



Information Presentation

Commission Meeting: July 11, 2019

PROJECT Interstate-495/270 Managed Lanes Study	NCPC FILE NUMBER 7984
SUBMITTED BY Maryland Department of Transportation	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 00.00(40.00)44938

PRESENTERS

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The purpose of this information presentation is to brief the Commission on the Interstate-495/270 Managed Lanes Study and hear comments/questions from commissioners at this important milestone in the process. The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Federal Highway Administration are undertaking an Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study to identify alternatives that will accommodate future travel demand along I-495 and part of I-270 in Maryland. The study has identified six “build” alternatives (known as Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study - #5,8,9,10,13B,13C) that include widening I-495 and a section of I-270 (south of the Intercounty Connector) with managed lanes similar to the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes in Virginia and the Intercounty Connector (ICC) in Maryland.

At this point in the process, MDOT is seeking NCPC concurrence on the six recommended alternatives for analysis in the EIS. “Concurrence” means that the Commission finds the information available (meaning the six alternatives) to be sufficient to proceed into the EIS analysis, which will be used by NCPC, a cooperating agency, to comply with NEPA obligations for its approval authority under the 1930 Capper-Cramton Act and 1931 Agreement between NCPC, MNCPPC, and Office of the President. The agreement prohibits in whole or in part, conveyance, sale, lease, exchange or use of the parklands for other than park purposes. Examples of park-related purposes include adding natural resources, trails and recreational amenities, stormwater management, and access to the park.

The managed lanes study has identified approximately 20 acres of Capper-Cramton land in Rock Creek, Sligo Creek, and Northwest Branch parks that may be impacted by future Beltway (I-495) expansion. Staff has provided input at earlier stages in the process (summarized below). In general, staff finds that among the six alternatives proposed for additional study in the EIS, there are none that appear to meet the purpose and need statement while minimizing/avoiding impacts to Capper Cramton land. Currently, each build alternative includes traffic operation variations with widenings to I-270 and I-495, all of which require use of Capper Cramton land.

Therefore, NCPC staff would like MDOT to add one other build alternative to the EIS that may avoid Capper-Cramton parkland adjacent to the Beltway and meet the purpose and need of the study. The alternative – identified as the ICC/I-270 Alternative by NCPC staff – would route

regional traffic to the ICC and I-270 rather than the Beltway (I-495) between I-95 and I-270. The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) has also asked that this alternative be further studied in the EIS. In addition, NCPC staff requests that MDOT meet with MNCPPC and NCPC staff to explain how the major Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) transit projects (i.e. Corridor Cities Transitway, Silver Spring Transit Center, etc. that will be built in the future) were included and analyzed in the modeling of the no-build alternative, which MDOT has concluded does not meet the purpose and need. This is also a request of MNCPPC.

Federal Interest:

A summary of NCPC's interest/authorities with regard to the project follows:

- 1) *1930 Capper-Cramton Act – Approval Authority:* NCPC has approval authority for development in stream valley parks that were acquired through federal funding appropriated under the Act. All development must be for “park use”. New managed lanes along the I-495 Beltway (in Montgomery County) could impact up to a combined 20 acres in Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, and Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park.
- 2) *National Capital Planning Act – Advisory Authority:* NCPC has advisory review over all federal property that may be impacted by the managed lanes including: the George Washington Memorial Parkway, Clara Barton Parkway, Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park, Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Baltimore-Washington Parkway, and Joint Base Andrews.
- 3) *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements:* NCPC has a general interest in the nature of the project through our regional planning policies.

NCPC Staff Comment Summary:

- *Scoping Comments Letter (May 2018):* NCPC staff recommended a broader Purpose and Need Statement (P&N) to emphasize multimodal connectivity as a primary study component; study measures to capture project impacts; project consistency with local, State, regional, and federal plans/policies; and noted our Commission's review authorities. In particular, the letter highlighted NCPC's approval authority over Capper-Cramton park property development, which would be impacted by future capacity improvements along the northern section of the Beltway.
- *Park Development Review Authorities Letter (October 2018):* In follow-up to our scoping comments, staff noted the Commission's approval authority over Capper-Crampton parkland and that the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (MNCPPC) would serve as the applicant for any future park development that requires NCPC approval. NCPC and

MNCPPC have an agreement (executed by President Truman) that requires Capper Cramton property to be used for park purposes only. Previously, NCPC has supported projects whereby resulting improvements benefited bicycle, transit, and pedestrian accessibility and stormwater management such as the Purple Line. The Commission also reviews development on National Park Service property through the National Capital Planning Act in an advisory capacity.

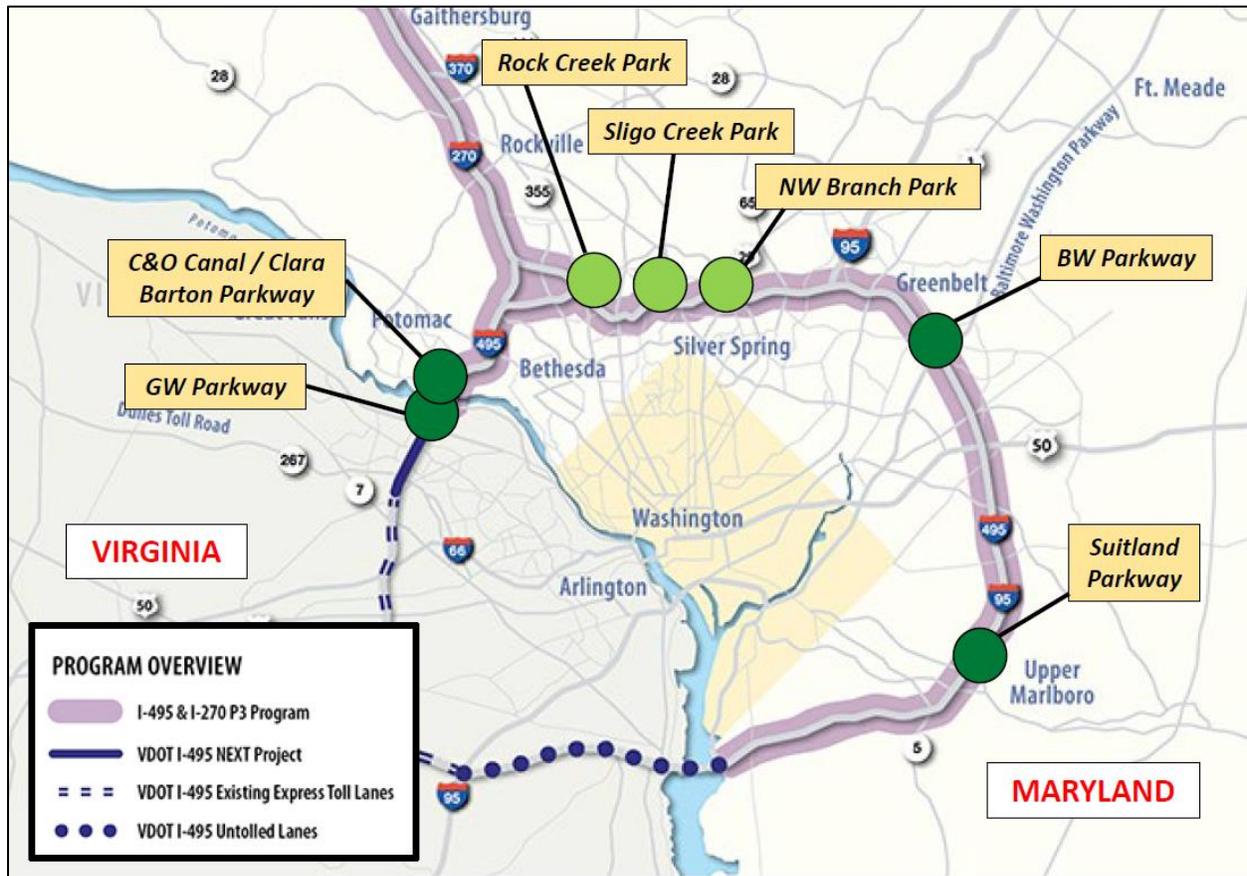
- *Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study Screening Review Letter (March 11, 2018)*: Staff recommended that MDOT broaden the set of alternatives by adding at least one Transit-focused (BRT or LRT) alternative. Staff also reiterated the 1931 agreement regarding Capper Cramton land and reiterated support for alternatives that minimized/avoided impacts to the parkland.

The current project schedule includes the following remaining notable milestones:

- November/December 2019 – Draft Environmental Impact Statement available
- Fall 2020 – Final Environmental Impact Statement / Record of Decision (ROD) available
- Contract Bidding/Further Planning/Permits Issued – 2021-2022

Letter Attachments:

- NCPC Letter # 1 - *Study Scoping Comments*
- NCPC Letter # 2 – *Parkland Review Authorities (w/ Appendices A&B)*
- NCPC Letter # 3 – *Study Alternative Screening Comments*
- Montgomery Co. Council Letter - *Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study Comments*
- Office of the Montgomery County Executive Letter – *Parkland Preservation*
- MNCPPC Letter – *Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study Comments*





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Alternative 1 – No Build

All projects in the Financially Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) including I-270 Innovative Congestion Management (ICM) Improvements, Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway, Bus Rapid Transit, and increased trip capacity and frequency along all MARC lines



Approx. 138' - 146'



Approx. 210' - 230'

- No-Build does **not** meet the purpose and need
- Used as a baseline to compare the results of each build alternative



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Alternative 5

Add one HOT managed lane in each direction on I-495 and convert one existing HOV lane in each direction to a HOT managed lane on I-270



Approx. 170' - 174'



Approx. 194' - 198'

- Reduces delay versus the No Build by 20% in AM peak and 22% in PM peak
- Decreases daily delay on local roads by 3.2%
- Average savings per commuter is 45 hours and \$900 per year
- Single lane system would be constrained by the slowest moving vehicle, less reliable, and less flexible to adapt to incidents



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Alternative 8

Add two ETL managed lanes in each direction on I-495 and add one ETL managed lane and retain one HOV lane in each direction on I-270



Approx. 194' - 198'



Approx. 210' - 222'

- Reduces delay versus the No Build by 24% in AM peak and 33% in PM peak
- Decreases daily delay on local roads by 6.3%
- Average savings per commuter is 59 hours and \$1,180 per year
- Similar to Alternative 5, a single lane system on I-270 would be constrained by the slowest moving vehicle, less reliable, and less flexible to adapt to incidents



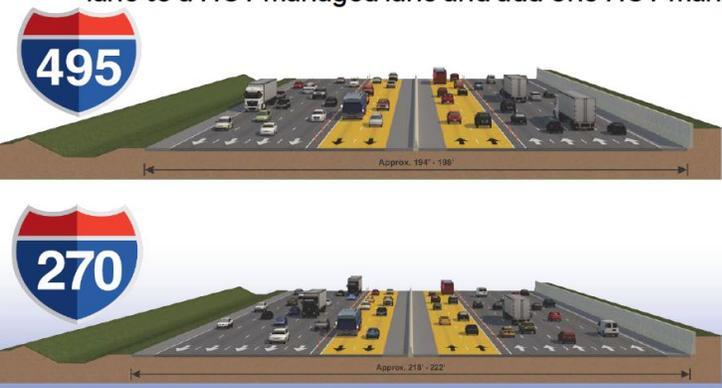
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TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN

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STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Alternative 9

Add two HOT managed lanes in each direction on I-495 and convert one existing HOV lane to a HOT managed lane and add one HOT managed lane in each direction on I-270



Approx. 194' - 198'

Approx. 218' - 222'

- Reduces delay versus the No Build by 34% in AM peak and 33% in PM peak
- Decreases daily delay on local roads by 6.8%
- Average savings per commuter is 73 hours and \$1,460 per year
- Would allow for passing of slower moving vehicles, be more reliable, and more adaptable to incidents than single lane or reversible alternatives

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TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN

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Alternative 10

Add two ETL managed lanes in each direction on I-495 and on I-270 and retain one existing HOV lane in each direction on I-270 only



Approx. 194' - 198'

Approx. 242' - 246'

- Reduces delay versus the No Build by 35% in AM peak and 35% in PM peak
- Decreases daily delay on local roads by 6.4%
- Average savings per commuter is 72 hours and \$1,440 per year
- Would allow for passing of slower moving vehicles, be more reliable, and more adaptable to incidents than single lane alternatives

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Alternative 13B

Add two HOT managed lanes in each direction on I-495 and convert existing HOV lanes to two HOT managed reversible lanes on I-270 while maintaining General Purpose lanes



Approx. 194 - 195



Approx. 202 - 208

- Reduces delay versus the No Build by 27% in AM peak and 22% in PM peak
- Decreases daily delay on local roads by 6.3%
- Average savings per commuter is 65 hours and \$1,300 per year
- Does not serve demand in off-peak direction of I-270, less flexible to adapt to incidents, and requires downtime for changeovers



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Alternative 13C

Add two ETL managed lanes in each direction on I-495 and add two managed, reversible ETLs on I-270 while retaining HOV lanes adjacent to General Purpose lanes



Approx. 194 - 195



Approx. 220 - 230

- Reduces delay versus the No Build by 26% in AM peak and 35% in PM peak
- Decreases daily delay on local roads by 6.2%
- Average savings per commuter is 64 hours and \$1,280 per year
- Does not serve demand in off-peak direction of I-270, less flexible to adapt to incidents, and requires downtime for changeovers



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