



# Conference Program



3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Michigan Rail Conference  
August 19 - 20th, 2015  
Grand Valley State University, Eberhard Center

# Welcome



## A special greeting from conference co-chairs:

We're pleased to welcome you to the Michigan Rail Conference. We're also excited to introduce Grand Rapids as the third host city for the conference, as we believe that recent rail development in the region provide a perfect setting toward continuing dialog on the future of Michigan's rail transportation.

Based on the positive feedback on last year's conference topics and format, we have sustained our panel-oriented structure for the sessions and we hope that it facilitates an active dialog between the audience and presenters. Some of the topics covered today have already been touched in two earlier conferences, but we're especially excited to include new areas in this year's program, including rolling stock trends and transportation challenges beyond the boundaries of rail transportation.

As always, we are deeply indebted to our speakers for volunteering their time and expertise and to our Conference Planning Committee that included several new (please review the names from the last page of the program). We would like to thank Grand Valley State University for hosting the event, Experience Grand Rapids for providing their local expertise for the preparations, and our industry stakeholders for providing their facilities to field visits. We'd also like to recognize Dave Nelson and his team from Michigan Tech, who handled all key logistics and coordination for the conference. Finally, we would like to recognize our industry sponsors, the Michigan Department of Transportation, and the U.S Department of Transportation through the National University Rail Center (NURail). Without their financial support, we could not have organized the conference while keeping the registration fees at a minimum.

If the best way to success is increased knowledge, we strongly believe that today's discussions on rail transportation systems and related technologies, challenges and advances are a step to right direction. Since we can only address limited number of topics in a single day, we will "stay on track" toward our ultimate vision; making Michigan Rail Conference the primary rail event for the State of Michigan. We hope you enjoy 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Michigan Rail Conference and we hope even more that you'll return next year to the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Michigan Rail Conference.

Welcome to the conference!

- Nikkie Johnson and Pasi Lautala

## Michigan Rail Conference Field Visit | August 19<sup>th</sup>

1:00 – 4:30 PM | See back page for schedule

## Michigan Rail Conference Technical Program | August 20<sup>th</sup>

7:30 – 8:00 AM | Breakfast

8:00 – 8:15 AM | Welcome & Safety Briefing

### Pasi Lautala

Assistant Professor & Director, Rail  
Transportation Program, Michigan Tech Univ.  
"Topic"

### Nikkie Johnson

Freight Rail Economic Development & Operations  
Program Manager, MDOT

8:15 – 8:30 AM | Welcome from Visiting Dignitaries

State Senator Peter MacGregor  
Senate District 28

State Representative Winnie Brinks  
House District 76

**8:30 – 10:00 AM | Plenary Session – Gathering Momentum, Challenges and Opportunities Before Us**

**Polly Kent**

Michigan DOT Intermodal Policy Division  
Administrator  
“Transportation Funding Picture”

**David Austin**

Analyst, Congressional Budget Office,  
Microeconomic Studies Division  
“Pricing Freight Transport to Account for External  
Costs”

**Andy Doctoroff**

Special Projects Advisor, Office of Governor Snyder  
“Statewide Logistics and Supply Chain Asset Study”

**10:00 – 10:15 AM | Break**

**10:15 – 11:30 AM | Plenary Panel Discussion – Railroad-Highway Grade Crossings**

**Curtis Stewart**

Education Chairman, Michigan  
Operation Lifesaver  
“OLS Perspective”

**Kris Foondle**

Local Crossing Project  
Manager, MDOT Office of Rail  
“State DOT Perspective”

**Stephen Klinger**

Highway Crossing Signal  
Engineer, NS Railroad  
“Class 1 Perspective”

**John Chipala**

Chief Engineer, WATCO  
Ann Arbor Railroad  
“Short Line Perspective”

**David Nelson**

Senior Research Engineer,  
Michigan Tech  
“Crossing Research in the U.S.”

**11:30 AM – 1:00 PM | Networking Lunch and Keynote Speaker – Mr. Joe Szabo**

**Executive Director**

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
“TBD”



**1:00 – 2:30 PM | Breakout Sessions\* #1 – Railroad Shipper Panel**

**Brian Brink**

Vice President, Brink Farms  
“Agri-Business Perspective”

**Jake Hayrynen**

Forest Products Marketing/Sales  
Manager, JM Longyear LLC  
“Forest Products Perspective”

**Nikkie Johnson**

Economic Development & Freight  
Operations PM  
“MDOT Perspective”

**Randy Warner**

North American Logistics Supervisor  
at Amway  
“Local Shipper Perspective”

**I. Howard Smith**

Wayne County Community College  
District Rail Program Faculty  
“Auto Industry Perspective”

**1:00 – 2:30 PM | Breakout Sessions #2 – Passenger Rail**

**Joe McAndrew**

Policy Director, Transportation  
for America  
“US Trends in Passenger Rail”

**Michael Benham**

Special Assistant for Strategic  
Planning, Ann Arbor Area  
Transportation Authority  
“Update on Michigan  
Commuter Rail Efforts”

**Kathy Waters**

American Public  
Transportation Association  
“APTA Perspective”

**David Simpson**

Chair, TRB Committee on  
Intercity Passenger Rail  
“TRB Rail Perspective”

**2:30 – 2:45 PM | Break**

**2:45 – 4:15 PM | Breakout Sessions\* #3 – Trends in Rolling Stock**

**Mark Duve**

Mechanical Engineer of  
Locomotive Design, NS  
Railroad  
“Trends in Power”

**Tom Klimek**

VP Marketing, Escanaba &  
Lake Superior Railroad  
“Freight Car Manufacturing in  
Michigan”

**Matt Keck**

Senior Sales Representative,  
The Andersons  
“Car Owner Perspective”

**Josh Coran**

Director of Operations, Talgo  
Inc.  
“Passenger Rolling Stock”

**Larry Salci**

Management Consultant –  
Transportation  
“Passenger Fleet Overview”

**2:45 – 4:15 PM | Breakout Sessions\* #4 – Rail Advocacy Groups, Challenges and Opportunities**

**Larry Krieg**

Chair, Michigan Association of  
Railroad Passengers  
“MARP Perspective”

**Jennifer Kalczuk**

Chair APTA Marketing and  
Communications Committee  
“APTA Perspective”

**Michael Lamb**

Friends of WALLY  
“Friends Perspective”

**Larry Lloyd**

State Director for Michigan,  
GoRail  
“Freight Rail Advocacy”

**Jim Bruckbauer**

Policy Specialist, Groundwork  
Center for Resilient  
Communities  
“Traverse City By Train?”

**4:15 – 4:30 PM | Break**

**4:30 – 5:00 PM | Closing Session**

**Rick Chapla**

VP, Strategic Initiatives, The Right Place  
“Closing Thoughts from Grand Rapids”

Wrap-Up, Feedback and 2016 Conference Discussion by Conference Chair

**5:00 – 6:00 PM | Networking Reception**

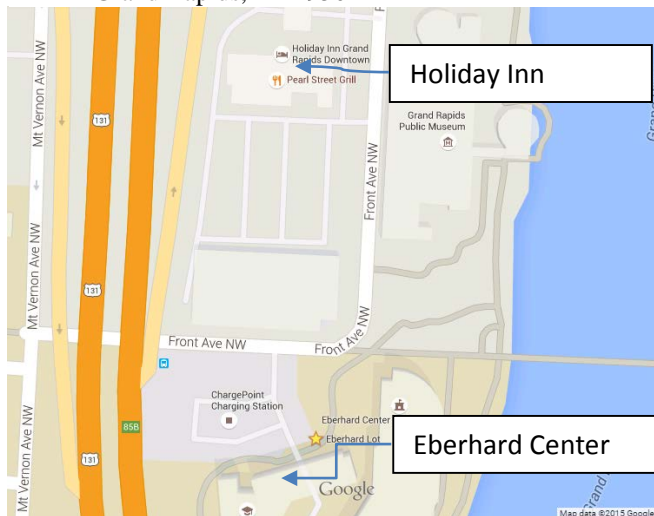
\*brief presentations followed by panel discussion\*

# Field Trip Schedule | August 19<sup>th</sup>

- 1:00 PM | Depart Front of Eberhard Center
  - 1:05 PM | Fulton Street Grade Crossing Project
  - 1:30 PM | Steel Pro, Grand Rapids Steel Distribution Facility
  - 2:10 PM | AMTRAK Station and the Rapid Central
  - 3:15 PM | Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing
  - 3:30 PM | Grand Elk Terminal Facilities
  - 4:30 PM | Return to Eberhard Center
- We can certify up to 6.5 hours of contact time to use towards professional development. Check at conference registration as you leave the conference to get a certificate.

## Conference Location:

Eberhard Center  
 Grand Valley State University  
 301 West Fulton  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49504



## Diamond Level Sponsors



## Platinum Level Sponsors



## Gold Level Sponsors



## Conference Planning Committee

Jon Cool

Nikkie Johnson

Ron DeCook

Shasta Duffey

Frank Dunbar

Nicholas Little

Pasi Lautala

Peter Fontana

Jennifer Kalczuk

Elizabeth Treutel

Derrick James

Libby Ogard



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