



Larry Hogan  
Governor  
Boyd K. Rutherford  
Lt. Governor  
Pete K. Rahn  
Secretary

Office of the Secretary

---

October 16, 2018

The Honorable Charles Allen  
Chair, National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington DC 20002

Dear Chairman Allen:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) would like to respond to concerns that we have recently heard regarding the I-495 and I-270 Managed Lane Study and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The National Capital Region is one of the most congested in the nation, and Marylanders face some of the highest commuting times. We anticipate that the existing significant congestion within the Baltimore-Washington region will remain, and even worsen, in the future. A comprehensive transportation network, including highway and transit improvements, is needed to relieve congestion.

Previous studies, including the Capital Beltway/Purple Line Study, determined that both transit and highway improvements are needed to fully meet the travel demand and provide the necessary enhancements for the needed capacity and safety within the I-495 and I-270 corridors. Because of the I-495 and I-270 extensive highway linkage to other regional transportation facilities, severe congestion along these corridors has a region-wide effect on all transportation modes. Transportation improvements to provide congestion relief on I-495 and I-270 are needed to enhance existing and proposed multimodal transportation services.

The MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) recognizes the unique and important community and environmental resources along the corridors and will develop the I-495 and I-270 Managed Lanes Study in an environmentally responsible manner. Our approach is to implement a solution within the existing highways rights-of-way, and we are committed to working with citizens, businesses, and federal, state, and local agencies to ensure that concerns related to property and environmental resources are addressed.

The I-495 & I-270 Managed Lanes Study, initiated in March 2018, is in an early stage of planning. As part of the National Environmental Policy Act process, the study's approach for alternatives analysis and development includes a three phase, iterative process. The first phase is the development of a spectrum of potential alternatives, sometimes referred to as a preliminary range of alternatives. The MDOT SHA met with interested agencies and the public in July to seek input regarding this preliminary range of alternatives. The preliminary range of alternatives

The Honorable Charles Allen  
Page Two

includes fifteen alternatives including adding managed lanes, general purpose lanes, transit and the no-build.

Considering feedback from the public and our federal, state, and local partners, the MDOT SHA is evaluating the preliminary range of alternatives to determine which alternatives represent reasonable approaches that meet the study's purpose and need. Only those alternatives determined to be reasonable and to adequately meet the purpose and need will be carried forward to the second phase of the alternatives analysis and development process, known as the alternatives retained for detailed study.

The MDOT SHA values public feedback on the I-495 and I-270 study and will continue to provide the public opportunities to be involved in this important environmental study. Multiple project workshops will be held throughout 2019 providing the opportunity for public feedback along with multiple other opportunities for feedback from our federal, state, and local partners resulting in the MDOT SHA recommended preferred alternative and ultimately Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Questions or comments on the study may be provided anytime via the I-495 and I-270 Public-Private Partnership (P3) Program email at [495-270-P3@sha.state.md.us](mailto:495-270-P3@sha.state.md.us). Updated information on the study and public involvement opportunities can be found on the I-495 and I-270 P3 Program website at [www.495-270-P3.com](http://www.495-270-P3.com).

If you need further assistance, please contact Lisa B. Choplin, DBIA, MDOT SHA I-495 and I-270 P3 Office Director, at 410-637-3320 or via email at [lchoplin@sha.state.md.us](mailto:lchoplin@sha.state.md.us). Ms. Choplin will be happy to assist you. You can also feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



R. Earl Lewis, Jr.  
Deputy Secretary for Policy,  
Planning & Enterprise Services

cc: Mr. Pete Rahn, MDOT Secretary  
Lisa B. Choplin, DBIA, Director, I-495 and I-270 P3 Office, MDOT SHA  
Mr. Gregory Slater, Administrator, MDOT SHA