

Building the V&T's Reno Branch: 1871-1872



2022 Virginia and Truckee Railroad History Conference

By Curtis Reid

Setting the Scene – 1871:

V&T completed between Carson and Virginia City
(1870)

Lots of traffic; looks like a good investment

V&T looks to connect with the newly-created
transcontinental railroad.

Connect at Wadsworth? Or Reno? Verdi?

June 20, 1871



- The final survey starts

Sometime after July 1, 1871



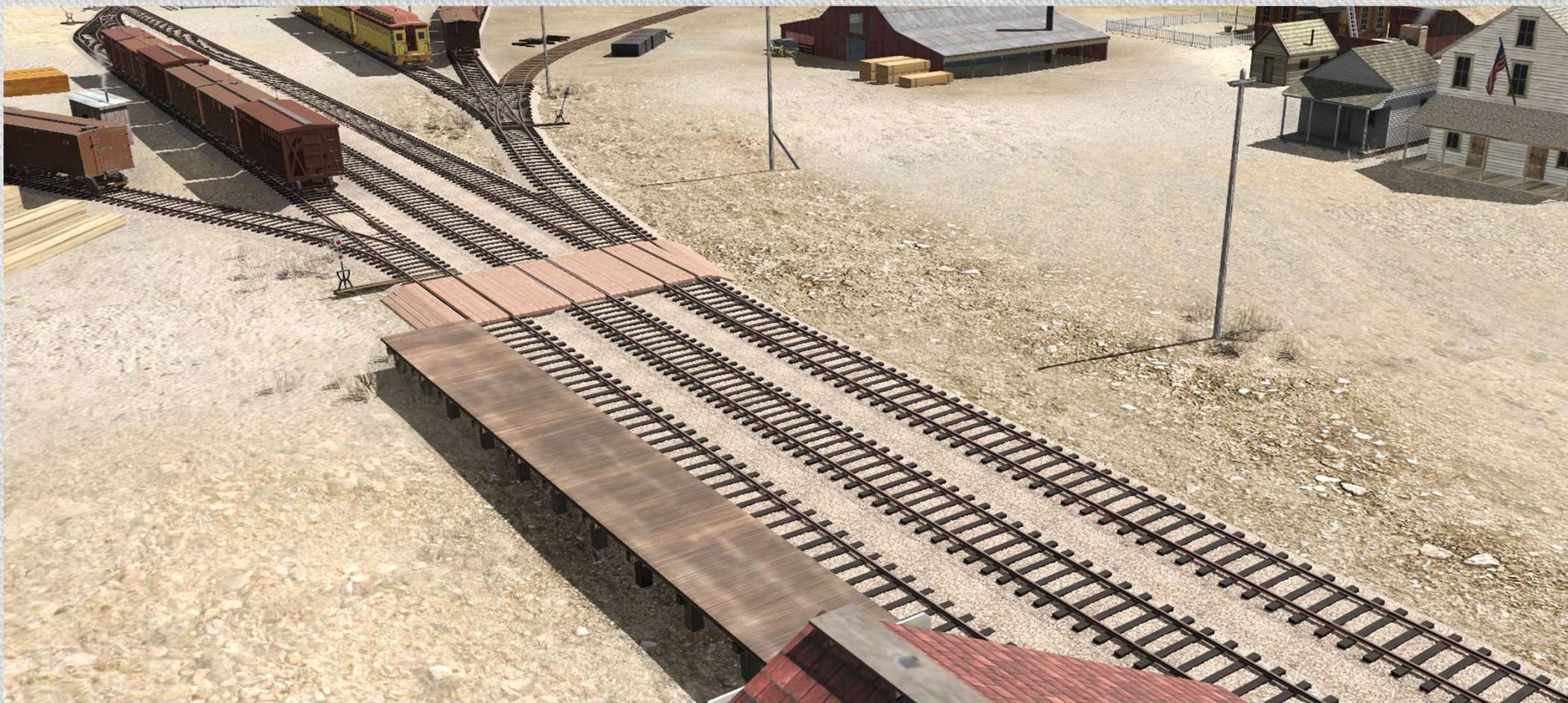
- Truckee River bridge construction starts

July 10, 1871



- Grading begins in Reno

July 24, 1871



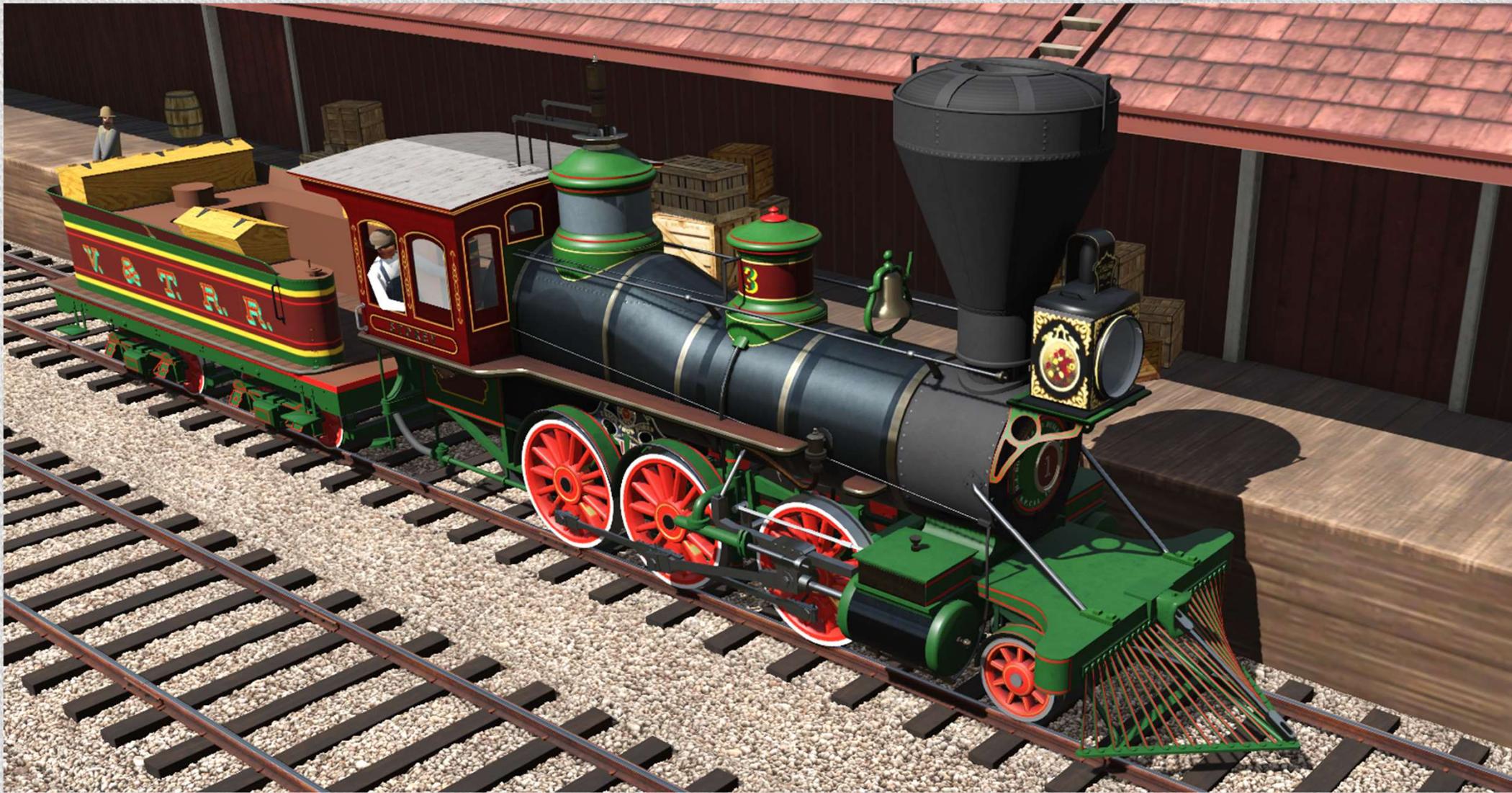
- Tracks connect to the Central Pacific
 - East of the depot

August 16, 1871



- 12 cars of Iron received in Reno
- 6 miles graded by now

September 16, 1871



- *Storey* arrives in Reno
- Transported from Virginia City

September 13, 1871



- Grading started from the Carson end
- Ash Canyon

September 23, 1871



- Reno bridge completed and track laid across it

September 30, 1871



- Excursion across the Truckee River bridge
- Rail laid ~4 miles now

October 1, 1871



- Steamboat Depot under construction

October 3, 1871



- Steamboat warehouse construction started

October 24, 1871



- Steamboat hotel, blacksmith shop, livery stable under construction

October 24, 1871



- Steamboat bridge under construction

October 24, 1871



- Steamboat turntable also under construction

October 28, 1871



- Rails completed to Steamboat

October 28, 1871



- Second connection at Reno
- West of the depot hotel

November 5, 1871



- First passenger train to Steamboat

November 7, 1871



- Formal opening of the line to Steamboat

November 7, 1871



- Also; *I.E. James* on the branch by now
- Shipped from Virginia ca Nov. 3rd

November 10, 1871



- Steamboat engine house under construction

November 18, 1871



- Reno engine house under construction

1872

April 6, 1872



- *Washoe* arrives at Steamboat
 - New from Baldwin in Pennsylvania
 - To be taken apart and shipped to Carson

April 18, 1872



- Lakeview tunnel *almost* completed

May 20, 1872



- Bridges between Steamboat and Washoe almost completed

July 4, 1872



- Rails reach Washoe City

July 5, 1872



- *Reno* received in Steamboat
- Arrived from Baldwin in Pennsylvania

July 11, 1872



- *Reno* goes on shakedown cruise

August 5, 1872



- 'Kimball train' arrives in Reno
- From San Francisco

August 9, 1872



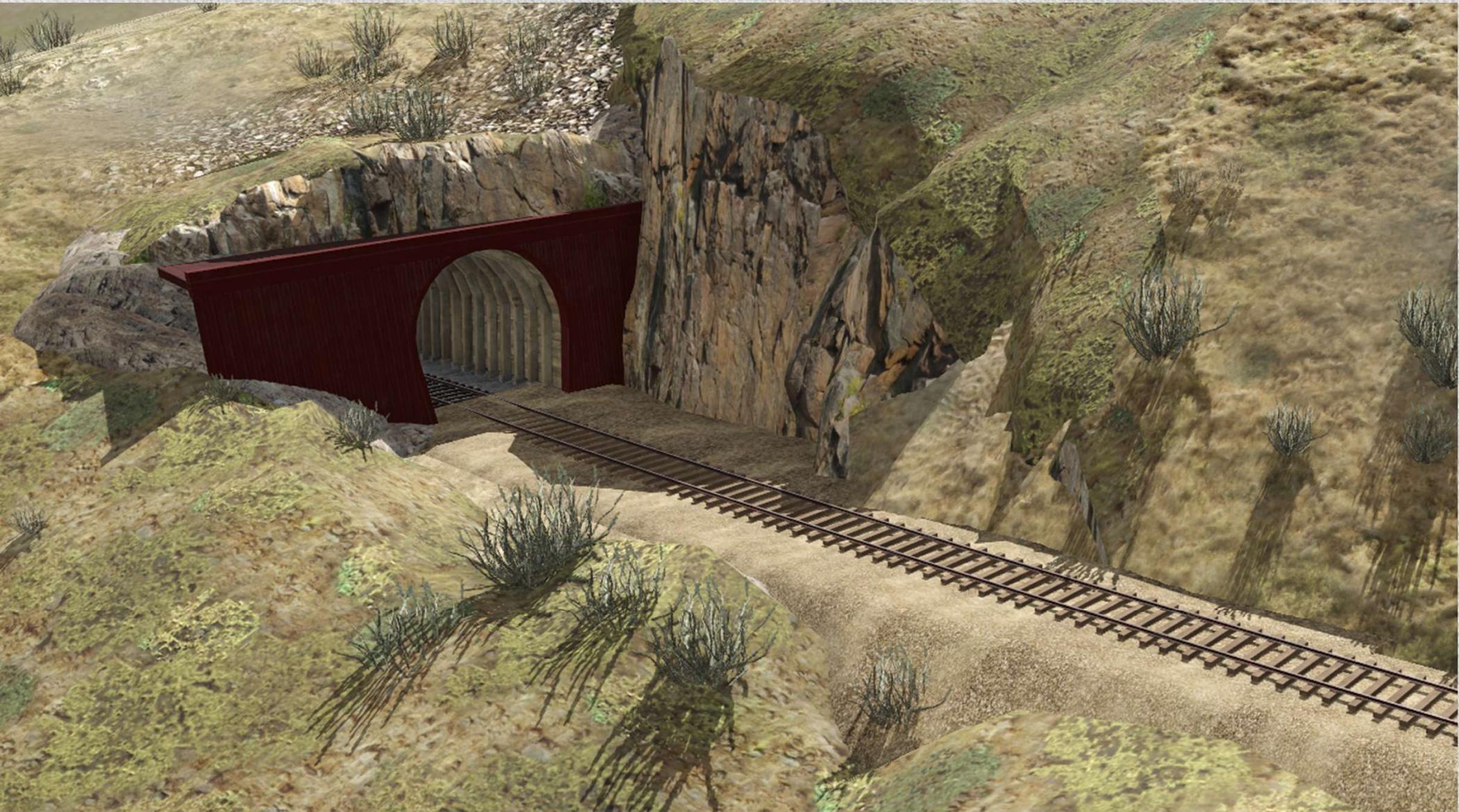
- First double-header on the branch
 - *I.E. James* and *Storey* with 16 cars

August 9, 1872



- Starting to enclose the track with fencing

August 20, 1872



- Rails through the Lakeview tunnel

August 24, 1872



- Reno branch connects to flume track
- Rails are now complete between Reno and Carson

August 24, 1872



- First train into Carson!

September 1, 1872



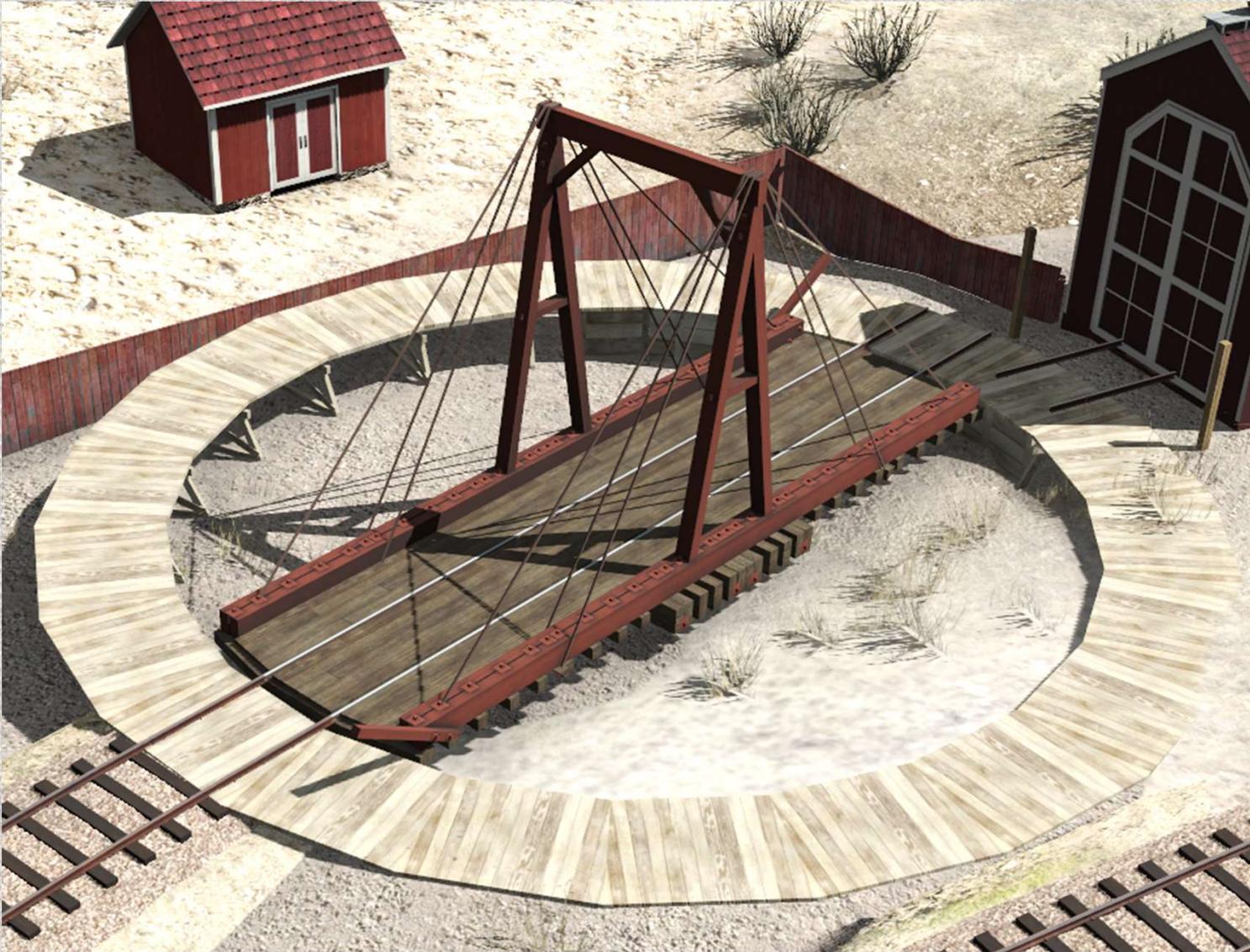
- First through train (Reno to Virginia)

September, 1872



- Washington Street track added
 - Grading started Aug 31
 - Crossed Carson Street Sept 18

Late August / September?, 1872



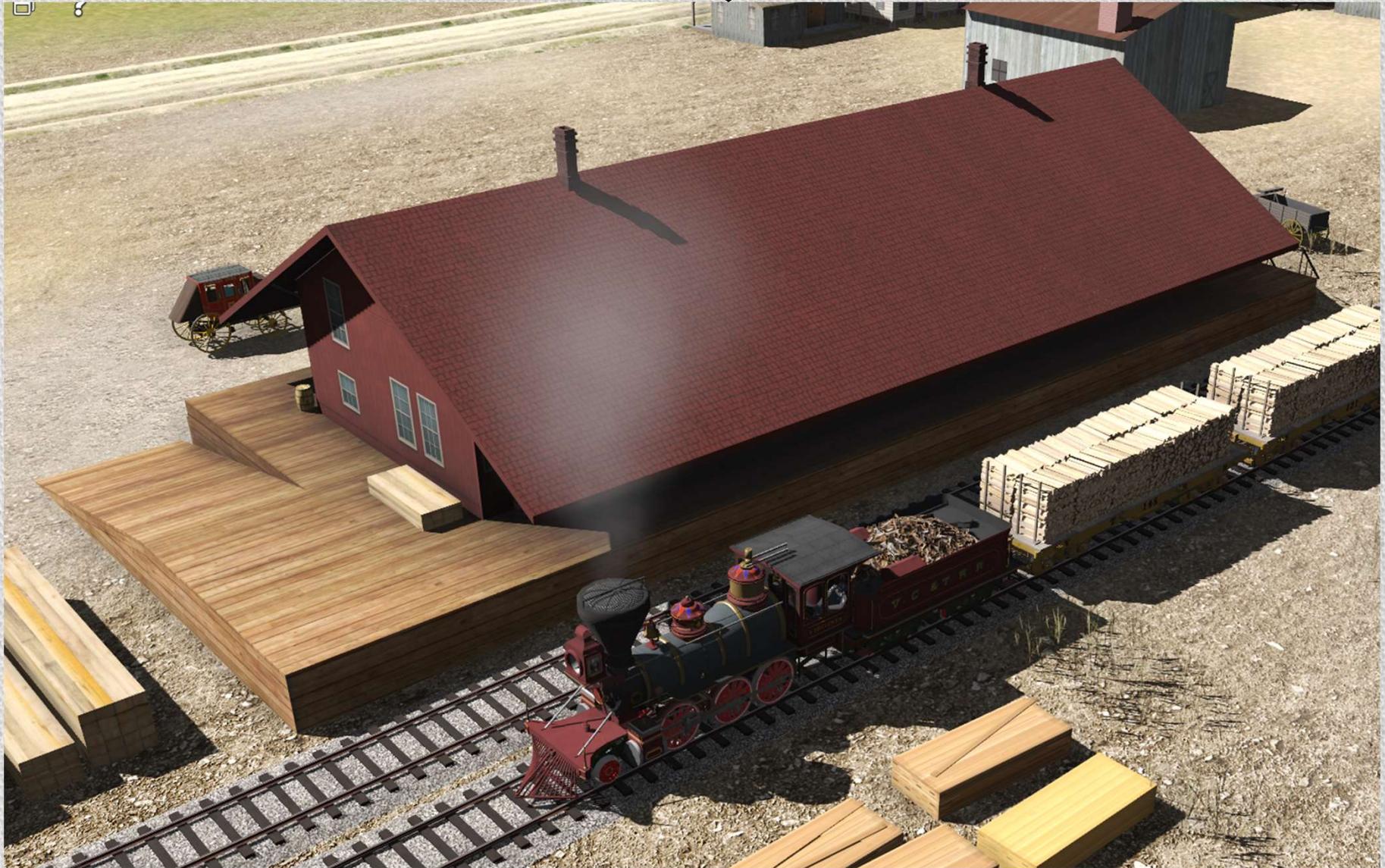
- Reno turntable built
 - Lumber ordered Aug 15

October 1, 1872



- Regular train service begins

October, 1872



- Freight house moved from Steamboat to Carson
 - Disassembled by Oct 11
 - Materials in Carson Oct 12

December 27, 1872



- Carson Passenger depot completed



That's all folks!!

Special thanks to:

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