



1 PURPOSE AND NEED

The Study Purpose and Need has not changed. Refer to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), Chapter 1 and DEIS, Appendix A. These materials can be viewed through the following links on the Program website:

DEIS, Chapter 1: https://495-270-p3.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2020-06-02_DEIS_01_Purpose_and_Need.pdf

DEIS, Appendix A: https://495-270-p3.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/DEIS_AppA_PN_web.pdf

This SDEIS Chapter includes the following updates:

- Identification of the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 9 – Phase 1 South, which is comprised of two, new high-occupancy toll (HOT) managed lanes in each direction on I-495 from George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) to I-270 and then on I-270 from I-495 to I-370 as well as along I-495 and the I-270 east spur to MD 187. No action or improvements on I-495 from the I-270 east spur to west of MD 5.

1.1 Background and Context

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), as the Lead Federal Agency, and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA), as the Local Project Sponsor, have prepared a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study (Study). The I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study (Study) is the first environmental study under the broader I-495 & I-270 Public-Private Partnership (P3) Program.

In January 2021, Alternative 9 was announced as the MDOT SHA's Recommended Preferred Alternative based on results of traffic, engineering, financial, and environmental analyses, as well as public comment. After several months of further coordinating with and listening to agencies and stakeholders regarding Alternative 9 as the Recommended Preferred Alternative, MDOT SHA decided to align the Study to be consistent with the previously determined phased delivery and permitting approach which focused on Phase 1 South only. As a result, FHWA and MDOT SHA identified a new Recommended Preferred Alternative: Alternative 9 – Phase 1 South. Alternative 9 – Phase 1 South includes the same improvements proposed as part of Alternative 9 but limited to the Phase 1 South limits only.

The Preferred Alternative focuses solely on building a new American Legion Bridge and delivering two high-occupancy toll (HOT) managed lanes in each direction on I-495 from the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Virginia to east of MD 187 on I-495, and on I-270 from I-495 to north of I-370 and on the I-270 eastern spur from east of MD 187 to I-270. Refer to **Figure 1-1**. This Preferred Alternative was identified after coordination with resource agencies, the public and stakeholders to respond directly to feedback received on the DEIS, and to align the NEPA approval with the P3 Program planned project phased delivery and permitting approach.

The 48-mile Study limits remain unchanged: I-495 from south of the GWMP in Fairfax County, Virginia, to west of MD 5 and along I-270 from I-495 to north of I-370, including the east and west I-270 spurs in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, Maryland. The Preferred Alternative, Alternative 9 - Phase 1 South (shown in dark blue in **Figure 1-1**), includes build improvements within the limits of Phase 1 South only totaling approximately 15 miles of proposed improvements. There is no action, or no improvements included at this time on I-495 east of the I-270 east spur to MD 5 (shown in light blue in **Figure 1-1**). While the Preferred Alternative does not include improvements to the remaining parts of I-495 within the Study limits, improvements on the remainder of the interstate system may still be needed in the future. Any such improvements would advance separately and would be subject to additional environmental studies and analysis and collaboration with the public, stakeholders and agencies.

Figure 1-1: I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study Corridors – Preferred Alternative



1.2 Study Purpose and Need

The Purpose and Need Statement remains the same as presented in the **DEIS, Chapter 1** and in the full Purpose and Need Statement in **DEIS, Appendix A**. However, the purpose and needs are restated below for ease to the reader.

The purpose of the Study is to develop a travel demand management solution(s) 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 needs for the Study are:

- Accommodate Existing Traffic and Long-Term Traffic Growth
- Enhance Trip Reliability
- Provide Additional Roadway Travel Choices

- Improve Movement of Goods and Services
- Accommodate Homeland Security.

Two goals for the Study were identified in addition to the needs: (1) the use of alternative funding approaches for financial viability and (2) environmental responsibility.