

PART 2: INVENTORY OF CENTRAL OHIO RAIL LINES

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I. INTRODUCTION TO INVENTORY OF CENTRAL OHIO RAIL LINES

A. Physical Constraints to the Use of Excess Rights-of-Way

Even if a railroad line has generous, excess right-of-way available on every segment, it may not be cost effective to develop this right-of-way for another use because of certain physical constraints or bottlenecks along the line. These physical constraints, which are identified for each of the rail line segments, include: at-grade-highway-crossings; narrow railroad bridge decks; railroad underpasses and tunnels (minimum horizontal clearance with bridge piers, retaining walls, abutments, etc.); buildings or structures within or immediately adjacent to the right-of-way; intersections of mainline or passing tracks at-grade, and railroad sidings and passing tracks.

At a significant expense, it would be possible to overcome each of these constraints by relocating a structure or by grade separating the proposed improvement. A new grade separation may be required at locations where the proposed new use would conflict with other traffic at grade crossings of major arterial roads, mainline railroad tracks, sidings, or passing tracks. Some uses may require grade separation of all highway crossings in order to control access onto the facility. The vast majority of railroad bridges were constructed only wide enough to accommodate the tracks using them, making it necessary to provide a new bridge for most new uses of the excess right-of-way.

Accurate determination of the location of piers, abutments, or railroad underpasses is not within the scope of this study, but it is likely that track relocation and/or some alteration to the structures will be required with many new uses.

Mainline tracks usually occupy the center of a railroad right-of-way. Consequently, relocation of mainline or passing tracks may be required to make effective use of the excess right-of-way. The capital cost for relocation of mainline tracks is approximately one million dollars per mile.

B. Assumptions Used to Determine Excess Rights-of-Way

This inventory assumes that two categories of excess rights-of-way will accommodate most improvements. One category requires 30 feet right-of-way width and includes such improvements as a busway or a light rail transit. The other category requires 10 feet of right-of-way width and is represented by such facilities as a bikeway or other use requiring a narrow right-of-way. Design criteria developed for the North Corridor Study indicate that the minimum right-of-way width required for a double track light rail transit or a single lane busway is 30 feet. A 10 foot right-of-way width will accommodate a two directional bikeway based upon the standard sighted in the Ohio Department of Transportation Policy And Procedures For Implementation Of A Bicycle Project.

These minimum right-of-way widths, along with railroads horizontal clearance standards are used to determine the amount of excess right-of-way available on any given segment of a particular line. Railroad horizontal clearance standards were adopted from the North Corridor AA/DEIS and assume a clearance of 13' between the centerline of track to the nearest obstruction. Each of the lines included in this analysis is described in the following pages. The description includes: a map showing the location of the line together with the location of physical constraints and segments of the line greater than 800 feet long which have less than 10 feet or 30 feet of excess right-of-way width; a table summarizing some of the more important features of the line; and an assessment

of the usefulness of the excess right-of-way which may exist on the line. The assessment is based upon a comparison of the number of tracks which exist in each segment with the right-of-way width. Right-of-way width in excess of that required for the number of tracks is accumulated for the entire line length for the two categories mentioned earlier; 10 feet and 30 feet. The location of segments with inadequate excess right-of-way and the location of groupings of physical constraints are then used to evaluate the general usefulness of the excess right-of-way.

Since the amount of excess right-of-way is largely dependent on the number of tracks, the removal or addition of a track has a significant impact on available space. Consequently, it should be noted that it may be possible to consolidate operations on a line with two or more tracks to fewer tracks by upgrading the signalization system.

C. Overview of Rail Line Information

To more logically analyze the rail system in central Ohio, the rail network was divided into 17 separate rail lines based upon the ownership of the trackage. These are the designations that have been historically used by MORPC in the 1985 and 1995 versions of this document. As shown in Figure 16, rail lines are numbered sequentially in a clockwise fashion beginning at 11:00 o'clock with CSX's "Columbus Subdivision", a line that is roughly parallel to SR 315, radiating out from downtown Columbus.

The segments have been chosen so that the information in each category within a segment is consistent. Certain kinds of facilities, such as the beginning or end of a passing track or location of a siding, also justify segment end points. A brief description of the variables presented for each line follows.

Rail Carrier: The operator of the line.

Line Use Status: The designation given the rail segment indicating whether it is "In Use" or "Abandoned."

Predominant Number of Mainline / Parallel Tracks within the Right-of-Way: This information is important to determine how much of the ROW is needed for the railroad's operation.

Trains Per Day: The average number of trains traveling on the line each day. Source: ORDC

Gross Traffic Density: Density measured in tons/year. Source: ORDC

Total Line Length: Total length in miles of each rail line within the 7-county central Ohio region. Source: MORPC GIS

At-Grade Highway Crossings: The number of locations where a public or private roadway crosses one or more rail tracks at grade. Source: PUCO

Railroad Bridges: The number of bridges used by trains to bypass roadways or waterways. Source: MORPC GIS

Railroad Underpasses: The number of locations where a public roadway crosses over railroad tracks. Source: MORPC GIS

At-Grade Railroad Crossings: The number of locations where two rail lines cross at grade. Source: Source: PUCO

Railroad Sidings: The number of spurs off a mainline track. Sidings can be used to hold trains not in use, or can provide access to businesses located nearby.

Maximum Speed - Maximum speed is an indication of the quality of the railroad trackage which may be considered a surrogate for the railroad's intention to continue use of this line. Source: ORDC

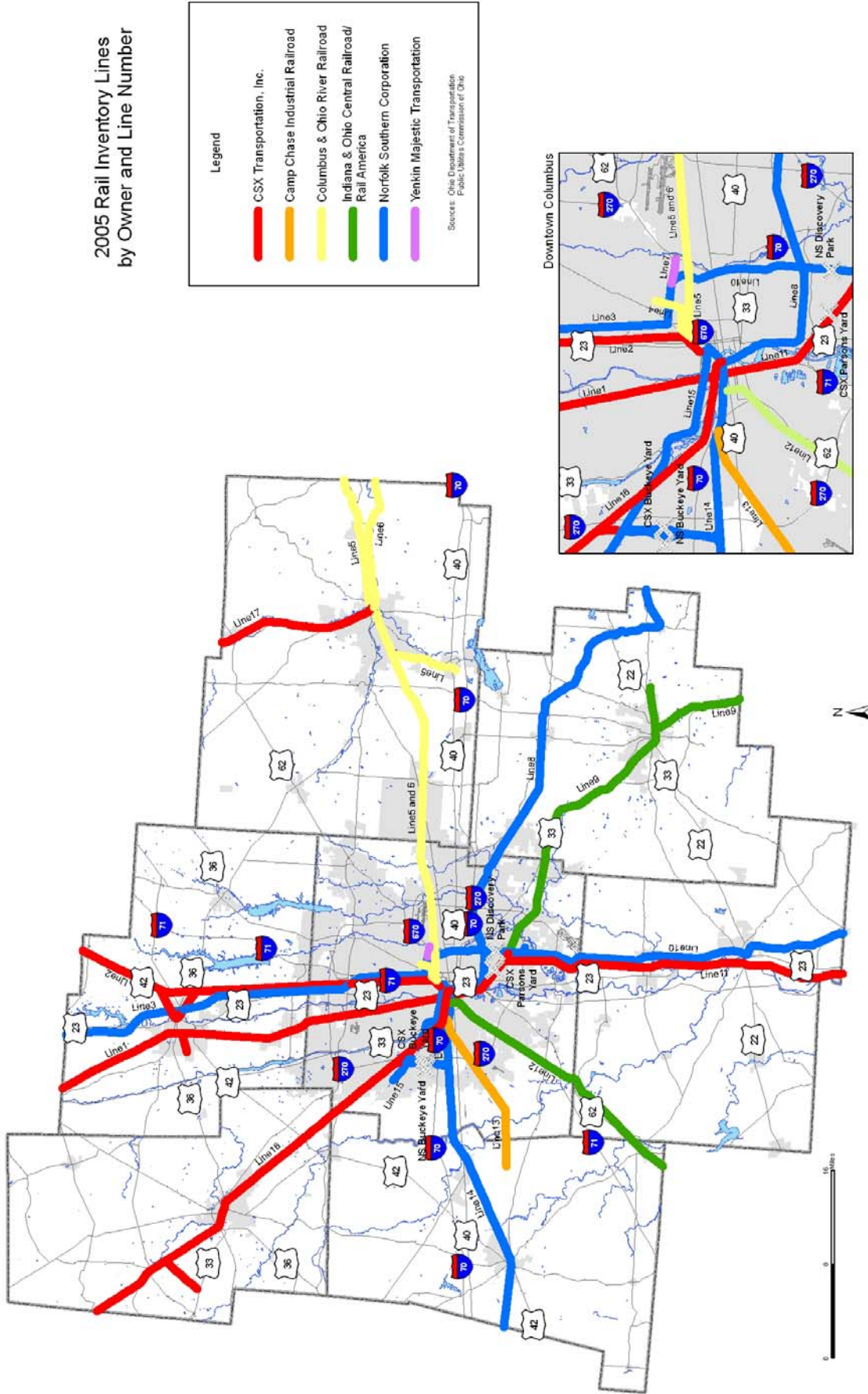
Adjacent Land Use (colored coded display on map) – The type of adjacent land use is an indication of whether additional ROW might be acquired outside of the railroad ROW. A special case of adjacent land use is a parallel railroad ROW or other parallel utility corridor such as a highway or electrical transmission lines. Source: MORPC GIS

Table 1: Line Summary Data

	Line 1 - Columbus Subdivision	Line 2 - Columbus Line	Line 3 - Sandusky District	Line 4 - Mount Vernon Secondary / Nelston Industrial Track	Line 5 - Panhandle Rail Line	Line 6 - Columbus & Newark Subdivision	Line 7 - East Columbus Industrial Track	Line 8 - Western Branch	Line 9 - Athens Subdivision	Line 10 - Columbus District	Line 11 - Northern Subdivision	Line 12 - Midland Subdivision	Line 13 - Camp Chase Industrial Track	Line 14 - Cincinnati Line	Line 15 - Bradford Secondary / Buckeye Line	Line 16 - Scottslawn Secondary / Western Branch	Line 17 - Lake Erie Subdivision	Total
Rail Carrier	CSX	CSX	NS	OHCR	State/ OHCR	OHCR	Y-Trans	NS	RA	NS	CSX	RA	CCIR	NS	NS	CSX	OHCR	
Line Use Status	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use		In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	In Use	
Predominant Number of Mainline Tracks within ROW	2	1	2	1	1	1		1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1		
Trains Per Day	10	10	25		6	6		1	1	10	10	1	1	10	6	10	1	
Gross Traffic Density (Tons/Yr)	4	3	4		2	2		3	1	4	4	2	1	4	2	3	2	
Total Line Length (in MORPC planning area) (miles)	37.3	37.2	32.9	2.2	50.1	44.3	0.9	45.9	36	38.9	36.4	23.3	13.9	30.6	9.9	46.7	14	500.5
At-Grade Highway Crossings	35	35	25	2	44	45		42	39	19	4	24	15	21	6	46	29	431
Railroad Bridges	14	17	28	3	24	49		28	13	28	29	14	3	19	11	9	5	294
Railroad Underpasses	4	11	5	6	15	20		14	5	19	18	9	2	11	8	6	2	155
At-Grade Railroad-Railroad Crossings	2	1	2	1	2	1		1	1	3	2	0	0	2	4	3	1	26
Railroad Sidings *	11	15	11	3	26	15		26	6	27	27	11	13	16	8	21	2	238
Maximum Speed	50	50	50	15	50	50		40	30	50	40	40	15	50	40	50	-	

*NS 7-county total, all others only Franklin and Delaware Counties

Figure 1: Overview Map of 7-County Railroad Lines



This map is provided in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and local communities.

The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources available to us which we believe to be reliable. We warrant that we have made every effort to ensure that the information is current and accurate as of the date of publication. We do not warrant that the information is complete or that it will be updated. The information is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to be used for any other purpose.

MORPC
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