

MARK CENTER (BRAC-133) SPOT IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY LIST

MASON DISTRICT BRAC-133 TASK FORCE

The Mason District BRAC-133 Task Force, through action taken on August 2, 2011 and November 1, 2011, hereby supports the following list of priority transportation spot improvements, intended to address impacts from partial and/or full occupation of the nearby Mark Center (BRAC-133):

Note: All cost impacts are estimated and each improvement will require further study and community involvement to determine feasibility, operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.

1. TRAFFIC SIGNAL OPTIMIZATION (GENERAL)

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 08/02/11)

Traffic patterns around BRAC-133, in both Alexandria and Fairfax, will inevitably change once the facility becomes occupied. Approximately 6,400 employees will be traveling to and from BRAC-133, introducing new and increased demands on the transportation network. Traffic signal timings and phasing should be re-evaluated and optimized for key traffic signals along Route 236, Beauregard Street, Seminary Road and South Van Dorn Street, as needed, to ensure that traffic is being served in the most efficient manner possible with existing transportation infrastructure.

Proposed Spot Improvement:	Traffic Signal Optimization (As Needed)
Timeframe:	Short Range (6-12 months)
Cost Impact:	N/A (VDOT)

Note: City of Alexandria is already implementing; coordination with City & VDOT necessary.

2. I-395 SB OFF-RAMP TO ROUTE 236 WB (ENHANCED SIGNAGE/WAY-FINDING)

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 08/02/11)

Demand for access to Route 236 and area attractions is anticipated to overload the single-lane SB off-ramp from I-395 to Route 236 WB. The introduction of BRAC-133 trips to the area transportation network will only serve to exacerbate the issue. In an effort to make better utilization of existing transportation infrastructure, enhanced signage/way-finding techniques could be employed on the ramp to ensure that travelers are aware, in advance, that Quantrell Avenue, with direct access from the ramp, can be used to access Beauregard Street, Lincolnia Road and the Plaza at Landmark shopping center. This action would help to remove unnecessary trips from the troublesome weave, where the ramp intersects Route 236, and the equally troublesome intersection of Route 236 and Beauregard Street.

Proposed Spot Improvement:	Enhanced Signage
Timeframe:	Short Range (12-18 months)
Cost Impact:	\$200K

Note: This improvement impacts an interchange on the Interstate Highway System; coordination with VDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is necessary – potential need for Interchange Modification Report (IMR).

3. Chowan Avenue Safety Improvements (Tie for 3rd)

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

Major thoroughfares in the vicinity of BRAC-133, such as I-395, currently experience significant congestion. This is only expected to worsen with time, as with occupation of BRAC-133. Commuters destined to, or traveling from, BRAC-133 will find their “optimal route” from a travel time standpoint. Consequently, many commuters will utilize various collectors and local streets as detour routes. Commuters, for example, may elect to use Edsall Road and Chowan Avenue to access Route 236 and BRAC-133 from the south/west, rather than I-395.

A safety issue exists at the intersection of Route 236 and Chowan Avenue. A service drive between Chowan Avenue and Southland Avenue can be accessed at high speeds from Route 236 (quick right-exit from Route 236 EB onto Chowan Avenue, quick-left onto the service drive). These vehicles making this quick “zig-zag” movement are not easily seen by vehicles approaching the intersection from the south on Chowan Avenue.

The anticipated increase in trips on Chowan Avenue due to BRAC will only serve to worsen the situation. Vehicles traveling north on Chowan Avenue, making what should be a simple approach to Route 236, will be placed in a dangerous situation with this conflicting movement. Mountable curb could be installed in the center of Chowan Avenue, aligned with and south of the existing raised median at the intersection. The mountable curb would serve to slow those vehicles making the quick movement from Route 236 to the service drive, thus providing a safer approach for those on Chowan Avenue.

Proposed Spot Improvement:	Mountable Curb
Timeframe:	Short Range (12-18 months)
Cost Impact:	\$50K

Note: Chowan Avenue is maintained by VDOT; coordination will be required.

3. Route 236 – Channelize WB Left Turns @ Beauregard Street (Tie for 3rd)

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

The Plaza at Landmark Shopping Center currently has a right-in, right-out access directly on Route 236. Vehicles exiting the plaza onto Route 236 WB often attempt to cut across three (3) lanes of traffic in order to reach the WB left turn lane at Beauregard Street. These vehicles, presumably intending to u-turn to Route 236 EB or to turn left onto Beauregard Street, may cross three lanes of high speed traffic, or may sit stopped in through lanes as they attempt to reach the left turn lane. Both situations pose safety and operational problems. Channelizing the WB left turn lane on Route 236 would prevent those exiting vehicles from accessing the left turn lane and would shift those vehicles to another plaza exit (such as Beauregard Street).

Proposed Spot Improvement:	Channelize Route 236 WB Left Turn @ Beauregard St
Timeframe:	Short Range (12-18 months)
Cost Impact:	\$50K

Note: Route 236 is maintained by VDOT; coordination will be required.

3. North Chambliss Street at Beaugard Street - Eliminating Exclusive SB Right (Tie for 3rd)
(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

Currently, a free-flow right-turn lane provides SB access from North Chambliss Street to Beaugard Street, just north of Route 236. This free-flow lane provides an alternative to the traffic signal at North Chambliss and Beaugard, allowing direct, non-stop access to Beaugard Street and Route 236. Unfortunately, this has created a dangerous conflict and weave situation where vehicles utilizing the free-flow lane from North Chambliss conflict with vehicles on Beaugard Street looking to turn right onto Route 236.

In an effort to eliminate this conflict/weave, the free-flow SB right turn lane from North Chambliss Street to Beaugard Street could be eliminated. All SB vehicles, whether on North Chambliss or Beaugard, would flow through the existing traffic signal at the Plaza Entrance. This elimination may result in the need for an additional right turn lane from North Chambliss onto Beaugard. Ultimately, this will separate the Lincolnia/North Chambliss traffic from the Beaugard traffic, thus eliminating the conflict/weave.

Proposed Spot Improvement:	Eliminate North Chambliss Free-Flow Right
Timeframe:	Short Range (12-18 Months)
Potential Issues:	Access Along North Chambliss Street
Cost Impact:	\$1M

Note: Beaugard Street, North Chambliss Street VDOT maintained; coordination required.

6. I-395 SB Off-Ramp to Route 236 WB – Widen Off-Ramp to Two Lanes
(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

Another means to increase capacity on the I-395 SB off-ramp would be to widen the ramp from one lane to two lanes, from I-395 to the Quantrell Avenue exit to Beaugard Street, Lincolnia Road and Plaza at Landmark. Adding a lane to Route 236 is not advisable as it would exacerbate the existing weaving issue.

Current Lanes:	1
Proposed Spot Improvement:	Additional Lane from I-395 Mainline to Quantrell Ave Exit
Proposed Lanes:	2
Timeframe:	Long Range (18+ Months)
Cost Impact:	\$1M

7. Route 236 – Closure of Service Drive Access, Installation of Bus Pull-Out

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

Traffic on Route 236 EB, through the Beauregard Street intersection, is currently impeded by vehicles accessing Route 236 from the southern service drive and from buses making scheduled stops, just east of Beauregard Street. In an effort to make traffic flow better through this troublesome intersection, the service drive access (generally aligned with the Exxon service station) could be closed and replaced with a bus pull-out bay for WMATA and Fairfax Connector buses stopping along this section of Route 236.

Proposed Spot Improvement: Close Route 236 Service Drive Access; Add Bus Pull-Out
Timeframe: Short Range (12-18 months)
Cost Impact: \$200K

Note: Route 236 is maintained by VDOT; Bus Routes are operated by WMATA/Fairfax Connector; coordination will be required.

8. Route 236 @ Beauregard – Street 3rd SB Left

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

2A, 2B and 2C deal with the weaving issue on Beauregard Street. Capacity on the SB approach of Beauregard Street at Route 236 is also of concern. Ideally, we would modify the SB approach to include three (3) exclusive left turn lanes, one (1) through lane and one (1) right turn lane. In addition to adding capacity for the SB lefts, we could potentially remove the split phasing at the traffic signal. Right-of-way (ROW), however, is a significant concern on the NW, NE and SE corners. Rather than adding two (2) full lanes to the approach, it is recommended that a third SB left be provided, but it be shared with the through movement. This would result in a net increase of one SB left turn lane. Note that a third receiving lane would be necessary on Route 236 heading east towards I-395 and Alexandria.

Current SB lane configuration: 1 SBL, 1 SBLT and 1 SBR
Proposed Spot Improvement: Additional SBL
Proposed SB lane configuration: 2 SBL, 1 SBLT, 1 SBR
Timeframe: Long Range (18+ Months)
Cost Impact: \$12M

Note: Enhanced signage may be appropriate, guiding turning vehicles to I-395 and the City of Alexandria.

9. Lincolnia Road, Braddock Road to North Chambliss Street

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

Lincolnia Road, a two-lane minor arterial providing connection between Columbia Pike and Braddock Road and Beauregard Street, is anticipated to reach its capacity by 2030.

Consideration should be given to enhancing the corridor to an improved two-lane facility with spot improvements, such as curb and gutter, turn lanes, sidewalks, etc., as determined by future study (e.g., at Sano St).

Current Lanes:	2
Proposed Spot Improvement:	Corridor Enhancements
Proposed Lanes:	2
Timeframe:	Long Range (18+ Months)
Cost Impact:	\$5M

10. Route 236 @ Cherokee Avenue – NB Right Turn Lane

(ACTION BY TASK FORCE – APPROVED 11/01/11)

Connecting Edsall Road and I-395 with Route 236, Cherokee Avenue could potentially offer BRAC-133 commuters an alternative route to and from the south. Currently, NB traffic stops at a free-flowing Route 236. With low availability of gaps and NB left turning movements blocking NB rights, separating the lefts from the rights would be beneficial. An exclusive NB right turn lane should be provided, long enough to provide adequate separation from the NB lefts and throughs.

Current NB lane configuration:	1 NBLTR
Proposed Spot Improvement:	Exclusive NBR
Proposed NB lane configuration:	1 NBLT, 1 NBR
Timeframe:	Long Range (18+ Months)
Cost Impact:	\$500K