Antiquated Urban Light Industry

"Bygone.scrm" contains a caboose and maintenance car storage area. Just two switches are required. This area is more important than you might think, because many of the most interesting toy train cars are rarely used types. Only half the width of a module is required, so with the addition of another switch and a crossover, the other module half will be used for modeling antiquated industries that use uncommon freight car types.

From left to right, the main track comes to a switch for a spur that leads to the other side of the module, then bends downward closer to the module edge. On the module left and forward edge side, is a unloading bin beside the main line for a side-dump hopper car to pause and quickly unload its load of coal. To enhance the illusion, you should park a pickup truck near the bin filled with some hand shoveled coal, to indicate that this is an active business that still supplies fireplace and stove coal.

Further down the main track is the switch for the diagonally diverging spur that heads towards the rear left corner of the module. This track is supposed to be an abandoned spur that once led to buildings some distance from the main track. At the end of the spur is a short truss/tressel bridge, such as the lionel short extension bridge #6-2716 (or similar) that conceals the fact that the track doesn't really still continue. The bridge is justified by placing a (currently dry) cement storm water channel beneath. This channel can be simulated using a flat trompe l'oeil painting of the drainage channel. A short truss/tressel bridge, rather than another type of bridge, is suggested because the height helps conceal the end of the track. Also, because you should avoid roofed bridges on the main line, this might be the only place where you will be able to use this style of bridge. If you wanted to further conceal the abandoned spur (and also justify why this would be a secure area for the railroad to park its vandalizable work cars), you could place a tiny switch tower, such as the Plasticville Switch Tower #1402, within the crotch between the caboose track and abandoned spur.

This abandoned spur crosses over the spur leading to the other side of the module. Immediately past the crossing, but before the drainage channel, is a switch for a spur that leads back to the left edge of the module, paralleling the main line. This is the dedicated caboose track, and a great place to show off your rarely operated equipment. The abandoned diverging spur itself, including the bridge, is used to temporarily park your maintenance or seasonal cars. It is ok if parked cars foul the caboose track switch.

The spur that leads to the right edge of the module we will use for other old part of town industries. The unusual features of this spur would make it ideal for a cooperage (barrel factory) featuring the Lionel wooden Barrel Loader accessory #362 (or similar).

The ramp parallels the spur, with the loading end of the ramp towards the left hand side of the module (note that while barrels are being loaded, the gondola will temporarily foul the crossover), and the bottom end of the ramp butting up against a roll door on the right hand rear of the cooperage building, which itself sits behind the ramp. For the cooperage building, you can use the rear of a K-line Lionel Auto Parts Store #6-22554 (or similar) building. In front of this door is where cars of stave lumber and metal hoops will be unloaded across the bottom of the ramp, and then manufactured in the building into barrels and small quantities of designer barrelwood furniture. Finished barrels regularly go up the loading ramp, while boxcars will infrequently arrive in the spot where the lumber is unloaded to pick up furniture items. Every so often old barrels will arrive for unloading at the ramp bottom, for their refurbishment at the cooperage.

The barrel loading spot sits in a position where it can be accessed by trains traveling either direction. You don't just have to back in. You can drive the locomotive forward into the spur to position a trailing gondola in front of the loading spot.

Between the cooperage and the right side of the module is enough space for another low rent industry of your choosing, such as a home appliance warehouse building. If you happen to have one though, this would make a good place for the Lionel Culvert Unloading Station #345 (or similar). Yes, the unloader can work in conjunction with a culvert loader, but loading and unloading on the same track right next to each other is kind of silly. Instead, we will position the unloader accessory at the end of the stub siding near the edge of the module, and model a culvert supply storage yard behind the accessory. The overhead crane is on the left of the accessory, so there is plenty of remaining siding room to move a gondola back and forth underneath. Once emptied, the same gondola can be reused for a load of wooden barrels at the cooperage.

On the main line across from the industrial spur is a no-frills commuter train stop, primarily used for morning and evening rush hour service. On the right half of the module, between the main line and the front module edge, place a thin strip of simulated tarmac. If you wanted to be really creative, you could add a thin painted line on the tarmac by the track edge, with some writing saying something like "please wait behind the line". This tarmac visually indicates the very edge of a passenger unloading area, which must be imagined to extend forward beyond the modules front edge. If still not noticable enough as a passenger stop, you could also add a low horizontal sign on the rear side of the main line track, emblasoned with the name of the commuter station.

And one for the road

There is the possibility that, at least occasionally, we can add another business to this module. If you happen to own an asphalt hauling tank car (a special insulated tank car with heating coils to keep the asphalt liquid), we can imagine that a construction crew needs liquid asphalt (a messy product made from crude oil) for a road repair contract. A direct track side vehicle-to-vehicle liquid cargo transfer is all that is required, and our abandoned spur would work great for this. Drive a medium sized asphalt tanker truck (several 1/43 scale plastic and die-cast models are available) between the barrel loading ramp and caboose track switch. Now we can make the delivery of the asphalt tank car, and park it over the caboose track switch during its unloading.