



**For Immediate Release**

Terry Owens, MDOT SHA P3 Office – 410-903-7454

**MDOT SHA, Federal Highway Administration Publish  
I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study's Supplemental  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

*Virtual Public Hearing Sessions Scheduled as Part of Review Process*

**BALTIMORE, MD (October 1, 2021)** – The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announce the publication of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study, which provides new information related to Preferred Alternative, Alternative 9 – Phase 1 South: American Legion Bridge I-270 to I-370. Publication of the SDEIS is part of the ongoing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

A public comment period for the SDEIS officially opens today, Friday, October 1, and continues through 11:59 p.m. Monday, November 15. The comment period includes two virtual public hearing sessions, scheduled for Monday, November 1, as well as opportunities for email, written and recorded comments. Following the 45-day public comment period, SHA and FHWA will consider comments received and will respond to substantive comments on both the SDEIS and DEIS in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS.)

This SDEIS has been prepared to consider new information developed after the [DEIS](#) was published in July 2020, and presents results relevant to Alternative 9 – Phase 1 South: American Legion Bridge I-270 to I-370, which was identified in May 2021 by FHWA and MDOT SHA as the Preferred Alternative. While the Managed Lanes Study considers ways to relieve congestion and improve trip reliability, mobility and connectivity for modes of travel, including transit, in the National Capital Region, this alternative focuses on replacing the 60-year-old American Legion Bridge and delivering two high occupancy toll (HOT) managed lanes in each direction within Phase 1 South: American Legion Bridge I-270 to I-370. The scope of the SDEIS builds upon the analysis and information that remains valid in the existing DEIS but is limited to new information about the Preferred Alternative.

On I-495, the Preferred Alternative consists of adding two new HOT managed lanes in each direction from the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Fairfax County, Va., to east of MD 187, Old Georgetown Road. On I-270, the Preferred Alternative consists of converting the one existing HOV lane in each direction to a HOT managed lane and adding one new HOT managed lane in each direction on I-270 from I-495 to north of I-370, and on the I-270 east and west spurs. Transit buses, motorcycles and HOV 3+ vehicles – those carrying three or more people – would be permitted to use the managed lanes toll free. There is no action, or no improvements, included at this time on I-495 east of the I-270



east spur.

The Preferred Alternative is designed to provide a new American Legion Bridge, address existing traffic and long-term traffic growth, enhance trip reliability, support regional transit improvements, foster new opportunities for transit and increased carpool/vanpool/ridesharing, and improve the movement of goods and services. In addition, the alternative would provide pedestrian and bicycle improvements to enhance connectivity of area sidewalks and trails, including the addition of a shared use path on the new American Legion Bridge across the Potomac River.

MDOT SHA and FHWA continue to consider the nearly 3,000 comments received as part of the DEIS and public hearings held last fall. Responding to public input, the SDEIS reflects successful efforts by MDOT SHA to reduce community and environmental impacts, including complete avoidance of Morningstar Cemetery in the Cabin John area. On Plummers Island, a research site for the Washington Biologists Field Club, the team collaborated with regulatory agencies and interested stakeholders to reduce the impact by 90% to 0.2 acre, consisting of one pier piling for the American Legion Bridge replacement.

Individuals are invited to provide verbal testimony via telephone on the SDEIS during the Monday, November 1, virtual public hearing sessions. The two call-in testimony hearing sessions will be 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Advance registration is required to be admitted to the phone queue to provide verbal testimony during the virtual hearing sessions. Registration is available at [OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS](https://OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS) or by calling 833-858-5960. Members of the public will be allotted three minutes and elected officials will be allotted five minutes, per person, for verbal testimony. Responses to questions will not be given at the hearing. Prior to attending a public hearing session, the public is encouraged to review the online presentation available at [OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS](https://OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS) beginning Friday, October 1. After the hearing, transcripts will be available on the website at a later date.

In addition to providing live verbal testimony, stakeholders also may provide verbal testimony during the call-in hearing sessions by dialing 855-432-1483 and leaving a single voicemail message limited to three minutes. The public can listen to the live hearing sessions via telephone by dialing 855-432-1483 or watching the livestream at [OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS](https://OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS).

Maryland Relay Service can assist teletype users at 7-1-1. Individuals requiring assistance to participate, such as an interpreter for hearing/speech difficulties or assistance with the English language, should contact the Op Lanes Maryland toll-free number, 833-858-5960, by October 22, 2021.

In addition to the virtual public hearing sessions, written comments and call-in testimony through voicemail will be accepted for the official record through 11:59 p.m. November 15, 2021. Those interested may:



**STATE HIGHWAY  
ADMINISTRATION**

- submit an electronic comment form at [OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS](http://OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS);
- email at [oplanesMLS@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:oplanesMLS@mdot.maryland.gov);
- send a written letter about the SDEIS to:  
Jeffrey T. Folden, P.E, DBIA  
Deputy Director, I-495 & I-270 P3 Office  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
State Highway Administration  
707 North Calvert Street  
Mail Stop P-601  
Baltimore, MD 21202; or
- provide verbal testimony by dialing 855-432-1483 and leaving a single voicemail message limited to three minutes.

**All comments received will be given equal consideration.** All substantive comments received or postmarked by the end of the comment period will be responded to in preparation of the FEIS. Comments received or postmarked after the close of the comment period will be reviewed and considered to the extent practicable.

The SDEIS is available online at [OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS](http://OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS). Hard copies of the SDEIS and electronic copies of the SDEIS technical reports also are available for review at multiple library locations in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, as well as one in Fairfax County, Virginia and one in Washington, D.C. For a list of these locations, please visit [OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS](http://OpLanesMD.com/SDEIS).

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