

# Northern Virginia Megaprojects Update

## Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee

Michelle Shropshire, P.E., DBIA  
Megaprojects Acting Director  
Virginia Department of Transportation

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# Northern Virginia Regional Express Lanes Network

- 94 miles in service
  - I-95, I-395, I-495, I-66 Inside the Beltway, I-66 Outside the Beltway
- 3 miles under construction
  - I-495 Northern Extension (2.5 miles to be in service in late 2025)
  - I-95 Express Lanes/Opitz Boulevard Ramp (to be in service in fall 2024)
- Under study
  - I-495 Southside Express Lanes
  - I-95 Bi-Directional Study
- Three independent operators



# Why Express Lanes?

- Additional capacity and congestion relief
- New faster and more reliable travel options
- Dynamic system with variable tolls to manage demand and keep lanes free flowing for all express lanes users
- Moves more people, not just vehicles



## Express Lanes Drivers

Vehicles with fewer than 3 people can choose to use the express lanes by paying a toll, receiving a faster and more reliable trip.



## HOV-3+ and motorcycles travel toll free

Carpools with 3 or more occupants, and motorcycles, can travel the express lanes for free anytime.



## Buses travel toll free

Faster and more reliable travel creates new opportunities and benefits for buses (who travel for free) on the express lanes.



## Funding support for enhanced transit in corridors

Transit payments in project agreements with private partners allow toll revenues to fund transit and multimodal improvements.



## Transit elements included in project scope

Transit and multimodal features such as new commuter parking lots and bus service can be incorporated into project scopes.

# 66 Express Lanes Opening

**Express Lanes opened ahead of schedule in 2022**

- **First 9 miles opened Sept. 12**
- **Remaining 13 miles opened Nov. 22**

**Ribbon cutting held on Nov. 29**



# Transform 66 Project – Final Completion

- Complete final work elements and punch list items
- Opened remaining segments of 66 Parallel Trail in October 2023
- Working to close environmental permits



First Trail Segment Opening – May 17, 2023

# 66 Express Lanes Performance - Transit and Carpooling



HOV3+ and motorcycles  
travel toll-free

Average 7,300 HOV3+ and 800  
motorcycle trips/day in September 2023



Bus transit travel  
toll free

An average of 1,400 transit trips (Fairfax  
Connector and Omniride/PRTC) benefit  
from free trips in 66 Express OTB every  
workday



Annual funding for enhanced  
transit in I-66 corridor

\$800 million over the concession term, paid  
out annually to support additional transit in  
corridor



Schools benefit from safe  
travel option

23 Fairfax County Public School bus  
routes using 66 Express OTB, safely  
transporting more than 400 students  
twice a day

# 495 Express Lanes Northern Extension Project (495 NEXT)

- Approx. \$660 million, 2.5-mile extension of 495 Express Lanes from Dulles Corridor interchange to George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) near the American Legion Bridge
- Public-private partnership project between VDOT and Transurban through 2087



Improve interchanges and replace existing bridges



Add bike and pedestrian trails



Replace existing noise walls and construct new walls where needed



Provide stormwater management facilities



Provide stream restoration and stabilization

## Other Project Benefits



# 495 NEXT Construction Update

Under construction, on track to be completed in 2026

## Current Activities Include:

- Utility relocation work, grading, drainage installation and retaining wall construction
- Progressing on new Beltway bridges at Live Oak Drive, Georgetown Pike and Old Dominion Drive
- Construction underway on new and replacement noise walls

## Major Milestones:

- **Late 2024/Early 2025:** Complete construction of new outside lanes
- **Mid-2025:** Complete installation of new noise walls
- **Late 2025:** Complete construction of new inside lanes and open new Express Lanes
- **Early 2026:** Complete new bike-pedestrian trail

Footprint of the wider future Beltway as viewed from the Old Dominion Drive overpass looking north.



Building new noise wall along northbound I-495 between Old Dominion Drive and Georgetown Pike.





# 95 Express Lanes Opitz Boulevard Ramp Project

- \$69.7 million project under design
- Constructing south-facing, reversible ramp from Opitz Boulevard bridge to 95 Express Lanes
- Provide sidewalk along the north side of Opitz Boulevard bridge
- Relocate existing slip ramp from southbound I-95 general purpose lanes to south of Dale Boulevard
- VDOT working with Transurban to implement
- Construction began October 2022
- Ramp scheduled to open summer/fall 2024; final project completion late 2024

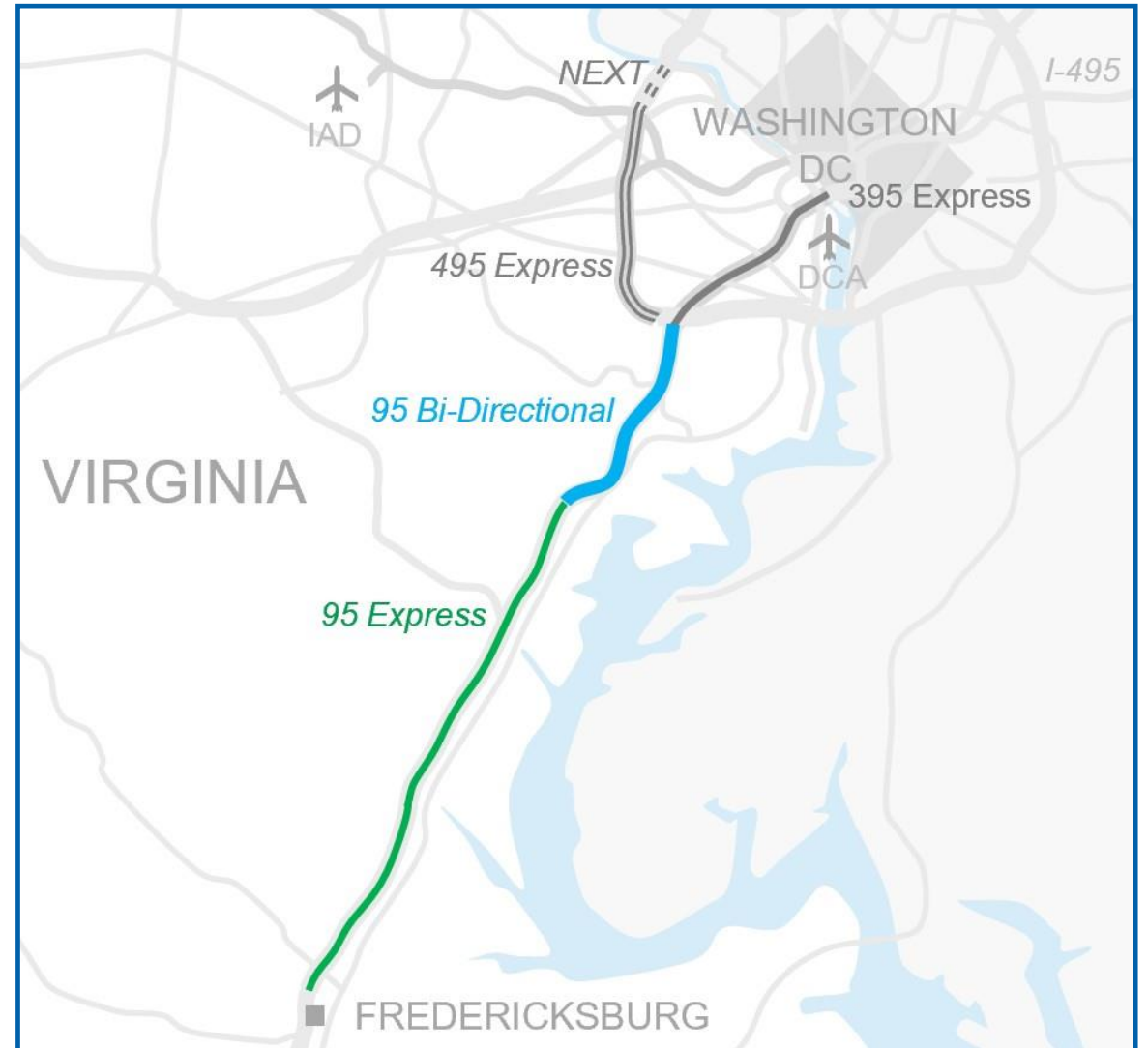


*Rendering of Proposed Improvements*



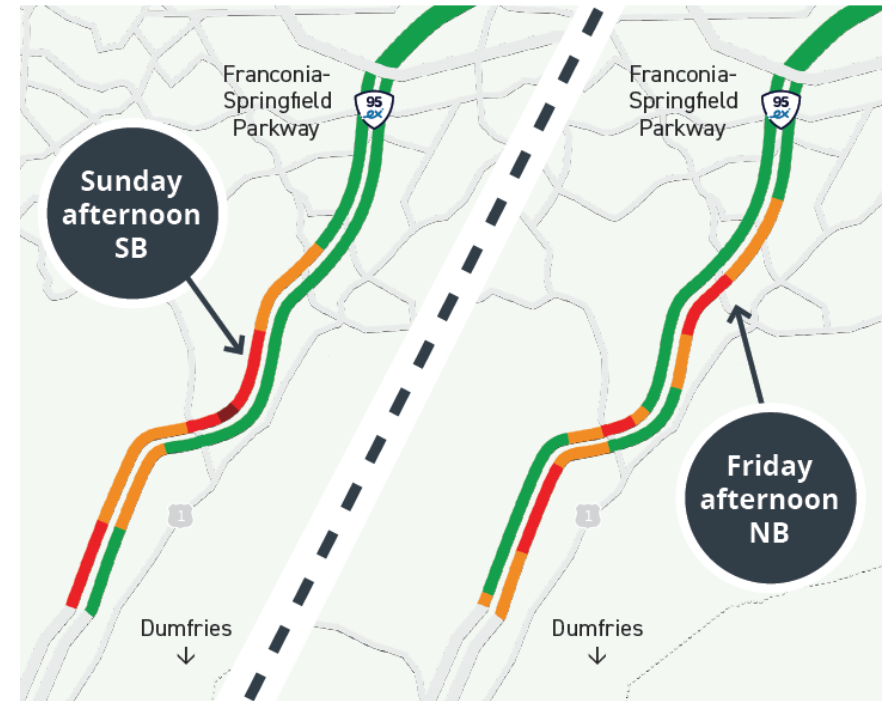
# 95 Express Lanes Bi-Directional Project - Introduction

- Existing 95 Express Lanes are reversible and operate only in peak direction
- 95 Express Lanes Bi-Directional Project would add about 11 miles of new capacity and counter-peak direction travel on existing 95 Express Lanes between Franconia-Springfield Parkway in Fairfax County and Opitz Boulevard in Prince William County
- VDOT and Transurban executed a Development Framework Agreement
- VDOT leading environmental assessment in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



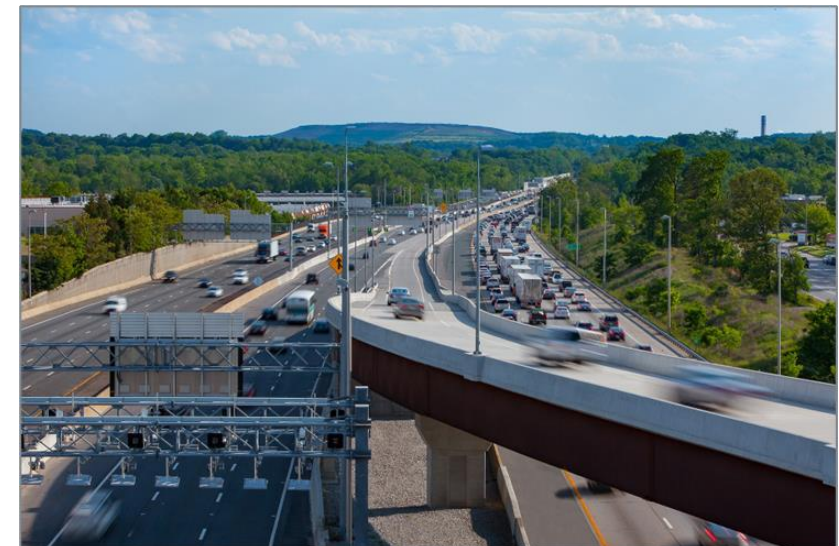
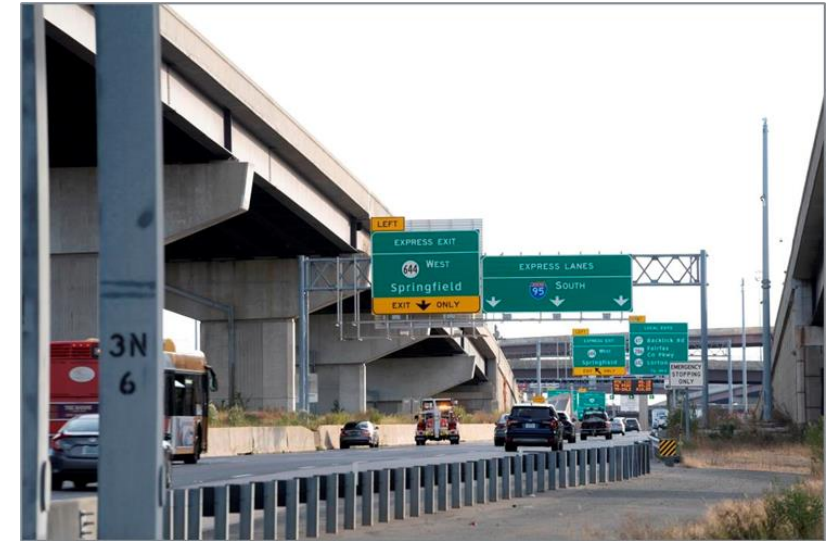
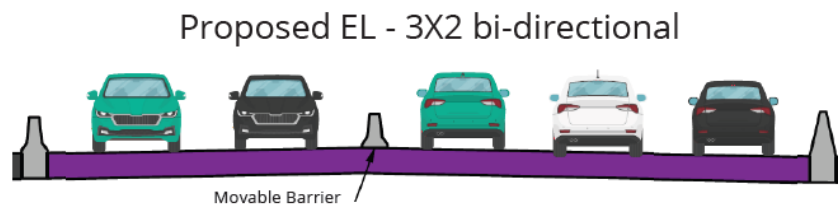
# Existing Conditions

- I-95 general purpose lanes experience daily and weekend congestion and poor reliability in both peak and counter-peak directions
- Due to Northern Virginia's growth, these conditions are expected to continue
- VDOT's I-95 Corridor Improvement Plan (September 2021) identified multimodal solutions and managed lanes as key to improving mobility on I-95
- **#1 driver complaint about 95 Express Lanes is that they are going in the opposite direction**

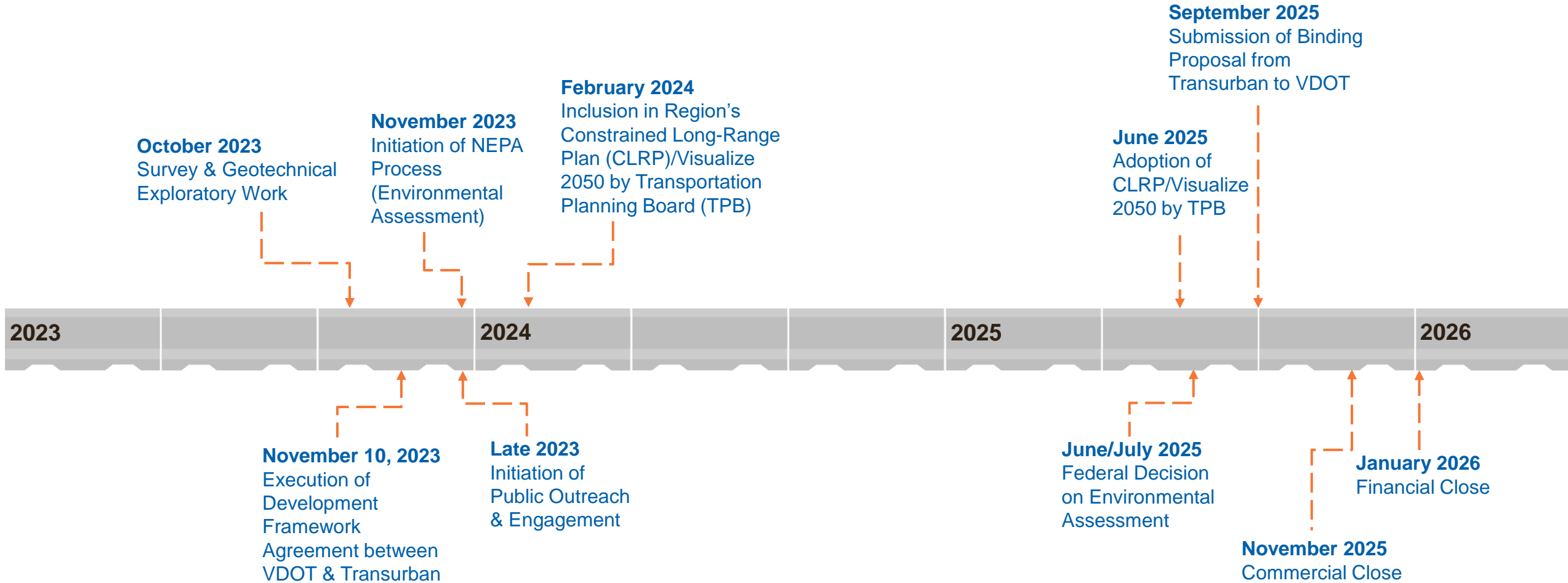


# Benefits of 95 Express Lanes Bi-Directional Project

- Increases 95 Express Lanes capacity in counter-peak direction – enabling efficient travel in both directions along I-95 corridor
- Provides new travel choices for even more express lanes users who want a faster and more reliable trip – including drivers who choose to pay a toll, and carpoolers (HOV-3+) and bus riders who travel toll free
- Provides access and seamless connectivity to overall Northern Virginia Express Lanes network for more people
- Reduces congestion for all I-95 travelers (general purpose and express)



# Schedule of 95 Express Lanes Bi-Directional Project



# 495 Southside Express Lanes Study - Update

- The I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study (495 Southside Study) is an environmental study to potentially extend the Express Lanes system on the southern section of I-495 (Capital Beltway)
- VDOT is coordinating the study with
  - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
  - Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
  - Other federal, state, regional, and local agencies in Virginia and Maryland

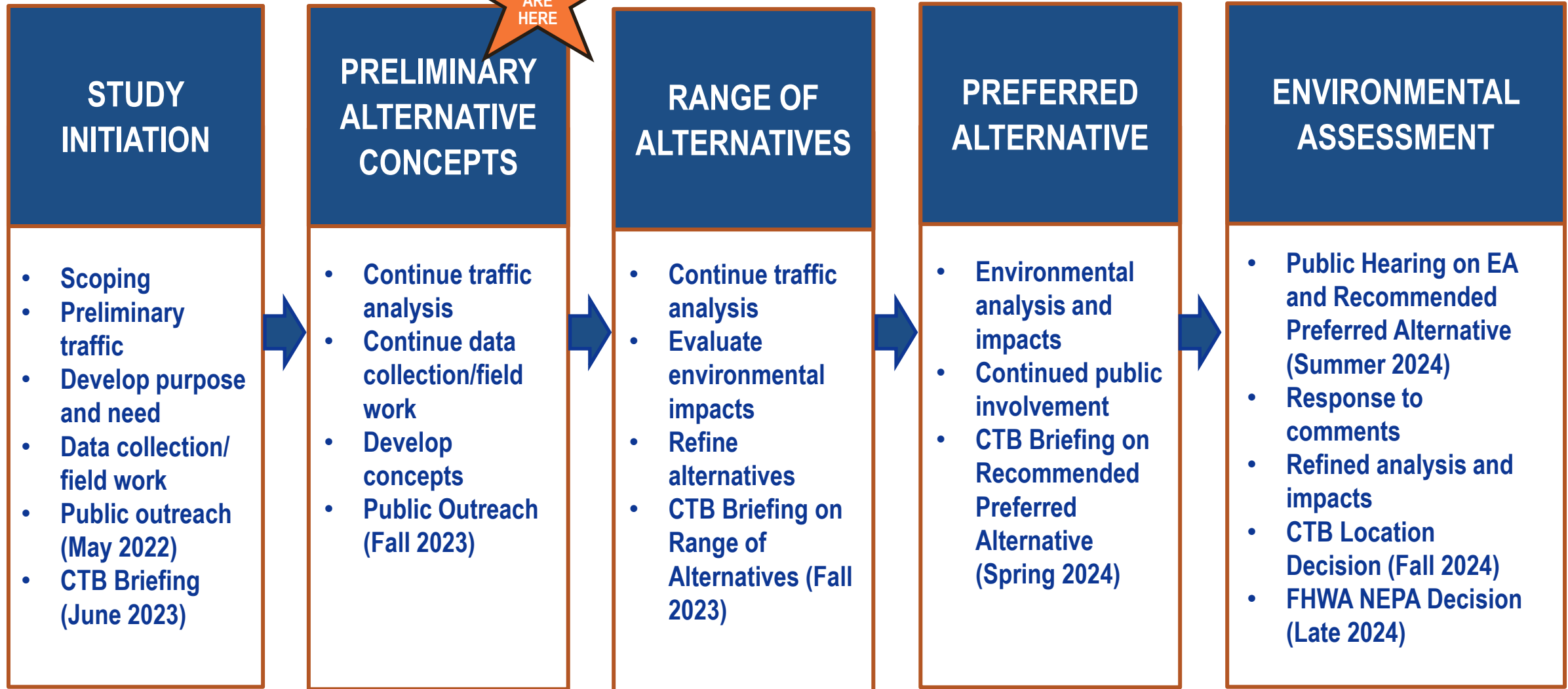


# Study Area

- 11 miles of the southern section of I-495 (Capital Beltway)
- Springfield interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) in Fairfax County, VA to the MD 210 interchange in Prince George's County, MD
- The study area is the last section of I-495 in Virginia where Express Lanes have not been implemented



# Study Process & Schedule





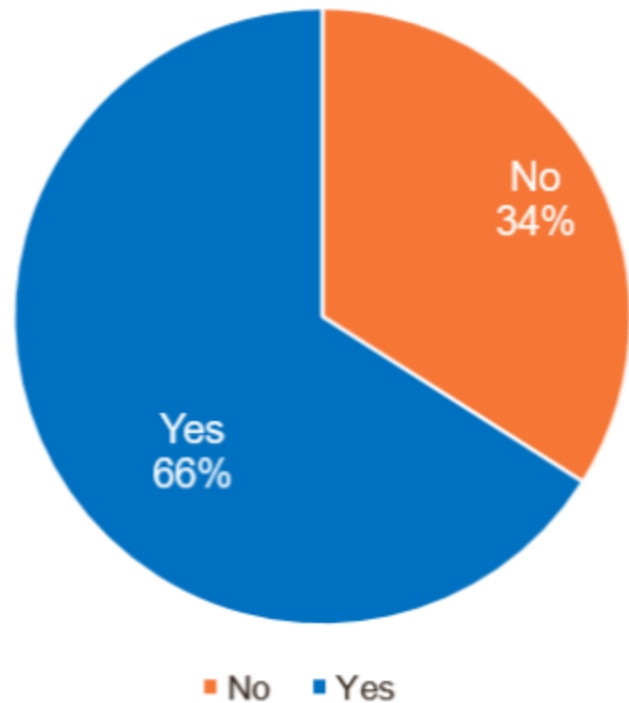
# Sept. 2023 Public Information Meetings Comment Summary

Meeting Date	Submission Method	No. of Submissions
Virtual - September 12	Formal Q&A Session (Verbal and Chat feature)	48
Oxon Hill- September 13	Formal Q&A Session	7
	Comment Form/Survey	3
Alexandria- September 19	Formal Q&A Session	18
	Comment Form/Survey	6
Springfield- September 20	Formal Q&A Session	11
	Comment Form/Survey	4
	Oral Comment (Court Reporter)	1

- In addition to the 98 submissions received during the PIMs, 236 submissions were received through other methods between August 30 and October 10:
  - Online Comment Form/Survey Respondents - 68
  - Emails- 152\* (104 were Form letters)
  - Agency and Organization letters- 11
  - Phone- 1
- Total of 330 Comments were received

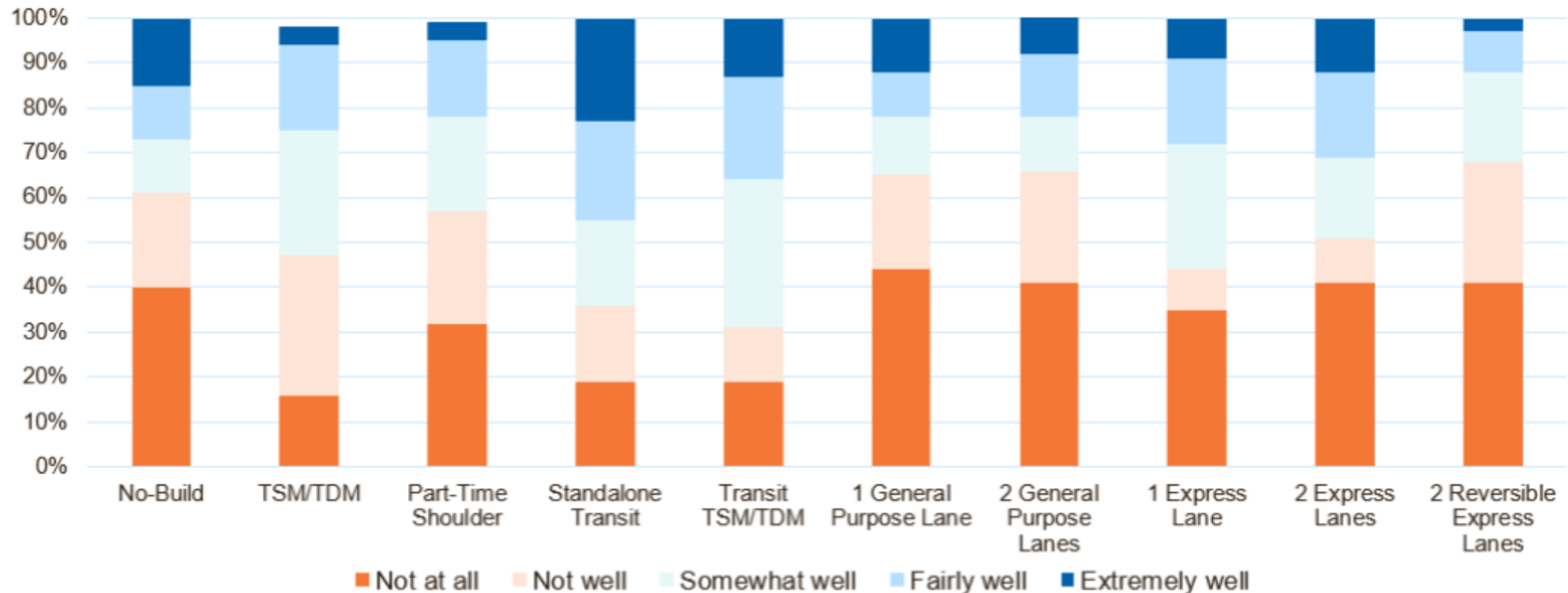
# Online Form Response Summary

Do you feel improvements to I-495 are needed within the study area?



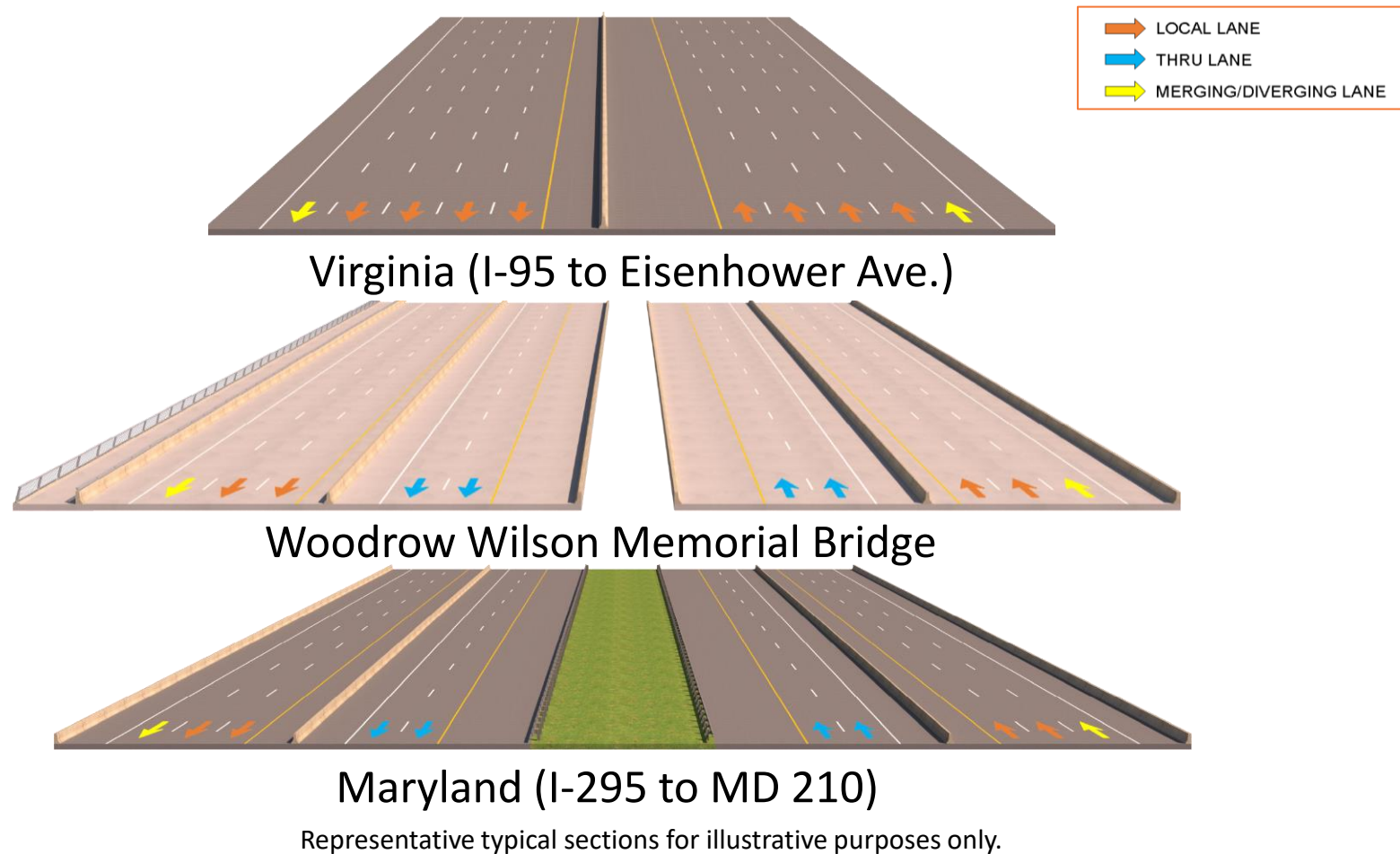
# Online Form Response Summary

How well do you think the following preliminary alternative concepts address the transportation needs identified for the study area?



# VDOT's Recommended Range of Alternatives

**No-Build:** Required by NEPA as a benchmark for comparison

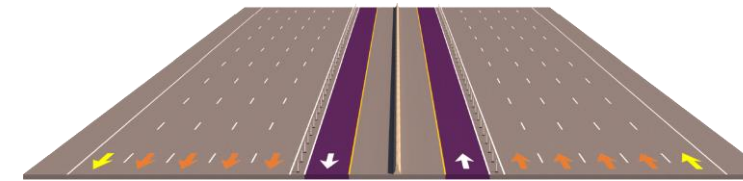
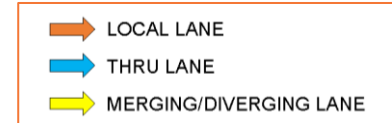


# VDOT's Recommended Range of Alternatives

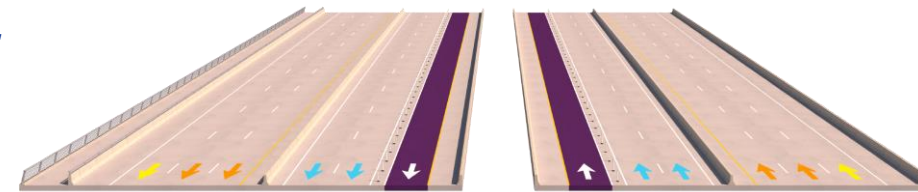
## 1 Express Lane: Add one buffer separated express lane in each direction

### • How concept meets Purpose and Need

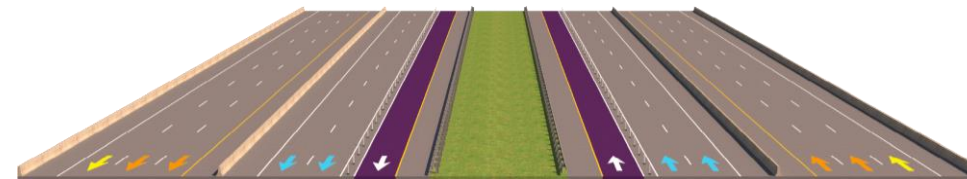
- **System Continuity:**
  - ✓ Completes the Express Lanes network in the Northern Virginia
- **Travel Choices:**
  - ✓ Provides additional travel choice for carpools, vanpools, and transit vehicles not currently incentivized in corridor
- **Reduce Congestion and Improve Travel Reliability:**
  - ✓ Improves travel speed, decreases travel time, and makes vehicular travel more reliable
- **Improve Safety:**
  - ✓ Reducing congestion improves safety
- **Consistency/Compatibility with Regional Plans:**
  - ✓ Provides Multi-modal solutions as outlined in plans



Virginia (I-95 to Eisenhower Ave.)



Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge



Maryland (I-295 to MD 210)

Representative typical sections for illustrative purposes only.

# VDOT's Recommended Range of Alternatives

## 2 Express Lanes: Add two buffer separated express lanes in each direction

- How concept meets Purpose and Need

- **System Continuity:**

- ✓ Completes the Express Lanes network in the Northern Virginia

- **Travel Choices:**

- ✓ Provides additional travel choice for carpools, vanpools, and transit vehicles not currently incentivized in corridor

- **Reduce Congestion and Improve Travel Reliability:**

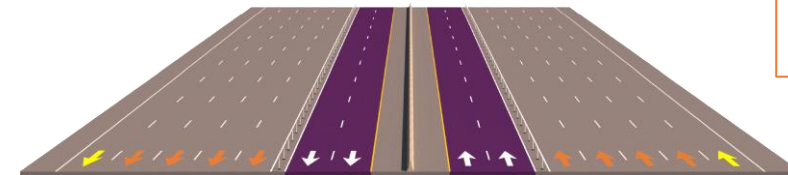
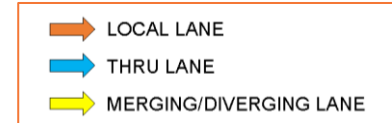
- ✓ Improves travel speed, decreases travel time, and makes vehicular travel more reliable

- **Improve Safety:**

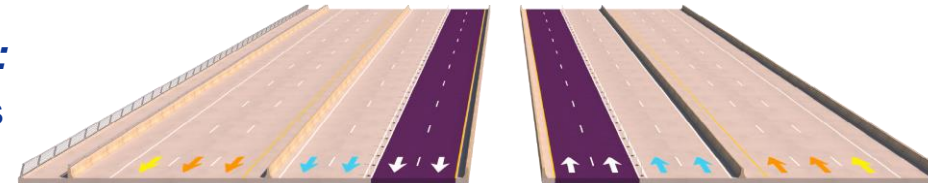
- ✓ Reducing congestion improves safety

- **Consistency/Compatibility with Regional Plans:**

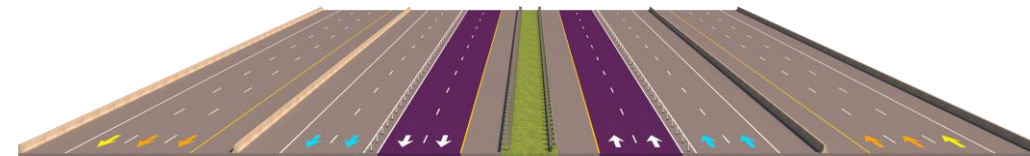
- ✓ Provides Multi-modal solutions as outlined in plans



Virginia (I-95 to Eisenhower Ave.)



Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge

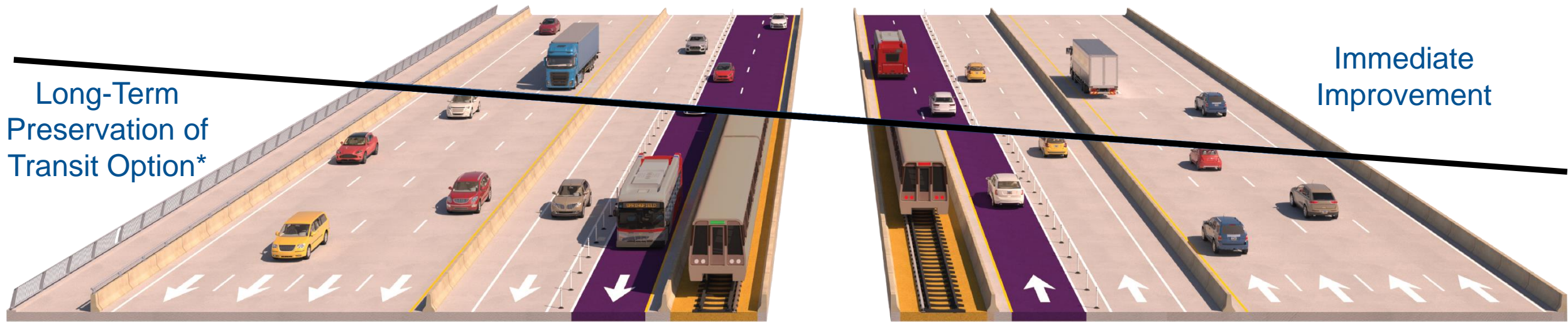


Maryland (I-295 to MD 210)

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# 2 Express Lanes Preliminary Alternative Concept

Long-term preservation of future transit (i.e. rail)



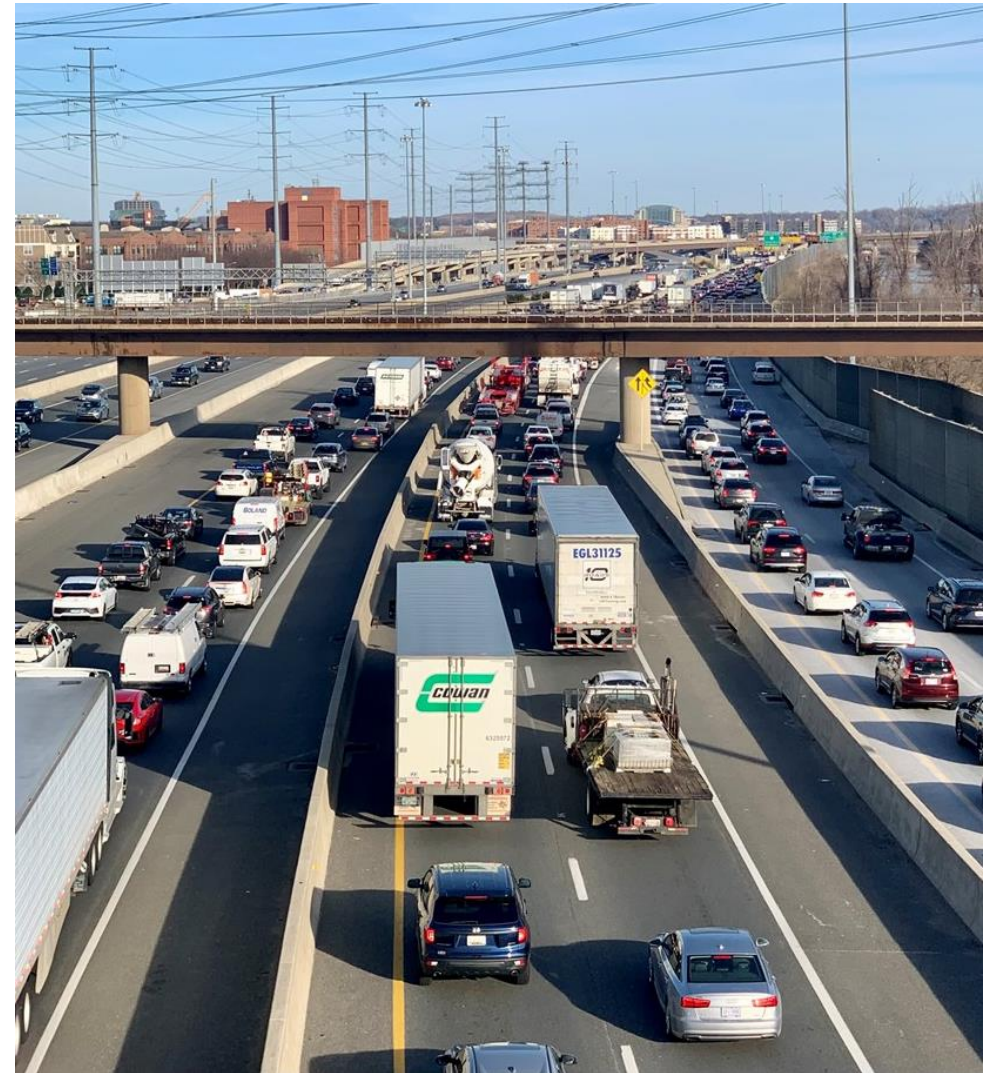
## I-495: Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge

\* Should Future Transit (i.e. rail) be Provided by Others

Representative typical sections for illustrative purposes only.

# DRPT I-495 Southside Capital Beltway Transit Study

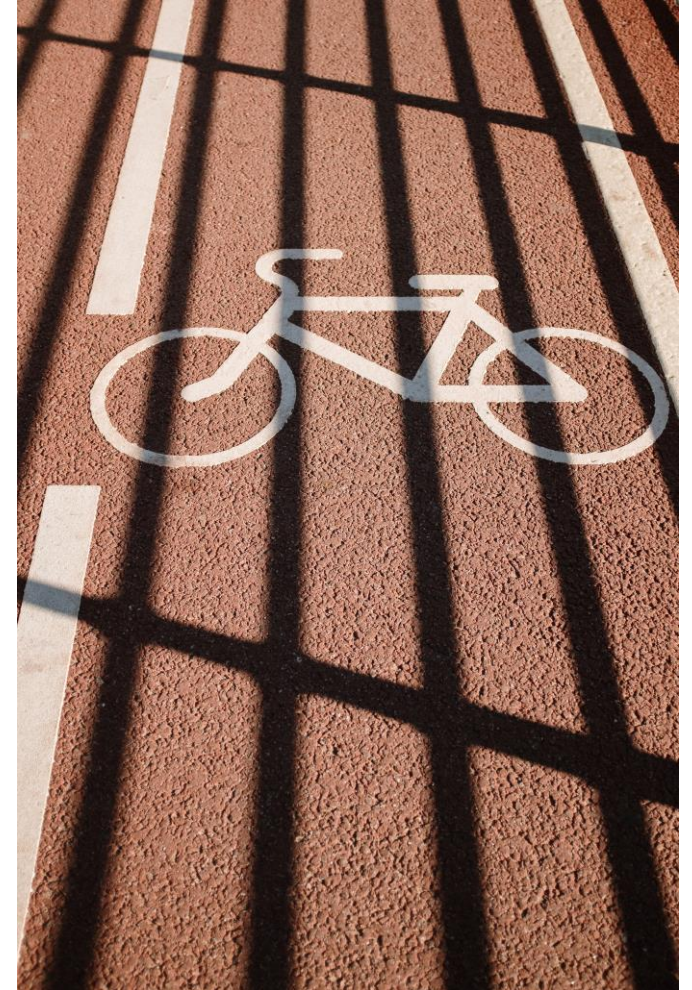
- The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) conducted a separate transit and transportation demand management (TDM) study
- Transit and TDM Study will inform VDOT's I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study
- DRPT Study Recommendations:
  1. **New or enhanced transit services that could benefit from an expanded express lanes network**
    - New bus services (express, commuter and local)
    - Rail was determined to not be as cost-effective compared to bus options for moving a similar number of people in the corridor
    - Improvements in the I-495 Southside corridor should not preclude future rail
  2. **New Commuter Assistance Programs**
  3. **Technology to encourage use of transit and alternative transportation modes**





# Pedestrian and Bicyclist Considerations

- VDOT is coordinating with state and local agencies to identify planned pedestrian/bike facilities in the study area and to identify gaps in the existing network
- Input has been provided by Fairfax County, the City of Alexandria, Prince George's County, and the Maryland State Highway Administration
- Pedestrian and bike facilities will be considered with the Build Alternatives that are carried forward for detailed evaluation in the EA



# Next Steps

Activity	Timeframe
Agency Concurrence on Range of Alternatives	December 2023
Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) Briefing: Range of Alternatives	Early 2024
CTB Briefing: Recommend Preferred Alternative	Spring 2024
Public Hearing for EA and Recommended Preferred Alternative	Summer 2024
Agency Concurrence on Recommended Preferred Alternative	Fall 2024
CTB Decision on Preferred Alternative	Fall 2024
Federal Decision on Environmental Assessment	Late 2024

\*Anticipated study schedule is subject to change and will be coordinated as the study progresses

