

60 Years
1965 - 2025



**NORTHERN OHIO
RAILWAY MUSEUM**

NORM 2030

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

A JOURNEY, NOT A DESTINATION

February 2025

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MISSION STATEMENT

“Our Mission Statement focuses on real goals from our visitor’s perspective, that fosters a common vision of NORM in 2030.”

The audiences for our Mission Statement are investors and benefactors, supporting organizations, and the Board of Directors and Museum’s membership.

The first is quite simply our mission statement: The mission of Northern Ohio Railway Museum is to collect, preserve, restore, display and operate streetcars and other electric railway equipment for the education and entertainment of the public. These words came out of the museum’s Articles of Incorporation written in 1976. If it doesn’t fit into one of these categories, we don’t do it. This is why we don’t have a merry-go-round or a bus museum out in our parking area.

The second is our Master Plan. This plan was developed in 1985 right after we purchased the main property on Buffham Road. We bought the property in 1984 and spent all of 1985 developing a master plan. We didn’t touch the new property until 1986 after the plan was finished. Over forty years later, the master plan has had only couple of minor changes and is well along in its development.

The third source that has guided the museum is the Recommended Practices for Railway Museums originally developed by ARM in the late 1990s. Even before this was formalized, we always looked to the more established trolley museums for the best way to do things.

Heritage Rail Alliance excerpt October 2024t: Mission statements are aspirational. Often, they include optimistic goals that are expensive to achieve or beyond the organization’s capabilities. With the reality of poverty and all-volunteer staffs, many museums took years to either draft a mission statement, or live up to the one they had. During this unsettled period, many museums strayed, acquiring artifacts or engaging in activities that didn’t match the mission statement. As will be discussed in the chapter on Collections, policies like mission statements and collections policies are valuable guard rails that keep you focused on the real goals.

COMMON VISION

The strategic plan will provide a shared understanding of and appreciation for the planning and implementation of NORM 2030, our strategic level plan, and how it relates to each Board of Director’s area of responsibility. This common vision as viewed from the visitor’s perspective will shape all of the support actives as the infrastructure and visitor center activities are completed over the coming years.

VISITORS EXPERIENCE

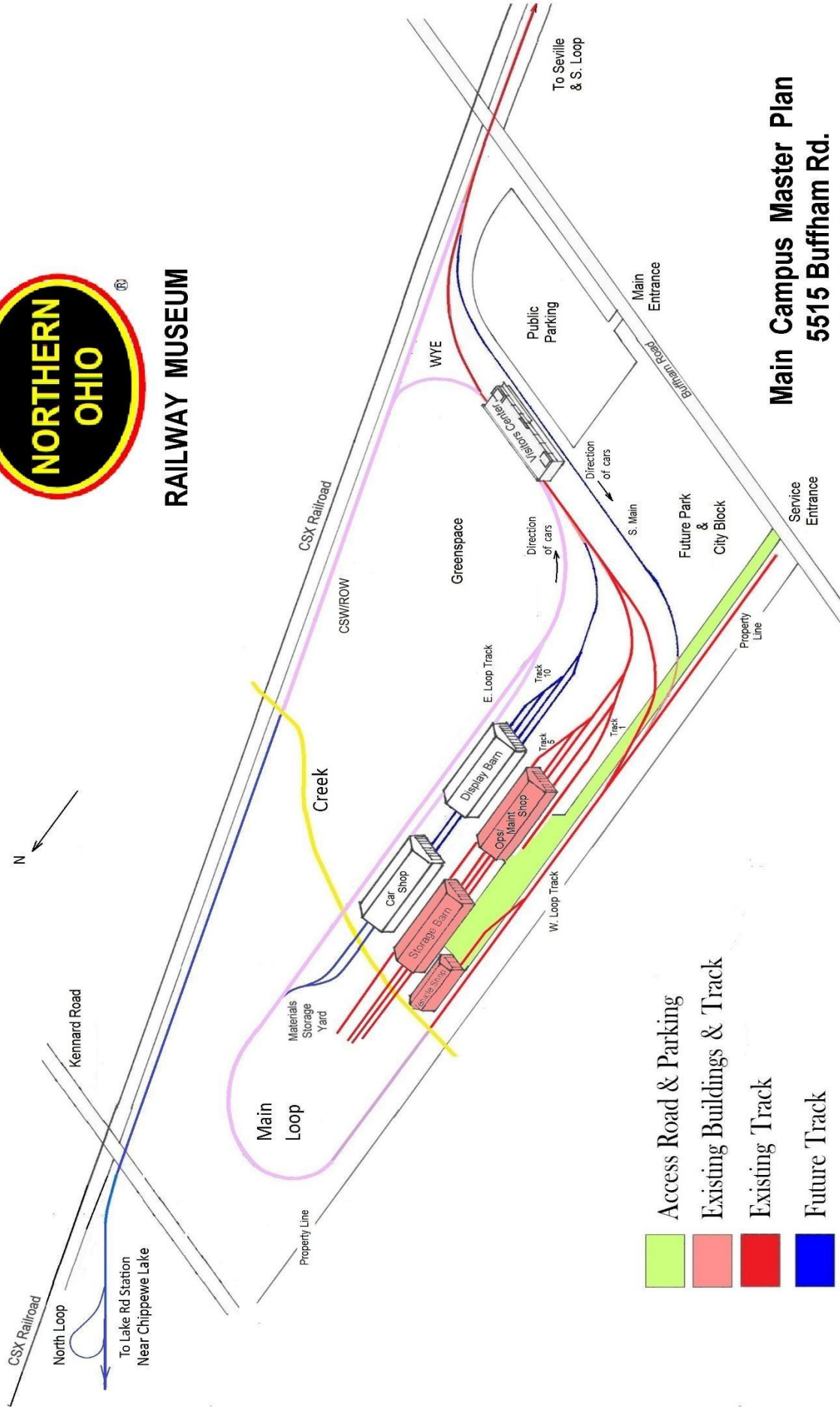
This section will be based upon Mission Statement viewed from a Museum visitor's perspective. What do we want our visitors experience to be? It really is three phases: What they expect before their visit? What is their experience, fun, educational, reminiscent, etcetera? What will they tell their family, friends and how many "Likes" will we receive on our website?

SUCCESSION PLAN

An integral part of the three tenants of our Mission Statement is a succession plan (Merriam-Webster: following one after the other) that establishes and maintains a process by which *"The mission of Northern Ohio Railway Museum is to collect, preserve, restore, display and operate streetcars and other electric railway equipment for the education and entertainment of the public."* will continue as the Museum's Board of Directors and Membership change.



RAILWAY MUSEUM



Main Campus Master Plan
5515 Buffham Rd.
Seville, Ohio
330-769-5501

January 19 2025

www.northernohiorailwaymuseum.org

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is an all-encompassing term that includes track bed design, grading and ballast; pole design and setting; bracket arm design and installation; overhead wire (catenary) connections and interfaces; and tie and rail bonding and installation. This requires detailed planning and coordination that includes both volunteer and contract support. Separate Project Plans will be written for each of the following: The WYE, The Main Loop and The South Main which makeup the current in-progress portions of the Master Plan.

WYE (CSW/ROW, N-WYE LEG and S-WYE LEG)

Description, function and location. The WYE will allow the continuous one-way operation on the Main Loop and South Main. It is composed of three separate but integrated pieces: a 2,000' straight track section that runs north to south and north and south legs of the wye that interconnect with the Main Loop. (Reference the Master Plan)

MAIN LOOP

Description, function and location. The Main Loop will provide a "excursion experience" for our visitors with the addition of 3,000' of track that will interconnect with both the Main Loop and South Main (Reference the Master Plan). Due to the topography coordination with and approvals from the Corps of Army Engineers, Environmental and Civil Engineers are required. (Reference the Master Plan)

SOUTH MAIN

Description, function and location. The South Main will facilitate the simultaneous one-way operation of multiple cars with the addition of 1,500' of track that will interconnect with the Main Loop and the South Wye. The South Main installation will be coordinated with the establishment of the Visitor Center Complex because of location of and construction considerations. (Reference the Master Plan)

VISITOR CENTER AND PARKING AREA



Visitor Center

The concept of how our visitors will be greeted (their first impression of the Museum) has evolved from a single structure (as illustrated in the Master Plan) to a number of smaller buildings that will house ticketing, store, library/archive, restrooms, display/exhibition space and meeting room facilities. The style of this “village” will be based on the CSW&C ticketing building that has been preserved and located in the city of Medina. This will be accomplished over several years beginning in the summer of 2025 with a ticketing building. Working with Connor Merritt (a graduate student at Harvard School of Architecture) to create a vision and plan as a starting point as a road map as the concept of a village takes shape.

Phase One - Buffham Road Station (Ticketing)

An incremental approach starting with a ticketing building and south parking area parking. The ticketing building will be located north-west quadrant of the parking area. Semi-permanent signage and barriers will be needed to designate restricted areas and walkways. The build will be prefabricated, approximately 10' X 10' with a CSW&C color scheme. The building will be equipped with electricity and lighting, ventilation and cash architecture will be a compilation of and ticketing facilities.



Internet access register. The CSW&C station

Parking Area

Parking planning and operation are an integral part of the Visitor Center Complex's development. The south parking area is operational with the north parking area currently designated as wet lands but available for future development.

The initial parking area will be located on the south side of the Buffham Road main entrance. The parking area will support the Buffham Road Station and will provide parking for designated operating days. The area is currently serviceable with the exception of the area around the north-south storm drainage culvert. (Reference the Master Plan and 2023 Fall Foliage Tour Plans)

CAR RESTORATION

Lightweight Interurban 303

Statistics: Builder: St Louis Car Company, Built: 1923, Trucks: St Louis 64E1B, Motors: GE465, Control: K35G, Brakes: SME (M28), Compressor: WH DH16

Description: Shaker Heights, Ohio Rapid Transit Car 303 was built in an effort to lower operating costs; a double-ended, single operator, lightweight car seating 52 passengers with a separate smoker's parlor sections.

Restoration Status: The windows and seating are in progress. The mechanical, electrical and pneumatic work is pending.

TTC Electric Street Car Peter Witt 2778

Statistics: Builder: Canadian Car & Foundry, Built: 1923, Trucks: CC&F 177, Motors: WH510A, Control: WH K35XA, Brakes: WAB SME, Compressor: WH DH16

Description: TTC Peter Witt style streetcar was designed with a front entrance door and a center exit door. This "pay as you pass" system allowed for single operator operation and speedier service eliminating lengthy loading and unloading of passengers.

Restoration Status: The initial restoration efforts are focused on the creation of 62 hardwood window frames that will provide the framework of the car's overall structure. The window frame prototypes are being made by the students at the Medina County Career Center. No other restoration work is currently underway.

Railway Car Restoration Group

Paul Davis will be the Museum's representative on this newly formed group. The group comprises the car restoration professionals from 11 railway museums with the started goal "to establish a forum to discuss car restoration activities currently underway and provide and exchange car specific information."

ARM Parts Exchange Group

Informal inter-museum forum that facilitates the sharing of streetcar and interurban plans and parts information. Steve Heister, Walt Stoner and Paul Davis are the Museum's representatives. Rod Fishburn is the coordinator; it's an active online forum especially regarding the sourcing of parts, and external services suppliers.

Heritage Rail Alliance

An inter-museum publication of active restoration and capital improvements. Aaron Isaacs from the Heritage Rail Alliance is the publisher.

OPERATIONS

Museum Operating Days

- Museum Tour Guides Scheduling
- Museum Store Staff Scheduling

Car Operating Days

- Car 12 Crew Members Assignments
- Museum Store Staff Assignments
- Car 109 Crew Members Assignments

Special Events

- Organizational Group Visits
- The Trams Drives Olympics

Volunteer Training

- Operating Days Support Personnel
- Car Operating Days Conductors and Motorman
- Fire Safety Knowledge Training (Buildings, Cars and Vehicles)

Professional Staffing

The Museum's Board of Directors is currently made-up of members of the Museum nominated to vacant positions on the Board. The membership will be expanded in the future to include members of the community and paid professionals.

OPERATIONS TIMELINE

The Operations Timeline provides an integrated planning timeline that incorporates Infrastructure, Car Restoration and the Visitor Center Complex and Parking Area sections. This is a "goals oriented" view that is based on the related supporting Project Plans used to determine annual season operating planning and scheduling.

2025 Season

Season May through September

Operating Days 2nd and 4th Saturdays

Car 12 - Full Service

Car 109 - Full Service

Buffham Road Station (Ticketing) - Trial Operations

South Parking Area - Trial Operations

2026 Season

Season May through September

Operating Days 2nd and 4th Saturdays

CSW/ROW and N-WYE Leg - Operational

Car 12 - Full Service

Car 109 - Full Service

Buffham Road Station (Ticketing) Operational

South Parking Area Operational

2027 Season

Season May through September

Operating Days 2nd and 4th Saturdays

S-WYE Leg - Operational

Car 12 - Limited Service

Car 109 - Full Service

Car 303 - Limited Service

2028 Season

Season May through September

Operating Days 2nd and 4th Saturdays

WYE Fully Operational

Car 12 - Limited Service Car

109 - Full Service

Car 303 - Full Service

2029 Season

TBD

2030 Season

TBD

Future Museum Expansion

Car 2778 - In Service

Main Loop Completion

South Main Completion

Visitors Center Expansion

Chippewa Lake Park - CSW&C ROW Extension

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The depth and scope of the public outreach will evolve over time and highlight the museum's NORM 2030 strategic objectives and accomplishments via presentations, social media, etcetera. This will include forecasting and implementing scheduled and non-scheduled operating days, anticipated attendance number and demographics and future growth possibilities and impacts.

Public Outreach Presentations

Audience

Historical Societies, Friends of the Library, Professional Societies, Retirement Communities and Fraternal Organizations

Location

Medina and contiguous counties

Saturday Morning Seminar Series

Internal Museum Focus **Internet**

Applications

Facebook and Instagram

Distance Learning

Museum's Physical Facilities

Curriculum Development

Railroad Safety Training

BSA Scouts Railroading Merit Badge

Science Technology Engineering Arts Mathematics (STEAM)

5th through 7th Grades

Online Presence (Website, Seminars/Webinars and Podcasts)

POTENTIAL ROAD BLOCKS & SOLUTIONS

STAFFING: all operational and supports aspects of the museum's operations both current operations and as part of the succession planning process

Skilled in the areas of mechanical and electrical

Non-skilled in the areas of organizational and administrative Paid professional staff members

ENVIROMENTAL: Wet lands on the main loop and north parking area completion

FUNDING: Major timeline infrastructure and visitor center completion

The Sources of Non-profit Funding

Bequests 8%

Foundations 19%

Individuals 67%

Corporations 7%

Grant Writing Skills and Awareness

Candid Non-profit Organizations Online Training

Candid Organization Profile

Candid Training Courses

Introduction to Proposal Writing

Introduction to Finding Grants

MUSEUM SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

NORM Bylaws

NORM Prospectus to the Community

My Vision for NORM for the Next Five Years (2006) – Walt Stoner

Tour Guide Manual (2009) –

Docent guided walking tours of the Museum's car collection and operation of the Museum Store

Conductor Training (2017) – Steve Heister

Physical qualifications to become a Conductor; track, switch and overhead functionality, car operations rule book, emergency situations awareness and mitigation, and Conductor's Qualification Examination

Visitors Guide (2024)

Procedures Manual (2017)

Fall Foliage Tour 2023 Operations Plan – Walt Stoner

NORM 2030 – Strategic Plan (2025) – Board of Directors