

Garden Railroad - Plan and Report

Paradise Valley Railroad, Powell River BC

As of Aug 11, 2025

Rationale We'd like to add a garden railroad as a resource for our ride-on railroad for several reasons:

- There are people in Powell River with an interest, including several of our current members,
- The public would enjoy seeing the display, and it could bring new members to the PV Railroad team.
- We set one up for several Santa Trains before Covid and they were very popular,
- Kiwanis donated us some funding towards a Garden Railroad.
- Geoff Stubbs passed away in 2024. His widow and current member Dawn Stubbs donated significant rolling stock and track assets for a G-Scale railroad in memory of Geoff. The assets are stored at Dawn's home.



Operating concept

- PV Railroad builds and maintains the track, and operates some rolling stock
- The public and Members can bring and run their cars free of charge
- We provide electrified track, because most general-public G-Scalers don't have on-board batteries
- At one point we had considered a display box to showcase Geoff's rolling stock, but security considerations have sidelined that idea

Siting Considerations Three sites have been considered:

- Most currently, and approved by the PRFAI, the grove near our south shed. But recent consideration of the significant mulch piled up on trees and the need to properly protect the trees has led to a pause in that plan. We had agreed in June 2025 to add large rocks to the site, but lack a detailed plan to proceed with that option
- In 2024 we were considering an in-the-rafters display in the station using plexiglas surface to entertain regular riders in line and avoid leaf maintenance in the grove. But concerns of vandalism, display quality and lack of expansion area paused that option.
- Most recently (Aug 10, 2025), creating the G-Scale railroad in one of our interior loops was suggested, with suitable paths to enable the public to get past our track.

Organizing concept We need a G-Scale-knowledgeable leader for this project. Our current PVR members are over-committed or don't have the passion needed to visualize the project and lead the willing helpers through to completion. Until the G-Scale Leader emerges, Dave Florence is prepared to conduct meetings and update this Plan so we can proceed with implementation of ideas that have a broad consensus.

Next Steps:

- Have an on-site meeting with PVR board members and other interested members to consider options
- visit Dawn Stubbs' garage and review/record the track and bridges we have to work with.

Website <http://qathet.prfhs.org/g-scale-garden-railroad/>

Appendix
2025 correspondence

G-Scale site rocks. Members agreed to install rocks in the G-scale grove as part of our Community forest-funded infrastructure program. In the discussion, it was noted that we still need the elusive "Lead" to make significant progress in the G-Scale project. Having some progress on the site may encourage that person to emerge.

1 Move the G-scale project forward by adding a few large rocks in the grove, ready for adding track at an elevated level

– Dan is preparing a design/cost.

Older correspondence - 2024

- From Rowwie Mckeown, (Mike Graham's daughter) I briefly spoke with Dave at the PRFAI AGM and since the season is ramping up I'd love to put you guys in touch with my Dad. ... He doesn't have a lot of energy for projects, but he has a ton of knowledge and experience with model railroad, specifically G gauge as well as O gauge. Dave mentioned that the Paradise Valley Railroad wants to set up a garden railroad. These trains have been a lifelong passion for my Dad so I'm sure he'd enjoy helping out where he can. ... If there's space for him to assist please let me know how he can get in touch with you. ... Thanks! .. Cheers, Rowwie McKeown
- from Dave: Hi guys ... I was thinking about an 8 foot by 20 foot oval track supported entirely by plexiglass for max visibility. .. Bottom 8 inch wide strip using 1/4 inch plexiglas with 4 inch high sides made from 1/8 inch plexiglas, glued and pinned. ... It would be like looking up at a train on a high trestle from below. ... It would take one 4x8 sheet of each thickness, about \$600
- From Geoff: Dave ... Straight track is available for \$10.00 a foot from Burnaby. This LGB track - good quality. May be used. Also, on my walk in the woods this afternoon I got thinking about the layout. I think it would be a good idea on the long straight away at the back, to have a siding connected with a switch at both ends to the main track. This way we could leave a train or two ready to go and also on display. I have two bridges I can donate. I'll bring them on Saturday to show them to you.
- From Leif: Hi all, A bit of an update from some recent conversations, maybe something to keep the interest up. ... I have this Howe truss bridge I built a bit ago for the society (see picture although not all components are present), all it needs is rail and then can be used. I could just remove the ties from some pre-fab track but would prefer if someone has any rail or scrap G gauge track they can spare. Length of bridge is 41in (82 linear inches), I can also splice together several pieces if necessary too. Let me know. I was going to bring this to our work session this weekend with a couple 2x 2 supports so we could see how it looked but got tied up with a few other things, I thought this could go in one of the 4 foot sections along the side. .. Dan mentioned it would be nice to get the G gauge train going for Santa train, not sure of funds but we may have a bit available to purchase some equipment either new or used:- loop of track preferably with 8 ft diameter (or extra flex track)- powerpack (run off battery or extension cord)- loco and several cars (although members could run their own, would be nice for the society to have our own so something is always available). Even a four-wheel loco with whatever cars we can pick up cheap, does not have to be logging-related and then could expand later- at least 36 feet of straight track (I have usually seen flex track sold in 6-foot lengths but others may know better), shipping costs could be problem depending on lengths...
Base/supports:- 2x2 wood or angle iron, bolted onto the bottom of the existing joists, either would be quick and easy. My preference is wood as I mainly work with wood but angle iron would be less visible and probably more secure; I am not sure of the price difference.- plywood or 1-by material for a base and then screwed/bolted to supports. Corners may take a bit of extra


planning or work, once we know the curve diameter I can work on this- plexiglass along front to hold derailments- in my plan I put the track centreline 6" away from the joists but we could go closer, min 5" width is needed for clearance for trains so we could use 1x6s and depending on the gap maybe a 1x4 along the back to prevent trains falling the other way.- even though it is covered we may want to paint/seal/varnish any wood to help prevent warping.... I am more than willing to help out or do a lot of the work related to installation. My main limitation is I am not being aware of suppliers, my G gauge equipment came from Art Knapp in Surrey or from train shows. It has been ten years since I was last at Art Knapp, not sure if they still sell trains, could not see any reference online. And unfortunately my favourite hobby shop (Central Hobbies) recently closed, there is a group that has started a new store at a new location (Inter-City Hobbies and Trains), still waiting for the online store to open but will need to see what they stock. Although I would like to, I am not planning to attend any of the train shows this fall/winter, not sure if anyone has friends/contacts that could help us out with train supplies or spread the word?The roof of the station will help protect the track from the elements, my biggest concern would be squirrels or birds using the base for a nest. Is this something we need to worry about or maybe deal with it if something occurs?.... Not sure if we want to come up with a budget to give us something to work with?... Will also see what I come up with as I scratch build some cars

From discussions Geoff, Leif, Mike Graham and Davef May 5, 2024

- Everyone recommends we go with LGB track
- Mike has seen elevated clear plexiglas track like we are suggesting and recommends it.
- everyone like the elevated-in-the-station idea; no one want to face the maintenance of an outdoor system in the tree grove.

From my research:

- R3 is the LGB designation for 8' diameter track. Center to center is 94.1"; outer edge to outer edge is 97.5"
- Cost for the track at Trainsonly.com for a 8 x16' loop is \$355 + \$85 shipping, or about \$600 canadian
- Plexiglas at PR Glass would be \$202 for 3/16, and \$270 for 1/4", so another \$500 for the support system
- A starter set with power supply would be about \$6500, so with 10% contingency the venture would be under \$2000.

 ONLY TRAINS . COM <i>Your Online Source For LGB</i>			
Home My Account Product Search Product List Shopping Cart Check Out			
Code	Product	Quantity	Price/Ea. Total
16000-12	LGB 16000 Curved Track, R3, 22.5, FULL BOX, 12 PIECES	1	\$173.04 \$173.04
16000	LGB 16000 Curved Track, R3, 22.5	4	\$14.99 \$59.96
10000-12	LGB 10000 Straight Track, 300mm (11.8 inches) FULL BOX, 12 PIECES	1	\$89.88 \$89.88
10000	LGB 10000 Straight Track, 300mm (11.8 inches)	4	\$7.99 \$31.96
		Total: \$354.84	

The graphic used to present the in-the rafters option

G-Scale Garden Railroad Project

- PRFHS pays for the track, club members build and run it.
- Members can bring and run their cars
- Start with an 8' x 19' oval suspended below the Station rafters.
- (Electricity is coming to the station.)
- Future years: build in the tree grove SE of the Station.

Station Track proposal, to be reviewed and approved by club members:

- 5" wide base from two 4'x 8' Plexiglas sheets 3/16" or 1/4"
- 3" I-beam sides 1/8" or 3/16", suspended by 1/8" or 3/16" cable with turnbuckles for leveling.

Interested? Contact us at info@prfhs.org or Dave at 604-413-1224

