

Item 15 - Correspondence

From: [Dan Wilhelm](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 15 for Oct 15
Date: Monday, October 12, 2020 3:17:15 PM
Attachments: [US29 Reliability Study.pptx](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

I was going to sign up for item 15 on Oct 15 hearing on the US29 Reliability Study but that item is not listed as accepting public testimony.

I put together the attached presentation that I want to share with the Board. This was put together for the East County Citizens Advisory Board meeting Wednesday evening. I would not expect to be given enough time to talk to the entire presentation. The main points I would cover are on page 1, page 2 third bullet and page 8 conclusion.

The problems with the study are beyond what the Board can reasonable address. Rather I would ask that the Board suggest that DOT work with your staff, Smoot and me to address the issues identified by me and your staff before the results are presented to the Council. We need a solution that is at a cost level that the Council will fund during these tight times and something that provides a non-congested lane for BRT lane. I don't think the Managed Lane alternative is acceptable for a number of reasons, primarily because it would repurpose one of the travel lanes. Backups from the beltway southbound was 4-5 miles in the AM before the pandemic. Unless the pandemic has changed (when over) the traffic volume at period periods substantially, I don't see how repurposing would be acceptable.

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MCDOT US29 Reliability Study

By Dan Wilhelm, 10/8/2020

- Study Primary Objective: develop solution for providing a dedicated BRT lane (not in mixed traffic) from Tech Road to SS Metrorail.
 - Study to include citizen proposal
- Study document
 - Poorly written: most explanations missing, conflicting info, hard to find key info
 - Bulk of space on other topics than primary one: previous studies, TDM, 16 pages for BRT station accessibility
- Six intersection improvements: \$16M-\$21M
 - Sligo Creek: maybe but minimal benefit
 - Beltway: ramp expansion provides no benefit since more vehicles can't access beltway
 - MD 650 (add third SB lane): rejected in 1990s as unsafe, could use for BRT only
 - Tech(add 2nd SB left turn): Many other changes needed, rather use LATIP/UMP
 - Stewart (2nd SB left turn): Needed but limited ROW doesn't allow proposed design
 - Greencastle (2nd SB left turn, E-W changes): needed to reduce delay, but not critical
- 200 bike and walking improvements from Bike MP:
 - \$15M-\$20M; actual cost at least 10 times that amount – address in CIP/LATIP
- Two BRT alternatives (22 pages):
 - Median (Emerson Smoot proposal+): \$106M, 9.8 acres for ROW: BRT only
 - Managed Lane: \$45M (\$40M Stewart-Musgrove). 2.2 acres, BRT+HOV

BRT Overview

- BRT (Flash) Implementation October 14, 2020
 - Two routes: 11 total stations, 5 on both routes
 - Burtonsville to SS only on US29: 6 stations
 - Briggs Chaney to SS on US29 and Stewart/Lockwood: 10 stations
 - Dedicated right shoulder north of Tech Rd and mixed traffic south.
- To be accepted must be low cost and provide dedicated BRT lane where congested. (major congestion between MD650 - MD193 and Sligo Creek-Spring Street)
- Study Global Issues
 - Didn't fully addresses existing conditions: MD193/Beltway, MD 650, Stewart
 - Unnecessary changes add cost and driver confusion: north of Tech Rd, Paint Branch Bridge, MD193 station, widening
 - Managed Lane provides dedicated lanes for half of MD650-MD193 segment, Travel time saving not justified with loss of lane (repurpose lane)
- Alternatives evaluated in five segments in subsequent charts
 - Provide solution for each study alternative ; issues identified in < >
 - Provide my preferred solution keeping both alternatives in middle segment

Burtonsville to Stewart Lane Segment

Median Alt (BRT)

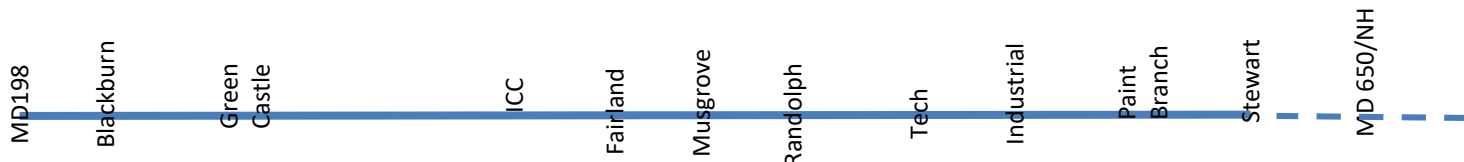
- 2 Tech Rd platforms unchanged (right side)
- Tech Rd north BRT on right shoulder
- 2 median lanes south < BRT to switch lanes>
- Widen Paint Branch Bridge in median <high cost>
- 10 ft side path on west south of Industrial Pkwy <poor location, needless expense>

Managed Lane Alt (BRT+HOV)

- 2 Tech Rd platforms unchanged
- 2 left BRT shoulder lanes from Blackburn Rd to Fairland Rd < must widen no cost, why change>
- BRT/HOV in left lane Musgrove to Stewart in perk period only - \$40M <why not full time>
- Switch mixed-use lane from Musgrove to use right shoulder during peak < confusing for drivers to switch lanes at certain times>
- <BRT switches: left lane-right platform-left lane>
- Widen bridge <high cost>
- No sidepath

Wilhelm Alt (BRT)

- 2 Tech Rd platforms unchanged
- Use right shoulder full length
- Restripe bridge to achieve 4 lanes
- No sidepath (use Old Columbia)
- May need to rebuild right shoulder (conflicting messages from DOT)
- (min cost and change)



Stewart Lane to Oak Leaf Dr Segment

Median Alt (BRT)

- 1 median BRT lane (from 2 north) <would need to widen MD650 intersection; rejected in 1990s as unsafe>
- Two 5 -10 ft sidewalks on both sides
- <does not address left turn congestion at Stewart for one route>
- <does not address large number of turns at MD650>

Managed Lane Alt (BRT+HOV)

- Repurpose one lane in median from Stewart in peak direction during peak period - 2 mixed-use lanes from 3 < doesn't explain how mixed traffic less congested; would need to widen MD650 intersection, rejected in 1990s due to safety)
- 2 sidewalks/side path
- <does not address left turn congestion at Stewart for one route>
- <does not address large number of turns at MD650>

Wilhelm Alt (BRT)

- BRT on right with right turning traffic
- 2nd SB left lane at Stewart via shift of mixed use lanes southbound
- Add 3rd lane southbound between two ramps at MD 650 (BRT only, avoids safety issue)
- No sidewalk/sidepath north MD 650 (Use Old Columbia)



Oak Leaf Dr to Timberwood Ave Segment

Median Alt (BRT)

- 1 median BRT lane <2 lanes at station in one diagram>
- Change left-turn signals
- Station moved to median at Lockwood intersection < BRT turning and conflicts to serve Burtonsville not clear; no available SB from WO>
- Expand sidewalk and add where needed (14-24 ft total) <very costly and requires property taking>

Managed Lane Alt (BRT+HOV)

- Repurpose one lane in median to Southwood Ave in AM peak and from Burnt Mills Ave to Prelude in PM peak < less congestion not explained/justified; why not all day>
- Move Burnt Mills Station to median \$12.4M <cost more than \$1.2M to move stone wall back>
- Add 2nd sidewalk where needed or sidepath on each side between intersections < very costly, requires property taking>

Wilhelm Alt (BRT+HOV)

A: **Median**

- Study design but no change to sidewalks, use BRT vehicle for bikes
- Station Location still an issue
(reduced cost)

B. **Managed (If DOT can justify repurposing)**

- Repurpose one lane on right from Oak Leaf to Timberwood, both directions
- BRT station not changed
- No change in sidewalks. Use BRT for bikes
(minimal cost, largely signs)



Timberwood Ave to Sligo Creek Segment

Median Alt (BRT)

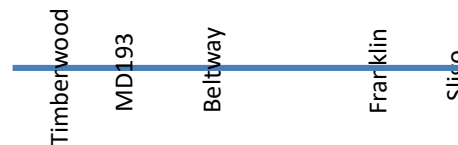
- 2 median lanes to beltway <limited congestion, except to access beltway>
- 1 median lane south of beltway <limited congested>
- Four Corners station moved to median <more people crossing the street, cost at \$7.2M*>
- Removes extra mixed-use traffic lanes, 6 total <backup traffic to beltway; even more congestion both ways>

Managed Lane Alt (BRT+HOV)

- Mixed Traffic, shift northbound lanes at HS.
- Southbound station moved to median at \$7.2M*. Northbound station moved back toward HS <No rationale for change, different location from Median alt, cost>

Wilhelm Alt (BRT+HOV)

- Mixed Traffic, little congestion in this section other than to access beltway
- No change to station (no cost)



* Not clear which alternative cost for

Sligo Creek to Spring Street Segment

Median Alt (BRT)

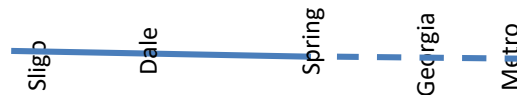
- Mixed traffic

Managed Lane Alt (BRT+HOV)

- Convert left of four lanes to BRT during peak period

Wilhelm Alt (BRT+HOV)

- Use Managed Lane Alternative, but use right lane.



Conclusion

- Oppose both MCDOT Draft Study Alternatives as presented
- Alternative(s) to fixing study design
 - Single solution for four segments
 - Two alternatives for middle segment
 - Depends upon whether repurposing can be justified
- Recommendation: DOT should work with Smoot, Wilhelm, Planning to fix before being presented to the Council