



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ON JUNE 24, 2021

Contact: Mark Frederick,
Director of Digital Outreach, RMM
Phone: 814-946-0834 (ext. 206)
Email: mfrederick@railroadcity.org

SAVING RAILROAD CITY: RESTORING THE SPIRIT OF ALTOONA

MUSEUM PARTNERS WITH RAILROAD PROFESSIONALS TO COMPLETE PRR K4 1361 RESTORATION

[ALTOONA, PA, JUNE 24TH—] The Railroaders Memorial Museum's (RMM) new campaign to restore the historic Pennsylvania Railroad steam locomotive K4 1361 launched today at the Museum's roundhouse complex in Altoona.

The museum's restructured Board of Directors and a new staff of historians were joined at the announcement by officials from FMW Solutions LLC, based out of Soddy-Daisy, TN. The restoration efforts of the iconic locomotive will be overseen by FMW, in conjunction with the RMM and its qualified volunteers. Ultimately, FMW will also assist in strategic planning for the eventual operation of the locomotive—which will serve as a useful educational tool and a valuable economic stimulant, not only for Blair County, but for other communities throughout the Commonwealth.

"The legacy of the PRR, the K4, and the industrious identity of Altoona makes this extremely special to us," said Davidson Ward, President of FMW Solutions. "Our team is prepared to assist RMM turn a new page in this project. Our hope is to make the locomotive a viable ambassador for Altoona and the Commonwealth for years to come."

"FMW Solutions brings a remarkable set of skills and talents to this project," said Joseph DeFrancesco, Executive Director of the RMM. "Their portfolio and professional approach is exactly what we need for this endeavor and their highly credentialed team has a successful track record that speaks for itself."

In 2019, the RMM recruited FMW to perform a detailed inspection of K4 1361, including a review of all previous restoration efforts. FMW then embarked upon a series of engineering inspections, calculations, and tests, resulting in a comprehensive assessment of the locomotive's boiler—determining its integrity and reparability. This thorough study has been accepted by the Federal Railroad Administration, which permits this long-awaited project to proceed.

DeFrancesco believes these professional partnerships will revive enthusiasm. “Paired with our board of directors, staff, skilled volunteers, government agencies, and donors, this partnership will return *The Spirit of Altoona* to the high iron once again and will bring the exciting sights, sounds, and smells of the Steam Age back to Railroad City.”

Projections indicate the restoration will cost \$2.6 million. Initial fundraising efforts are being led by railroad preservation advocates and experienced industry leaders such as Museum Board Chairman and former Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman. Moorman marks this occasion as a new a chapter, not only for the K4, but for the Museum itself. “K4 1361 has a checkered thirty-year restoration history. Since running last in 1989, it has been disassembled, partially restored, moved across the Commonwealth, and then transported home to Altoona in pieces. Our new team is dedicated to concluding this restoration project that began long ago.”

DeFrancesco urges community involvement because of the K4’s significance to Altoona’s heritage. “These large hunks of steel represent far more than technological developments; they are testaments to the enduring legacy of Altoona’s hardworking laborers of bygone times. *The Spirit of Altoona* is a tangible reminder of the citizens who built the world’s largest railroading complex. This restoration project will link our local history to the broader industrial heritage of America.” Learn more by visiting www.railroadcity.org/1361.

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If you would like more information about this release, please call Director of Digital Outreach Mark Frederick at 814-946-0834 (ext. 206), or email mfrederick@railroadcity.org.