

New Project Website

The I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study's project-specific website, www.i270multimodalstudy.com, will provide:

- Updates on the study
- Details about alternatives under consideration
- Video simulation of highway and transit improvements
- Information on the study's next steps
- Instructions on how to request a project briefing for your community or organization

What's Next?

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • Complete AA/EA Document | Winter 2009 |
| • Hold Public Meetings | Spring 2009 |
| • Evaluate Public/Agency Comments | Summer 2009 |
| • Select Locally Preferred Alternative | Fall 2009 |
| • Complete Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) | TBD |
| • Receive Record of Decision (ROD) | TBD |

VERSION EN ESPAÑOL DISPONIBLE:

Si desea una copia en español, por favor contactese con: Sr. Russell Anderson, Gerente del Proyecto, randerson2@sha.state.md.us, o llame al (410) 545-8839 o gratuitamente al 1-800-548-5026.

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I-270/US15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study



PROJECT NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2009

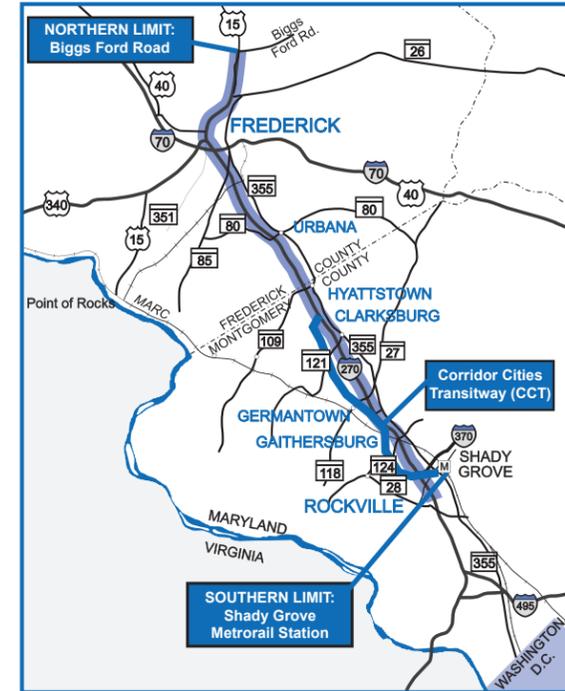
Spring 2009 Public Meetings Being Planned

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) will be holding joint public meetings regarding the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study in Montgomery County and Frederick County in Spring 2009. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss the study's new developments since the June 2002 public hearings and describe the associated impacts from the highway and transit portions of the study.

The meetings will provide the public an opportunity to comment on the Alternatives Analysis (AA)/Environmental Assessment (EA) document described in the Project Developments section on the following page. Public comments will be collected at the meetings.

Later this year you will receive notification of the specific dates, times, and locations of the meetings and more information on where and how to access the AAEA document.

VERSION EN ESPAÑOL DISPONIBLE: Ver detalles atrás



Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony Brown, Lieutenant Governor
John D. Porcari, Secretary
Neil J. Pedersen, SHA Administrator
Paul J. Wiedefeld, MTA Administrator

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Project Background

The I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study is a joint SHA and MTA project. The project limits extend from the Shady Grove Metro Station in Montgomery County, north to the US 15/Biggs Ford Road intersection area in Frederick County (approximately 30 miles). The transit component, known as the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), extends 14 miles from the Shady Grove Metro Station in Rockville, through Gaithersburg and Germantown, and terminates at the COMSAT facility just south of Clarksburg.

Project History

- Project initiated – June 1994
- Public Initiation Meeting conducted to present highway and transit concepts – May 1995
- Alternates Public Workshops conducted to present refined alternatives for public comment – December 1995
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) developed and public hearings conducted – June 2002 (Log on to the project web site at www.i270multimodalstudy.com and click on **Environmental Studies** for an electronic version of the 2002 DEIS.)
- Open House Meetings conducted to introduce the public to the concept of Express Toll Lanes (ETL) - June 2004

Project Developments

- The Study Team is preparing an AA/EA document that serves as a companion to the DEIS and will include detailed environmental technical analyses of resources affected by the proposed ETL and the CCT.
- The purpose of the AA/EA is to develop the ETL alternatives to the same level of environmental review as the original DEIS alternatives, to update information that has changed since the DEIS was issued, and to evaluate and rate the proposed transit alternatives.
- The AA/EA document will also provide detailed analyses of the CCT alternatives (Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail), I-270 mainline traffic operations, and ETL effects on CCT ridership and the socioeconomic and natural environment.
- The AA/EA document will be made available no less than 15 days before the Spring 2009 public meetings are conducted. The document will present the findings of the environmental technical studies for air quality and noise; socioeconomic, cultural, and natural environment resources; and

government coordination. The AA/EA will be on display for 60 days for public review and comment at selected libraries and public buildings throughout the corridor, MTA and SHA Headquarters, SHA District Offices in Greenbelt and Frederick, and online at www.marylandroads.com (click on **Projects**).

- SHA continues its preliminary engineering studies of potential limits of disturbance and estimated right-of-way impacts within the project area.

Alternatives 6A/B and 7A/B

Highway Component

The highway component of Alternatives 6A/B and 7A/B would provide:

- General-purpose lanes
- Auxiliary lanes
- Electronic ETLs
- Additional interchanges
- Improvements to existing interchanges

ETLs are new capacity, tolled lanes that can be combined with general-purpose lanes to provide motorists the choice of paying a fee to drive in separate, relatively free-flowing lanes to reduce travel time. Based on demand, toll rates would vary by time of day or traffic conditions, and tolls would be collected electronically from vehicles traveling at full highway speeds. ETLs would be barrier-separated from general-purpose lanes in the median in both directions. Direct access ramps at selected interchanges and “open access” areas to and from the general-purpose lanes on I-270 would permit drivers to enter and exit the ETLs.

The highway component of Alternative 6A/B would provide two ETLs in each direction from I-370 to MD 121, and one ETL in each direction from MD 121 to north of MD 80. Alternative 7A/B would provide two ETLs in each direction from I-370 to north of MD 80.

Transit Component

The transit component of Alternatives 6A/B and 7A/B would provide a fixed guideway service, which means that the CCT will operate in its own dedicated right-of-way on the proposed CCT alignment from the Shady Grove Metro Station to the COMSAT area in Montgomery County. Service would be provided by Light Rail (Alternatives 6A and 7A) or Bus Rapid Transit (Alternatives 6B and 7B) on the guideway. Twelve new stations are proposed at residential, mixed-use, and employment centers along the route, and a shared-use path (hiker-biker trail) would be constructed adjacent to the transitway.

Summary of Potential Impacts of Alternatives 6A/B and 7A/B

Displacements/Area of Impact		
Resource	Alternative 6A/B	Alternative 7A/B
Residential Displacements		
Highway component	251	251
Transitway component	5-9	5-9
Business Displacements		
Highway component	10-11	10-11
Transitway component	3-32	3-32
Right-of-Way		
Highway component	578 acres	578 acres
Transitway component	170 acres	170 acres
Natural Environment		
Floodplains - Total	28.4 acres	28.4 acres
Highway component	25.6 acres	25.6 acres
Transitway component	2.8 acres	2.8 acres
Forest - Total	295.8 acres	295.8 acres
Highway component	268.6 acres	268.6 acres
Transitway component	27.2 acres	27.2 acres
Total Streams	24,204 linear feet	24,204 linear feet
Total Wetlands	15.6 acres	15.6 acres
Highway component		
Streams	20,198 linear feet	20,198 linear feet
*Ephemeral channels	10,812 linear feet	10,812 linear feet
Wetlands	13 acres	13 acres
Transitway Component		
Streams	4,006 linear feet	4,006 linear feet
Ephemeral channels	1,646 linear feet	1,646 linear feet
Wetlands	2.6 acres	2.6 acres
Cultural Resources		
Historic Properties		
Highway component (number/acres)	5/31.17 acres	5/31.17 acres
Transitway component (number/acres)	3/12.11 acres	3/12.11 acres
Socioeconomic Resources		
Public Parks		
Highway component (number/acres)	13/39.97 acres	13/39.97 acres
Transitway component (number/acres)	1/5.16 acres	1/5.16 acres

*Streams in which water flows only at certain times or under certain conditions.

Traffic and Modeling Projections

SHA and MTA have developed computer-generated travel demand models that estimate the anticipated number of users and assess the travel performance of I-270, US 15, and the CCT. These models require demographic information, future economic development projections, transportation operations assumptions, and estimated trip origins and destinations. The interconnection of the proposed CCT with local transit services is also evaluated in the AA/EA, as are the locations of potential CCT maintenance facilities. The models will help determine the mode of transportation that corridor users will choose and the benefits they will experience. Planners will use the updated estimate of transit riders to assess the effectiveness of the transitway and finalize the location, layout, and parking needs at each station along the CCT.

Ridership, User Benefit Hours, and Annual New Transit Trips

Alternative	Daily Guideway Boardings	Annual User Benefit Hours (Travel Time Savings)	Annual New Transit Trips
6A (LRT)	30,000	2,070,000	2,679,600
6B (BRT)	26,000	2,220,000	2,864,400
7A (LRT)	30,000	2,100,000	2,710,400
7B (BRT)	27,000	2,250,000	2,895,200

LRT=Light Rail Transit; BRT=Bus Rapid Transit

Project Costs

Transportation projects are typically financed through a combination of federal and state transportation funds. The costs of transportation projects continue to climb in response to the rising costs of land and construction materials. ETLs would enable the State of Maryland to generate additional revenue to meet its growing infrastructure needs.

Estimated Capital Costs (in millions of 2007 dollars)

Alternative	Highway*	Transit	Total
6A (LRT)	\$3,879	\$777.5	\$4,656.5
6B (BRT)	\$3,879	\$449.9	\$4,328.9
7A (LRT)	\$3,879	\$777.5	\$4,656.5
7B (BRT)	\$3,879	\$449.9	\$4,328.9

*Highway cost estimates are identical for Alternatives 6A/B and 7A/B, as they have identical footprints and an equal amount of paving.

Associated Projects

- MD 121/Cabin Branch Development: A developer-funded project that will improve the I-270/MD 121 interchange and local infrastructure to make way for new development in the Clarksburg region.
- US 15/Monocacy Boulevard Interchange: SHA, the City of Frederick, and Frederick County have reached an agreement to provide funding to accelerate improvements at this location and address safety concerns.
- I-270/Watkins Mill Road Interchange and Watkins Mill Road Extended: A joint project by SHA, Montgomery County, and a private developer that will improve local infrastructure and make way for new development in Gaithersburg.