



MORGANA RUN TRAIL EXTENSION STUDY



Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) Midwest regional office produced this report via the generous support of The George Gund Foundation. In partnership with Slavic Village Development (SVD), RTC took a fresh look at expansion opportunities from the southern terminus of the existing Morgana Run Trail. Recommendations for that expansion are included in this report.

THE GEORGE GUND FOUNDATION

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January 2014



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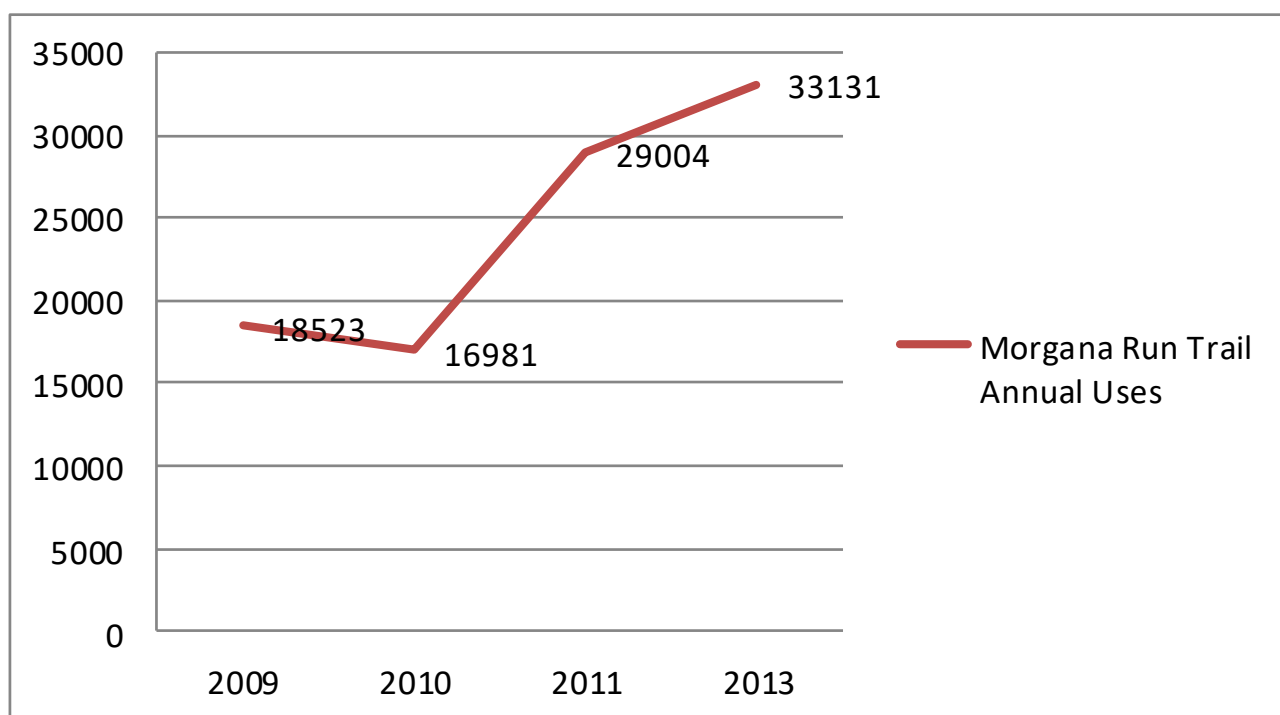
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Introduction

Morgana Run Trail opened in 2006 as Cleveland's first rail-trail conversion; there were plenty of skeptics. What transpired in the ensuing eight years is an undeniable success. From the beautification of the rail corridor itself to the wonderful public art installations that have become the calling cards of the neighborhood, the trail has been a lynchpin in the transformation of the Slavic Village area. The three-mile trail has 16,839 residents living within a half-mile of it, according to 2000 census numbers. Over the past five years there have been four automated trail use counts along the trail. The numbers tell a very compelling story: Trail use at the busiest location, has increased 79%.



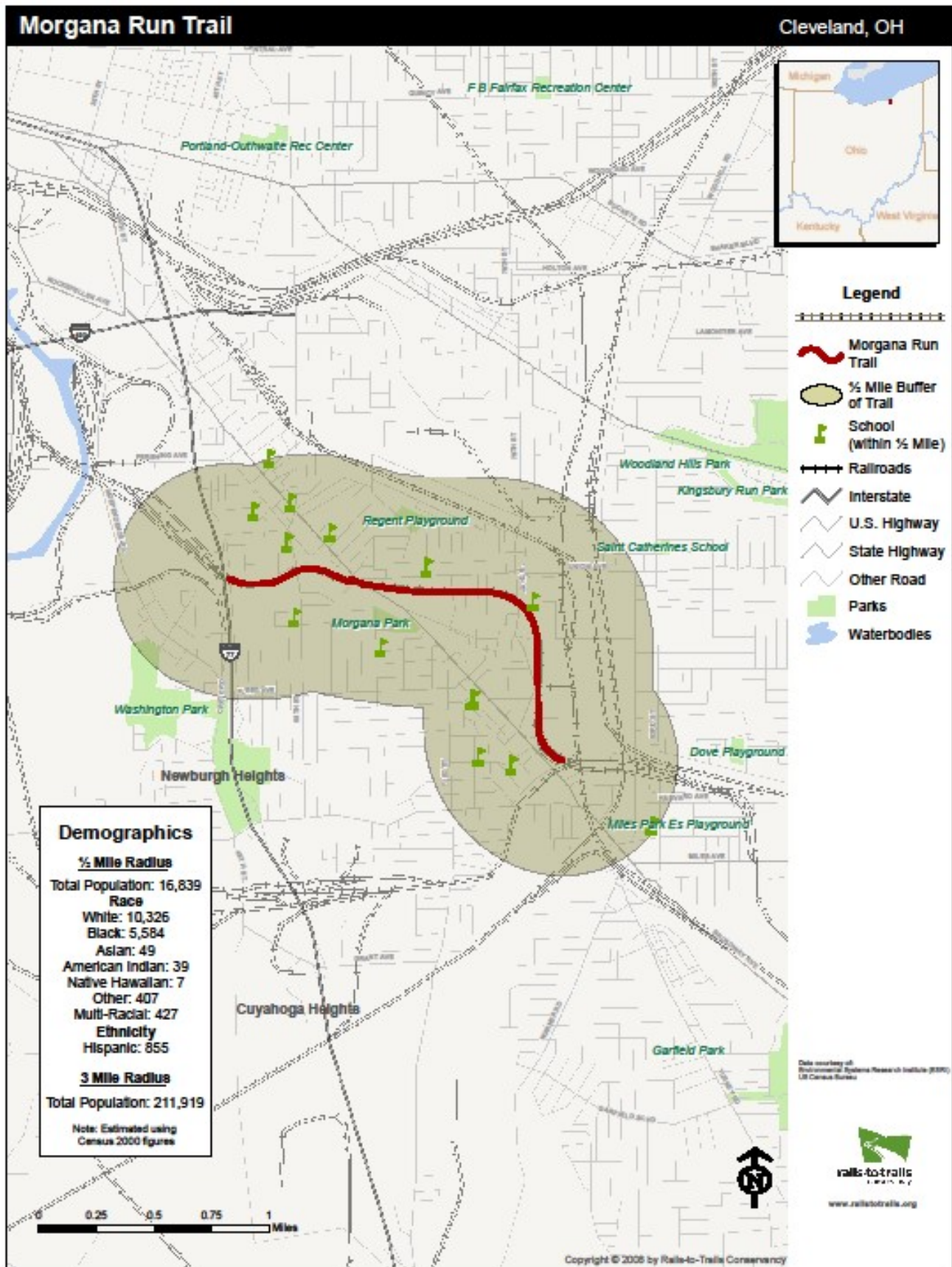
Introduction

Slavic Village Development and its local partners want to extend the benefits of the Morgana Run Trail to even more residents of the area. This study takes a closer look at extending the trail from its current southern terminus at Jones Road west along the unused railroad corridor, as well as south to link to the existing Mill Creek Falls Trail.

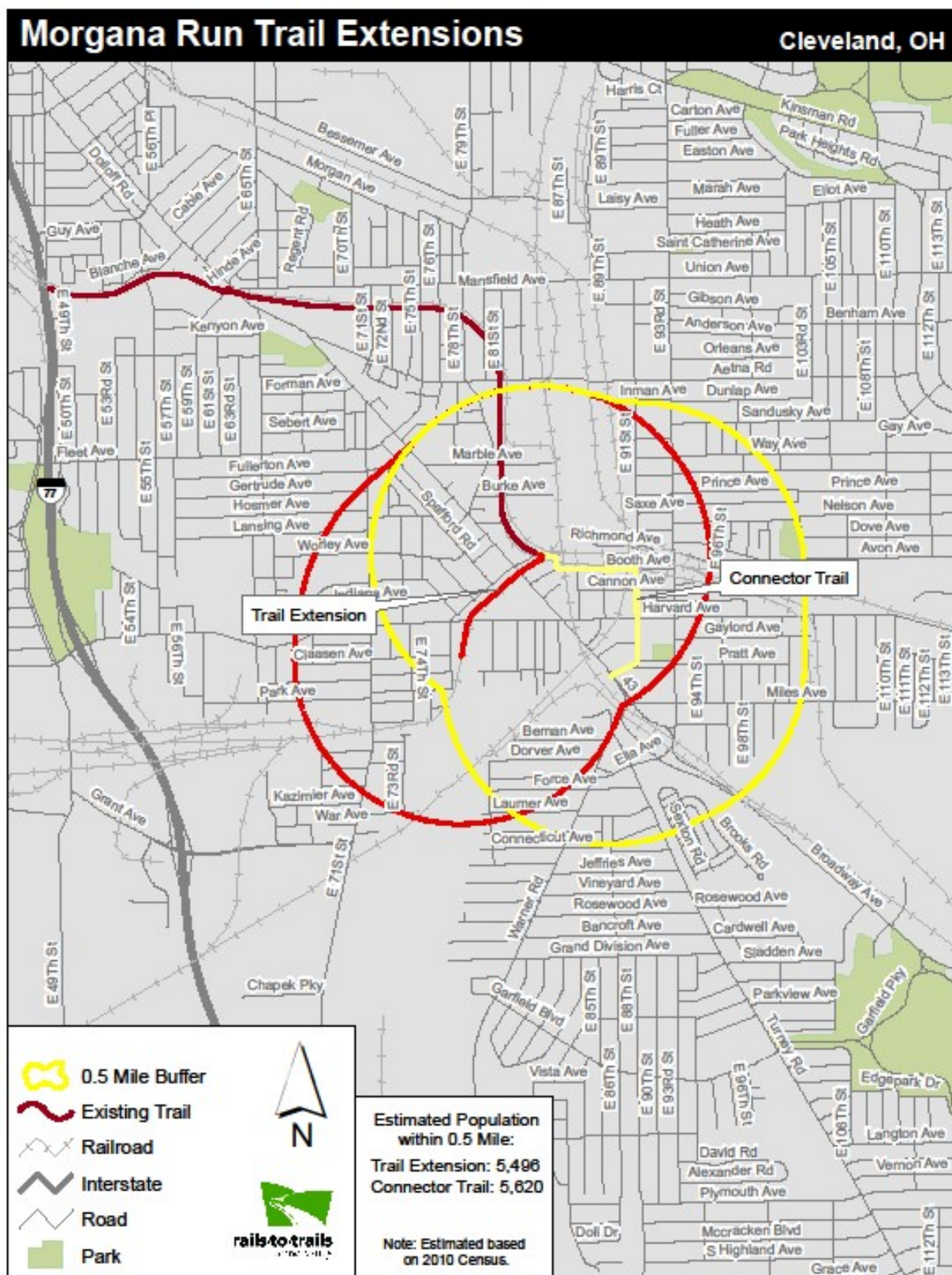
These trail extensions will connect more residents to the trail, to each other, and to the endless benefits the trail brings. The railroad corridor expansion west will connect up to 5,500 more residents to the trail. Taking the trail under the Booth underpass to the Mill Creek Falls trail will connect an additional 1,000 to 2,000 people.

The increased population that the extensions would benefit is shown in the maps on the following pages.

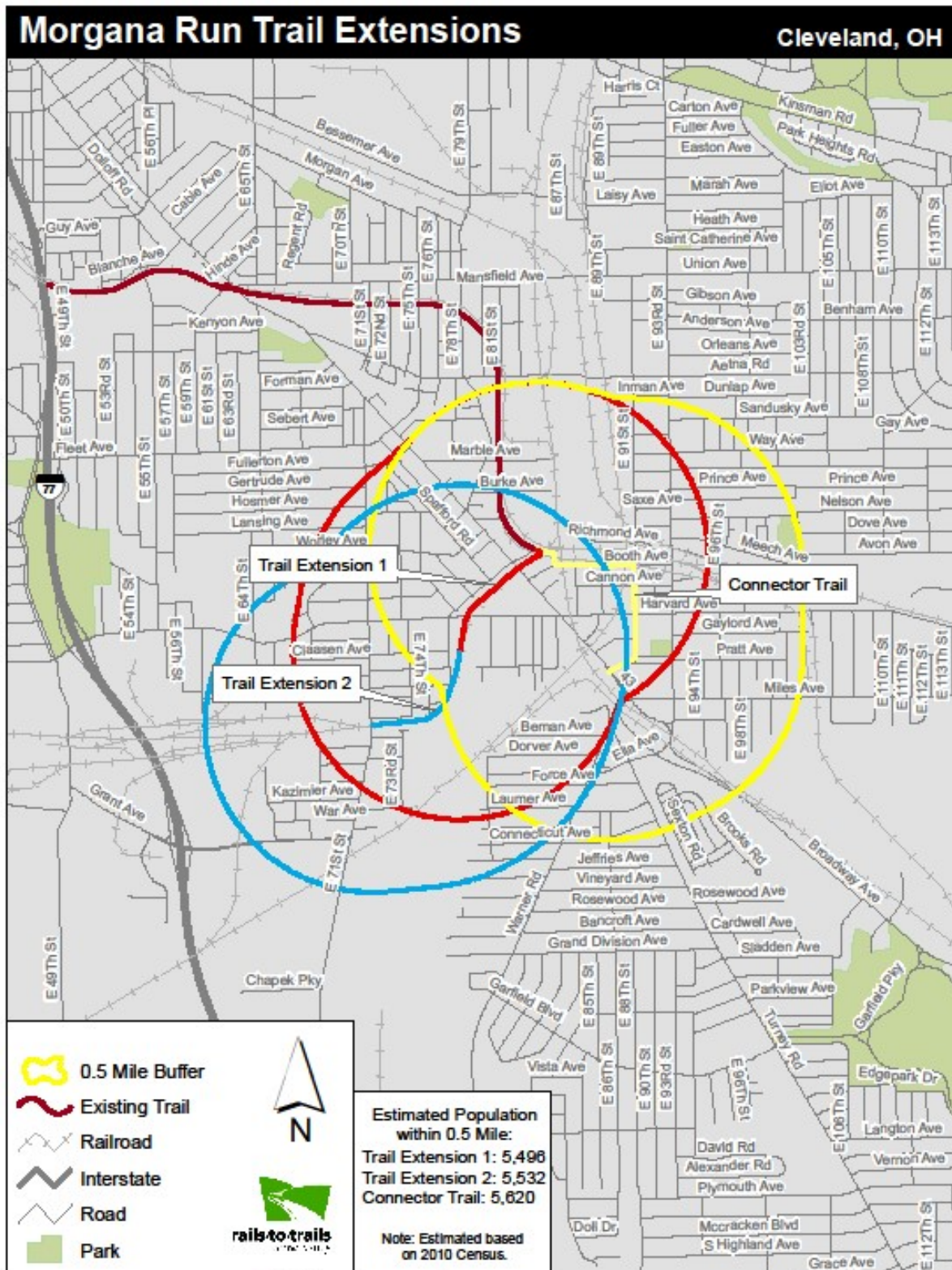
Existing Morgana Run Trail



This map depicts the extension west to Claassen Road in red and the connector to the Mill Creek Falls trail in yellow.



This map depicts the extension west from Classen Road to E. 71st Street in light blue, as well as the Mill Creek Falls connector in yellow.



Benefits

The benefits of the Morgana Run Trail to the residents of Slavic Village are numerous. As stated, the public art pieces have enhanced community pride and are a daily enjoyment to thousands. High trail use, as shown in the trail count results, indicates that people are indeed on the trail and using it for a myriad of reasons.





Health benefits associated with trail use have been well documented. When people move there, are undeniable health benefits. ((Maybe insert some factoid here to back up this claim?))



Trailside housing development is no longer a dream in Slavic Village, but a reality with the emergence of the new Trailside housing development. Site selection, the name of the development, and the correlating marketing strategies underscore Morgana Run Trail's undeniable impact on this new investment in Slavic Village.

Current conditions

Jones Road West along rail corridor:

The majority of the empty rail corridor which begins at the current terminus of the Morgana Run Trail at Jones Road heading west is owned by the Newburgh & South Shore Railroad. This corridor consists of six parcels of land, three of which are owned by the railroad, one by the City of Cleveland, and one by a local business, C&K



Current view from rail corridor looking north to Jones Road trail terminus.

Meats, Inc.

View looking west along the rail corridor from the same place as the above photo.



Current Conditions

Two critical factors making this extension so important are the existing bridges over Broadway and Harvard Avenues, which would give residents a safe off-road crossing of those busy thoroughfares. Correspondence with the rail corridor owners has taken place (details attached to this report).



Broadway Avenue Bridge



Harvard Avenue Bridge



Current Conditions

Two options exist. One is continued negotiations with the railroad over the final parcel to Irma Park and perhaps East 71st Street. The other is to work toward acquisition of parcels that are out of service, and with C&K Meats, to bring the trail to the west side of Harvard Avenue. This would add four-tenths of a mile to the trail, connect more than 5,000 additional people to the trail, and get an off-road crossing of both Harvard and Broadway.



Corridor just west of the Broadway Ave. bridge.

Open, almost field-like setting, just west of the Harvard Ave. bridge.



Current Conditions

The corridor to just short of Claasen Avenue is heavily overgrown with vegetation and rails are absent. From Claasen to E. 71st Street, the rails are in place and it is in use periodically. It appears this section is primarily used for car storage. Both bridges appear sound, although a structural engineering assessment will be needed. There are no noticeable issues with the corridor that would prohibit trail construction at this time.



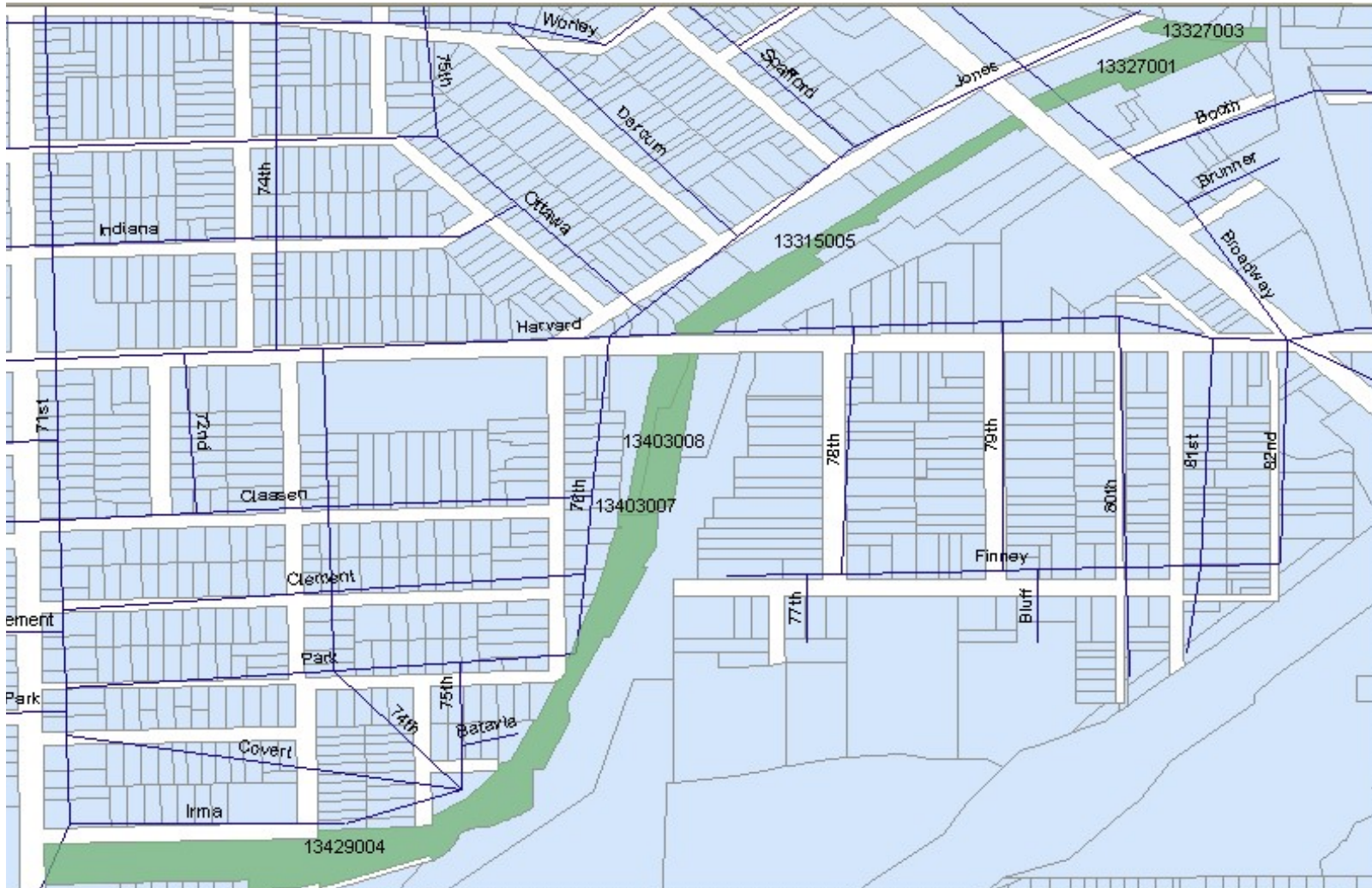
Rails emerge on the corridor west of Classen Road.



View looking southwest at the track still used to store cars.

Current Conditions

Current Property Ownership



Parcel owner information:

13327003– City of Cleveland

13327001, 13315005, 13429004– Newburgh & South Shore
Railroad

13403008, 13403007- C&K Meats Inc.

Current Conditions

Jones Road South to Mill Creek Falls Connector Trail:

Finding an alternative to the Broadway Avenue on-street connection between the Morgana Run Trail and the Mill Creek Falls Trail is critical to the Slavic Village network. From Jones Road there are three parcels of land, all owned by the City of Cleveland, that would bring the trail to an abandoned Booth road corridor that goes under the Norfolk & Southern railroad. This creates a marvelous opportunity to extend the trail off road to the neighborhood on the south side of the tracks. 400 Realty Inc., owns the only piece of land between the east side of the Booth Avenue tunnel and the current Booth Avenue on that side.



Booth Ave. Underpass



Current Conditions

Current Property Ownership



Parcel Owner Information:

13327003, 13327035, 13327036– City of Cleveland

13327010– Realty 4000 Inc.

Current Conditions

The most logical on-road route using either bike lanes or a signed route would emerge from the Booth Avenue tunnel, turning south on E. 86th Street, east onto Cannon, and then south on E. 91st St to Miles Park Ave. It is a short trip southwest on Miles Park to the existing crossing to the Mill Creek Falls Trail.



Current Conditions

Once the trail has been constructed under the railroad tracks, the options for off-road construction are challenging. The property ownership in the neighborhood is complicated by a myriad of ownership types. Between the city-owned parcels, municipal land bank parcels, and distressed parcels, a possible off-road, but incomplete, route may emerge. Vacant, privately-held land could go a long way toward creating an off-road option. Outreach to these property owners is highly recommended. The following pages show possible routes and property ownership status.

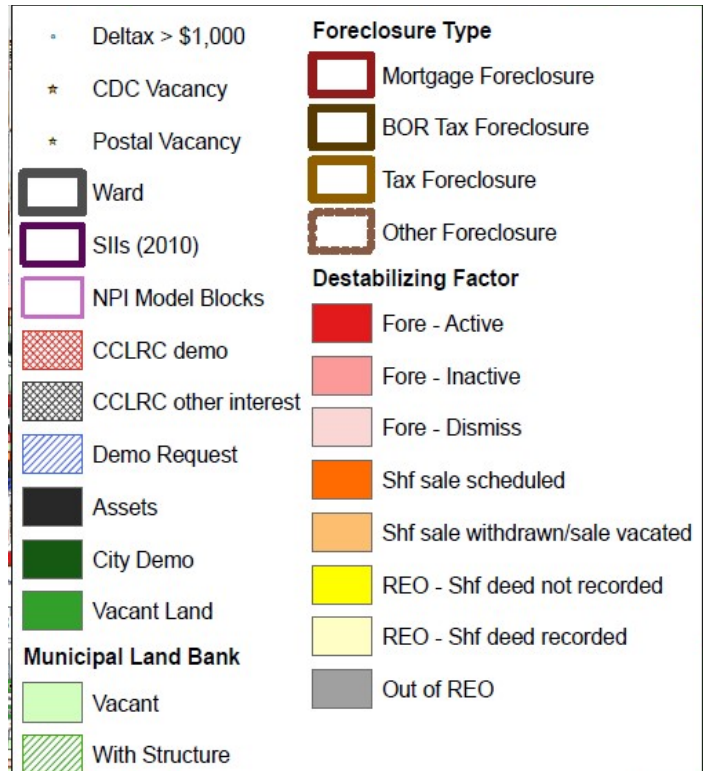


Miles Park Neighborhood



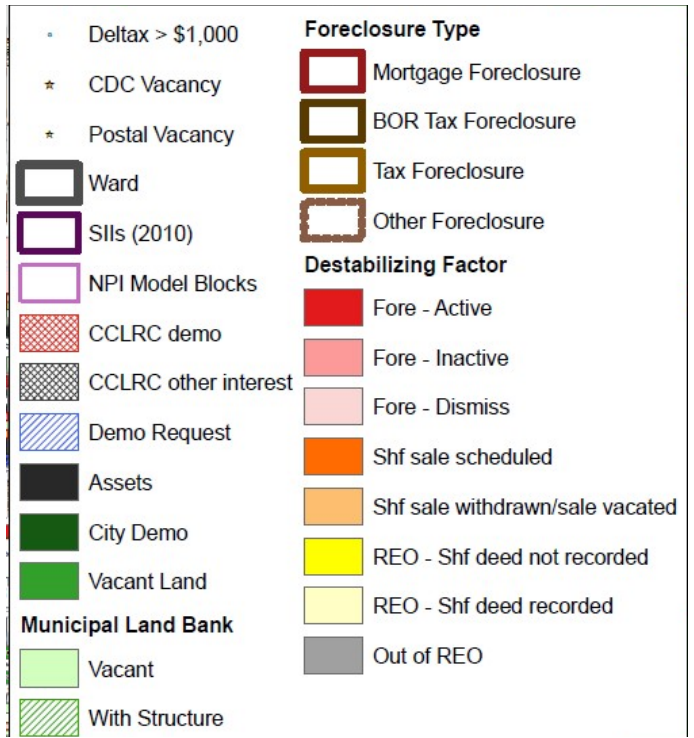
Current Conditions

Property ownership status



Current Conditions

Property ownership status



Off-Road Route Opportunities

As seen on the property status maps, there are no eminent parcel acquisitions that would create a corridor from Booth Avenue to Cannon. Therefore, the same on-road route is needed in that short section. From Cannon there are two options, both of which would require a mid-block crossing of Harvard Avenue. Both options utilize privately owned parcels labeled as 'vacant' and negotiations with owners will be necessary. There are parcels with foreclosure and tax delinquent status indicated here as well.

Route A uses on-road treatments from Booth to Cannon. It then goes off-road on a vacant parcel paralleling the active railroad tracks to Harvard Avenue. A mid-block crossing of Harvard would allow the trail to again run southwest using vacant and tax delinquent parcels. A municipal land bank parcel would allow the trail access onto Walker Avenue. A short on-road treatment here takes the trail to the traffic crossing at the Walker and Broadway Avenue intersection. Once here trail users are a short block north of the Mill Creek Trail and can use a signed route to access it.

Route B uses the same alignment as route A but deviates once across Harvard Ave. At that point, the trail would use the vacant land but then use a foreclosed property to gain Walker Ave. This route will cross Walker and use one of two parcels currently in foreclosure to move toward Miles Park Ave. To connect to Miles Park, one private parcel will need to grant easement across a parking lot. From there two tax delinquent parcels are in line to allow trail access to Miles Park Avenue. A short on-road section along Miles Park will get to the Broadway Avenur intersection. Using the existing crosswalk, trail users will then connect to Mill Creek Falls Trail.

Off-Road Route Opportunities

Route A

Green line is on-road facility

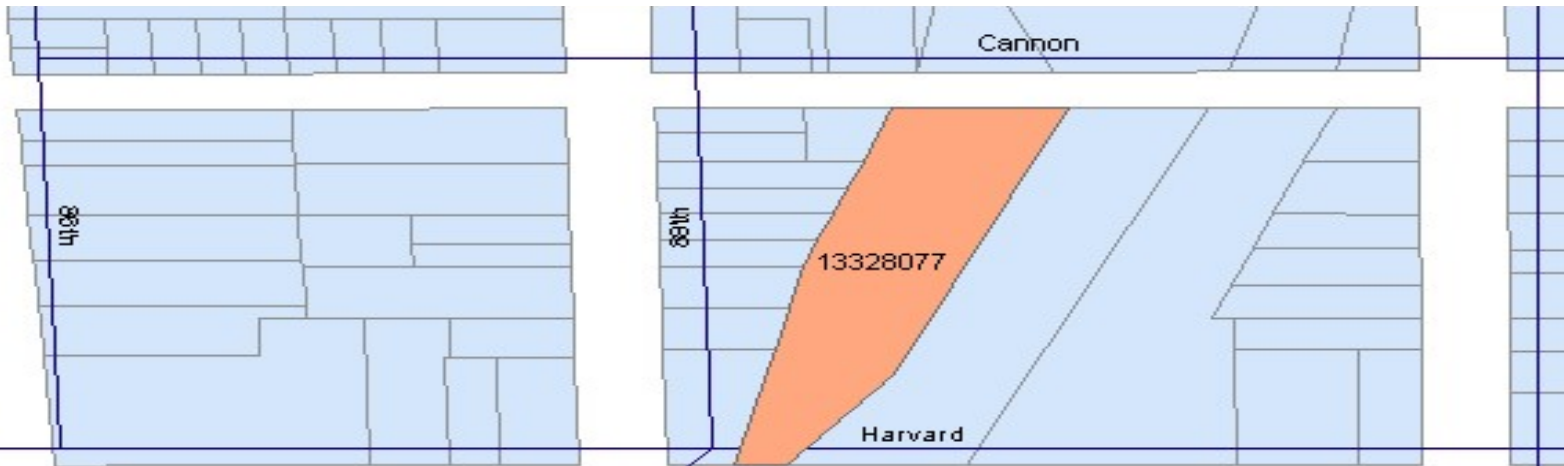
Red line is off-road trail



Off-Road Route Opportunities

Route A

Property ownership



Parcel status

13328077, 13406062, 13406005– Vacant land with delinquent taxes

13406076– Vacant Land

13406063– Municipal Land Bank

13406064– Tax foreclosure

Off-Road Route Opportunities

Route B

Green line is on-road facility

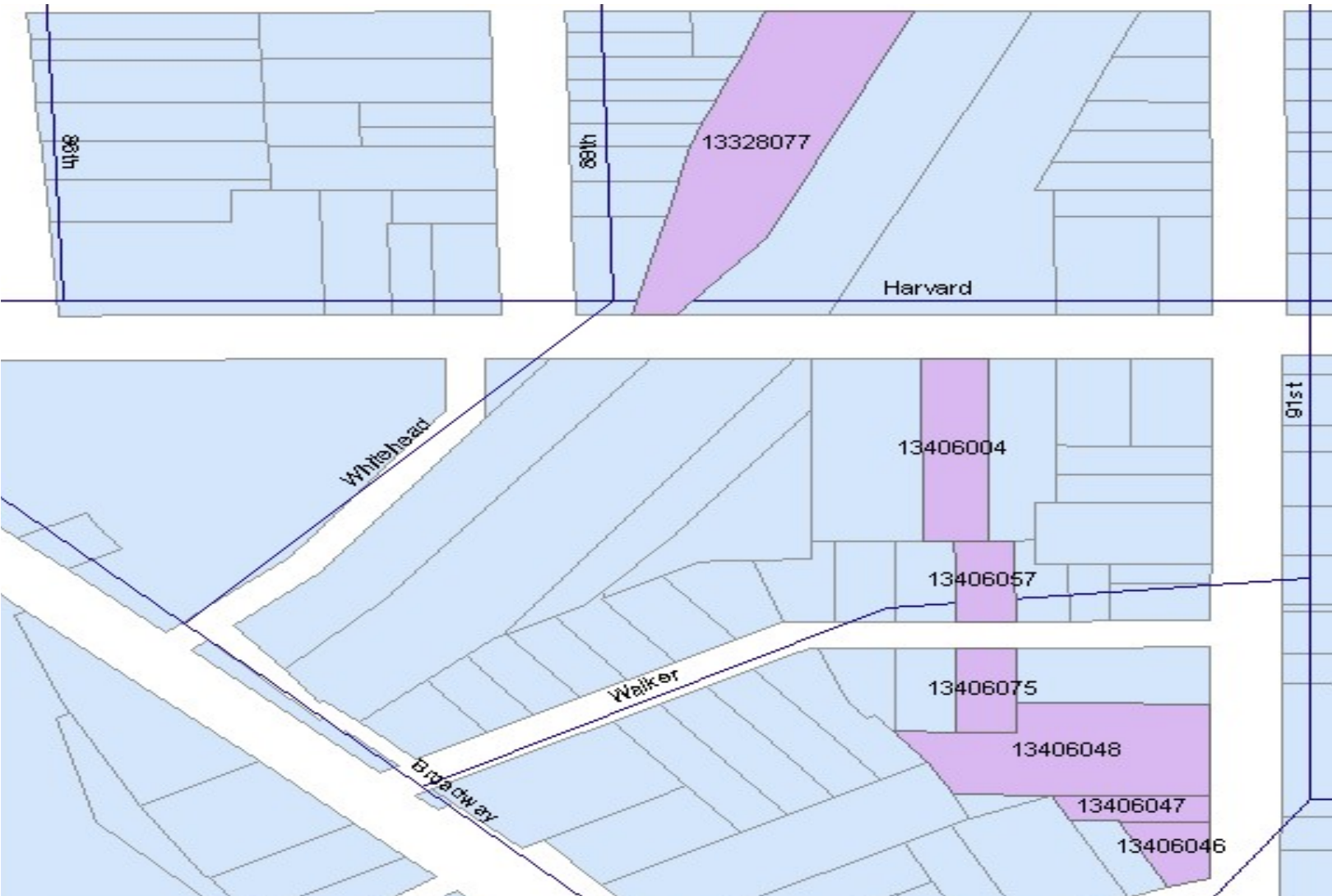
Red line is off-road trail



Off-Road Route Opportunities

Route B

Property Ownership



Parcel Status

13328077- Vacant land with delinquent taxes

13406004, 13406075- Vacant land with tax foreclosure

13406057- Tax Foreclosure

13406048- Private Parcel in good standing

13406047, 13406046- Private Parcels with delinquent taxes

Design Guidelines

The existing Morgana Run trail is a ten-foot wide asphalt trail. Any off-road extension should be built to the same standard to ensure continuity and conformity to current ASSHTO standards required in many government grant programs.

The two bridges over Broadway and Harvard Avenues provide unique branding opportunities. The steel superstructure of the bridges is ideal for public art. In addition, the Slavic Village Greenway Morgana Run Trail logo would beautify the bridges, as well as alerting motorists passing under to the existence of the trail.

Example in St. Louis Missouri of bridge painting opportunity



Design Guidelines

There are two options for the on-road section from the Booth underpass to the Mill Creek Falls Trail. The existing on-road route along Broadway Avenue includes traditional green ODOT bike route signage, with the trail's destination indicated below. It is recommended that in addition to—or perhaps in lieu of—those signs, the Slavic Village Greenway logo be incorporated into simple wayfinding signs along the route. This provides cohesion to the neighborhood wayfinding signage that Slavic Village Development installed along the Morgana Run Trail in 2010, as well as solidifying the branding message that the trails and connectors in Slavic Village are part of one trail system.



Existing wayfinding signage in the neighborhood

Existing signage along Broadway Ave.



Recommendations/next steps

The first step in expansion of the Morgan Run Trail is property acquisition and/or easement approval. Continued communication with land owners is critical. If parcel number 13429004 continues to be non-negotiable **buying the other two from them to get the two bridges is certainly worth pursuing.**

An easement from M&K Meats, Inc., pertaining to parcel number 13403007 will be necessary for access directly to Harvard Avenue. From the West side of the Harvard railroad bridge an easement with C&K Meats will need to be obtained on parcel numbers 13403008 and 13403007 as well.



Access to Harvard Avenue from M&K Meats Parcel #13403008



Recommendations/next steps

The City of Cleveland owns the parcels leading to, and including, the Booth Avenue underpass. Therefore, expansion of Morgana Run Trail through the underpass to E. 86th should occur without delay. At that time, the signed route recommended in this report can be deployed quickly.

The off road sections in this neighborhood require multiple property acquisitions. A priority list of properties and strategies for acquisition should be undertaken as soon as possible.



E. 86th Street from the Booth underpass



E. 91st Street Looking towards Cannon from Miles Park Avenue.

Appendix

Property Owner Contacts

Newburg & South Shore Railroad Company

Tax records show this as the owner address:

Chicago, West Pullman & Southern Railroad Company

4200 E 71st St Cleveland, OH 44105

Correct contact is Adam Hess

ahess@omnitrax.com

303-398-4522

The following page is a letter sent to Mr. Hess. Correspondence is ongoing to assess willingness of his company to part with the property.

Mr. Hess,

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is working on multi-use trail expansion opportunities in Cleveland. We have extensive ties to the Slavic Village neighborhood and the Morgana Run Rail-Trail located there. The trail currently terminates near Jones Road. We at RTC would like to inquire about the unused rail corridor that you own. This corridor begins near the terminus of the trail and extends to near Irma Park at the end of Batavia Avenue. The property is shown as being owned by the Newburgh & South Shore Railroad. This property consists of three parcels numbered 13327001, 13315005, and 13429004. This consists of just over one half mile of corridor; an aerial visual of the corridor is below. The red line indicates the corridor I am inquiring about. The extension of the trail along this right-of-way would connect thousands of residents to the commercial area along Broadway, the Boys & Girls Club, and multiple schools in a safe off-road manner. I look forward to speaking with the appropriate people within your organization to explore options that may allow this corridor to enhance the community it runs through. Thank you for your time. Please contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Eric Oberg

Manager of Trail Development

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Midwest Regional Office

33-C N. High Street

Canal Winchester, OH

43107

eric@railstotrails.org

614.837.6782

Property Owner Contacts

M&K Meats Inc. parcels #'s 13403008, 13403007

Auditors site names them as C&K Meats:

C & K Meats Inc.

7700 Harvard Cleveland, OH 44105

4000 Realty Inc. Parcel # 13327010

4000 Realty Inc,

4000 E 86th St, Cleveland, OH 44105-3914

Route A off-road parcels:

Parcel # 13328077

Winston Network Inc.

Attn: Legal Dept

Transportation Display

275 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016-1101

Parcel # 13406076

Anthony Fisher

3664 E 147 St. Cleveland, OH 44120

Property Owner Contacts

Route A off-road parcels:

Parcel # 13406005

Anthony Fisher

3664 E 147 St. Cleveland, OH 44120

Parcel # 13406062

Anthony Fisher

3664 E 147 St. Cleveland, OH 44120

Parcel # 13406063

City of Cleveland Land Reutilization Program

601 Lakeside Ave, Room 325, Cleveland, OH 44114

Parcel # 13406064

Barbara Harris

8803 Walker Ave.

Cleveland, OH 44105

Property Owner Contacts

Route B off-road parcels:

Parcel # 13328077

Winston Network Inc.

Attn: Legal Dept

Transportation Display

275 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016-1101

Parcel # 13406004

Anthony Fisher

3664 E 147 St. Cleveland, OH 44120

Parcel # 13406057

Orville S. Strickland

9001 Walker Ave.

Cleveland, OH 44105

Parcel # 13406075

Cynthia & Frank Ciulla

8912 Walker Ave, Cleveland, OH 44105-5157

Property Owner Contacts

Route B off-road parcels:

Parcel # 13406048

Paladin Professional Sound

7680 Hub Pky,

Valley View, OH 44125

Parcel # 13406047

Tamika Laster

4108 E 91 St.

Cleveland, OH 44105

Parcel # 13406046

Operation Care, LLC.

9007 Miles Park Ave.

Cleveland, OH 44105