



San Francisco Bay Area Convention

September 1–4, 2018

For 2018, the Electric Railroaders' Association returns to the San Francisco Bay Area for its four-day convention over the Labor Day weekend. It was 2004 when we last held our convention here and a lot has changed. The convention will feature streetcar charters, shop tours, a ride on the new Sonoma-Marín (SMART) and eBART diesel commuter rail lines, provision for a ferry ride, two museums, and just the right amount of time on your own with a pre-loaded Clipper Card.

Your ERA package will include a pre-loaded Clipper Card good for our scheduled trips on Sonoma-Marín Transit, BART, plus four single rides on Muni Metro and buses. The Clipper Card can be used on cable cars, but you'll want to re-load it with enough for the \$7 per ride fare.

Transit in San Francisco and its surrounding counties, as well as Sacramento, needs no introduction to most of our long-time members. The area is rich with many different systems and modes. It doesn't hurt that the setting for all of this is among the most beautiful in North America. The 105-year-old San Francisco Municipal Railway operates a five-line light rail system which includes the Muni Metro downtown subway shared in large part with the Bay Area Rapid Transit system (BART). There's also a 10-line electric trolleybus system, the largest in the U.S. The historic three-line cable car network continues to provide a vital neighborhood transit function as well as bring joy to millions of tourists each year. And finally, there are the two historic streetcar lines, the jewel of the railfan and tourist experience. The E and F lines feature multicolored PCCs, Milan Italy Peter Witts and historic cars from several continents as well as Muni's own heritage fleet.

Beyond Muni there is BART, a melding of rapid transit and regional rail, operating from Millbrae on the peninsula to Pittsburg on the north near the Sacramento River delta, and from Richmond in the east bay to the Diablo Valley at Dublin/Pleasanton and to Warm Springs. Hopefully by our visit, BART will be extended to Berryessa in the northern neighborhoods of San Jose. There is also Caltrain, a true commuter railroad operating from the San Francisco 4th and King Street Station (previously 4th & Townsend) to San Jose, 46 miles distant, and beyond during commute hours to Gilroy.

Diesel Light Rail is now part of the rail interest of the bay area. The long-planned Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit line (SMART) operates 43 miles from San Rafael in Marin County to Santa Rosa and the Sonoma County Airport. We are planning a roundtrip on this line. Another new line is eBART (East Contra Costa BART Extension), operating 10.1 miles from the end of the Pittsburg-Baypoint line to Antioch. We are anticipating that both will be open by the time of our visit. SMART uses 14 Nippon Sharyo diesel multiple unit (DMU) cars, similar to those operating between Toronto Union Station and the Pierson Airport, while eBART employs eight Stadler DMUs of the same type that are in service in Austin and Denton County, Texas.



Some of the delights beyond the Bay Area include Sacramento's light rail system and the California State Railroad Museum. We will also travel to Rio Vista Junction in Solano County to visit the splendid Western Railway Museum with an eclectic collection ranging from recently retired San Diego Trolley Duewags to former Manhattan Second Avenue El cars.

Bring along your non-railfan spouse or companion! The Bay Area needs no introduction to them — it's one of the world's premier tourist destinations. Within minutes of our convention hotel, non-railfans have access on foot, Muni or BART to world class shopping in Union Square (Macy's, Neiman Marcus, Barney's, Saks and many international boutiques), Ferry Marketplace at the historic 1898 Ferry Terminal, touring the many Victorian-era neighborhoods, the iconic Golden Gate Bridge and Park, cruises around the Bay, dining at Fisherman's Wharf or North Beach Italian, and many more attractions too numerous to mention. Our tour itinerary includes an evening drop-off at the picturesque waterfront town of Sausalito.

The region is served by three airports, each with nearby rail connections into downtown San Francisco. This will be an ERA convention you will long savor!

Convention Headquarters

Courtyard San Francisco Downtown

299 2nd Street

San Francisco, California 94105

415-947-0700

<https://goo.gl/maps/cD2hLkmss292>

We are fortunate to have Marriott's **Courtyard San Francisco Downtown** as our convention hotel as headquarters and the site of our 2018 Annual Banquet. This newly renovated, contemporary hotel is situated just three blocks from the Montgomery station on the BART/Muni Metro and one stop on Muni's F streetcar line. This is more convenient to prime tourist attractions and the vibrant transit scene than alternatives in the East Bay area. We were also able to negotiate a rate that compares favorably with previous conventions for a hotel which provides the Marriott's high level of service and amenities. The Courtyard is rated 4 out of 5 stars on Trip Advisor and Expedia.

The ERA has secured a block of rooms at the heavily discounted rate of only \$149 plus 16.25% occupancy tax and 45¢ California tourism fee per room per night (either one king bed or two queen beds for up to two guests) available for the nights of August 31 and September 1, 2, 3 and 4, with checkout on September 5 (plus three days **before and after** these dates, at hotel's discretion based on availability)

Hotel amenities in our ERA package include:

- Hotel check-in is at 4:00 p.m.; checkout is at 11:00 am
- Complimentary Wi-Fi in guestrooms
- Complimentary Wi-Fi in the lobby and public areas (including meeting rooms)
- Smoke-free policy: This hotel is 100% smoke-free in both guest rooms and common areas
- Pet policy: No pets allowed
- Pool and hot tub
- Fitness center



Please note that the rate **does not** include breakfast. A Starbucks is located inside the hotel. Several other choices are available in the area, including fast food.

You can also book online using the special link provided on the last page of this flyer that contains hotel reservation instructions. You can also book your reservation either by calling Courtyard reservations at 800-321-2211 or directly with the Courtyard San Francisco Downtown at 415-947-0700 (ask for “reservations”). Mention the “**group reservation under the Electric Railroaders’ Association**” room block when calling to get the \$149 per night room rate. Also make sure you confirm that your reservation is at the “299 2nd Street” location (there is another Courtyard in downtown San Francisco).

The cut-off date for reservations is Friday, August 3, 2018 OR when our room block has been fully booked, whichever occurs earlier. Reservations booked after August 3 will be accepted by the Courtyard at the hotel’s discretion based on availability and rate. **Book early and get this discount!**

Itinerary

Saturday, September 1

We will leave the hotel at **8:30 a.m.** via chartered motor coaches for the first of two stops:

- [Western Railway Museum](#) (Rio Vista Junction in Solano County), founded in 1963 by the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association, has a comprehensive fleet of over 50 cars representing all of the Bay Area’s rich traction heritage. This includes Key System Bridge Units; Muni PCC 1016, the first of the last fleet of PCCs built in the U.S.; Sacramento Northern 1005, a steel interurban which once ran from San Francisco to Sacramento along what is now the museum’s tracks; and a train of former Manhattan wooden el cars which came to Oakland during the Second World War to move shipyard workers. We plan to charter some of these cars for the enjoyment of attendees.
- We will stop off for a **quick lunch** along I-80 on our way to San Rafael, 55 miles away, for a round-trip ride on the new [Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit \(SMART\)](#) line. A holiday weekend schedule will be in effect, limiting the time we need to get there.
- We will depart [San Rafael](#) (the current south end of the SMART line; service to Larkspur expected to begin in early 2019) on the **1:52 PM to Sonoma County Airport** (the north end of the line), then return. SMART is served by Nippon-Sharyo DMUs operating on the completely rebuilt former Northwestern Pacific right-of-way. We are due back in San Rafael at **4:23 PM**.
- Our motor coaches will pick us up for the short drive to [Sausalito](#), a particularly pretty town nestled between the Marin hills and the bay, with a feel similar to an Adriatic resort town. It features shopping and antiques, one of the best ice cream parlors in the region, and a renowned Angus beef burger stand near the Esplanade. There are numerous places to eat dinner with breathtaking views of the bay. When you are ready, you can ride back to the hotel with either the [Golden Gate Ferry](#) (departure at 5:35 PM) or a Golden Gate Transit bus via the Golden Gate Bridge. Both accept your Clipper Card. If you would rather return to the hotel early, you can stay on our chartered bus, which will take you directly back.



Plan to be back at the hotel by **7:00 PM** for the **cocktail reception** for our **2018 Annual Banquet**, featuring a prominent presenter from the Bay Area's transit scene (to be announced) as our speaker. **Dinner begins at 7:30 PM.**

Sunday, September 2

Our convention starts promptly at **8:00 AM** with a San Francisco Muni charter featuring two cars from their historic fleet (specific cars have yet to be determined). The fleet includes [double-end PCC 1011](#) and a recently rehabbed "[Torpedo](#)" and "[Iron Monster](#)" [162](#), a 103-year-old car refurbished about 12 years ago and recently returned to service. Both are quintessential San Francisco. The four-hour excursion will cover much of the streetcar and light rail system. Please note that we will incorporate photo stops and restroom breaks into the excursion, but we will not be stopping for lunch. Have a hearty breakfast or take a snack to tide you over to about 2:00 PM. There is free time in the afternoon to ride the rest of the Muni routes or any other system in the nine-county area in which the Clipper Card is valid.

Monday, September 3

Our chartered motor coaches will leave the hotel at **8:00 AM** for the 80-mile trip to Sacramento. We'll do some sightseeing along the way, including motoring alongside the famous 1930 [Southern Pacific Carquinez Bridge](#) across the Carquinez Strait, now used by Capitol Corridor trains, Amtrak's California Zephyr and Union Pacific freight trains.

- Our destination is Amtrak's [Sacramento Valley Station](#), the western terminus of the [Sacramento RT Light Rail](#) Gold Line. We will ride the full length of the **Gold Line** to the suburban **Historic Folsom** station, traversing what is arguably modern day single-track interurban territory on the outer end. There will be time for lunch in Folsom before a return to downtown and an afternoon visit to the acclaimed 100,000 square-foot [California State Railroad Museum](#) in Old Sacramento. Features include 21 restored cars and locomotives, and numerous displays and hands-on exhibits.
- Following the tour, you can wander through Old Sacramento soaking up the ambience of the late 1800's era in the city's history. Have dinner while there. "Old Sac" has a wide choice of restaurants to please your tastes. We will board our motor coach for return to San Francisco at **7:30 PM.**
- For those who may wish to take the train back to San Francisco, Amtrak's Capital Corridor trains to Richmond and an easy connection to BART leave the restored Sacramento Valley Station at 4:55, 5:40, 7:35 and 10:30 PM Travel by Amtrak is at your own expense.

Tuesday, September 4

This is the final day of the convention. It is also [BART Day](#). For guests leaving today, please settle your charges with the hotel and **be ready to leave by 8:45 AM.**

- This will be our day for riding and touring BART. We will leave the hotel at 8:45 AM to walk to the Montgomery Station near Market and 2nd streets. We will ride an in-service trip on the Fremont-Warm Springs Line to Hayward Station, where we will be met by BART staff who will conduct a guided tour of the [Hayward Maintenance Complex \(HMC\)](#), the main repair facility on the system.



- Following the HMC tour, participants have a choice of activities. You can re-board BART to Fremont station where is a direct connection to Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) buses to San Jose. There you can ride the [Santa Clara VTA Light Rail](#) system, for those who may like to ride that system.
- There is also [the new eBART operation](#), which runs from an across-the-platform transfer from the Pittsburg/Baypoint line's end station to Antioch. In all, eBART has 10 miles of running on standard gauge track in the middle of California Highway 4. We are arranging to have knowledgeable BART staff with us on our ride to answer any questions and explain the future plans for the line.
- We will return on regular BART service direct from Pittsburg/Baypoint to Montgomery Station, **concluding the 2018 Convention.**

Logistics

Reaching the Courtyard Downtown San Francisco

The hotel is located on 2nd Street at Folsom Street. It is an easy, flat three-block walk down 2nd from Market Street and the Montgomery BART/Muni Metro Station. Alternatively, Muni's 10 and 12 lines alternate about every 10 minutes and run along 2nd from Market to a stop at Howard, one block north of the hotel.

Here are some of the ways to reach the hotel by public transit:

- **From San Francisco International Airport (SFO):** Take BART from the Airport Station to Montgomery Station. The BART station is located near the International Terminal. It is also easily accessed from Terminals 1, 2 and 3 via the free SFO people mover. "Terminal G and BART" will be announced. BART fares vary depending on your destination. Currently Montgomery is \$9.65 for adults (\$9.15 with a Clipper Card) or \$3.40 with a Senior Clipper Card. You can buy a magnetically encoded ticket from the machine in the station, or use a Clipper Card to tap-in and tap-out. The Clipper Card has the advantage of automatically applying a transfer discount to Muni and other systems.
- **From Oakland International Airport (OAK):** Ride the three-year old BART-to-OAK automated guideway people mover to the BART Coliseum Station and then board a San Francisco/Daly City train. Get off at Montgomery. The BART fare to Montgomery from the Coliseum Station is \$10.95/\$10.45 for adults and \$3.90 for seniors (same fare media choices as above).
- **Arriving on Amtrak and regional trains in Oakland (Emeryville):** Take the Amtrak shuttle bus to the Transbay Terminal (first stop). The new Transbay Terminal is due to open by the time of our visit and is only two blocks from the hotel.
- **Arriving on Caltrain at the Caltrain Terminal (4th and Townsend):** Take Muni Line 10 directly from outside the terminal to 2nd and Howard, one block from the hotel. Muni cash fare is \$2.75 adult/\$1.35 senior.

Please Note

Scheduled event times given in this flyer are subject to change in the final itinerary or during the trip without prior notice. Daily trip itineraries may be changed without prior notice to ensure on-time return at the end of each day. Announcements will be made each day to update guests on essential information



during all ERA events. **Providing your phone number (and email address) on your registration form is critical.** If you have questions regarding the itinerary or accommodations, please e-mail **Bob Newhouser** at bnnyc1955@aol.com or call/text him at **917-482-4235**. E-mail is preferred.

Making Your Hotel Reservations

The Courtyard Downtown San Francisco Hotel Electric Railroaders' Association special rate is \$149 plus 16.25% tax plus 45¢ California occupancy tax per night. The Courtyard is a member of Marriott Rewards points program. There are two ways to book your reservation with this hotel:

1. Use Courtyard's [special ERA link](#) to book your room. Using this URL will automatically bring up the discounted rates of \$149 per night (plus tax) for rooms with one king bed or two queen beds. To obtain these discounted rates, please book as soon as possible. You may pay with Marriott Reward points. The room rates are available for the nights of August 31, September 1, 2, 3 and 4, with checkout on September 5 (plus three days prior and after these dates, depending on availability). These discounted rates expire after August 3, 2018. Further offers of the discount rate after August 3 are at the hotel's discretion on a space available basis.
2. Call the Courtyard Downtown San Francisco direct at 415-947-0700 or Courtyard reservations at 800-321-2211. At either the hotel desk or the 800 reservations desk, ask for **"Courtyard San Francisco Downtown"** reservations and, most importantly, book under the **"group reservation of Electric Railroaders' Association"** to get the lower room rate of \$149 for one king bed or two queen beds. Please note **there are two Courtyard hotels in San Francisco**, so be sure to specify the Courtyard San Francisco Downtown hotel at 299 2nd Street. While availability lasts, you can request (not guaranteed) a room on a high floor with bay views and a room that has been renovated. Based on hotel's information, their renovations should be completed by the time of our convention booking.

Cancellations

Cancellations must be received 72 hours prior to check-in (4 p.m.) for refund. Your cancellation number MUST be obtained to ensure refund. All succeeding reservations will be automatically cancelled by the system if guests fail to check-in on the first arrival date and first night will be charged on the credit card provided with no refund. In addition, if you can't make the first night of your visit, but can make the other nights, call the hotel immediately to preserve the rest of your reservation.

NOTE: The Courtyard San Francisco Downtown does not accept reservations by U.S. mail. Please reserve online or by phone as shown above.

