Riverside Transfer Short Line Operations Primer

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About the Riverside Transfer Short Line Railroad

The **Riverside Transfer Short Line Railroad (RTSL)** is a freelanced N-scale model railroad designed to offer a fun and engaging operating experience. While the layout draws inspiration from real-world railroading practices, it prioritizes creative problem-solving, teamwork, and a sense of accomplishment over strict adherence to prototypical rules. Whether you're a seasoned operator or new to the hobby, the RTSL provides a welcoming and enjoyable environment for all.

What Makes the RTSL Unique?

Two Yards, Two Challenges:

- **Croton-Harmon Yard (North):** A bustling classification yard where operators sort cars for staging or local deliveries.
- **Riverside Yard (South):** The heart of industrial switching and car float operations, complete with multiple industries to serve and puzzles to solve.
- **Car Float Operations:** The south end features a working car float at the 69th Street Transfer. Operators will load and unload cars, managing traffic as it interchanges with the "off-layout" world—a unique twist that adds variety and challenge to the session.
- **Freight Traffic Designed for Fun:** Each operating session moves approximately 114 cars, broken into manageable 8-car trains. From delivering empties to industries to spotting loaded cars, every move on the RTSL is meaningful and contributes to the session's objectives.
- **Zone Track Spotting:** Cars must be spotted at precise locations within industries, adding a layer of strategic thinking and coordination to the operations.
- **Collaborative Gameplay:** The RTSL is designed to foster teamwork. All three operators must work together to keep traffic flowing smoothly and meet the layout's goals for the session.

Operating Positions:

1. **Croton-Harmon Yardmaster:** Oversees operations at the main yard, classifying cars and assembling trains for staging or local delivery.
2. **Riverside Yardmaster:** Balances car float management, local industry switching, and maintaining order in the secondary yard.
3. **Short Line Engineer:** A flexible role that supports both yards, handles mainline road trains, and serves industries outside the yard limits.

Why Visit the RTSL?

The Riverside Transfer Short Line Railroad is an inviting layout where creativity meets operations. It's not about adhering to strict rules—it's about solving switching puzzles, coordinating with fellow operators, and enjoying the flow of freight traffic in a relaxed yet dynamic environment. Whether you're strategizing how to maximize yard efficiency or figuring out the best way to load the car float, the RTSL delivers a fulfilling and memorable experience. Come join us for an operating session where every train counts, every move matters, and fun is the ultimate goal!

Layout Background

The layout is set on the West Side of Manhattan, blending both reality and fiction to create a captivating narrative. Its concept is freelance, a "railroad of lies," providing a creative and engaging foundation for operations.

The story of this fictional railroad empire begins with the Human[c]ity Junction Leasing Company (HCJX), which seized an intriguing opportunity as the New York Central Railroad wound down its freight operations in Manhattan. HCJX acquired the iconic Pacemaker Boxcars (40') and the West Side branch line, stretching from the northern tip of Manhattan in Inwood to the 72nd Street Yard and the 69th Street Transfer Bridge.

To manage these assets, HCJX founded "Riverside Transfer," a company dedicated to overseeing car float operations and the freight terminal. Riverside Transfer established key interchanges:

- To the north at the Croton-Harmon Yard.
- To the south at the West Side Float Bridge.

Layout Inspiration

The design of the layout draws inspiration from the historic 69th Street Transfer Bridge, bringing a piece of New York City's industrial past to life.

Layout Overview

- Location: Upper West Side, Manhattan, New York, NY
- Scale: N (1:160)
- Layout Size: 28 ft x 1 ft (shelf layout, around the room)
- Mainline Length: 30 ft
- Era: 1968–1973 (flexible for other eras/models)
- Theme: 3D board game inspired by prototypical railroading
- Purpose: Short Line railroad operations
- First Operating Session: April 2024
- Crew Complement: 3 operators
- Session Pace: ~3 hours
- Tone: Casual atmosphere

The Riverside Transfer Livery

Visiting Operator Essentials

Before Arrival:

- **Familiarize Yourself**:
  - Review the Car Cards & Waybill system.
  - Understand the Zone Track Spot (Z-T-S) designations.
- **Bring the Essentials**:
  - Comfortable shoes—you'll be standing and walking for most of the session.
  - Personal throttles are welcome (Digitrax Duplex or Wi-Fi preferred).
- **Ask Questions**: Don't hesitate to reach out via email for clarifications.

During the Session:

- **Use the Tools Provided:** Magnifying glasses, uncoupling tools, and detailed track diagrams are available to assist you.
- **Stay Organized:** Use sorting rails for Car Cards & Waybills—do not place them directly on the layout.
- **Protect the Lead:** Always maintain a clear view of the direction your train is moving. When moving forward, focus on watching the front of the train to ensure the path ahead is safe. When reversing, shift your attention to the back of the train, monitoring for any obstacles or hazards. In both cases, protecting the lead ensures the train's movement is controlled and secure.

General Rules:

- Visitors may rerail trains if they derail.
- Food and drinks are allowed only on the provided table, not near the layout.
- Faulty trains should be placed on the RIP track in Croton Harmon Yard with a "Bad Order" slip (pink) attached to the Car Card.
- Notify the layout owner about any layout issues.
- Do not leave rolling stock blocking turnouts for any longer than necessary.

Location:

- Layout Address and location will be provided separately via email.

Bathroom Location:

1. Exit the layout room and turn left.
2. Go through the double doors.
3. Turn right and proceed to the end of the hallway.
4. The bathroom is slightly to the right at the hallway's end.

Emergency Exit:

- Use the stairs and exit through any door leading to the street.

Wi-Fi Access

- SSID: Human_Layout
- Password:
  (Used for both throttle operations and internet access.)

This section gives you an overview of the three roles available on the RTSL. Don't worry if you don't meet all the criteria—just come with an open mind and plenty of questions. Together, we'll make it a fun and informative experience for everyone!

Riverside Yardmaster

Responsibilities:

- Oversee Riverside Yard operations on the South end of the layout.
- Classify incoming trains and prepare outbound trains.
- Operate the car float to manage loading and unloading of cars efficiently.
- Switch local industries within the Riverside Yard's area of responsibility.
- Perform additional switching jobs as needed, such as rearranging cars for industries or temporary storage.
- Coordinate closely with the Short Line Engineer and Cortlandt Yardmaster to handle south-end traffic efficiently.

Skills Needed:

- Proficiency in switching and car classification operations.
- Familiarity with car float procedures and local industry requirements.
- Problem-solving skills to manage multiple tasks and prioritize effectively.

Key Performance Goals:

- Keep car float operations running smoothly to maintain layout traffic balance.
- Provide timely switching for local industries to support operating session goals.
- Manage Riverside Yard traffic to prevent delays to road trains or mainline movements.

Work Areas:

- Riverside Yard
- Riverside Industries
- 72nd Street Industries
- 69th Street Car Float (South Interchange)

Do NOT Work:

- IRT Powerhouse
- Manhattanville
- Croton-on-Hudson
- Croton-Harmon Yard (CH Yard)
- Selkirk (North Interchange)

Note:

- Send all restricted cars to Croton-Harmon Yard in Cortlandt

Cortland Yardmaster

Responsibilities:

- Manage operations in Croton-Harmon Yard on the North end of the layout.
- Classify incoming trains by sorting cars onto appropriate tracks based on their destinations and outbound assignments.
- Assemble outbound trains in the correct order for road operations.
- Coordinate with the Short Line Engineer to ensure efficient traffic flow in and out of the yard.
- Troubleshoot yard bottlenecks or space constraints and adjust movements as necessary.
- Maintain clear communication with the Riverside Yardmaster and Short Line Engineer to manage overall layout traffic.

Skills Needed:

- Strong understanding of car card and waybill systems (if applicable).
- Ability to handle complex switching tasks efficiently.
- Good communication and teamwork to coordinate with other operators.

Key Performance Goals:

- Minimize yard congestion by optimizing track utilization.
- Ensure outbound trains are correctly built and ready for departure on schedule.
- Collaborate effectively to keep mainline traffic running smoothly.

Work Areas:

- Croton-Harmon Yard
- Croton-on-Hudson
- Selkirk (North Interchange)

Classify/Block Cars for:

- Croton-on-Hudson
- Manhattanville
- IRT Powerhouse

Do NOT Work:

- Riverside Yard
- Riverside Industries
- 72nd Street Industries
- 69th Street Car Float (South Interchange)

Note:

- Send all restricted cars to Riverside Yard

Short Line Engineer

Responsibilities:

- Act as a supporting operator for both Cortlandt and Riverside Yardmasters as needed.
- Run road trains between Croton-Harmon Yard, Riverside Yard, and other layout destinations.
- Perform switching duties at industries outside of the primary yard areas.
- Resolve any operational issues on the mainline or at industries, including track blockages or car misplacement.
- Communicate effectively with both yardmasters to ensure seamless traffic flow across the layout.

Skills Needed:

- Versatility in operating road trains and performing switching tasks.
- Strong coordination and communication skills to work with yardmasters.
- Flexibility to adapt to various roles during the session as needed.

Key Performance Goals:

- Ensure road trains run on schedule with minimal delays.
- Assist yardmasters promptly to prevent yard congestion.
- Handle mainline and industry switching tasks efficiently to maintain session flow.

Work Areas:

- Switch the following industries:
- Croton-on-Hudson
- Manhattanville
- IRT Powerhouse
- Run trains between Riverside Yard and Croton-Harmon Yard (both directions).

Coordinate With:

- Cortlandt and Riverside Yardmasters as needed.

Team Coordination

- All three operators must work together to ensure smooth and safe operations across the layout.
- Clear and consistent communication is vital for resolving conflicts and maintaining efficient traffic flow.
- Collaboration on task prioritization will help avoid delays and optimize the operating session experience.

Riverside Yardmaster

Work Areas:

Riverside

72nd Street

69th Street

Do NOT Work:

Selkirk

Croton-Harmon

on-Hudson

Manhattanville

IRT Powerhouse

Note: Send all restricted cars to Croton-Harmon.

Cortlandt Yardmaster

Work Areas:

Selkirk

Croton-Harmon

Classify/Block Cars for:

on-Hudson

Manhattanville

IRT Powerhouse

Do NOT Work:

Riverside

72nd Street

69th Street

Note: Send all restricted cars to Riverside Yard.

Shortline Engineer

Work with BOTH Yardmasters as needed

Industry Switching

on-Hudson

Manhattanville

IRT Powerhouse

Run trains between Riverside Yard and Croton-Harmon (both directions).

Track Power

Circuit Breakers

- The layout is split into 6 power districts using DCC Specialties PSXX Circuit Breakers.

Command Station Track Power

- If nothing on the layout is working, including throwing turnouts, the command station track power might have tripped.
- Located on all the switch panels, track power is indicated by the color of the logo.
    - If the logo is green, the layout has the track power turned on.
    - If the logo is red, track power is turned off.

    - If the track power went out due to a short, please first clear the issue that caused the short, then hit the "Track On" button to restore power to the layout.
- Located on the fascia around the layout, there are green LEDs that indicate track power status.
   - If the layout experiences a short or power loss, the LEDs will not be lit.

Troubleshooting Locomotive Issues:

- If your locomotive is not moving, check the green LED indicators to ensure track power is active.

Locomotive Track Power (Default Off)

- The default for all locomotive tracks is that they are powered off
- To turn on track power to a locomotive track, press the red button at the end of the track.
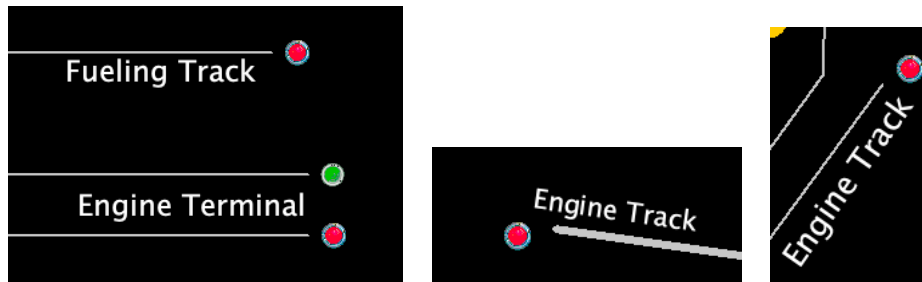
- Once you have pulled your locomotive clear of the track, please turn the power back off by pressing the green button.

Tablet Operations for Turnout Control

Overview: The tablets positioned around the layout are configured to run JMRI (Java Model Railroad Interface) control panels.

Using the Tablets:
- Each tablet displays a schematic of the layout with turnouts represented as toggle buttons.
- To change a turnout, tap the corresponding button on the screen. A successful turnout operation will be indicated visually (e.g., a green or red line on the schematic).

Operational Notes:
- Always verify the turnout alignment on the panel before proceeding with any movement.

If a turnout does not respond, notify the dispatcher or layout coordinator immediately.

Safety: Ensure all train movements are halted when troubleshooting turnout control issues on the tablets.

Uncoupling Procedures for Visiting Operators

Uncoupling N scale model railroad rolling stock on the Riverside Transfer Short Line requires precision, care, and the use of the proper tools. Follow these steps to ensure efficient and damage-free operations:

Bring the Train to a Complete Stop
- Always stop your train completely before attempting to uncouple cars. Position the train on a straight track section whenever possible to reduce tension on the couplers.

Use the Uncoupling Tools
- Use uncoupling picks provided near the layout. These tools are designed to fit between the couplers without applying excessive force.

Align and Insert the Tool
- Insert the uncoupling tool between the coupler knuckles. Take care to align the tool vertically and avoid twisting or forcing it into place, as this can damage the couplers or rolling stock.

Release Tension
- Gently nudge the train forward or backward to relieve any tension on the couplers before uncoupling. This minimizes resistance and makes the uncoupling process smoother.

Spread or Lift Couplers
- For **Micro-Trains magnetic knuckle couplers**, spread the knuckles slightly with the tool to disengage them.

Practice Patience
- Take your time. Jerky or hurried movements can cause derailments or damage. If you're new to this process, practice on an easier area of the layout to gain confidence.

Lighting and Magnification
- Ensure the work area is well-lit. Magnifying glasses are available on the fascia for improved precision when working with smaller couplers.

By following these guidelines, visiting operators can ensure smooth and efficient operations while protecting the delicate components of the layout's rolling stock.
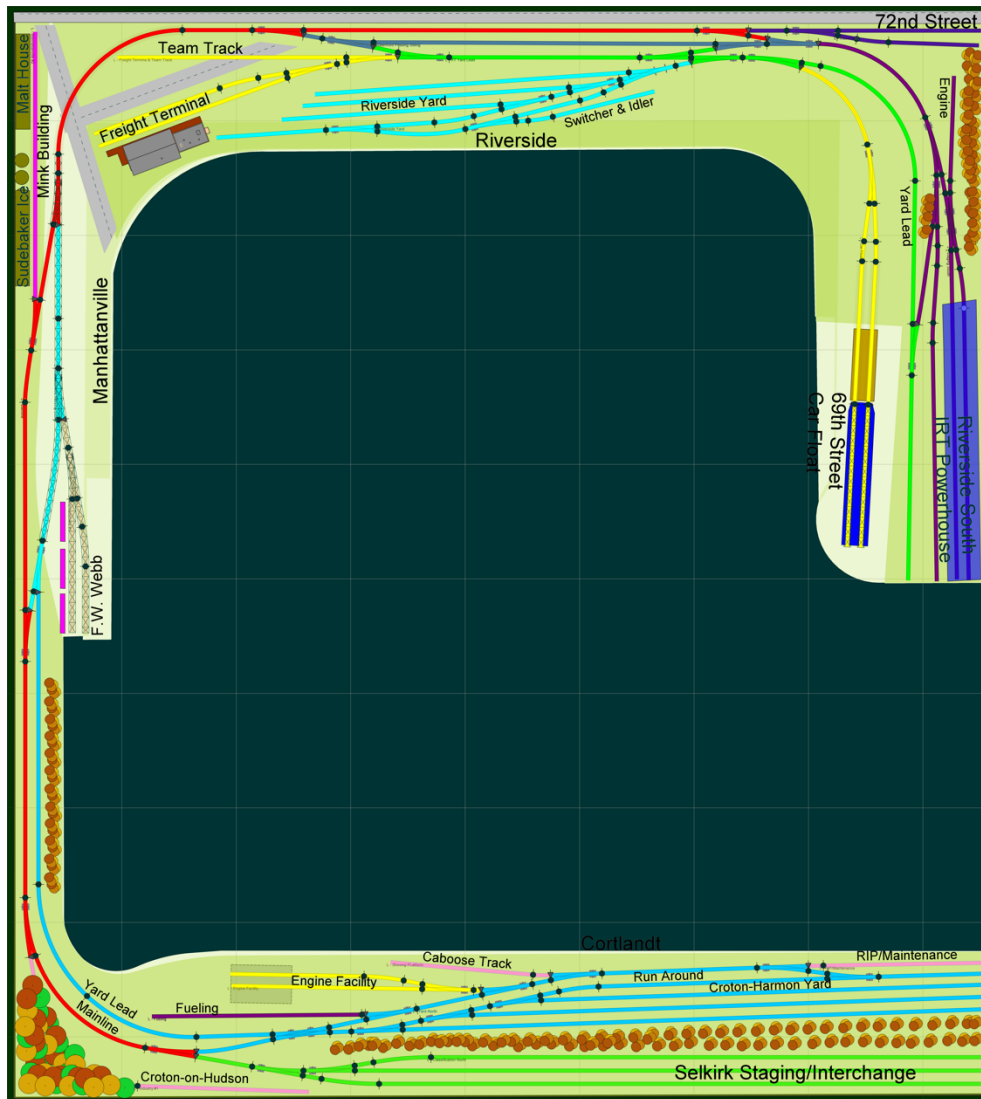
Operations

Layout Orientation

- Track Diagrams: Clearly displayed on the valance for easy reference.
- Station Names and Mileposts: Labeled and visible on the valance above the layout.
- Directional Layout: The layout is oriented along a North/South axis.

The layout operates on a 3-stage rotation:

1. Empty Cars: Move from industries to staging via the yards.
2. Loaded Cars: Transfer from yards to industries.
3. Staged Cars: Deliver from staging to the closest yard.
- Maximum train length: 8 cars (excluding locomotives and cabooses).

The Layout Plan

Riverside Transfer Shortline Train Schedule (Northbound Trains Have Priority)

Seq	Train	Origin	Destination	Description	Build	Engineer
1	PC-222	Riverside South	Croton-Harmon	Move empty cars with Selkirk destination from any IRT Powerhouse track to Croton-Harmon Yard, Place 69th Street Cars on Riverside Yard Extension.	SE	SE
2	RC-211	Riverside	Croton-Harmon	Build train of loaded on-Hudson, Manhattanville and Riverside Sotuh cars and setout on Riverside A/D track, run train to Croton-Harmon Yard. 1st Train	RY	SE
3	CR-412	Croton-Harmon	Riverside	Build train of loaded Riverside and 72nd Street cars. Run train to Riverside Yard. 1st Train	CY	SE
4	RR-422	Riverside	Riverside	Pull empty cars from Riveride Industries and deliver to Riverside Yard for classification. Spot loaded cars at Riverside Industries.	RY	RY
5	CP-712	Croton-Harmon	Riverside South	Build Train of loaded cars for the IRT Powerhouse. Block cars for delivery. Run train from Croton-Harmon Yard to IRT Powerhouse. 1st Train.	CY	SE
6	PC-224	Riverside South	Croton-Harmon	Move empty cars with Selkirk destination from any IRT Powerhouse track to Croton-Harmon Yard, Place 69th Street Cars on Riverside Yard Extension.	SE	SE
7	RC-213	Riverside	Croton-Harmon	Build train of loaded on-Hudson, Manhattanville and Riverside South cars and empty Selkirk cars and setout on Riverside A/D track, run train to Croton-Harmon Yard. Priority is loaded cars. 2nd Train.	RY	SE
8	CS-111	Croton-Harmon	Croton-Harmon	Move empty cars from Croton-Harmon to Selkirk, 1st Train.	CY	CY
9	TR-411	69th Street	Riverside	Pickup loaded cars from 69th Street Float and deliver to Riverside Yard. Store cars in yard for session. 1st Train	N/A	RY
10	CP-714	Croton-Harmon	Riverside South	Build Train of loaded cars for the IRT Powerhouse. Block cars for delivery. Run train from Croton-Harmon Yard to IRT Powerhouse. 2nd Train.	CY	SE
11	RT-812	Riverside	69th Street	Load car float with empty cars for 69th Street. 1st Float. Must be completed 1.5 hours into session	RY	RY
12	CP-716	Croton-Harmon	Riverside South	Build Train of loaded cars for the IRT Powerhouse. Block cars for delivery. Add any loaded/empty cars for Riverside, 72nd Street or 69th Street. Run train from Croton-Harmon Yard to IRT Powerhouse. 3rd Train.	CY	SE
13	PR-415	Riverside South	Riverside	Move empty cars with 69th Street destination from any IRT Powerhouse track and Riverside Yard Extension to Riverside Yard.	SE/RY	SE/RY
14	CH-252	Croton-Harmon	on-Hudson	Run loaded cars with on-Hudson destination to Croton-on-Hudson. Pickup all empty cars and deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard for classifcation to final destination	CY	CY
15	CS-113	Croton-Harmon	Selkirk	Move empty cars from Croton-Harmon to Selkirk, 2nd Train.	CY	CY
16	RR-424	Riverside	Riverside	Pull empty cars from Riveride Industries and deliver to Riverside Yard for classification. Spot loaded cars at Riverside Industries.	RY	RY
17	SC-212	Selkirk	Croton-Harmon	Pickup loaded cars from Selkirk and deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard. Store cars in yard for session. 1st Train	N/A	CY/SE
18	RC-215	Riverside	Croton-Harmon	Build train of loaded on-Hudson, Manhattanville and Riverside South cars and empty Selkirk cars and setout on Riverside A/D track, run train to Croton-Harmon Yard. Priority is loaded cars. 3rd Train	RY	SE
19	CM-312	Croton-Harmon	Manhattanville	Build train of loaded cars for Manhattanville. Deliver cars to Manhattanville and pickup all empties. Deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard for classifcation to final destination. 1st Train	CY	SE
20	RD-452	Riverside	72nd Street	Pull empty cars from 72nd Street and deliver to Riverside Yard for classification. Spot loaded cars at 72nd Street.	RY	RY
21	CM-314	Croton-Harmon	Manhattanville	Build train of loaded cars for Manhattanville. Deliver cars to Manhattanville and pickup all empties. Deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard for classifcation to final destination. 2nd Train	CY	SE
22	RC-217	Riverside	Croton-Harmon	Build train of empty Selkirk cars and setout on Riverside A/D track, run train to Croton-Harmon Yard.	RY	SE
23	CR-414	Croton-Harmon	Riverside	Build train of loaded/empty Riverside, 72nd Street and 69th Street cars. Run train to Riverside Yard. Priority is loaded cars. 2nd Train.	CY	SE
24	TR-413	69th Street	Riverside	Pickup loaded cars from 69th Street Float and deliver to Riverside Yard. Store cars in yard for session. 2nd Train	N/A	RY
25	CS-115	Croton-Harmon	Selkirk	Move empty cars from Croton-Harmon to Selkirk, 3rd Train.	CY	CY
26	SC-214	Selkirk	Croton-Harmon	Pickup loaded cars from Selkirk and deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard. Store cars in yard for session. 2nd Train	N/A	CY/SE
27	RT-814	Riverside	69th Street	Load car float with empty cars for 69th Street. 2nd Float. Must be completed 2.75 hours into session	RY	RY
28	CS-117	Croton-Harmon	Selkirk	Move empty cars from Croton-Harmon to Selkirk, 4th Train.	CY	SE
29	SC-216	Selkirk	Croton-Harmon	Pickup loaded cars from Selkirk and deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard. Store cars in yard for session. 3rd Train	N/A	CY/SE
30	SC-218	Selkirk	Croton-Harmon	Pickup loaded cars from Selkirk and deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard. Store cars in yard for session. 4th Train	N/A	CY/SE
				RTSL Extra Trains		
XTRA	CR-416	Croton-Harmon	Riverside	Build train of loaded/empty Riverside, 72nd Street and 69th Street cars. Run train to Riverside Yard. Priority is loaded cars. 3rd Train.	CY	SE
XTRA	CR-418	Croton-Harmon	Riverside	Build train of empty 69th Street cars. Run train to Riverside Yard for classification. 4th Train	CY	SE

SC-212

From: Selkirk
To: Croton-Harmon

Pickup loaded cars from Selkirk and deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard. Store cars in yard for session. 1st Train

	17	E

RC-215

From: Riverside
To: Croton-Harmon

Build train of loaded on-Hudson, Manhattanville and Riverside South cars and empty Selkirk cars and setout on Riverside A/D track, run train to Croton-Harmon Yard. Priority is loaded cars. 3rd Train

RY	18	SE

CM-312

From: Croton-Harmon
To: Manhattanville

Build train of loaded cars for Manhattanville. Deliver cars to Manhattanville and pickup all empties. Deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard for classifcation to final destination. 1st Train

CY	19	SE

CM-314

From: Croton-Harmon
To: Manhattanville

Build train of loaded cars for Manhattanville. Deliver cars to Manhattanville and pickup all empties. Deliver to Croton-Harmon Yard for classifcation to final destination. 2nd Train

CY	21	SE

RC-217

From: Riverside
To: Croton-Harmon

Build train of empty Selkirk cars and setout on Riverside A/D track, run train to Croton-Harmon Yard.

RY	22	SE

CR-414

From: Croton-Harmon
To: Riverside

Build train of loaded/empty Riverside, 72nd Street and 69th Street cars. Run train to Riverside Yard. Priority is loaded cars. 2nd Train.

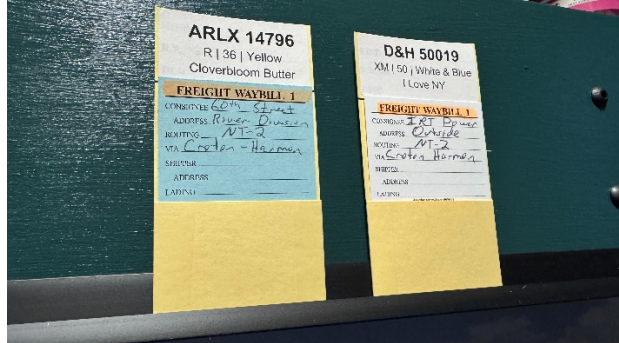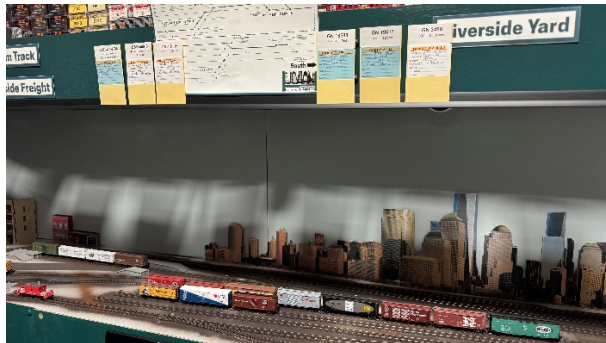| CY	23	SE

Car Cards and Waybills

- Card and Waybill Use: Always move Car Cards and Waybills with the trains.
- Organization:
  - Car Card boxes are on the fascia.
  - The top card represents the car closest to the locomotive. Keep cards in order.
- Waybill Numbering:
  - Tracks: Numbered from the mainline outward.
  - Spots: Numbered starting at the turnout.
- Reading Car Numbers:
  - Use magnifying glasses if necessary.
  - Pull cars onto a clear track for better visibility.
- Waybill Rules: Do not switch or rotate waybills during an operating session.
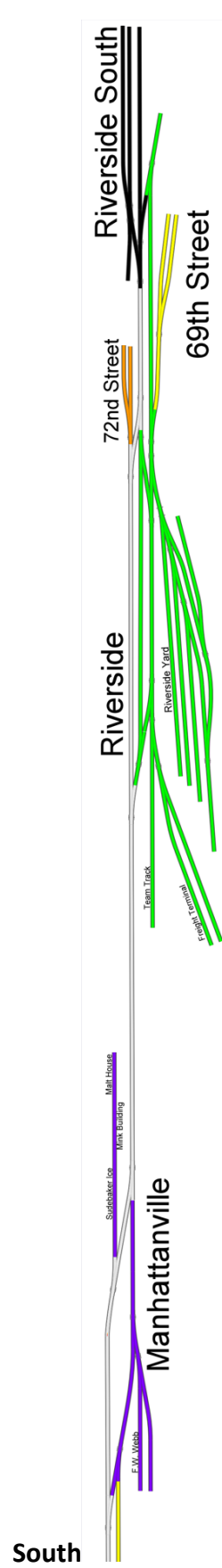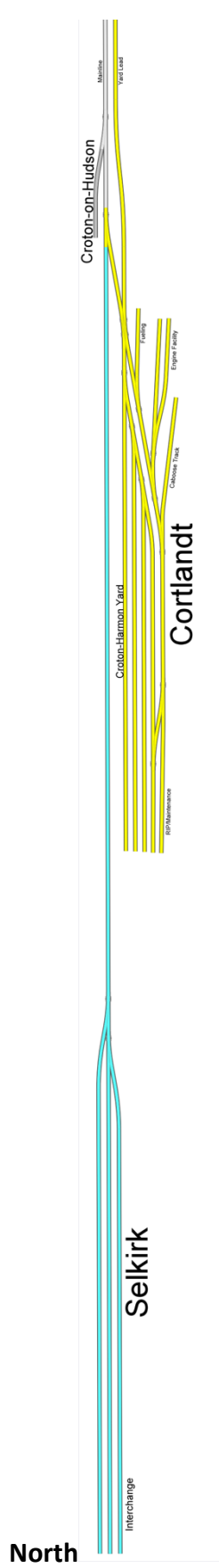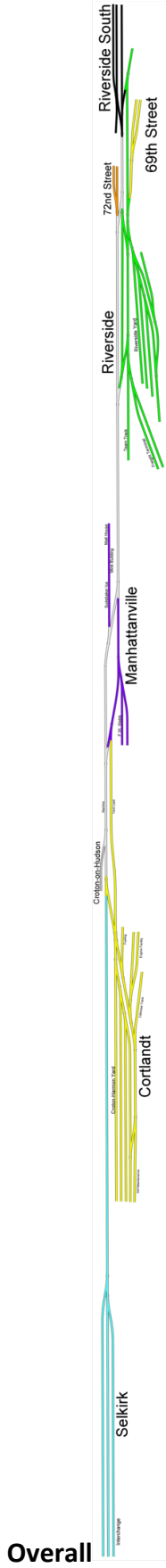
Waybill Examples

Manhattanville 1	**Manhattanville** 1
To: F.W. Webb	**To:** Mink Building
Z-T-S: 31-712-03	**Z-T-S: 31-714-01**
Via: Croton-Harmon Yard	**Via:** Croton-Harmon Yard
Lading: Loaded	**Lading:** Loaded
From: Hartz Mtn Corporation	**From:** Maines Candy Paper Company

(Reverse side, printed upside-down:)

69th Street 2	**Selkirk** 2
To: Car Float/Interchange	**To:** Interchange
Z-T-S: 51-000-00	**Z-T-S: 11-000-00**
Via: Riverside Yard	**Via:** Croton-Harmon Yard
Lading: Empty	**Lading:** Empty
From: F.W. Webb	**From:** Mink Building

Car Card Sorting: Please use the Car Card sorting rails for organizing the CC&WBs during an operating session. Do not put the CC&WBs on the layout.

Car Card Examples

Color: Brown	40
Note:	
ACL	**46683**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Yellow	36
Note:	
ARLX	**7306**
Type: R	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Yellow	36
Note: Cloverbloom Butter	
ARLX	**14796**
Type: R	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Yellow	40
Note: Crazy Water	
ART	**417**
Type: R	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Light Blue	50
Note: GN Weathered	
BN	**950398**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Silver/Blue	40
Note: Sentinel	
BO	**46008**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Color: White	40
Note: Ken-L-Ration Dog Food	
CBIX	**1515**
Type: R	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Black	50
Note: The Right Way	
CG	**1570**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Red	40
Note: Pacemaker	
NYC	**174183**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Red	40
Note: Pacemaker	
NYC	**174200**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Red	40
Note: Pacemaker	
NYC	**174234**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Color: Red	40
Note: Pacemaker	
NYC	**174304**
Type: XM	

When empty, Return to:

Overall

Riverside South
72nd Street
69th Street
Riverside
Riverside Yard
Team Track
Manhattanville
F.W. Webb
Croton-on-Hudson
Mainline
Yard Lead
Croton-Harmon Yard
Cortlandt
Selkirk
Interchange

North

Croton-on-Hudson
Mainline
Yard Lead
Fueling
Engine Facility
Caboose Track
Croton-Harmon Yard
RIP/Maintenance
Cortlandt
Selkirk
Interchange

South

Riverside South
69th Street
72nd Street
Riverside
Riverside Yard
Team Track
Freight Terminal
Malt House
Mink Building
Studebaker Ice
Manhattanville
F.W. Webb

Zone Track Spot System in Railroading

The "Zone Track Spot" system is a precise method used in railroad operations to organize and identify specific tracks and car placements within a yard or industrial area. This system assigns a numbered "zone" to a group of tracks and further divides each track into numbered "spots" for accurate placement of railcars. It acts as a standardized addressing system, improving operational efficiency and communication.

Key Features of Zone Track Spot:

- **Organization:** Each "zone" represents a designated area within a yard or industrial trackage, identified by a unique number.
- **Track Identification:** Tracks within a zone are assigned individual numbers to differentiate them.
- **Spot Designation:** Specific locations along each track, called "spots," are further identified by numbers to precisely position railcars for loading or unloading.

Applications:

1. **Customer Orders:**
   When a customer requests a shipment, the railroad uses the Zone Track Spot system to determine the exact location to place the railcar.
2. **Train Crew Communication:**
   The system provides clear instructions to train crews, making it easier to position cars within a yard or industry and enhancing operational efficiency.

Example:

Imagine "Zone 61," which contains tracks numbered 731 through 733. On Track 732, "Spot 4" might be designated as the precise location for unloading a specific customer's railcar. To simplify identification, each railroad zone may also be assigned a letter, making it easier to reference in train operations and communication.
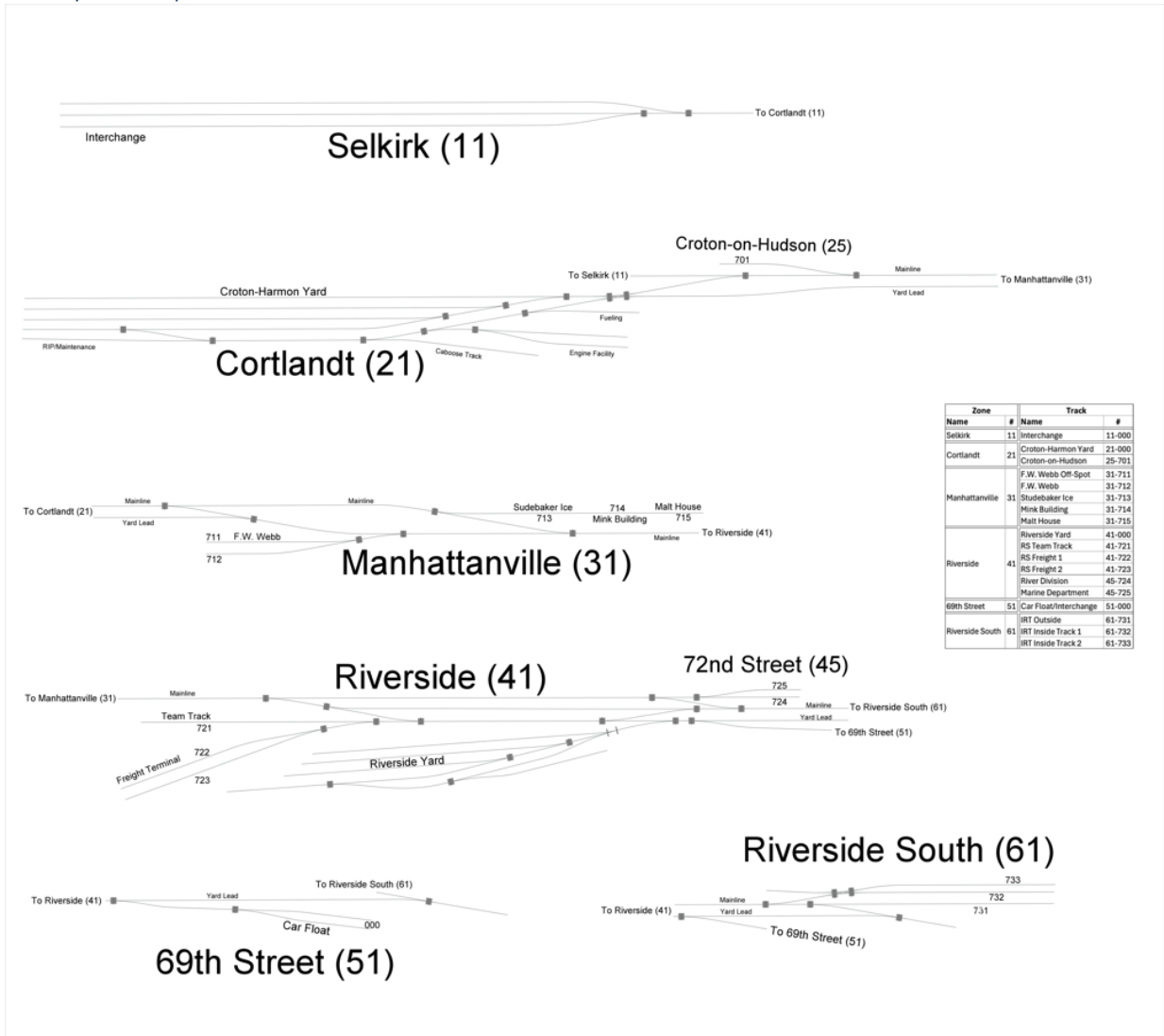
Zone Chart

11	Selkirk	S
21	Croton-Harmon	C
25	on-Hudson	H
31	Manhattanville	M
41	Riverside	R
45	72nd Street	D
51	69th Street	T
61	Riverside S	P

This allows for quick recollection and ensures accuracy when referencing or planning within the railroad system. Additionally, the mnemonic emphasizes the operational mindset of railroads: efficiency, order, and productivity.

Zone Track Chart

Zone		Track	
Name	**#**	**Name**	**#**
Selkirk	11	Interchange	11-000
Cortlandt	21	Croton-Harmon Yard	21-000
		Croton-on-Hudson	25-701
Manhattanville	31	F.W. Webb Off-Spot	31-711
		F.W. Webb	31-712
		Studebaker Ice	31-713
		Mink Building	31-714
		Malt House	31-715
Riverside	41	Riverside Yard	41-000
		RS Team Track	41-721
		RS Freight 1	41-722
		RS Freight 2	41-723
		River Division	45-724
		Marine Department	45-725
69th Street	51	Car Float/Interchange	51-000
Riverside South	61	IRT Outside	61-731
		IRT Inside Track 1	61-732
		IRT Inside Track 2	61-733

ZTS Layout Maps

Zone		Track	
Name	#	Name	#
Selkirk	11	Interchange	11-000
Cortlandt	21	Croton-Harmon Yard	21-000
		Croton-on-Hudson	25-701
Manhattanville	31	F.W. Webb Off-Spot	31-711
		F.W. Webb	31-712
		Studebaker Ice	31-713
		Mink Building	31-714
		Malt House	31-715
Riverside	41	Riverside Yard	41-000
		RS Team Track	41-721
		RS Freight 1	41-722
		RS Freight 2	41-723
		River Division	45-724
		Marine Department	45-725
69th Street	51	Car Float/Interchange	51-000
Riverside South	61	IRT Outside	61-731
		IRT Inside Track 1	61-732
		IRT Inside Track 2	61-733

Selkirk (11)

To Cortlandt (11)

Interchange

Croton-on-Hudson (25)

Mainline

Yard Lead

701

To Selkirk (11)

Fueling

Engine Facility

Cortlandt (21)

Caboose Track

Croton-Harmon Yard

RIP/Maintenance

Manhattanville (31)

To Manhattanville (31)

To Riverside (41)

Malt House

715

Mainline

714

Mink Building

Sudebaker Ice

713

Mainline

F.W. Webb

711

712

Mainline

Yard Lead

To Cortlandt (21)

72nd Street (45)

To Riverside South (61)

To 69th Street (51)

725

724

Mainline

Yard Lead

Riverside (41)

Riverside Yard

Mainline

Team Track

721

722

723

Freight Terminal

To Manhattanville (31)

69th Street (51)

To Riverside South (61)

Car Float

000

Yard Lead

To Riverside (41)

Riverside South (61)

733

732

731

To 69th Street (51)
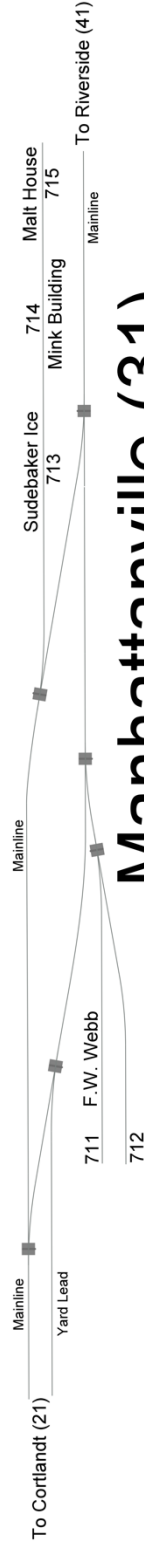
Mainline

Yard Lead

To Riverside (41)
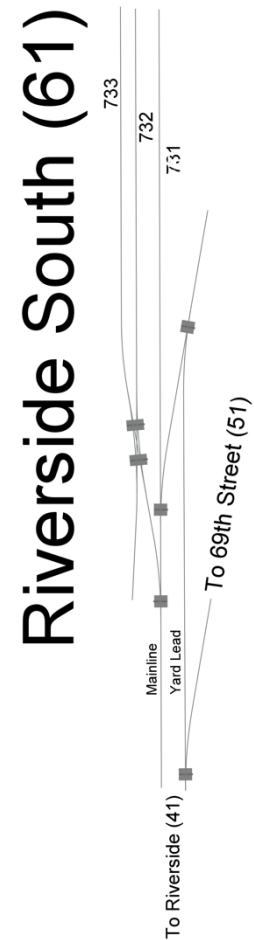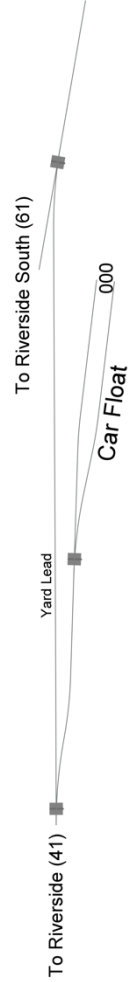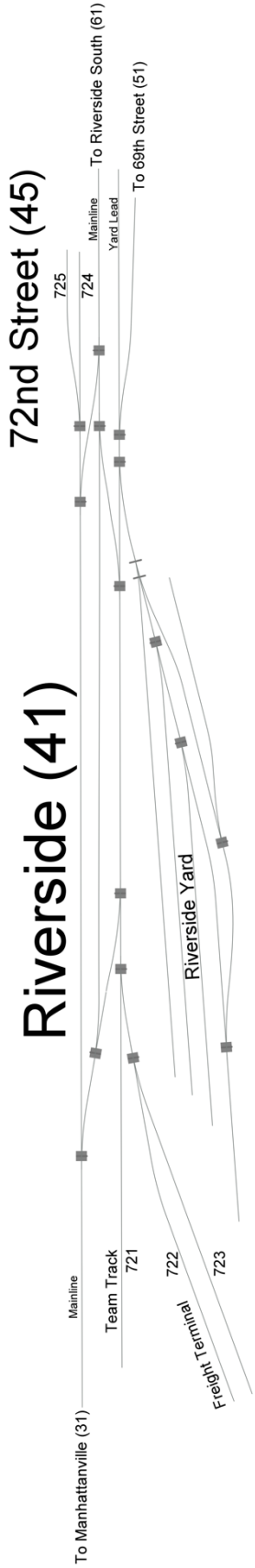
North is to the left when facing the layout.
South is to the right when facing the layout.

Croton-on-Hudson (25)

25-701-01
25-701-02
25-701-03
25-701-04

701   04   03   02   01
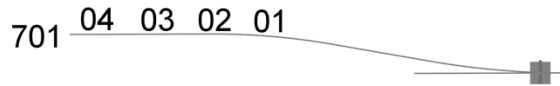
Manhattanville (31)

31-711-01
31-711-02
31-711-03
31-712-01
31-712-02
31-712-03
31-713-01
31-713-02
31-714-01
31-714-02
31-715-01
31-715-02
31-715-03

F.W. Webb

711   03   02   01

712   03   02   01

F.W. Off-Spot

Mink Building 714

Sudebaker Ice 713   Malt House 715

01   02   01   02   01   02   03
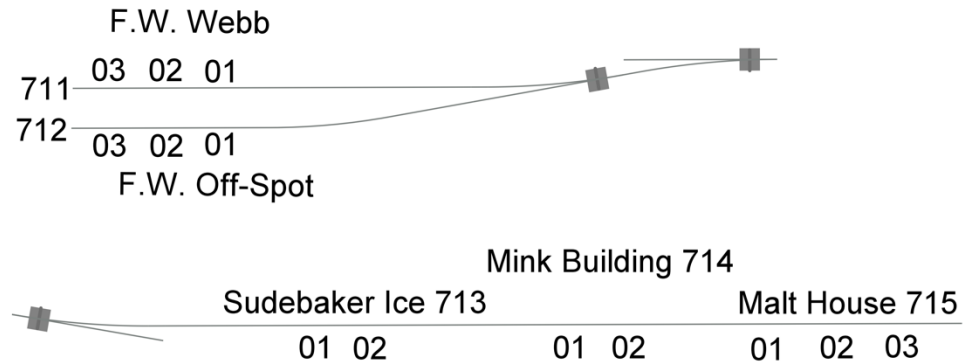
Riverside (41)

41-721-01
41-721-02
41-721-03
41-721-04
41-721-05
41-722-01
41-722-02
41-723-01
41-723-02
41-723-03
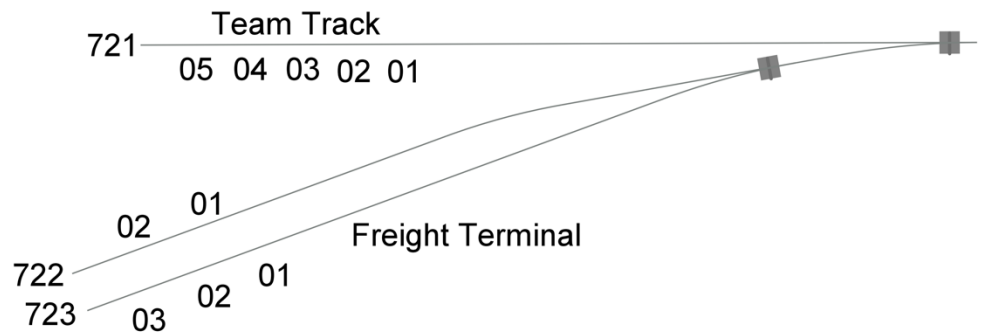
721   Team Track
    05   04   03   02   01

01
02

Freight Terminal

722
723   03   02   01

North is to the left when facing the layout.
South is to the right when facing the layout.

72nd Street (45)

45-724-01
45-724-02
45-724-03
45-725-01
45-725-02
45-725-03

Marine Department
01 02 03 725
01 02 03 724
River Division
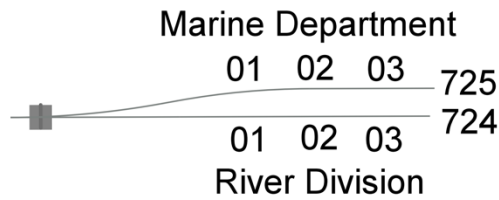
Riverside South (61)

61-731-01   61-732-01   61-733-01
61-731-02   61-732-02   61-733-02
61-731-03   61-732-03   61-733-03
61-731-04   61-732-04   61-733-04
             61-732-05   61-733-05
             61-732-06   61-733-06
             61-732-07   61-733-07
             61-732-08   61-733-08

IRT Powerhouse
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 733
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 732
            01 02 03 04 731
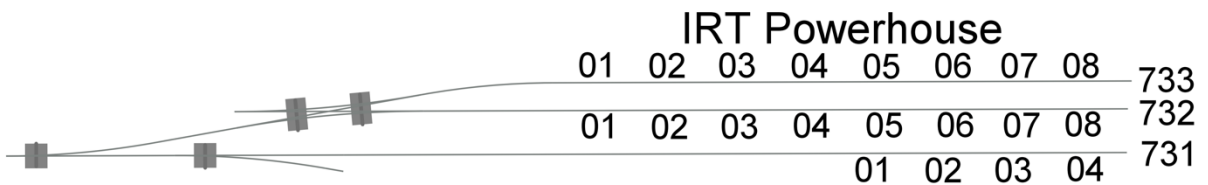
North Staging – Selkirk

Pickup

- Trains are staged and ready for pickup.
  - 3 – 4 trains with 6 or 7 cars each
  - ALL Trains will utilize their own locomotives and cabooses.
    - See train packet for Locomotive Number & DCC Address
- Deliver cars to Croton Harmon Yard for classification and sorting.
- Setout caboose on designated yard track.
- Bring locomotive to engine terminal

Set Outs

- Pickup locomotive(s) from engine terminal.
- Pull caboose and place on South end of train.
- Pull up to 8 cars out of yard (as directed by Yardmaster, onto mainline, past lead switch for Selkirk.
- Run around train and connect locomotive(s) to the North end of the train.
- Run train to Selkirk and points North.
  - Tie down train in Selkirk Yard, the crew van will drive you back to Harmon Yard

Track Power

- Selkirk Tracks must be powered off while not in use.
- See section on Locomotive Track Power

South Staging - Car Float Operations

General Guidelines

- Session Setup: Each session is scheduled with two incoming and two outgoing car floats.
- Float Capacity: Each car float holds a maximum of 8 freight cars.

Operational Procedures

1. Unloading Floats:
   - Unload cars evenly to prevent imbalances.
   - Maintain an imbalance of no more than 2 cars at any time.
2. Car Delivery:
   - Deliver unloaded float cars to Riverside Yard for classification and sorting.
3. Loading Outgoing Floats:
   - Notify the Train Supervisor once the outgoing car float is fully loaded.

Use of Idler Cars

- Purpose:
  - Idler cars (also known as "reach cars") are used to move freight cars on and off the car float without risking the yard locomotive on the transfer bridge.
  - These cars are usually converted flat cars that act as an extension between the yard locomotive and the cars on the barge.
- Designated Idler Cars:
  - Use the Riverside Transfer Cabooses 101 & 102 as idler cars for loading and unloading operations.
- Operational Steps:
  - Couple the yard locomotive to an idler car (RT Caboose 101 or 102).
  - Use the idler car to push onto the float bridge and reach the freight cars on the barge.
  - Carefully pull the cars off the barge or push them onto it.
- Storage of Idler Cars:
  - When not in use, place the RT Transfer Cabooses on the track leads to the car float.
  - This ensures no vehicles drive onto the transfer bridge when a float is not docked.

Controllers

Throttle List: Available on Riverside Transfer

- TCS UWT-100 (1x)
- TCS UWT-50 (1x)
- Digitrax DT602D (1x)
- Digitrax UT6D (1x)
- ProtoThrottle (2x, coming soon)
- Personal Wi-Fi or Digitrax Duplex throttles are welcome.

DCC Addressing:

- Locomotives: Use long addresses. Enter leading zeros for addresses below 128.
- Consists: Use the address of the lower locomotive number in the consist.
- Use F8 to turn on/off sound on locomotives. All of the locomotives except the 44 tonners have sound.
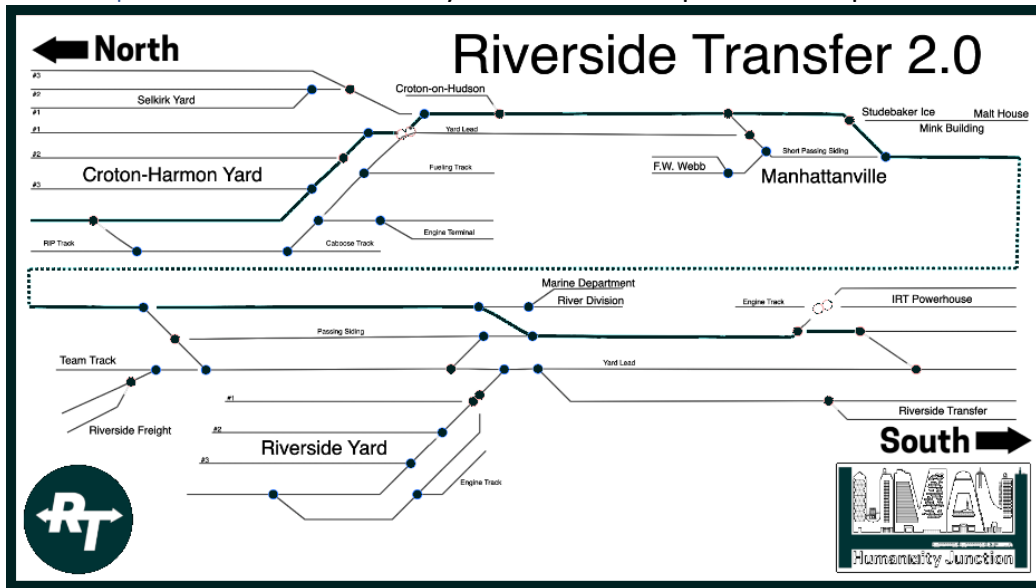
Coming Soon Features:

- Sound Decoders: All sound-equipped locomotives will use ESU decoders.
- Momentum: Enabled by default.
  - Use F4 (brake function) to stop.
  - Ensure F4 is not selected when stationary.
  - Press F7 to enter "Switch Mode" to disable momentum.
- Function Mapping: Check the locomotive card for specific details.

Locomotive Function Mapping: ESU Decoders

F0 ☀️ **Headlight**

F1 🔔 Bell

F2 📢 Horn

F3 🔗 Coupler

F4 🔴 Dynamic Brake

F5 🎇 Aux Lights

F6 🔴 **Independent Brake**

F7 ⚪ Switch Mode

F8 🔊 Sound On/Off

F9 🤝 Drive Hold

Dispatchers Panel: Currently there is not a dispatcher for operations.

Map of Second Floor