



The Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc. (MARP) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation established in 1973 to improve passenger train service, travel conditions for passengers, and to work for the preservation of historic rail stations.

Monthly meetings are held at locations around the state. Check the website for dates and venues. The public is invited to attend.

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*The Michigan Passenger Editor and Webmaster, Larry Sobczak
ON TRACK Editor, Kay Chase*

2019 MEETINGS

- 26 January** – Member Meeting
St. Johns MI
- 12 February** – Executive Committee
- 12 March** – Executive Committee
- 6 April** – Member Meeting
Dearborn Amtrak Station
- 14 May** – Executive Committee
- 22 June** – Member Meeting
Sanford Centennial Museum
Sanford MI
- 9 July** – Executive Committee
- 7-9 August** – Michigan Rail Conference
Michigan State University
- 14 September** – 46th Annual Meeting
Lansing MI
- 8 October** – Executive Committee
- 9 November** – Member Meeting
West Region Location TBA
- 10 December** – Executive Committee

Visit www.marp.org
Email marprail@yahoo.com

It's Not Over 'til It's Over

Lawmakers in Michigan's House of Representatives have heard the mantra "Fix the Damn Roads", but the transportation budget they passed last week will not please many nor will it go very far in fixing the roads. Even worse, it contains a number of provisions that pose a threat to passenger trains and public transit in our state.

In fact, Matt Maddock (District 44, R-Milford), chair of the House appropriations subcommittee on transportation, was quoted saying the House budget will eliminate "waste" at MDOT by "focusing more money on roads, and not rail or airports." He told reporters that Michigan should not be in the Amtrak business.

The budget anticipates \$542.5M in additional road funding by redistributing the sales tax paid at the pump to roads—most of sales tax on gasoline now goes to schools and municipalities. The balance of needed road funds to fix the roads will be taken from other state agencies and programs.

The budget of the Office of Rail will be reduced by \$572,700 and the money redirected to road programs. This (and other such cuts) would require changes to Public Act 51 (PA 51), the statute that determines how transportation funds are allocated.

Included among the boilerplate items appended to the budget is a stipulation that no state funds "may be expended for the improvement of the state-owned rail line between Dearborn and Kalamazoo except as necessary to maintain the line in its current condition." Another directive requires MDOT to "take all actions needed to develop a solicitation for proposals for the delivery of daily round-trip rail passenger service between Grand Rapids and Chicago, Illinois by September 30, 2020.

Funds to operate Michigan's three passenger trains will remain at last year's level of \$18 million. An amendment offered by Rep. Jon Hoadley (District 60, D-Kalamazoo) restored \$35 million for operating assistance to 81 local public transit agencies.

Differences between the House bill and the Senate bill that was approved on May 16, will be hammered out by a conference committee.



MARP Member Meeting
Saturday, 22 June 2019, 10 AM - Noon
Sanford Centennial Museum
2222 Smith St, Sanford, MI 48657

MAP & DIRECTIONS

We will meet in the Depot building that is part of this multi-building complex. [Here is a map of the complex](#). The meeting will be an opportunity for members to provide their ideas about projects and activities for MARP over the next several months. Meeting details posted on the [MARP website](#).

Thank You!

To all who have renewed their 2019 membership dues, we thank you. If you have not yet done so, it's easy to renew online.

You do not need a PayPal account to pay online. You may pay with a debit or credit card by using the

PayPal Guest Checkout

Or download a mail-in form [HERE](#).

Register Now!



www.rail.mtu.edu/MRC2019

MICHIGAN RAIL CONFERENCE

"Think Global, Act Local"



Ronald Batory
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
Keynote Speaker

Breakout Sessions to include:

- New Technology in Rail
- Crossing Safety
- Railway Suppliers
- Passenger System
- International Connections

August 7-9, 2019
Henry Center at
Michigan State University
3535 Forest Road
Lansing, MI 48910



Derek Taylor
Vice President Southern Region
Canadian National
Conference Opening

Information & Registration at rail.mtu.edu/MRC2019

Michigan Rail Conference in Lansing August 7 through 9

The **Michigan Rail Conference** will take place this year on August 7-9 at Michigan State University's **Henry Center**, 3535 Forest Road in Lansing MI 48910. The conference is sponsored annually by the Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Technological University's Rail Transportation Program, Michigan State University, Michigan Railroads Association, and other industry partners. Use the hashtag #MIRailConference.

The keynote speaker will be Ronald Batory, administrator for the Federal Railroad Administration. Derek Taylor, vice president of the Southern Region for Canadian National Railroad, will give the conference opening speech.

The Thursday technical program features presentations, panel discussions, and breakout sessions on various topics, including:

- New technology in rail
- Railroad crossing safety
- Railway suppliers
- Passenger rail system
- International connections
- Local opportunities and impacts

The **Student Scholarship Golf Outing** will be held on Wednesday, August 7, 2019. Check-in will be at 8:30 am and play will start at 9:00 am. Cost of \$75 per player includes 18 holes and cart rental. An opening reception for attendees will be held that evening from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the **Henry Center**.

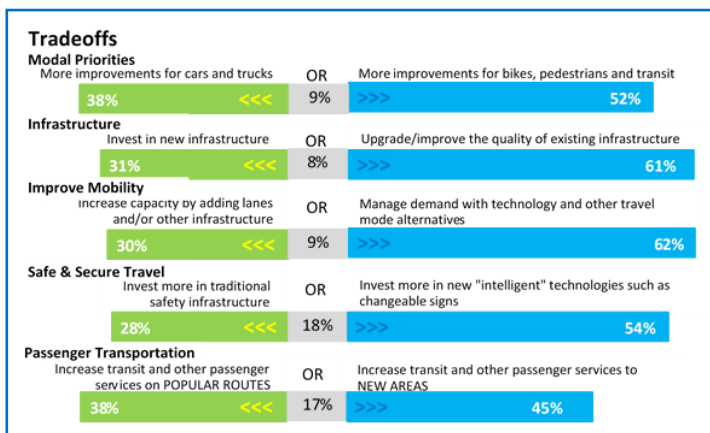
Regular registration at \$250 is open through July 6, rising to \$325 after that date. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

MM2045 Stakeholders Team Kicks Off

Members Joshua Hamilton and Kay Chase will represent MARP as part of the Key Stakeholders Team guiding development of the state's long-range transportation plan, dubbed **Michigan Mobility 2045**.

Stakeholders met for the first times on May 29 and June 11 to be briefed on findings of the Town Hall meetings and the online survey conducted in the preceding months. The chart below shows some of the survey results. The group also developed a vision statement that will be presented to the **State Transportation Commission** on July 18.

You can find more information about the long-range plan at **Michigan Mobility 2045**, learn how to submit your comments and get on the mailing list to receive updates. A second round of public meetings will be held in the fall of this year, with a final round set for the fall of 2020 when the draft plan is out for comment.



At Last! New Locomotives Charge onto the Wolverine Route

MARP members Steve Sobel and Clark Charnetski were among the first to spot the new *SC-44 Charger* locomotives in revenue service on the *Wolverine* line across southern Michigan.

On a sunny June 12 in Dearborn, Sobel caught engine no. 4630 leading Train #350. The next day was wet and foggy when Charnetski photographed Train #350 pulling into Ann Arbor with *Charger* locomotives on both ends – no. 4630 in the lead and no. 4612 bringing up the rear. Charnetski reports seeing *Chargers* on Train #355 as well, but confesses he hasn't gotten up early enough to see if Train #351 has the new locomotive when it arrives in Ann Arbor at 7:30 am.

The Siemens *Charger SC-44* locomotives have been in service on the *Pere Marquette* line since November, 2017. Their introduction on the *Wolverine* line had to wait for extension of the ITCS train control system eastward from the Amtrak-owned segment of track between Porter IN and Kalamazoo. Other routes in the Midwest use the I-ETMS train control system.

The inset at right (photo courtesy of Bob Johnston, *Trains*) is a close-up inside the cab showing the ITCS screen used in Michigan to the right of Wabtec's I-ETMS train control screen used on the other state-supported routes in IL, WI and MO.



Photo courtesy of Steve T. Sobel

Photo courtesy of Clark Charnetski

About the Charger Locomotives

Built by Siemens in Sacramento CA and procured with a \$216.5 million federal grant under a joint purchase agreement by Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Missouri, Washington and California, the *Charger SC-44* locomotives comprise the first higher-speed passenger locomotives to meet Tier IV emissions standards, meaning a 90% reduction in emissions and a reduction in fuel consumption of up to 16% compared to the previous locomotives.



Components have been provided by suppliers from across the U.S., including cooling units from a Michigan firm and the largest ever, 4,400-hp diesel engine built by Cummins in Indiana to supply the power.

Thirty-three *Charger SC-44* locomotives operate on the four state-supported routes carrying the **Amtrak MidwestSM** logo.

Lower maintenance costs and reduced fuel consumption will mean a savings for the states operating these trains. Faster acceleration and braking will provide for better on-time reliability.

The SC-44 Charger locomotive consumes three times less fuel than comparable gallons per passenger in an automobile with two occupants.

MARP Executive Committee Seeking New Members

Would you like to be a part of MARP's policy-making committee and have a greater influence on what happens in our organization? We have just the place for you!

Vacant positions exist on MARP's Executive Committee. If you would like more information about the duties and time commitment, please contact Chair Adam Tauno Williams at awilliams@whitemice.org or phone him at 616-581-8010.

The Executive Committee holds a conference call at 7 pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Please contact us at marprail@yahoo.com if you have issues for discussion or would like to join the conversation.

FAST FACTS

Michigan Passenger Train Ridership increased more than 3.4 percent in FY 2018, outpacing the rest of the Midwest. Ticket revenue from the three routes totaled about \$32 million.

\$18M was appropriated for passenger rail in FY2018-19. H.B. 4246 as passed by the House 13 June 2018 keeps the appropriation at this level for FY2020.

View from elsewhere . . .

"I think we have an obligation to avoid a gas tax increase, and I am willing to look at any option we have."

--Representative Matt Maddock (District 44, R-Milford) speaking to reporters on June 6 after the transportation appropriations subcommittee he chairs agreed to substantial shifts in funds from various state agencies and departments to pay for fixing the roads, as well as selling off state assets including the Blue Water Bridge and looking for a private entity to operate the *Pere Marquette* passenger train.

For more on the budget bill approved by the House transportation appropriations subcommittee—and subsequently passed by the full House—see the June 06 [Associated Press News article](#) by David Eggert. Eggert also reported on the Senate-passed budget in an article appearing in [Crain's Detroit](#) on May 16.

"The disentanglement of motor fuels and the Sales Tax should be a priority."

--Citizens Research Council white paper [Evaluating Michigan's Options to Increase Road Funding](#). This 35-page analysis is an excellent primer on the challenges of adequately funding Michigan's roads.



Bridge-Oriented Development

Portland's car-free transit, bike and pedestrian bridge [Tilikum Crossing](#), opened in 2015, is, according to one commentator, "spurring local development in ways that a heavy, car and truck crossing never could". Watch the [video](#) to learn more about how the bridge is fostering important connections and increasing the vitality of the South Waterfront District. This commentator added that the bridge "also connects to the equally exquisite [aerial tram](#) to Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) which in turn boasts the largest bicycle valet service in North America".



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