

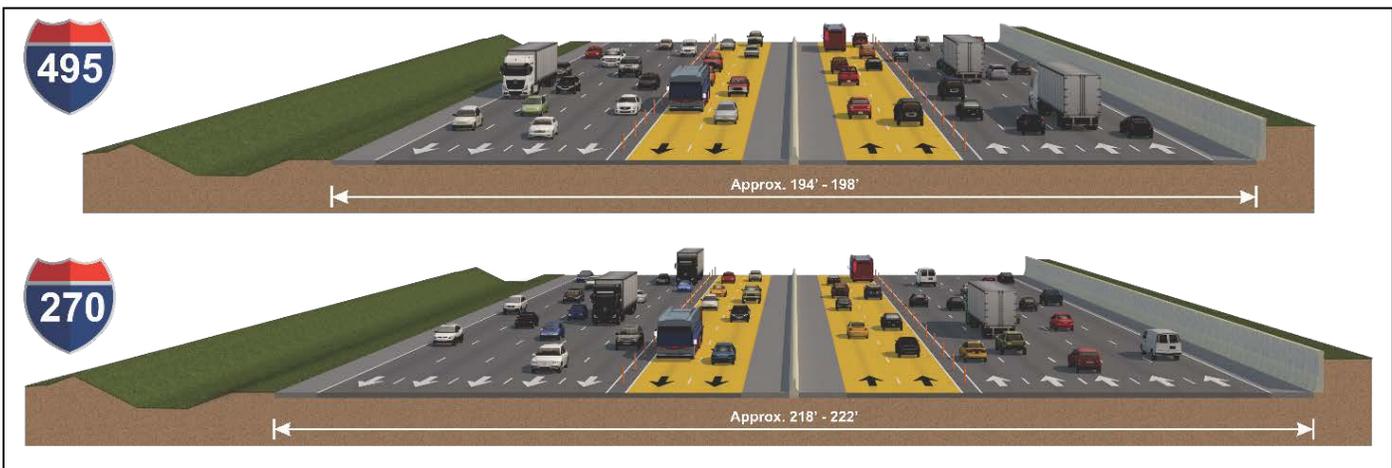


The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) has formally recommended Alternative 9, adding two high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes on I-495 across the American Legion Bridge to I-270, and north on I-270 to I-370.

Under this alternative, buses and vehicles with three or more people would be able to travel the new HOT lanes free of charge, reducing dependence on single-occupant vehicles and providing opportunities for faster, more-reliable bus transit service, carpooling and vanpooling throughout the region. The program also would provide significant new bike and pedestrian connections.

Denoted as Alternative 9 in the I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study, HOT Lanes are the MDOT Recommended Preferred Alternative (MDOT RPA), proposing two high-occupancy toll (HOT) managed lanes in each direction of I-495 from south of the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Virginia, across the American Legion Bridge, to west of MD 5. On I-270 from the Capital Beltway north to I-370, the MDOT RPA proposes to add a HOT lane and to convert the existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane into a HOT lane, resulting in a two-lane, HOT managed lanes network in each direction. The section of I-270 north of I-370 to Frederick will be considered as part of a separate environmental study. MDOT SHA will not seek permits/authorizations outside of Phase 1 South: American Legion Bridge I-270 to I-370 until additional design details are developed in coordination with applicable agencies and environmental review is completed.

### MDOT RPA: High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Typical Section



It's important to note that Alternative 9 maintains free use of the existing free, general purpose lanes on the entire system. All travelers will be able to continue to use these lanes for free. The proposed HOT lanes under Alternative 9 will provide traffic relief throughout the corridor, as well as in these free general purpose lanes where no toll is required. Toll facilities would additionally provide funds for transportation improvements throughout the corridor – including expanded transit opportunities and infrastructure state of good repair costs and modernization -- that would not otherwise be funded.



The MDOT RPA provides significant operational and multimodal system benefits including:

- the best average speed and travel times on I-495 and I-270, achieving free-flow speeds in the managed lanes while averaging 41 miles per hour (mph) in the free general purpose lanes, during peak periods;
- the greatest average hours of saving per commuter of about 73 hours per year;
- average PM peak period trips from the American Legion Bridge to I-370 would take just 15 minutes in the managed lanes, or just 23 minutes in the free general purpose lanes, compared to 32 minutes in the No-build Alternative, a time savings of up to 17 minutes one-way;
- the largest reduction in local roadway network travel delays -- 7.0 percent daily time savings;
- new travel opportunities and connections by providing toll-free travel for HOV 3+ users and bus transit in addition to the free general purpose lanes;
- new opportunities for ride sharing and car/van pooling, reducing dependence on single-occupancy vehicles (SOV);
- new travel options with expanded bicycle and pedestrian connections, including across the American Legion Bridge;
- the greatest increase in travel speed for transit buses in the HOT lanes assuring a reliable transit trip; new connections to existing transit services on local arterials that serve activity and economic centers;
- replacement of approximately 23 miles of existing noise walls and installation of more than 14 miles of new noise walls; and
- the most operational compatibility with the existing and proposed I-495 Express (HOT) Lanes in Virginia.

The MLS is being conducted by MDOT SHA and FHWA in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). MDOT SHA is concurrently conducting a solicitation for the I-495 & I-270 P3 Program Phase 1: American Legion Bridge I-270 to I-70 Relief Plan. The solicitation will identify a private-sector partner to work collaboratively with all the stakeholders on the Phase 1 Predevelopment Work.

The P3 Program will be designed and developed using a multi-step Progressive P3 model. Selecting a partner for the Predevelopment Work over the next year allows MDOT SHA and the Maryland Transportation Authority to begin working with the Phase Developer and all stakeholders on best ways to advance the preliminary design to further avoid and minimize impacts to environmental resources, communities, properties, utilities, and other features by working with the counties, municipalities, state and federal agencies, property owners, utilities, and citizens.

After this significant collaborative effort, and only if a build alternative is identified, MDOT would seek final approval from the Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW) for only the first Section P3 Agreement, which would be focused on the American Legion Bridge and connecting with our partners in Virginia, to advance final design, construction, financing, operations, and maintenance for 50 years. Predevelopment collaboration through this progressive P3 model will provide more efficient pricing and better schedule certainty for section agreements before MDOT takes them to BPW for final approval only after a record of decision is received.



MDOT is also committed to the following bicycle and pedestrian connections, regional transit improvements, and environmental enhancements:

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections:**

- Commit to priority bicycle and pedestrian connections to remove barriers and provide connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians consistent with those identified in the affected county master plans and priorities.

#### **Montgomery County**

- New pedestrian/bicycle connection across the American Legion Bridge
- Replace and widen Bethesda Trolley Trail bridge crossings of I-495 and I-270
- Lengthen I-270 bridge over Tuckerman Lane north of Bethesda to accommodate future separated bikeway along Tuckerman Lane
- New buffer-separated side paths across MD 190 over I-495 near Carderock Springs
- Widen path along Seven Locks Road under I-495 between Moses Lodge Cemetery and Gibson Grove Church
- New separated bikeway along northbound MD 355 over I-495 between Bethesda and Rockville

#### **Prince George's County**

- New 8-foot-wide sidewalks across MD 212/Riggs Road bridge over I-495 near White Oak Manor
- New 10-foot-wide shared-use path along Cherry Hill Road near Beltsville on 2 bridges crossing I-495 Inner Loop and Outer Loop to provide trail connection across interstate
- New 8-foot-wide sidewalks on both sides of Glenarden Parkway over I-495 to improve connection and safety between Glenarden neighborhoods, an identified environmental justice community
- Pedestrian crossing of I-495 in the Largo area between Arena Drive, Metro Bridge, Central Avenue, and Southwest Branch – evaluate best location for the connection
- Expand 8-foot-wide sidewalks on both sides of Auth Road bridge over I-495 to improve access to the Branch Avenue Metro Station
- New connection to Henson Creek Trail near Temple Hills

### **Regional Transit and Rideshare Improvements:**

- Free bus usage of the HOT lanes
- HOV3+ traveling for free, which also allows carpoolers and vanpoolers to ride for free on the HOT lanes
- Commit to the collaboration and delivery of certain regional transit improvements to enhance existing and planned transit and support new opportunities for regional transit service. These items were identified as priorities by the transit service providers and are under discussion with the respective counties:

#### **Montgomery County**

- Bus capacity expansion at WMATA Shady Grove Metrorail Station
- Park-and-Ride expansion at Westfield Montgomery Mall Transit Center



### Regional Transit and Rideshare Improvements (continued):

#### Prince George's County

- “Virtual BRT” stops and technology to support interest in a “virtual BRT” route extension of the Purple Line. This would include stop enhancements and technology such as next vehicle arrival information.
- A Prince George's County bus maintenance facility to support their system and the buses that would travel along the managed lanes.

### Environmental Enhancements:

MDOT SHA is committing to continue working collaboratively with our partner agencies to further avoid and minimize community, cultural, environmental, and parkland impacts, and finalize mitigation based on identified priorities that would, at a minimum, bring no net loss to impacted resources with a goal of net benefit.

Specific commitments and environmental enhancements include the following:

- Commit to further collaboration with National Park Service to continue to reduce impacts with special focus on George Washington Memorial Parkway and Baltimore Washington Parkway.
- Commit to pursuing options that avoid direct access to the Baltimore Washington Parkway.
- Commit to developing a strike team of nationally recognized experts in constructability, design and structures, focused on analyzing innovative options to minimizing impacts to NPS properties near the American Legion Bridge.
- Commit to environmental enhancements that would provide meaningful benefits to adjacent resources to improve the values, services, attributes and functions that may be compromised including water-quality improvements, stream restoration, and removal of invasive species on county parkland.
- Commit to further ongoing collaboration with the bi-county Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) to develop solutions to address their comments and to address water quality concerns on parkland focused on stabilizing streams, creating natural surface channels, and revegetating areas to improve water quality and reduce flooding and pollutant loads. These water quality enhancements include, but are not limited to, these significant parks:

#### Montgomery County

- Cabin John Stream Valley Park
- Rock Creek Stream Valley Park
- Sligo Creek Parkway
- Indian Spring Terrace Local Park
- Northwest Branch Park

#### Prince George's County

- Southwest Branch Stream Valley Park
- Heritage Glen Park
- Manchester Estates Park

Planning and design collaboration for the MDOT RPA will allow the State to work with utilities, including the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, to provide for modernization and improvements of outdated water and sewer lines and other infrastructure underneath and adjacent to the Capital Beltway. This access will allow utilities and our county partners to review and plan upgrades that conform to and support their regional utility master plans now and in the future.