

M-52 Morenci: Gateway to Michigan

Context

The city of Morenci is located in Lenawee County just north of the Ohio border.

Michigan Welcome Sign

Morenci is very proud to bill itself as the southernmost community and the friendliest gateway in Michigan. The sign and associated landscaping create a positive initial impression for travelers entering Michigan on M-52.

Relocated Sterling Road Bridge

The historic truss bridge, moved to Morenci from Hillsdale County, represents a successful partnership among local, state, and federal agencies. The bridge relocation meets real transportation needs. The removal of the bridge facilitated needed roadway improvements in Hillsdale County. The bridge's relocation to Morenci provides non-motorized transportation for the adjacent historic M-156/Murray D. Van Wagoner Bridge, which lost its sidewalks during a recent rehabilitation effort.

State Historic Marker

The new historic marker (shown covered in the bottom right photo) commemorates the Taft Memorial Highway and the Murray D. Van Wagoner Bridge. The city of Morenci was a major champion and an anchor community for this important north-south memorial route that ran from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan to Fort Meyers, Florida. The bridge was named to honor Michigan State Highway Department director Van Wagoner, who was elected governor in 1940.

Outcome

A special dedication was held in October 2004 to celebrate all three roadside improvements. The relocated truss bridge, along with the mainline bridge and new welcome sign, provide an attractive gateway to Morenci and the state of Michigan.

Funding

The welcome sign and landscaping, rehabilitation and placement of the historic truss bridge, and the historic marker were funded through the Transportation Enhancement Program.



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