

MANAGED LANES STUDY

495

270

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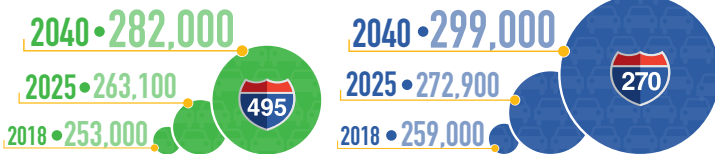
Study Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2019

MDOT SHA is Addressing Our Region's Congestion

Traffic congestion in the National Capital Region is among the worst in the nation. On I-495 and I-270, heavy traffic lasts between seven and ten hours every day. This gridlock extends onto local roads, as drivers look for ways to avoid the congestion.

Expected Growth in Average Annual Daily Traffic



With regional population expected to grow by nearly 1.2 million people by 2040, the travel time for everyone's trip on I-495 and I-270 is expected to increase, further stressing the system.

Transportation studies show that both transit and highway improvements are required to meet future travel needs. For a highway system as extensive and vital as I-495 and I-270, the necessary investment for improvements must be large-scale and sustainable, or we will be stuck in never-ending traffic. The consequence of inaction will severely impact the quality of life for Maryland's citizens, and dampen the State's economy.

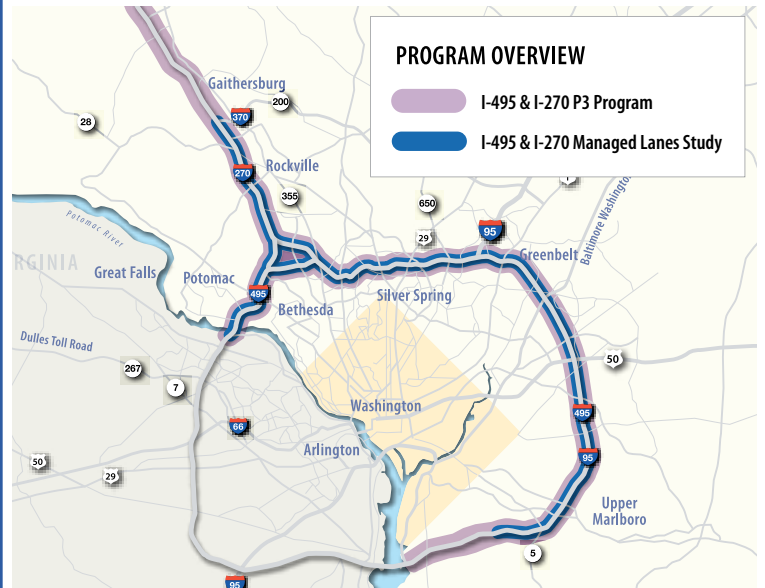
The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) have undertaken the I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study to evaluate solutions that could accommodate traffic growth and provide more reliable travel times. Concurrent with the Study, MDOT SHA has begun a separate Public-Private Partnership (P3) process to enable the use of resources and innovation

I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study Underway Evaluating Congestion Relief

The purpose of the I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study is to develop a travel demand management solution that addresses congestion, improves trip reliability on I-495 and I-270 within the Study limits, and enhances existing and planned multimodal mobility and connectivity. The FHWA and MDOT SHA are leading this Study, which is evaluating multiple alternatives to:

- Accommodate existing and future traffic growth
- Enhance trip reliability

Study Area Limits



The FHWA and MDOT SHA initiated the I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study in March 2018. Since initiating the study, MDOT SHA has gathered additional traffic data to better refine the study limits to locations where heavy volumes of traffic enter and exit the highway. The refined limits are:

- Western Limit on I-495: south of George Washington Memorial Parkway
- Southern Limit on I-495: west of MD 5
- Northern Limit on I-270: north of I-370

from the private sector to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain these potential transportation improvements to address the Study goals.

- Provide additional roadway travel choices
- Accommodate homeland security, and
- Improve the movement of goods and services along these vital corridors.

Alternatives will also be evaluated to ensure they are financially viable and can be delivered in an environmentally responsible manner.



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MDOT MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

How Did MDOT SHA Screen the Alternatives?

In Summer 2018, MDOT SHA presented the Preliminary Range of Alternatives to the public. Alternatives included the following elements:

- No Build
- General Purpose (GP) Lanes
- High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes
- Priced Managed Lanes [either Express Toll Lanes (ETL) or High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes]
- Reversible/Contraflow Lanes
- Stand-Alone Transit alternatives

To narrow the fifteen Preliminary Range of Alternatives, MDOT SHA performed an Initial Screening to determine each alternative's ability to meet the Study Purpose and Need. If

an alternative did not meet the Purpose and Need screening criteria, MDOT SHA recommended dropping it from further consideration. The screening criteria included engineering, homeland security, environmental considerations, movement of goods and services, financial viability, and multimodal connectivity.

Based on this Initial Screening, MDOT SHA recommends dropping a number of alternatives from further consideration and retaining seven Screened Alternatives for additional analysis. The MDOT SHA will perform this additional analysis to determine the traffic operations, financial viability, and potential effects to environmental resources. The MDOT SHA will present the results of this additional analysis in the upcoming public workshops and make recommendations on Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS). The ARDS will be carried forward into the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The alternatives screening process is illustrated below.



Alternatives Recommended to be Dropped from Further Consideration

The following alternatives were recommended to be dropped from further consideration. For a more detailed explanation regarding each of these alternatives, please visit the program website at 495-270-P3.com/environmental/alternatives

- **Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management**
- **High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Only Lanes**
- **General Purpose (GP) Lanes**
- **Collector-Distributor Lane Systems**
- **Contraflow Lanes**
- **Reversible Lanes on I-495**
- **Stand-Alone Transit alternatives** (heavy rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, and dedicated bus-only managed lanes)



The Public Continues to Provide Important Insight

In July 2018, MDOT SHA held four public workshops to discuss Study alternatives and gather input. The Alternatives Public Workshop Summary Report is now available on the program website. The Report includes and summarizes the public comments received during the Alternatives Public Workshop Comment Period, July 17 to August 27, 2018 and the results of the public survey conducted from June 18 to September 27, 2018.

The public will have another opportunity to comment on the Study this Spring 2019. Stay tuned to the program website 495-270-P3.com for more information as it becomes available.



Recommended Screened Alternatives

The MDOT SHA's Initial Screening recommends Alternatives 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13B, and 13C for further analysis and environmental evaluation. Although Alternative 1 does not meet the Study's Purpose and Need, it is being carried forward for baseline comparison purposes in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The seven recommended Screened Alternatives are detailed below:

Alternative 1	No Build
Alternative 5	1-Lane, HOT* Managed Lane Network on both I-495 & I-270
Alternative 8	2-Lane, ETL* Managed Lane Network on I-495; 1-ETL* and 1-Lane HOV Managed Lane on I-270
Alternative 9	2-Lane, HOT* Managed Lane Network on both I-495 & I-270
Alternative 10	2-Lane, ETL* Managed Lane Network on I-495 & I-270 plus 1-Lane HOV Managed Lane on I-270
Alternative 13B	2-Lane, HOT* Managed Lane Network on I-495; HOT* Managed, Reversible Lane Network on I-270
Alternative 13C	2-Lane, ETL* Managed Lane Network on I-495; ETL* Managed, Reversible Lane Network and 1-Lane HOV Managed Lane on I-270

**HOT Lanes or ETLs combine congestion pricing and lane management to control the number of vehicles entering the lane to keep traffic flowing. ETLs require all users to pay a toll whereas HOT lanes provide reduced tolls for HOVs with multiple people in them. When drivers choose to use the HOT lanes or ETLs, the general-purpose lanes can also move faster.*

***Bus usage including consideration of additional express bus service will be examined in all ETL and HOT managed lanes alternatives to accommodate transit within the I-495 and I-270 roadways. MDOT has committed to working with the Washington Area Bus Transformation Project to incorporate the results of this separate project to identify bus transit improvements for I-495 and I-270.*

The seven alternatives shown in the table above are being carried forward for detailed traffic, environmental, and financial analyses to determine each alternative's effectiveness at meeting the Study's Purpose and Need and the results will be presented at the upcoming public workshops. The alternatives that meet the screening criteria as established from the Purpose and Need will be carried forward in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) as the ARDS. Input from the environmental resource agencies and public regarding these results will be considered by FHWA and MDOT SHA prior to the identification of the Recommended Preferred Alternative in the DEIS.

More information on the recommended Screened Alternatives and those alternatives no longer being considered is available on the program website at 495-270-P3.com/environmental/alternatives.

Next Steps: Screened Alternatives Public Workshops

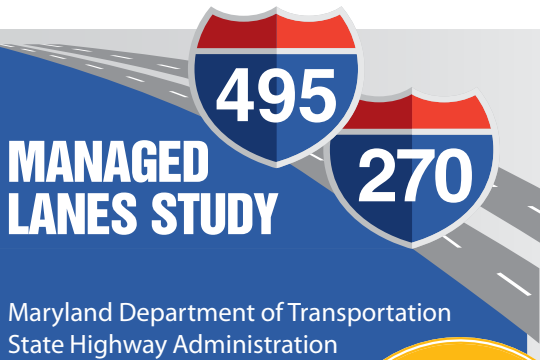


The MDOT SHA will hold a series of [public workshops in Spring 2019](#) to present detailed traffic, environmental, and financial analyses for the seven Screened Alternatives with recommendations on the ARDS.

The MDOT SHA team will guide attendees through the public workshops, presenting interactive map displays and hard copy maps to highlight the limits of disturbance of the recommended Screened Alternatives, and answer questions. A presentation will be given to highlight the Screened Alternatives process.



Following the Spring public workshops, MDOT SHA will evaluate the results from the ARDS, including public feedback, and identify the Recommended Preferred Alternative that will be in the DEIS. The MDOT SHA will hold formal Public Hearings where people can provide testimony and comments on the Preferred Alternative and the DEIS in winter 2020



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Study Timeline

Spring 2018 Summer - Fall 2018 Winter - Spring 2019 Summer 2019 - Winter 2020 Winter - Fall 2020

Spring 2018	Summer - Fall 2018	Winter - Spring 2019	Summer 2019 - Winter 2020	Winter - Fall 2020
Notice of Intent to Initiate NEPA Study	Range of Alternatives	Alternatives Analysis & Environmental Technical Analysis	Development of Environmental Impact Statement	Combined Final EIS/ROD
Scoping Open Houses 45-Day Comment Period	Define Purpose & Need Develop Preliminary Range of Alternatives Screening Criteria Public Workshops	Select Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS) Complete Technical Analysis of ARDS Public Workshops	Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Identify MDOT SHA's Preferred Alternative DEIS Public Hearing	Final EIS/Record of Decision



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 State Highway Administration
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