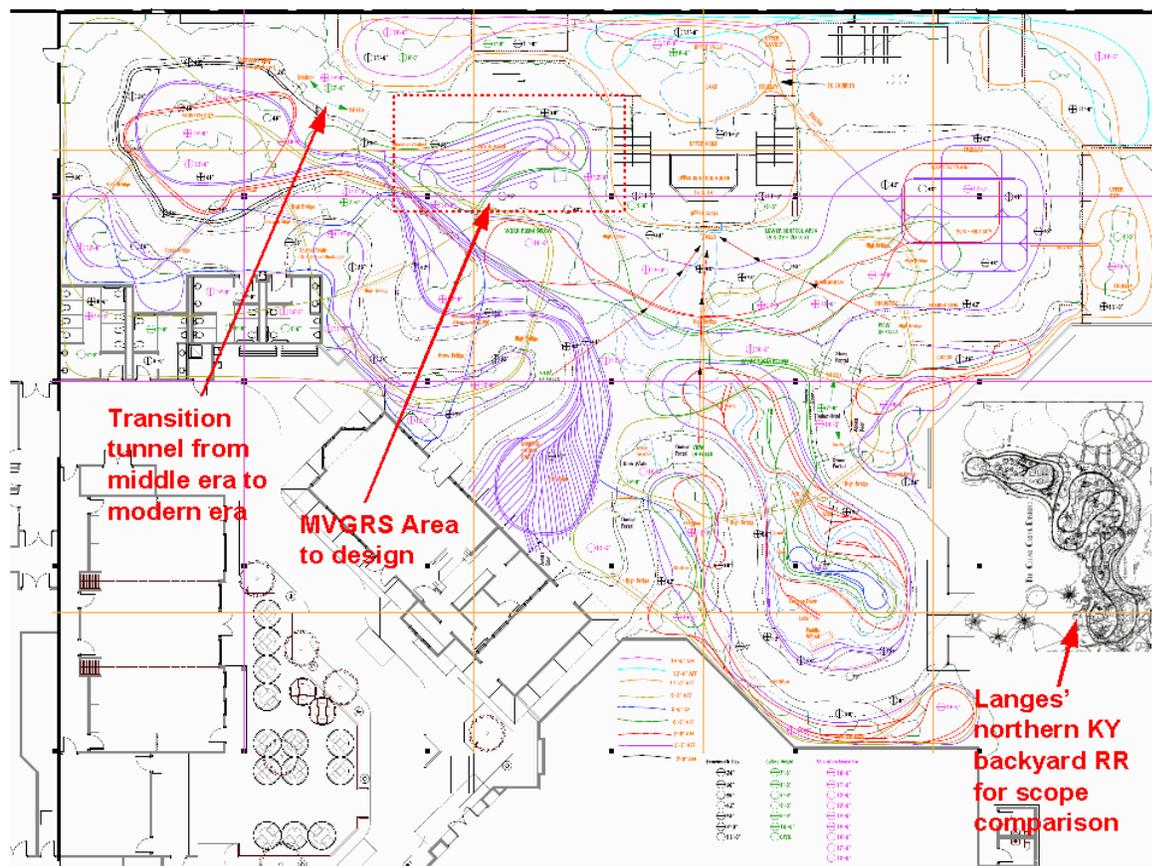


The Big Train Project Status Report

PROGRESS! As is usual with many large projects, things are happening on the Big Train Project (currently known as “EnterTRAINment Junction”) just not as fast as expected. With large investors on board, the project has gotten to the point of trying to get the appropriate approvals from the local city and county governments, which are supportive, but want some things their way. Fortunately, they have, thus far, been willing to be flexible if their wants threaten the project’s survival. Final zoning approval is currently expected on 21 August 2006.

That date is also the deadline chosen for completion of the basic layout plan (track location, elevations, and basic scenery contours). This will be needed so that an architectural firm can design the structure on which the layout will be constructed. When the design is completed, the structure will be professionally built. Once that’s done, the fun part begins: building and “scenicking” the layout – that’s the job for the volunteers – model railroaders and enthusiasts from around the region.

Work on the layout plan is being done by a committee of about fifteen Cincinnati and Miami Valley model railroad club members. An early concept of the plan is shown below, indicating the complexity and scope of what is currently being designed at the detail level. The 20,000 square-foot layout is expected to have about 10,000 feet of track with up to 150 trains running simultaneously. A plan of the Langes’s terrific Northern Kentucky backyard layout is shown for comparison to give you an idea of the scope and size of the Big Train Project layout.



MVGRS members have volunteered to design an engine servicing facility for both steam and diesel engines in the middle era portion of the layout (covering the period from the late 1800s to about 1950). This is located in a 20 x 40 foot area near the transition tunnel leading to the modern era portion of the layout (as indicated on the plan). We've also discussed ideas for the inside of the transition tunnel, hoping to show a large engine maintenance or assembly facility with a large overhead crane lifting a locomotive or a large part of one.

Major objectives of the whole design are to show railroading in a fairly realistic but also positive light, not to rivet-counting detail but in a way that will impress and delight children and adults alike, many of whom are unfamiliar with the details of railroad operations. The project is looking for a "WOW factor:" using structures, scenery, animation, lighting, and sound to get that "Wow!" reaction from the people who come to see the layout, hopefully, again and again, as it evolves over time.

The project continues to look for volunteers, and there are many opportunities for creative and talented people, of which there are so many among the members of MVGRS. If you're not already involved, but would like to be, contact Tom Bartsch or Jack Wilson, and they'll provide you with more information about the types of volunteer activities available and the benefits of participating.

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MVGRS Big Train Project Coordinator