

# Bowie Maglev Coalition

July 2017

## Description of SCMaglev

A new form of high speed transportation is being considered between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland. This system is called an SCMaglev (super conducting magnetic levitation) train. Four of the six proposed routes of the train go through Bowie and the surrounding area. This sheet provides information about what the SCMaglev is, potential effects for citizens of Bowie, and the future plans for this project.

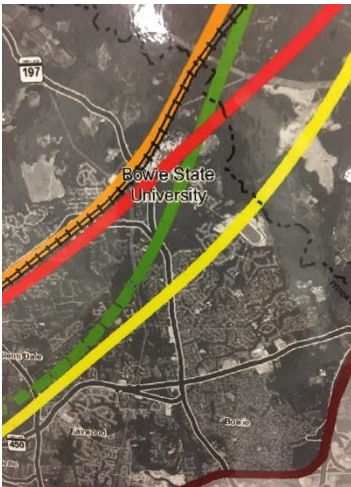
According to the Baltimore-Washington Superconducting Maglev Project, the SGMaglev is a train system in which magnets are used to levitate and pull the train through a u-shaped guideway. The powerful superconducting magnets located on the trains and the coils that are installed in the walls of the guideway pull the train through the guideways at speeds exceeding 300 miles per hour.<sup>1</sup> For a complete description of the project visit the official website at <http://baltimorewashingtonscmaglevproject.com>.

## History of the Baltimore-Washington SCMaglev

The Maglev Development Project was established in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) conducted a nation-wide competition for states to receive grants to study and evaluate the potential for a maglev project. The first site-specific Draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) was conducted in 2003 with German technology. The project was suspended without a final EIS being issued.

The current process began prior to late Fall 2015, when the Maryland project secured the first round of federal funding in the amount of \$27.8 million to assess the feasibility of the SCMaglev using the technology of the Japanese company JR Central. The Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was published on November 25, 2016. This included the public notification and commenting period which ended on January 9, 2017. Public feedback is being accepted throughout the entire EIS process. Open house meetings were held in various locations in Washington, D.C. and Maryland April 3-8. In May 2017, the SCMaglev project released the [Scoping Report](#).<sup>2</sup> Most recently, the SCMaglev representatives presented at the Bowie City Council meeting on July 10, 2017 followed by a comment period during the meeting.

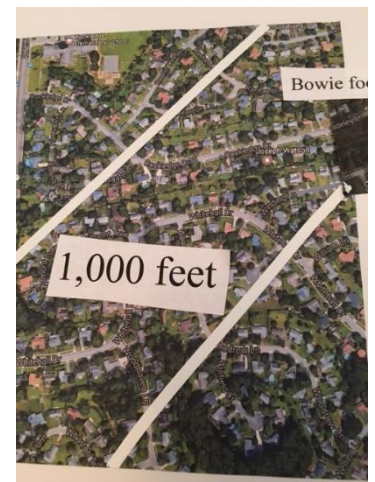
## Proposed Routes



**Figure 1: Proposed routes through Bowie**

Four of the six proposed routes come through Bowie – the Orange, Red, Green and Yellow (Figure 1: Proposed routes through Bowie). The Orange and the Red routes follow along the Amtrak tracks for part of the route and diverge north of Bowie State University. The Yellow route follows along the WB&A Trail. The Green route also follows part of the WB&A trail and the dotted lines are proposed to be underground and follow through Glendale then crosses over through Bowie State University. There are **no stops** between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore Washington Airport. In addition to the routes, eminent domain of 1,000 feet along the proposed lines may be allowed. The space between the white lines demonstrates what 1,000 feet width along one of the routes looks like in the dense area of Bowie (Figure 2: Example of 1,000 feet through residential Bowie).

These routes have the potential to affect the following Bowie neighborhoods: Old Town Bowie, Rockledge section, Northridge (Q section), Camelot in Glenn Dale, High Bridge and High Bridge Estates, Hillmeade Station, Two Rivers, and many other neighborhoods along the proposed routes.



**Figure 2: Example of 1,000 feet through residential Bowie**

<sup>1</sup> <http://baltimorewashingtonscmaglevproject.com/index.php/overview/what-is-scmaglev>

<sup>2</sup> <http://baltimorewashingtonscmaglevproject.com/index.php/overview/background>

## ***Unknown Effects for Bowie***

These routes, and the SCMaglev project as a whole, will have many effects on the communities they are proposed to go through. Many questions are being raised at this time. Most do not have answers. The issues that do not have firm answers include the impact to

- The environment and wildlife
- Noise levels along route
- Health impacts of magnets
- The WB&A trail
- Communities along the routes including the use of eminent domain and falling property values
- Agriculture
- Historic properties along the route
- Businesses, the tax base, and economics of the local communities (such as loss of revenue)
- Ridership for other forms of transportation such as the MARC train

Currently, the only fully functioning maglev train system in the world is in China. The Japanese system, even though it is taking passengers, is still *experimental*. Germany has suspended their *experimental* system because of a fatal accident in 2006. This accident was caused by the train colliding with a maintenance vehicle that was on the route. Debris was thrown approximately 300 yards (3 football fields) from the crash site and 23 people were killed. The train was only going about 120 miles per hour – less than half the speed of the 300+ miles per hour of the proposed SCMaglev.

## ***Moving Forward***

This project is a *single sourced* project by the Japanese company JR Central as a showcase of this Japanese technology. BWRR is planning for additional meetings. In addition, there are many community-led meetings being scheduled. The current proposed schedule states that construction on this project is to start in late 2019.

## ***Funding and Alternate Transportation Options***

With alternate methods of expanding the public transportation in the area such as expanding Metro and MARC, and even developing high speed rail as part of the current infrastructure, SCMaglev is not in the region's best interest. These methods of increasing public transportation access come at a much lower cost than the SCMaglev. Even if the project is funded partially by the Japanese company, JR Central, it may be in the form of a low interest loan. The remaining funding for building will come from other sources such as transportation funds, grants, and loans from other sources meaning the tax payers and riders will be paying the bills. After building, the SCMaglev will need to be maintained and that burden will fall squarely on the riders and tax payers.

## ***Get Involved***

We encourage you to share your opinions and questions with your representatives at all levels as well as the SCMaglev project.

Stay informed about the Bowie Maglev Coalition and the maglev project status

- Subscribe to receive information through [maglevcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:maglevcoalition@gmail.com)
- Join FaceBook: Citizens Against SCMaglev
- Contact your county, state and federal representatives
  - US Senator Chris Van Hollen
  - Us Senator Ben Cardin
  - Congressman Steny Hoyer
  - Governor Larry Hogan
  - State Senator Doug Peters
  - Delegate Geraldine Valentino-Smith
  - County Executive Rushern Baker
  - County Councilman Todd Turner
  - Mayor Fred Robinson
  - Councilman James Marcos (At Large)
  - Councilman Henri Gardner (At Large)
  - Councilman Michael Estève (District 1)
  - Councilwoman Diane Polangin (District 2)
  - Councilwoman Courtney Glass (District 3)
  - Councilman Ike Trough (District 4)

You can also contact the SCMaglev project directly to register your comments:

info@BaltimoreWashingtonSCMaglevProject.com

Mail: SCMAGLEV Project, c/o John G. Trueschler

Maryland Transit Administration

6 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

Info: <http://www.bwmaglev.info/> or <http://baltimorewashingtongmaglevproject.com>