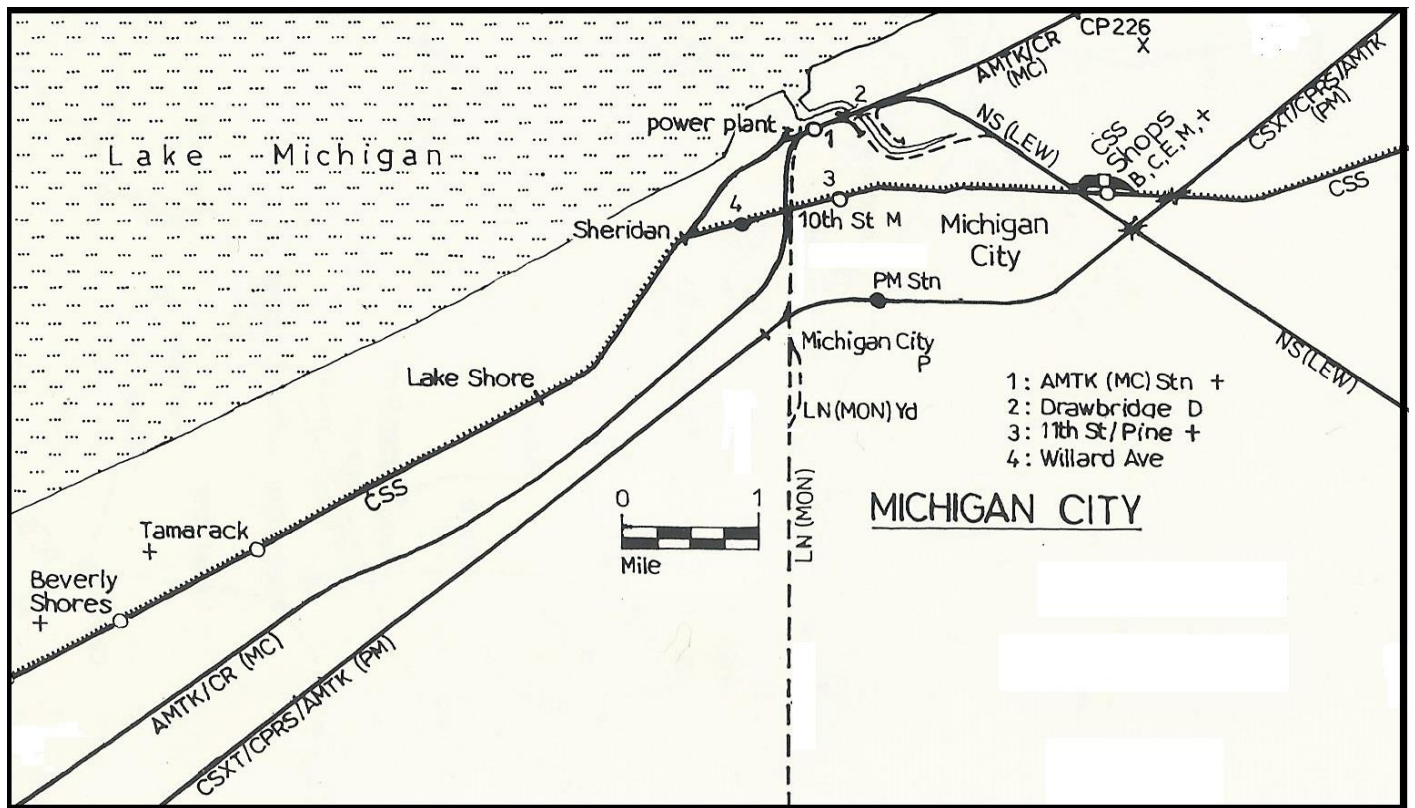


Modeling Michigan City, Indiana in HO Scale

By Seth Lakin



Railroad Atlas of North America: Great Lakes East; Steam Power Video

Michigan City History:

Indiana became a state in 1816. Beginning in 1828, a road was being planned to connect the Ohio River, the new state capitol Indianapolis and Lake Michigan. In 1832, the harbor at Trail Creek was selected as the end of the road. This road became known as the Michigan Road and in 1836 Michigan City was incorporated as the city at the end of Michigan Road.

Michigan Central:

1850 Michigan Central opens from Detroit to Michigan City
 1852 Michigan Central is completed to Chicago
 1930 Michigan Central leased to New York Central
 1958 New York Central reroutes all through freight via Elkhart leaving only passenger and local freight between Kalamazoo, MI and Porter, IN
 1963 New York Central single tracks from Michigan City to Porter and evidentially entire line from Detroit
 1963 Five daily round trip passenger train between Chicago and Detroit with two continuing to New York
 1968 New York Central and Pennsylvania merge to form Penn Central
 1976 Amtrak takes control of line between Kalamazoo and Porter
 1980's-2020's Four daily round trip passenger trains 3 between Chicago and Detroit (at times continuing to Pontiac or Toledo) and one between Chicago and Port Huron via GTW east of Battle Creek ply the line

Monon:

1853 New Albany & Salem opened from Michigan City to Lafayette and to New Albany in 1854
 1859 New Albany & Salem renamed Louisville, New Albany & Chicago
 1897 Louisville, New Albany & Chicago reorganized as the Chicago, Indianapolis & Louisville

1928 Last passenger train north of Medaryville on Michigan City Branch, by 1935 all passenger trains on the branch discontinued
1956 Name changed to Monon Railroad (a name commonly used since 1910's)
1971 Monon Railroad sold to Louisville & Nashville
1980 Louisville & Nashville abandoned Michigan City to Medaryville (45 miles)

Nickel Plate:

1871 Indianapolis, Peru & Chicago completed line between Indianapolis and Michigan City that had been started as early as 1846
1881-1886 Indianapolis, Peru & Chicago leased by Wabash St Louis & Pacific
1887 Indianapolis, Peru & Chicago sold to Lake Erie & Western
1900-1922 Lake Erie & Western operated by New York Central
1922 Lake Erie & Western purchased by New York Chicago & St Louis (Nickel Plate Road)
1932 Last passenger train between Indianapolis and Michigan City
1964 Nickel Plate sold to Norfolk & Western
1982 Norfolk & Western merged into Norfolk Southern
C.1990 all tracks north of 8th St removed in Michigan City
2001 Norfolk Southern sells Michigan City to Dillon (22 miles) to South Shore Freight

C&O

1903 Pere Marquette Railway completed between Grand Rapids and Porter, IN with trackage rights over Lake Shore & Michigan Southern to Chicago
1929 Chesapeake & Ohio gains control of the Pere Marquette
1947 Pere Marquette merges into the Chesapeake & Ohio
1971 Last passenger train operates between Chicago and Grand Rapids
1984 Amtrak restarts daily round trip between Chicago and Grand Rapids
1987 Chesapeake & Ohio merged into CSX

CSS&SB

1908 Chicago Lake Shore & South Bend opens between South Bend and Kensington IL with transfer to the Illinois Central to Chicago
1925 Purchased by utility magnate Samuel Insull and reorganized as the Chicago Shout Shore & South Bend
1925-1927 entire railroad rebuilt to steam line standards and promoting car load and overhead freight
passenger trains run over Illinois Central trackage rights allowing single seat ride to downtown Chicago
1960's falls under Chesapeake & Ohio Control
1981 Electric freight operations end, passenger service continues to be electrically operated
1983 Replaces 1925 era passenger cars
1984 falls under control of the Venango River Corporation
1989 Passenger and freight operations split with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District acquiring and operating the mainline line and passenger assets while Anacostia & Pacific creates South Shore Freight to acquire and operate the freight assets

Northern Indiana Railway

1886 Horse car service begins on a single line from downtown to the Indiana State Prison
1898 Prison Line electrified
1903 Interurban opens between Michigan City and LaPorte
1904 Street car service on the Eastport and South Franklin Lines begin
1908 Interurban reaches LaPorte from South Bend, at first a car change was needed, but later cars would be through routed South Bend to Michigan City.
1932 Michigan City street car service discontinued
1934 Interurban service between Michigan City and South Bend discontinued

Prototypical Model Railroad Design

Modeling the prototype is, in some ways, easier than doing freelance mainly because all the hard parts have already been done for you by the railroad that you're modeling. If you want to know what the track plans are, just look it up on the Internet. If you want to know what certain towns looked like, find some pictures of the area or, better yet, go visit the place and see for yourself. Take your own pictures of the landscape, the tracks, the trains, the yards and the structures; bring them back to your railroad room at home and use them as reference photos.

Additionally, if you research the *prototype operations*, including scheduling patterns, what kind of trains they used (e.g., fast freight, through freight, passenger, etc.), how many trains traveled through the area in any one day during a particular era, this will further help you decide on your own train layout design and how *your* model railroad layout will operate.

If you model the prototype very closely, you know up front that you will never be able to replicate it exactly. That's a given. The first thing you almost certainly won't be able to replicate exactly is the scale distance from one point to another. Even in N scale, the scale distance of one mile would require 33 feet of layout space. The second thing is that it would be very difficult to include everything in a model that is observable in the prototype, partly because of space considerations, and perhaps partly because there are some parts of the prototype that are just not that interesting or that you don't really want to spend time on. How do we get around this and still stick to the prototype plan well enough so that our model is a recognizable depiction of that railroad?

Selective Compression is one answer to this question. This basically involves compression of certain parts of the railroad that are perhaps less interesting than other parts, so that you can then focus on detailing the areas of the prototype that are more interesting.

Layout Design Elements, or LDE's are the second answer to the question. These are the elements of the prototype that are recognizable visually and operationally that you *do* want to model in some detail. Your particular train layout design elements might include certain industries that are critical for the prototype you are modeling, or they might be certain towns, or even certain scenes, like the Horseshoe Curve on the Pennsylvania RR, that are or were important to the prototype.