

MICHIGAN'S RAILROAD HISTORY

1825-2014



Contributing Organizations

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) wishes to thank the many railroad historical organizations and individuals who contributed to the development of this document, which will update continually.

Ann Arbor Railroad Technical and Historical Association

Blue Water Michigan Chapter-National Railway Historical Society

Detroit People Mover

Detroit Public Library

Grand Trunk Western Historical Society

HistoricDetroit.org

Huron Valley Railroad Historical Society

Lansing Model Railroad Club

Michigan Roundtable, The Lexington Group in Transportation History

Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers

Michigan Railroads Association

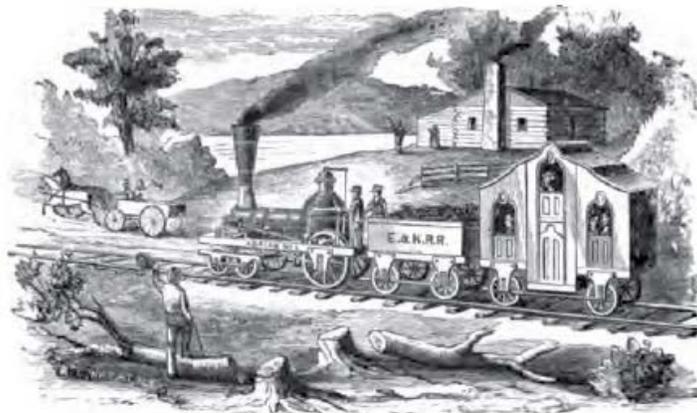
Peaker Services, Inc. - Brighton, Michigan

Michigan Railroad History Museum - Durand, Michigan

The Michigan Railroad Club

The Michigan State Trust for Railroad Preservation

The Southern Michigan Railroad Society





STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LANSING

RICK SYNDER
GOVERNOR

KIRK T. STEUDLE
DIRECTOR

October 13, 2014

Dear Michigan Residents:

For more than 180 years, Michigan's railroads have played a major role in the economic development of the state. This document highlights many important events that have occurred in the evolution of railroad transportation in Michigan.

This document was originally published to help celebrate Michigan's 150th birthday in 1987. A number of organizations and individuals contributed to its development at that time. The document has continued to be used by many since that time, so a decision was made to bring it up to date and keep the information current. Consequently, some 28 years later, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has updated the original document and is placing it on our website for all to access.

As you journey through this history of railroading in Michigan, may you find the experience both entertaining and beneficial. MDOT is certainly proud of Michigan's railroad heritage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirk T. Steudle".

Kirk T. Steudle, P.E.
State Transportation Director

An Overview

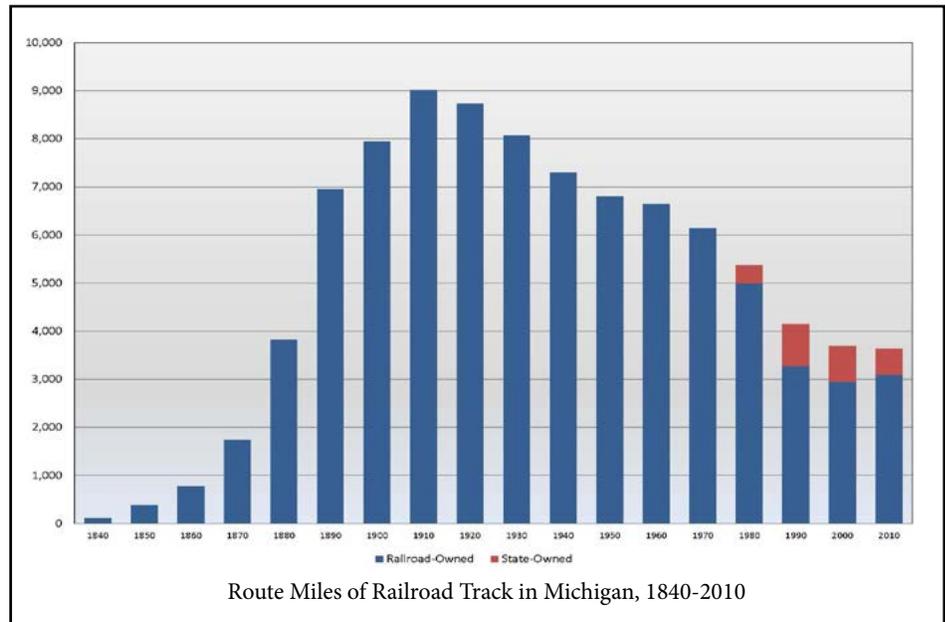
From its beginning in the 1830s, Michigan's railroad system increased to a high of more than 9,000 route miles by the early 1900s. However, as the road system improved and use of automobiles and trucks increased, the number of miles of track began to contract. Today, Michigan's railroad system has some 3,600 route miles of track.

At the same time, in response to the federal government's effort to restructure bankrupt railroads in the northeast and Midwest regions of the nation, the State Transportation Preservation Act of 1976 (Act 295 of 1976) was enacted to provide a means of preserving critical rail lines in Michigan. By September 1987, the state owned 872 miles of railroad. An effort was made by the state, beginning in July 1998, to divest itself of commercially viable rail operations. Today, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) owns some 665 miles of railroad.

Since its inception in Michigan in 1846 between Kalamazoo and Detroit until 1971, intercity passenger rail had been provided by private railroads. In 1971, Amtrak was created to operate the nation's intercity passenger rail system.

During the Amtrak era, 1971 to the present, intercity passenger rail service to Michigan started with two daily round trips between Chicago and Detroit. This was increased to three daily round trips in 1974, with one of the three going to Toledo. In 1994, the two daily round trips ending in Detroit were extended to Pontiac. In 1995, the third

daily round trip that ended in Toledo was rerouted to Pontiac, which is the service configuration today. The Chicago-Port Huron service (Blue Water) began in 1974 and the Chicago-Grand Rapids service (Pere Marquette) began in 1984, both with one daily round trip, which continues to be the level of service today. Statewide ridership was relatively steady for many years before the major increases occurring after the turn of the century. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, statewide intercity passenger rail ridership established a record level of 804,697; in FY 2014, statewide ridership decreased to 769,348. Michigan's railroads have played a very important role in the economic development of the state. Freight railroads provide shippers with cost-effective transportation, especially for heavy and bulk commodities. Michigan's automotive



This publication highlights many important events that have occurred in the evolution of railroad transportation. The following are cases where Michigan was the first in the nation to achieve the accomplishment.

1832 - A Michigan newspaper, *The Western Immigrant*, was the first in the nation to suggest a transcontinental railroad.

1857 - First steam locomotive on a logging railroad.

1891 - The World's first international submarine tunnel, the St. Clair River Tunnel, formed a continuous rail route between eastern Canada and Chicago, the longest route in the world under a single management.

1891 - Four of the largest steam locomotives ever built in the nation up to that time were built for use in the St. Clair River Tunnel.

1897 - The *Pere Marquette*, operating between Ludington

and Manitowoc, was the first all-steel car ferry on the Great Lakes.

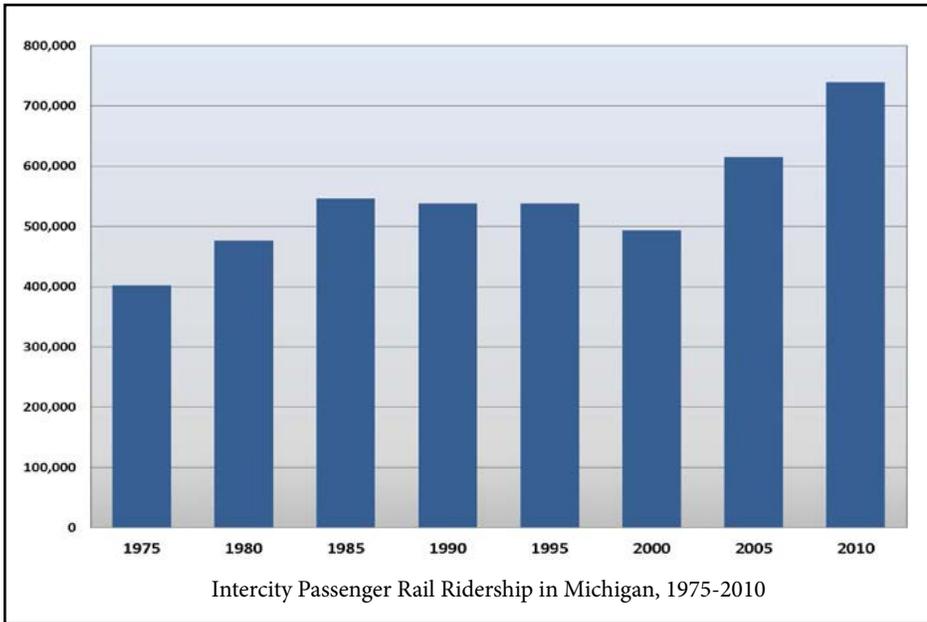
1913 - The world's tallest railroad terminal (Michigan Central Depot) at the time built in Detroit.

1946 - The Detroit & Mackinac Railway became the first all-diesel line haul railroad in the nation.

1959 - The first "roadrailer" experimental combination rail-and-highway vehicles in the nation operated between Grand Rapids and Traverse City.

2013 - The first intercity passenger rail service to operate at speeds up to 110 mph in the United States outside the northeast corridor in the Amtrak era.

An Overview



industry continues to rely on the railroads to transport materials to their plants and finished automobiles to their markets.

Michigan's agricultural industry depends, in large measure, on the freight railroads to transport their grains to the marketplace. In recent decades, freight rail and the trucking industry have worked together in transporting goods using containers. Freight rail is not only cost effective but also energy efficient as it generates less air pollution per ton-mile than trucking. Also, railroads are critical to the national defense in terms of moving heavy weaponry and providing transportation system redundancy.

At the same time, intercity passenger rail has contributed to the economic well-being of Michigan. The economic benefits of intercity passenger rail, featuring accelerated rail, include:

- Linking people with jobs and educational opportunities
- Supporting economic development
- Increasing productivity
- Bringing more visitors to more places
- Increasing property values in the vicinity of stations
- Contributing to environmental efficiency

Emerging commuter rail service has the potential to provide economic benefits to Michigan residents, businesses and visitors, including:

- Creating/maintaining construction and operations jobs
- Enhancing business activity and property values
- Improving access to jobs
- Encouraging new business development
- Reducing the need for land for roads
- Contributing to environmental efficiency



1820-1829 April 19, 1825

The President, Directors and Company of LaPlaisance Bay Harbor Co. was the Michigan railroad with the longest corporate name and the shortest planned route. It was formed on this date to build a half-mile line at Monroe. However, it was never built.

1830-1839 July 31, 1830

The Pontiac & Detroit Railway Co. was chartered. This charter, issued by the territorial Legislature, was the first railway charter in the state. By the time Michigan gained statehood in 1837, 23 private railroad companies had been chartered, most of which never laid any rail.

Feb. 1, 1832

A Michigan newspaper, *The Western Immigrant of Ann Arbor*, proposed the idea of a transcontinental railroad, the first printed suggestion made anywhere of such a project.

June 28, 1832

The Detroit & St. Joseph Railroad, the first railroad planned to cross Michigan, was chartered. Its name was later changed to Michigan Central Railroad (MCRR).

1833

The first railroad tracks in Michigan were laid by the Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad between Adrian and Toledo.

1836

The Michigan Central Railroad began construction west from Detroit, reaching Ypsilanti by February 1838, Ann Arbor in October 1839, and Jackson on Dec. 29, 1841.

March 28, 1836

The state chartered seven railroads in a single day.

Nov. 2, 1836

The first operating railroad west of the Alleghenies and in Michigan, the Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad, began horse-powered service between Port Lawrence (now Toledo), Ohio, and Adrian.

March 20, 1837

The Public Improvements Act of 1837 was passed, which allowed the State of Michigan to borrow up to \$5 million at 5.25 percent interest to finance the construction of three railroads, two canals and other transportation projects.

July 4, 1837

First steam locomotive placed in service in Michigan, *Adrian*, began operating on the Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad.

1840-1849

1840

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 104 miles.

July 4, 1843

The Detroit & Pontiac Railroad began service between Detroit and Pontiac.

Nov. 25, 1845

Train operations began between Detroit and Battle Creek.

1846

Public Acts passed, authorizing sale by the State of the Michigan Southern (\$500,000) and the Michigan Central (\$2 million) railroad companies.

Feb. 2, 1846

Regularly scheduled passenger rail service between Kalamazoo and Detroit commenced.

April 23, 1849

Michigan Central completed to New Buffalo, the first railroad to cross the state.

1850-1859

1850

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 380 miles.

Sept. 25, 1851

In the landmark Great Railroad Conspiracy case, a Detroit jury convicted 12 men for burning MCRR's Detroit depot. The men were aggrieved at refusal of MCRR to pay for cattle killed by trains near Jackson.

1852

Last strap rails eliminated on state railroads.

1852

Michigan Southern and Michigan Central railroads completed.

Feb. 20, 1852

The Michigan Southern Railroad reached Chicago from Toledo via Adrian, Hillsdale, Coldwater and White Pigeon. This line, later called "The Old Road," was for a few years part of the only rail line between the East Coast and Chicago.

May 21, 1852

First train operated by Michigan Central Railroad from Detroit to Chicago.

1855

Michigan Central Railroad began using the telegraph to control train operations, making it the nation's first railroad to make widespread use of this system.

Feb. 12, 1855

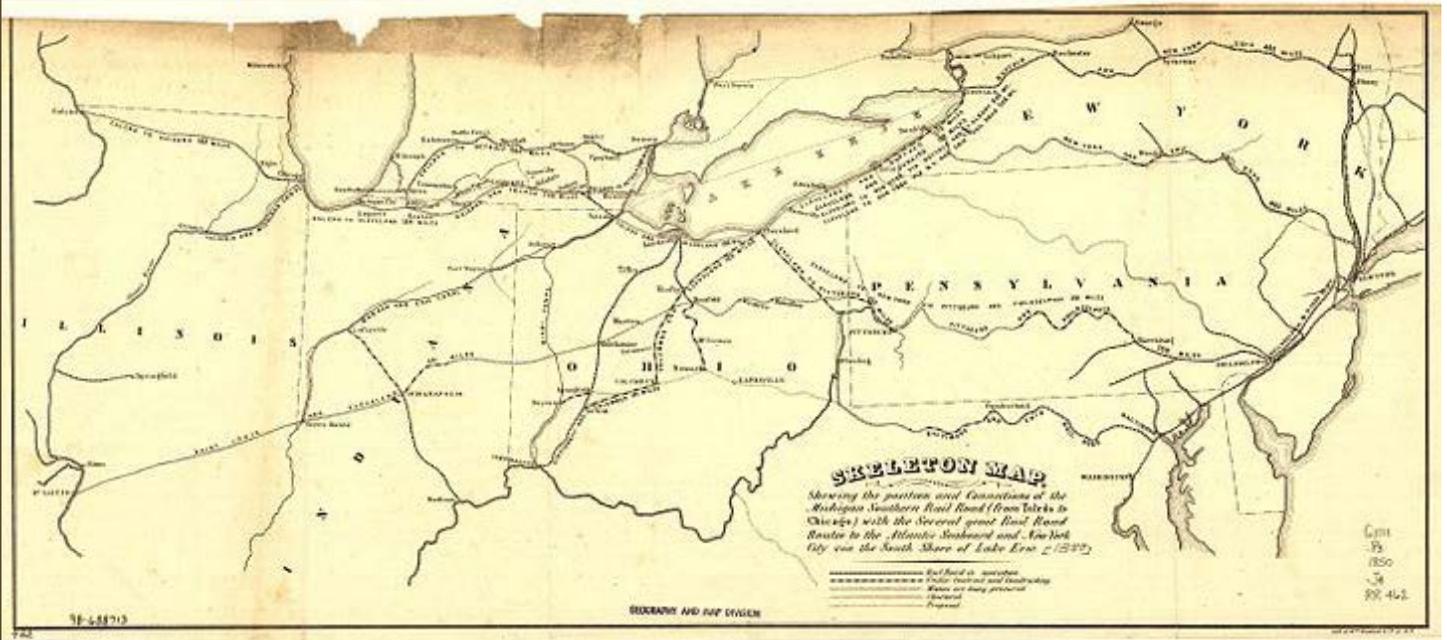
State law passed requiring crews on passenger trains and depot personnel to wear a badge on a hat or cap indicating their job title or office.

Feb. 22, 1855

First common carrier railroad in the Upper Peninsula, the Iron Mountain Railroad, was chartered; its Negaunee-Marquette line was completed by August 1857. (An earlier road, the "Iron Mountain Railway," was a privately owned horse-powered tramway.)

The first trains were horse-drawn. The steam-powered locomotives followed soon thereafter.





The railroad system in the Midwest United States (St. Louis-Philadelphia) in 1850.

- August 1855 The first steam locomotive in the Upper Peninsula, *Sebastopol*, arrived via boat at Marquette for the Iron Mountain Railroad.
- 1856 Michigan received its first federal railroad land grant. Under the Act of 1856, Michigan's railroads were eventually awarded a total of 3,809,826 acres of public land.
- July 1856 Detroit, Monroe & Toledo Railroad completed a Detroit-Toledo line. Later, it was leased to the Michigan Southern & Northern Indiana Railroad.
- 1857 First steam locomotive on a logging railroad in the nation when Blendon Lumber Co. began hauling logs on wooden rails in the Bass River Valley.
- Jan. 22, 1857 Flint & Pere Marquette Railroad chartered to construct a rail line from Flint to Lake Michigan via Saginaw.
- July 4, 1858 First regularly scheduled passenger train into Grand Rapids.
- November 1858 Detroit & Milwaukee Railroad completed the Detroit-Grand Haven line via Owosso, Ionia and Grand Rapids.
- Nov. 21, 1859 First Detroit-Fort Gratiot (Port Huron) service on the Chicago, Detroit & Canada Grand Trunk Junction Railway. At age 12, Thomas A. Edison worked on this line as a "candy butcher."

1860-1869

- 1860 Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 770 miles.
- Jan. 5, 1861 The Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay Railroad Co. was the first land-grant road in Michigan to receive a certificate stating that it had completed 20 miles of acceptable track.
- May 13, 1861 Company G, 3rd Regiment, Michigan Infantry moved by lumber wagons from Lansing to Bath to board the Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay Railroad, the nearest railroad to Lansing. It was the state's first known movement of troops by railroad.
- Dec. 8, 1862 Flint & Pere Marquette began scheduled train service to Flint.

- April 1863 In a meeting held in Marshall, 13 Michigan Central Railroad men planned a national railwaymen's organization, resulting the following month in the founding in Detroit of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the oldest railroad labor union in the Western Hemisphere.
- Aug. 25, 1863 Line completed from Lansing to Owosso by the Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay Railroad.
- August 1864 Peninsula Railroad Co. of Michigan completed Escanaba-Negaunee line.
- July 1865 Marquette & Ontonagon Railroad opened Ishpeming-Champion line.
- June 25, 1866 Jackson, Lansing & Saginaw Railroad completed line from Jackson to Lansing via Mason.
- Sept. 19, 1866 Representatives of car departments of 11 railroads met at Adrian, agreeing on a general meeting of "car masters" in Springfield, Massachusetts, on May 15, 1867, resulting in the founding of the Association of American Railroads.
- 1867: Brush Street Station is completed in Detroit. It replaced an earlier wood structure that burned down.
- Jan. 1, 1867 Detroit River car ferry service began with *Great Western*, at the time the largest iron or steel vessel on the Great Lakes.
- September 1867 The Paw Paw Railroad, Michigan's shortest (4 miles) common carrier railroad, began Paw Paw-Lawton service.
- Dec. 1, 1867 Bay City & East Saginaw Railroad began regularly scheduled intercity passenger rail service between Bay City and Saginaw.
- November 1869 First passenger train into Muskegon from Ferrysburg.

Station at Bruce's Crossing near Ontonagon on the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic Railroad.



- 1870-1879** 1870 Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 1,739 miles.
- 1870 Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad was completed from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Kalamazoo (September 1870) and Grand Rapids (October 1870).
- 1870 Between 1863 and 1870, Michigan communities voted a total of more than \$1 million in tax-supported bonds to support railroad construction.
- Jan. 1, 1870 Grand River Valley Railroad completed the Jackson-Grand Rapids line via Charlotte and Hastings.

Track gang posing
with their hand car.



- 1871 The most ever miles of mainline track completed in Michigan in a single year, 559, were built.
- 1871 The Michigan Supreme Court decided that the general aid law for railroad construction was unconstitutional.
- April 17, 1871 The state Legislature enacted a law requiring passenger train conductors to announce the next station in all cars “within a reasonable time before arrival.”
- May 22, 1871 Detroit & Bay City Railway formed; completed the Detroit-Bay City Line July 31, 1873.
- Aug. 31, 1871 Detroit-Lansing line was opened by the Detroit, Howell & Lansing Railroad.
- December 1871 Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad was completed to Clam Lake (now Cadillac).
- 1872 First annual report issued by the Michigan Commission of Railroads.
- 1872 Steam-powered car ferry service on the St. Clair River began with *International II*, the first propeller-powered ferry on the Great Lakes, making the crossing from Point Edward, Ontario, to Fort Gratiot. *International II* was the first three-track ferry (dual-gauge tracks).
- 1872 Construction of a Detroit River railroad tunnel commenced, but work was soon abandoned because of noxious gas and quicksand.
- July 23, 1872 Elijah J. McCoy, an African-American inventor raised in Ypsilanti, patented the first automatic lubrication system for locomotives and other machinery, a device so effective that it was difficult to sell imitations that weren’t “the real McCoy.” Thus, McCoy’s name became synonymous with anything genuine or authentic.
- November 1872 Car ferry service began between Sarnia, Ontario, and Port Huron with the ferry *Saginaw*.
- December 1872 First rail line into Traverse City completed by the Traverse City Railroad from Walton Junction.
- 1873 Northern Central Michigan Railroad Co. completed its rail line from Jonesville to Lansing.
- May 1, 1873 The state Legislature passed a law requiring passenger trains to be equipped with air brakes or equally effective devices, and that a bell or whistle must be sounded when approaching crossings.

- Oct. 11, 1873 Mineral Range Railroad completed Hancock-Calumet line.
- May 1874 Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad reached Petoskey.
- Dec. 1, 1874 Flint & Pere Marquette Railroad completed the Flint-Ludington line via Midland, Clare and Reed City.
- 1877 Vanderbilt interests proposed a Detroit River tunnel from Grosse Ile to Canada, but work never happened.
- 1877 George S. Sheffield of Three Rivers invented a three-wheel, hand-pumped “track velocipede” for use by track inspectors; his company ultimately produced thousands for worldwide use.
- Jan. 28, 1877 Lake George & Muskegon River Railroad, Michigan’s first common carrier logging railroad, began operations in Clare County.
- June 21, 1878 Rail line completed and first freight train operated between Toledo and Ann Arbor on what would become the Ann Arbor Railroad. Regularly scheduled passenger rail service began a few days later.
- Sept. 3, 1878 Detroit, Mackinac & Marquette Railroad incorporated to construct Marquette-St. Ignace line.
- Oct. 10, 1879 The Michigan Central Railroad’s *Pacific Express* wrecked when it ran into a switch engine in heavy fog at Jackson, killing 18 passengers and injuring 26.

1880-1889

- 1880 Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 3,823 miles.
- 1880 Ephraim Shay of Cadillac developed the Shay gear-driven steam locomotive. From 1880 to 1945, 2,770 Shays were built, chiefly for logging, lumber and mining railroads.
- 1880 Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad began summer-only “dummy trains” to resorts north of Petoskey. The *Pere Marquette* offered a similar service many years later south of Petoskey.
- Feb. 8, 1880 Chicago & Grand Trunk Railway completed the Port Huron-Chicago line via Flint, Lansing and Battle Creek.
- Sept. 10, 1880 Ontonagon & Brule River Railroad chartered to construct a rail line from Ontonagon southeast to the Wisconsin state line.

Loading trains on the railway ferry *Chief Wawatam* in Mackinaw City, Michigan.



- June 1881 Detroit, Butler & St. Louis Railroad (later Wabash) completed line from Montpelier, Ohio, to Detroit, offering a direct route to St. Louis and Kansas City.
- Oct. 10, 1881 Detroit, Mackinac & Marquette, the Michigan Central, and the Grand Rapids & Indiana formed a joint subsidiary, the Mackinac Transportation Co., to operate car ferry service at the Straits of Mackinac.
- Oct. 20, 1881 Construction of Pontiac, Oxford & Port Austin Railroad began at Caseville to bring rail service to the Thumb area.
- Dec. 18, 1881 Michigan Central Railroad reached the Straits of Mackinac from Bay City.
- Dec. 19, 1881 Detroit, Mackinac & Marquette Railroad completed line into St. Ignace creating a through-route from Marquette to the Straits.
- July 3, 1882 Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad reached Mackinaw City.

This Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic (DSS&A) caboose was used with DSS&A trains operating across the northern part of the Upper Peninsula.



- July 1883 Marquette, Houghton & Ontonagon Railroad connected Marquette with Houghton by rail.
- Dec. 31, 1883 Michigan Central Railroad opened a car ferry crossing between Detroit and Windsor.
- 1884 First railroad service to Ironwood started by Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railway Co.
- November 1884 Paddlewheel car ferry *Lansdowne* began more than 90 years of crossings between Detroit and Windsor, the longest service of any railroad car ferry in the world.
- November 1884 Michigan's first mechanical interlocking plant was installed at Wasepi at the crossing of Grand Rapids & Indiana and Michigan Central railroads.
- June 5, 1885 State law passed requiring railroads to place automatic couplers on all cars.
- 1886 Michigan Central depot in Ann Arbor constructed.
- 1887 Interstate Commerce Commission established; Thomas M. Cooley of Michigan is its first chairman.
- 1887 Eighty-nine logging railroads operated in Michigan - more logging railroads than any other two U.S. states combined.
- Jan. 7, 1887 Manistee & Northeastern Railroad was chartered to build a standard-gauge railroad between Manistee and Traverse City.

- March 9, 1887 Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic (“The South Shore”) created by consolidation of several railroads.
- July 6, 1887 Gogebic & Montreal River Railroad (later “Soo Line”) built into Ironwood and Bessemer.
- July 10, 1887 Mackinac Island’s Grand Hotel opened. The 600-room resort hotel was built by Michigan Central and the Grand Rapids & Indiana railroads, and a steamship company.
- September 1887 Detroit, Mackinac & Mackinac rails reached Sault Ste. Marie from Soo Junction.
- Nov. 20, 1887 Milwaukee & Northern Railroad completed the line into Champion from Milwaukee; reached Ontonagon in 1893.
- Dec. 31, 1887 Michigan’s only international railroad bridge, the 1.2-mile series of spans across the rapids of the St. Mary’s River at Sault Ste. Marie, was opened to create a direct route from the upper Midwest to Atlantic coast ports. The double-bascule spans were, at the time, the largest of this type in the world.
- 1888 The “High Bridge,” the highest railroad bridge in Michigan, was built over the Manistee River between Baldwin and Kaleva by the Chicago & West Michigan Railway Co.
- Jan. 1, 1888 Tracks of the Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie & Atlantic Railway (later “Soo Line”) reached Sault Ste. Marie.
- April 1888 Wooden car ferry *St. Ignace* entered St. Ignace-Mackinaw City service, the first ship to provide a rail link between Michigan’s two peninsulas. The boat was a pioneer in ice-breaking technology, and the first to be equipped with a bow propeller.
- June 11, 1888 Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie & Atlantic and three other railroads merged to form the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie Railway, commonly known as the “Soo Line.”
- August 1888 Rail line that eventually became the Ann Arbor Railroad completed as far as Cadillac.
- 1889 Fort Street Union Depot in Detroit was constructed.
- Jan. 6, 1889 First passenger train run on the Manistee & Northeastern Railroad.
- March 4, 1889 Grand Trunk car ferry *Transit I* was totally destroyed by a fire at Grand Trunk Western’s wharf in Windsor.
- June 1889 Soo Line began running luxury trains across the Upper Peninsula between Minneapolis and Montreal via Sault Ste. Marie; service lasted until after World War I.
- Nov. 25, 1889 Toledo, Ann Arbor & North Michigan Railroad (later named Ann Arbor Railroad) began service from Toledo to Frankfort.

Once located on the Grand Trunk Western mainline southwest of Lansing, the Millett depot is an example of a typical small town station that served the community as a stop for passengers and freight.



St. Clair Tunnel connecting Port Huron and Sarnia was opened in 1891.



1890-1899

1890

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 6,957 miles.

July 8, 1890

First Chicago and West Michigan passenger train into Traverse City.

1891

Iron Range & Huron Bay Railroad began construction of a 40-mile line. It was completed four years later. Only one locomotive was ever run on the line, which was soon abandoned as a total loss.

1891

Four of the largest steam locomotives ever built in the United States up to that time were built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works for use in the St. Clair Tunnel.

Sept. 19, 1891

World's first international submarine tunnel, the St. Clair Tunnel, was opened between Port Huron and Sarnia by the Grand Trunk system, forming a continuous rail route between eastern Canada and Chicago, the longest route in the world under single management.

1892

Current Niles Richardsonian Romanesque-style passenger rail station was constructed by the Michigan Central Railroad Co. The station has been showcased in several feature films, including "Continental Divide", "Midnight Run", and "Only the Lonely". The station was upgraded in 1988.

June 29, 1892

First Manistee & Northeastern Railroad train into Traverse City.

Nov. 24, 1892

Car ferry *Ann Arbor No. 1* began service from Elberta to Kewaunee, Wisconsin, the first car ferry service on Lake Michigan and the first railroad ferry service in the world across open water.

1893

The Mackinac Transportation Co. acquired the car ferry *Sainte Marie* for the Straits of Mackinac crossing.

Jan. 21, 1893

Fort Street Union Depot opens in Detroit. Railroads that served the station include the

Baltimore and Ohio, Pere Marquette (later Chesapeake and Ohio), Pennsylvania, and Wabash.

Opened in 1893 with its brick Romanesque Revival architecture, Fort Street Union Depot served Detroit until it closed on April 30, 1971.



- Feb. 24, 1893 Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad formed; built the Marquette-Negaunee line by 1896.
- Oct. 13, 1893 Michigan Central Railroad special passenger train stopped in the Jackson Station rear-ended by another Michigan Central Railroad special train, killing 14 persons and injuring 70 others.
- Oct. 19, 1893 Grand Trunk Western's passenger train wreck at Battle Creek killed 26 persons.
- Dec. 9, 1894 Detroit & Mackinac Railway was chartered as the reorganization of the Detroit, Bay City & Alpena Railroad.
- March 12, 1895 Epworth League Railway in Mason County was organized; later named Ludington & Northern Railroad.
- April 25, 1896 Cincinnati Northern Railroad was completed to Jackson from Hudson and south.
- Feb. 16, 1897 *Pere Marquette*, the first all-steel car ferry on the Great Lakes, made its maiden voyage between Ludington and Manitowoc, Wisconsin.
- Dec. 27, 1899 Copper Range Railroad completed the line from Houghton to McKeever.

1900-1909

- 1900 Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 7,946 miles.
- 1900 Union depot in Grand Rapids opened.
- Jan. 1, 1900 Chicago & West Michigan, Flint & Pere Marquette, and Detroit, Grand Rapids & Western consolidated to form the Pere Marquette Railroad, the state's largest railroad system under one management.
- Aug. 15, 1900 Head-on collision north of Pierson on Grand Rapids & Indiana, caused by operator error, killed eight persons.

The Niles Station, a Richardsonian Romanesque-style design, was completed in 1892.



The Durand Union Depot was dedicated in October 1903, destroyed by fire in April 1905, and rebuilt and opened in September 1905.



- January 1901 The 42-mile Detroit & Charlevoix Railroad, started as a logging railroad, incorporated as a common carrier. At one time, the D & C was reputed to be the longest railroad in Michigan owned by one person.
- Jan. 25, 1901 Port Huron Southern Railroad, later Port Huron & Detroit Railroad, was chartered.
- November 1901 The Kinnear track pans east of Dexter on the Michigan Central, the state's first track pan installed, began operation. Track pans permitted a speeding locomotive to scoop up water without stopping. The MCRR was the only railroad in Michigan to install track pans.
- Nov. 27, 1901 Head-on collision on the Wabash Railroad near Seneca killed 23 persons.
- Dec. 28, 1901 Escanaba & Lake Superior Railway started regular service between Escanaba and Channing.
- 1902 Pere Marquette Railroad began Port Huron-Sarnia car ferry service.
- June 25, 1902 Michigan Central Railroad and the Pere Marquette Railroad opened Union Station in Lansing.
- Jan. 20, 1903 The Grand Trunk Western opened a passenger depot on South Washington Street, Lansing.
- Aug. 7, 1903 Air brake failure wrecked the Wallace Brothers Circus train at Durand, killing 26 people and several animals.
- Sept. 1903 Grand Trunk Car Ferry Line began service between Grand Haven and Milwaukee.
- October 1903 The Manistique, Marquette & Northern Railroad initiated car ferry service between Northport and Manistique with ferry *Manistique, Marquette & Northern No. 1*. The 75-mile route was abandoned in June 1904.
- Oct. 1, 1903 Durand Union Depot dedicated. Nearly destroyed by fire April 17, 1905, the depot was rebuilt and opened Sept. 25, 1905. Still in use for passengers, the building is claimed by railroad enthusiasts to be the most photographed depot in the nation.
- Dec. 26, 1903 Pere Marquette Railroad passenger train accident at East Paris killed 18 persons.
- 1904 Detroit & Mackinac began service between Bay City and Cheboygan.
- 1905 Railroad depots in Michigan reached an all-time maximum of 1,776 buildings.
- 1905 Grand Trunk built Battle Creek depot.
- May 2, 1905 Detroit, Toledo & Ironton Railroad chartered as reorganization of the Detroit Southern Railroad.
- 1906 Pere Marquette Railroad began Detroit-Windsor car ferry operations.

- October 1906 The Detroit River Tunnel Co. commenced work on a railroad tunnel from Detroit to Windsor. The tunnel opened July 26, 1910, using electric locomotives.
- 1907 Michigan Railroad Commission created.
- 1907 Keweenaw Central Railroad completed from Calumet to Mandan, the most northern railroad in Michigan. Abandoned in March 1918. Michigan's worst railroad crash, a head-on collision of two Pere Marquette trains east of Salem due to misread train orders. Thirty people were killed.
- 1908 Grand Trunk built a 42-stall roundhouse at Durand, at the time the state's largest, and one of few completely circular, roundhouses in the nation.
- Feb. 28, 1908 First trip through St. Clair Tunnel with electric locomotives took place with a 700-ton train. Steam operation through the bore ended on May 17, 1908.
- 1909 High point of Michigan steam railroad mileage reached, with a total of 9,059 road miles in operation at the end of the year. Employment on steam lines was 81,695.
- 1909 Pere Marquette Railroad's principal resort train to northwestern Michigan, *The Resort Special*, inaugurated.
- May 29, 1909 *Ann Arbor Car Ferry No. 4* capsized at Manistique.

Michigan Central Depot opened in December 1913 in Detroit, the tallest railroad terminal in the world at that time.



1910-1919

- 1910 Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 9,021 miles.
- 1910 Manistee & Northeastern Railroad completed line from Kaleva to Grayling.
- March 8, 1910 *Ann Arbor Car Ferry #1* burned at Manitowoc, Wisconsin.
- April 1910 Ann Arbor Railroad obtained operating control of the Manistique & Lake Superior Railroad.
- July 1910 The state sent 500 troops to Durand to assure order during railroad strike.
- Sept. 9, 1910 Car ferry *Pere Marquette No. 18* sank off Sheboygan, Wisconsin, with the loss of approximately 30 persons.
- Nov. 26, 1910 Car ferry *Ann Arbor No. 5* launched. It was the first Great Lakes ferry with a seagate to keep out high waves.

- 1911 Ann Arbor Railroad began 13-year use of gasoline-powered, mechanical-drive McKeen railcars, the first self-propelled passenger cars in Michigan.
- October 1911 Steel car ferry and icebreaker *Chief Wawatam* placed in service at Straits; continued run until August 1984.
- 1912 Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad built an ore dock at Presque Isle near Marquette, the second reinforced concrete ore dock in the U.S.
- 1912 Rail activity at Durand peaked with as many as 42 passenger, 22 mail and 78 freight trains passing daily through the town.
- Jan. 12, 1912 Ann Arbor Railroad's 100-room resort hotel at Frankfort, the Hotel Frontenac, built in 1907, burned.
- Dec. 16, 1913 Michigan Central Depot in Detroit opened, the tallest railroad terminal in the world at that time.
- Jan. 1, 1915 Lake Shore & Michigan Southern merged into the New York Central system.
- Dec. 28, 1917 Operation of the nation's railroads taken over by the U. S. Railroad Administration (USRA) as a wartime measure.
- July 31, 1918 USRA formed the Lake Michigan Car Ferry Association to operate five boats of Pere Marquette, four of Ann Arbor Railroad, and two of the Grand Western Railroad fleet.
- Aug. 15, 1918 Boyne City, Gaylord & Alpena Railroad was completed from Alpena to Boyne City.

1920-1929

- 1920 Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 8,734 miles.
- 1920 Pennsylvania Railroad began serving Detroit over its new line from Carleton. It was the last new main line route built by a major railroad in Michigan.
- 1920 Henry and Edsel Ford bought the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton Railroad, and immediately began modernizing the property and rolling stock.
- March 1, 1920 USRA returned Michigan railroads to private ownership.
- May 1920 A gala party opened the unusual two-story Pennsylvania freight house in Detroit. PRR began passenger service from Detroit to eastern cities.
- June 13, 1920 The first Baltimore & Ohio Railroad passenger train left Detroit's Fort Street Union Depot for Washington.
- March 26, 1921 Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad was leased to the Pennsylvania Railroad for 999 years.
- 1922 Radically new type of railroad bascule bridge built over River Rouge for the Wabash Railroad.
- July 5, 1923 Knights Templar Grand Commandery special train derailed at Durand, killing five people.
- 1925 Detroit, Toledo and Ironton Railroad began use of a Ford-built 5,000 HP electric locomotive, the most powerful in the world at the time, between the Ford plant at Dearborn and Flat Rock. Electric operations discontinued in 1930.
- 1925 The Wabash System obtained control of the Ann Arbor Railroad.
- Sept. 27, 1925 *The Red Arrow*, a popular Detroit-New York passenger train named for Michigan's Red Arrow infantry division of World War I, began service.
- 1926 The Pere Marquette Railroad began a 20-year experiment with poured concrete roadway and ties on section of line east of Plymouth.
- Nov. 1, 1928 Grand Trunk Western Railroad consolidated 10 subsidiary or component companies to form a single system in Michigan, Indiana and Illinois.

The Nation's first all-diesel, line-haul railroad was the Detroit & Mackinac Railway. D & M Locomotive 466, an RS-2 model, is depicted here at Tawas/East Tawas Depot on March 31, 1951, leading D & M's last passenger train.



1929 Pere Marquette Railroad became part of a multi-state railroad system created by the Van Swerigen brothers of Cleveland.

1929 Discouraged by industry and government policies and regulations, Ford sold the DT&I Railroad to Pennroad, a company owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

July 1, 1929 The Detroit Union Produce Terminal opened, built in only 100 days by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

August 1929 Grand Trunk Western Railroad began regular commuter service from Detroit's northern suburbs.

Oct. 22, 1929 Grand Trunk car ferry *Milwaukee* was lost in a violent storm on Lake Michigan without survivors, making this the Great Lakes' worst car ferry disaster, with a total of 42 dead.

1930-1939 1930 Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 8,072 miles.

1930 Manistee & Northeastern was leased to the Pere Marquette system.

Jan. 2, 1930 The New York Central system acquired 99-year lease of both Michigan Central and "Big Four" (Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati & St. Louis Railroad) lines.

Aug. 26, 1932 I.C.C. approved abandonment of the Detroit and Charlevoix Railroad.

April 2, 1933 The Pennsylvania and Wabash railroads inaugurated fast through-passenger trains between Detroit and Chicago via Fort Wayne, with a running time of 4 hours, 45 minutes.

Sept. 17, 1933 Grand Trunk moved car ferry operations from Grand Haven to Muskegon.

July 15, 1936 Michigan's first streamlined train *The Mercury* began Detroit-Toledo-Cleveland run over New York Central lines. By November 1938, *The Mercury* service was expanded to the Detroit-Chicago route via Jackson, Battle Creek and Kalamazoo.

June 1937 The *Chippewa*, a new, completely air-conditioned train, began service over The Milwaukee Road from Chicago to Iron Mountain.

Oct. 5, 1937 The Michigan Railroad Club, the first railroad enthusiast group in Michigan, was founded in Detroit. The MRC pioneered special excursions for "railfans."

April 1938 Grand Trunk Western received two diesel-electric switching locomotives, the first in its system. Ironically, the GTW was the last major U.S. railroad to use steam locomotives.

1940-1949 1940

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 7,303 miles.

1946

Detroit & Mackinac Railway discontinued use of steam locomotives, became the nation's first all-diesel, line-haul railroad.

Aug. 10, 1946

Nation's first streamlined train built since World War II, the *Pere Marquette*, entered service, making its Grand Rapids-Detroit run in 160 minutes.

June 6, 1947

Pere Marquette Railroad was consolidated into The Chesapeake & Ohio Railway.

The streamlined
Pere Marquette
departs Grand Rapids
Union Station for
Detroit on
April 3, 1948.



1948

Nahma & Northern, organized in Delta County and regarded as the last remaining logging railroad in Michigan, was abandoned.

1949

Pennsylvania Railroad authorized to end passenger service between Cadillac and Mackinaw City.

1950-1959 1950

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 6,803 miles.

1950

Pennsylvania Railroad passenger service from Muskegon to Grand Rapids ended.

July 19, 1950

Last passenger train over the Ann Arbor Railroad from Elberta to Toledo.

1951

The Mackinac Transportation Co. handled 34,786 cars across the Straits of Mackinac, the largest number carried by the car ferry during any one year from 1940 until August 1984, when service ceased.

March 31, 1951

Last passenger train operated on the Detroit & Mackinac Railway.

1952

Pennsylvania Railroad regularly scheduled passenger train service was discontinued between Grand Rapids and Cadillac, but seasonal service continued for many years thereafter.

Jan. 4, 1952

C&O car ferry *Spartan* launched. Along with sister ship *Badger*, these were the largest, best-equipped and last coal-fired passenger-carrying steamships built in the United States. The *Badger* has remained in service for more than 62 years but no longer handles rail traffic.

Dec. 29, 1953

Electric train operations through the Detroit River railroad tunnel ended, replaced by diesel locomotives.

1954

C&O began use of the Detroit River tunnel and discontinued the car ferry at Detroit.

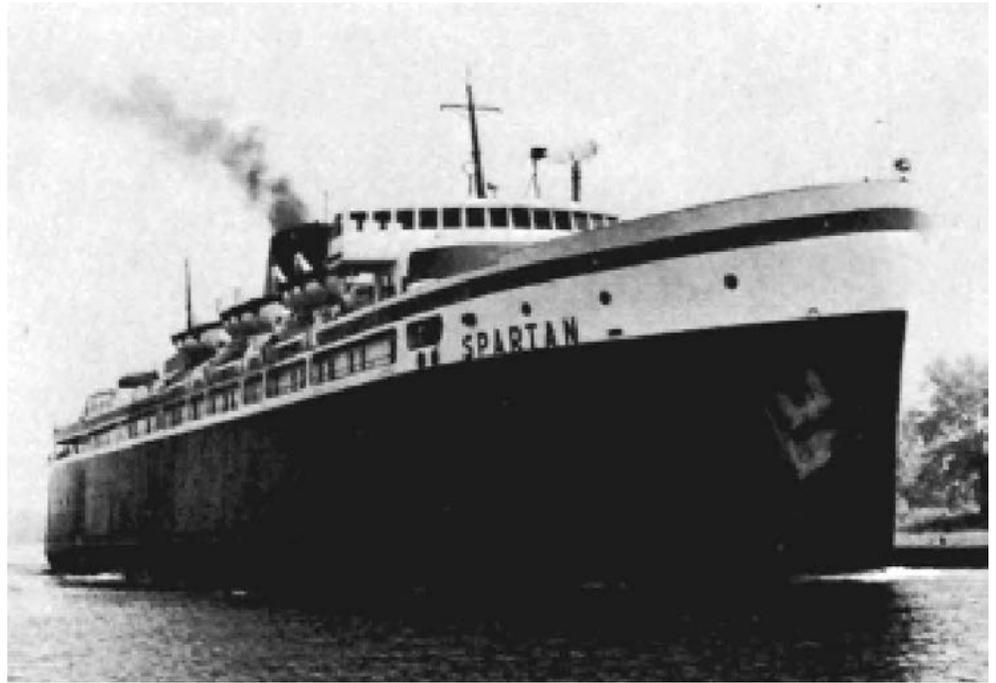
Aug. 1, 1955

Transportation of passenger trains by car ferry *Chief Wawatam* discontinued between Mackinaw City and St. Ignace.

Sept. 25, 1955

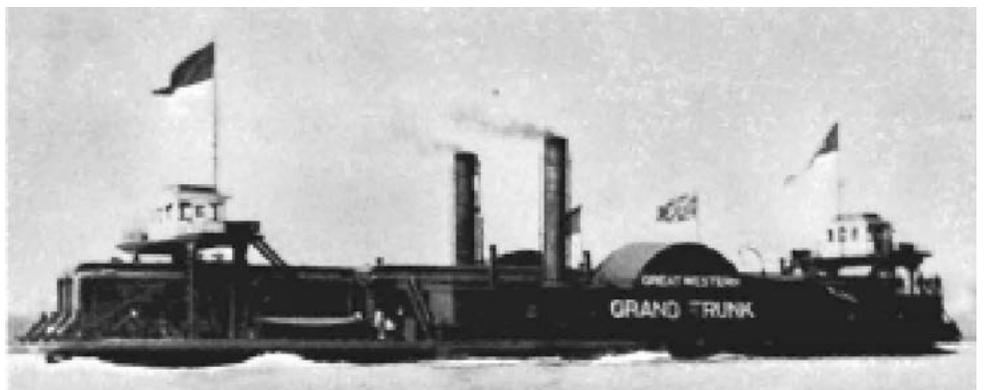
Canadian National Railway discontinued passenger service on its Detroit River car ferries and substituted bus service through the auto tunnel.

The C&O car ferry *Spartan*, together with the *Badger*, provided service between Ludington, Michigan, and Manitowoc, Wisconsin.



- Dec. 30, 1955 Last Grand Trunk Western mixed passenger and freight train out of Grand Haven.
- Dec. 31, 1955 One of state's last mixed passenger and freight trains, Grand Trunk Western service from Pontiac to Caseville, was withdrawn.
- April 29, 1956 New York Central's high-speed experimental passenger train *Aerotrain* entered Detroit-Chicago service.
- Nov. 19, 1956 Last regularly-scheduled passenger train on "The Old Road" through Coldwater, Hillsdale, and Adrian to Toledo.
- Jan. 12, 1956 Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic Railroad discontinued St. Ignace-Marquette passenger service.
- 1959 New York Central Railroad's *Beliner*, a self-propelled passenger, baggage, and mail car, ceased Jackson-Grand Rapids service.
- 1959 "Roadrailer," first experimental dual wheeled combination rail and highway vehicles in the United States, began operating between Grand Rapids and Traverse City on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway.
- July 25, 1959 Pennsylvania Railroad discontinued its *Red Arrow* passenger train from Detroit to New York, Philadelphia and Washington, DC.
- Dec. 24, 1959 *Beliner* discontinued between Jackson and Bay City via Owosso and Saginaw.

CN operated car ferries across the Detroit River between Windsor and Detroit until 1955.



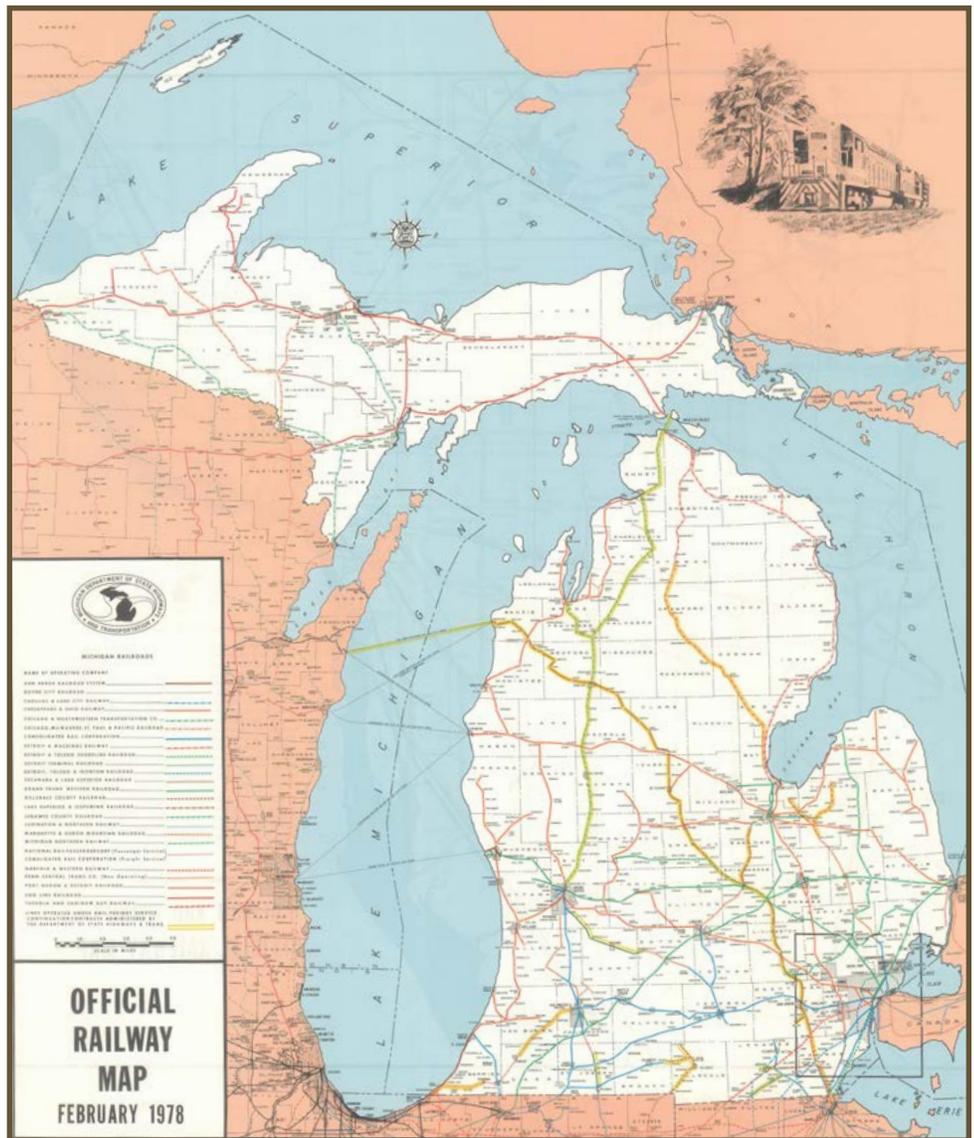
1960-1969 1960

- March 27, 1960 Grand Trunk Western dropped passenger service between Durand and Muskegon via Grand Rapids.
- March 27, 1960 Last regularly scheduled steam-powered passenger train on a major U. S. railroad ran from Durand to Detroit over the Grand Trunk Western.
- 1961 Chesapeake & Ohio Railway car ferries transported 132,000 railroad cars, 54,000 automobiles and 153,000 passengers cross-lake between Ludington and Milwaukee, Manitowoc and Kewaunee, Wisconsin.
- May 20, 1961 Grand Trunk Western's steam locomotive number 5632 donated to city of Durand.
- Sept. 4, 1961 *The Northern Arrow*, the Pennsylvania Railroad's last summer-only passenger service in Michigan, made its final trip from Mackinaw City.
- Sept. 3, 1962 New York Central's summer-only weekend service, *The Timberliner* between Detroit and Mackinaw City, left Mackinaw City for the last time. Regularly scheduled daily *Beeliner* service between Bay City and Mackinaw City also ceased on this date.
- Aug. 31, 1963 Detroit, Toledo & Ironton Railroad assumed management of Ann Arbor Railroad.
- March 19, 1964 All passenger service ends on New York Central's Detroit-Bay City branch line.
- June 1964 Cadillac & Lake City Railway began operations using steam locomotives.
- Oct. 16, 1964 Wabash Railroad leased to Norfolk & Western system.
- Oct. 29, 1966 Chesapeake & Ohio Railway passenger train service between Grand Rapids and Traverse City discontinued.
- July 10, 1967 The state Legislature created the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA) to plan, operate and improve commuter service, including rail, in seven counties. SEMTA eventually operated Detroit-Pontiac commuter service on the Grand Trunk Western line.
- Feb. 1, 1968 Penn Central Railroad formed by the merger of the New York Central System and the Pennsylvania Railroad.
- Aug. 5, 1968 Ann Arbor Railroad abandoned the car ferry route between Frankfort and Manistique. Abandoned at the same time was the Manistique & Lake Superior Railroad.

1970-1979 1970

- January 1970 I.C.C. authorized the Ann Arbor Railroad to abandon 80.52 miles of its car ferry route between Frankfort and Menominee, and its switch yard and dock facility at Menominee.
- June 21, 1970 Penn Central Railroad entered into bankruptcy.
- April 30, 1971 Privately operated railroad passenger service in Michigan came to an end on the C&O, GTW, The Milwaukee Road, Penn Central, and the Norfolk & Western Railway, as Amtrak was formed. The *Wabash Cannonball* operated for the last time between Detroit and St. Louis. Fort Street Union Depot closes.
- May 1, 1971 The National Railroad Passenger Corp. (Amtrak) began operating the nation's intercity passenger rail system, including two daily round trips on the Chicago-Detroit corridor.
- 1973 Grand Trunk Western's Brush Street Station is demolished in Detroit to make way for the Renaissance Center.

Michigan Department of State Highways and Transportation official railway map from February 1978.



- March 13, 1973 Gov. William G. Milliken issued an executive order reorganizing the State Highway Department, giving it jurisdiction over all state transportation programs. The department's responsibility was expanded to include aeronautics, railroads, buses, water transportation, and port development.
- Oct. 15, 1973 Ann Arbor Railroad entered into bankruptcy.
- January 1974 Detroit's Fort Street Union Depot is demolished.
- Sept. 15, 1974 Amtrak ran inaugural Chicago-Port Huron trip via Lansing and Flint, the *Blue Water Limited*.
- Jan. 20, 1975 State-assisted commuter rail service between Ann Arbor and Detroit, the *Michigan Executive*, commenced.
- April 25, 1975 Chicago-to-Detroit Amtrak service was increased from two to three daily round trips.
- July 1975 The American Freedom Train, visiting the state with displays of the nation's treasured documents, toured southern Michigan.
- Feb. 5, 1976 Federal legislation known as the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act (4R Act) was enacted. This provided the basis for Michigan's Act 295 of 1976.

Grand Trunk Western celebrates the nation's bicentennial with a locomotive painted in special livery and numbered 1776.



April 1, 1976

Conrail began operations in Michigan. The state subsidy program began with Michigan Northern Railway Co. offering Comstock Park-Mackinaw City service, including a Traverse City branch. Hillsdale County Railway Co. started subsidized operations in Hillsdale County. Penn Central Railroad ceased operations, as 200 miles of Michigan track were abandoned. The Michigan Department of State Highways & Transportation (MDSH&T) acquired the Ann Arbor Railroad, including rolling stock and right of way from Toledo, Ohio, to Ann Arbor, and Ashley to Cadillac. This was MDSH&T's first railroad acquisition.

April 1, 1976

The Interstate Commerce Commission orders the Soo Line Railroad to take over operations of the Mackinaw Car Ferry.

July 1976

Straits Car Ferry Service Co. formed to take over operation of the Mackinaw Car Ferry.

Nov. 15, 1976

The State Transportation Preservation Act of 1976 (Act 295 of 1976) was enacted. This Michigan legislation, among other things, authorized the state to preserve rail transportation to shippers by acquiring rail lines in jeopardy, thereby preserving Michigan's economic base and jobs associated with these shippers.

July 1977

Chessie Steam Special operated in the state commemorating the 150th anniversary of American railroading.

Oct. 1, 1977

Michigan Interstate Railway Co. assumed operation of Ann Arbor Railroad from Conrail. Lenawee County Railroad Co. began service in Lenawee County. Tuscola & Saginaw Bay Railway Co. started operation in the Vassar area.

An Ann Arbor Railroad caboose operated by the Michigan Interstate Railway Co.



- October 1978 Grand Trunk Western's Muskegon-Milwaukee car ferry service abandoned. The state acquired the car ferry *City of Milwaukee* for remaining Ann Arbor Railroad routes.
- Jan. 31, 1979 The intercity passenger rail service between Detroit and New York via Buffalo, known as the *Niagara Rainbow*, was discontinued.
- July 15, 1979 Kent-Barry-Eaton Connecting Railway, the first African-American-operated railroad in the United States, began Grand Rapids-Vermontville service.

1980-1989

1980

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 5,370 miles.

- 1980 State-owned railroad mileage was 373 miles of the total.
- June 24, 1980 Grand Trunk Western acquired Detroit, Toledo & Ironton Railroad.
- Oct. 4, 1980 The Chessie System (formerly Chesapeake & Ohio Railway) dropped the car ferry route between Ludington and Milwaukee.
- Oct. 14, 1980 The United States enacted the Staggers Act, which deregulated the railroad industry in the United States, replacing the regulatory structure that had existed since 1887. This resulted in a significant reduction in railroad costs and prices, thereby reversing the loss of traffic to the trucking industry.
- Oct. 1, 1981 Grand Trunk Western acquired the Detroit & Toledo Shore Line Railroad.
- 1982 Tuscola and Saginaw Bay Railway took over operation of the Ann Arbor Railroad between north of Ann Arbor and Alma and the St. Charles branch.
- 1982 Michigan Northern Railroad took over operation of the Ann Arbor Railroad between Alma and Alberta.
- February 1982 Chessie System discontinued car ferry service between Ludington and Manitowoc, Wisconsin.
- Feb. 19, 1982 Chessie System abandoned the Manistee Traverse City-Petoskey line.
- June 1982 The state-sponsored *Michigan Executive* commuter rail service was modified to originate in Ann Arbor instead of Jackson.
- Oct. 31, 1982 The International Limited intercity passenger rail service was inaugurated, replacing the *Blue Water* service.

The Detroit People Mover, shown here in front of the Renaissance Center, began serving the Detroit Central Business District in 1987.



Two Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority Electro-Motive Division (EMD) diesel locomotives.



- June 30, 1983 Kent-Barry-Eaton Connecting Railway abandoned operations. This included discontinuing service between Vermontville and Grand Rapids.
- July 1, 1983 Michigan-Wisconsin Transportation Co. began operating rail car ferry service between Ludington and Kewaunee, Wisconsin.
- Oct. 17, 1983 Final run of commuter trains on the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority's Detroit-Pontiac rail line.
- 1984 Tuscola and Saginaw Bay Railway took over Ann Arbor Railroad operations between Alma and Elberta.
- Jan. 13, 1984 Amtrak announced plans to discontinue the state-sponsored *Michigan Executive* commuter rail service between Ann Arbor and Detroit.
- Feb. 15, 1984 The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) acquired 342 miles of railroad track from the Penn Central Railroad.
- Aug. 5, 1984 Intercity passenger rail service between Chicago and Grand Rapids, the *Pere Marquette*, was initiated by Amtrak.
- Aug. 21, 1984 Railroad car ferry service between Michigan's two peninsulas discontinued.
- Oct. 1, 1984 Coe Rail, Inc. began rail operations on the former Grand Trunk Western rail line from Wixom to Walled Lake.
- Oct. 1, 1984 Michigan Northern was removed as the designated operator of the state-owned lines north of Cadillac to Petoskey/Bay View, including the Traverse City-area lines, and replaced by Tuscola & Saginaw Bay Railway.
- 1985 Conrail sold the Detroit River Tunnel to Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Railway.
- June 17, 1985 The Detroit-Chicago Corridor High Speed Rail Symposium held in Kalamazoo, Michigan. MDOT's "Detroit-Chicago Corridor High Speed Rail Technical Report" was released at the symposium. The report and symposium represented the first in-depth discussion of higher speed rail services in the Detroit-Chicago corridor.
- October 1985 Rail service between Petoskey and Charlevoix discontinued due to a part of the rail line collapsing into Lake Michigan.
- 1986 Conrail converted double-track main line between Willow Run and Jackson to single track. Passing sidings are retained between Four Mile Lake and Chelsea, and through Jackson.
- March 27, 1986 The Huron and Eastern Railway Co. began operations on 83 miles of former Chessie System track in the Thumb Area.

- Nov. 2, 1986 Ceremony at Blissfield commemorated 150 years of railroad service in Michigan.
- Dec. 20, 1986 CSX abandoned its South Haven Branch, a 15.3 mile segment.
- 1987 Conrail converts double-track main line between Jackson and CP Comstock, near Kalamazoo, to single track. Passing sidings are retained between downtown Albion and CP 99 (west of town), and in Battle Creek.
- 1987 CSX conveyed their Hartford-Paw Paw Line to the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago Railroad.
- April 12, 1987 Michigan Northern vacated track between Bay View and Pellston, which had been owned by Penn Central Trustee and sold to a South Carolina salvage company in 1986. Track removal commenced beginning at Mackinaw City and moving south in summer 1987.
- Summer 1987 Soo Line sold its Lake States Subdivision (located in the Upper Peninsula) to the Wisconsin Central Railroad.
- September 1987 The Little Traverse Scenic Railway started operations on the surviving track between Bay View and Alanson as a tourist line. This excursion service was later operated into the 1990s by the Alanson & Petoskey Railroad, after which all remaining track between Bay View and Mackinaw City was removed.
- Sept. 4, 1987 Central Michigan Railway purchased the Grand Trunk Western line between Durand and Midland, and Durand and Muskegon.
- Sept. 8, 1987 The Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago Railroad began operation on former Chessie track between Hartford and Paw Paw.
- Sept. 21, 1987 MDOT purchased the Soo Line between Arnheim and Lake Linden, bringing MDOT rail line ownership to the all-time high of 872 miles.
- Oct. 11, 1987 The Wisconsin Central Railroad began operations on 2,000 miles of railroad, including Michigan's Upper Peninsula.
- Dec. 18, 1987 CSX sold a portion of its Edmore and Greenville subdivisions to Mid-Michigan Railroad (a Raitex company).
- 1988 Conrail converted their double-track main line between CP Marl (near Greenfield Village) and Wayne Junction to single track. Double-track is left in place between Wayne Junction and CP Ypsilanti.
- 1988 Conrail removed second main line track between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo.
- Jan. 5, 1988 Tuscola & Saginaw Bay Railway purchased about 2.5 miles of CSX track at Clare.

Starting in the 1980s, cabooses began disappearing from service due to cost. They were replaced by flashing rear-end devices (FRED) that monitored train air brake systems and provided a flashing light for protection.



- Jan. 6, 1988 The Michigan Central Depot in Detroit is closed after the last Amtrak train departs for Chicago.
- Early 1988 The Saginaw Valley Railroad was formed, as a division of the Huron & Eastern Railway, to obtain the 58.6-mile portion of CSX's Bad Axe Subdivision between Saginaw and Bad Axe.
- Early Fall Soo Line removed track between Trout Lake and St. Ignace.
- Fall 1988 Grand Trunk Western Railroad abandoned the former DT & I Napoleon Subdivision (7.15 miles).
- Dec. 22, 1988 CSX sold the Saginaw-Bad Axe line between Saginaw and Bad Axe to the Huron & Eastern Railway.
- 1989 Central Michigan Railway approved to abandon the line between Marne and Muskegon.
- 1989 Coopersville and Marne Railway purchased the line between Coopersville and Marne from Central Michigan Railway.
- 1989 CSX began leasing its Detroit-Grand Rapids-Chicago line track rights to the Canadian Pacific Railway, dramatically increasing the number of trains on this east-west route.
- June 7, 1989 CSX abandoned 7 miles of the Port Huron Subdivision west of Port Huron between Avoca and milepost 83.28.
- Aug. 5, 1989 The *Star Clipper* dinner train began operations over the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago Railroad between Lawrence and Paw Paw.
- November 1989 The Michigan Southern Railroad began operation of the former New York Central line between Sturgis and Coldwater, which had been inactive since 1984.

1990-1999 1990

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 4,143 miles, of which the state owned 872 total miles.

A Tuscola and Saginaw Bay Railway locomotive on an October 1998 fall colors excursion in Cadillac.



- July 4, 1990 Soo Line removed former DSS & A track between Bergland and Sidnaw. The Coopersville & Marne Railway operates its first revenue passenger run between Coopersville and Marne.
- Sept. 29, 1990 The Detroit & Mackinac Railway operated its last run between Gaylord and Cheboygan.
- Dec. 12, 1990 The Michigan Shore Railroad purchased track in Muskegon from the Central Michigan Railway.
- Christmas 1990 The Durand Depot was officially designated by the state as the Michigan State Railroad History Museum and Information Center.
- 1991 The Detroit & Mackinac Railway removed all track between Hawks and Cheboygan.

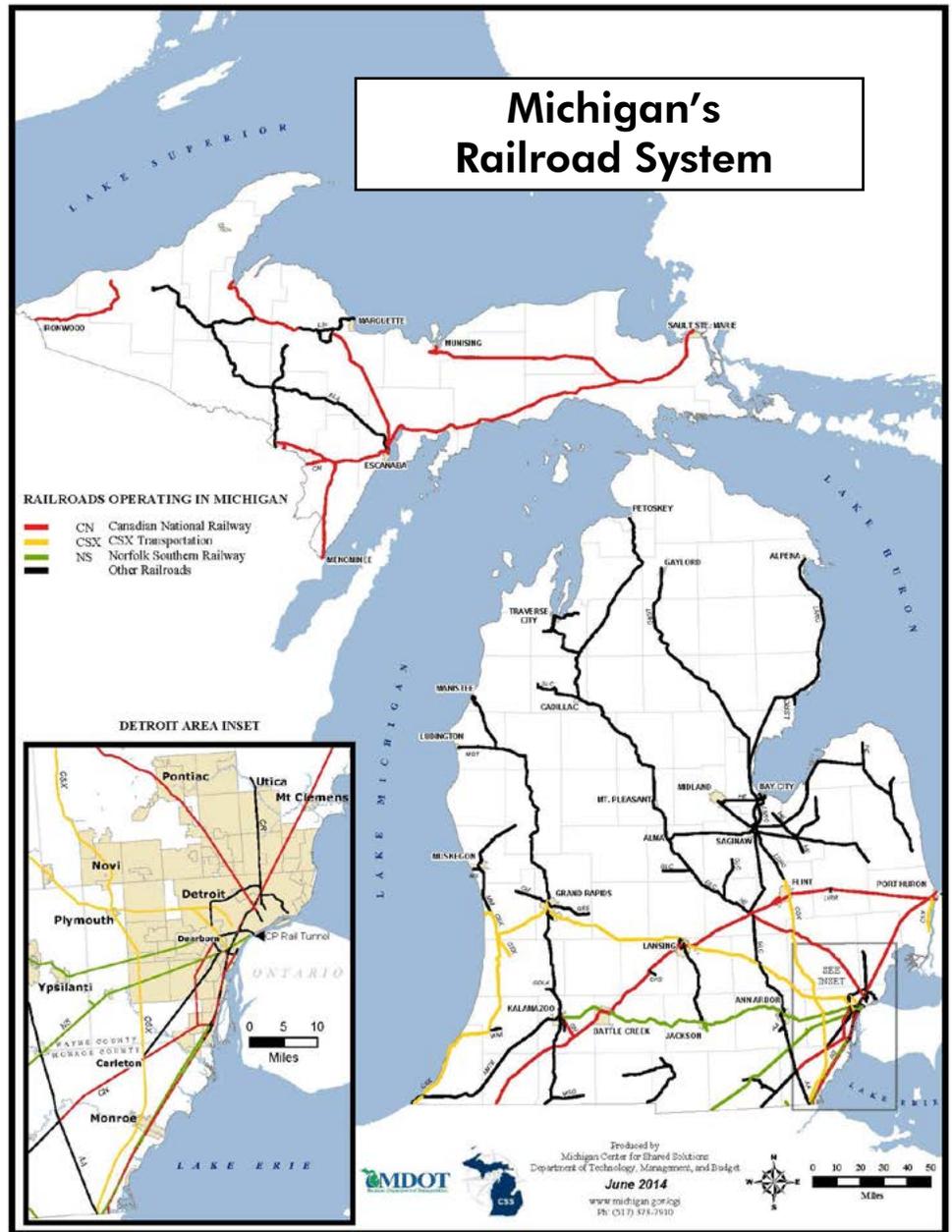
- 1991 The former GR&I/PRR/Northern Michigan track between Reed City and Cadillac was removed.
- 1991 Rail was removed from the rail line between Comstock Park and Reed City and was converted to a hiking and biking trail.
- Jan. 23, 1991 The Huron & Eastern Railway assumed operation of the original 54-mile Tuscola & Saginaw Bay Railway operation near Vassar.
- April 1991 All rail removed on the former MCRR/NYC/D & M line between Cheboygan and Mackinaw City.
- April 1991 Central Michigan Railway approved to abandon line between Owosso and Ionia.
- April 1991 Railroads required to blow horns at all road grade crossings, even where formerly prohibited by local ordinance. The FRA ruled that federal law supersedes local ordinances.
- Feb. 17, 1992 Lake State Railway assumed operation of Detroit & Mackinac Railway lines between Bay City and Alpena area and between Bay City and Gaylord.
- Summer 1993 A tourist train began operation on the former Wisconsin Central line between Mellon, Wisconsin, and Bessemer, Michigan.
- December 1993 Morris Leasing purchased Conrail Quincy Secondary (15 miles between White Pigeon and Sturgis) and former GR&I branch line (4 miles between Sturgis and the Indiana state line).
- 1994 The Chicago-Detroit trains (two daily round trips) were extended from Detroit to Pontiac.
- 1994 The Alanson & Petoskey (former GR&I/PRR) closed.
- April 17, 1994 The north tube of the Detroit River railroad tunnel was reopened by the Canadian Pacific Railway after a \$27.5 million clearance project, allowing 19-foot, 6-inch double-stack railroad cars to use the tunnel.
- April 30, 1994 Norfolk Southern Railway ended Detroit River car ferry operations when the *Cassidy* and the barge *Windsor* depart the Canadian Pacific slip in Windsor.
- May 5, 1994 The Detroit Amtrak station was relocated from the Michigan Central Depot area to the Detroit New Center area (southwest corner of Woodward Avenue and West Baltimore Avenue).
- Summer 1994 The Leelanau Scenic Railroad went out of business as a truck hit one of the line's bridges; the right of way was turned into bike trails.
- Summer 1994 The CSX railroad car float operation between Port Huron and Sarnia tied up for the last time. The railroad car float operation began in 1902. CN continued to operate its railroad car float service.

Leelanau Scenic
Railroad locomotives
await disposition near
Greilickville in July 1997.
The operation ended
three years earlier.



Feb. 12, 1995	Tourist train operations ceased on the former Wisconsin Central line between Mellon, Wisconsin, and Bessemer, Michigan.
April 2, 1995	The Chicago-Detroit-Toledo daily round trip service was rerouted from Toledo to Pontiac.
April 5, 1995	Canadian National Railway opened a new \$200 million, 6,130-foot tunnel connecting Port Huron and Sarnia, Ontario, accommodating double-stack railroad cars. The original tunnel was removed from service.
April 24, 1995	The Chicago and North Western Transportation Co., including its important iron ore hauling line between Ishpeming and Escanaba, was acquired by Union Pacific Railroad.
May 1995	The Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago ceased operation on their line between Hartford and Paw Paw.
October 1995	The West Michigan Railroad, a Pioneer Rail Corp. unit, began operation on former KLS & C line between Hartford and Paw Paw.
Sept. 1, 1995	CN discontinued the railroad car float service between Port Huron and Sarnia. This resulted from the opening of the rail tunnel under the St. Clair River between the two cities.
1996	First meeting of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, a nine-state consortium, was held in Chicago, Illinois, to develop an intercity passenger rail system plan.
Oct. 15, 1996	CSX announced its intention to purchase Conrail, beginning a tumultuous fight that ended in a split of Conrail assets between CSX and NS.
1997	The Union Pacific Railroad's lines in the Upper Peninsula were sold to Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp.
1997	The UP (former Soo Line) abandoned track between North Escanaba and Hermansville.
Early 1997	The Marquette-to-Munising junction portion of the old Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic was taken out of service by Wisconsin Central.
June 1997	The Southeastern Michigan Regional Rail Study was completed. This study was concluded with the publishing of the "Regional Passenger Rail-A Concept for Southeastern Michigan: Summary Report."
Oct. 29, 1997	Railtex removed 6.6 miles of track between Elmdale, north to Malta (the former PM/GTW junction). The diamond at Malta was removed and a new connection track was installed in the northwest quadrant of the Malta Junction. The approach to the former Soo Line ore dock in Marquette was dismantled.
Late 1997	Lake State Railway abandoned the Paxton Branch from Alpena west to the quarry at Paxton.
April 27, 1998	CSXT sold its 51-mile Port Huron Subdivision to RailAmerica, which operated the line as the Saginaw Valley Railway Co. The line runs just east of Saginaw to Brown City.
July 3, 1998	The Michigan Legislature amended Act 295 of 1976, authorizing MDOT to divest itself of four rail lines: the Lenawee County, Hillsdale County, Vassar-area, and Ann Arbor-Northwest Michigan (Ann Arbor to Traverse City/Petoskey) systems.
Mid-1998	Grand Trunk Western abandoned a portion of the Romeo Subdivision between Richmond and Washington.
June 1, 1999	Consolidated Rail Corp. (Conrail) was jointly acquired by CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern Railway. As a result of this acquisition, the Conrail lines from Kalamazoo to Dearborn; Grand Rapids to Elkhart, Indiana; Lansing to Jackson; and Detroit to Toledo were transferred to Norfolk Southern. Other Conrail lines in the Detroit area became part of the Conrail Shared Assets Operations (CSAO).

Michigan's railroad system, having been more than 9,000 miles in the early 1900s, is now approximately more than 3,600 miles 100 years later.



October 2001

Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp., including all its lines in the Upper Peninsula, was acquired by Canadian National Railway.

Jan. 7, 2002

Amtrak began operating at train speeds up to 90 mph between Kalamazoo and Niles (45 miles).

Nov. 29, 2002

CSX abandoned 6.1 miles of railroad between milepost CBG 19.00 in Holland and milepost CBG 12.9 in Hamilton.

July 29, 2003

CSX and Mid-Michigan Railroad abandoned 5.5 miles of railroad from milepost CBE 40.00 at Alma to milepost CBE 45.5 at Elwell in Gratiot County.

November 2003

CSX began construction on a new CSXT Intermodal yard in the Livernois Avenue complex. The new yard was built on the site of the old NYC receiving yard and stockyards.

April 25, 2004

The *Blue Water* intercity passenger rail service between Port Huron and Chicago was reinstated, which resulted in leaving Port Huron approximately six hours earlier than the *International*. Prior to this, it was part of the *International* service, which operated between Toronto and Chicago.

- May 2004 CSX removed 2.68 miles of line (MP 83.28-MP 85.96) near Port Huron in St. Clair County. The segment was added to the Avoca bicycle trail.
- Sept. 5, 2005 Amtrak began operating at 95 mph between Kalamazoo and Niles. It was later extended to east of New Buffalo (66 miles).
- Oct. 5, 2005 The CSX rail lines from Mt. Morris north to Paines, Bay City, and Midland, were sold to Lake State Railway Co., which operated them as the Saginaw Bay Southern Railway.
- Nov. 12, 2005 The CSX rail lines from Grand Rapids north to Ludington and Manistee (129 miles) were sold to Marquette Rail.
- 2006 The Kalamazoo Transportation Center is remodeled as an intermodal hub serving Amtrak trains along with bays for intercity and local transit buses.
- March 2006 The Tuscola & Saginaw Bay Railway was purchased by Federated Railways, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Federal Capital Corp. The railroad was renamed Great Lakes Central Railroad and is the largest regional railroad in Michigan, with 424 miles of track.
- March 8, 2009 Grand Elk Railroad began operations as Watco's first railroad to operate in Michigan. It leased the 151-mile main line between Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Elkhart, Indiana, from the Norfolk Southern Corp.
- June 2009 The MDOT-sponsored report "Michigan Passenger Rail Station Community Benefits Study" was published. This report determined that Michigan's intercity passenger rail stations provided more than \$62 million of benefits to Michigan station communities.
- June 24, 2009 RailAmerica's Mid-Michigan Railroad abandoned 15.83 miles of the old Detroit & Milwaukee/GTW line between Lowell and Ionia.

The Kalamazoo Transportation Center was remodeled in 2006 into an intermodal hub.



2010-2019 2010

Railroad mileage in Michigan totaled 3,634 miles, of which the state owned 540 miles.

2010

Escanaba and Lake Superior Railroad received authority from the Surface Transportation Board to abandon 43 miles of track between Sidnaw and Ontonagon in the Upper Peninsula.

October 2010

Rail operations on the Norfolk Southern Railway line between Jackson and Lansing were transferred to the Jackson & Lansing Railroad Co., a subsidiary of the Adrian & Blissfield Rail Road.

May 14, 2010

The Federal Highway Administration issued the final environmental clearance approval for the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal.

September 2011

MDOT produced the Michigan State Rail Plan to guide the development of the rail system and rail services in Michigan.

2012

Marquette Rail was acquired by RailAmerica.

Feb. 15, 2012

Train speeds on Amtrak service between Kalamazoo and Porter, Indiana, a distance of 97 miles, increased to 110 mph.

June 12, 2012

The Battle Creek Station was refurbished and reopened.

Oct. 5, 2012

The Michigan Railroad Club celebrated its 75th anniversary.

Nov. 28, 2012

Michigan Air-Line Railway Co., which purchased the line from Coe Rail, Inc. in July 2006, abandoned the railroad between Wixom and Walled Lake.

Dec. 7, 2012

MDOT acquired 135 route miles of railroad (Kalamazoo-Dearborn) from the Norfolk Southern Corp.



The Grand Rapids Vernon J. Ehlers Amtrak station was opened Oct. 27, 2014.

The new Dearborn Station was opened in December 2014. It serves the city of Dearborn and The Henry Ford.



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| Dec. 28, 2012 | Genesee & Wyoming Inc. purchased RailAmerica to become the largest short-line railroad operator in the United States. |
| January 2013 | Ann Arbor Railroad (a 50-mile short-line railroad) began operations under Watco ownership. |
| June 8, 2013 | West Michigan Railroad abandoned the line between Lawrence and Paw Paw. |
| June 14, 2013 | The first displaying of a refurbished former Metra car to be used in the proposed Jackson-Ann Arbor-Detroit commuter rail service and the proposed Howell-to-Ann Arbor commuter rail service was done as part of Ann Arbor's annual Green Fair held on Main Street in downtown Ann Arbor. |
| July 2013 | Indiana Northeastern Railroad abandoned the line between Coldwater and Sturgis (16 miles). |
| March 14, 2014 | The Michigan Legislature amended Act 295 of 1976 to repeal the provision that MDOT may divest itself of the four rail lines designated in the July 3, 1998, amendment. |
| Oct. 14, 2014 | The new Troy Amtrak Station was dedicated. |
| Oct. 27, 2014 | The new Grand Rapids Amtrak Station was dedicated. The new station is attached to the existing transit facility (The Rapid) in downtown Grand Rapids. It is an intermodal terminal housing intercity passenger rail, intercity bus, and local transit. |
| Dec. 15, 2014 | The new Dearborn Amtrak Station was dedicated, serving both the city of Dearborn and The Henry Ford. It is the first station in Michigan to have a double platform, a retractable platform edge, and platforms 15 inches above the top of rail on a main line. All other platforms in Michigan are 8 inches above the top of rail, except the new Grand Rapids Vernon J. Ehlers Amtrak Station, which also is 15 inches above the top of rail. |

RESOURCES

Frank N. Eliot | *When the Railroad Was King*

Michigan Railroad Commission | *Aids, Gifts, Grants and Donations to Railroads*

John M. Longyear | *A History of the City of Lansing*

Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Railroads

George W. Hilton | *The Great Lakes Car Ferries*

LeRoy Barnett | *Railroads in Michigan*

Willis Dunbar | *All Aboard*

Paul W. Ivey | *The Pere Marquette Railroad Co.*

www.michiganrailroads.com

