

**J00B01 – MDOT - State Highway Administration  
MDOT RESPONSE TO DLS ANALYSIS**

***DLS Budget Analysis Issues***

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**1. Traffic Relief Plan: Approaches and Costs Vary by Region (Page 32 -35)**

**If the General Assembly wishes to have meaningful input on how these projects proceed, it should withhold planning funds until the Administration commits to a process that recognizes the co-equal role of the General Assembly in establishing transportation policies that serve the best interests of the citizens of Maryland.**

**MDOT Response:**

In accordance with the public-private partnership (P3) law passed by the General Assembly in 2013, MDOT included the Traffic Relief Plan (TRP) project as a P3 project under consideration in its annual submission to the General Assembly on P3 projects. In addition, MDOT is actively preparing the pre-solicitation report that the law requires prior to solicitation of any P3 projects. That report will be submitted later this year. The P3 law was drafted based on the recommendations of the bi-partisan Joint Legislative and Executive Commission on Oversight of Public-Private Partnerships.

In addition to meeting all statutory requirements for legislative notification, there are numerous opportunities for public/stakeholder input during the federally required National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process as well as the long-range plan, transportation improvement program and air quality conformity processes at the Transportation Planning Board (the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) for the Washington Region). All concerned parties will have many opportunities to have meaningful input into these projects.

**The Secretary should brief the committees on:**

- **the factors that led to the development of such disparate traffic relief solutions between the Washington and Baltimore regions;**

**MDOT Response:**

Both the Washington and Baltimore regions experience high levels of traffic and congestion. But from a congestion, reliability and traffic volume perspective, the Washington region experiences more saturated and unreliable conditions compared to the Baltimore region.

Similar to Express Toll Lanes (ETL)/High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes operations already in place in the Washington region (VA HOT lanes, ICC), it is anticipated that

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***DLS Budget Analysis Issues (cont.)***

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innovative ETL solution opportunities able to be delivered by the net zero cost P3 approach will provide the best results to relieve congestion in the Washington region. In short, ETL's are needed to compete and keep-up in the Washington Metro Region market including Northern Virginia.

In the Baltimore region over the last 10 years, significant traditional type investment in the Baltimore Beltway has occurred. Between 2007 and 2017, close to \$400 million dollars has been spent on various improvements including expansion, lighting, resurfacing, and structural improvements. An approach such as utilizing Hard Shoulder Running (HSR) and technology such as adaptive ramp metering to maximize these improvement investments will provide relief to peak congestion. Furthermore, in excess of \$200 million is planned for improvements in the next CTP (FY18-FY23).

- **why MDOT believes that converting shoulders to additional lanes, as proposed for the Baltimore Beltway, will not simply induce more traffic within a short time; and**

**MDOT Response:**

In line with the MDOT Practical Transportation Policy, one of the key strategies for Traffic Relief Plan (TRP) solutions is focused on leveraging existing infrastructure or existing highway footprint to maximize mobility and relieve congestion. Projects such as the Baltimore Beltway Innovative Congestion Management (ICM) Project, where such strategy is utilized, providing additional capacity through new highway lanes are not considered. These projects attempt to minimize environmental and right of way impacts while use of technology is deployed to enhance traffic movement.

The Hard Shoulder Running (HSR) solution proposed on Baltimore Beltway is an operational improvement to alleviate peak hour congestion. It is not equivalent to adding permanent capacity as the shoulder lanes will serve as traditional shoulders during off-peak and night time hours. Moreover, in the event of incidents or weather emergencies, the HSR option is not going to be operational. Due to these factors, we believe that the HSR option will not result in induced demand. The purpose of the solution is to ease peak hour congestion through technology and innovation.

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***DLS Budget Analysis Issues (cont.)***

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- **why transit should not be a component of traffic relief efforts in general and the P3 proposal for Phase 1 in particular.**

**MDOT Response:**

The Hogan administration will continue to pursue a balanced approach to address transportation demands. In addition to the Traffic Relief Plan (TRP), the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is moving forward with constructing the Purple Line in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties, recently revamped Baltimore’s transit system with the launch of BaltimoreLink and has pledged more funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in conjunction with Virginia, Washington D.C., and the federal government matching Maryland’s offer.

TRP is focused on a System of Systems approach to solutions including components such as transit, and Smart Signals. Additionally, another significant component of the TRP is leveraging existing highway infrastructure to maximize mobility and relieve congestion while minimizing environmental and right of way impacts using innovation and technology.

The proposed public-private partnership (P3) project for the I-495 and I-270 corridors is in the early stages of the development process. Transit will be accommodated and be able to benefit from the use of the express toll lanes. There will be opportunities for public/stakeholder input during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to further address the role of transit in this project.

**2. Certain Local Government Uniform Financial Reports Not Submitted (Page 35)**

**It is recommended that State transportation aid funding under the HUR program be suspended for these jurisdictions until the jurisdictions submit delinquent annual audit reports and UFRs. Suggested language is included in the Recommended Actions section of this analysis for consideration.**

**MDOT Response:**

The Department concurs with the DLS recommendation.

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***Operating Budget Recommended Actions***

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1. Add the following language to the special fund appropriation:

, provided that \$5,856 of this appropriation made for the purpose of providing transportation aid to Deer Park in Garrett County may not be expended until the town has submitted audit reports and Uniform Financial Reports as required under Sections 16-304 and 16-306 of the Local Government Article for fiscal 2015, 2016, and 2017. Funds restricted pending the receipt of these documents may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall be cancelled.

Further provided that \$1,732 of this appropriation made for the purpose of providing transportation aid to Caroline County on behalf of Marydel may not be expended until the town has submitted the audit reports and Uniform Financial Reports as required under Sections 16-304 and 16-306 of the Local Government Article for fiscal 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017. Funds restricted pending the receipt of these documents may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise and shall be cancelled.

**MDOT Response:**

The Department concurs with the recommended language.

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***PAYGO Budget Recommended Actions***

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| 1. Delete planning funding for the Traffic Relief Plan (Phase 1).<br>There are numerous policy issues that should be resolved prior to moving forward with this project. Furthermore, no funding should be authorized until the Administration commits to a process that recognizes the co-equal role of the General Assembly in establishing transportation policies that serve the best interests of the citizens of Maryland. | \$22,000,000 SF |
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<b>Total Special Fund Reductions</b>	<b>\$22,000,000</b>
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**MDOT Response:**

The Department respectfully does not concur with this special fund reduction. An express lane network on I-495 and I-270 has been supported by the Transportation Planning Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for more than a decade and is directly tied to priorities from both the Montgomery County and Frederick County CTP Priority Letters. This funding is necessary for the Department to advance the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning process for I-495 and I-270, including public involvement and stakeholder coordination, and to develop the pre-solicitation report, required under the public-private partnership (P3) law passed by the General Assembly, for submission to the Comptroller, State Treasurer, the budget committees, and the Department of Legislative Services. Deletion of this funding would not allow these efforts to be advanced, which are also an important part of the proposal for Amazon HQ2, and further delaying needed improvements long requested and supported by citizens and local stakeholders.