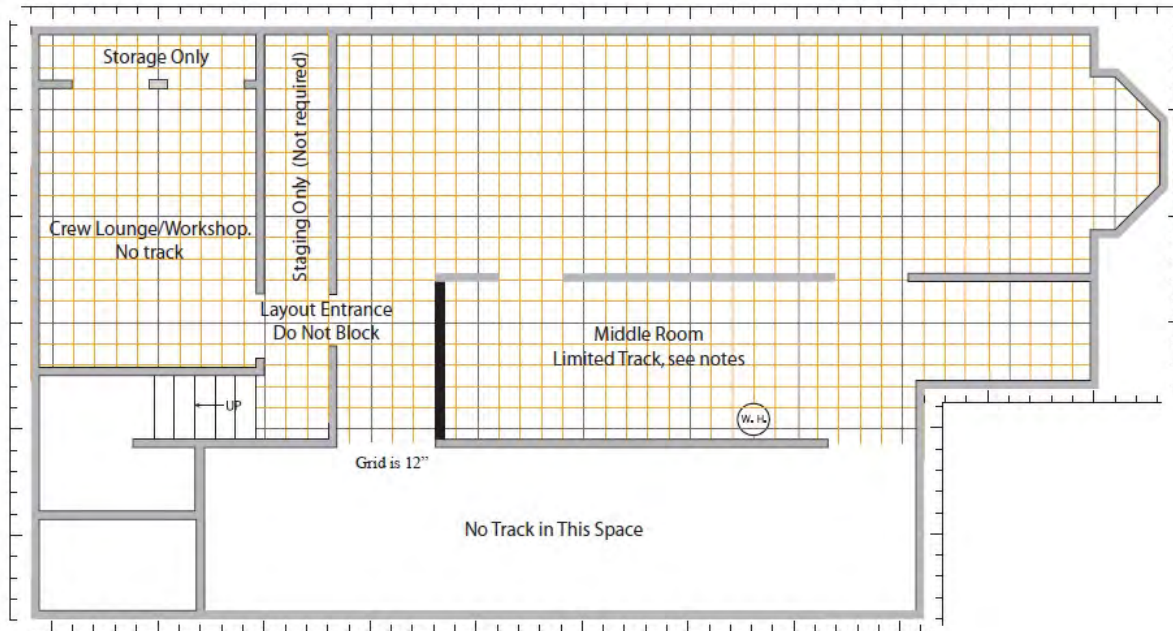


Layout Design and Operation Design Challenge At the Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend January 26-28, 2018 – Alameda

This year the challenge is to design a layout and/or an operation plan for the Alameda Belt Line (ABL). The owner of the space is modeling in scale and has chosen as his era. For the challenge you can choose your scale and era. The space for the layout is approx. 38' x 11', per the drawing below:



The layout will be built in HO scale. Other scale ideas are welcome, especially N. Ray deBlieck is intrigued by what an N scale version might look like.

Preferences:

- All plans should be as close to 100% of the prototype as possible. The ABL mainline is approximately 12,200 feet (including the main yard). That is about 140 feet in HO scale.
- The modeled era is 1953-54, meaning mostly 40' cars would be used.
- 24" minimum radius in HO scale.
- Mainline starts at the bridge into Alameda from Oakland and ends at the yard at the west end of Alameda. Mainline is to follow prototype track map [available to challengers].
- Sidings only where they were on the prototype (here is a hint: there are none. This means clearing main or yards only for passing).
- Virtually all the mainline is to be in the upper room in the drawing above.
- The middle room can be used for docks and any track that must leave the main room at the prototypically correct place and rejoin the main line before the yard office.
- The black wall in the middle room can be removed.
- No other walls can be penetrated.
- The two doorways at the bottom of the upper room can be used for track or blocked by layout (or both).

The Alameda Belt Line was jointly owned by the Western Pacific and the Santa Fe. After the mergers

of the 1980s and 1990s, it was still owned by the successors – UP and BNSF. The largest customer was probably Del Monte Foods.



Del Monte Foods plant after they closed.



ABL yard office and one of the switchers working in 1988.



An earlier photo of Alco S-2 D-5 (ex-State Belt #22). Later renumbered 105 and shown in the background of the photo of the yard office above.

The significant rail-served industries include: Del Monte (California Packing Corp on the map), Pennzoil, Loop Lumber, Pacific Coast Engineering (steel plant), JH Baxter, various maritime industries on the Northern Shore, Weyerhaeuser, Stokely-Van Camp, Alaska Basin docks and the Box Company (building in lower part of yard), among others. There was also a ferry terminal for ATSF and WP ferries to San Francisco.

Some supporting references are found below. It's easy to participate: simply develop a layout design or a general operations plan or both for the Alameda Belt Line along with a page or two of supporting information. The organizers will pull submissions together into a computer presentation for discussion with the group. Each challenger will have five to ten minutes to present his or her design to the meeting on Saturday, January 27th.

After the presentations of the designs, a panel of modelers will discuss the various approaches. If you are not able to attend the meet, but still want to enter the challenge, we can present your entry *in absentia*. The good news is that there is no winning or losing ... the bad news is you will not receive any lovely gifts for participating.

If you are interested in participating in the challenge or have questions regarding the challenge, please e-mail Bruce Morden at bdmorden@sbceo.org or Ray deBlieck at raydbcs@aol.com as soon as possible. Additional maps and photos are available to serious challengers. Most will be part of the presentations on the Saturday of the meet.

Your submissions for the Design Challenge are due no later than January 24, 2015. This is not a lot of time and so we are looking at rough sketches and design thoughts and operational concepts not a finished ready to build design or operating scheme. Our goal is four or five participants.

So pull out your design tools and operations resources and let's have some fun!

Thanks,

Bruce Morden

Selected References

Abandoned Rails page: [http://www.abandonedrails.com/Alameda Belt Line Railroad](http://www.abandonedrails.com/Alameda_Belt_Line_Railroad)

Western Rails page: <http://www.trainweb.org/westernrails/ca/abl.html>

Wikipedia page: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alameda Belt Line](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alameda_Belt_Line)

Other references available to those with on-line or CD access to Kalmbach Publications:

- Trains, August 1941
- Model Railroader, April 1980

Note: These following references are for flavor of the ABL only and some reference. None of these plans cover the entire 12,200 ft.

Byron Henderson's N-scale Alameda Belt Line which appeared in the 2005 *Model Railroad Planning*
<http://www.layoutvision.com/gallery/id32.html>

Byron Henderson's N-scale Oakland Harbor Belt which is partially inspired by the Alameda Belt Line
<http://home.earthlink.net/~hendoweb/ohb/index.html>

M.C. Fujiwara's Alameda Belt-in-a-Box N Scale Layout video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgrJ8Bxwupg>