

## Your Comments & Concerns Are Important to Us

The study team values public participation in the Capital Beltway Study. The planning study includes a public participation program consisting of public meetings, newsletters, and community presentations.

In May 2004, two open houses were held to present the ETL concept. In Spring 2005, the project was presented at a number of community meetings. Since these meetings, SHA has been conducting additional analyses to address the questions and comments received from citizens. We plan on having these analyses completed prior to holding any further public meetings on the study.

## Contact Us!

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## Project Website:

For the latest information on the project, please check the project website, [www.capitalbeltway.mdprojects.com](http://www.capitalbeltway.mdprojects.com)

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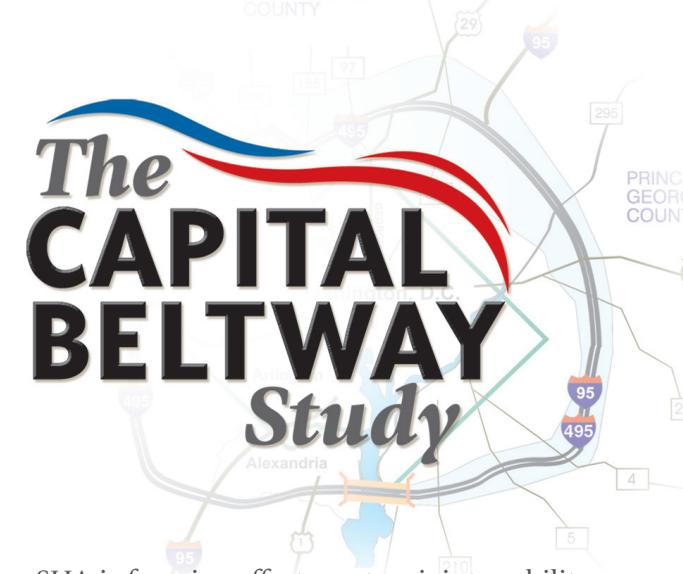


**News & Information**  
**Summer 2006**

## Maryland/Virginia Collaborate on Beltway Joint Mobility Studies

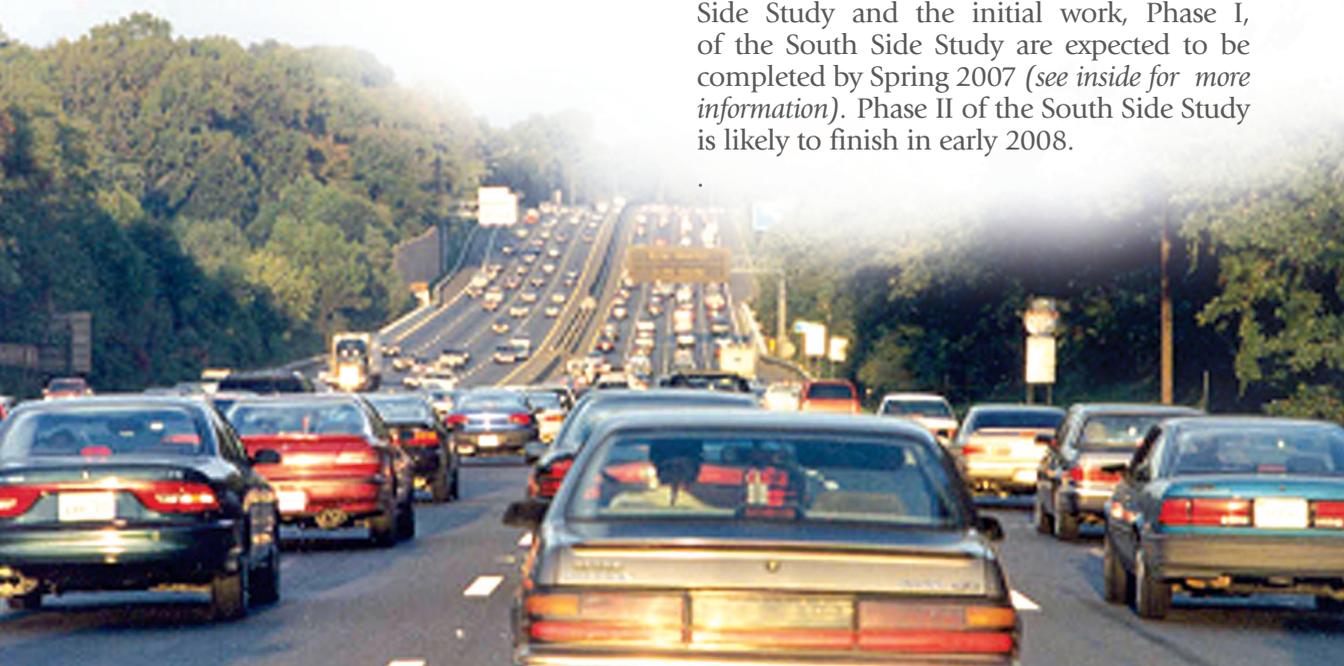
As part of the Capital Beltway Study, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) has been working with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to evaluate options to relieve congestion along the Capital Beltway (I-495/I-95). Severe traffic congestion occurs each day along this corridor that runs through portions of both Maryland and Virginia.

In an effort to coordinate the transportation planning process between the two states,



SHA is focusing efforts on two joint mobility studies recently initiated with VDOT and on an evaluation of existing pavement and bridge conditions.

The mobility studies will look at lane continuity and traffic operations on both the West Side and South Side sections of the Beltway. SHA will lead the West Side Mobility Study with VDOT providing support. VDOT will lead the South Side Mobility Study with SHA taking the support role. The West Side Study and the initial work, Phase I, of the South Side Study are expected to be completed by Spring 2007 (*see inside for more information*). Phase II of the South Side Study is likely to finish in early 2008.



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# Capital Beltway Study Overview

The Capital Beltway (I-495/I-95) is one of the busiest and most congested highways in Maryland. Bumper to bumper conditions are a regular occurrence, often reaching gridlock. As the number of households and jobs increases in this region, traffic conditions will continue to deteriorate.

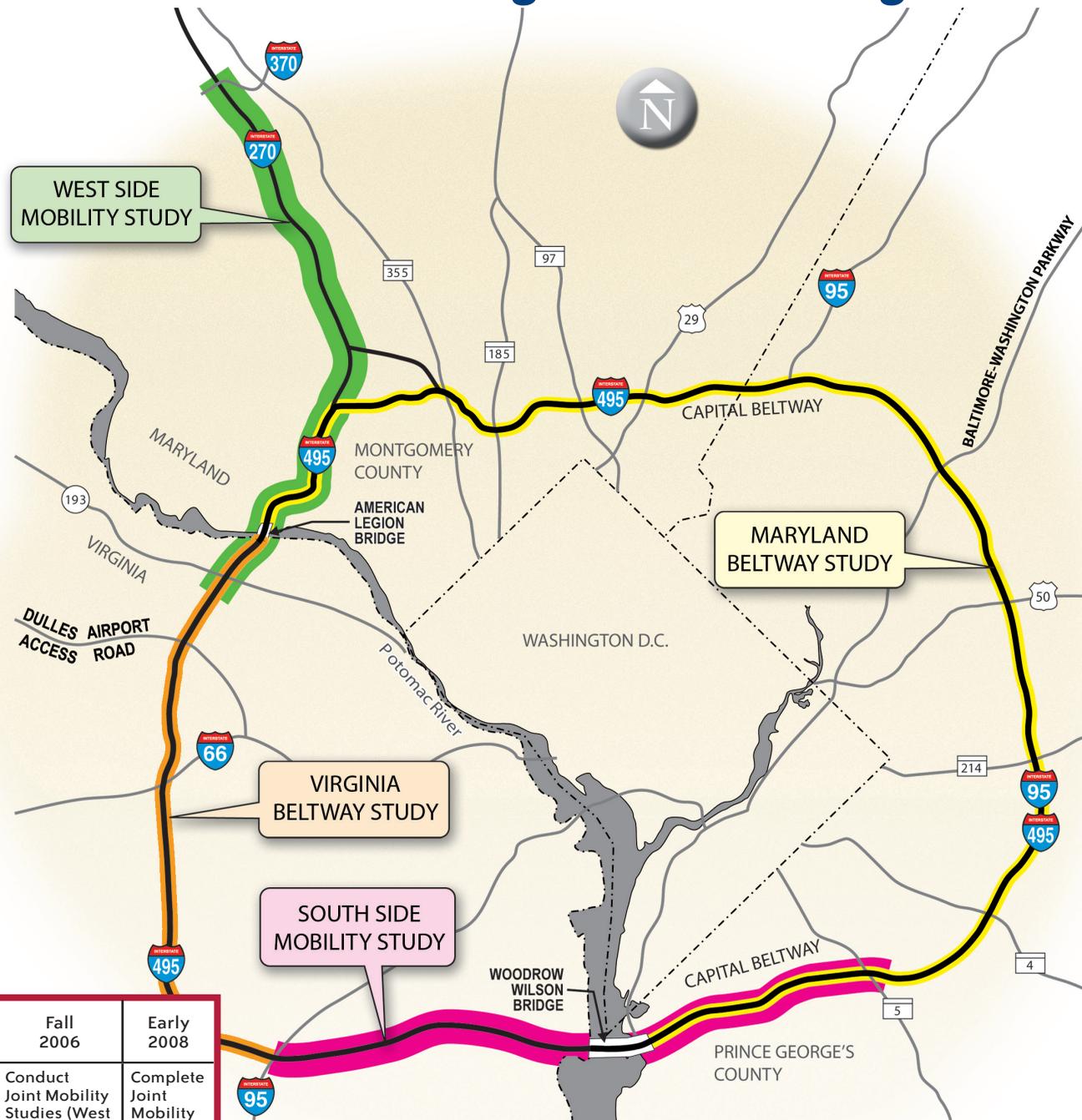
In 1993, SHA began looking into the possibility of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on Maryland's 42-mile portion of the Capital Beltway. Planning studies looked at various options including transit and managed lanes. It was determined that the travel demand in the region is too great for a single transportation improvement (highway or transit) to solve the mobility problems. As a result, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) initiated the Bi-County Transitway Study from Bethesda to New Carrollton (formerly called the Purple Line) and SHA continued highway improvement studies along the Capital Beltway. For more information on the transit project, please visit [www.bicountytransitway.com](http://www.bicountytransitway.com).

The concept of Express Toll Lanes (ETLs) was introduced in 2004. ETLs would offer drivers a choice to avoid congestion by paying a fee to drive in reserved, relatively free-flowing lanes on a given trip. Fees would vary by time of day and would be based on traffic demand. Tolls would be collected electronically at highway speeds.

## Recent Study Milestones

Spring 2004	Summer/Fall 2004	Spring 2005	Summer 2006	Fall 2006	Early 2008
Held Public Open Houses	Performed Engineering and Environmental Analysis	Held a series of Community Meetings	Complete evaluation of existing pavement and bridge conditions	Conduct Joint Mobility Studies (West and South sides)	Complete Joint Mobility Studies

# Current Planning Studies Along The Capital Beltway



### Maryland Beltway Study

The Maryland Beltway Study includes Maryland's entire portion of the Beltway, 42 miles, which extends from the American Legion Bridge to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Currently, the schedule for this study is pending as SHA focuses on the Joint Mobility Studies with Virginia.

### West Side Mobility Study

The West Side Joint Mobility Study extends north from SR 193 in Virginia, along the west side of the Capital Beltway, along the I-270 West Spur, and along I-270 to the I-370 Interchange. This 14-mile study area is evaluating connections between Virginia's Study with High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, Maryland's Capital Beltway Study, and Maryland's I-270 Multi-Modal Study.

### South Side Mobility Study

The South Side Mobility Study extends from the Springfield Interchange in Virginia, along I-95/I-495, to MD 5 (Branch Avenue) in Maryland. This 14-mile study area is evaluating modal options and connections between Virginia's Study with High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, the Springfield Interchange, the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project, and the MD 5 Interchange.

### Virginia Beltway Study

The Federal Highway Administration issued a Record of Decision on June 29, 2006 for the Capital Beltway project in Virginia. The project, which extends approximately 14 miles from I-95 / I-395 / I-495 interchange to the American Legion Bridge, will widen the Beltway by two lanes per direction and operate those lanes as HOV / HOT (High Occupancy Toll) lanes. The project will now move forward into the design phase.

For the latest information on VDOT's Capital Beltway HOT Lanes project check the project website: <http://project1.parsons.com/capitalbeltway/>

### Existing Beltway Maintenance

The Capital Beltway was originally constructed between 1960 and 1964. Over the years, additional general-use lanes have been added along with auxiliary lanes in specific locations. Much of the Beltway pavement and most bridges date from the original construction and therefore are approaching the end of their designed lifespan. SHA is currently performing an evaluation to determine where pavement and bridges will need to be replaced within the next 10 to 20 years.