

FAST LANE

Spring 2005

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Welcome to FastLane

This is the twelfth issue of *FastLane*: a quarterly newsletter that highlights ongoing activities and research in managed lanes in Texas. Previous issues can be found in the *FastLane* archives on our web site, <http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu>. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone who might be interested in its contents, and as always, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

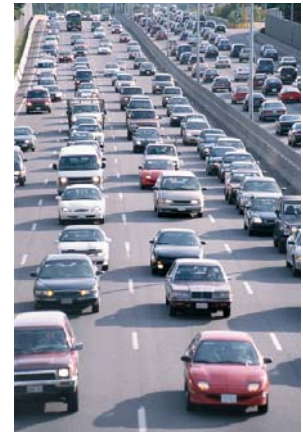
Managed Lanes in the News

Turning Lanes into Labs

A February 14, 2005, article in the *Dallas Business Journal* examines a managed lanes research study on I-30 in Dallas that studied driver attitudes and behavior. The managed lane facility, scheduled to be completed in 2007, will consist of lanes that will be used as either high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes or toll lanes. The full article can be accessed at <http://dallas.bizjournals.com/dallas/stories/2005/02/14/focus1.html>. Related stories regarding the I-30 managed lanes project were found in the November 10, 2004 issue of the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* titled “I-30 Gets Go-Ahead for Special Toll Lanes” and “Toll Lanes May Help Traffic to Stadium.” These articles by Gordon Dickson describe the project and its goals as well as the possible effect the lanes may have on traffic bound for the proposed Dallas Cowboys stadium and the Arlington entertainment District.

HOV Privileges and Hybrids

Several articles related to the privilege of allowing single occupant hybrid cars to use HOV lanes appeared recently in a number of newspapers and journals. A number of states have laws related to the use of HOV lanes by hybrid vehicles, but these laws can not be implemented until approved by Congress. Currently only Virginia has laws governing hybrid vehicles in HOV lanes.



Virginia has encountered a surge of hybrid vehicles using HOV lanes in recent years. Surveys and traffic counts revealed that in the spring of 2004 8 percent of cars using HOV lanes were single occupant hybrid cars. By October 2004 that number had increased to 18 percent. As a result, a task force comprised of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia State Police Department recommended that the exemption allowing hybrid single occupant vehicles to use HOV lanes be allowed to expire in July 2006. A copy of the task force report can be accessed on the VDOT web site www.virginiadot.org. Full text articles regarding this issue are “As Hybrid Cars Multiply, So Do Carpooling Gripes” by Steven Ginsberg and Carol Morello, *Washington Post* January 7, 2005 issue; “Significant Increase in Hybrid Vehicles Strains HOV Lanes in Northern Virginia” found in *The Urban Transportation Monitor* January 21, 2005 issue, and “HOV Privilege Elusive for Owners of Hybrid Vehicles” by Lisa Mascaro, *Los Angeles Daily News* January 26, 2005 issue.

Managed Lanes on the Web

The project team has updated the web site and added the following items. The Managed Lanes Website is located at <http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu>.



The reports are available in Adobe Acrobat format.

Reports

Report 0-4160-17: Incident Management for Managed Lanes

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/reports/0-4160-17.pdf>

Report 0-4160-18: Interoperability Issues on Managed Lanes

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/reports/0-4160-18.pdf>

Report 0-4160-19: Year 4 Annual Report of Progress - Operating Freeways with Managed Lanes

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/reports/0-4160-19.pdf>

Article

“Managed Lanes,” Jon Obenberger, *Public Roads*, November/December 2004 · Vol. 68 · No. 3

<http://www.tfhr.gov/pubrds/04nov/08.htm>

Presentations

Full Text of the following presentations were made at the 12th International HOV Systems Conference: Improving Mobility and Accessibility with Managed Lanes, Pricing, and BRT held in Houston, Texas, April 12-20, 2005, are now available.

Presentation Title: *Recent Research on Managed Lanes: A Report from Texas*

Presenter: Beverly T. Kuhn, Ph.D., P.E.

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/presentations/0-4160-2005HOVConf-Kuhn.pdf>.

Presentation Title: *Managed Lane Ramp Design Issues*

Presenter: Marcus Brewer, P.E.

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/presentations/0-4160-2005HOVConf-Brewer.pdf>.

Presentation Title: *Enforcement of Managed Lanes with HOV Preference*

Presenter: Ginger Goodin, P.E.

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/presentations/0-4160-2005HOVConf-Goodin.pdf>.

Presentation Title: *Traffic Control Devices for Managed Lanes*

Presenter: Susan Chrysler, Ph.D.

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/presentations/0-4160-2005HOVConf-Chrysler.pdf>.

Presentation Title: *Design and Operations Associated with Single Lane Directional Managed Lanes*

Presenter: Casey Toycen

<http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/presentations/0-4160-2005HOVConf-Toycen.pdf>.

Research Team Out Front

The February 2005 issue of the *ITE Journal* contains several articles on multimodal operations. In recent years, multimodalism has become very important to our profession. As ITE International President Timothy P. Harpst, P.E., PTOE, says in his monthly message, it is vital that we as transportation professionals see the big picture and understand how our efforts impact the overall transportation plan for our community. "What we do to benefit one mode of transportation can profoundly affect other modes - sometimes positively and sometimes negatively."

Two articles included in this issue are about managed lanes, which can play a key role in fostering multimodalism within a community. The first entitled *Managed Lanes: The Future of Freeway Travel*, was written by Ginger Goodin. As we all know, transportation officials are exploring the use of managed lanes to address mobility needs in freeway corridors. This article presents examples of managed lanes in operation, new projects on the horizon and unresolved issues associated with designing and operating a fully flexible managed lane facility. The second article, entitled *Managed Lanes Research in Texas*, was written by Beverly Kuhn and Carlos Lopez. This feature presents the highlights of the multi-year managed lanes research project to investigate the complex and interrelated issues surrounding the safe and efficient operation of

managed lanes using various operating strategies. To read these articles online, visit the following links on our website:

“The Future of Freeway Travel,” Ginger Goodin, ITE Journal, February 2005, <http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/articles/JB05BA22.pdf> and

“Managed Lanes Research in Texas,” Beverly Kuhn, and Carlos Lopez, ITE Journal, February 2005 <http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/products/articles/JB05BA27.pdf>.

TRB Managed Lanes Joint Subcommittee

A TRB managed lanes joint subcommittee meeting was held at the annual TRB meeting in January. Ginger Goodin provided a brief description of the background and scope of the subcommittee. Brief reports were presented by the representatives of the following supporting committees: pricing, bus transit systems, freeway operations, and HOV systems. Highlights of these reports are as follows.

- Pricing: Patrick DeCorla-Souza – The implementation of road pricing is being demonstrated now in managed lanes projects. The two committees should work closely together. There will be a solicitation of pricing proposals soon, with proposals due March 15th.
- Bus Transit Systems: Charles Prestrud – The three areas the committee is interested in regarding managed lanes are operations, funding/revenue use, and identifying research needs.
- Freeway Operations: Jon Obenberger- There are interesting and challenging operational issues associated with managed lanes. Research problem statements currently vying for funding include managed lanes for freeway bottlenecks and automated enforcement.
- HOV Systems: Ginger Goodin – The HOV committee is most interested in the role of HOV’s in managed lanes, particularly since managed lanes are replacing current HOV operations or HOV project plans.

Information was also provided by Beverly Kuhn on FHWA managed lanes research and TxDOT research. It was also reported that the TRB HOV Systems Committee should be soon publishing a White Paper.

The floor was then opened to comments regarding research problem statements and future conference sessions with sponsoring committees. The subcommittee is developing an inventory of managed lane projects. WSDOT’s HOT lanes inventory and the HOV Committee’s Manage Lanes White paper will be the starting points for managed lane projects that are in operation and under development.

The committee met again during the 12th International HOV Systems Conference: Improving Mobility and Accessibility with Managed Lanes, Pricing, and BRT, which was held in Houston, Texas April 18th – 20th. At this meeting, the highlight of which was a presentation and discussion of one-page issue descriptions prepared by members on planning, enforcement, design, and signing. To access more information about the subcommittee, visit its temporary website on the Managed Lanes website under “Related Work”. The URL is http://managed-lanes.tamu.edu/related_work/.

The Managed Lanes List

A managed lanes listserv is available to interested readers. This list is a means for the research team to disseminate information to members of the list in an efficient manner. This listserv is open to anyone interested in managed lanes topics or research. If you have concerns or questions about the list would like to be added to the list, please contact Beverly Kuhn at b-kuhn@tamu.edu.

Managed Lanes Terminology

This feature of *FastLane* highlight commonly-used terms in managed lanes that serve as a framework upon which our researchers will base future efforts. The entire glossary of terms may be accessed on the managed lanes website.

- ★ **Average Vehicle Occupancy (AVO)** – the number of people divided by the number of vehicles (including buses) traveling past a specific point over a given time period.
- ★ **Continuous Access** – an HOV lane separated from the regular lanes of traffic by a painted stripe only.
- ★ **Fixed Guideway** – transportation system composed of vehicles that can operate only on their own guideways.