



STATE OF MICHIGAN
RICK SNYDER, Governor



MACKINAC BRIDGE AUTHORITY

N415 I-75 ST. IGNACE, MICHIGAN 49781 PH: 906-643-7600 FAX: 906-643-7668

WILLIAM H. GNODTKE, CHAIRMAN
BARBARA J. BROWN, VICE CHAIR
BARBARA J. ARENS
PATRICK F. GLEASON
KIRK T. STEUDLE, P.E.,
DIRECTOR

R. DAN MUSSER, III
MATTHEW E. MCLOGAN
NICK KHOURI, TREASURER
ROBERT J. SWEENEY, P.E.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2017

CONTACT: Bob Sweeney, Mackinac Bridge Authority, 906-643-7600

Location announced for Mackinac Bridge Authority's Lansing public meeting for 2018 Annual Bridge Walk

November 7, 2017 -- A third public meeting regarding the 2018 Annual Bridge Walk, set in Lansing for the convenience of other participants in the event, is scheduled for 9 a.m. Monday, Nov. 20, in the Forum Room of the Michigan Library and Historical Center.

Recognizing that the Annual Bridge Walk draws participants from throughout the state, the Mackinac Bridge Authority (MBA) set this public meeting to hear additional comments on options for the bridge walk's direction, busing and date prior to making a decision.

The meeting will be broadcast on the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) [LiveStream channel](https://livestream.com/MDOT/MBA-LansingBridgeWalkMeeting) at <https://livestream.com/MDOT/MBA-LansingBridgeWalkMeeting> for those unable to attend in person. Two other meetings were held Oct. 25 and 26 in Mackinaw City.

"After hearing from people in the Straits area at our two meetings, and reviewing comments we'd received through our website, the board felt it was important to give another opportunity for others in the state to attend a meeting in person," said Bill Gnodtke, chairman of the MBA board. "This also gave others both additional time and opportunities to share their comments with us through our website and in person."

Parking is available for \$1 per hour, up to \$8 per day. Accommodations can be made for persons with disabilities and limited English speaking ability. Large print materials, auxiliary aids or the services of interpreters, signers, or readers available upon request. Please call 906-643-7600 to request at least seven days before meeting date.

The board heard presentations from bridge staff on the 2017 walk and options for the 2018 event at both the board's regular meeting and a public meeting in October, and listened to comments from those in attendance. The MBA also has been collecting comments in meetings with Straits area businesses and tourism groups, and through its website, www.mackinacbridge.org/about-the-bridge/contact-us/.

Recorded versions of both meetings are available to view on MDOT's LiveStream channel at <https://livestream.com/MDOT/2018BridgeWalkPublicMeeting> and <https://livestream.com/MDOT/MBAMeeting102617>.

The options proposed by MBA staff are posted on the Authority's website at www.mackinacbridge.org/mba-staff-proposals-2018-annual-bridge-walk/. They include:

Starting the walk from both St. Ignace and Mackinaw City (no buses)

In this option, walkers would begin from both the St. Ignace and Mackinaw City ends of the bridge in one outside lane to the halfway point, then crossing the center lanes of the bridge and heading back to their starting point in the other outside lane. Those who wish to, and if they begin the walk early enough, would have the option to continue across the entire bridge. Those who do walk the full length of the bridge will need to walk back across the bridge – for a 10-mile hike round trip – or make their own transportation arrangements to get back to the side they started from after the bridge reopens to public traffic. In this option, no buses will transport participants across the bridge; the center two lanes will remain open to emergency vehicles.

Start the walk in Mackinaw City and end in St. Ignace (with bus service)

The Annual Bridge Walk alternated directions every other year until 1965, when it was permanently changed to start in St. Ignace and end in Mackinaw City. Under this option, the direction would flip, starting in Mackinaw City and ending in St. Ignace. As approximately 80 percent of walk participants arrive from the south side, more participants could begin the walk immediately after their arrival in Mackinaw City. As long as people board a bus by 9:30 a.m. at Bridge View Park in St. Ignace, or arrive at the starting line by 10 a.m., they should be able to walk the bridge.

Start the walk in St. Ignace (with bus service and a new bus loading area)

In this option, the bridge walk would start in St. Ignace and end in Mackinaw City as in the past, but with a different bus loading area in Mackinaw City to maximize bus transportation efficiency. At the current bus loading area, the State Dock, only eight buses can be loaded at a time. A new loading area, such as the Mackinaw City School parking lot, would provide room to load 12 buses at a time. With 175 buses (50 more than in 2017) and no breakdowns or delays in traffic, this

system could transport about 24,000 participants to the starting line in time to complete the walk.

All the proposed options presume the bridge will be closed to public traffic during the walk, from 6:30 a.m. to noon, as it was this year. MBA staff have also suggested the board consider other days for the bridge walk other than the traditional Labor Day, including the Saturday or Sunday of Labor Day weekend, Memorial Day weekend, or another weekend in the spring or early summer.

###

Download MDOT's Mi Drive traffic information app: www.michigan.gov/drive

www.michigan.gov/drive | www.twitter.com/MichiganDOT | www.facebook.com/MichiganDOT