

Resources for Prototype Track Planning

Prototype track planning is the reproduction in miniature of the trackage of a real railroad at a particular time and place with the greatest degree of accuracy possible given the constraints of space, access, standards, and model physics.

The evolution of Prototype Track Planning: Notable track plans

Frank Ellison's Delta Lines c. 1934-1956
John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid, c. 1954-1973
John Armstrong's Canandaigua Southern c. 1950-2004
Allen McClelland's V&O c. 1962-2001
Jim Hediger's Ohio Southern c. 1980
Bill Darnaby's Maumee Route c. 1992
Tony Koester's NKP Third Sub c. 2000
Paul Dolkos' Baltimore Harbor District c. 2008
Lance Mindheim's CSX Downtown Miami c. 2008

Tools for Prototype Track Planning

Online Mapping Software

Google Maps <https://maps.google.com/>
Bing Maps <https://www.bing.com/maps/>
Google MyMaps <https://www.google.com/mymaps>
Historical Topographic Maps <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/maps/TopoView/> >get maps
Google Earth <https://www.google.com/earth/>

Track Maps

Multimodalways <http://www.multimodalways.org/archives/rrs/rrs.html>

- Conrail ZTS maps
- Many other roads

Also available from historical societies, swap meets, etc.

Other Resources

Frograil Tours <http://www.frograil.com>

Wikipedia <https://www.wikipedia.org/>

- Railroad entries
- Towns/Cities entries

Picture Sites like RR Picture Archives <http://www.rrpicturearchives.net/>

When all else fails: library, museums

Bob's Calculators

- Curve and Grade
- Train Length
- Scale Distance
- Degrees/Radius
- Frog Angle

<https://www.bobstrackplans.com/plans>

CAD Software

I use MacDraft Pro <http://www.microspot.com/>

Characteristics of a Prototype Track Plan

- Recognizable depiction of a real-life railroad route at a point in time
- Facilitates operation in the manner of a particular prototype
- Gives a sense of location/direction/orientation
- Uses believable scaling and compression
- Uses prototypical track design principles

Prototype Track Patterns

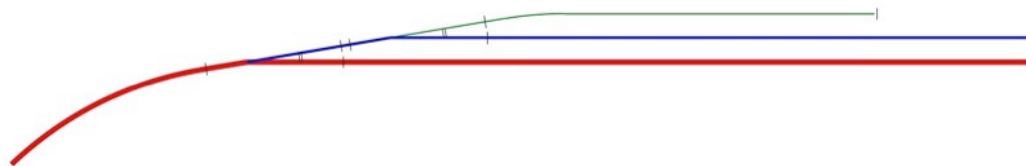
We might be tempted to do this:



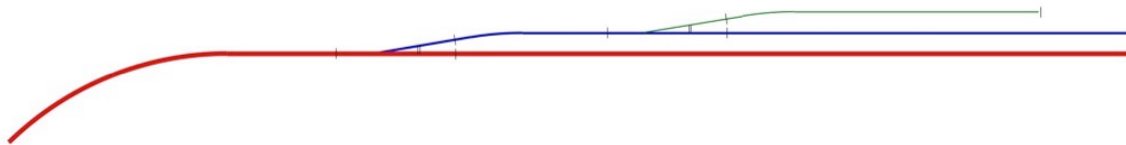
The prototype would almost certainly do this:



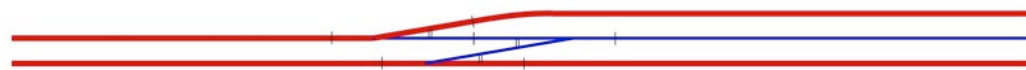
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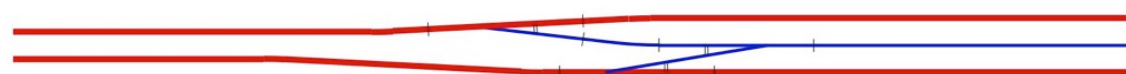
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All of Bob Sprague's track plans can be viewed and downloaded at:
<https://www.bobstrackplans.com/plans>