

Lakes Region Model Railroad Museum

Museum Definition

Note - This an evolving document. All major changes require the support of the Board of Directors of the museum. Once adopted, this document will be the blueprint for the development of the museum until and unless modified by the Board.

Version 2

Adopted by the Board on **9/21/2021**

I. Museum Mission

- Provide an interactive experience and historic portrait of the socio-economic and cultural impact of railroads on the industrial, transportation, and tourist development of several central New England towns, including Wolfeboro.
- Provide hands-on interactive operation of the trains, for all ages and all skill levels, with progressive educational opportunities for operators.
- Develop an environment where the museum can evolve over time to suit the needs of future generations and emerging technologies
- Provide a positive outcome for all visitors which leads to repeat visits and recommendations

II Museum Components

The focus of the museum is to provide interactive, informative, and educational edutainment – that is learning by having fun. The design is intended to drive multiple visits through increasingly challenging interactions with the museum. The museum components are here grouped into Historical Presentation and Interactive Edutainment, both centered on the HO scale layout, along with additional alternatives which will be explored.

A. Historical Presentation

The story being presented by the museum layout is how the arrival of the railroads turned isolated, self-sufficient agricultural villages like Wolfeboro into busy manufacturing and tourist centers with the rails connecting people, goods and services across the country year-round, night and day.

In this way, all visitors to the Museum will be introduced to Wolfeboro and the neighboring towns, will view the historical structures and places on the layouts, and will be able to access increasing levels of detail with smart phone links.

They will learn where the remaining railroad structures can be found, how the railroad affected the layout of the Town, where the turntable, roundhouse, water-side terminus, and Factory Street spur ran. And how central the railroad was to the town's economy during the first half of the 20th century. All illustrated by the operating model of the railroad at that time.

They will also see equivalent buildings, places and hear stories for the other towns depicted on the layouts, but the emphasis will be on Wolfeboro since that is where the visitor has chosen to come. We will include physical artifacts from that era illustrating the stories, many of which have already been offered to the Museum.

The target market for this aspect of the museum is the first-time visitor, curious about the socio-historical story of Wolfeboro, and willing to spend half an hour to learn about its history.

Version 2 adopted 9/21/2021

B Drivable Train Layout

The primary exhibit in the museum is the large HO-scale model railroad representing the Lakes Region and surrounding towns and cities. The design of the layout will be focused on enabling several visitors to drive trains at the same time, and to have fun doing so.

While the model layout will represent the actual railways at the time, additional trackage, yards, switches and complexity, not present in the actual railway layouts, will be added to make the model an interesting challenge for operations.

The layout will be built around the outer walls of the museum space, would have multiple levels to accommodate the greatest number of visitors, including those in wheelchairs, with tracks generally coming 18" to 48" from the outer wall around most of the museum. Blocking of tracks and digital control would ensure trains get to where they are assigned to be without colliding with other drivers. Storage space will be provided under the layout where practical.

The layout will be designed with the goals of allowing visitors to learn such concepts as logistics, prioritization (right of way), application of expert control systems, the use of scientific analysis, engineering calculations, model-building, and the underlying technology used to control the layout.

The target market for this aspect of the museum is a young family or youth group with preteens and teenagers, who visit for the hands-on experience of operating the layout and who will return for progressively more satisfying experiences.

C Other Alternatives

The direction in which the museum develops will depend largely on feedback from visitors. It will also be influenced by the availability of funding, space, people and technical resources.

While proceeding with the program laid out in A and B above, we will continue to explore the least expensive, highest return attractions, if feasible, to bring in money to pay for A and B.

These will include amongst other ideas.

- * Enhanced and virtual reality where the visitor can be "in the engine cab" on the layout, or in the cab of other trains not on the layout.
- * Remote operation where trains can be run from elsewhere using video links, expanding the museum experience beyond the walls of the building
- * Virtual operation of other railroads not at the museum
- * Structured STEM instruction for youth groups with an emphasis on fun
- * Formal STEM instruction curricula for schools and job training
- * Adding a passenger car for workshops, presentations, and instruction space
- * Incorporating all or part of the passenger station into the museum complex

Version 2 adopted 9/21/2021