

# GREENWAYS INITIATIVE:

Planning for Detroit's Rail-Trails

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PREPARED BY RAILS-TO-TRAILS CONSERVANCY FOR THE GREENWAYS INITIATIVE,  
A PROGRAM OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

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The purpose of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is to enrich America's communities and countryside by creating a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors.

This report was made possible by a generous grant from the GreenWays Initiative, a five-year program of the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and our many Michigan partners extend our gratitude for the foundation's support and vision to create a regional greenways system that will reconnect communities with parks and open space, walking and bicycling facilities, mass transit and cultural and historical resources. The GreenWays Initiative, launched in 2001, is a comprehensive effort aimed at expanding and enhancing our region's natural landscape. The GreenWays Initiative is about linkage, leverage and collaboration: linking communities...leveraging vision, resources and people...and collaborating to promote and protect the health and well being of the community for the present and the future.

## SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy would like to recognize the work of several individuals that greatly enhanced the accuracy and utility of this report: Tim Karl, City of Detroit Recreation Department, Jared Fijalkowski, RTC intern, Andrea Ferster, RTC general counsel, Barbara Richey, RTC graphic designer and Christie Carpenter, RTC editor.

# GREENWAYS INITIATIVE:

Planning for Detroit's Rail-Trails

*Abandoned Rail Corridor Inventory and Assessment*

FINAL REPORT

October 2002

## TRAILDART

**TRAIL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE RESPONSE TEAM**

A Service of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy



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## PREFACE

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Building on the farsighted blueprint provided by *A Vision for Southeast Michigan Greenways*, September 1998, this regional assessment provides crucial information and analysis necessary to move the compelling idea of an interconnected system of trails from vision to reality. Building on high initial expectations for Detroit's rail-trail conversion opportunities, this assessment demonstrates the existence of a network of abandoned railroad corridors greater than our original projections.

The city of Detroit is fortunate that the area's once vibrant railroad infrastructure remains available to form the basis of an interconnected regional network of greenways and trails. This network of green infrastructure would provide local residents with abundant opportunities for healthy recreation, open space preservation, non-motorized transportation and economic and community revitalization. As a native of southeast Michigan, it is truly a privilege to be part of the renaissance of one of our nation's great urban centers.

This assessment would not have been possible without the assistance of many people and organizations. From the initial inventory and ground-truthing site visits to learning about the many plans and projects currently underway, we at Rails-to-Trails Conservancy deeply appreciate the information and insight provided by individuals, non-governmental organizations, city and county agencies and corporations. Special thanks are due to the GreenWays Initiative, a program of the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan for their commitment to making the greater Detroit region a national model for revitalization through the development of green infrastructure.

The vast amount of research and analysis revealed in *GreenWays Initiative: Planning for Detroit's Rail-Trails* provides a solid foundation for the development of greenways and trails in southeast Michigan. These community assets will stand as a lasting legacy worthy of the committed individuals and organizations seeking to realize the vision of an interconnected system of greenways in their backyards.

Keith Laughlin  
President  
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

## PROJECT GOALS:

- ❶ Provide a comprehensive inventory and assessment of abandoned railroad corridors in the greater Detroit region
- ❷ Select target corridors best suited for rail-to-trail conversion
- ❸ Develop the study as a vehicle to encourage and promote local organizations to pursue trail development

## INTRODUCTION

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The greater Detroit region has an extensive network of railway corridors, many of which were built around the turn of the twentieth century as a means of transporting goods, materials and people both in and out of state. However, during the later part of the century, as other means of overland transportation were developed, train service was discontinued and many of the lines abandoned. The region now has the opportunity to protect these abandoned corridors for potential future rail use and develop a system of interconnected greenways providing recreational and non-motorized transportation corridors. This study is part of the landmark GreenWays Initiative that is expected to put a minimum of \$75 million to work from private industry, foundations and public agencies to create and expand greenways in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Washtenaw, St. Clair and Livingston counties.

Across the United States, many abandoned rail corridors continue to be lost for public trail use to roads, parking lots or adjacent development. Public agencies, nonprofit organizations and private citizens now understand the value of these resources and are attempting to reclaim corridors before they are lost forever.

The following study of abandoned rail corridors provides a detailed look at the remaining corridors in Detroit and evaluates their prospects for rail-trail conversion. The study inventories and maps all rail corridors abandoned between 1962 and mid-2002 in order to assess their potential for development as recreational trails, non-motorized transportation connectors or other public uses.

## OVERVIEW OF THE DETROIT METROPOLITAN AREA

The city of Detroit covers 139 square miles of land on the west bank of the Detroit River in southeastern Michigan. With a population of more than 950,000, Detroit is a major metropolis in the Midwest situated on the Canadian border. Characterized by its rich history as one of the first cities west of the original 13 colonies, Detroit is distinguished by its automotive legacy. Recent efforts have been established to revitalize the city and reinvent the prosperity of its past.

While Detroit existed before railroads reached the Midwest, rail service expedited its growth. Detroit saw its first railroad and first steam engine in the mid-1830s. The city grew to become a major transportation link between the East, the West and parts of Canada. Railroads fueled the growth of industry, contributing to the conglomeration of the automobile industry in Detroit at the turn of the twentieth century.

eth century. Ironically, however, it was the automobile that led to the demise of much of the rail service across the country, including Detroit.

The automobile industry in Detroit spurred growth in freight service to the city, but led to a decline in passenger rail service. The city's streetcar system was replaced by diesel bus service. Railroad companies merged to avoid bankruptcy and closure. The automobile became the dominant form of transport to, from and around the city. Many railroad companies left the city, leaving abandoned corridors behind.

In recent decades, Detroit has been working to reclaim its status as a major economic center while improving the quality of life for its citizens. The automobile industry has made grand investments in the city, developing brownfield sites into commercial buildings and parks. Major revitalization projects, such as the Renaissance Center project of the late 1970s and current Detroit Riverfront projects, have begun to reverse the decay caused by the exit of job-producing and tax-paying corporations. Detroit is beginning to realize its vision of a more beautiful and sustainable city.

Despite urban revitalization projects growing in the city, there is a lack of focus on the development of non-motorized or public transportation in Detroit. The departure of railroad companies throughout the twentieth century left linear footprints in the heart of the city. Miles of abandoned rail corridors in the city have the potential to become rails-to-trails projects, linking residential neighborhoods, schools, commercial areas and parks. Rail-trails bring economic growth to the communities they traverse and raise property values of the land that surrounds the trails. Rail-trails would be a tremendous complement to the economic development projects in Detroit.

The revitalization of Detroit continues to take shape in many projects and proves to be an extremely successful endeavor. A system of networked trails would connect those projects with Detroit citizens by linking neighborhoods to transportation hubs, schools, public parks and centers of business. Citizens would become connected with the revitalization of their city through the development of a network of rail-trails traversing the city. Converting the existing abandoned rail corridors into a network of public trails and greenways will lead to the reclamation of Detroit's prestige as a world-class city.

## THE VALUE OF RAIL-TRAILS

Trails and greenways positively impact individuals and improve communities by providing recreation and transportation opportunities and encouraging economic and community development. Trails and greenways bring many benefits to the communities they traverse.

**Multiple Recreation Opportunities.** Rail corridors are flat or have gentle grades, making them perfect for multiple users, including walkers, inline skaters, bicyclists and people with disabilities. Trails are multimodal and versatile passageways.

**Economic Renewal and Growth.** Trail users spend money on products and services related to recreational activities. Bicycle and inline skate shops, food stores, hotels and tourist locations report an increase in business as a result of trails. Trail-related businesses spring up in communities with trails, spurring economic growth in the area.

**Increased Property Values.** Studies have shown that properties on land adjacent to trails and greenways often increase in value. People are willing to pay more to have a multi-use trail in their neighborhood. Trails have become an important amenity that many look for when choosing where to live.

**Healthy Living.** The U.S. Surgeon General estimates that 60 percent of American adults are not regularly active and 25 percent are not active at all. In communities across the country, people do not have access to trails, parks or other recreation areas close to their homes. Trails and greenways provide safe, inexpensive avenues for regular exercise.

**Environmental Protection.** Trails and greenways help improve air and water quality. Communities with trails provide enjoyable and safe options for clean transportation, which reduces air pollution. By protecting land along rivers and streams, greenways prevent soil erosion and filter pollution caused by agricultural and road runoff.

**Connecting People and Communities.** Trails serve as utilitarian transportation corridors between neighborhoods and workplaces. They connect congested urban areas with open space. By bringing people to greenways for their daily commutes, trails unite people and their natural surroundings.

**Regional Systems.** As trails begin to interconnect, regional systems emerge creating threads of green linkages within and between communities. Trails serve as the backbone for these systems, increasing the value of the whole by connecting the parts. Regional trail systems cross political, social and economic barriers, allowing trail users to form new connections with neighboring communities. These ribbons of green link schools, parks, commercial areas, neighborhoods and waterfronts, allowing trail users to traverse the region solely and safely on trails. Trail networks form a more cohesive transportation system, allowing people to travel to other communities or to work and to combine trail use with other forms of transit. Regional trail systems draw more riders from outside the community, contributing to the economic growth of the region. Bringing trails together to form networks dramatically increases the positive effects that trails bring to their communities.

## TECHNICAL METHODOLOGY

This project inventories and assesses abandoned rail corridors in order to identify opportunities for trail development in Detroit and builds from the 1998 document, *A Vision for Southeast Michigan Greenways*. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's (RTC) trail planning team, in coordination with our Michigan field office, researched, analyzed and produced the report. Information and guidance was gained from the City of Detroit Parks and Recreation Department, the Planning and Development Department, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, Wayne County Tax Assessors Office, the American Heritage River Project and consultants Hamilton Anderson & Associates. Railroad companies including Conrail, Canadian National (CN), CSX and Norfolk Southern also were involved in this report.

This process of inventorying and analyzing abandoned rail corridors across the Detroit Region was composed of two phases:

- *Phase one* developed a comprehensive inventory of all rail corridor abandonments in Wayne County, Michigan recorded between 1962 and 2002, including available original ownership information and was completed through:
  - (a) research of the Surface Transportation Board (STB) records and those of its predecessor, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). The STB maintains a list of proposed and approved corridor abandonments, which it updates on a continual basis. A total of 10 entries — some of which combined multiple STB proceedings — were identified in a comprehensive search of this data (five corridors are more than two miles in length).



(b) findings of the *Southeast Michigan Greenways: Wayne County Report*, July 1994.

(c) *A Vision for Southeast Michigan Greenways*, September 1998.

(d) information gathered from local sources on the future disposition of area corridors including representatives from affected railroad companies.

- *Phase two* assessed the inventoried corridors, completed an analysis of their merits for development as multi-use trails and developed a targeted list of five corridors which were given a more in-depth analysis. Current ownership information was assembled for these targeted corridors, relying largely on information from the City of Detroit Tax Assessors office. Part of the assessment section called "Finding the Corridor" provides detailed street directions with trail access points to offer maximum usability when surveying the corridors. A legal analysis of Michigan law as it relates to abandoned corridors was completed. General information sections such as proposed action steps and analysis of potential funding sources were included to provide guidance on next steps in the rail-trail conversion process.

*GIS maps* show a regional perspective on all inventoried corridors, an area view of targeted corridors, individual maps of each corridor and a recommended loop system. The project team also used the format of the GIS map to illustrate ownership location while providing narrative analysis associated with the map segments. Photo images are imbedded into individual corridor maps at significant crossroads for a realistic trail perspective.

*The photo image inventory* provides snapshot images at incremental points along each corridor. This view provides a street level representation of the opportunities and constraints unique to each corridor. See appendix A for the complete inventory.

The following report describes the methodology undertaken in both phases of the project. Each corridor is represented individually with subsections including corridor inventory, assessment summaries, ownership analysis, GIS maps and photo images. An additional section describing a recommended trail loop system provides a conceptual representation of future potential connectivity of the targeted corridors.

## PHASE I: INVENTORY OF WAYNE COUNTY ABANDONED RAIL CORRIDORS

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The corridor inventory information, which identifies each abandoned corridor, is included in each corridor section for this report. The database lists the corridors, STB docket numbers and submission numbers if applicable (necessary for locating the abandonment information on the corridor in the STB records). Also included is the date the railroad owner filed for abandonment. Further information on the corridor includes its length and title, which is usually expressed by its location between two end points, and the county through which it passes. Finally, the inventory includes area resources that intersect with specific corridors and a comments section derived from STB records and information gained from local sources. **See individual corridor assessments for inventory information.**

### CORRIDOR INVENTORY KEY

**Label:** Number used to identify the corridor on maps and in other assessment documentation.

**Name:** The railroad trackage name for the corridor (the line, branch or spur name).

**Topographical Coordinates:** The coordinates guide to corridor locations on the USGS topographic quadrangle maps.

**Old Ref.:** The reference code(s) for corresponding corridors in the previous Wayne County corridor assessment.

**Length:** The total end-to-end length of the corridor (does not include spur trackage).

**Endpoints:** Potential beginning and end of the trail corridor.

**Linkages (Schools):** Schools in immediate proximity to the corridor.

**Linkages (Parks):** Parks in immediate proximity to, or connected by, the corridor.

**Linkages (Other: Museums, Hospitals, Libraries, etc.):** Other landmarks and civic destinations in immediate proximity to the corridor.

**Comments:** General narrative about the status of the corridor.

**Docket Numbers:** The docket numbers of any STB/ICC proceedings pertaining to the corridor.

**Contacts:** Key contact person(s) for the corridor.

## PHASE II: ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITIZATION OF INVENTORIED CORRIDORS

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In phase II the project team identified target projects that represent the best opportunities for rail-trail conversion by analyzing the merits of each abandoned corridor. These corridors received in-depth land use and ownership analysis and include a GIS map with segment identifiers for easy transition between map and related narrative.

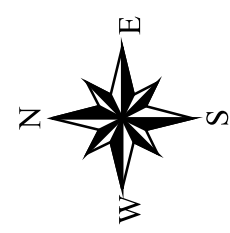
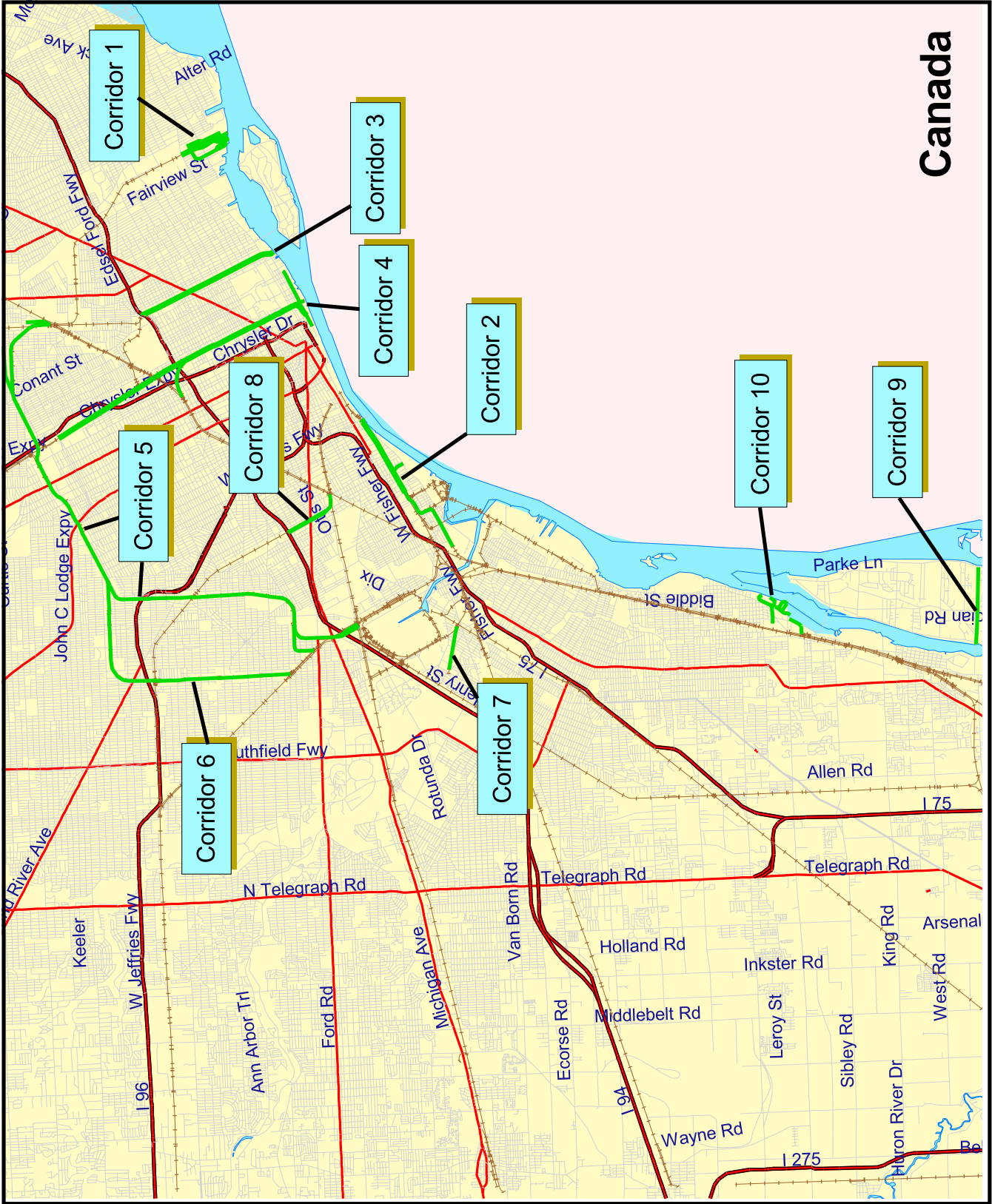
The phase II corridor analysis was based on information gathered during the inventory and specific criteria including ownership status, adjacent land uses, access points, resource characteristics and physical features. Targeted corridors also were evaluated for potential uses for transportation, recreation, economic development, natural resource protection, cultural interpretation, utility development and connectivity to community resources. Additionally, during site visits conducted to ground-truth the corridors, the project team compared maps and associated research with the actual location and circumstances of the corridor. The information gathered during these site visits is provided in the sections identified as *Corridor Evaluation* and *Ownership/Land Use Summary*.

Both summary and detailed ownership analyses were developed for each targeted corridor by researching city of Detroit tax records and consulting with the appropriate railroad companies. The ownership information included in the *Assessment* section is essential for determining the availability of a corridor for trail conversion. In some cases, current information on the status of a corridor could not be obtained through the city records and was supplemented by input from railroad representatives and local contacts.

This phase II analysis clearly demonstrated the emergence of a potential regional trail loop system. In overlaying maps from Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and other area planning projects, the project team discovered connections between the targeted corridors and existing plans that showed promise as a loop system. As a result, an additional section to the report identifies the system and gives a brief description of its potential.

Additionally, during the site visits, the project team compiled a photo inventory of the corridors (see appendix B) to provide an accurate representation of their status at selected crossroads.

# Regional View



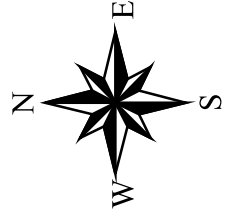
Canada

# Target Corridors



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- Studied corridors
- Rail corridors
- Streets
- Highway
- Primary road
- Secondary
- Local road



Canada

10 Miles

5

0

## CORRIDOR 1: CONRAIL SUPERIOR LEAD

### INVENTORY

LABEL: 1(1a-c)

NAME: Conrail Superior Lead

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.91-2, 3.38

OLD REFERENCE: RR-15

LENGTH: 1.5 miles

ENDPOINTS: Detroit River; Near Jefferson Avenue (parallel to Lycaste)

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS):

LINKAGES (PARKS): Waterworks Park (East Jefferson Avenue and Parkview Street); Portersfield Marina Village and St. Jean Boat Ramp (Freud Street and St. Jean Street); Algonquin Recreation Playfield (East Jefferson Avenue and Conner Avenue); Zachariah Chandler Park (Dickerson Street and Frankfort Street); Conner Playfield (Conner Avenue and Harper Street)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.):

COMMENTS: Conrail abandoned 0.8 miles of this corridor in 1984. According to Pat Bosch, Nortown Community Development Corporation, there is a seven-neighborhood, nonprofit group initiative to develop the Conner Creek Greenway. This group plans to use only a portion of the railroad corridor to the north of this abandoned segment (located near PVS Chemical Plant) from Harper Road to the I-94 overpass. The rest of the trail follows roads. They were awarded \$75,000 from the GreenWays Initiative in the last round of Transportation Enhancements funding to develop Phase I of the trail, the Millbank segment from the Detroit River to Van Dyke and Conner Streets. This portion follows an old Native American trail to the creek. They have until September 2002 to raise a \$150,000 local match to commence the project. Phase II would be developed along Millbank to Gratiot. Phase III would develop it from Harper to Mack. Each neighborhood group will assume leadership as the trail gets to their location.

In STB FD-33950, Jefferson Terminal Railroad Company (Crown Enterprises, Inc.) filed for permission to operate on this line. They purchased it from Chrysler Corporation in 1994. However, the filing was a tactic to avoid foreclosure by the city. These 1.2 miles are now in city ownership.

STB DOCKET NUMBERS: (1a) AB-167 sub 814 [7/2/84 - 0.83 miles (1b) AB-167 sub 818 [7/13/84 - 850 feet] (1c) FD 33950 [3/15/01 - 1.2 miles]

CONTACT: Roger Storm

## ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** This corridor section is not of significant length and does not serve any areas except heavily industrial areas. At the Chrysler plant north of Jefferson Avenue, the corridor is obstructed from reaching any of the residential neighborhoods to the northwest, and the condition of the line is somewhat degraded with potential contamination issues. In addition, much of the corridor is no longer in railroad ownership, though some is now held by the city of Detroit. Some of this land owned by the city on and adjacent to one of the branches of the corridor is being developed for use as a sewage and water reclamation plant. Given the surrounding industrial land uses, both current and planned, the project team does not recommend pursuing this corridor section as a rail-trail conversion.

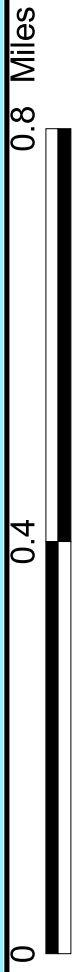
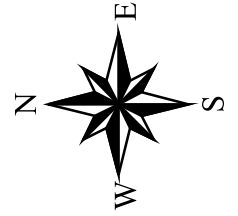
This railroad line continues on the other side of the Chrysler facility to an eventual connection with the #5 corridor. However, this portion of the line is believed to be active in its entirety, and owned partially by Chrysler and other shippers. It is also heavily industrial for its entire length. The Nortown Community Development Corporation's plan for the Conners Creek Greenway includes only a very small portion of this corridor, presumably for shared, rail-with-trail use. Its potential for much more is very limited.

**Finding the Corridor:** The two main branches of this corridor can be picked up via Freud Avenue which roughly parallels East Jefferson Avenue but is closer to the riverbank. One branch of the corridor intersects Freud Avenue between St. Jean Avenue and Lycaste Street. The other crossing is just east of Lycaste Street. Neither branch of the corridor can really be followed by car or on foot, but driving toward the river on Clairpointe Street affords a view of the eastern branches of the corridor from the other side of the canalway.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

The majority of this corridor appears to be in Conrail (via Detroit Terminal Railroad) ownership, although pieces that fully obstruct the corridor's path from the river to Jefferson Avenue have been sold and in some cases built upon. Portions of the corridor were bought by Crown Enterprises from Chrysler Corporation in 1994. A subsidiary of Crown, Jefferson Terminal Railroad Company, applied to the STB for permission to operate rail service on the line south of the Chrysler plant. As mentioned in the inventory, they did this to avoid foreclosure by the city, however. The petition was rejected by the STB and the land is now in city control. Another part of the corridor near Freud Ave. was purchased by Gilreath Manufacturers. Land adjacent to the corridor and its various leads is held mostly by Crown, at least for now, with the exception of the Detroit Edison power facility between two of the leads near the river. Some of land adjacent to and including the westernmost lead near the river is owned by the city of Detroit.

# Corridor 1 - Conrail: Superior Lead







## CORRIDOR 2: CONRAIL EXPOSITION SPUR

### INVENTORY

LABEL: 2 (2a-c)

NAME: Conrail Exposition Spur and Connecting Trackage

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.85, 3.26

OLD REFERENCE: RR-5(2a) RR-6(2b) RR-4(2c)

LENGTH: 3.5 miles

ENDPOINTS: Ambassador Bridge; near I-75 and Woodmere Street (considerable spur trackage)

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS): Southwestern High School (Waterman Street & W. Fort Street)

LINKAGES (PARKS): Riverside Park (West Jefferson Avenue & 24th Street - currently undergoing redevelopment)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.): Historic Fort Wayne (West Jefferson Avenue & Dragoo Street); Campbell Library (W. Fort Street & Crawford Street)

COMMENTS: A 2.3-mile segment was proposed for abandonment in 1981 (2a) and the Michigan Department of Transportation arranged financial assistance for the railroad for one year. The line was abandoned in 1982 (valuation was \$314,861). It is three tracks wide for most of the corridor, one or more of which are active in some sections.

According to the old corridor assessment, the availability of suitable bridges across River Rouge to connect this abandonment with the city of River Rouge and upstream destinations needs investigation. The Rouge River Plan addresses this issue. There is a heavy industry area that leads into a quiet residential area as it proceeds southwest. At abandoned industrial sites such as Revere Copper, toxic soils may be an issue.

STB DOCKET NUMBERS: (2a) AB-167 sub 121 [9/13/82 - 2.3 miles] (2b) AB-167 sub 836 [1/29/95 - 0.24 miles] (2c) unknown

CONTACT: Bob Ryan, Conrail

Rick Hood, CSX

John Kelly, Norfolk Southern

## ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** This corridor is especially useful for its connections between elements of the Southwest Detroit Riverfront Greenway Plan and the Rouge River Greenway. The Southwest Detroit Riverfront Greenway Plan outlines a system of enhanced sidewalks and bike lanes, while the Rouge River Greenway would be an off-road facility. Corridor #2 interacts with both these projects and can serve as a link between the two.

Although the full use of this corridor would necessitate some rail-with-trail arrangements, the corridor is very wide in places where abandoned trackage parallels active trackage, and shared use would be possible. Approval from CSX and Norfolk Southern, which share the active track, is unlikely. However, the portions of this corridor that are fully abandoned, including the spur to Fort Wayne and the branch that continues all the way to the CN mainline near I-75, would be viable options for connecting the planned Southwest Riverfront bicycle and pedestrian paths with the Rouge River Greenway as an alternative to using Jefferson Ave. A greenway system that integrates all or part of corridor #2 could provide safer separation from traffic, connections to Southwestern High School, McMillan School, St. John's School, the athletic fields by I-75, Fort Wayne and Riverside Park with minimal on-road travel, as well as improve reach and access to the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Finding the Corridor:** The eastern portion of this corridor can be best viewed from intersecting streets. The closest parallel through streets are West Fort Street to the north and West Jefferson Avenue to the south, but these are not close enough to allow a good view of the corridor. After the corridor curves southeast and then back southwest, it can be paralleled fairly closely by following Thaddeus Street southwest from West End Street. The following access points afford good views of considerable lengths of the corridor:

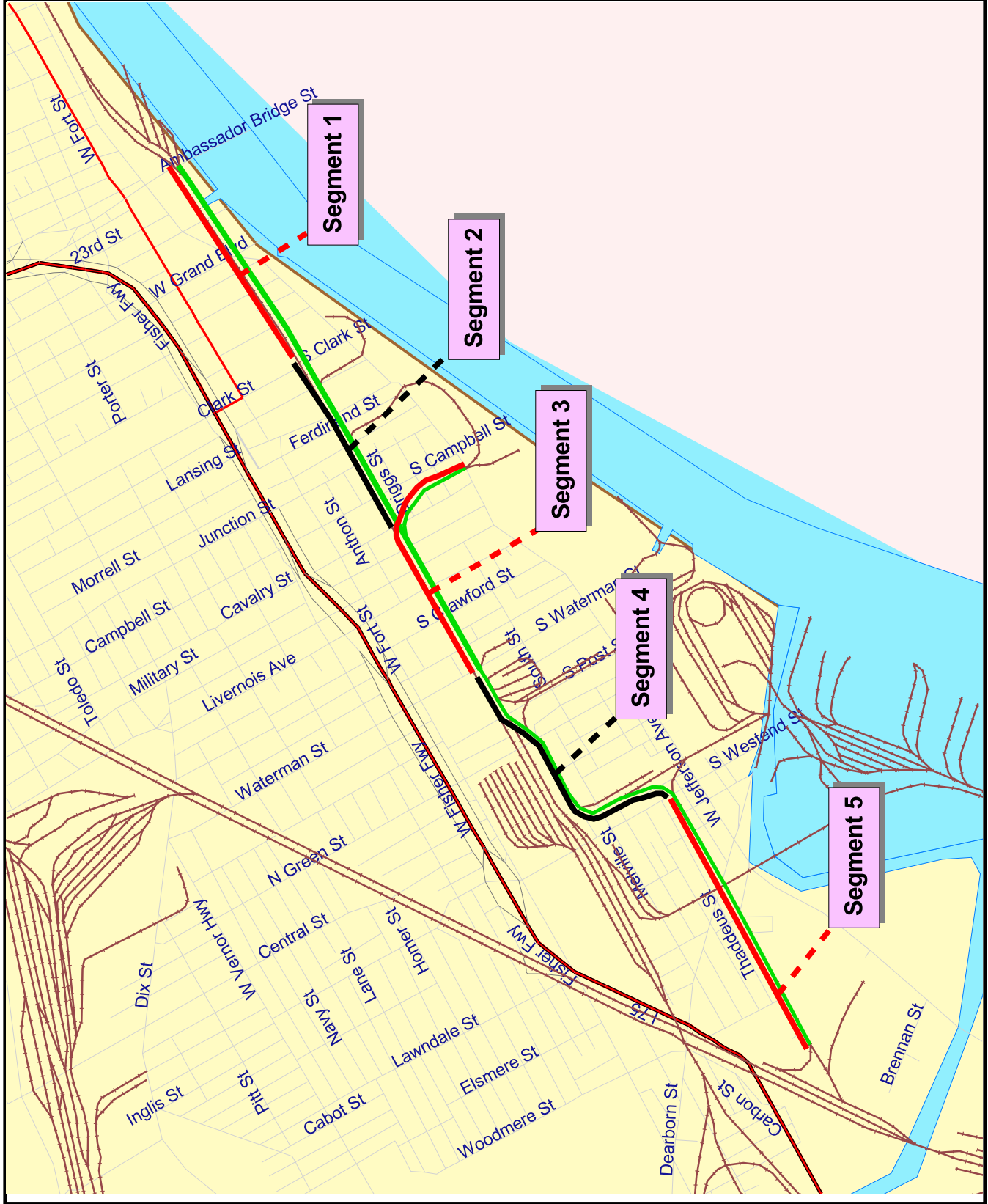
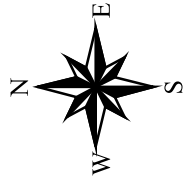
- A) The intersection of West Grand Boulevard and West Jefferson Avenue. The corridor passes through this intersection, which is one long block south of West Fort Street.
- B) Livernois Avenue just south of West Fort Street. This vantage point is particularly useful for seeing how the width of the corridor (and number of tracks) expands and contracts through this section.
- C) West End Street just south of its intersection with Thaddeus Street, near McMillan School. There is an easy turn-off here from which to view the corridor just as it bends back to continue southeast, parallel to Thaddeus Street.

# Corridor 2 - Conrail Exposition Spur



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## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

City tax maps do not consistently represent the abandoned portion of this corridor, but there appear to be very few non-railroad landowners. Many of the remaining parcels are owned by the city of Detroit. The few parcels within the corridor that have been purchased by individuals are still listed as vacant properties, and would not completely obstruct a trail even if they cannot be acquired. The railroad-owned land is mostly listed as Michigan Central property, but some parcels are listed as property of Conrail, C&O, Wabash and others. Most likely, all of these parcels are in Conrail control and city records have not kept up with the railroad mergers that took place. Norfolk Southern and CSX share the active stretch from Cavalry Street east.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE DETAILS

\*Note: The rail abandonment that makes up most of Target Corridor #2 begins at a point near Jefferson Avenue and Cavalry Street at the end of a spur that connects with the main line and runs parallel to Fort Street in a southwesterly direction before branching off from the main line again. In addition to this abandonment, we have also included in Target Corridor #2 (and in this ownership summary) the portion of that main line that extends northwest from the junction with the spur all the way to the rail yard near the Ambassador Bridge. This stretch is included because of its value as a potential rail-with-trail connection into Riverfront Park. The ownership summary begins with this section.

**Segment 1 — Ambassador Bridge to Clark Street:** Between the shadow of the Ambassador Bridge and Grand Boulevard, bordered on the northwest by Fort Street and on the southeast by the Detroit River, the corridor is either in public or railroad ownership. The parcel immediately west of the bridge is owned by CSX Transportation and marks the beginning of the active rail yard that extends beyond the bridge to the northeast. Corridor #2 proceeds southwest from this yard, and is represented on city tax maps as an exempt right-of-way with no ownership information. Beyond the rail yard, the land adjacent to the corridor is all owned by the city of Detroit, split between the Recreation Department (Riverfront Park), the Fire Department, the Sanitation Department, Public Works and Animal Control, with corresponding facilities located within each parcel. Moving southwest from Grand Boulevard, the corridor continues to be represented as an exempt right-of-way of about 60 feet in width. Proceeding southwest to Clark Street, the corridor is flanked by railroad shipping/docking facilities, metals factories and a Ford distribution center. This corridor features multiple tracks. Even though one or more remain active there appears to be sufficient unused right-of-way for trail development.

**Segment 2 — Clark Street to Cavalry Street (junction with spur):** Beyond Clark Street, the corridor is abutted by various industrial properties, including parcels that were once spurs off of the main line. The land on the corridor's southeast side is primarily occupied by warehouse and industrial office and storage facilities that are in use and owned by various entities. An exception is the entire block between McKinstry and Summit, which is owned by the city of Detroit and is vacant. The land on the northwest side leading up to Junction Street is much the same, though more parcels are vacant. Some parcels, one of which appears to extend into the 60-foot right-of-way width, are listed as being owned by C&O or Pere Marquette Railroad. Another parcel of note is southwest of Ferdinand Street. It is a small vacant parcel that abuts the corridor and is zoned as residential. It is owned by Fort Summit Holdings, LLC. Between Junction and Cavalry Streets, the corridor is bordered to the northwest by two parcels. One is an industrial lot owned by Sax Realty and Investment Company of Detroit and the other is a vacant

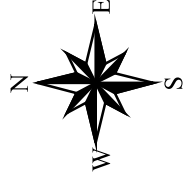
industrial lot owned by the city of Detroit Planning and Development Department. To the southeast are three miscellaneous industrial parcels owned by L. Thoms Leasing Inc.

**Segment 3 — Jefferson Avenue (near Cavalry Street) to Waterman Street:** The end of the spur at Jefferson Avenue marks the actual abandonment as defined in STB records. From Jefferson Avenue, between Cavalry and Campbell Streets, the corridor runs northwest, adjacent to a parallel alleyway. In the first block, the alley is listed as a property of Conrail, but for the remainder of the section, the alley is shown as public property. In the records, the corridor is broken up into separate parcels. The first parcel, past Jefferson Avenue, is owned by Michigan Central Railroad, but the next is owned by a Ricardo Thomas. It is listed as "railroad facilities" but is zoned as residential. Continuing northwest to Harvey Street, the next two parcels within the corridor are owned by TCS&D Railroad and also are zoned as residential. The corridor (excluding the alley) through this section is 50 feet wide and is bordered by residences. Beyond Harvey Street, the corridor bends to the west to meet the main line. The next two parcels are listed as Michigan Central land. They are abutted to the west by an industrial plot owned by Solt, Inc. A square parcel, a vacant residential plot owned by Stanford Rubach of Plymouth, Mich., in this section appears to cut into the corridor right-of-way. The last section of this right-of-way is owned by C&O Railroad and is zoned as industrial property. At this point, near Cavalry Street, the corridor continues southwest and parallels the main line. Moving along the combined corridor, city maps show a 60-foot public right of way representing the active main line. It is bordered to the southeast by parallel parcels with individual owners, which comprise the abandoned line. Between Cavalry and Waterman Streets, these parcels have various listed owners (all railroads), including Michigan Central, Conrail, New York Central, C&O and Wabash. The two parcels nearest Waterman are zoned as residential. The rest are recorded as industrial/railroad facilities. Various industrial parcels including those owned by Sybil Inc., Leo D. Phillips Co., and what appears to be a GMC facility occupy property northwest of the main line. Southeast of the abandoned parcels, more industrial facilities (mostly metals facilities) occupy the property.

**Segment 4 — Waterman Street to West End Street:** Past Waterman Street, the combined corridor is bordered to the northwest by Southwestern High School and to the southeast by a large industrial parcel. At Post Street, the abandoned corridor branches off from the main line, but continues to run parallel for another quarter mile. Two parcels within this section are listed as Michigan Central and Conrail properties. Various adjacent parcels are owned by the city of Detroit. As the corridor continues past Green Street, however, it is recorded as a Detroit Edison transmission right-of-way in addition to being a Michigan Central property. The corridor then bends to the southeast and is represented as a public right-of-way, possibly because it parallels another active (or at least more recently active) line through this section. It is bordered to the northeast by a large industrial parcel now owned by the Detroit P&DD. As it continues southeast and begins to bend back to the southwest, the corridor seems to be comprised of three or four different parcels. Michigan Central owns two. The others are owned by Detroit Board of Education and leased as railroad facilities.

**Segment 5 — West End Street to Main Line (near Woodmere Street):** From West End Street, the corridor proceeds southwest until it connects to the Canadian National main line. Through this section, the corridor is treated like a an exempt right-of-way with no ownership information. To the intersection with Dearborn Street, it is bordered on both sides by residential units, and is referred to in those plot descriptions as the Michigan Central railroad right-of-way. Past Dearborn Street, it is bordered on the southeast by a city of Detroit water storage and treatment facility. To the northwest, a series of five adjacent parcels are owned by individuals and zoned as industrial. Past Leigh Street to the north, a playground area owned by the city could be a good trailhead.

# Corridor 2 - Conrail Exposition Spur



Canada





## CORRIDOR 3: DETROIT BELT LINE AND TRANSIT BRANCH

### INVENTORY

LABEL: 3 (3a-c)

NAME: Detroit Belt Line and Detroit Transit Branch

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.89-94, 3.33-5

OLD REFERENCE: RR-14

LENGTH: 4.4 miles

ENDPOINTS: I-94 & Mt. Elliott Avenue; Detroit River at Mt. Elliott Avenue and west past Chene Street

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS): Whitney Young Middle School (Lafayette Street & Macomb Street); Martin Luther King High School (Lafayette Street & McDougall Street); Duffield Elementary School (Bradby Drive & Macomb Street); Miller Middle School (Maple Service & Chene Street); Bunche Elementary School (East Vernor Highway & Ellery Street)

LINKAGES (PARKS): Gabriel Richard (East Jefferson Avenue & E. Grand Boulevard); Chene Park & Amphitheater (Chene Street & Atwater Street); Coleman Young Recreation Center (Maple Service & Bradby Drive); Belle Isle (across bridge); Jean Boat Ramp (Freud Street & St. Jean Street); Algonquin Rec. Playfield (East Jefferson Avenue & Conner Street); Zachariah Chandler Park (Dickerson Street & Frankfort Street); Conner Playfield (Conner Street & Harper Street)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.): Pewabic Pottery (East Jefferson Avenue & Cadillac Boulevard); Doctor's Hospital (East Jefferson Avenue & Joseph Campau Avenue); goes through "The Lofts" development on the north side of Jefferson Avenue.

COMMENTS: The old assessment stated that the line was abandoned in three pieces: Detroit Transit Railroad (1.3 mi.), abandoned 1981; Conrail (2.2 mi.), abandoned 1982 and 1984 (3a&b). The '82 and '84 abandonments covered the trackage all the way to the river. The '81 abandonment could be the trackage parallel to the river, but it is uncertain. There is no ICC record for it because, apparently, it was a transit line. The one-mile section from Warren to I-94 was likely abandoned in 1995.

STB DOCKET NUMBERS: (3a) AB-167 sub 339 [2/25/82 - 1.6 miles] (3b) AB-167 sub 807 [7/13/84 - 0.62 miles] (3c) unknown [1995 - one mile]

## ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** This corridor in particular is at a crucial juncture. Though a majority of it is still owned by Conrail, Conrail has sold many sections and the buyers are starting to make alterations to the corridor. Because none of these alterations has, as yet, permanently affected the continuity of the corridor, there is still opportunity for a trail to be developed over its entire length. In addition, this corridor is remarkably wide in most sections, especially nearer to the river. It runs through the middle of city blocks, and open space from the corridor to Beaufait Street to the west creates nearly 150 feet of width for much of the corridor. This means that even in places near the river, where the corridor has been altered to add parking lots and such, there is still remaining open space. However, as redevelopment in this area continues, the opportunity to make use of this corridor as a trail could be lost.

The corridor also is appealing because of the neighborhoods it passes and the sites it connects. Mt. Elliott Park lies near the southern terminus of the corridor, as do several new loft apartment buildings and other new housing developments. There also is a tremendous view of the river and the bridge to Belle Isle from the corridor at the Uniroyal site. As the corridor continues northwest, it passes within blocks of at least a half dozen large churches, many with historic and architectural significance. The corridor is also valuable as a possible bicycle and pedestrian link from the river to the #5 corridor as part of the loop system identified in this report.

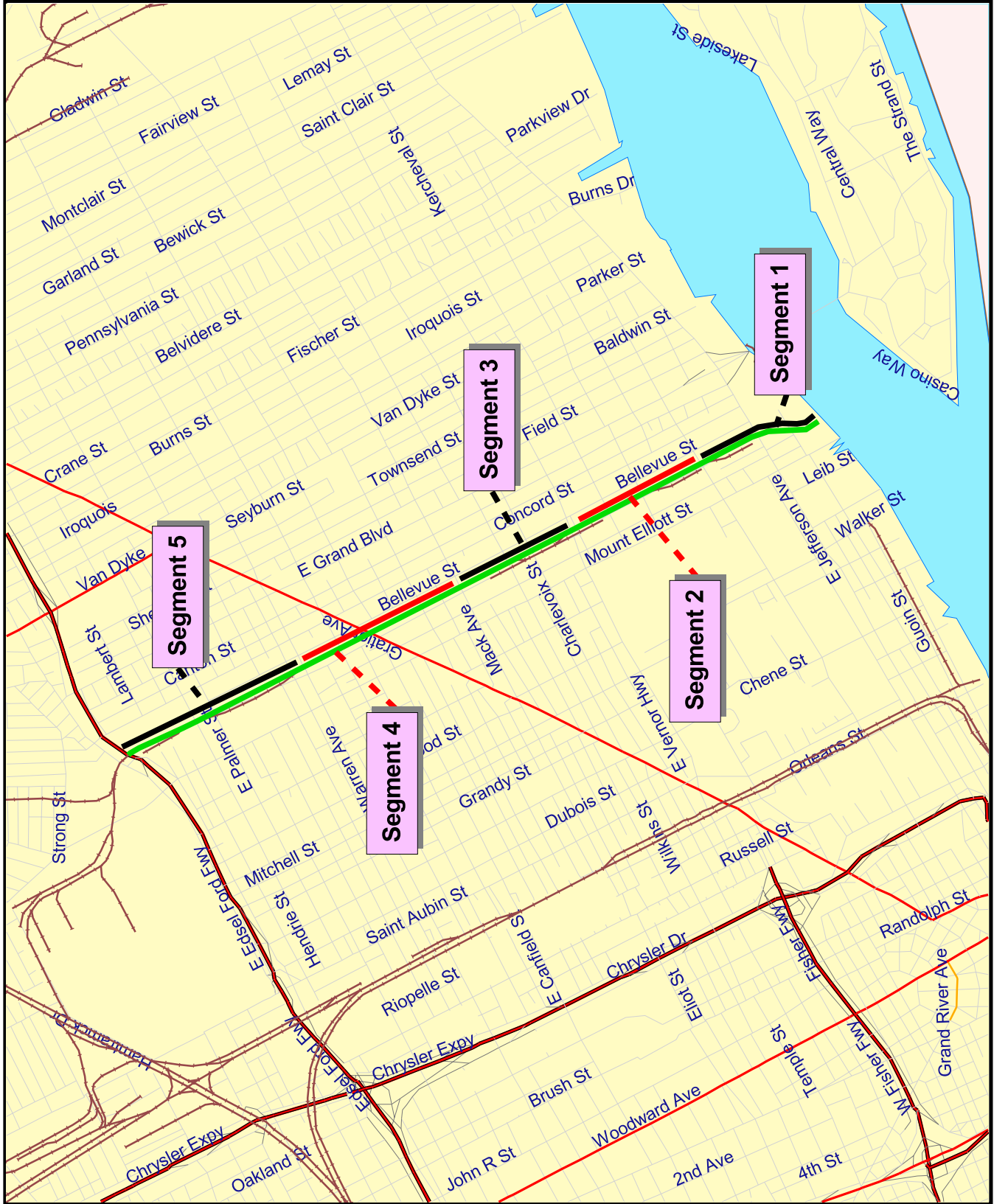
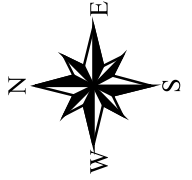
**Finding the Corridor:** For most of its north-south length, this corridor is paralleled closely on either side by a through street: Bellevue Street to the east and Beaufait Street to the west. Because much of the land between the corridor and Beaufait Street is vacant, it is best to track the corridor from Beaufait. The corridor can be easily accessed from these three points:

- A) The intersection of Wight Street and Mt. Elliott Avenue. Just one long block south of East Jefferson Avenue, this is a good intersection from which to view and follow the corridor along its short east-west length. In this section it is within the Wight Street roadway, parallel to the river.
- B) The intersection of East Jefferson Avenue and Beaufait Street. The corridor can be followed northwest from this point along Beaufait Street.
- C) Gratiot Avenue between Beaufait and Bellevue Streets. From this point the corridor can be followed in either direction using either Beaufait Street or Bellevue Street as a parallel through street.

The intersection of East Grand Avenue and Bellevue Street. The corridor can most easily be picked up from I-94 by exiting for Mt. Elliott Ave., heading south on Mt. Elliott and then turning left on East Grand Boulevard. East Grand Boulevard crosses the corridor in a long block, just before the intersection with Bellevue Street. The corridor can then be followed south by turning right on Bellevue Street.



# Corridor 3 - Detroit Belt Line and Transit Branch



## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

This corridor has been abandoned for nearly a decade now. Since then, Conrail has succeeded in finding buyers for only a few pieces of it. These buyers have primarily been limited to owners of adjacent parcels who wish to expand their enterprises in one way or another. It appears that the appeal of the corridor up to this point has been extra parking for residential and commercial users toward the south end and for storage tanks and vehicle parking for industrial users on the north end. Some of this temporary activity is taking place on parts of the corridor still owned by Conrail and constitutes an illegal encroachment upon the corridor. In any event, there is no evidence from the site visit, information from Conrail and the Detroit tax maps that the corridor has been irrevocably obstructed.

From Kercheval Street north to the end of the corridor at I-94, the corridor is almost completely in railroad ownership. The only exception is a section between Sylvester Street and Warren Avenue that has been sold to adjacent industrial interests. From Kercheval south to the river, the corridor is in the ownership of various residential and commercial development interests and a brownfield section is owned by the city. The part of the corridor closest to the river is more in demand for development.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE DETAILS

**Segment 1 – Detroit River to Lafayette Street:** The southern portion of this corridor is very near the riverbank and adjacent to a large parcel owned by the city and managed by the city's Economic Development Department. This parcel lies along the corridor to the south and east and is almost completely vacant. It is the site of the former Uniroyal tire factory and is considered a brownfield site. The corridor passes through this site and continues southwest briefly in the roadway (tracks are still present) until its termination at a new residential development along Mt. Elliott Avenue. This portion of the corridor is completely in city ownership, though some small adjacent parcels are owned by Conrail and Michigan Central Railroad. Between Jefferson Avenue and Lafayette Street, the corridor is enveloped by a fairly new residential development, but it does not appear that any buildings obstruct the corridor. In this block, the corridor is a single, 80-foot wide parcel owned by B&D Property Management. There are two adjacent, vacant parcels each about 100 feet wide between the corridor and the street owned by Best Group, Inc., of Bloomfield Hills, and Jefferson Land, Inc., of Detroit. The latter is zoned as commercial.

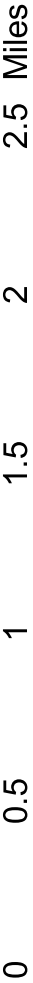
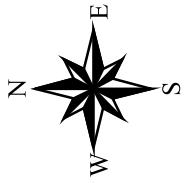
**Segment 2 – Lafayette Street to Vernor Street:** Proceeding northwest from Lafayette Street, the corridor remains vacant and includes another 100 to 150 feet of open space to the west, facing Beaufait Street, which parallels the corridor. This is consistent to the intersection of Vernor Street and Beaufait Street, where the Gleaners Community Food Bank building is adjacent to, but does not obstruct, the corridor. Between Lafayette Street and Kercheval Street, the corridor (remaining at approximately 80 feet wide for most of the way) is owned by Phoenix Enterprises of Detroit and is zoned as industrial. The adjacent open parcels in this section to the west are owned by Phoenix, Beaufait Enterprises and Style Craft Products, Inc., and are all zoned as industrial. One exception is a small parcel on Kercheval Street owned by the Elmwood Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, which is zoned as commercial. North of Kercheval Street to Vernor Street, the corridor and the adjacent open swath are listed as under railroad ownership. Various parcels are listed as Conrail and Michigan Central properties. At Waterloo Street, however, there is a parcel within the corridor owned by Chandler Sales Chapel and zoned as residential, but the lot remains vacant. The corridor is bordered to the east by various industrial facilities for the entirety of this section.

**Segment 3 — Vernor Street to Mack Avenue:** In the entire length between Vernor Street and Mack Avenue, the corridor is marked in city records as a single vacant parcel, owned by Michigan Central Railroad. Again, there is a parallel parcel facing Beaufait Street that is also owned by Michigan Central, creating a total vacant width of approximately 130 feet for most of this stretch. Interestingly, both parcels are zoned as residential. Just before Mack Avenue, however, an adjacent parcel on the southwest side of the corridor is owned by Frontera Brothers and is the site of industrial buildings. Parallel to the corridor on the northeast side are a series of industrial plots with various owners. Most of these plots are in use.

**Segment 4 — Mack Avenue to Warren Avenue:** Continuing northwest beyond Mack Avenue, the corridor continues to be listed as vacant and under railroad ownership up to just beyond Sylvester Street. Michigan Central owns most parcels comprising the corridor width although some parcels have Conrail listed as the owner. Again, many of the parcels are zoned as residential rather than industrial, but all of them are vacant. The corridor, which narrows to about 40 feet near Sylvester Street, is flanked on both sides by various industrial parcels with several different owners. Most of these parcels are in use. Beyond Sylvester Street, the parcel that encompasses the corridor has been purchased by Mohammad Esfahanian of Ann Arbor, the owner of the gas station on the southeast corner of Gratiot Avenue and Beaufait Street. It remains vacant and is zoned as industrial. This parcel is abutted to the northeast by two tracts owned by the New Cavalry Baptist Church and used for printing/publishing facilities. To the southwest are two industrial parcels owned by Beaufait Holdings of Detroit. North of Gratiot Avenue there is a small commercial parcel with buildings that appear to be adjacent to the original corridor. Marwan and Nashwan Essa of Oak Park own this parcel. The rest of that block (bordered by Gratiot Avenue, Beaufait Street, Forest and Bellevue) is one parcel owned by Ajax Metal Processing Inc. The corridor appears to be blocked by some structures in this space, but they don't appear to be permanent structures. The corridor is still considered to be intact through this stretch. Continuing to Warren Avenue, the corridor is treated as a public right-of-way with no ownership information, though there is a parcel within the corridor (which is approximately 60 feet wide in this area) near Warren Avenue that is owned by Rice and Werthmann Co., of Detroit. The parcel is vacant and zoned as industrial. Adjacent to the corridor in this section are several industrial plots both vacant and built-up. Near Warren Avenue to the northeast of the corridor there are also two parcels owned by the city of Detroit.

**Segment 5 — Warren Avenue to I-94:** Just north of Warren Avenue, the corridor is again documented in city records as a public right-of-way with no ownership information. However, the width of that right-of-way narrows to about 20 feet and is flanked on the southwest by industrial property owned by Faygo Beverage, Inc., and on the northeast by an industrial parcel owned by Lagrasso Bros. In the next block, there is again a wide swath (over 150 feet) of vacant space encompassing the corridor. This width is still under railroad ownership (Michigan Central) all the way to Grand Boulevard. This parcel is bordered on the northeast by various industrial properties and on the southwest by the Trinity Cemetery (Beaufait Street ends at the cemetery). Between Grand Boulevard and I-94, the corridor is again represented as a public right-of-way with no ownership information except for a narrow parcel owned by Conrail and zoned as industrial. The property to the northeast of the corridor in this section is owned entirely by the city of Detroit and is referred to as the "Packard Properties." To the southwest are two large industrial parcels that separate the corridor from Mount Elliott Avenue and I-94. Beyond I-94 to the northwest, the corridor is active, and is primarily indicated to be in Conrail and Michigan Central Railroad ownership.

# Corridor 3 - Detroit Belt Line and Transit Branch





## CORRIDOR 4: GRAND TRUNK LINE

### INVENTORY

LABEL: 4(4a-c)

NAME: Grand Trunk Western/CN Corridor (Dequindre Cut) and Norfolk & Western Russell Street Spur

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.88-93, 3.31-3

OLD REFERENCE: AC-1 RR-13 (4c)

LENGTH: 4.2 miles

Endpoints: Grand Boulevard to Detroit River; and St. Antoine Street to Rivard Street parallel to the river. Includes stretch between Ferry Street and Brush Street (near I-94/I-75 Interchange)

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS): Chrysler Elementary (Lafayette Street & Rivard Street); Miller Middle School (Maple Service & Chene Street); Campbell Elementary School (Leland Street & St. Aubin Street); Ferry Elementary (East Grande Boulevard & East Palmer Street); College for Creative Studies (E. Kirby Street)

LINKAGES (PARKS): St. Aubin Park & Marina (Atwater Street & St. Aubin Street); Central Park (Between Lafayette Street & E. Larned Street; between Orleans Street and Rivard Street); Plaisance (Russell Street & Maple Street); Elmwood Central Park (Maple Street & Bloombury Place); St. Aubin-Waterloo Playfield (Maple Street & Dubois Street)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.): Detroit FD History Museum (St. Aubin Street & Adelaide Street); Eastern Market (Russell Street); Moross House/Detroit Garden Center (E. Jefferson Avenue); Alexander Blaine Memorial Hospital (East Jefferson Avenue & St. Aubin Street), Globe Building (on priority list for restoration by Automobile National Heritage Area program, which has considerable funds available for projects)

COMMENTS: The line passes underneath major roads. The corridor was discussed in a 1994 study as a rail-with-trail possibility. The line is now partially abandoned. 1.3 miles (Detroit River to Gratiot Avenue) were abandoned in January 2000 and sold to Jefferson Holdings, LLC. 2.27 miles (Gratiot Avenue to the GTW main line) were sold to Adrian & Blissfield Railroad Co., in 1998, then were sold to Detroit Connecting Railroad Co., in October 2000. It is unclear if there is any rail use on the line now—most likely not. Jefferson Holdings, representing MGM Casinos, also acquired the west piece from Riopelle Street to Rivard Street, for a total of 4.5 miles. They acquired these miles for a major road that was planned to bring traffic to the riverfront casinos. The location of the casinos on the riverfront has been cancelled due to angry opposition from people who would rather see the riverfront developed for the public. Jefferson Holdings has directed that the land be turned over to the city, and the deed paperwork is being prepared for that deal. General Motors acquired the eastern piece from Riopelle Street to St. Antoine Street to construct a parking garage for the Renaissance Center. Detroit has an interest in this corridor for light rail as well. The line contains six fiber-optic lines, which will become the city's. The lease for these was pre-paid to the railroad, but Detroit will get a share once the lease is renegotiated.

STB DOCKET NUMBERS: (4a) AB-31 sub 36 [10/12/99-.31 miles]; FD 33601 [7/26/98—spur trackage] (4b) FD 33692 [12/28/98-2.27 miles]; FD 33935 [10/4/00 - 2.27 miles] (4c) unknown [1983 - 0.8 miles]

CONTACTS: Tim Karl, Akinya Khalfani, Dr. Kate Beebe (Director, Greater Detroit Downtown Partnership), Dr. Lilian Randolph (Victor Institute, Mich. St. U.), Bob Malone, Canadian National

## ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** This corridor is truly a unique urban asset, especially the section from Gratiot Ave. to the Detroit River which cuts through inner Detroit at a level about 50 feet below grade. Given that this section is already in the process of being acquired by the city of Detroit, it is an even more natural candidate for trail conversion. In addition, this section of the corridor passes through a very dense residential area between Jefferson and Gratiot, and would provide easy access to the riverfront and in the opposite direction to Eastern Market for a great many people. There is also enough right-of-way width in this section to allow for all kinds of possibilities for trailside features and amenities. Other trails have used such space for outdoor art galleries, concession stands, performance stages, and various artistic, cultural, and entrepreneurial endeavors.

North of Gratiot, the corridor reaches into an extremely depressed residential neighborhood with single-family homes that are mostly vacant. A trail along this corridor that leads downtown could be one way to encourage redevelopment in this area. Although the corridor is technically still active north of Gratiot, the likelihood that it will be abandoned soon is great.

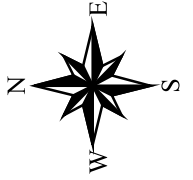
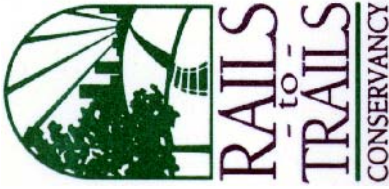
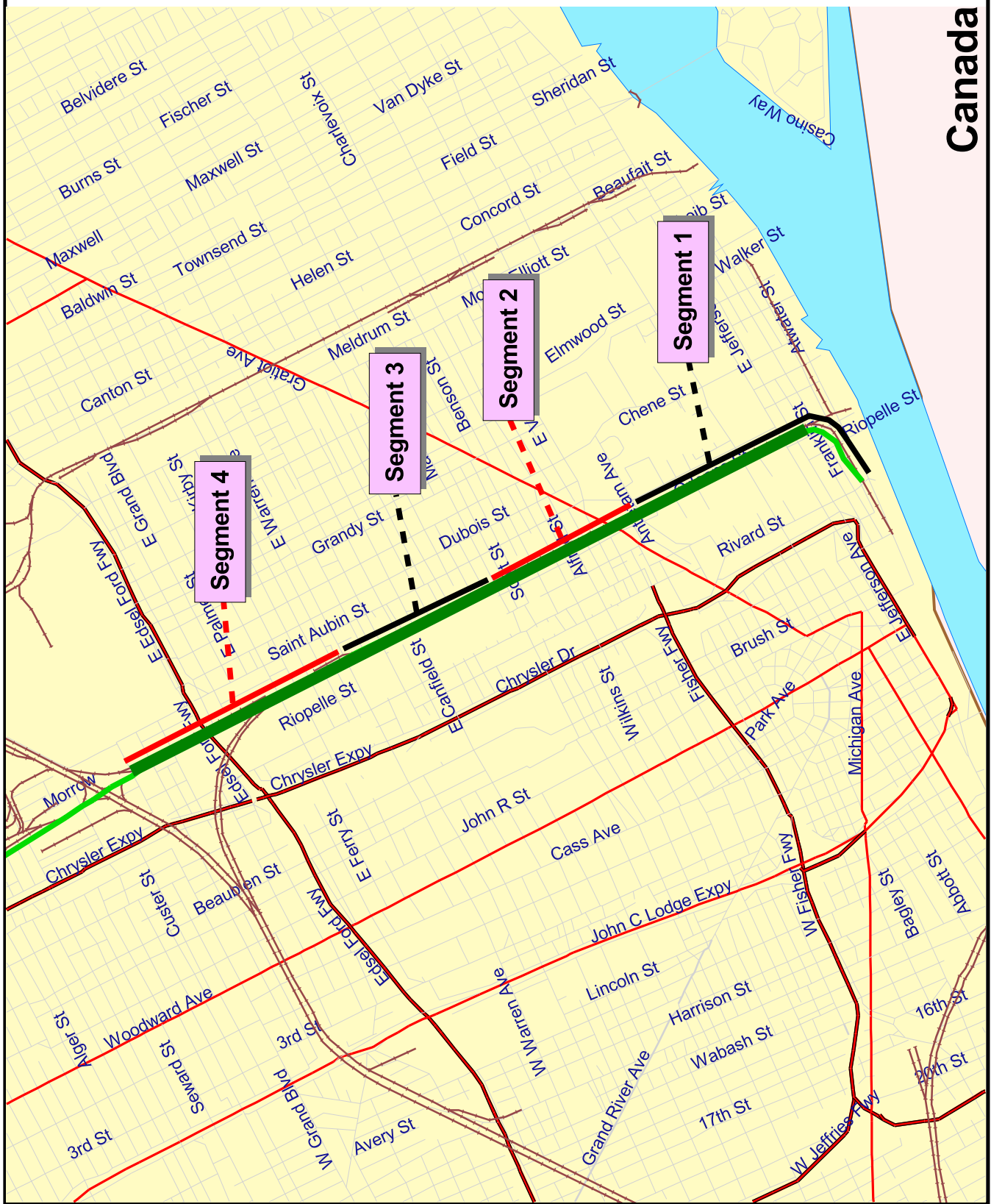
The corridor also interacts with an area south of Jefferson Ave. that is already the focus of redevelopment efforts such as the effort to restore the Globe Building.

The project team strongly recommends that this corridor be a priority for trail conversion.

**Finding the Corridor:** Because of its depression below grade, the southern part of this corridor cannot be easily followed from a parallel street. Though Orleans Street and St. Aubin Avenue parallel the corridor to the west and east respectively, the corridor is well canopied and cannot be seen well from either street. However, there are several street bridges over the corridor that afford considerable views of the corridor in both directions. In the northern section, there are no through streets that closely parallel the corridor. The following places are good crossings from which to access and view the corridor:

- A) Riopelle Street between Franklin and Atwater Streets. This point is just over two blocks south of East Jefferson Avenue. From here, the short east-west stretch of the corridor can be viewed, running between and parallel to Franklin and Atwater Streets.
- B) East Larned Street between Orleans Street and St. Aubin Avenue. This point is a bridge over the corridor; from here the corridor can be tracked by following Orleans Street or St. Aubin Avenue and viewing the corridor from the bridges that connect the two streets.
- C) East Forest Street near Orleans Street. This crossing provides a good vantage point for viewing the corridor in both directions, but must be approached from the west as East Forest Street is a one-way street heading east from Russell Street. In addition, this is where Orleans Street begins, so it is a good place to begin following the corridor heading south.
- D) Trombly Street near Orleans Street. This crossing is a good place from which to view the section of the corridor north of I-94.

# Corridor 4 - Grand Trunk Line



Canada

0 0.8 1.6 Miles

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

This 4.2-mile corridor section is divided into two different parts with substantially different ownership status. The 2.27 miles north of Gratiot Avenue to the Canadian Northern main line is still technically an active railroad line, though it does not appear to be in use. It is owned by Detroit Connecting Railroad Company, which acquired it from Adrian & Blissfield Railroad Company in October 2000, which, in turn, had acquired it from Grand Trunk Western in 1998. The 1.3 miles from Gratiot Avenue to St. Antoine Street near the riverside was abandoned in January 2000. Jefferson Holdings, LLC, bought all but the very end of this segment upon abandonment. They represented the interests of MGM Casinos, which hoped to use the corridor for roads accessing a new planned riverfront casino. The casino plan met with opposition and Jefferson Holdings now plans to turn that portion over to the city of Detroit in a deal currently in progress. The very end of this portion, the two blocks between Rivard Street and St. Antoine Street, was bought by General Motors in order to construct a parking garage for the Renaissance Center.

The way the corridor is represented in city of Detroit tax assessment maps also changes at Gratiot Avenue because the corridor runs below surface grade until it is north of Gratiot Avenue. The segment north of Gratiot Avenue is only a 60 to 100 foot exempt right-of-way with no railroad-owned out-parcels. However, the depressed segment south of Gratiot Avenue consisted of a 60-foot, exempt right-of-way with 40-foot strips of railroad-owned land on either side, comprising the "valley" through which the corridor runs. It is unclear whether the purchase by Jefferson Holdings included these outer strips or merely included the exempt right-of-way. Most likely, the acquisition included the entire corridor, but the city of Detroit tax assessment maps still indicate that Canadian Northern owns these outer strips.

Land use along the part of the corridor between Jefferson Avenue and the Detroit River is primarily industrial, with many vacant, deteriorating, industrial structures surrounding the corridor. Once it crosses Jefferson Avenue and descends into the "valley," however, the corridor is abutted by various apartment and condominium developments until Gratiot Avenue. Between Gratiot Avenue and Mack Avenue, the adjacent land use is light industrial, featuring meatpacking facilities associated with Eastern Market, a Pepsi Co. bottling facility and a Department of Public Works water and sewage facility. North of Mack Avenue the corridor passes through a few blocks worth of single-family, residential parcels before reemerging in another area of light industrial use. Heavier industry dominates as the corridor continues north and approaches I-94.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE DETAILS

**Segment 1 — St. Antoine Street (near Detroit River) to Jefferson Avenue East:** According to Canadian National Railroad records, the abandoned corridor begins parallel to the river and proceeds northeast from St. Antoine Street. On the city of Detroit tax assessment map, the corridor is shown as a single parcel, about 150 feet wide that stretches between St. Antoine and Rivard Streets. There is no ownership information for this parcel in city tax assessment records, though it has reportedly been purchased by General Motors for use as a parking garage serving the Renaissance Center. Immediately on the other side of Rivard Street, there are two small parcels that make up the corridor and are owned by Jefferson Holdings, which has a listed address of 1 Woodward Avenue. The parcels are vacant and zoned as industrial. From this point to Orleans Street, the corridor is portrayed as separate parcels



belonging to Canadian National. These parcels are fairly narrow, but gain in width as the corridor begins to curve to the northwest. The line is bordered to the northwest by several industrial parcels, including a large one owned by Crain Communications. Others appear to be vacant and have been bought by speculators. Guion Street borders the corridor to the south. Past Riopelle Street, there are restaurants that abut the corridor to the north. Once past Orleans St., the corridor curves to parallel Orleans Street. Beginning here, two blocks south of Jefferson Avenue, the rail line (a narrow width of 30 or 40 feet) is portrayed as an exempt right-of-way. There are adjacent industrial parcels owned by various realty companies and developers, including Jefferson Land, Inc., and Vigliotti Realty. The corridor passes underneath Jefferson Avenue and begins to descend further below grade as it continues northwest.

**Segment 2 – Jefferson Avenue to Antietam Avenue:** Once the corridor passes under Jefferson Avenue, the right-of-way widens considerably to accommodate the corridor, which becomes a “valley” below the surface grade. As the corridor continues northwest, it is shown to be about 150 feet wide, with a 60-foot strip down the middle represented as an exempt right-of-way (the actual space where the tracks are or, in some cases, were) with two strips on either side of about 40 feet each that represent the additional land owned by the railroad. This representation continues in a similar fashion all the way to Gratiot Avenue where the corridor returns to grade level. The parcels on both sides of the exempt right-of-way are shown to be property of Canadian National with one exception: A small parcel on the west side of the line just south of Clinton Street is controlled by the Detroit Housing Commission. Between Jefferson Avenue and Lafayette Street, the corridor is bordered on both sides by apartment complexes, some of which are low-income housing developments. Between Lafayette Street and Antietam Avenue, adjacent properties include St. John’s Presbyterian Church, Friends School, the Town Square Apartment complex and North Park cooperative to the northeast. To the southwest of the corridor are Lafayette Towers, Cherboneau Cooperative, Cherboneau Condominiums, Chataeufort Place Cooperative and Parc-Lafayette Condominiums.

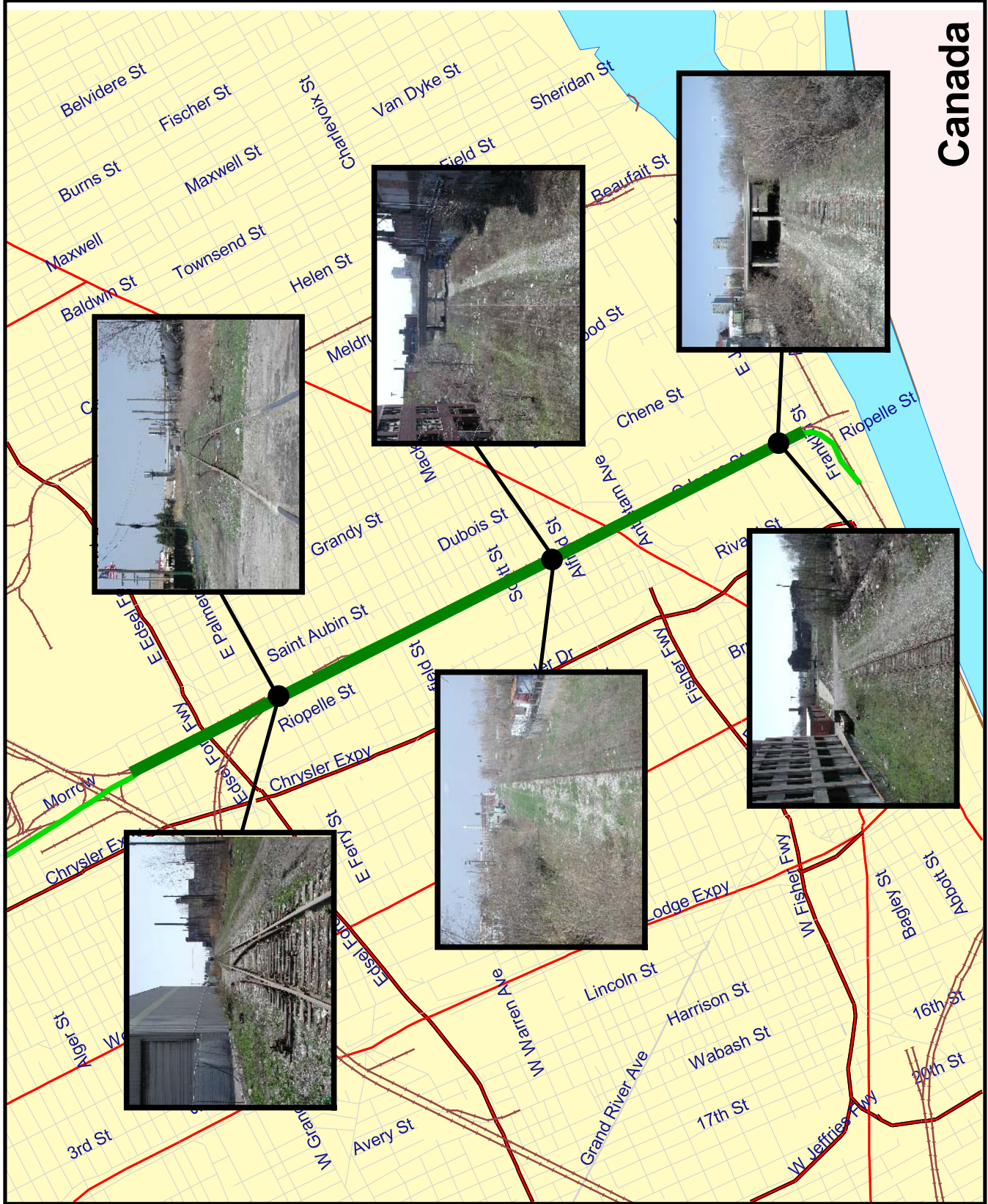
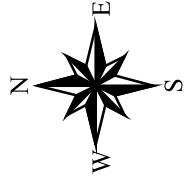
**Segment 3 – Antietam Avenue to Mack Avenue:** As the corridor continues northwest past Antietam Avenue, it begins to return to grade level and subsequently narrows. The strip of exempt right-of-way down the middle stays at about 60 feet, but the adjacent railroad-owned parcels narrow in the two blocks between Antietam and Gratiot Avenues. In these two blocks, the corridor is bordered to the southwest by a Catholic church and to the northeast by a large vacant parcel owned by the city. Beyond Gratiot Avenue, it is only the approximately 60-foot exempt right-of-way that encompasses the corridor. There are no longer any side parcels owned by the railroad. Adjacent land use on both sides is light industrial, with several small meat packing facilities including Berry & Sons, Chicago Beef and Thorn Apple Valley. Farther north, toward Wilkins Street, there are two larger parcels on the east side of the corridor owned by the city of Detroit and by Detroit Edison. On the other side of Wilkins on the west side of the corridor are two large water/sewage facilities managed by the Department of Public Works. The parcels on the opposite side of the corridor are vacant industrial parcels owned by T and T Development Company. As the corridor approaches Mack Avenue, both sides feature sites associated with Eastern Market, including Eastern Market Beef and the Wholesale Center on the west side, and Pellerito Foods on the east side. Again, the corridor is shown as a continuous, exempt right-of-way of 60 feet in width through this entire section.

**Segment 4 – Mack Avenue to Warren Avenue:** The rail corridor continues to be represented as an exempt right-of-way through this section, but the width varies as it passes different land uses and gains and loses additional tracks. The PepsiCo. bottling facility sits just north of Mack Avenue on the west side of the corridor. As the line passes the facility it gains extra tracks and the corridor widens to

approximately 100 feet. Directly opposite the Pepsi facility, the corridor is faced by a neighborhood of single-family residences, most of which are vacant. Many of these are in city hands, as well. Once the corridor passes the Pepsi facility, it is surrounded by single-family residential parcels on both sides and the right-of-way narrows to about 80 feet. Once the corridor passes Canfield Street, it again narrows to 60 feet and enters another area of light industrial use. The Boomer Company occupies the warehouse parcels on the east side. The parcels on the west side are vacant and managed by the city's Economic Development Department.

**Segment 5 – Warren Avenue to East Grand Boulevard (CN main line):** North of Warren Avenue, the land use adjacent to the corridor turns to heavier industrial and the parcels get larger on both sides. On the west side of the corridor there are four large parcels leading up to Ferry Street: Frigid Food Products Inc, a refrigeration company; High Rise Industrial Park; a GM parts facility; and OJ Transportation. To the east of the corridor are two parcels owned by W-F, LLC, and then several parcels owned by USL City Environmental Inc. which formerly constituted a rail yard adjacent to the corridor between Warren and Frederick Streets. On the other side of Ferry Street, part of the corridor branches off to the west to meet the CN main line. The space between the two branches is owned by Waste Management, which has offices on site and City Disposal Systems, which has a freight terminal. The city's Department of Public Works owns the large site just southwest of the branch. The branch itself is shown as an exempt right-of-way. As the main corridor proceeds northward past Ferry, it is bordered to the east by another rail yard shown as being in Grand Trunk Western (CN) ownership as well as additional light industrial sites including Schlafer Iron. At this point the tracks pass underneath I-94 and alongside a large parcel owned by Detroit Edison to the west and the facilities of the Michigan Box Company to the east. Leading up the Grand Boulevard, the corridor widens significantly on its approach to the CN main line and passes several more industrial parcels such as Union Toy, Arco Alloys, Midwest Steel and Famous Furniture, the latter two being vacant and now owned by the city.

# Corridor 4 - Grand Trunk Line



Canada

0 0.8 1.6 Miles

**INVENTORY**

LABEL: 5 (5a-k)

NAME: Conrail — Former Detroit Terminal RR (and Penn Central) and spur trackage

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.87-97, 3.21-8

OLD REFERENCE: RR-10 RR-8 RR-11 RR-12 (5k)

LENGTH: 9.3 miles

ENDPOINTS: Dearborn near Ford Road and junction of I-94 and US-12 (Michigan Avenue); Forest Lawn Cemetery, east of Mt. Elliott Avenue and just south of East McNichols Road.

TARGET ENDPOINTS: Lonyo Avenue to Ryan Road

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS): Highland Park High School (Woodward Avenue & Candler Street); St. Benedict Catholic School (John Road & Stevens Street); Henry Ford Elementary (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue & Midland Street); Field Elementary (Midland Street & 3<sup>rd</sup> Street); Glazer Elementary (Ford Street & 14<sup>th</sup> Street); Joffe Elementary (Holmur Street & Kendall Street); Courtis Elementary (West Davison Avenue & Greenlawn Street); Tappan Elementary & Middle School (Ewald Circle & Webb Street); St. Cecilia Catholic School (Burlingame Street & Monica Street); Drew Middle School (Wisconsin Street & Asa Avenue); St. Johns Catholic School (Wisconsin Street & Asa Avenue); Barton Elementary (Joy Road & Ohio Street); Sherrill Elementary (Prairie Street & Alaska Street); Detroit Urban Luther Elementary (Ohio Street & Tireman Avenue); Priest Elementary (Wagner Street & Casper Street); St. Cunegunda (Kirkwood Street & McDonald Street); O.W. Holmes Elementary (Arnold Street & Trenton Street); St. Matthews Lutheran Elementary (Michigan Avenue & St. James Street); Atkinson Elementary (Hildale East Street & Conley Street)

LINKAGES (PARKS): Hammerberg Playfield (Wyoming Street & Westfield Street); Little Playfield (Greenlawn Street & Ohio Street); Salsinger Playfield (Linwood Avenue & Fenkell Street); Ives Park (Hamilton Street & Midland Street); Woodrow Wilson Playfield (Lonyo Avenue & Arnold Street); Porath Park (Porath Street & Wyoming Street); Keilb Park (Wyoming Street & Porath Street); Palmer Park and State Fairgrounds; Krainz Park (Hildale East Street & Justine Street)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.): Detroit Repertory Theater (13103 Woodrow Wilson Street); Dearborn Medical Centre (Eugene Street & Michigan Avenue); Highland Park Civic Center (Victor Street & Woodward Avenue); Detroit Fire Department (Dexter Street & Ewald Circle); near Palmer Park and State Fairgrounds. Automobile history tie-in: Highland Park (near one end) was site of Ford plant with first assembly line in the world; Ford River Rouge Plant is near other end. Ryan Correctional Facility & Mound Correctional Facility are between corridor and Krainz Park/Atkinson School.

COMMENTS: The northern seven miles were abandoned in 1984 and are mostly still owned by Conrail. On the southern end, separated by a short gap, it appears (pending confirmation) that there are two overlapping abandonments along the Oakman Spur: the 0.6-mile portion abandoned by Conrail in 1984 (5c) and the 1.5-mile portion abandoned by Penn Central in 1976 (5d). There is also

a 0.6-mile extension to the south past Michigan Avenue to the Conrail main line, abandoned in 1984.

STB DOCKET NUMBER: (5a) AB-167 sub 816 [7/19/84 - 3.9 miles] (5b) unknown (5c) AB-167 sub 835 [5/18/84 - 0.55 miles] (5d) unknown [1976 - 1.5 miles] (5e) AB-167 sub 815 [7/2/84 - 0.65 miles] (5f) AB-167 sub 805 [5/25/84 - 0.55 miles] (5g) AB-167 sub 809 [6/13/84 - 0.27 miles] (5h) AB-167 sub 810 [6/28/84 - 0.2 miles] (5i) AB-167 sub 811 [6/28/84 - 0.21 miles] (5j) AB-167 sub 808 [11/8/84 - 0.9 miles] (5k) AB-167 sub 817 [7/2/84 - 0.6 miles]

## ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** This corridor is significant because of its continuous length. Although portions at both ends remain active, there are nearly eight miles of continuous abandoned corridor. This could feasibly make up the majority of a loop system of trails and on-road bicycle/pedestrian facilities that would circle the city. This is also a key moment in time for the public use of this corridor. Conrail wishes to sell and/or lease the entire corridor, has hired a consultant to look in to possible buyers and is actively pursuing this avenue. Conrail also indicates that it is willing to consider the possibility of donating the line to a public agency if such an option turns out to be financially favorable.

Although this corridor passes through some heavily industrialized areas, for the most part it remains wide open and, in some places, scenic. There are multiple opportunities for converting adjacent open spaces already in public ownership into trailside parks or other amenities. A trail along this corridor would also serve to connect neighborhood residents with the commercial corridors of Livernois Avenue and Grand River Avenue, which are both preferred on-road bike routes as identified on the Detroit City Bike Map (see Regional Loop System Map).

**Finding the Corridor:** There is no road that consistently parallels this corridor for any great length, but it is still relatively easy to see in various places along its route. These are some of the most convenient access points:

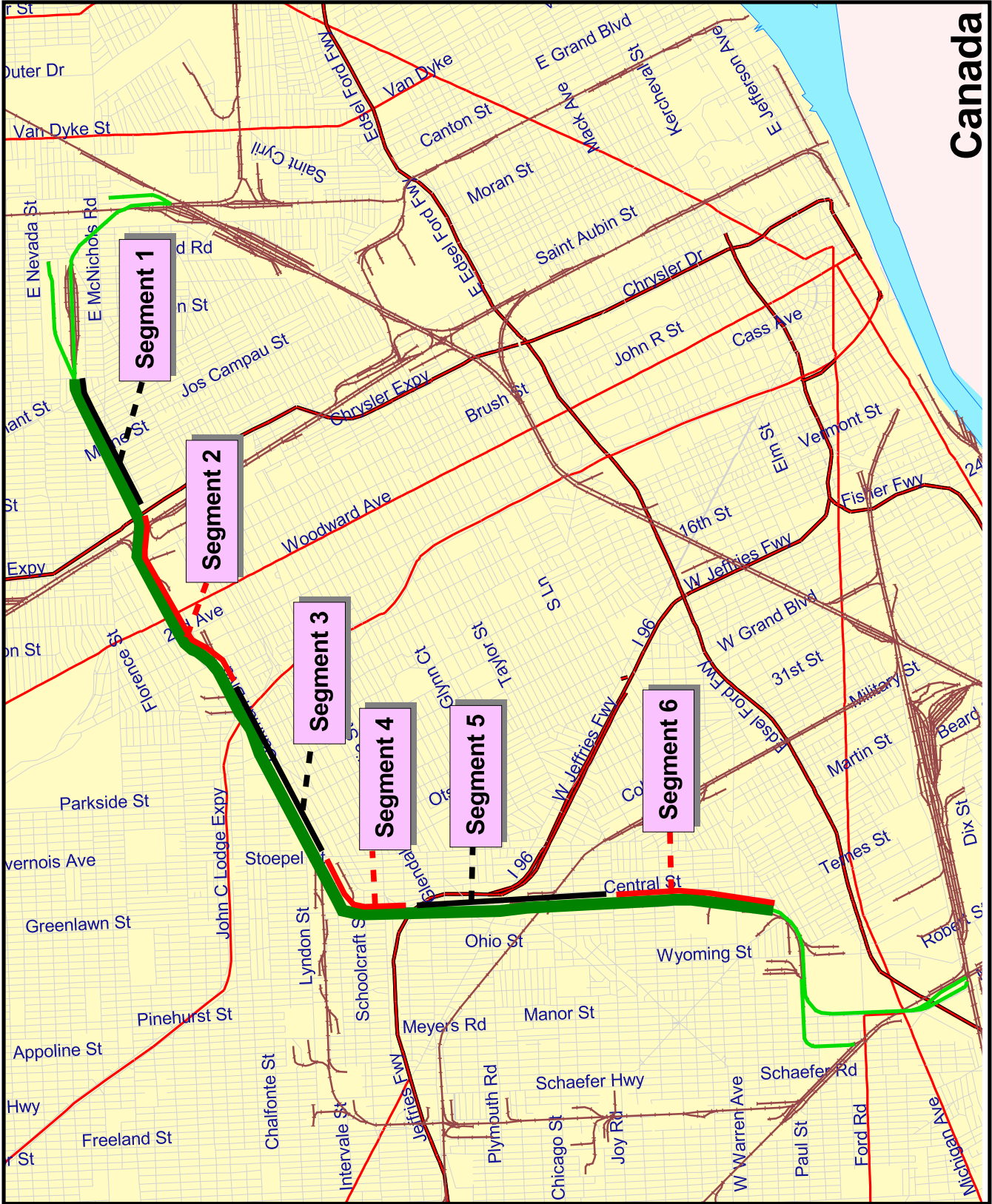
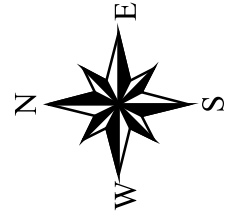
A) The intersection of McNichols Road and Main Street. The corridor passes through this intersection, and can be followed closely from here to the northeast along Jerome Street. It is also an easy access point from I-75; exit on McNichols Road and head east about a half-mile.

B) 2nd Avenue near Bartlett Street and the Ford Highland Park industrial complex. The corridor is difficult to get close to through this heavily industrial section of Highland Park, but the crossing at 2nd Avenue allows for extended views of the corridor in both directions as it curves. This is probably the easiest access point from Woodward Avenue; turn west from Woodward on to Bartlett Street and continue one block to approach this intersection.

C) West Davison Avenue near Greenlawn Street. This is the quickest way to access the corridor from I-96 and affords a view of how overgrown the corridor is through this stretch. Greenlawn Street parallels the corridor on the west side for a block leaving this intersection.

Tireman Avenue between Greenlawn Avenue and Alpine Street. This crossing can be arrived at easily from I-94 via Livernois Avenue and provides good views of the corridor in both directions as it passes through a residential neighborhood to the north and an industrial area to the south.

# Corridor 5 - Conrail: Former Detroit Terminal



Canada

6 Miles

3

0

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

This corridor was removed from service in several increments during the 1980s, but has remained, for the most part, intact. The corridor is active from Ryan Road east and from Lonyo Avenue southwest. Private carriers operate both sections under leases from Conrail. The entire section in between amounts to nearly eight miles of continuous corridor with no permanent obstructions. City of Detroit tax assessment maps do not represent the corridor in a consistent manner, but for its entire length it is shown as an exempt right-of-way (as if it were still active) or as vacant parcels owned by Detroit Terminal Railroad, Penn Railroad and Conrail. The assets of both Detroit Terminal and Penn Railroads were divested to Conrail, so the entire corridor is essentially under Conrail control. According to tax records, there are no sections Conrail has sold that would obstruct the entire width of the corridor. Conrail has indicated interest in leasing and/or selling this entire corridor, and has hired a consultant to look in to possible buyers.

Obviously, a corridor of this length will pass through a variety of land uses. The corridor is primarily surrounded by industrial facilities of varied sizes, with adjacent commercial parcels near intersections with major roads. However, the corridor also passes through some residential areas, such as just northeast of Highland Park and I-75, between Fullerton Avenue and Oakman Boulevard near Grand River Avenue and between Joy Road and Tireman Avenue as the line approaches Dearborn. Encroachments and overgrowth are most prevalent in the section just south of Grand River Avenue. Several adjacent parcels are owned by the city of Detroit, especially in the sections immediately west of Highland Park.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE DETAILS

**Segment 1 — Ryan Road to I-75 (Highland Park municipal boundary):** East of Ryan Road (not included in target corridor portion), the corridor is shown to be owned by Detroit Terminal Railroad and passes alongside the prison complex bounded by Mound Road, Nevada Street, Ryan Road and the railroad track itself. The line appears to be active from this point east, so we start our overview heading west from Ryan Road. Beginning at Ryan Road heading west, the corridor is represented as an exempt right-of-way, of approximately 60 feet in width. It is bordered by four industrial parcels that serve as warehouses and metal/auto salvage facilities (one or more of which may still be served periodically by the railroad from the east). However, of multiple tracks in this block, it appears only one is still used, if at all. Moving west past Conant Avenue, the tracks are inactive. At this point, the corridor is bordered to the northwest by Jerome Street, which parallels the line all the way to its intersection with McNichols Road. On the other side of Jerome Street from the corridor, leading up to Gallagher Street, are various small industrial parcels and the First Community Baptist Church. The parcels adjacent to the corridor to the southeast are an automotive store and several large industrial parcels owned by Crown Enterprises, a trucking company. Beyond Gallagher Street to McNichols Road, the predominant land use on both sides is single-family residences. Some small industrial and commercial shops also occupy the land. The corridor in this section is broken into individual parcels as opposed to being an exempt right-of-way. This is usually a sign that the line is inactive. All of these parcels are owned by Detroit Terminal Railroad, but have various zoning recordation. As the corridor crosses McNichols Road and continues southwest, it no longer has Jerome Street adjacent to it, but instead widens into that space to become just over 90 feet wide. South of this intersection, a large area of open space adjacent to the corridor is owned by Moon Warehousing and Distribution of Howell,

Michigan, but is shown on the map as under a state lien. This area could make a good trailside park. Through this section to Interstate 75, the line continues to be represented as individual, block-length parcels owned by Detroit Terminal Railroad and zoned as vacant residential land. The final corridor parcel in this section extends underneath I-75 to the Highland Park municipal boundary. There are four large industrial parcels that border the corridor to the northwest between McNichols Road and I-75. They contain trucking facilities and metal works factories. To the southeast of the line are various smaller industrial tracts with warehouses and other facilities. There is also, just east of Dequindre Road, a large parcel owned by the city of Highland Park.

**Segment 2 – I-75 (Highland Park Municipal Boundary) to near Lincoln Avenue (Detroit Municipal Boundary):** This section lies entirely within the municipality of Highland Park and no tax assessment information could be obtained. However, topographic maps and site visits indicate that the land use surrounding the corridor in this area is heavily industrial. Conrail asserts that they still own this section of the right-of-way.

**Segment 3 – Near Lincoln Avenue (Detroit Municipal Boundary) to Livernois Avenue:** As the corridor comes back into the city of Detroit from Highland Park, the line continues to head through major industrial sites and has multiple tracks and considerable width – at least 80 feet. The entire corridor is represented as three strips through this section, the northernmost being owned by Detroit Terminal Railroad, the middle strip by Penn Railroad and the southernmost by Conrail. After the line crosses the Lodge Freeway (Highway 10), however, the entire corridor is shown as a single parcel owned by Conrail. This section extends to Linwood Avenue and is about 70 feet in width. There is a small parcel in the middle of the corridor (but not the entire width) near Linwood Avenue that is leased by Conrail to Borin Brothers. Through this section, the corridor is bordered on both sides by several active and vacant industrial tracts. The vacant parcels are nearly all owned by the city of Detroit and are part of the Focus: Hope Program. The active industrial parcels include Schrebner Corp., a metalworks company, Linwood Pipe & Supply and Midwest Ice Corp. Past Linwood Avenue, the corridor is again divided into separate strips. The largest of these narrow parcels extends all the way from Linwood Avenue to Livernois Avenue, and looks to be about 40 feet in width. It is owned by Conrail and the parcel description refers to it as the abandoned former Detroit Terminal Railroad. Adjacent and parallel to this parcel to the southeast are several strips that are listed as owned by Penn Railroad and comprise about 40 additional feet of corridor width. This remains consistent up to Livernois Avenue as well. Some of the Penn Railroad parcels are zoned as residential, but the rest of the parcels that make up the corridor are zoned as industrial. All are vacant, with the exception of a couple small strips that have been leased to various adjacent industries. The predominant land use on either side of the corridor continues to be industrial up to the commercial corridor of Livernois Avenue. To the north of the rail corridor, parcels include Associated Hospitals, a laundry facility, Caravan Technologies, a distributor, a BASF wood products facility and a Value City grocery store at the intersection with Livernois Avenue. Parcels to the south of the corridor include Kelly Windows, City Smoked Fish, a packing plant, Kircos Flour, Sun Valley Foods and Auto City Auto Recovery.

**Segment 4 – Livernois Avenue to I-96:** Just beyond Livernois Avenue Corridor #6 branches off from #5, and proceeds due west between and parallel to Lyndon Avenue and Intervale Street. Just past this fork, corridor #5 turns to head due south. Within this area as the line makes its turn, it is shown as being owned in three distinct parcels by Detroit Terminal Railroad and Penn Railroad. Leading up to where the corridor crosses Intervale Street, there are three large, vacant industrial parcels to the northwest, all owned by the city of Detroit. To the southwest of the corridor are a dozen or so smaller industrial parcels, with facilities including warehouses, distribution plants, auto service garages, a



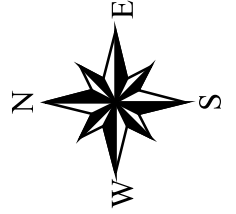
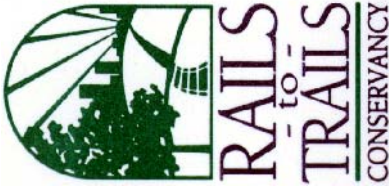
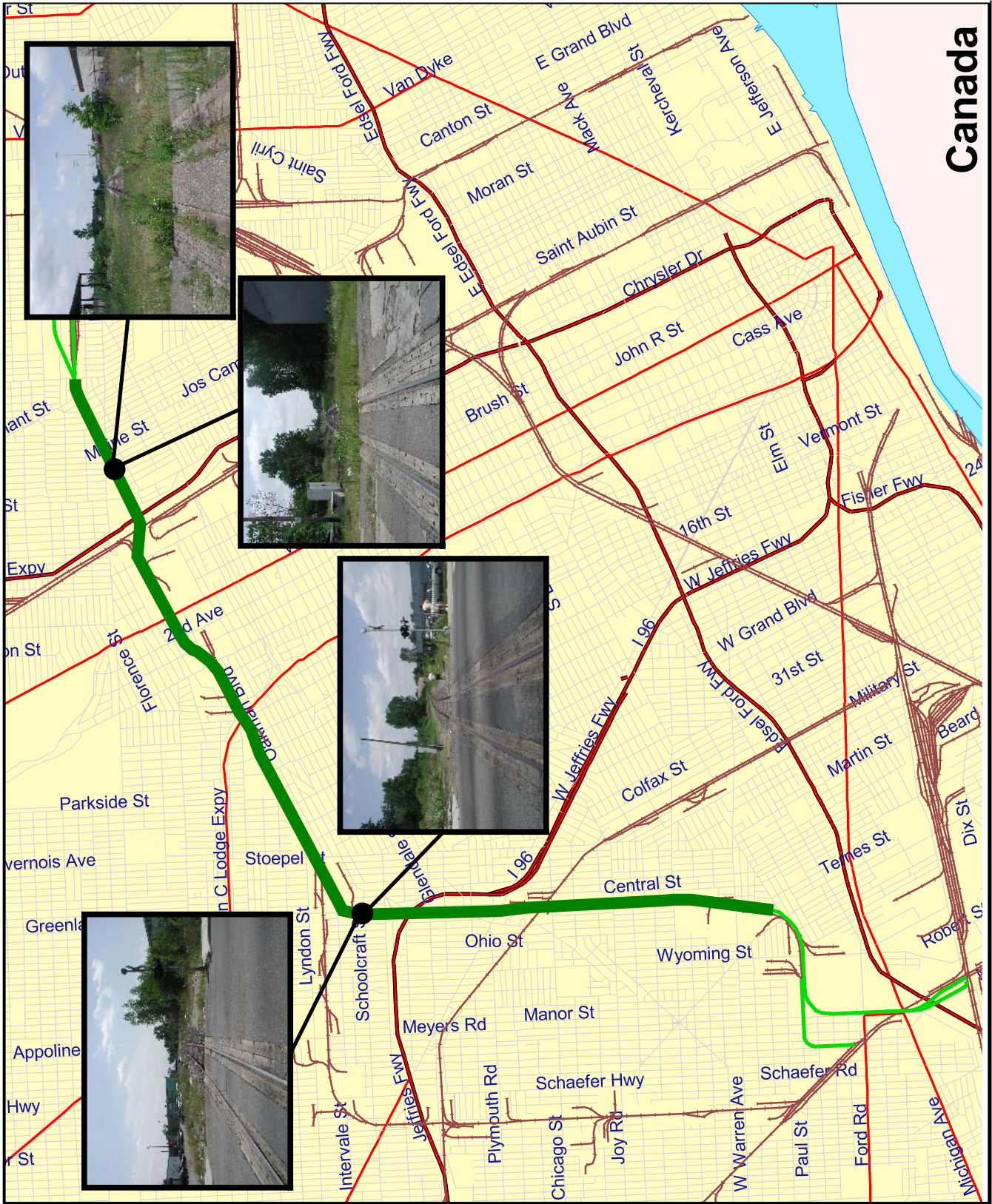
creamery and a beverage bottler. There is also a spur that comes off the line and extends for about one third of a mile parallel to and southwest of Intervale Street. Pioneer Steel Corporation has purchased this land. Past Intervale Street as the corridor approaches Schoolcraft Boulevard, it completes the turn and heads due south. To the east is a large parcel owned by Chancellor Media Corp., the site of WNIC Radio. To the west bordering the corridor is a large industrial site owned by Gilreath Associates. In the space between Schoolcraft Boulevard and I-96 and as it proceeds under I-96, the corridor is documented as an exempt right-of-way of approximately 60 feet in width with no ownership information. The corridor was most likely active through this stretch more recently than the sections previously discussed, but STB records indicate (and Conrail verifies) that this corridor is abandoned all the way to Lonyo Avenue. In this section between Schoolcraft Boulevard and Davison Avenue, the corridor is bordered to the east by a large industrial facility owned by Motor & Machine Casting. Abutting the line to the west are two parcels; the northernmost is the US Fastener Corp. facility, and the other is a large parcel managed by the Wayne County Board of Education and listed as containing cultural and religious buildings. Finally, as it approaches I-96, the corridor is bordered on both sides by city public works buildings.

**Segment 5 — I-96 to Joy Road:** The corridor continues to be documented as an exempt right-of-way south of I-96 to Cortland Drive, where it again is displayed as taxable parcels. One single parcel extends from Cortland Drive to Grand River Avenue and is shown as a vacant industrial parcel owned by Conrail. The corridor is about 70 feet wide at this point. Through this section the corridor is bordered to the west, up to Oakman Boulevard, by small single-family residential lots. On the east are more small commercial and industrial parcels, which include a gas station, warehouses, industrial storage facilities and parking lots. South of Oakman Boulevard, the corridor narrows to about 50 feet in width as it approaches Grand River Avenue. After the line crosses Oakman Boulevard, the predominant land use on the west side shifts from residential to commercial as the corridor approaches the main commercial thoroughfare of Grand River Avenue. This thoroughfare includes the Home Pride Market and a large vacant parcel owned by the city. Parcels to the east include an auto repair shop, Starlight Metal, Brown Roofing Co., Detroit Cut Stone and parking for the Greater Faith Temple which is on the west side of the corridor past the intersection with Grand River Avenue. After it crosses Grand River Avenue, the corridor, now more than 70 feet wide, is divided into two strips. The western-most strip is about 50 feet in width and is shown as a vacant industrial parcel owned by Conrail. The other strip is shown as an exempt right-of-way with no ownership information. Aside from the church, the land use on both sides of the corridor south of Grand River Avenue becomes heavily industrial, with two large parcels to the east owned by Usher Oil Co. and Kimmel Scrap Iron Co. and a large, unidentified industrial parcel to the west. These last two parcels extend along the rail corridor south to the junction with the CSX main line near West Chicago Street. The parcel comprising the corridor extends to West Chicago Street and widens by another 10 feet or so. Beyond West Chicago Street, the corridor is again shown entirely as an exempt right-of-way with the occasional out-parcel or strip representing additional trackage listed as Detroit Terminal Railroad. Between West Chicago Street and Joy Road on the west side of the corridor are about 20 individual industrial parcels, including primarily metalworks and automotive facilities. To the east are five sizeable parcels: The first two are owned by Consumers Scrap Recycling, the third is a vacant parcel and the last two, leading up to Joy Road, are owned by Burns Fabricating. The corridor width is close to 100 feet through this area.

**Segment 6 — Joy Road to Lonyo Avenue:** At Joy Road, the land use type on both sides of the corridor again changes back to single-family residential following a couple commercial lots facing Joy Road. The corridor width exceeds 100 feet in this stretch and is quite overgrown. It is consistently shown as

an exempt right-of-way for the remainder of the target section. Beginning at Tireman Avenue, the corridor straddles the municipal boundary between Dearborn and Detroit, so it is difficult to determine the width of the right-of-way through this section from Detroit tax maps. The land use on both sides of the corridor is heavily industrial. The main line of the corridor also begins to bend to the southwest after it crosses Tireman Avenue, though a lead extends off the main line and proceeds due south to Warren Avenue. This forms a triangular parcel between the lead and the main line, which is shown as a Detroit Terminal Railroad parcel. South of Warren, a thin strip of industrial parcels lies between the corridor and a residential neighborhood to the east. Some of these parcels are owned by the railroad, but the southernmost parcel is the Quality Bakery facility. To the west in Dearborn is a large industrial tract that is still served by the active rail line, which is active beginning at Lonyo Avenue. This is where the target section ends. Conrail does not operate on this active section but leases it out to a private carrier.

# Corridor 5 - Conrail: Former Detroit Terminal



Canada

6 Miles

3

0

## CORRIDOR 6: WEST BELT AND SPUR TRACKAGE

### INVENTORY

LABEL: 6 (6a-c)

NAME: West Belt and Spur Trackage

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.89-95, 3.20-4

OLD REFERENCE: RR-9

LENGTH: 5.7 miles

ENDPOINTS: Dearborn at CSX line near Schaefer Highway.; Livernois Road near Davison Avenue.

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS): Courtis Elementary (West Davison Avenue & Greenlawn Street); St. Brigid Catholic School (Schoolcraft Boulevard & Indiana Street); Monnier Elementary (Ward Street & Schoolcraft Boulevard); Parker Elementary (Meyers Street & Elmira Street); Ford Elementary (Marlowe Street & W. Chicago Avenue); McFarlane Elementary (Ward Street & Joy Road); Oakman Elementary (Chase Street & Gould Street); St. Alphonsus Catholic School (Schaefer Highway & Gould Street); H. Lowrey Elementary (Haggerty Street & Jonathon Street); Joffe Elementary (Kendall Street & Holmur Street)

LINKAGES (PARKS): Hemlock Park (Hemlock Street & Schaefer Highway); Anthony Park (Diversey Street & Anthony Street); Belton-Mark Twain Playground (Belton Avenue & Mark Twain Street); Sam Greene Playground (Ellis Street & Robson Street); Red M. Butzel Playfield (Lyndon Avenue & Meyers Street)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.): Links with major abandonment from Dearborn to Highland Park (5); Dearborn Public Library (West Warren Avenue & Hartwell Street); Detroit Fire Department (Oakland Street & Dexter Avenue); Detroit Police Department (Schaefer Highway & Schoolcraft Boulevard); Dearborn Fire Dept. (Schaefer Highway & Henson Street)

COMMENTS: The previous assessment identified this corridor as a potentially significant trail opportunity, but the status of the corridor needs investigation. The railroad is reported to be paved over at roads, but no abandonment record has been located aside from spur trackage. This corridor was shown as a potential trail on a Project Pride redevelopment proposal for the area.

STB DOCKET NUMBERS: (6a) AB-167 sub 812 [6/13/84 - 0.2 miles] (6b) AB-167 sub 806 [6/28/84 - 0.2 miles] (6c) AB-167 sub 813 [7/2/84 - 0.15 miles]

## ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** Only one third of Corridor #6 is inactive: the northernmost portion from near Grand River Avenue to the corridor's junction with Corridor #5. There is potential for this corridor to be a valuable extension or spur off of any trail made from Corridor #5 as it connects many neighborhood parks and playgrounds. The corridor itself has a substantial canopy of trees, especially in the northern part. Most of the corridor is owned by Conrail, which has sold or leased a few parcels near the junction with Corridor #5. There are no apparent obstructions. The project team recommends that the northernmost portion of Corridor #6 be looked at as a potential spur off of any trail converted from Corridor #5, but not as a potential trail in and of itself unless more of it becomes fully abandoned in the near future.

**Finding the Corridor:** There are several roads that dead end near the northern portion of this corridor, any one of which can be followed north from Intervale Street up to the corridor for a partial view. However, these crossings afford better views of the continuous length of the corridor:

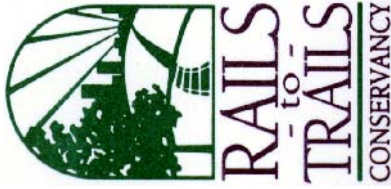
A) Cloverdale Street between Lyndon Avenue and Intervale Street. This location provides views of the corridor in both directions near its junction with the #5 corridor.

The intersection of Schoolcraft Boulevard and Stansbury Street. The rail corridor completes its turn to the south near this intersection, and short walks north on Stansbury Street or west on Schoolcraft Boulevard provide good views of the corridor on both sides of this curve. This location can be accessed easily from Grand River Avenue and has ample parking.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

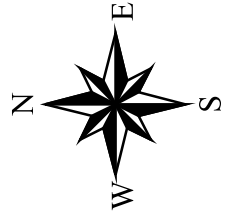
Corridor #6 branches off from Corridor #5 near Livernois Avenue and Intervale Street. It is a Penn Central Railroad line that was divested to Conrail. The portion of the line between the intersection with Corridor #5 and a point near Grand River Avenue is inactive. Conrail has already sold or leased some of the corridor and hopes to sell and/or lease more of it in the near future. No buildings are obstructing the corridor yet. The rest of the parcels that encompass the corridor are all listed as Penn or Conrail properties. From Grand River Avenue to the junction with the CSX mainline near Haggerty Street, the corridor is active and under operation by a private carrier. In this section, the corridor is represented on city tax maps as an exempt right-of-way. There is substantial right-of-way width, especially in the northern portion. In addition, the northern portion is abutted by parcels with only light industry, which gives way to residential neighborhoods within a block or two of the corridor.

# Corridor 6 - West Belt and Spur Trackage



GREENWAYS  
INITIATIVE

COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
For SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN



4 Miles

2

0

**INVENTORY**

LABEL: 7

NAME: Conrail Detroit, Dearborn, & Delray (DD&D) Branch

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.84, 3.20

OLD REFERENCE: RR-3

LENGTH: 1 mile

ENDPOINTS: Schaefer Road; Allen Road (in Melvindale)

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS):

LINKAGES (PARKS): DeLuca Field (Allen Road & Elizabeth Street); Barola Playfield (Oakwood Boulevard & Sanders Street)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.): Melvindale Fire Department (Oakwood Boulevard & Wall Street); Melvindale Municipal Bldg. (Oakwood Boulevard & Wall Street); Melvindale Post Office (Oakwood Boulevard & Flint Street)

COMMENTS: Conrail abandoned 0.8 miles of this stretch in 1982. Net liquidation value (1982) found to be \$113,823. Conrail sold this segment to the city of Melvindale and others.

STB DOCKET NUMBER: (7) AB-167 sub 120 [2/9/82-.8 miles)

**ASSESSMENT**

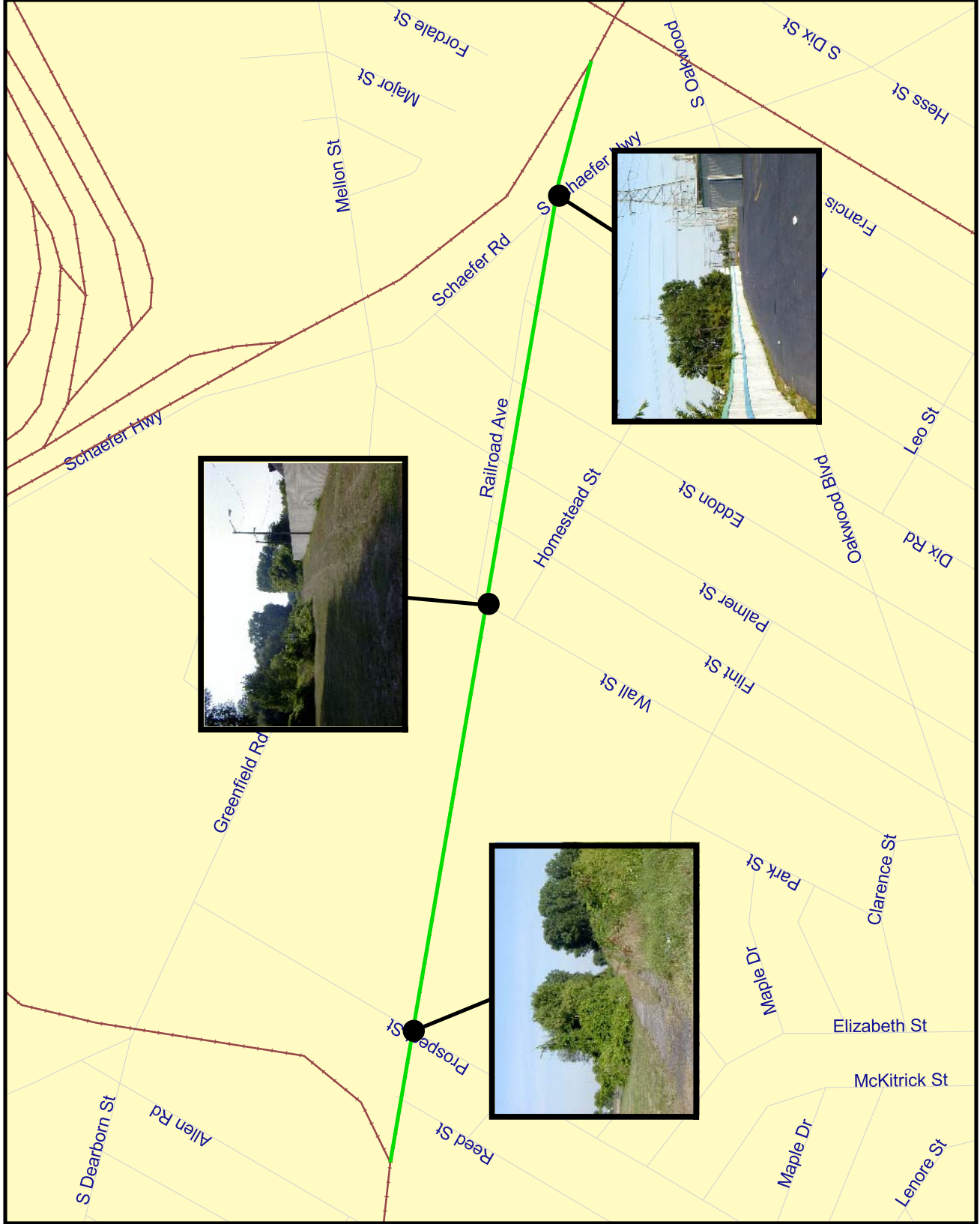
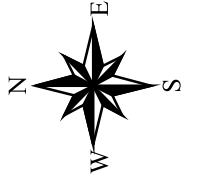
**Corridor Evaluation:** At just under a mile in end-to-end length, this corridor could be a nice neighborhood trail. De Luca Field, an athletic facility, is located at the western end. Otherwise, the corridor does not offer much in the way of linkages to significant locations such as schools. The project team does not recommend this corridor as a major priority for trail conversion.

**Finding the Corridor:** This corridor is not paralleled by any through streets, but the at-grade crossings at Raupp Road and Wall Street north of Homestead Street, as well as Prospect Avenue and Allen Road near Martel Avenue, provide good vantage points. All of these crossings can be accessed easily from Greenfield Road and Schaefer Highway.

**OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY**

This section lies entirely within the municipality of Melvindale, for which no tax assessment information could be obtained. However, topographic maps and site visits indicate that the land use surrounding the corridor in this area is residential, parkland, and light industrial. According to ICC documentation, Conrail sold most of this segment to the city of Melvindale in 1982, and the city is likely the current owner.

# Corridor 7 - Conrail: D, D, & D Branch



0.6 Miles

0.3

0





## CORRIDOR 8: CSX UNION BELT

### INVENTORY

LABEL: 8

NAME: CSX Union Belt

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.89, 3.25

OLD REFERENCE: RR-7

LENGTH: 1.06 miles

ENDPOINTS: Conrail Main line (at Junction Street); near I-94 (parallel to Livernois Avenue)

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS): Academy Americas Elementary School (Junction Street & St. Hedwig Street); Zion Elementary School (Livernois Avenue & Buchanan Avenue); St. Francis of Assisi Elementary (Rich Street & Wesson Street); Ellis Elementary School (Rich Street & 35th Street); Newberry Elementary School (30<sup>th</sup> Street & Buchanan Avenue)

LINKAGES (PARKS): St. Hedwig Playfield (Junction Street & Konkel Street)

LINKAGES (OTHER: MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, LIBRARIES, ETC.): Michigan Osteopathic Medicine Center West Hospital (Cook Street & Military Street)

COMMENTS: CSX filed for abandonment in 1992. The right of way is 60 feet wide and was acquired in 1917.

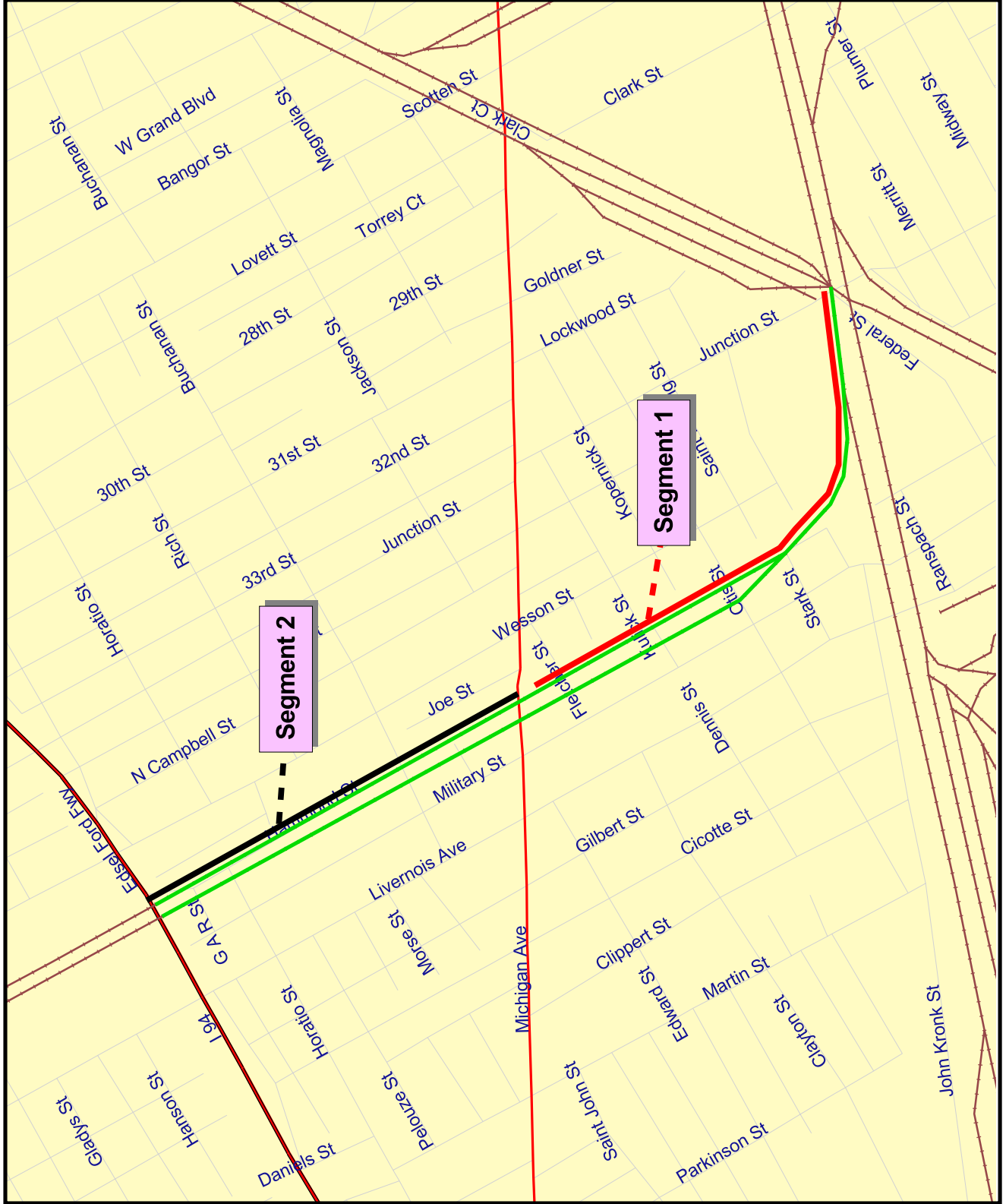
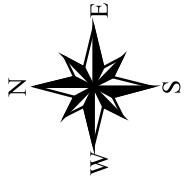
DOCKET NUMBER: (8) AB-55 sub 439 [9/29/92 - 1.06 miles]

### ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** The value of this corridor is the connection it could facilitate between the #5 corridor and the #2 corridor. In addition, the corridor is tremendously valuable on the neighborhood level because two city parks, Atkinson Park and Memorial Park, lie at its endpoints. Though it is barely one mile in length, the corridor also passes within three blocks of three different schools and a playground. This would have to move forward as a rail-with-trail project as there is an active CSX line along the corridor. That would be the greatest hurdle to overcome. However, only one of the two tracks along the corridor is active, and there is easily sufficient width to accommodate a parallel pathway. Although CSX is reluctant to participate in any such arrangement, city tax maps indicate that CSX has granted two different leases to an adjacent landowner that appear to allow for crossing of the corridor and travel along the corridor within the right-of-way and alongside the active track. The corridor is also wide open and fairly appealing visually.

**Finding the Corridor:** Hammond Street parallels this partly-active corridor very closely in two different sections, one north and one south of Michigan Avenue. North of Michigan Avenue, Hammond Street can be accessed by turning north on Livernois Avenue and then east on Buchanan Avenue. South of Michigan, it can be accessed by turning south on Livernois Avenue and then east on Otis Street. Both Buchanan Avenue and Otis Street also cross the corridor, providing good continuous views in both directions.

# Corridor 8 - CSX: Union Belt



0.8 Miles

0.4

0

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

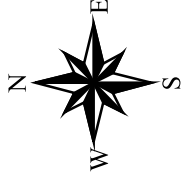
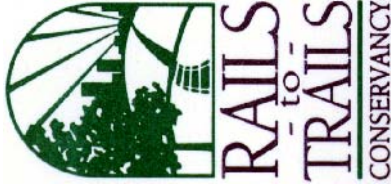
This corridor contains two parallel tracks for most of its length. One of these tracks (the southwest track) is an active CSX line. The other has been abandoned. CSX controls the entire corridor width for the length of the section with one exception – a small parcel that is leased to an adjacent welding shop between Buchanan and Cook Streets. This may just be a lease arrangement for crossing of the corridor as no structures are indicated. The corridor is more than 60 feet wide for most of its length, a sufficient width for a rail-with-trail to be feasible.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE DETAILS

**Segment 1 – Junction Street to Michigan Avenue:** This corridor segment begins at the junction of the Conrail and Canadian National mainlines, which occurs at Junction Street. As the Conrail main line heads west from the junction, corridor #8 begins to branch off from it and head in a northwesterly direction. The land is owned by Canadian National to the point where the line fully branches off near Hammond Street. The corridor is represented as a public right-of-way for the entire length of this section, which is indicative of the fact that it contains an active CSX line. It is bordered here immediately to the north by Memorial Park. After the corridor bends around Memorial Park and continues north-west, it is paralleled to the southwest by Hammond Street for three blocks. Bordering the line to the northeast (as well as to the southwest on the other side of Hammond Street) are single-family residences. This remains the case until the line reaches Dennis Street. At this point, Hammond Street ends and the corridor is abutted immediately to the southwest by the Olympic Steel warehouse facility, a parcel that continues all the way up to Michigan Avenue. On the northeast side, the line continues to be bordered by small residential lots until the Michigan Avenue block and the Pay and Save Market.

**Segment 2 – Michigan Avenue to I-94:** In the blocks immediately northwest of Michigan Avenue, the corridor is bordered on both sides by various industrial enterprises, including Bulldog Steel and B&H Machine Sales to the southwest. To the northeast are Tiger Auto Repair, a bottling plant, and a welding shop owned by Robert Carmack, who has lease agreements with CSX that allow for crossing of the corridor to Hammond Street and a connection from his property to Michigan Avenue. Continuing northwest, the corridor is again bordered by Hammond Street to the southwest. On the other side of Hammond is another warehouse facility and several individual residential lots, most of which are vacant. Bordering the corridor immediately on the northeast side are more industrial parcels including a food warehouse and office building owned by Internet, Ltd. Beyond this facility which ends at Nowak Street, the corridor is bordered on both sides by individual residential lots until it passes underneath I-94. Just on the other side of I-94, there is a vacant industrial parcel owned by the city of Detroit immediately northeast of the corridor that connects to Atkinson Park, a possible terminus/trailhead.

# Corridor 8 - CSX: Union Belt



0.8 Miles

0.4

0

## CORRIDOR 9: GROSSE ILE RAILROAD GRADE

### INVENTORY

NAME: Grosse Ile Railroad Grade

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.66, 3.20

OLD REFERENCE: RR-1

LENGTH: 1.6 miles

ENDPOINTS: West shore of Grosse Ile; East Shore of Grosse Ile, along Grosse Ile Parkway

Linkages (Schools): Grosse Ile High School (Grey's Drive & Lyons Drive)

LINKAGES (PARKS): Water's Edge Golf & Country Club (Grosse Ile Parkway & W. River Road); Grosse Ile Golf & Country Club (Bellevue Street & W. River Road); Grosse Ile Bikeway, Elizabeth Park (across Trenton Channel to west)

LINKAGES (OTHER): Grosse Ile Township Hall (Macomb Street & Meridian Road); Grosse Ile Police Department (Macomb Street & Parke Lane); Grosse Ile Post Office (Macomb Street & Parke Lane); Historic depot (now a museum), Historic customs house

Comments: This early railroad (long abandoned) crossed the Detroit River to Canada. Portions of old rail bed are still visible along the south side of the Grosse Ile parkway. The adjoining depot museum and customs house are owned and operated by local historical society. Wayne County owned the right-of-way and the customs house but gave them to the historical society in 1979.

DOCKET NUMBERS: unknown

### ASSESSMENT

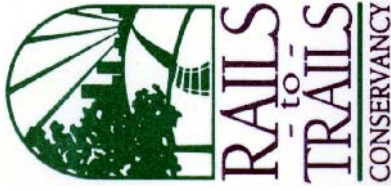
**Corridor Evaluation:** This corridor crosses Grosse Ile from the western shore to the eastern shore. The railroad was abandoned long ago and much of the right-of-way width has since been turned into Grosse Ile Parkway, a road dissecting the island. There is already a bicycle path alongside the parkway for some of its length. There is a railroad customs house and a depot museum just south of the corridor, which are owned and operated by the local historical society. The project team does not include this among the targeted corridors as the corridor has been developed and already includes accommodation for bicycles and pedestrians.

**Finding the Corridor:** What is left of this corridor can be seen from Grosse Ile Parkway, which is located within the old railroad right-of-way from western shore to eastern shore of the island.

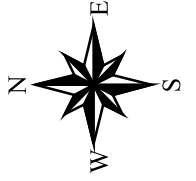
### OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

This corridor has been turned into the Grosse Ile Parkway, though portions of the old railbed are apparently still visible immediately adjacent to the parkway on the south side. The entire corridor, including road and railbed, is believed to be owned by Wayne County as a public right-of-way.

# Corridor 9 - Grosse Ile Railroad Grade



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
For SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN



1.2 Miles

0.6

0



INVENTORY

NAME: Wyandotte Terminal Railroad

TOPOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: 46.72, 3.21

OLD REFERENCE: RR-2

LENGTH: 1.6 miles

ENDPOINTS: In Wyandotte on Detroit River; near intersection of Pennsylvania Road and Jefferson Avenue

LINKAGES (SCHOOLS): McKinley Elementary (Cherry Street & 6th Street); Roosevelt High School (Eureka Avenue & 5th Street)

LINKAGES (PARKS): Bishop Park (Vinewood Avenue & Van Alstyne Street )

LINKAGES (OTHER): Wyandotte Museum (Biddle Street & Superior Boulevard); Benjamin F. Yack Arena & Kiwanis Club (246 Sycamore Street); Bacon Memorial Public Library (Vinewood Avenue & Van Alstyne Street); Wyandotte City Hall (Biddle Street & Sycamore Street); Wyandotte Fire Department (Maple Street & 3rd Street); Wyandotte Police Department (2nd Street & Oak Street)

COMMENTS: 8.9 miles of railroad were abandoned in 1983 within a closed BASF plant on the Detroit River. (Since there were parallel lines, the total end-to-end length is much less than 8.9 miles.) Toxics in the soil may raise clean-up issues. The city of Wyandotte has undertaken development of a park with 3/4 mile of the riverfront on the site.

DOCKET NUMBERS: unknown

ASSESSMENT

**Corridor Evaluation:** While apparently in public ownership, this corridor system is not of much use for trail conversion at the moment because it is not continuous and is a convoluted web of railroad trackage that circled around an industrial facility. It is possible that Wyandotte may find this corridor to be somewhat useful as it plans a potential recreational facility on part of this site near the Detroit River. However, the most that could be done, in terms of trail conversion, would be a trail that extends three or four blocks into the residential area nearest the river. This could be a nice way for a small population to reach any planned riverfront park, but little more. Because of its limited reach, the project team does not recommend that this be a priority corridor.

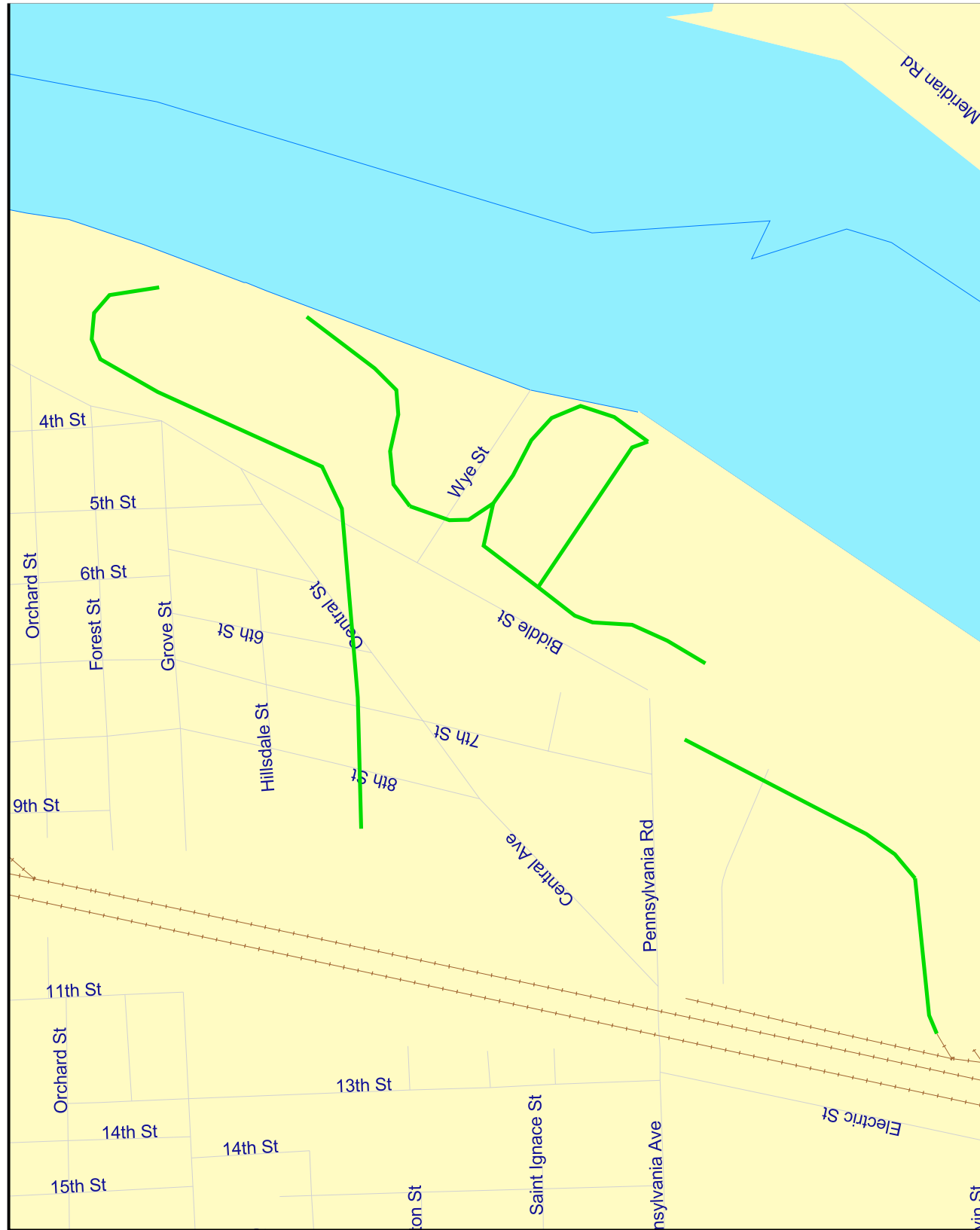
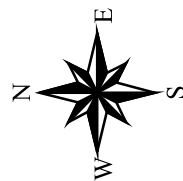
**Finding the Corridor:** This complex jumble of railroad lines can be viewed most easily from West Jefferson/Biddle Avenue, which crosses abandoned portions in three places between Forest Street and Riverview Street, and closely parallels additional portions of the abandonment which lie between West Jefferson/Biddle Avenue and the Trenton Channel of the Detroit River.

## OWNERSHIP/LAND USE SUMMARY

This trackage lies partly within Wyandotte and partly within Riverview, two suburban municipalities southwest of Detroit. It consists of a web of tracks that served a BASF industrial facility along the Detroit River, connecting the facility with the main railroad line just to the west. The tracks and the industrial complex are believed to be in the ownership of Wyandotte. Wyandotte hopes to convert some of this riverfront area into parkland. The tracks circle through a maze of industrial buildings, with three or four short lines that extend to the main line through about four blocks of residences. There is also a sewage disposal facility west of the main concentration of tracks.



# Corridor 10 - Wyandotte Terminal Railroad



1.2 Miles

0.6

0

## PROPOSED REGIONAL LOOP SYSTEM

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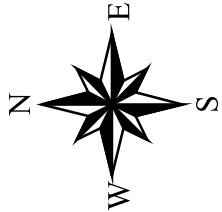
The proposed regional loop system is a conceptual model of the targeted corridors studied in this report combined with several projects and plans currently being developed in the Detroit region. Included in the system is bicycle-friendly mapping done by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, greenway or bicycle projects in the planning stages and recommended on-road connections proposed by the project team. The corresponding map shows an emerging loop system that links segments of each project or plan into a singular trail that interacts with a multitude of resources and communities throughout Detroit. The proposed loop system is made up of excellent individual project opportunities in various phases of development. Our purpose in presenting the potential for a regional system is to show the relation of each of those projects to each other and to introduce a larger vision that demonstrates the utility of the identified target corridors as the backbone of that system. As planning moves forward to develop a system of greenways for southeast Michigan, we encourage all stakeholders to consider the genuine opportunities made available by these abandoned rail corridors.

# Regional Loop System



**Legend**

- Target corridors
- Tunnel
- Riverwalk
- Connecting corridors
- Rouge River Grnwy
- RTC: on-road
- SEMCOG: NMTP



Canada

10 Miles

5

0



# LEGAL ANALYSIS OF MICHIGAN RAILROAD LAW

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## INTRODUCTION

Where a railroad corridor cannot be railbanked under federal law (16 U.S.C. § 1247(d)), the ability to convert a railroad corridor into a trail depends on the interpretation of the applicable deeds under state law, and the public policy (either statutory or common law) of the state concerning preservation of rail corridors. In general, in determining whether a rail corridor can be converted to trail use under state law, there are three basic questions that must be addressed: First, what is the nature of the railroad's ownership interest (fee versus easement)? If it is easement, the next question is, has the easement been abandoned? Third, are the terms of the easement sufficient to encompass trail use?

If the railroad acquired a fee simple, then the railroad has the right to transfer the corridor for any purpose, including trail use. Trail interests are also protected if the corridor was acquired by the railroad through federal land grants. The railroad's fee interest may also be construed as a defeasible fee interest (i.e., a fee estate subject to a retained future interest by the grantor) provides for a right of reentry or reverter if the corridor ceases to be used for railroad purposes. In the case of a defeasible fee the question is whether such a right of re-entry has been extinguished by a marketable title law, designed to permit defeasible fees to ripen into full fee simple title upon the passage of time and/or the failure of the holder of the reversionary interest to record that interest.

If the railroad acquires only an easement interest, the ability to convert the easement to a trail depends on whether the railroad has abandoned the easement, and whether the language of the easement, interpreted in light of the applicable public policy of state, is broad enough to encompass trail use.

As will be discussed below, the law in Michigan relating to the ownership of railroad corridors and use as trails is fairly well-developed and is generally favorable to interests of preserving railroad corridors for continued public use, including as trails.

## DISCUSSION

### I. Fee versus Easement

In Michigan, the language of the conveyance will determine whether a deed creates an estate in fee or an easement, but if the language of the deed is ambiguous then other evidence may be used to determine the type of interest created. See Department of Natural Resources v. Carmody-Lahti Real Estate, Inc., No. 222645, 2001 Mich.App. LEXIS 1509, at \*2 (Mich. Ct. App. June 5 2001) (finding that a deed using the term "right of way" created an easement).

In Quinn v. Pere Marquette R Co, 239 N.W. 376, (Mich. 1931), the Michigan Supreme Court articulated the standard that is generally used to determine whether a conveyance creates an estate in fee or an easement:

"Right of way" has two meanings in railroad parlance: the strip of land upon which the track is laid, and the legal right to use such strip. In the latter sense it may mean an easement. But in this State

and others the character of the title taken to the strip depends upon the language of the conveyance.

Where the grant is not of the land but is merely of the use or of the right of way, or, in some cases, of the land specifically for a right of way, it is held to convey an easement only.

Id. at 379 (Mich. 1931)). An interest in fee can still be found if the land itself is conveyed and use of the land is limited to a specific purpose, such as railway use. Id.

## II. Possibility of Reverter and Rights of Entry

Generally, a deed will be construed as a defeasible fee interest if the deed contains a reverter clause. Quinn, 239 N.W. at 379. Absent a reverter clause, a statement limiting use, may be interpreted as an intention of the parties for a lawful conveyance without creating a future interest in the grantor. Id. If a deed is construed as a defeasible fee interest, Michigan state law provides for the possible extinguishment of the future interest and conversion of defeasible fee into fee simple title pursuant to the Possibilities of Reverter and Rights of Entry Act, MCLS §§ 554.61 et seq. (Law. Co-op. 2002).

Under this law, in order for a "terminable interest" to be enforceable, the "specific contingency" must occur within thirty years of the creation of the "terminable interest." MCLS § 554.62. A "terminable interest" is defined as "a possessory or ownership interest in real property which is subject to termination by a provision in a conveyance or other instrument which either creates a right or reversion to a grantor or his heirs, successors or assigns or creates a right of entry on the occurrence of a specified contingency." MCLS § 554.61(a). A "specified contingency" is defined as "the event described in a conveyance or other instrument creating a terminable interest, the occurrence of which requires or permits the divesting of the terminable interest." MCLS § 554.61(b).

A "terminable interest" must be recorded within thirty years of its creation and re-recorded every thirty years to be preserved. MCLS § 554.65. Unless recorded, "terminable interests" created prior to March 29, 1968 are void unless the "specific contingency" which would terminate the interest occurred within thirty years of the creation of the interest or prior to March 29, 1969, whichever is later. MCLS § 554.63.

## III. Abandonment

Under Michigan law "[t]o prove abandonment, both an intent to relinquish the property and external acts putting the intention into effect must be shown. Nonuse, by itself, is insufficient to show abandonment. Rather, nonuse must be accompanied by some act showing a clear intent to abandon." Ludington & Northern Railway v. The Epworth Assembly, 468 N.W.2d 884, 888 (Mich. Ct. App. 1991) (internal citations omitted) (reversing a lower court finding that a railroad had abandoned its interest in an easement created for railroad purposes by nonuse). See also Chester Belka v. Penn Central Corp., No. 1:92-CV-581, 1993 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 15836, at \*17-18. (D.Mich. Oct. 14, 1993) (Easement was abandoned where, out of a total of 30.5 miles the defendants has sold 3 miles without making a "reservation of a right to use for railroad purposes . . . [and] broken up the remaining 27.5 miles of the former rail corridor into 5 disconnected segments 4 to 9 miles in length.")

By contrast, in Cary Enterprises v. CSX Transportation Inc., No. 195528, 1997 Mich.App. LEXIS 3056, at \*1 (Mich. Ct. App. July 29, 1991), the court agreed that the payment of taxes on a railroad easement was evidence of an intention not to abandon a railroad easement even though the railroad intended to discontinue rail service, had removed its tracks and sought a certificate of abandonment

from the Interstate Commerce Commission ("ICC"). The court also agreed that the ICC abandonment certificate only indicated an intent to cease rail service, but that the certificate did not necessarily imply an intention to abandon property interests. *Id.* at \*5-6.

In addition, a railroad easement can be extinguished by impossibility. Impossibility exists when the purpose for which the easement was created is no longer possible. *See Chester Belka* at \*19. In *Chester Belka*, the court found that there was "no possibility of rail access" for the remaining segments that the defendants possessed. *Id.* at \*21. The court also concluded that since the policy goal behind rails-to-trails is to preserve "rail corridors for future rail use," if an easement terminates because of impossibility the public policy in favor of rails-to-trails no longer applies because the underlying goal is no longer possible. *Id.* at \*21-22.

#### IV. Shifting Public Use Doctrine

Michigan is one of a handful of states in which the courts have expressly ruled that a railroad easement is a form of public highway use that is sufficiently broad to encompass use as a trail, *See Cary Enterprise v. CSX Transformation, Inc.*, No. 95-03311-CH, slip op. at 9 (Mich. Cir. Ct. April 19, 1996) (finding that recreational trail use "consistent with the original transportation purpose of the easement."). As the court explained, the term "right of way" in this case meant "the instrumentality to operate upon the 'right of way'" and that "[r]ailroads were the super highways and air routes of the late 19th century. They were the primary method for transporting goods and people beyond their local community." *Id.* at 8.

The willingness of courts to adopt the shifting public use doctrine, in part, derives from the fact that the state of Michigan has adopted a clear state policy declaring trail use to be a public purpose. *See Cary, supra*, at 9. The Michigan State Transportation Preservation Act of 1976, provides that: "The preservation of abandoned railroad rights of way for future rail use and their interim use as public trails is declared to be a public purpose." MCLS § 474.51 (3) *See Chester Belka v. Penn Central Corp.*, No. 1:92-CV-581, 1993 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 15836, at \*17 (D.Mich. Oct. 14, 1993) (stating that the public policy of Michigan clearly supports using railbanking and the interim use of corridors for trails).

## PROPOSED ACTION STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

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As community groups and public agencies pursue the conversion of Detroit's rail corridors to multi-use trails, some important steps must be followed to avoid common pitfalls, inform the public and assure safe and enjoyable trail use.

### DETERMINE SALEABILITY

The first step for any corridor conversion will include meeting with the railroad company or corridor owner to determine their willingness to sell, a timeline for selling, conditions of sale and an estimate of the acquisition cost. The outcome of this step will determine how the process should proceed.

**Useful resource:** Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has published a how-to manual, *Acquiring Rail Corridors* for detailed guidance on this process.

### STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

If the sale appears to be imminent and feasible, the next step will be to determine who potential stakeholders will be. Because stakeholders will be the organizing force behind trail implementation, they should be the first audience to receive information about the projected benefits, costs and development framework for the trail project. The following categories of stakeholders are recommended for the Detroit railroad corridor projects:

- Community reinvestment strategy cluster boards
- Collaborative partners from similar and connected projects
- Local user groups including bicycling, walking and youth groups
- Local nonprofit groups such as Friends of the Detroit River, the Greening of Detroit, Wildlife Habit Council and Youth, Sports and Recreation Commission
- Local governmental elected officials, especially Detroit City Council and Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick
- Local government departments including Detroit Department of Parks and Recreation and Detroit Department of Planning and Development
- Neighborhood associations and housing groups
- Nearby businesses

The stakeholders should meet as one large, or several small, groups to discuss the project and receive factual and anecdotal input on its potential, issues and opportunities. Their input can help customize the rest of the steps. The lead stakeholders in the trail's development should be determined at these meetings. The leaders who step forward to help with the trail project may be formed into a steering committee to help with the implementation steps.

## **PROJECT INTEGRATION**

If stakeholders agree to proceed with the trail project, the next step involves incorporating the project as a priority in critical planning documents, such as the recreation plan, the community master plan and the community zoning plan. In order for the project to be formally adopted by local elected planning and recreation boards, trail project planners will have to advocate for the project and present the project plans and benefits to relevant boards and groups. The integration of the project into community plans is a requirement of many public grant programs at the state and federal level. Stakeholders on the project steering committee can have a considerable influence by advocating for the project to appropriate decision makers, lending professional expertise and notifying necessary parties when the integration is official.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Another requirement of many public grant programs, and the next step in the process, is a Phase I environmental assessment. The assessment will include a visual inspection, examination of relevant public records and a sampling of possible problem areas. If the Phase I study identifies problem areas, a Phase II assessment may be required, including tests to determine contamination levels and clean-up steps necessary before securing public funding. The Phase II assessment can be avoided if the corridor owner assumes responsibility for clean-up costs should problem areas need attention.

## **FEASIBILITY STUDY AND TRAIL COST ESTIMATE**

A feasibility study is the next step in the corridor conversion process. While this report details which corridors hold realistic potential as a trail projects, more detailed feasibility studies will guide the implementation and development of the projects. A feasibility study involves a specific physical review of the corridor, including an analysis of treatment options for intersections, possible realignments of the corridor, surface alternatives, potential locations and design of trailheads and all other design issues and opportunities.

A feasibility study will also include potential trail management options and a determination of maintenance tasks to be undertaken regularly or on an as-needed basis. The administrative structure required to accomplish the trail maintenance will be discussed in the study. Specific questions addressed in the feasibility study will be:

- Who will own and manage the trail?
- How will the trail be maintained, including standards for vegetation management, snow removal, trail surface repair, litter removal, graffiti cleanup and sweeping?
- How will the trail be patrolled by police and volunteer citizens?
- What provisions will exist for emergency vehicle access and citizen emergency phone access?

Additionally, two or three sessions inviting public input on the feasibility study topics will help customize the trail design for its potential users. Individual meetings with stakeholders as needed will



further help the steering committee arrive at a preliminary design. From this information, the community group or public agency leading the project will create a trail cost estimate and a strategy for funding, which will include a list of federal, state and private grants for which the project would be most eligible. A trail cost estimate will indicate how much local match will be required, and the feasibility study will explore possible ways of raising these dollars, tailored to the community.

### **INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS**

A brochure depicting the vision for the trail project including who, what, where and why will draw potential trail supporters to comment on design considerations, provide financial support and advocate at public meetings. A marketing plan should accompany the development of the brochure to determine how they will be distributed and how and when to contact the media for coverage of the trail effort. Possible venues for a display booth should be explored by trail supporters to increase public awareness. The more places information can be disseminated, the more likely the trail will gain acceptance in the community.

**Useful resource:** *Secrets of Successful Rail-Trails, An Acquisition and Organizing Manual for Converting Rails into Trails*, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 1993.

# APPENDIX A: FUNDING AND SUPPORT SOURCES FOR GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

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## FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

### **The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)**

TEA-21 is federal transportation legislation that provides for funding to enhance communities including improvement of non-motorized transport, trails and greenways. While TEA-21 is federal legislation, the Michigan Department of Transportation in Lansing makes funding decisions for Michigan-based projects.

Through TEA-21's Transportation Enhancements Program, about \$22 million per year has been made available to Michigan over the past 12 years. The program, to be reauthorized in 2003 will provide for the next 6 years. This program is a prime source of greenway funding for the following categories:

- Building facilities for bicycles and pedestrians
- Providing safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Converting abandoned railroad corridors into bicycle and pedestrian paths
- Preserving historic sites
- Acquiring scenic or historic sites
- Sponsoring scenic or historic highway programs
- Beautifying roadsides
- Rehabilitating historic buildings or facilities to serve a transportation need
- Performing archeological research, such as excavations
- Removing outdoor advertising signs
- Mitigating water pollution caused by road runoff
- Establishing transportation museums

Eligible project applicants include all governmental entities that receive fuel tax revenues, such as city and village road agencies, road commissions, transit agencies, the state Department of Transportation and Michigan Department of Natural Resources for rail/bike path projects. The application procedure is being revised. Local units of government will be notified of new application deadlines. The project sponsor must pay at least 20 percent of a project's cost. Project expenses have ranged from a few thousand dollars to

\$1 million.

#### **Contacts:**

Office of Transportation, Economic Development and Enhancements  
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Michigan Department of Transportation  
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### **National Recreational Trails Funding Program**

The Recreational Trails Program provides funds for both motorized and non-motorized trail development. Through this program, federal gasoline taxes paid on non-highway, recreation fuel for off-road and camping vehicles is transferred from the highway trust fund. This program is part of TEA-21 and has annual funding of \$30 million for FY 1998, \$40 million for FY 1999 and \$50 million per year for each remaining year of the bill.

States can grant these funds to private individuals, organizations, city and county governments and other government entities. Grant recipients are generally required to provide 20 percent of the total project cost. In Michigan, the Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) administers the program. There is no open application process and most of the money is used on DNR projects. A DNR division can sponsor local projects. Permissible uses of the fund include:

- State administrative costs
- Environmental and safety education programs

- Development of urban trail linkages
- Maintenance of existing trails
- Restoration of areas damaged by trail use
- Development of trail facilities
- Provision of access for people with disabilities
- Acquisitions of easements
- Fee simple title for property and construction of new trails

**Contact:**

Ed Hagen, State Trails Coordinator, Parks & Recreation Bureau, Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
 P.O. Box 30257  
 Lansing, MI 48909  
 Phone: 517-373-0367 • Fax: 517-241-0977  
 E-mail: hagene@michigan.gov

**Scenic Byways Program**

TEA-21 authorizes the use of federal funds to identify and designate federal, state and local scenic byways. These byways, typically back roads, are intended to showcase areas of great beauty and rich history. Funds may be spent on the construction of facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists along these designated highways. Of 20 nationally recognized roads in this program, Michigan has six.

**Contact:**

Scenic America  
 801 Pennsylvania Ave., Ste 300  
 Washington, D.C. 20003  
 Phone: 202-543-6200 • Fax: 202-543-9130  
 E-mail: webmaster@scenic.org  
 Web site: www.scenic.org

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is administered in Michigan by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and funds the planning, acquisition and development of land for federal and non-federal (state-side) outdoor recreation. This program has recently been re-opened after a period of dormancy. Funding for 2003 and beyond is expected to reach at least \$4 million per year.

State agencies and municipalities are eligible for state-side LWCF funds which can generally be used to acquire land, build and repair recreation or park facilities, provide biking and hiking trails, enhance

recreational access and provide wildlife and hunting areas. The program matches up to 50 percent of the cost of a project.

**Contact:**

James Wood, Manager, Resource Protection Section, Grants Administration Division  
 Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
 P.O. Box 30425  
 Lansing, MI 48909  
 Phone: 517-241-2480  
 DNR Web site: www.michigan.gov/dnr

**Michigan Coastal Management Program**

Michigan's Coastal Management Program, developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) 1972, is administered by the Land and Water Coastal Zone Management Division of the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The DEQ distributes about \$800,000 per year to shoreline communities for a variety of projects.

Michigan's coastal zone boundary extends a minimum of 1,000 feet inland, and sometimes further to include coastal lakes, river mouths and bays, floodplains, coastal wetlands, sand dunes, parks natural areas and urban areas.

CZMA Section 306 funds are used for planning activities, site design, engineering, feasibility and natural features studies, historic preservation projects, coastal education materials, developing portions of local zoning ordinances, master planning of coastal significance and waterfront redevelopment studies. CZMA Section 306A funds are used for low-cost construction projects such as resource protection, trails, boardwalks, scenic overlooks, education and/or interpretive displays, restoration of historic coastal structures and barrier-free retrofitting. Under both sections, grants require a local match in an amount equal to the grant. About 40 projects up to \$50,000 are approved for funding each year. Applications are due no later than April 1st.

**Contact:**

Cathy Cunningham  
 Unit Chief  
 Land and Water Coastal Zone Management Unit  
 Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
 P.O. Box 30458  
 Lansing, MI 48909

Phone: 517-335-3456  
DEQ Web site: [www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq)

### **Urban and Community Forestry Program**

The Forest Mineral and Fire Management Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administers this program. The Department provides approximately \$130,000 for grants annually from this U.S. Department of Agriculture program. Applicants must be local units of government or nonprofit organizations. Grants up to \$20,000 are awarded to projects that develop or enhance urban and community forestry resources in Michigan. The application deadline is in early spring. Project categories include:

- Local government program development
- Nonprofit program development
- Demonstration projects
- Information/education projects
- Tree planting

**Contact:**

Cara Boucher, Urban and Community Forester  
Forest Mineral and Fire Management Division  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 30452  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: 517-335-3354  
Web site: [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)

## **OTHER FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES**

### **Non-point Source Pollution Control Grants**

The Surface Water Quality Division's Non-point Source Unit in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality administers this Environmental Protection Agency Program. Grants are provided to county or local units of government, Cooperative Extension Service agencies, soil conservation districts, regional planning commissions, lake boards and water management districts.

Program priorities are established for each fiscal year. Examples of previous priorities include projects that demonstrate new or innovative technical and institutional approaches, watershed restoration activities and groundwater protection activities. A project on the Huron River (Washtenaw County) focused on information and education activities targeted toward local governmental units, land use planners, local businesses and large institutional landowners. Activities include

expansion of the Adopt-A-Stream program and development of partnerships with local businesses and large institutional landowners.

Since the inception of the program in 1988, \$9.4 million dollars have passed to local communities to fund projects in more than 35 watersheds statewide.

**Contact:**

Non-point Source Unit, Water Division  
Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality  
P.O. Box 30273  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: 517-373-2867  
Web site: [www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq)

### **State Wetlands Protection Development Grant Program**

This Environmental Protection Agency Program provides grants to state and local governments for developing new or enhancing existing wetlands protection programs. Funding priority is focused on Wetland/Watershed Protection Approach Demonstration Projects and River Corridor and Wetland Restoration Projects.

**Contacts:**

Lori Williams, Wetlands Division  
Office of Wetlands  
Oceans and Watersheds (4502F)  
Environmental Protection Agency  
401 M Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 230460  
Phone: 202-566-1376

Sue Elston  
EPA, Region V  
77 West Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: 312-886-6115 • Email: [elston.sue@epa.gov](mailto:elston.sue@epa.gov)  
Web site: [www.epa.gov.owow/watershed/wacademy/fundwet.html](http://www.epa.gov.owow/watershed/wacademy/fundwet.html)

### **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

The Department of Agriculture, through its Farm Service Agency provides payments to farm owners and operators to place highly erodible or environmentally sensitive cropland into a 10 to 15 year contract. The participant, in return for annual payments, agrees to implement a conservation plan approved by the local conservation district for converting these sensi-

tive lands to less intensive use. For example, cropland must be planted with a vegetated cover that reduces soil erosion, improves water quality and enhances or establishes wildlife habitat.

**Contact:**

Shannon Zezula  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
3001 Coolidge Rd., Suite 250  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
Phone: 517-324-5259  
Web site: [www.mi.ncrs.usda.gov](http://www.mi.ncrs.usda.gov)

**Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)**

The Department of Agriculture, through its Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, provides direct payments to private landowners who agree to place sensitive wetlands under permanent or 30-year easements. This program could be used to permanently protect wetland areas as open space along a greenway corridor and would pay on a cost-share basis for restoration of a wetland.

**Contact:**

Jim Marshall  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
3001 Coolidge Rd., Suite 250  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
Phone: 517-324-5257

**Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention (Small Watershed Protection Grants)**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides funding to state and local agencies or non-profit organizations authorized to carry out, maintain and operate watershed improvements in watersheds of less than 250,000 acres. The NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to eligible projects that improve watershed protection, flood prevention, sedimentation control, public water-based fish and wildlife enhancements and recreation planning. The NRCS provides a 75 percent local match for public recreation, fish and wildlife improvements and flood prevention projects. Also, in-kind services may count as a match to this program.

**Contact:**

Sean Duffey  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
3001 Coolidge Rd., Suite 250  
East Lansing, MI 48823

Phone: 517-324-5247

*For all of the Natural Resources Conservation Service programs listed above, you can also contact the local NRCS agent located in each county.*

**Brownfields Revitalization Grants**

The Brownfields Revitalization and Environmental Restoration Act, signed into law in early 2002, provides \$200 million nationwide for brownfields assessment and clean-up. Greenways, habitat restoration, parks and other "green activities" are eligible purposes for these grants. The program is administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and has an initial grant deadline of December 16, 2002. If reviewed favorably, the final grant deadline is March 5, 2003. Local governments and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply.

**Contact:**

Deborah Orr  
EPA Region 5 Brownfields Coordinator  
77 West Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60604-3507  
Phone: 312-886-7576  
E-mail: [orr.de@epa.gov](mailto:orr.de@epa.gov)  
Web site: [www.epa.gov/brownfields](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields)

**Watershed Grants**

A new watershed initiative program has been announced by the Environmental Protection Agency for funding in 2003 (subject to the appropriations process). The program will focus on watershed coalitions and innovative collaborative efforts for assessment, clean-up and mitigation of threats to water quality. Up to 20 watersheds will be selected for this \$21 million initiative. Grants will range from \$300,000 to \$1.3 million, and a 25 percent non-federal match is required. Nominations must be submitted through the governor or a tribal leader. State, local, community and nonprofit groups are eligible to apply.

**Contact:**

Robert Wayland, Director  
Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds  
Mail Code: 4501T  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20640  
Phone: 202-566-1146  
Web site: [www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative)

## MICHIGAN FUNDING SOURCES

### Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

This program, administered by the Grants Management Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, makes some \$20 million per year available for acquisition and development of lands and facilities for outdoor recreation and environmental protection. Money for the fund is dependent on revenue and interest accruing to the trust fund from oil and gas exploration and sales from state land.

Applications are evaluated on established criteria such as resource protection, water access and community recreation. At least a 25 percent match on either acquisition or development projects is required from local applicants. Any unit of government, including school districts, or any combination of units in which authority is legally constituted to provide recreation, is eligible to apply for funding.

Applications must be postmarked not later than April 1st and August 1st of each year with decisions usually made by the end of the year. There is no minimum or maximum limit on land acquisition grants. Development grants have a \$15,000 minimum and a \$500,000 maximum.

#### Contact:

Sharon Edgar, Chief  
Grants Management Section  
MI Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 30425  
Lansing, MI 48909-7925  
Phone: 517-241-3100 • Fax: 517-3366813  
Web site: [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)

### Recreation Improvement Fund

The Recreation Improvement Fund, administered by the Forest Mineral and Fire Management Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), makes some \$800,000 per year available for the operation, maintenance and development of recreation trails, restoration of lands damaged by off-road vehicles and inland lake cleanup. There is no open application process and most of the money is used on DNR projects. However, a DNR division can sponsor local projects. Projects are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Special department initiative
- Citizen/local government support

- Contribution to economic development through tourism
- Linkages to parks, natural resources, communities and other major trails
- Number and variety of uses to be accommodated
- Year-round recreation opportunities
- Resolution of issues and conflicts

#### Contact:

Ed Hagen, State Trails Coordinator  
Parks and Recreation Bureau  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 30257  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: 517-373-0367 • Fax: 517-241-0977  
E-mail: [hagene@michigan.gov](mailto:hagene@michigan.gov)

### Millages and Bonds

Local, county or state millages and bond issues may be passed by voters or governing bodies. A number of Southeast Michigan communities — Ann Arbor, Rochester Hills, Grosse Isle, Novi and West Bloomfield Township — have millages for park operations, maintenance, development and land acquisition. This can be one of the most effective approaches for funding a greenway initiative.

### Parks and Recreation Budgets

Greenway funding can come from willing agencies, which may include local and county parks and recreation departments or the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Division.

## PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

### Kodak American Greenways Awards Program

Administered by the Conservation Fund, in partnership with Kodak and the National Geographic Society, the American Greenways Awards Program provides grants of \$500 to \$2,500 to local greenways projects. These grants can be used for activities such as mapping, conducting ecological assessments, surveying land, hosting conferences, developing brochures, producing interpretive displays and audio-visual material, incorporating land trusts, building trails and trail facilities or other creative projects. Grants cannot be used for academic research, general institutional support, lobbying or political activities. The submis-

sion period for grant applications is March 1st to June 1st with a final deadline of June 1st. Decisions are announced in early fall.

**Contact:**

Leigh Anne McDonald  
American Greenways Coordinator  
The Conservation Fund  
1800 North Kent Street, Suite 1120  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Phone: 703-525-6300  
Email: lmcDonald@conservationfund.org

**Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI)  
Environmental Grants**

REI awards grants to organizations for protection and enhancement of natural resources for use in outdoor recreation. Grants of up to \$5,000 are offered to accomplish any of the following:

- Preservation of wildlands and open space
- Advocacy-oriented education for the general public about conservation issues
- Building a membership base of a conservation organization
- Direct citizen action (lobbying) campaigns on public land and water recreation issues
- Projects working to organize a trail constituency or to enhance the effectiveness of a trail organization's work as a trail advocate at the state or local level

There is more than one deadline date for the submission of grant applications. Grants are awarded through the local store.

**Michigan contact:**

Allison Washburn  
REI  
17559 Haggerty Rd.  
Northville, MI 48167  
Phone: 248-347-2100 • E-mail: awashbu@rei.com

**Bikes Belong Coalition**

Comprised of members of the bicycle industry, Bikes Belong is dedicated to putting more people on bikes more often. Grants of up to \$10,000 each are offered to local organizations, agencies and communities for developing bicycle facility projects. Grants are closely tied with furthering project readiness toward funding

by a TEA-21 enhancement grant (described above). Successor grants for continuing projects are considered. Applications can be submitted anytime and funding decisions are made on a rolling basis, with a three-month waiting period. Applicants should contact Bikes Belong before submitting an application.

**Contact:**

Tim Baldwin  
Grants Program Administrator  
Phone: 617-734-2111 • E-mail: tim@bikesbelong.org

**Michigan Economic and Environmental  
Roundtable (MEER)**

The MEER grant was established six years ago by Public Sector Consultants, a governmental consulting and research firm in Lansing. The roundtable is a partnership comprised of Michigan Environmental Council, National Wildlife Federation, Dow Chemical Company, the Michigan State Chamber of Commerce and Public Sector Consultants. The conjecture of environmental and economic issues, especially land use, is the main focus of the program. The small grant program focuses on funding organizations working on land use issues from a collaborative perspective, involving the business, nonprofit and government sectors. Total funding per year is up to \$20 million and the maximum grant allowed is \$4,000. Applications are due in the spring and grant decisions are made within one month of the deadline.

**Contact:**

Conan Smith  
Michigan Environmental Council  
119 Pere Marquette, Suite 2A  
Lansing, MI 48933  
Phone: 517-487-9539 • Fax: 517-487-9541  
E-mail: conanmec@voyager.net

**DALMAC Fund**

Established in 1975 to promote bicycling in Michigan, the DALMAC Fund is administered by the Tri-County Bicycle Association and supported by proceeds from the DALMAC (Dick Allen Lansing to Mackinaw) bicycle tour. The Fund has supported safety and education programs, bicycle trail development, state-wide bicycle organizations and route mapping projects.

Applications must be submitted between January 1st and April 1st. Grants are awarded between June and August.

**Contact:**

Tom Hardenbergh, Chair  
 DALMAC Fund Committee  
 P.O. Box 22146  
 Lansing, MI 48909-2146  
 Phone: 517-485-7818  
 Web site: [www.biketcba.org](http://www.biketcba.org)

**People and Land (PAL) Grants**

PAL Grants have been funded by the People and Land group since 2001. The focus of these grants is to increase the public's understanding of land use management and its impact on the state's environmental condition, economy and overall quality of life, to develop successful land use planning models and to aid in the development of effective state and local land use policies. In 2002, 10 projects were awarded grants totaling one million dollars. Grants are awarded only to projects which are multi-jurisdictional, consist of multiple stakeholders with diverse interests and promote collaboration. Nonprofit groups, educational institutions and local governments are eligible to apply.

**Contact:**

Julie Metty Bennett  
 PAL Assistant Program Manager  
 600 W. St. Joseph  
 Lansing, MI 48933  
 517-371-7467  
 Web site: [www.pal@peopleandland.org](http://www.pal@peopleandland.org)

**Michigander/Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Fund**

The Michigan Field Office of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has a small grant program based on revenue from the annual Michigander Mountain Bike Tour. The purpose of the program is to aid the development of a connected trail initiative throughout the state of Michigan. The program goals are to develop new projects, assist with grassroots start-up costs and help provide leverage for additional funding. Grants are usually no more than \$5,000 and do not require local match.

**Contact:**

Nancy Krupiarz, Director  
 Rails-to-Trails Conservancy  
 Michigan Field Office  
 416 S. Cedar, Suite C  
 Lansing, MI 48912  
 Phone: 517-485-6022 • Fax: 517-485-9181  
 E-mail: [rtnancy@transact.org](mailto:rtnancy@transact.org)  
 Web site: [www.railtrails.org/MI](http://www.railtrails.org/MI)

**The GreenWays Initiative**

The GreenWays Initiative, a five-year program of the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan launched in 2001, is a comprehensive effort aimed at expanding and enhancing our region's natural landscape. Funding provided by the GreenWays Initiative provides southeast Michigan with an opportunity to enhance the region's natural environment while simultaneously building and connecting its diverse communities.

**Contact:**

Tom Woiwode, Director, GreenWays Initiative  
 Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan  
 333 W. Fort Street, Suite 2010  
 Detroit, MI 48226  
 Phone: 313-961-6675

**OTHER PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES****Land Trusts**

National, state, regional, county and local private land trusts (or conservancies) can purchase land for resale to public agencies, buy options to protect land temporarily, receive land donations, put together land deals and provide technical assistance. As private entities, land trusts can often act more quickly than public agencies.

**Foundations**

Private foundations are nongovernmental, nonprofit organizations having principal funds managed by trustees and directors, and established to maintain or aid charitable, educational, religious or other activities serving the public good, primarily by making grants to other nonprofit organizations. The overwhelming majority of foundation grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations that qualify for public charity status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



## DIRECTORIES OF FOUNDATION FUNDING SOURCES

***Guide to Foundation Grants for Rivers, Trails and Open Space Conservation***, 2nd edition. Prepared by National Center for Recreation and Conservation, National Park Service. June 1996.

Available from NPS (330-657-2378).

This guide lists information about selected foundations that may have interest in greenway projects.

***Michigan Foundation Directory***. Prepared by Council of Michigan Foundations and Michigan League for Human Services.

Available from libraries and the Council of Michigan Foundations (616-842-7080). Web site: [www.cmif.org](http://www.cmif.org).

This directory gives information about the programs of hundreds of Michigan foundations and numerous corporations. It is updated biennially.

***The Foundation Directory, & The Foundation Directory Part 2***. Prepared by the Foundation Center.

Available from libraries and the Foundation Center (212-620-4230). Web site: [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org).

These directories describe the programs of thousands of large foundations throughout the U.S., and are updated annually.

***The Foundation Grants Index***. Prepared by the Foundation Center.

Available from libraries and the Foundation Center (212) 620-4230. Web site: [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org).

This index lists recent foundation grants, and is updated annually.

## BUSINESSES

Most towns have public-spirited companies. These firms have a history of helping worthy projects by providing meeting rooms in a company building, giving small grants, donating copying or renting services or giving free or reduced-fee use of the company's special services. For example, a law firm might provide pro bono legal advice or an accounting firm might donate staff time to assist in developing a simple bookkeeping system.

## FRIENDS GROUPS

We all need friends, and this holds true for greenway projects as well. In fact, the long-term success of a project can well depend on the formation of an ongoing private Friends of the Trail organization. Friends groups can provide a number of services including physical labor through Adopt-a-Trail maintenance or construction activities, fundraising, user education, promotion and surveillance of the facility. These groups are important in all project phases: planning, acquisition, development and operation.

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Civic groups and school groups can play an important role in support of a greenway project. They might help with trail development and maintenance, funding, promotion and hosting of events. These activities can be separate from, or in conjunction with, a friends group.

## INDIVIDUALS

Willing individuals can donate money, land, easements and services. The vast majority of money donated to trail and greenway projects in this country comes from individuals. In many cases, the financial contribution of a single individual has meant the success of a trail or greenway project.

# APPENDIX B: PHOTO INVENTORY

## CORRIDOR ONE: CONRAIL SUPERIOR LEAD PHOTO LOG



Freud Street and Clairpoint Street, southeast view.



Freud Street and Clairpoint Street, northwest view.



Freud Street and Clairpoint Street, southeast view.



Terminus at Jefferson Avenue E., southeast view.



Jefferson Avenue E., northwest view.



Terminus/abandoned lot.

## CORRIDORTWO: CONRAIL EXPOSITION SPUR PHOTO LOG



Jefferson Avenue W. and Grand Boulevard W., northeast view.



Jefferson Avenue W. and Grand Boulevard W., southeast view.



Scotten Street, northeast view.



Scotten Street, southwest view.



Military Street, northeast view.



Military Street, southwest view.



Waterman Street, northeast view.



Waterman Street, southwest view.



Southwestern High School.



West End Street and Thaddeus Street, northeast view.



West End Street and Thaddeus Street, southwest view.



Pulaski and Lyle Streets, southwest view.



Jefferson Avenue W. near Campbell Street, northwest view of spur trackage.



Jefferson Avenue W. near Campbell Street, southeast view into Fort Wayne grounds.

CORRIDOR THREE:  
DETROIT BELT LINE AND  
TRANSIT BRANCH  
PHOTO LOG



Just northwest of I-94, northwest view near where corridor becomes inactive.



Just northwest of I-94, southeast view near where corridor becomes inactive.



Grand Boulevard E., northwest view.



Grand Boulevard E., southeast view.



Grand Boulevard E.



Palmer Street, northwest view.



Palmer Street, southeast view.



Warren Avenue E. between Bellevue and Beaufait Streets, northwest view.



Warren Avenue E. between Bellevue and Beaufait Streets, southeast view.



Sylvester Street, northwest view.



Sylvester Street, southeast view.



Mack Avenue, northwest view.



Mack Avenue, southeast view.



Charlevoix Street, northwest view.



Charlevoix Street, southeast view.



Kercheval Avenue, northwest view.



Kercheval Avenue, southeast view.



Lafayette Street, northwest view.



Lafayette Street, southeast view.



Jefferson Avenue E., northwest view.



Jefferson Avenue E., east view.



Iron Street and White Street, southwest view.



Iron Street and Leib Street, southwest view; terminus of corridor.

CORRIDOR FOUR:  
GRAND TRUNK LINE  
PHOTO LOG



Jefferson Avenue E., southeast view.



Jefferson Avenue E., northwest view.



Pedestrian bridge from Lafayette Street, northwest view.



Antietam Street, southeast view.



Antietam Street, northwest view.



Adelaide Street, southeast view.



Adelaide Street, northwest view.



Wilkins Street, southeast view.



Wilkins Street, northwest view.



Ferry Street E., southeast view.



Ferry Street E., northwest view.



Trombly Street, northwest view.



Holbrook Avenue, southeast view.



Holbrook Avenue, northwest view.



Jay Street and Gratiot Avenue, northwest view.

CORRIDOR FIVE:  
CONRAIL – FORMER  
DETROIT TERMINAL  
PHOTO LOG



Dwyer Street and Brimson Street, southeast view.



Dwyer Street and Brimson Street, northwest view.



Jerome Street and Conant Avenue, northeast view.



Jerome Street and Conant Avenue, southwest view.



Main Street and McNichols Road, northeast view.



Main Street and McNichols Road, southwest view.



Goddard Street south of McNichols Road, northeast view.



Goddard Street south of McNichols Road, southwest view.



Oakland Avenue, northeast view.



Oakland Avenue, southwest view.



Sears Street and 3rd Street, southwest view.



Sears Street and 3rd Street, northeast view.



Linwood Avenue, northeast view.



Linwood Avenue, southwest view.



Davison Avenue W., north view.



Davison Avenue W., south view.

CORRIDOR SIX:  
WEST BELT AND  
SPUR TRACKAGE  
PHOTO LOG

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Cloverdale Street south of Lyndon Avenue,  
east view.



Cloverdale Street south of Lyndon Avenue,  
west view.



Schoolcraft Boulevard near Grand River  
Avenue, north view.



Schoolcraft Boulevard near Grand River  
Avenue, south view.

CORRIDOR SEVEN:  
 CONRAIL: DETROIT,  
 DEARBORN AND DELRAY  
 BRANCH (D, D AND D)  
 PHOTO LOG

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DeLuca Field, southeast view.



Prospect Avenue, southeast view.



Wall Street, northwest view.



Allen Street, northwest view.



Schaefer Street, southeast view.



Further south on Schaefer Street, southeast view.

CORRIDOR EIGHT:  
 CSX UNION BELT  
 PHOTO LOG

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Bridge over I-94, northwest view.



Buchanan Avenue, northwest view.



Buchanan Avenue, southeast view.



Michigan Avenue, northwest view.



Michigan Avenue, southeast view.



Hammond and Gar Streets, southeast view.



Otis Street, southeast view.



## APPENDIX C: CONCURRENT PROJECTS IN GREATER DETROIT

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### AMERICAN HERITAGE RIVER

In 1998, Congress designated the Detroit River an American Heritage River. The designation prompted a consortium of agencies and organizations in the Detroit area to focus on various projects for revitalization along the waterfront. One of the priorities for the American Heritage River Project group is to further develop a system of linked trails and greenways along the river between Belle Isle and the Ambassador Bridge. Corridor #4, the Dequindre Cut, interfaces with this project as it intersects with the riverfront at St. Aubin Park and Marina. The park and marina will be undergoing a \$3 million upgrade in order to provide recreational and educational facilities as well as docking for cruise ships, tour boats and tall ships. The Dequindre Cut would provide a non-motorized route to the river for many nearby residents. It would also provide a connection for marina visitors to get to Lafayette Park, Eastern Market and other nearby attractions.

### AUTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

In 1988, Congress designated six corridors in Michigan as the Automotive National Heritage Area. These corridors are part of a landscape telling the story of Michigan's rich automotive heritage. The corridors follow the Rouge, Detroit, Flint and Grand rivers. The goal of the Automotive National Heritage project is to develop a management plan that will provide recreational and educational opportunities along these corridors. Such opportunities will celebrate the area's rich automotive heritage and explain its impact on the culture and traditions of today. Greenways, museums, tours and festivals will all play a role in this effort. The Globe Building, a critical project within the management plan, interfaces with Corridor #4, the Dequindre Cut, at the south end of the corridor. The Dequindre Cut will serve as a safe, attractive, non-motor-

ized facility for direct access to a newly restored and revitalized Globe Building.

### DETROIT NON-MOTORIZED PLAN

The city of Detroit received a transportation enhancement grant in 2001 to create a non-motorized transportation plan for the city. Work begins on this plan in fall 2002. The plan will focus on connecting bicycle routes between neighborhoods and along the river. At least six of the targeted abandoned rail corridors, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7 and #8, may serve as viable alternative transportation connectors to on-road routes.

### THE GREENWAYS INITIATIVE

The GreenWays Initiative, a five-year program of the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan launched in 2001, is a comprehensive effort aimed at expanding and enhancing the region's natural landscape. The GreenWays Initiative is about linkage, leverage and collaboration: linking communities...leveraging vision, resources and people...and collaborating to promote and protect the health and well being of the community for the present and the future. This landmark initiative is expected to put a minimum of \$75 million to work to create and expand greenways in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Washtenaw, St. Clair and Livingston counties. Through up to \$25 million in foundation and private contributions, the GreenWays Initiative will help communities and organizations develop and implement greenways plans and projects that will leverage another \$50 million of matching investments from government and other sources.

The GreenWays Initiative will:

- physically link communities throughout the region through the construction of greenways

- bring communities together to collaborate on opportunities that cross jurisdictional lines
- build the capacity of the institutions, both public and private, that are responsible for the development of greenways
- increase public awareness, understanding and appreciation for the benefits of greenways to their communities and their quality of life.

The GreenWays Initiative provides southeast Michigan with an opportunity to enhance the region's natural environment while simultaneously building and connecting its diverse communities.

#### **NEW TRUCK TUNNEL**

Planning is underway to convert the current railroad tunnel under the Detroit River to a trucks-only tunnel. A new railroad tunnel, which would accommodate double layers of boxcars, will be built nearby. The above ground surface right-of-way for the truck tunnel as it meets the shoreline and progresses to an intermodal freight terminal could possibly be used as a non-motorized facility at the surface level. It could serve as a connection to several of the targeted corridors, namely corridor #2.

Michigan Department of Transportation is currently studying the possibility of combining several intermodal freight terminals into one large facility in southwest Detroit.

#### **RIVERFRONT EAST DEVELOPMENT**

Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick recently formed a high-powered study group, co-chaired by General Motors executive Matt Cullen and Derrick Miller, the city's chief administrative officer, to review possible development projects along the riverfront between Cobo Center and Belle Isle. Mayor Kilpatrick also has hired Cooper, Robertson & Partners, a renowned design firm, to design the improvements. The firm has de-

signed waterfront improvement for several cities, including New York, Boston and Chattanooga. A plan is expected within 90 days. The south end of corridor #4, the Dequindre Cut, terminates within this riverfront segment and is sure to receive some attention as an important route for bringing bicyclists and pedestrians to the revitalized area.

#### **ROUGE RIVER GATEWAY PROJECT**

The Rouge River Gateway Project is a public-private partnership formed to restore life to the Rouge River and its urban surroundings. The partnership is a diverse stakeholder group comprised of municipal officials and leader from cultural institutions and private business. Partnership members include the cities of Allen Park, Dearborn, Detroit and Melvindale, Edward C. Levy Company, Ford Motor Company, Henry Ford Community College and Henry Ford Museum. There are at least 36 improvements planned along the river corridor from the Hines Drive trail system at the north end to Zug Island and the Detroit River at the south end. Naturalization of the river bank, a river pathway, new interpretive nature and historical exhibits, restoration of historical landmarks, business district "streetscaping" and "green" manufacturing facilities with visitor interpretation are only a few highlights of this tremendous effort. Corridor #2 interfaces with this project at its extreme west end, just north of Zug Island, offering an east-west rail-trail connection from the north-south Rouge River pathway to Historic Fort Wayne and other points east along the Detroit River.

#### **SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN BICYCLE MAPPING**

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) is in the process of developing cyclist-friendly maps for the entire region. The maps show all trails and road routes that are currently regularly used by bicyclists or are safe for bicycle use. It also depicts the average daily

traffic flow of all major roads and shows where there are on-road bicycle facilities, such as bike lanes or wide paved shoulders. At this time, SEMCOG is assimilating the public input that has been received over the past two months. The maps are due to be printed by the end of 2002, but the extent of distribution to the public has yet to be decided.

#### **SOUTHWEST DETROIT RIVERFRONT GREENWAY PROJECT**

The City of Detroit Parks and Recreation Department was awarded a grant from The GreenWays Initiative to plan an interconnected, non-motorized route linking neighborhoods and parks in the northern section of the region with the Detroit riverfront, including Riverside Park on the east end and Historic Fort Wayne on the west. Hamilton-Anderson and Associates have proposed a series of side paths and bike lanes along major roads along with landscape improvements. These improvements will provide non-motorized access and a greening of the area. Corridor #2 cuts east to west through the southern third of the project, offering less bicycle and pedestrian interaction with automobile traffic as well as possible historical interpretive opportunities detailing the importance of rail transportation in the early industrial progress of the city.

## APPENDIX D: NEIGHBORHOOD CLUSTER BOUNDARIES AND INFORMATION

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### WHAT ARE NEIGHBORHOOD CLUSTER AREAS?

Neighborhood Clusters geographically divide the city of Detroit into 10 community areas of approximately 100,000 people each. Within each Neighborhood Cluster the population is large enough to support a community-level retail development. Planning for each of the clusters began in 1998 with the Community Reinvestment Strategy where community leaders created a vision for each area of Detroit. Clusters have proven to be a valuable way to coordinate Planning and Development Department staff. Boundaries of Detroit's Neighborhood Cluster Areas are shown on the map.

**Neighborhood Clusters would be an ideal way to foster community support for a new trail project.**

#### CLUSTER 1

Aleta Runey

Master Planning

313-224-1700

Keith Hernandez

Community Planning

313-628-0186

Cheryl Booth-Collins

313-224-0986

#### CLUSTER 2

Aleta Runey

Master Planning

313-224-1700

Keith Hernandez

Community Planning

313-628-0186

Robert Davenport

Project Management

313-628-0233

#### CLUSTER 3

For Corridors #1 and #3

Janani Narayanan

Master Planning

313-224-6543

Clarence Lee

Community Planning

313-224-1279

Karen Gage

Project Management

313-224-4521

#### CLUSTER 4

For Corridor #4

Bruce Evans

Master Planning

313-224-1563

Clarence Lee

Community Planning

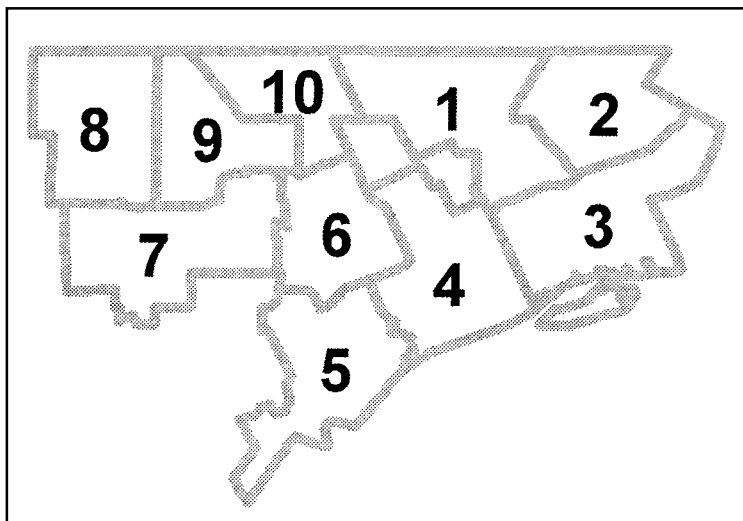
313-224-1279

Alvin Mitchell

Project Management (East of

Woodward)

313-224-2375



*Note: Information provided by City of Detroit Planning and Development Department*

Chidi Nyeche  
Project Management (West of  
Woodward)  
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**CLUSTER 5**  
For Corridors #2, #5 and #8

Michael Boettcher  
Master Planning  
313-224-1482

Alex Pollock  
Community Planning  
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Lela Agee  
Project Management  
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**CLUSTER 6**  
For Corridors #5, #6 and #7

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Master Planning  
313-224-1482

Tracee Davie  
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**CLUSTER 7**  
For Corridor #5

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Tracee Davie  
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Dominic Marturano  
Project Management  
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**CLUSTER 8**  
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Master Planning  
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Community Planning  
313-224-1325

Dominic Marturano  
Project Management  
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Sheryl Gray-Dodds  
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**CLUSTER 10**  
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## APPENDIX E: DATABASE OF CONTACT INFORMATION RELATED TO STUDY

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### **METROPOLITAN AFFAIRS COALITION**

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Dave Sanders, AICP  
Vice President  
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### **AUTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**

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National Park Service  
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Andrew Heffner  
Recreation Specialist  
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### **DETROIT DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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### **GREENWAYS INITIATIVE**

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**CANADIAN NATIONAL**

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**NORFOLK SOUTHERN**

John Kelly  
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Mark Friedlin  
904-633-1110

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Register of Deeds  
Catherine Ann Czene  
Supervisor of Tract Index

## APPENDIX F: ABOUT RAILS-TO-TRAILS CONSERVANCY

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Founded in 1986, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy was created to breathe new life into abandoned rail lines by converting them to hiking and biking trails for public use nationwide. Prior to that time, there were only 200 open rail-trails in the country and more than half the nation's 300,000-mile railroad network laid unused or abandoned.

Since its founding, RTC has helped convert more than 11,000 miles of abandoned railroad corridors into America's newest parklands, enjoyed by more than 100 million users a year. Places like the Cape Cod Rail-Trail, Nebraska's Cowboy Trail, the San Diego Bay Shore Bikeway, the Illinois Prairie Path, the Capital Crescent Trail in Washington, D.C. and hundreds of others. Now 16 years old, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has become the largest and most widely respected trails organization in America. In addition, **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is the only national group devoted to preserving railroad corridors by converting them to multi-use trails.**

RTC is a 501 c (3) nonprofit organization with:

- 46 employees distributed among six regional offices in California, Florida, Massachusetts (serving New England), Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and headquarters in Washington, D.C.;
- More than 100,000 members and supporters nationwide;
- A 13-member board of directors that meets three times a year;
- An operating budget of \$6 million dedicated to trail building, corridor preservation, open space protection, public education and advocacy;
- Five national and three international Trails and Greenways Conferences to date, the most recent in September 2001 in St. Louis attended by more than 500 trail activists; (the next conference is scheduled for June 2003 in Providence, Rhode Island);
- A full-color quarterly magazine *Rails to Trails* and a highly visited constellation of linked Web sites
  - accessible through [www.railtrails.org](http://www.railtrails.org)
  - addressing a broad range of information, from trail finder databases for the everyday user, to technical counsel on trail purchase and construction;
- Recognition from a diverse mix of interests, including health, environment, government and recreation, such as:
  - Lead private sector partner in the White House Millennium Trails Program that identified and celebrated 16 National Millennium Trails, 51 Millennium Legacy Trails and more than 1,000 Millennium Community Trails;
  - The Presidential Award for Sustainable Development by The President's Council of Sustainable Development;
  - The Biennial Trails Service Award from American Trails;
  - Sponsorship from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to bring public health officials to our 2001 conference to create an exchange and address a common agenda between the trails and health communities;
  - The American Greenways Dupont Award from the Conservation Fund, Dupont Corporation and the *National Geographic Society*.





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# TRAILDART

**TRAIL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE RESPONSE TEAM**

A Service of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy



Rails-to-Trails Conservancy • 1100 Seventeenth Street N.W., 10th Floor • Washington, D.C. 20036  
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