

## I. Master Plan

Interstate 95 (I-95) has been identified as the “East’s Coast Main Street” because it provides connection for regional traffic from Maine to Florida. The Maryland section of I-95 is approximately 110 miles long and extends from the Delaware State Line to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (Virginia State Line). The Maryland Transportation Authority (the Authority) owns, operates, and maintains I-95 in Maryland from south of Baltimore City north to the Delaware State Line.

Between 2000 and 2002 the Authority, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted the *I-95 Master Plan, I-95/I-895(N) Split to the Delaware State Line* (herein referred to as the I-95 Master Plan) study. The purpose of the study was to comprehensively identify long-range transportation needs that establish clear goals for system maintenance, preservation, and enhancement; and ensure development of environmentally sensitive and intermodal-friendly solutions for the 50 miles of I-95 known as the John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway (JFK).

During the I-95 Master Plan process, the Authority coordinated with local, State and Federal regulatory agencies. As a result, the agencies concurred on the need for four independent projects, the termini for each project, and the concepts to be carried forward. The I-95 Master Plan identified the logical termini for the four independent projects that originated from the I-95 Master Plan:

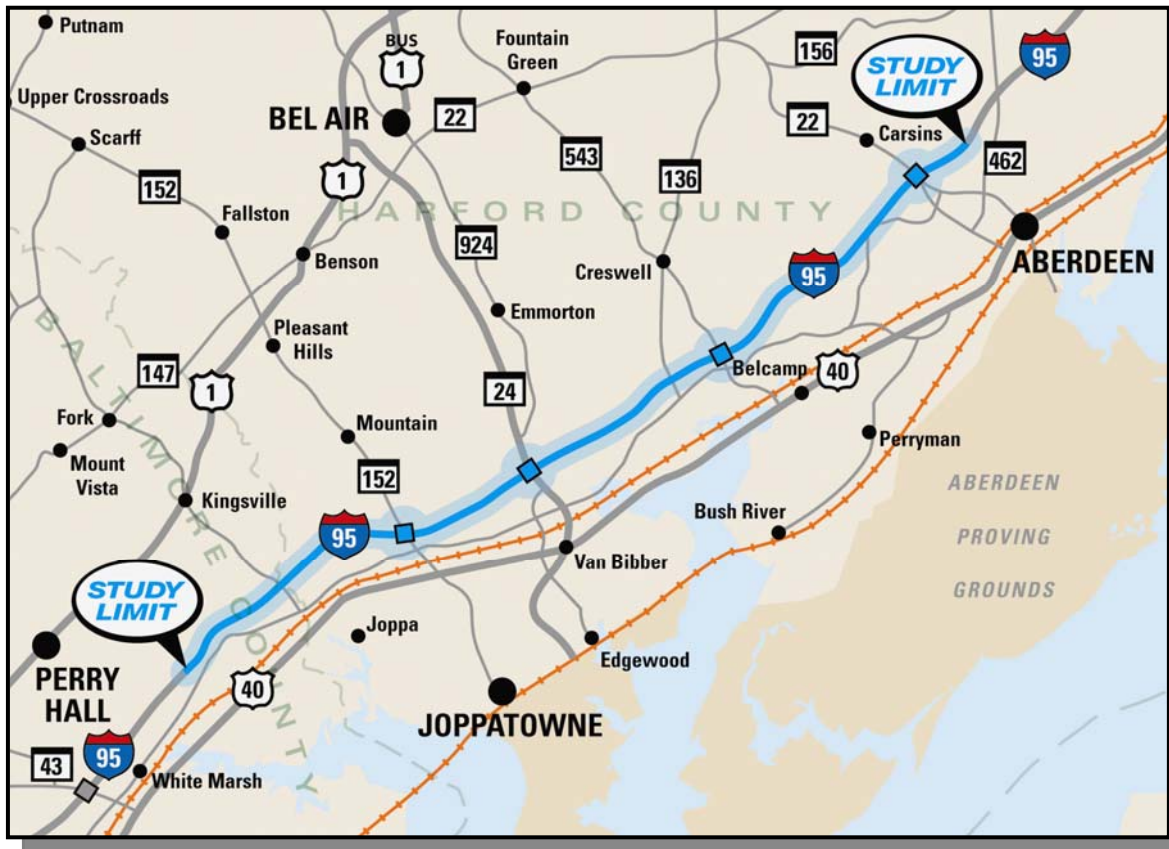
Section 100: I-95, I-895(N) Split to North of MD 43

Section 200: I-95, North of MD 43 to North of MD 22

Section 300: I-95, North of MD 22 to North of MD 222

Section 400: I-95, North of MD 222 to the Delaware State Line

The I-95 Master Plan was adopted by the Authority in 2003. Section 200 is the second project identified in the I-95 Master Plan to be initiated. The Section 200 corridor identified on the map below is 16 miles long.



Map 1 – Section 200 Study Area

The I-95 Master Plan recommended three concepts for additional study for Section 200 at the project planning phase. These concepts included the No-Build Alternate, General Purpose Lanes (GPL) Alternate, and Managed Lanes (ML) Alternate. The Authority developed preliminary alternates based on these concepts.

The definition of MLs encompasses a range of management strategies that may include restrictions relating to access locations (i.e. at ramps); vehicle class (i.e. cars, busses, trucks, occupancy, and commercial); time of day and/or toll options. MLs could

potentially have a shared use, such as serving commuter and transit traffic during peak hours and commercial traffic only during non-peak hours. The ML strategies could meet a specific individual or a combination of transportation goals. These achievable benefits include: increasing flexibility, providing choices, optimizing highway efficiency, providing reliable travel times, promoting transit, promoting public safety, reducing incident response times, improving work zone safety, and generating revenue.

On May 4, 2004 the Maryland Secretary of Transportation announced an Express Toll Lanes (ETL) initiative. Under this initiative, the Secretary has directed the Maryland Department of Transportation and Maryland Transportation Authority to consider implementing ETLs on several existing facilities in Maryland, including I-95. The ETL initiative involves the construction of new tolled lanes adjacent to existing free lanes. Tolls would be collected electronically, without the use of toll booths, and would vary by time of day and demand. The adjacent Section 100 project from the I-895 Split to North of MD 43 analyzed the various managed lane concepts including ETLs. In determining the best management strategy, the Authority considered the following factors: optimized operational efficiency, safety, congestion management and revenue production. Based upon that analysis the Authority selected the priced management strategy utilizing ETLs with variable or dynamic pricing. FHWA approved the priced management strategy utilizing ETLs. The ETL alternate was later selected as the preferred alternate for the Section 100 project and is currently under construction.

Section 200 has similar characteristics to the Section 100 Corridor. Therefore, similar operational efficiency, safety, congestion management and revenue production are anticipated in Section 200 with an ETL strategy. Introducing a different management strategy in Section 200 would introduce logistical problems and driver confusion at the limits of the two projects. Based on the above, the Authority decided to select ETLs as the management strategy for the Section 200 managed lanes alternate.