



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

June 18, 2019

The Honorable Martin Nohe
Chairman
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300
Washington DC 20002

Dear Chairman Nohe:

On June 5, the Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW) designated the I-495 & I-270 Program, the Traffic Relief Plan (TRP), as eligible for a private-public partnership (P3), with amendments. This allows Governor Larry Hogan's administration to move forward with soliciting and evaluating private investment for desperately needed congestion relief on I-495 and I-270.

In addition to an amendment from the Governor which updated the phasing of the P3, the BPW approved the following amendments from Comptroller Peter Franchot:

1. Transit buses ride for free on the lanes.
2. No property will be taken until the BPW approves the P3 segment contract.
3. Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) will conduct a monorail feasibility study.
4. Ten percent of the state's portion of toll revenue sharing will go toward funding of regional transit projects.

Several questions were received and addressed at the June 7, 2019 meetings of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) Technical and Steering committees on the status of the TRP. Based on the content of those meetings, MDOT thought it would be useful to you and the TPB members to receive background information in advance of the June 19, 2019 TPB meeting.

MDOT has reviewed the technical inputs on all Maryland projects included in the update to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the National Capital Region and the Amendment of Visualize 2045, the federally required long-range transportation plan for the National Capital Region. MDOT is not making any major updates to the Maryland portion of the TIP, including adding or removing any projects. Minor updates regarding the year of completion for certain projects are not significant to regional air quality conformity.

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The TRP as originally proposed is included in the federally approved Regional Air Quality Conformity Determination of Visualize 2045 and in the FY 2019-2024 TIP, and the updated phasing approved by the BPW will not affect the overall regional conformity determination for the program as a whole. Although the BPW actions will have conformity benefits in the future, the first environmental study for the P3 Program is still going through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. These changes to the P3 Program and any subsequent updates or changes in this iterative process will be packaged together before the TPB runs the regional model for Air Quality Conformity again, once a preferred alternative has been selected.

With a clear consensus for making improvements on I-270, the BPW approved Governor Hogan's request to make I-270 improvements Phase 1 of the project, although Governor Hogan's first priority remains the replacement of the American Legion Bridge. The American Legion Bridge replacement along with accompanying improvements on I-495 to I-95, will be included in Phase 2 to allow additional input, study, and debate for local residents and elected officials. The final phase will improve I-495 from I-95 to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

As Phase 1 encompasses two environmental studies at different stages, this phase will be delivered with two sub-phases: Phase 1A from I-495 to I-370 will be awarded first, followed by Phase 1B from I-370 to I-70. Both awards are dependent on a BPW approval and a completed record of decision from the NEPA process.

Based on the BPW direction, MDOT will spend the next few months repackaging the solicitation for Request for Qualifications for the new phase of I-270. We also have been engaging the industry with all the details of the I-270 phase. That work began immediately following the BPW approval of the designation of I-495 & I-270 P3 Program as eligible for a public-private partnership.

Thank you for your continued coordination, and if you have questions or need additional information, please contact Kari Snyder, MDOT Office of Planning and Capital Programming, Regional Planner, at 410-865-1305 or via email at ksnyder3@mdot.maryland.gov. She will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,



R. Earl Lewis, Jr.
Deputy Secretary

cc: Kari Snyder, Regional Planner, Office of Planning and Capital Programming, MDOT