MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study

Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation

September 2020

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

TRAFFIC RELIEF PLAN

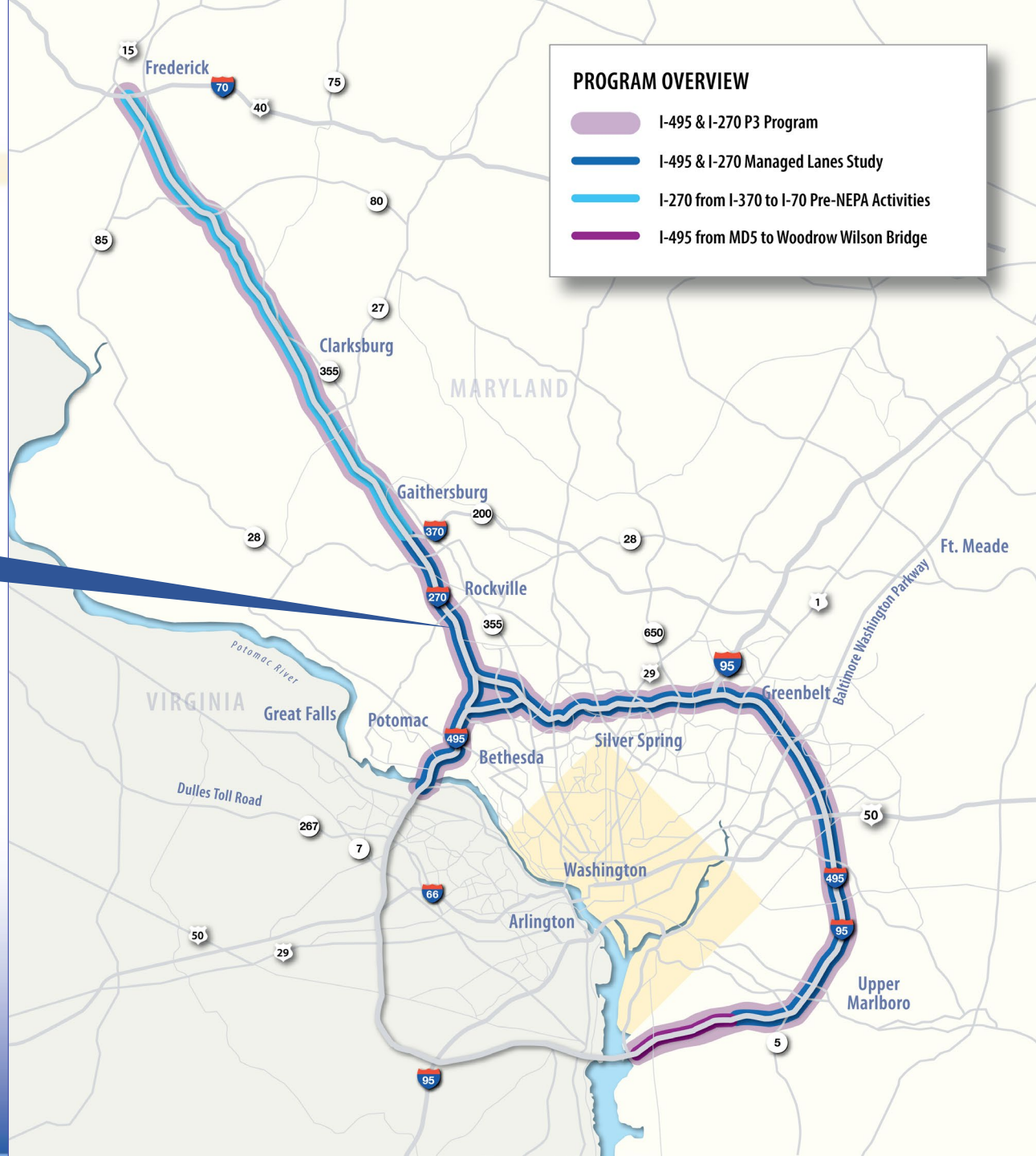
I-495 & I-270 P3 Program

The I-495 & I-270 P3 Program includes more than 70 miles of highway improvements.

I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study

- The Managed Lanes Study covers 48 miles of those improvements.
- The Study begins south of the George Washington Memorial Parkway on I-495 in Virginia, including the American Legion Bridge, and extends to west of MD 5 and along I-270 from the Capital Beltway to north of I-370.

For additional details, see 495-270-p3.com/program-overview/



I-495 & I-270 MLS Purpose and Need

DEIS Ch. 1 & Appendix A

Purpose: 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.

Needs:

- Accommodate Existing Traffic and Long-Term Traffic Growth
- Enhance Trip Reliability
- Provide Additional Roadway Travel Choices
- Accommodate Homeland Security
- Improve Movement of Goods and Services

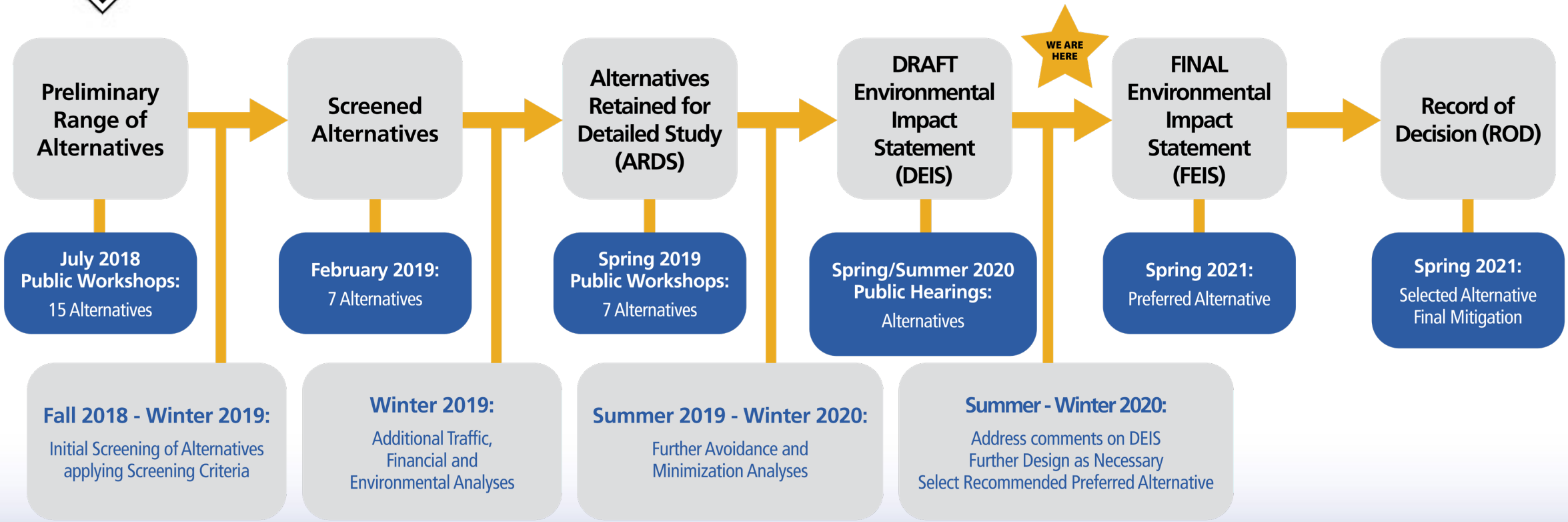
Goals:

- Financial Viability
- Environmental Responsibility

How Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Impacted the Study?

- MDOT's number one priority is the health and safety of Marylanders.
- MDOT SHA recognizes the impact of COVID-19 on current transportation patterns throughout the National Capital Region, including how we work, travel, and spend our free time. We are aware of the reduced traffic on interstates such as I-495 and I-270.
- We are continuing to ensure transportation improvements are being developed to meet our State's needs for today and in the future.
- We will evaluate and consider all new information as it becomes available to ensure the solutions will meet the needs of Marylanders now and in the future.

Managed Lanes Study Schedule



DEIS Availability

495-270-p3.com/DEIS

- Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation was *published in the Federal Register on Friday, July 10th* for public and agency review and comment

- Comment period was extended to 120 days. *Comments due by November 9, 2020*

- DEIS can be *viewed or downloaded from Program webpage* or viewed in *hard copy at 21 locations* in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, Fairfax County Virginia and District of Columbia

Agency Coordination

DEIS Ch. 8 & Appendix P

- Eight (8) Cooperating Agencies participated in the development of the DEIS

Federal Cooperating Agencies	State/Local Cooperating Agencies
US Army Corps of Engineers	Maryland Department of Environment
National Park Service	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Protection Agency	Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
National Capital Planning Commission	Virginia Department of Transportation

- Numerous other agencies were actively involved throughout the Study including Federal, State and Local agencies
- Interagency Working Group established during scoping and continued monthly or as needed
- Consultation and coordination with individual agencies occur on a monthly basis

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

DEIS Ch. 8 & Appendix P

- The public has been engaged at every step of the process and are a key component of the NEPA process.
- To date, MDOT SHA has extensively engaged the public through the following ways, among others:

✓ 16 Large Public Workshops
✓ 21 Community Association Meetings
✓ 85 Stakeholder/Large Landowner Meetings
✓ Presentations to regional, state and local elected officials
✓ Actively maintaining public and elected officials mailing lists
✓ 3 Program and Study Newsletters
✓ Public and Elected Official Email Blasts
✓ Targeted Outreach to Underserved Communities
✓ Social Media
✓ Radio
✓ Regional and local newspapers
✓ P3 Program webpage (495-270-p3.com/)

Incorporation of Public and Agency Input into the Study

DEIS Ch. 7

MDOT SHA and FHWA enhanced the Study and included many additional elements for review in this DEIS, including but ***not*** limited to:

- Amended purpose and need to include multimodal elements and “no net loss” goal
- Build Alternatives that retained the existing HOV lanes and no toll for eligible HOV (+3)
- Free bus usage of all Build Alternatives
- Direct access to/from managed lanes to support mobility and connectivity to transit stations
- Shared use path on American Legion Bridge
- Design elements aimed at narrowing the footprint and avoiding and minimizing environmental impacts
- Innovative SWM facilities such as underground vaults to avoid environmental impacts
- Removed the existing Collector/Distributor lanes on I-270 to stay largely within the existing pavement
- Added direct access to support approved land use and development
- Analyzed two additional alternatives in an effort to avoid and reduce property and environmental impacts

Alternatives Under Consideration in DEIS

DEIS Ch. 2 & Appendix B

Note: *MDOT SHA and FHWA determined Alternative 5 (1-lane, High Occupancy Toll network on both I-495 and I-270) is not a reasonable alternative, but it is included in the DEIS for comparison purposes only.*

1	**No Build** (No improvements planned to I-495 and I-270)
8	**2-lane Express Toll Lane** network on I-495 & **1-lane Express Toll Lane** and **1-lane High Occupancy Vehicle** network on I-270
9	**2-lane High Occupancy Toll** network on both I-495 & I-270
9M	**2-lane High Occupancy Toll** network on West and East sides of I-495 and I-270 & **1-lane High Occupancy Toll** network on top side of I-495
10	**2-lane Express Toll Lane** network on I-495 and I-270 & **1-lane High Occupancy Vehicle** network on I-270
13B	**2-lane High Occupancy Toll** network on I-495 & **2-lane High Occupancy Toll/Reversible Lanes** network on I-270
13C	**2-lane Express Toll Lane** network on I-495 & **2-lane Express Toll Lane/Reversible Lanes** network and **1-lane High Occupancy Vehicle** network on I-270

HOT Lanes and ETLs

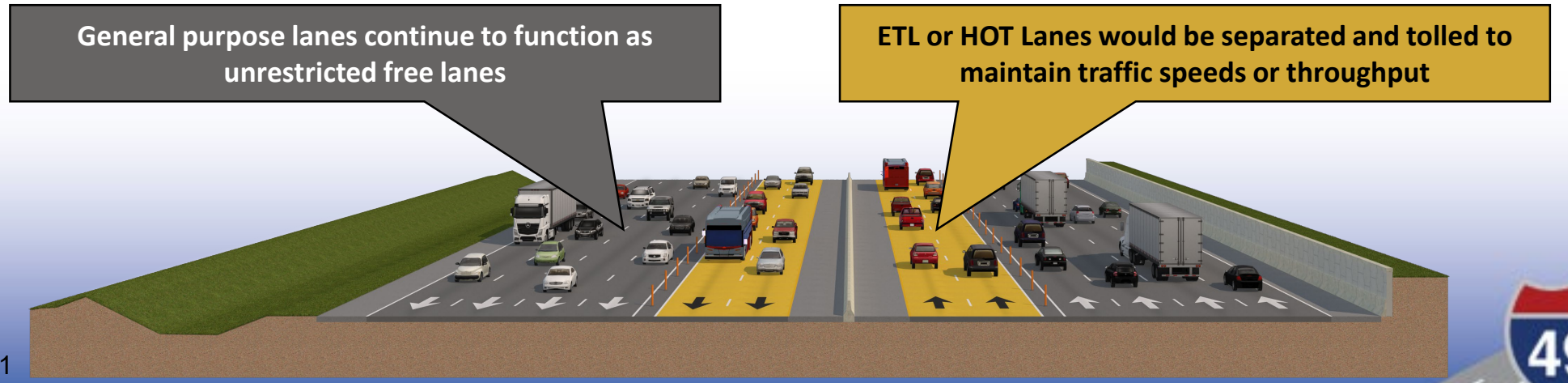
DEIS Ch. 2 & Appendix B

What are High Occupancy Toll Lanes (HOT)?

Dedicated managed lanes within highway right-of-way that single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) motorists may use by paying a variably priced toll and high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) motorists may use by paying no toll at all. Toll payments may vary by time of day and level of congestion.

What are Express Toll Lanes (ETL)?

Dedicated managed lanes within highway right-of-way that any motorist, regardless of vehicle occupancy, may use by paying a variably priced toll, depending on the time of day and level of congestion.



Traffic Operations

DEIS Ch. 3 & Appendix C

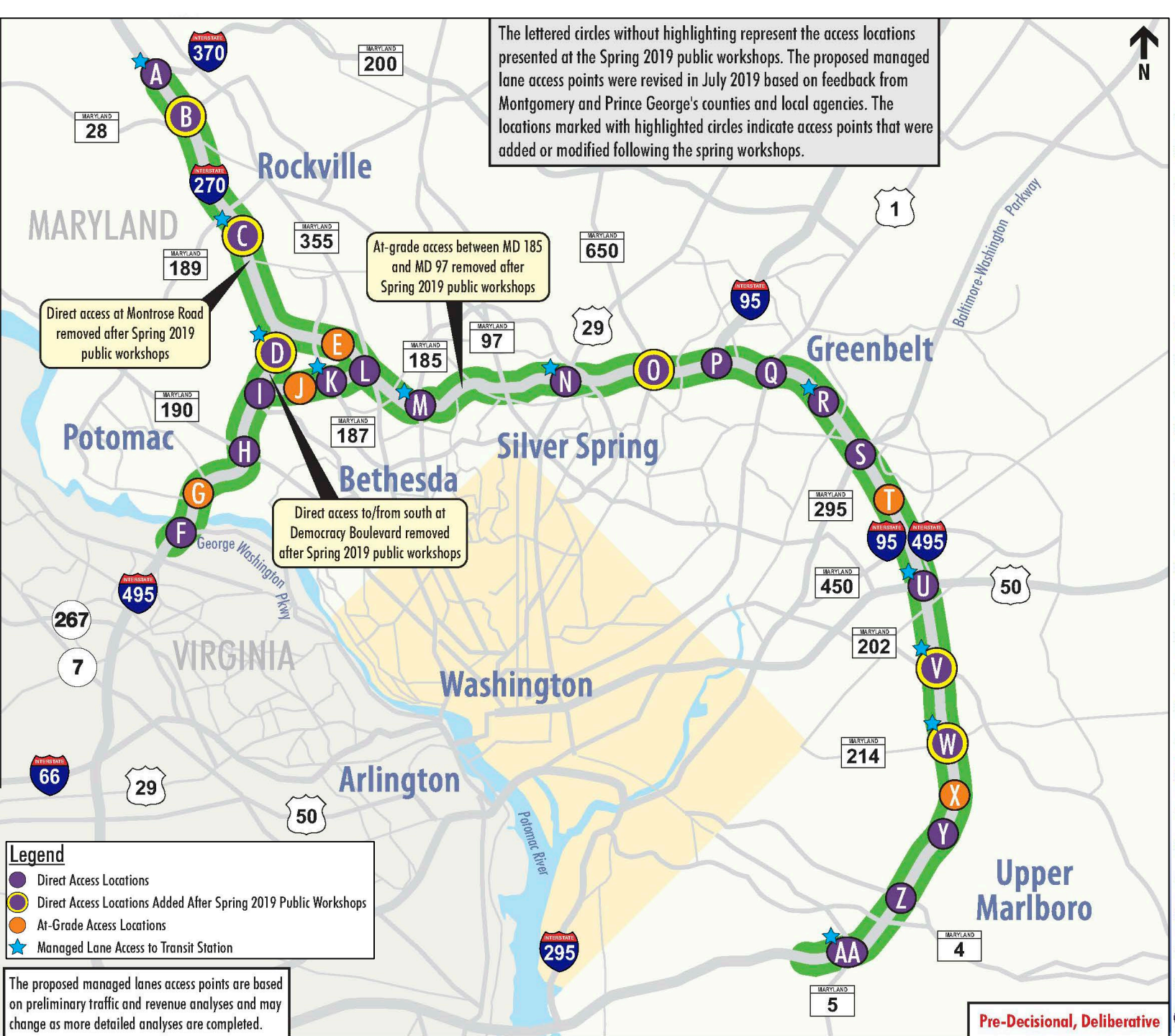
- The No Build Alternative would not address existing and long-term traffic growth and would result in slow travel speeds, significant delays, long travel times, and an unreliable network.

- Compared to the 2040 No Build Alternative conditions, all Build Alternatives would:
  - increase average speeds in the general purpose lanes and provide free-flow speeds in the managed lanes;
  - reduce delay;
  - reduce travel times for all roadway users;
  - improve Level of Service;
  - increase throughput; and
  - reduce delay on the surrounding local network.

Elements Common Among the Build Alternatives

DEIS Ch. 2 & Appendix B

- **Interchanges and Managed Lane Access**
- **Transit-Related Elements**
- **Tolling**
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Considerations
- Stormwater Management Considerations
- Limits of Disturbance (LOD)
- Construction and Short-Term Effects
- Construction Phasing



Interchanges & Managed Lanes Access

DEIS Ch. 2 & Appendix B

- A I-270 at I-370 (access to Shady Grove Metro)
- B I-270 at Gude Drive
- C I-270 at Wootton Parkway (access to Twinbrook Metro)
- D I-270 at Westlake Terrace (access to Montgomery Mall Transit Center)
- E I-270 east of MD 187
- F I-495 at George Washington Parkway
- G I-495 north of Clara Barton Parkway
- H I-495 at MD 190/Cabin John Parkway
- I I-495 at I-270 West Spur
- J I-495 west of MD 187
- K I-495 at MD 187 (access to Medical Center Metro)
- L I-495 at I-270 East Spur
- M I-495 at MD 185 (access to Medical Center Metro & Kensington MARC)
- N I-495 at US 29 (access to Silver Spring Metro/MARC)
- O I-495 at MD 650
- P I-495 at I-95
- Q I-95/I-495 at US 1
- R I-95/I-495 at Cherrywood Lane (access to Greenbelt Metro/MARC)
- S I-95/I-495 at Baltimore-Washington Parkway
- T I-95/I-495 south of Baltimore-Washington Parkway
- U I-95/I-495 at US 50 (direct access to New Carrollton Metro/MARC/AMTRAK)
- V I-95/I-495 at MD 202 (north leg only) (access to Largo Town Center Metro)
- W I-95/I-495 at MD 214 (south leg only) (access to Largo Town Center Metro)
- X I-95/I-495 north of Ritchie Marlboro Road
- Y I-95/I-495 at Ritchie Marlboro Road
- Z I-95/I-495 at MD 4
- AA I-95/I-495 at MD 5 (access to Branch Avenue Metro)

Transit-Related Elements

DEIS Ch. 2 & Appendix B

www.srta.ga.gov

- Free bus usage in the managed lanes to provide an increase in travel speed, assurance or a reliable trip, and connection to bus transit on arterials that directly connect to activity and economic centers.
- Access (direct and indirect) to existing transit stations and planned Transit-Oriented Developments will be included at the following locations:
  - Shady Grove Metro (I-370)
  - Twinbrook Metro (Wootton Parkway)
  - Montgomery Mall Transit Center (Westlake Terrace)
  - Medical Center Metro (MD 187 and MD 185)
  - Kensington MARC (MD 185)
  - Silver Spring Metro and MARC (US 29)
  - Greenbelt Metro and MARC (Cherrywood Lane)
  - New Carrollton Metro, MARC, and Amtrak (US 50)
  - Largo Town Center Metro (MD 202 and MD 214)
  - Branch Avenue Metro (MD 5)
- A Transit Work Group, with representatives from transit providers from Montgomery, Prince George's, Frederick, Anne Arundel, Charles, and Howard counties and representatives from MDOT SHA, MDOT Maryland Transit Administration, FHWA, Federal Transit Administration, and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, works together to collaboratively identify opportunities to enhance transit services on the proposed managed lanes and create an interconnected transit/highway system in the National Capital Region.

Tolling

DEIS Ch. 2 & Appendix B

The DEIS does not recommend final proposed toll rates; however, potential rates were estimated to meet the goals of the project and to determine if the Build Alternatives would be financially viable.

2025 average weekday toll rates per mile for passenger cars (in 2020 dollars):

Alternative 8	$0.70/mile
Alternative 9	$0.69/mile
Alternative 9M	$0.77/mile
Alternative 10	$0.68/mile
Alternative 13B	$0.73/mile
Alternative 13C	$0.71/mile

H. Darr, USAT

- Toll rate ranges will be set as required by the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR 11.07.05, *Public Notice of Toll Schedule Revisions*).
- Toll rate ranges will be approved by the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) Board after public review and comment.

Environmental Overview

DEIS Ch. 4, 5 & Appx. D-L, O

Environmental Overview

DEIS Ch. 4

Corridor Study Boundary (CSB):

- Defines the data collection area for natural resources, properties, and parks.
- Approximately 300 feet wide on either side of the centerline of I-495 and I-270 for the length of the study (48 miles).
- Does ***not*** define the entire area where impacts would occur.

Example Visual of Corridor Study Boundary

Natural Resources Evaluated in DEIS

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix L

- Aquatic Biota
- **Floodplains**
- Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species
- Topography, Geology, and Soils
- Unique and Sensitive Areas
- **Vegetation and Terrestrial Habitat and Wildlife**
- Watersheds, Surface Water Quality, and Groundwater Hydrology
- **Waterways and Wetlands**

Natural Resources Highlights

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendices L, M

Vegetation and Terrestrial Habitat

Resource	Impacts (acres)				
	Alts. 8 & 9	Alt. 9M	Alt. 10	Alt. 13B	Alt. 13C
Forest Canopy	1,497	1,477	1,515	1,489	1,503
Forest Conservation Act Easements	19.3	18.6	20.8	18.8	19.7
Potential Forest Interior Dwelling Species Habitat	27.7	26.6	27.7	27.7	27.7

Note: Efforts to avoid and minimize impacts have occurred throughout the planning process and will continue during the final design phase.

Natural Resources Highlights

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendices L, M

Wetlands, Waterways, and Floodplains

Resource	Impacts				
	Alts. 8 & 9	Alt. 9M	Alt. 10	Alt. 13B	Alt. 13C
Wetlands (acres)	16.3	16.1	16.5	16.3	16.5
Wetlands 25-ft Buffer (acres)	53.1	52.7	53.6	53.1	53.5
Waterways (linear feet)	155,922	155,229	156,984	155,822	156,632
100-Year Floodplain (acres)	119.5	116.5	120.0	119.5	119.9

Note: Efforts to avoid and minimize impacts have occurred throughout the planning process and will continue during the final design phase.

Socioeconomic Resources Evaluated in DEIS

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix E

- Communities and Community Facilities
- Demographics
- Environmental Justice Populations
- Indirect and Cumulative Effects
- Land Use and Zoning
- **Property Acquisitions and Relocations**
- **Visual and Aesthetic Resources**

Socioeconomic Resources Highlights

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix E

Property Acquisitions and Relocations

Resource	Existing Properties within CSB	Impacts					
			Alts. 8 & 9	Alt. 9M	Alt. 10	Alt. 13B	Alt. 13C
Residential Properties	2,668	Relocated Properties	34	25	34	34	34
		Partially Impacted Properties	1,127	1,046	1,164	1,105	1,127
Business/ Other Properties	679	Relocated Properties	4	4	4	4	4
		Partially Impacted Properties	348	346	354	342	352
Total Acreage Impacted			323.5 acres	313.4 acres	337.3 acres	318.9 acres	329.3 acres

Socioeconomic Resources Highlights

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix E

Visual and Aesthetic Resources

- Impacts localized to properties adjacent to the study corridors and viewsheds to/from adjacent parklands.
- Post-construction viewsheds would generally be consistent with existing viewsheds along study corridors.
- Mitigation measures to lessen the visual impact of the improvements include landscaping and aesthetic treatments to retaining walls.

Cultural Resources Evaluated in DEIS

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix G

- Archaeological Resources
- **Historic Architectural Resources**

Cultural Resources Highlights

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix G

Historic Properties

Resource	Historic Properties in Area of Potential Effects	Impacts				
		Alts. 8 & 9	Alt. 9M	Alt. 10	Alt. 13B	Alt. 13C
Historic Properties with Adverse Effect	54	13				
Historic Properties where Effect Cannot Currently be Determined		7				

Note: Numbers may vary slightly pending consultation with Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer.

Air Quality

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix I

Existing Conditions

- Study is included in the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board 2019 – 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Study conforms to the:
  - Visualize 2045 Long-Range Plan and accompanying Air Quality Conformity Analysis; and
  - The State Implementation Plan (SIP) for meeting Federal ozone standards.

Anticipated Impacts

- **Carbon Monoxide**: worst-case concentrations expected to remain well-below the National Ambient Air Quality Standards;
- **Mobile Source Air Toxics**: emissions expected to remain the same or slightly decrease compared to No Build condition; and
- **Greenhouse Gas**: emissions expected to increase slightly for all Build Alternatives when compared to the No Build condition for 2040, but decrease compared to existing conditions.

Noise

DEIS Ch. 4 & Appendix J

Noise abatement has been investigated at all noise-sensitive areas (NSAs) along the study corridor.

- 133 NSAs were found along the Study Corridor.
- The results of the noise investigation are the same under **all Build Alternatives (8, 9, 9M, 10, 13B, 13C):**

Resource	Proposed Noise Mitigation for Build Alternatives	Number of Noise-Sensitive Areas
Noise-Sensitive Areas	Existing noise barriers that would remain in place as currently constructed	7
	Existing noise barriers would be relocated	42
	Existing noise barriers would be reconstructed and extended	20
	New noise barriers constructed	23
	Noise Barrier not proposed for construction	19

Section 4(f) Resources/Park Land

DEIS Ch. 5 & Appendix F

- **Section 4(f) properties within the CSB include:**
  - National parks
  - County and local parks
  - Historic sites that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
  - Stream valley units of larger park facilities
  - Local neighborhood parks
  - Parkways
- **A Section 4(f) "use" includes a permanent acquisition or a temporary occupancy.**

Resource	Total Properties within CSB	Properties Experiencing Impacts that:	Impacts				
			Alts. 8 & 9	Alt. 9M	Alt. 10	Alt. 13B	Alt. 13C
Section 4(f) Properties	111	Qualify as Section 4(f) "use"	22				
		Anticipated *de minimis* impact	36				
		Impacts to Section 4(f) properties that qualify as an exception to a Section 4(f) "use"	10				
Total Acreage Impacted			146.3	144.2	148.5	145.0	146.2

Avoidance and Minimization Efforts

DEIS Chs. 4 and 5, Appendices B, F, M and Q

- At this stage in the NEPA Study, opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts have been coordinated with the regulatory and resource agencies and have been incorporated into the Build Alternatives.
- Design strategies were developed to avoid and minimize impacts to parks, wetlands, streams, forests, 100-year floodplain, residential and business properties, and historic/archeological resources, among others
- The effort to avoid, minimize and mitigate unavoidable impacts will continue through ongoing and future coordination with the applicable regulatory and resource agencies and be documented in the FEIS.

Examples of Results of Minimization Efforts

- **Rock Creek: reduction in parkland impacts of approximately *10 acres* and reduction in stream impacts by *3,287 linear feet***
- **Thomas Branch: reduction in stream impacts by *592 linear feet***
- **Paint Branch Mainstem: reduction in stream impacts by *2,393 linear feet***

Potential Mitigation

DEIS Chs. 4 and 5, Appendices B, F, M and Q

- Coordination is ongoing with our lead federal agency as well as regulatory and resource agencies to determine appropriate and meaningful mitigation with the goal of " no net loss"

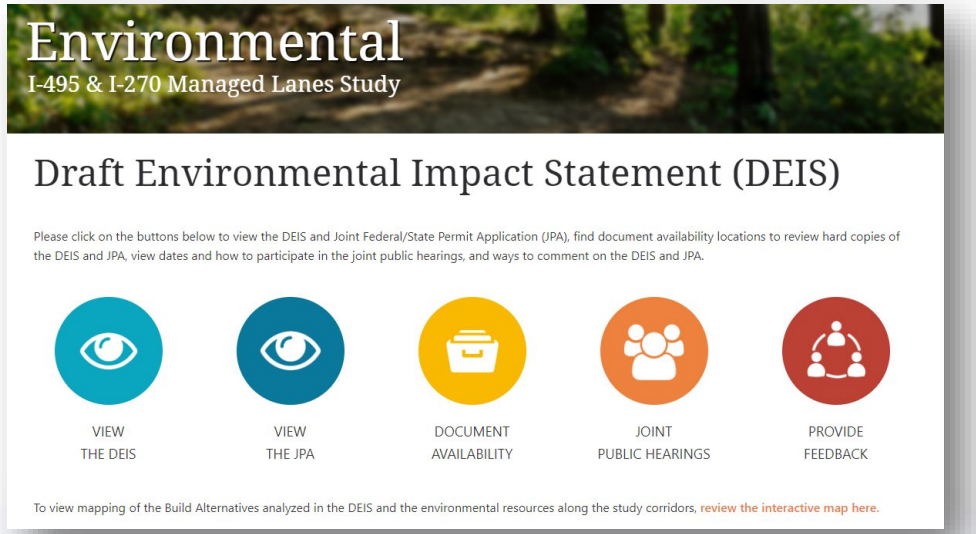
- Conceptual mitigation strategies include but are not limited to:
  - ✓ Replacement park land
  - ✓ Replacement of park facilities such as sidewalks, trails, benches, courts, fields, parking etc.
  - ✓ Relocation of recreational facilities outside of environmentally compromise areas
  - ✓ Restoration and landscaping of disturbed areas
  - ✓ Construction of new or extension of noise barriers
  - ✓ Reforestation and replanting onsite and on public lands
  - ✓ Wetland creation and stream restoration

- Final mitigation will be committed to in the Record of Decision

Comments on the DEIS

- DEIS can be viewed and downloaded from the P3 Program webpage at 495-270-P3.com/DEIS or at 21 locations within the National Capital Region

- Comments can be submitted received the following ways:
  - Comment form on 495-270-P3.com/DEIS
  - Email at MLS-NEPA-P3@mdot.Maryland.gov
  - Written letter to Lisa B. Choplin, P3 Program Director
  - *Oral testimony at the in-person or virtual hearings**
  - *Written comments in comment boxes at in-person hearings**



- Comment period on the DEIS is between July 10th and November 9th

** Note: Public Hearings occurred between August 18th and September 10th*

Public Hearings

Due to the current COVID-19 health crisis and MDOT SHA's commitment to protect the public and agency members, the public was encouraged to provide public testimony through virtual hearings. COVID-19 guidelines were followed for in-person hearings

- **Four virtual hearings** held from 9 AM – 8 PM:
  - TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2020
  - TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020 (Official USACE Hearing)
  - THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2020
  - THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2020

- **Two in-person hearings** held from 12 – 9 PM:
  - TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 – Prince George's County – Homewood Suites by Hilton, 9103 Basil Court, Largo, MD 20774
  - THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 – Montgomery County – Hilton Executive Meeting Center, 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852

- **Verbal testimony was received from 144 people during the Public Hearings**

Next Steps

- MDOT SHA and FHWA will review all DEIS comments and respond to substantive comments received or postmarked by the end of the comment period in the FEIS
- The FEIS will summarize additional and updated information not refined or quantified in the DEIS, identify the Preferred Alternative and factors that support the selection, and commitments and mitigation measures to be carried forth during final design and construction
- FEIS and Record of Decision are anticipated in Spring 2021