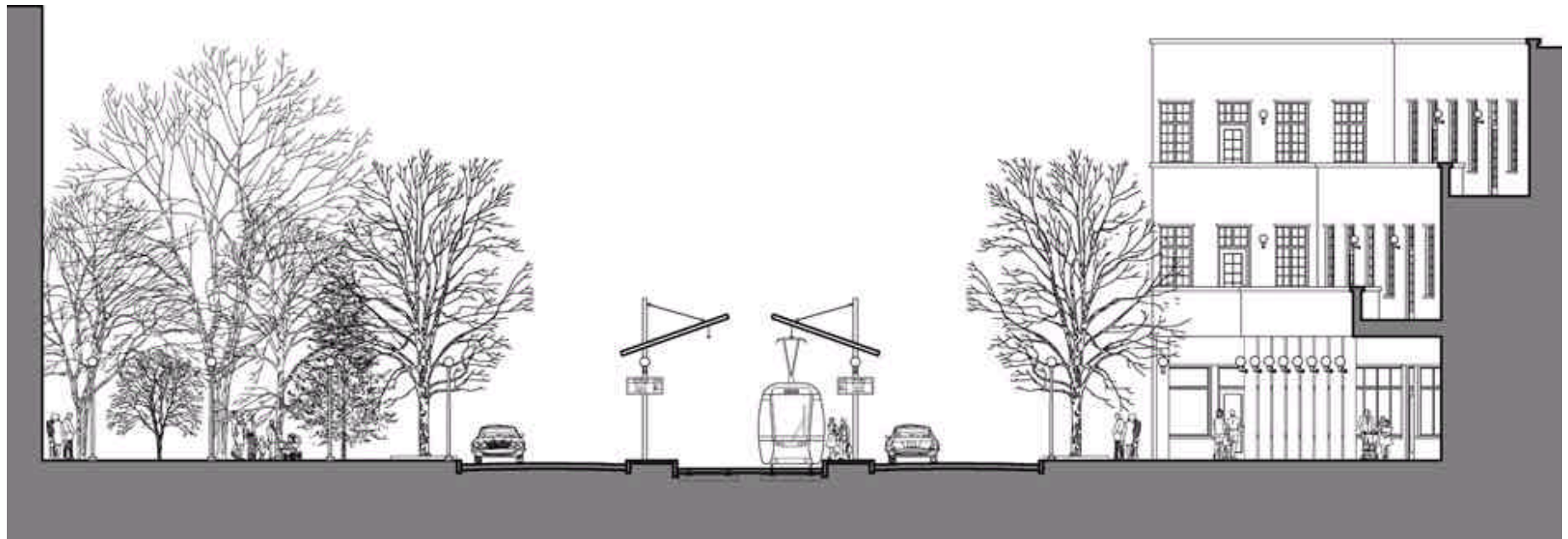


Adding a consolidated Rapid Transit Line to the Opportunity Corridor



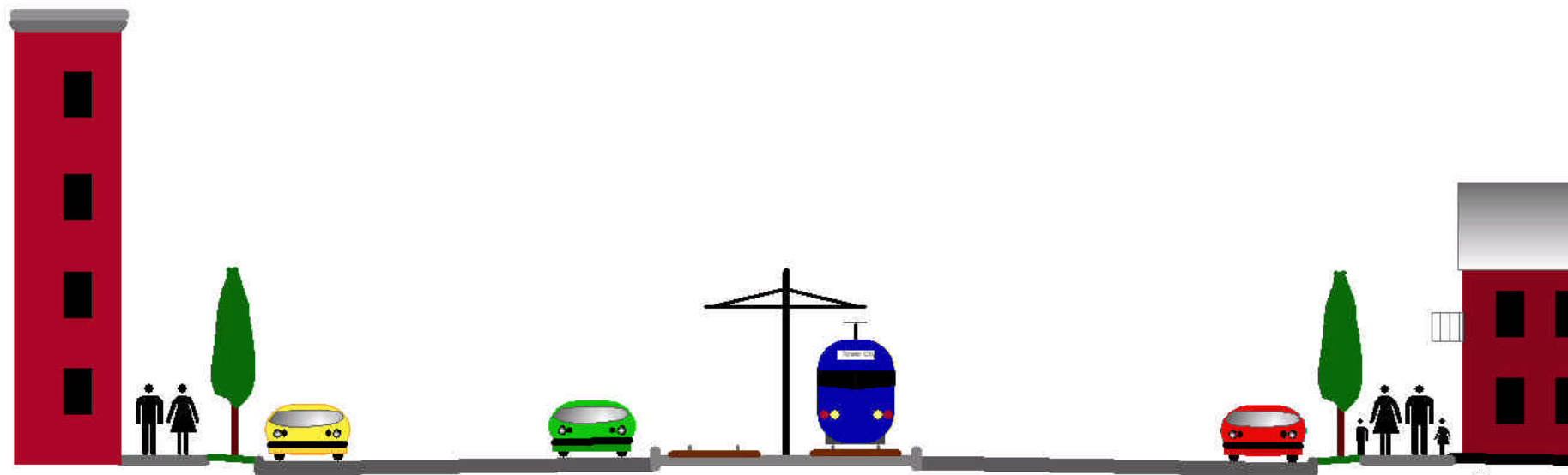
**NEOtrans
2005**

OVERVIEW

NEOtrans, a nonprofit consultancy of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers, proposes consolidating the existing Rapid Transit lines of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority within the median of the Opportunity Corridor Boulevard.

Such a consolidation already exists west of the Kinsman/East 65th Street area to Tower City Center. Extending this consolidation eastward another mile, along an at-grade alignment in a boulevard right-of-way, like that of the median of the Shaker and Van Aken Boulevards, should reduce GCRTA maintenance costs and increase revenue. The Red Line is proposed to continue eastward another mile in the Opportunity Corridor Boulevard's median to Quincy Avenue.

NEOtrans believes this project is essential to increase the Opportunity Corridor's utility to affected neighborhoods, limit RTA's operating costs and an oversupply of transit services where rail lines are already underperforming, increase rail ridership by up to 500,000 trips per year, promote transit-friendly development, and improve the perception of safety among GCRTA riders by offering more visible station locations.



Community Benefits

1. Create a new vision for reenergized, compact, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods with the uniting and superior connectivity of high-quality, visible rail transit services.

2 . Enhance the utility of the proposed Opportunity Corridor boulevard for residents of the affected areas along the corridor where auto ownership rates per household are just 56-70 percent.

3. Reverse a weakening of poorly performing rail transit lines that would have likely occurred with the addition of bus transit services on a mostly parallel Opportunity Corridor Boulevard.



4. Offer "at-grade" stations at the same elevation of the surrounding landscape to improve the visibility and accessibility of transit riders at area stations to overcome a perceived lack of safety.

5. Create a transportation hub in the "Forgotten Triangle" that offers a high-degree of connectivity among buses, urban rail and future regional rail to access jobs in the city and suburbs.

Cost savings for GCRTA

1. Reduces the quantity of rail transit infrastructure which is up to 86 years old and needs to be maintained. That infrastructure would be replaced with a new alignment in a new right of way built by ODOT and possibly jointly maintained by GCRTA and ODOT.
2. Exchanges two bi-level stations -- with their lighting, escalators, stairs, more substantial structures, etc. -- for less-costly at-grade stations.
3. Eliminates the need to maintain substantial bridge structures on the mostly elevated Blue/Green lines between East 55th and East 93rd.
4. The current transit option for the Opportunity Corridor is new GCRTA bus service. That would result in three parallel east-west transit routes within a narrow corridor. The two rail routes are already under performing. The NEOtrans concept consolidates and strengthens the existing rail transit services.



Ridership growth opportunities for GCRTA

1. Potentially massive Transit Oriented Development opportunities around new stations in the vicinity of Buckeye/East 90th and at East 79th Street. GCRTA could garner up to 500,000 new transit trips per year from just these two TODs. See "TOD Opportunities" beginning on Page Eleven for more information.
2. Safer, more visible station locations (rather than the existing Red Line stations in the railroad trench, or the existing Blue/Green Line East 79th elevated station).
3. New ridership from easier/faster travel by rail between Shaker Heights and University Circle by bringing the transfer point a total of three miles closer to their point of origin/destination.
4. Greatly enhanced connectivity if a joint station on the consolidated rail transit line is served by NEOrail commuter service between downtown, MidTown and numerous suburbs. See "Regional Links" starting on Page Fourteen for details.



Potential GCRTA capital funding sources for an Opportunity Corridor rail line

The following can provide funding up front, or reimburse GCRTA's capital contribution:

Revenue bonds from parking garages at existing or proposed stations to avail space for Transit-Oriented Development. Assumed are two 800-car parking garages. Property acquisition, demolition & construction costs are estimated at \$4 million each from federal grant leveraged by sale/lease of partial station properties. Net annual revenue from parking garages (80% occupancy @ \$4/car/day less expenses of one-third gross revenue)=\$1.2 million (rounded). \$1.2 million per year, at 5% bond interest rate, can retire a 20-year bond issue of about: **\$15 million**

Sale of 1.25 miles of Blue/Green Line between East 68th Street and Ambler Street (such as to Cuyahoga County for biking/hiking trail construction, or to communications/fiber optics/utility or other uses): **\$1 million to \$5 million**

Sale of 1.5 miles of Red Line between Kinsman Avenue and vicinity of East 105th Street (such as to Cuyahoga County for biking/hiking trail construction, NS for track capacity expansion or industrial track leads, Flats Industrial Railroad for same, communications/fiber optics/utility or other uses): **\$1.25 million to \$6 million**

Scrap value of rails, ties, catenary, wires, East 79th Station(s) materials, hardware, etc. from the above segments (range of 15-30 percent value of new materials): **\$2.5 million to \$5 million**

Total: \$19.75 million to \$31 million (GCRTA contribution)

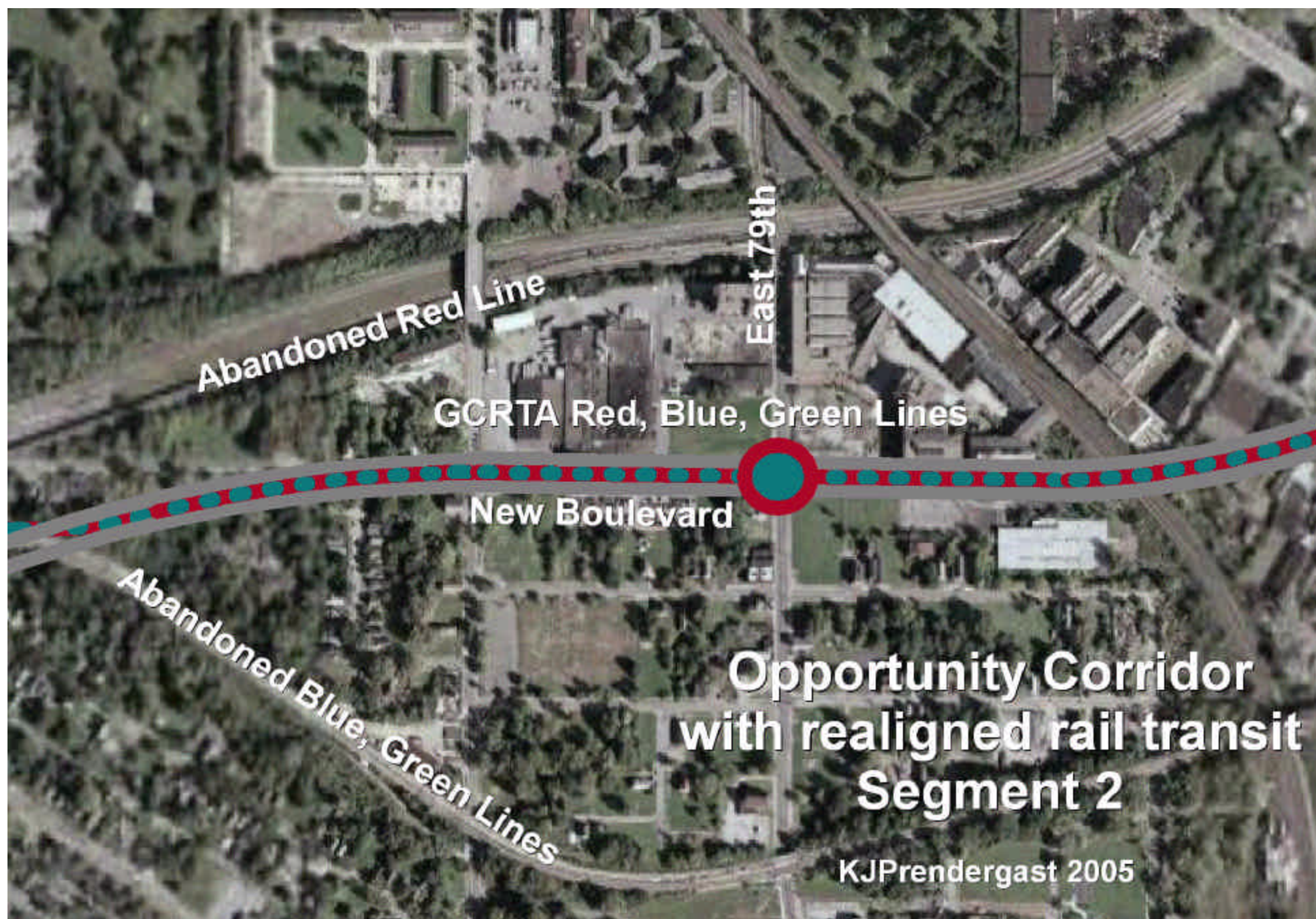
Possible capital investment for the Opportunity Corridor rail line

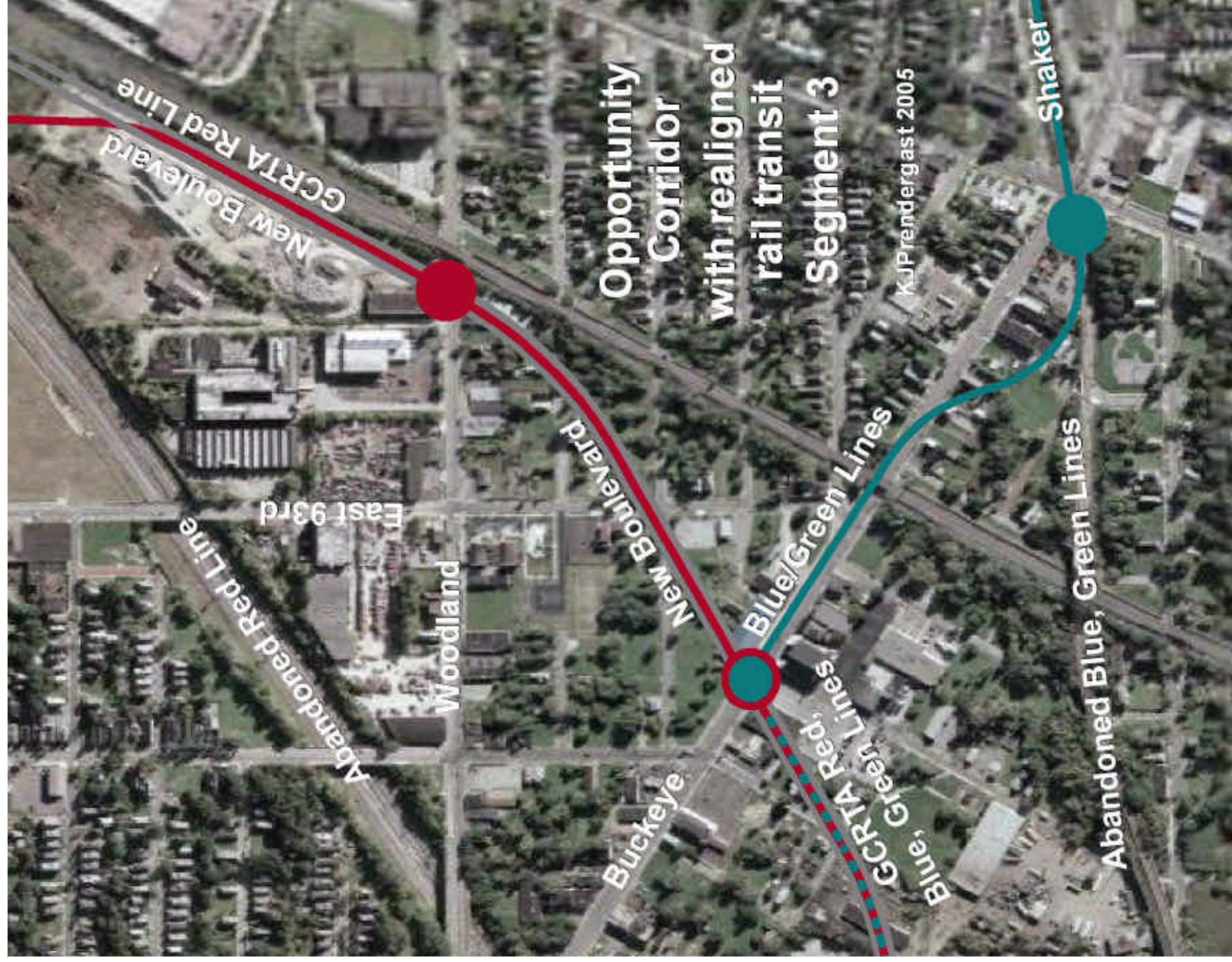
The proposed Opportunity Corridor rail route mileage would be about 2.15 miles. Construction of the Waterfront Line in 1994-96 cost about \$70 million for a similar length. With the Opportunity Corridor, much of the right of way could be provided for the rail line within the new boulevard's median, saving significant costs.

Thus, construction costs for the rail line were assumed to be \$20 million to \$30 million per mile, or \$43 million to \$64.5 million total. If a 50 percent local share (matched with federal funding) is required for the construction of the Opportunity Corridor rail line, the amount could range from \$21.5 million to \$32.25 million. If a 25 percent local share (matched with state/federal funding) is required for the rail line's construction, the amount could range from \$10.75 million to \$16.13 million.











TOD opportunities

One of the most exciting opportunities from consolidating rail transit routes in the Opportunity Corridor is the creation of new, energetic, densely developed neighborhoods built around rail stations. These would offer a lifestyle that is competitive with areas of the country that are attracting Northeast Ohio's creative young people.

TODs usually cater to residents from a mix of ages, incomes and backgrounds. They would be linked by energy-efficient, all-weather trains to Tower City Center, new developments along the Waterfront Line, Hopkins International Airport and the booming University Circle area.



East 79th Street TOD

- 215 new single-family homes (in addition to the 50 or so still standing in the area),
 - 630 multi-family units,
 - 50 live-work units,
 - roughly 200,000 square feet of ground-floor retail/restaurants
 - approximately 50,000-100,000 square feet of office/medical space.
- ✓ Estimated ridership at the East 79th TOD is about 700 new transit trips per day, or 255,000 additional transit trips per year.

Buckeye Road TOD

- 245 new single-family homes (in addition to the 25 or so still standing in the area),
 - 565 multi-family units,
 - 50 live-work units,
 - roughly 150,000 square feet of ground-floor retail/restaurants,
 - about 25,000-50,000 square feet of office/medical space.
- ✓ Estimated ridership at the Buckeye TOD is about 600 new transit trips per day, or 220,000 additional transit trips per year.

East 79th- Opportunity Corridor TOD



East 79th

Norfolk Southern Railroad

Light industrial/warehousing

Live-Work

15 floors

Live-Work

7 floors

10 floors

GCRTA Red, Blue, Green Lines

New Boulevard

future NEOrail

Industrial/
warehousing

5 floors

8 floors

6 floors

KEY

- s/f residential
- m/f residential
- residential over retail
- high-rise residential over retail
- office/commercial over retail
- structured parking over retail-office

Park

Hiking/Biking Trail

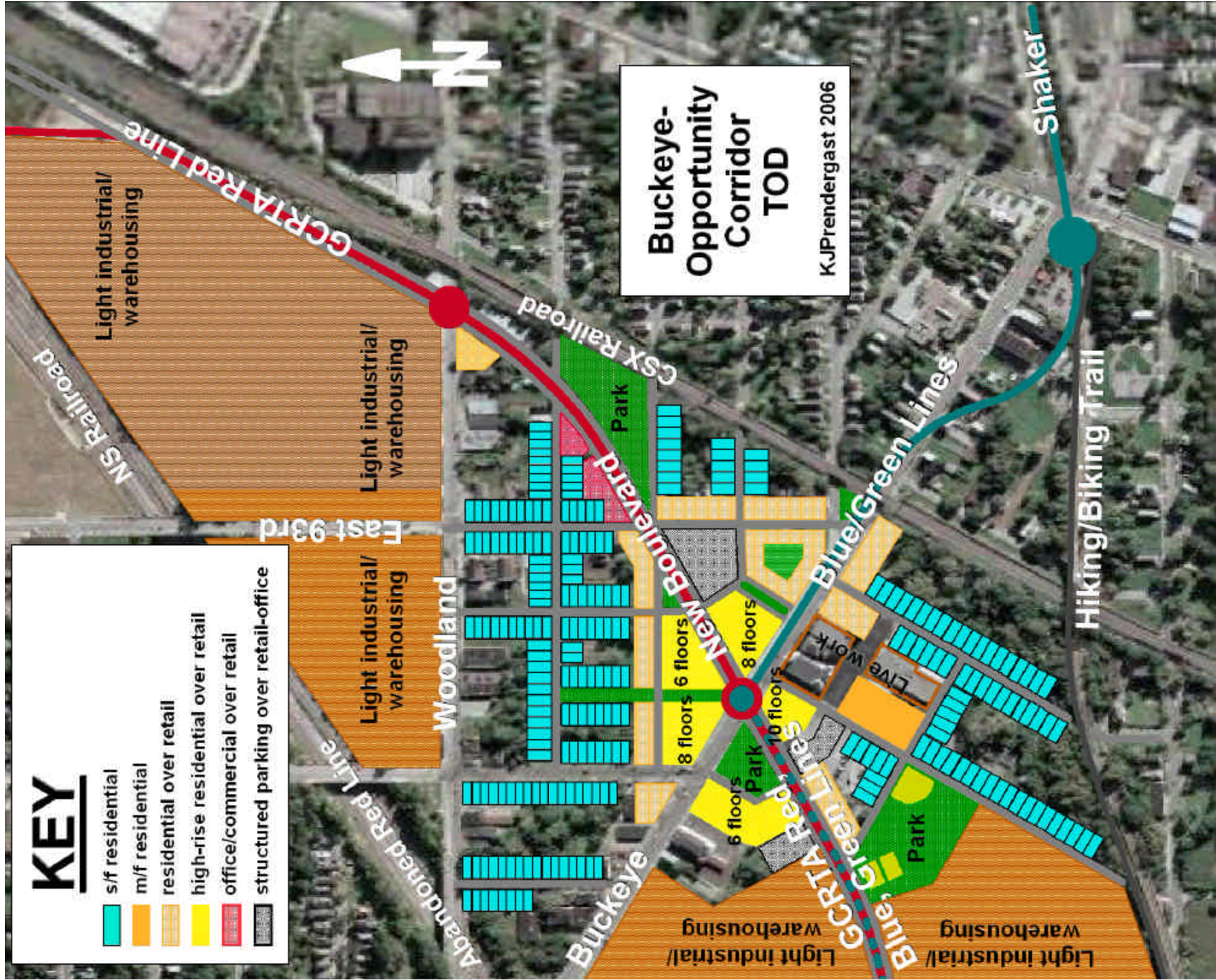
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KEY

-  s/f residential
 m/f residential
 residential over retail
 high-rise residential over retail
 office/commercial over retail
 structured parking over retail-office

Buckeye- Opportunity Corridor TOD

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Regional Links

The juxtaposition of fixed-route transit services to transit additions planned over the long term favors consolidating rail transit services in the Opportunity Corridor.

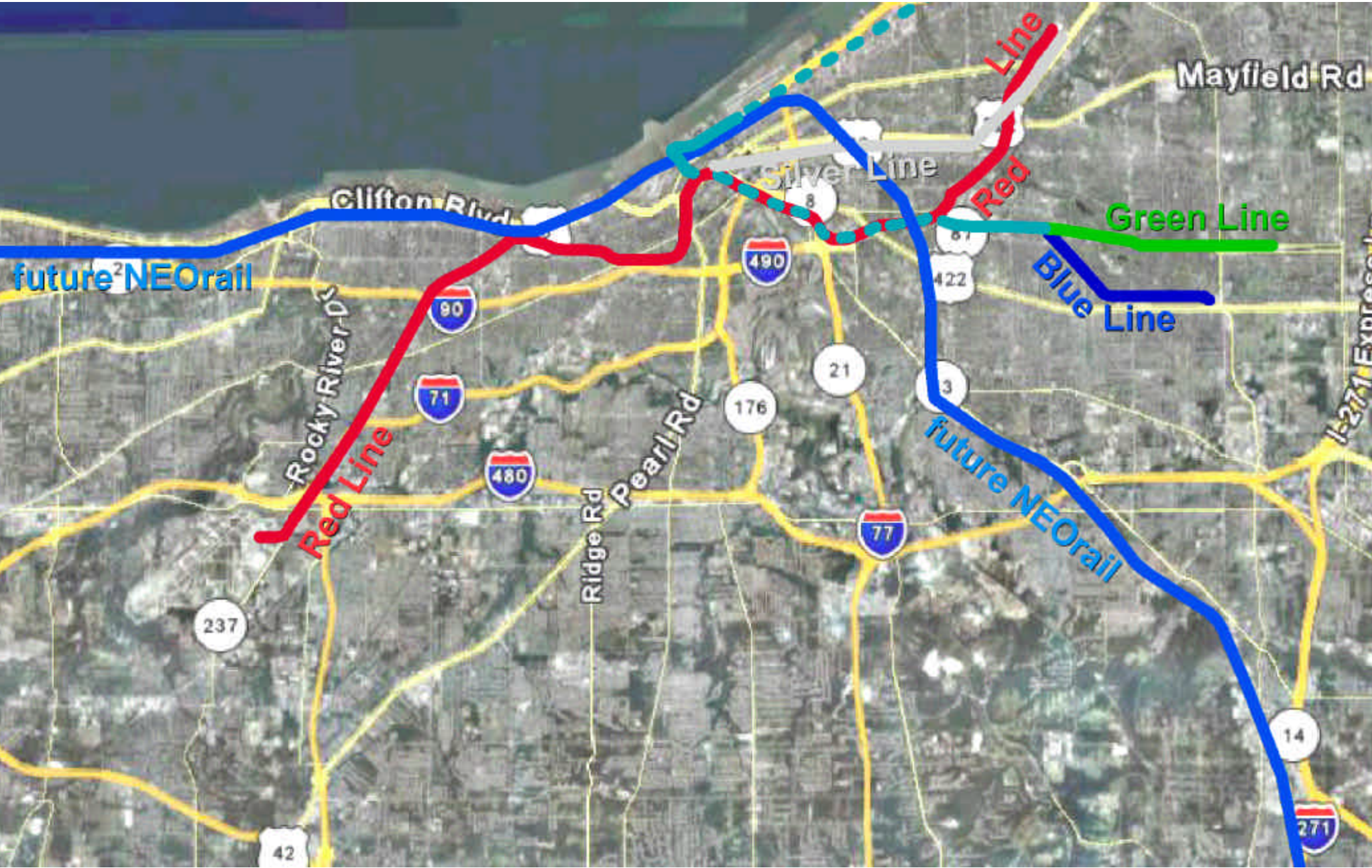
Connectivity for east-side residents to and from a Lorain-to-Akron area NEOrail commuter route would be greatly simplified with this consolidation.

The NEOrail service is authorized to receive funding in the recently passed federal surface transportation reauthorization. Also, RTA has the Cleveland-Akron route in its long-range capital budget to advance the planning. A side project is an extension of the Waterfront Line, which is in the city's lakefront plan.

If these planned transit services are added in the future, the "Forgotten Triangle" would be accessible by rail transit from six directions. It should become a major transfer point riders. Such a hub could turn an economic dead zone into a highly accessible magnet for jobs, housing, shopping and upward economic mobility.

With this level of transit and connectivity, plus the involvement of community and regional development organizations, the Forgotten Triangle could soon be transformed into the "Golden Triangle."





**For more information,
please contact NEOtrans**

**Ken Prendergast
NEOtrans consultancy
12029 Clifton Blvd., Suite 505
Lakewood, OH 44107
(216) 288-4883
KJPrendergast@cox.net**