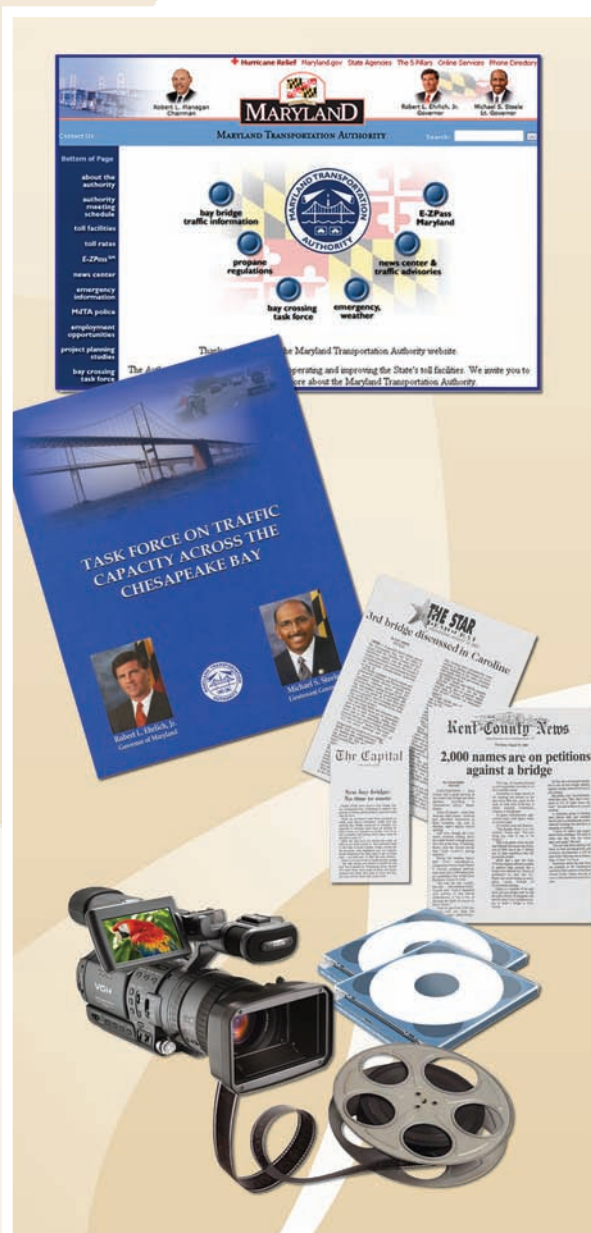




## 3. Public Involvement and Outreach

In addition to the Task Force meetings, public outreach and education were critical elements of the Task Force process. At the start of the process, an outreach plan was developed to ensure that elected officials, interest groups and the public within the counties surrounding the Chesapeake Bay were informed of the process and encouraged to give feedback. Informal outreach, such as the Task Force website, the 350-member mailing and email lists, attendance at local conferences, informational brochures and briefings to elected officials, was used throughout the process to disseminate information about the Task Force. Formal outreach was used to present information to the public as a series of workshops held in the Western and Eastern Shore counties. Each Task Force meeting was advertised in advance and open to the public. These meetings were held on both the Western and Eastern Shores to ensure equitable public participation.



# Public Involvement and Outreach

## Informal Outreach

At the beginning of the Task Force process, information packages were sent to a 350-member mailing list of potential interested parties, including federal, state and local elected officials, agencies, and special interest groups.

During the summer and early fall of 2005, the Authority contacted County Delegations, County Executives/County Councils and County Commissioners, and Mayors in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties, to offer opportunities to brief these officials on the Task Force's creation, mission, and goals prior to the public information meetings scheduled

for fall 2005. The Authority also contacted Chambers of Commerce, Tri-county councils and Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Many of the County Delegations coordinated with other local officials in their jurisdiction and met with the Authority. For a list of meetings held between the Authority and elected officials or interest groups please see Appendix B.

The Authority also participated in the following events to disseminate information to a broad audience:

- Maryland Association of Counties Conference
- Maryland State Fair
- County Engineers Association of Maryland Fall Conference.

Figure 7: Library Locations

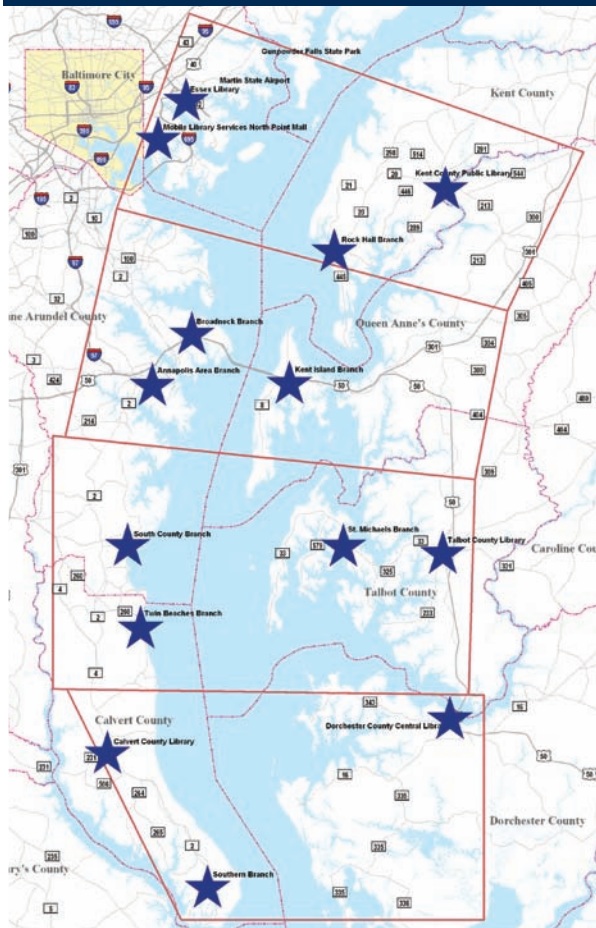
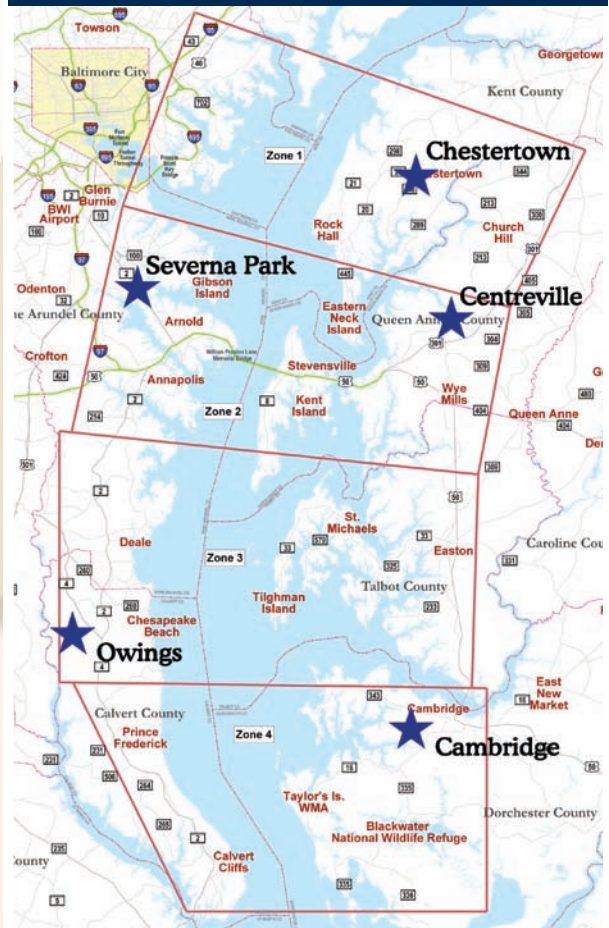


Figure 8: Public Meeting Locations



A Task Force brochure was created to distribute at these events as well as during briefings to elected officials. A project webpage, Bay Crossing Task Force, was added to the Authority's website ([www.mdtransportationauthority.com](http://www.mdtransportationauthority.com)) at the beginning of the process to keep the public informed of the process and to provide electronic copies of all materials developed for the Task Force. The public also had the opportunity to post comments and questions to the Authority and the Task Force via the website. The brochure was also posted on the project website. The webpage was updated promptly, following each Task Force meeting.

Each Task Force meeting was videotaped, and Meetings #4 and #5 were also simulcast on the Internet. The tapes were distributed to public and government access channels in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Harford, Queen Anne's, and Wicomico Counties and the Town of Easton to reach the cable broadcasting areas on each shore. These videos were broadcast from October 2005 through March 2006. Each meeting was aired up to twice a week for a 5 week period.

Task Force meeting materials, including printed copies of the Task Force Briefing Book, the 2004 Transportation Needs Report, and VHS or DVD copies of Task Force meetings, are available for public review at the following public libraries (Figure 7):

- Anne Arundel County (Broadneck, Annapolis Area, and South County)
- Baltimore County (Essex and North Point)

- Calvert County (Twin Beaches, Southern and Prince Frederick)
- Dorchester County Central Library
- Kent County (Chestertown and Rock Hall)
- Queen Anne's County
- Talbot County (Headquarters and St. Michaels)

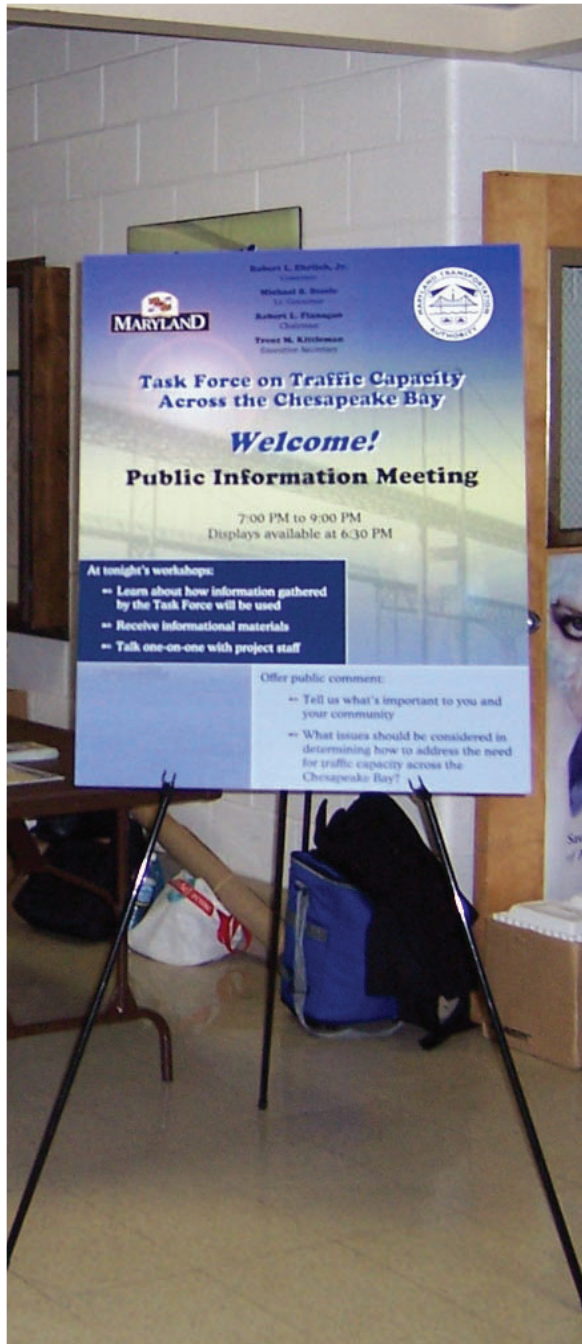
## *Public Information Meetings*

In addition to the ongoing informal outreach, the Authority held five public information meetings to present the information presented during the Task Force meetings, to a broader public audience. The Authority and Task Force members also sought public comments on issues related to transportation needs across the Chesapeake Bay. Ultimately, the public comments were used to help the Task Force understand the needs of Maryland's citizens on the issue of traffic across the Bay. The five meetings were held in Anne Arundel (Severna Park High School), Kent (Washington College), Queen Anne's (Queen Anne's County High School), Dorchester (Cambridge South Dorchester High School) and Calvert (Northern High School) Counties (see Figure 8). Task Force members were invited to attend the meetings in their respective areas. Each meeting was staffed by representatives from the Maryland Transportation Authority, the State Highway Administration, the Maryland Department of Transportation, and the consultant team. Each meeting was advertised in the local newspapers serving the meeting location. Table 4 shows the meeting dates, locations, and attendance.

*Table 4: Public Information Meetings*

Meeting	Date	Location	Attendance
1	October 18, 2005	Severna Park High School	15
2	October 25, 2005	Washington College	135
3	October 25, 2005	Queen Anne's County High School	35
4	October 27, 2005	Cambridge South Dorchester High School	45
5	November 3, 2005	Northern High School	60

# Public Involvement and Outreach



At the meetings, citizens were encouraged to sign up for the mailing list, sign up to speak, review the materials presented, and to fill out comment cards. The meetings were divided into two parts: (1) a workshop where citizens reviewed information the Task Force had received and (2) an opportunity for citizens to formally express their views on the work of the Task Force.

The workshop consisted of eight stations: (1) Task Force Purpose and Membership, (2) Bay Bridge History, (3) Transportation Needs Report Findings, (4) Construction of Major Crossings, (5) Traffic Forecasts, (6) Environmental Review and Regulatory Process, (7) Growth and Economic Development, and (8) Public Outreach. Staff members were available at each station to answer questions. All meeting materials have been posted to the project website at [www.mdtransportationauthority.com](http://www.mdtransportationauthority.com).

During the public comment portion of the meeting, a professional facilitator conducted each meeting to ensure that every person who wished to speak had the opportunity to do so. Members of the public raised similar concerns at each meeting. Appendix B includes the Summary of the Public Information Meetings, which was distributed to the Task Force members at Meeting #5.

## Summary of Public Outreach Efforts

This nearly year-long process of outreach has been integral in supplementing the information provided to the Task Force during the meetings. Issues raised by the public, through the Public Information Meetings and e-mails, will be considered as part of any future studies of traffic capacity across the Chesapeake Bay. Though the Authority continues to respond to comments submitted to the project website, the public outreach efforts through March 2006 are summarized in Table 5.

*Table 5: Summary of Public Outreach Efforts*

Outreach	Activities												
Mailing list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Received packet containing an introduction letter, the Transportation Needs Report Executive Summary, and Task Force brochures</li> <li>Elected officials and groups on this list were offered a briefing prior to the Fall Public Information Meetings</li> <li>Received updates of future Task Force events</li> </ul>												
Brochures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation Needs Report Executive Summary, December 2004</li> <li>Task Force on Traffic Capacity Across the Chesapeake Bay, December 2004</li> <li>Public Information Meetings Brochure, October 2005</li> </ul>												
Information Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each location contains a printed copy of the Briefing Book and videos of the Task Force meetings and what format(s) the library has for public viewing for several months</li> <li>Briefing Books were updated promptly after each meeting</li> </ul>												
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign up for the Task Force Mailing List</li> <li>Submit comments by email or by mail</li> <li>View and download the Bay Bridge Transportation Needs Report and the Task Force Briefing Book (by chapter or full document)</li> <li>View slide presentations and all materials provided to the Task Force members for each Task Force meeting</li> <li>View web cast of Meetings #4 and #5 immediately following and for 30 days after each meeting (625 viewed Meeting #4 and 369 viewed Meeting #5)</li> <li>Virtual Public Meeting – view all display boards presented at the Public Information Meetings</li> <li>Website hits: <table border="0"> <tr> <td>April 2005: 809</td> <td>Aug. 2005: 1,536</td> <td>Dec. 2005: 1,103</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 2005: 1,478</td> <td>Sept. 2005: 1,346</td> <td>Jan. 2006: 1,178</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 2005: 1,694</td> <td>Oct. 2005: 1,445</td> <td>Feb. 2006: 981</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July 2005: 2,140</td> <td>Nov. 2005: 1,190</td> <td>March 2006: 809</td> </tr> </table> </li> </ul>	April 2005: 809	Aug. 2005: 1,536	Dec. 2005: 1,103	May 2005: 1,478	Sept. 2005: 1,346	Jan. 2006: 1,178	June 2005: 1,694	Oct. 2005: 1,445	Feb. 2006: 981	July 2005: 2,140	Nov. 2005: 1,190	March 2006: 809
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July 2005: 2,140	Nov. 2005: 1,190	March 2006: 809											
Briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90 individuals contacted</li> <li>29 briefings held</li> </ul>												
Public events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maryland Association of Counties Conference, Ocean City, MD, August 17-20, 2005</li> <li>Maryland State Fair, Timonium, MD, August 26- September 5, 2005</li> <li>County Engineers Association of Maryland Fall Conference, Ocean City, MD September 8-9, 2005</li> </ul>												
Public Information Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consisted of informational workshops and a forum for citizen comments</li> <li>Citizens encouraged to speak, fill out comment cards and visit the Task Force website for more information</li> <li>Virtual Meeting on website for those who could not attend a meeting</li> <li>Advertisements offered assistance to persons with special needs</li> </ul>												
Government and Public Access Channels	<p>The following channels aired videos of each Task Force meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anne Arundel Community Television, Channel 98</li> <li>Baltimore Comcast Cable Channel 25</li> <li>Calvert County Cable Channel 6</li> <li>Harford Cable Network</li> <li>Queen Anne’s County TV Channel 3</li> <li>Midshore Community TV (Channel 15 Easton)</li> <li>PAC 14, Salisbury</li> <li>Channels aired videos beginning from October, 2005 to March, 2006</li> </ul>												