VISUALIZE 2050
National Capital Region Transportation Plan

Frequently Asked Question

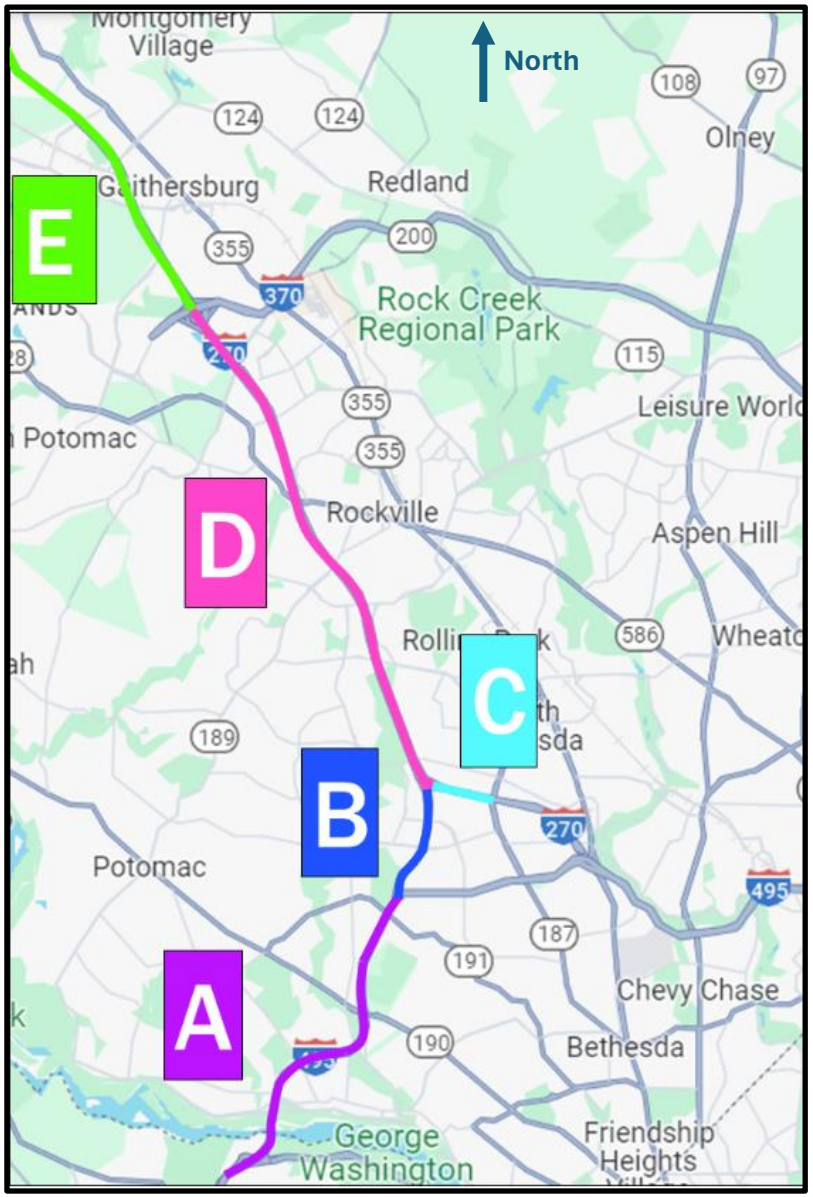
What express lanes projects are proposed in Maryland for Visualize 2050, and is it different from what was included in Visualize 2045?

The map shows five express lane segments proposed for inclusion in Visualize 2050. Each segment is detailed in the following table indicating the existing conditions, approved future conditions in Visualize 2045, and proposed conditions after re-evaluation of the projects for Visualize 2050. Additional project development activities provided by MDOT are attached.

ABBREVIATIONS: HOV = High Occupancy Vehicle
HOT = Express Toll Lanes

NOTES:

1) All existing HOV lanes are HOV2+ and currently operate in the peak period in the peak direction only. The HOV lanes are available to non-HOVs at other times.
2) It is proposed that the HOV lanes occupancy will change from 2+ to 3+ and the HOV lanes converted to HOT lanes to allow vehicles not meeting HOV occupancy requirements to use the lanes by paying a toll.
3) All HOT lanes will operate as HOT3+ on a 24/7 basis.
4) There will be 2 HOT lanes in each direction, except in segment C which will convert the existing 1 HOV lane in each direction to a HOT lane, and segment E, which may consider express lanes, but the specific configurations will be studied. Two HOT lanes will be constructed in each direction in segment A. Segment B and segment D will convert 1 HOV lane to a HOT lane and construct 1 HOT lane in each direction.



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UPDATED TPB PROJECT TITLE	SEGMENT	SEGMENT LIMITS	EXISTING	VISUALIZE 2045	VISUALIZE 2050
I-495/I-270Y (West Spur) Express Toll Lanes Widening: American Legion Bridge (including the bridge) to I-270 *(T11582, CE3863)*	**A**	I-495 (VA line to I-270 Western Spur)	8-10 general purpose lanes	8-10 general purpose lanes + 4 HOT lanes	8-10 general purpose lanes + 4 HOT lanes
	B	I-270 Western Spur	6-7 general purpose lanes of which 1 lane operates as HOV during the peak period in the peak direction	5-6 general purpose lanes + 4 HOT lanes	5-6 general purpose lanes + 4 HOT lanes
I-270 Express Toll Lanes Widening: MD 187 to I-370 *(CE3281)*	**C**	I-270 Eastern Spur (top of Western Spur to MD 187)	6 general purpose lanes of which 1 lane operates as HOV during the peak period in the peak direction	4 general purpose lanes + 4 HOT lanes	4 general purpose lanes + 2 HOT lanes
	D	I-270 (top of Spur to I-370)	8-11 general purpose lanes of which 1 lane operates as HOV during the peak period in the peak direction	7-10 general purpose lanes + 4 HOT lanes	7-10 general purpose lanes + 4 HOT lanes
N/A	***E***	*I-270* *(I-370 to I-70)*	*4-11 general purpose lanes of which* *1 lane operates as HOV during the peak period in the peak direction* *(from Middlebrook Rd to I-370 southbound and from I-370 to MD 121 northbound)*	*4-10 general purpose lanes* + *4 HOT lanes*	*Not included in Visualize 2050 for construction. No change to existing configuration.* *Study only.*

AMERICAN LEGION BRIDGE +270

The American Legion Bridge+270 Corridor Program includes a set of activities to evaluate and implement multimodal strategies for addressing transportation challenges along the I-495 and I-270 corridors in a manner that is equitable and sustainable and addresses the core congestion relief needs of the National Capital region. Specific activities include:

- **Transit and Ridesharing.** Options include improving the MARC Brunswick line, bus rapid transit on parallel roads, commuter bus using managed lanes in the corridor and expansion of transportation demand management programs to incentivize people to not drive alone but carpool, take transit, shift travel times, or other ways to reduce single drivers on the road.
- **Transit-Oriented Development**. Identifying and supporting opportunities for transit-oriented development at transit stations within the corridor.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections.** Improved connections throughout the corridor with a focus on connecting transit, rideshare, rail, and existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- **Phased Approach to Managed Lanes.** Implementation of managed lanes will be phased, with the American Legion Bridge, I-495 to the I-270 West Spur, and the I-270 West Spur being the focus for initial implementation. The section from the I-270 West Spur to I-370, including through the City of Rockville, has been de-emphasized for the near-term and would be addressed in a later phase after stakeholder coordination. This phasing will allow for a rational and fiscally prudent phased development.
- **A Comprehensive Planning Strategy for I-270.** Evaluating multimodal options for enhancing mobility on the northern section of the I-270 corridor between I-370 and I-70 by beginning the I-270 from I-370 to I-70 environmental study.

State of good repair, safety, transit, and reliable active transportation needs for the aging American Legion Bridge and along the corridor will be addressed as part of this program. Most of the infrastructure in the corridor was originally constructed more than 60 years ago, cannot support today's transportation needs, and is not up to today's design standards. Considering the age, condition, and continued traffic expected to use the American Legion Bridge, it is anticipated the bridge will be in poor condition within the next ten years, unless significant preservation investments are made in the existing bridge. Activities to address the condition of the bridge deck require either lanes to be closed in each direction for the duration of construction or a wider bridge to be constructed. The traffic backups and safety issues associated with closing one or more lanes for the duration of construction, which would be many years, make it infeasible to repair the bridge deck without widening the bridge. Considering all the factors, a bridge replacement would be the most efficient long-term approach.

While replacing the American Legion Bridge, new bridge lanes would also provide a new bicycle-pedestrian path connection over the Potomac River between Maryland and Virginia and the means for fast and convenient transit connections between Maryland and Virginia. Additional travel lane improvements between the American Legion Bridge and transit stations, such as the Westfield Montgomery Transit Center located off the I-270 West Spur, are included in this program, and are needed to provide viable bus transit while allowing buses to move at or near free-flow speeds.

I-270 North. The I-270 from the Intercounty Connector/I-370 to I-70 will take a comprehensive look at the transportation needs and opportunities within the corridor. A range of equitable and environmentally sensitive transportation solutions including transit and transportation demand management will be considered. Options will be considered for near-term, mid-term, and long-term implementation.

Program Status

MDOT is currently advancing design activities associated with American Legion Bridge, I-495 to the I-270 West Spur, and the I-270 West Spur with a goal to deliver that section first. MDOT is working to refine the transit, ridesharing, transit-oriented development, and bicycle-pedestrian program and pursuing federal grants to implement the program.

MDOT intends to launch the I-270 North NEPA study in fall of this year.

At this juncture, MDOT is not currently advancing design activities associated with the section of I-270 between Westlake Terrace and I-370. MDOT will continue to engage with stakeholders as we plan the future of that section of the corridor.