



HARRY W.
NICE
BRIDGE

IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



Toll Free: (866) 713-1596
Web: mdtransportationauthority.com

ALTERNATES PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

MARYLAND

Thursday, May 31, 2007

5-8 p.m.

Dr. Thomas L. Higdon
Elementary School
12872 Rock Point Road
Newburg, Md. 20664

VIRGINIA

Thursday, June 7, 2007

5-8 p.m.

Potomac Elementary School
16495 15th Street
Dahlgren, Va. 22448

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Where is the Study Area?

The study area of the Nice Bridge Improvement Project extends from just east of Route 206 in King George County, Va. along US 301 to just north of MD 234 in Charles County, Md.

STUDY AREA



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the Maryland Transportation Authority's (MdTA / "The Authority") Nice Bridge Improvement Project.

These Alternates Public Workshops are an opportunity for the Study Team to provide information on the project Purpose and Need, the preliminary alternates, and the assessment of the surrounding environment. In addition, these workshops allow stakeholders to provide feedback to the Study Team.

Please take a moment to visit the different stations at the workshop, which provide information relevant to the Nice Bridge Improvement Project. Study Team members are available at the stations to receive comments and answer questions.

You may also provide comments or ask questions by filling out a comment card and placing it in the Comment Box located at the welcome table.

Please visit the Nice Bridge project web page at www.mdtransportationauthority.com (Capital Projects link) where you can attend a "virtual public workshop," and browse information from the workshop stations at your leisure. You can also submit comments and questions and join the project mailing list.

Thank you for your participation, and we look forward to your continued involvement in the study.



View of Harry W. Nice Bridge from Maryland shoreline

Project Background

The project planning study for the Harry W. Nice Bridge Improvement Project kicked off in summer 2006. The Maryland Transportation Authority, which owns and operates Maryland's seven toll facilities including the Nice Bridge, is conducting the study in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

As part of the evaluation, here are some of the topics that the study is exploring:

- Investigating ways to improve traffic flow on the Nice Bridge;
- Evaluating current and future traffic conditions and travel patterns;
- Becoming better informed about the motorists, communities, and businesses that are served by the Nice Bridge, and
- Assessing the surrounding environment.

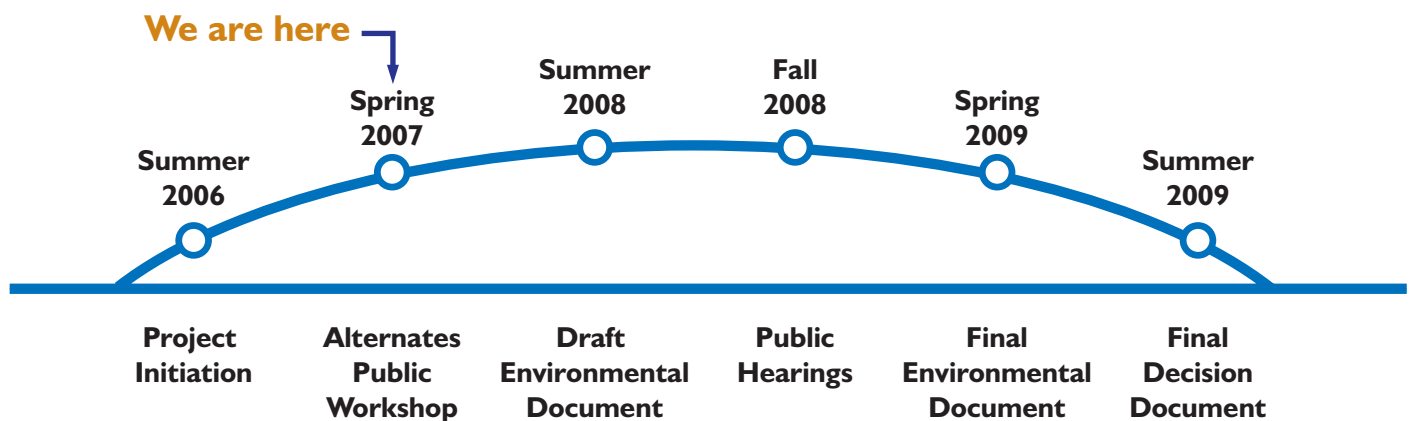


Maryland shoreline at the Aqualand Marina



Traveling northbound across the Nice Bridge

PROJECT TIMELINE



PURPOSE

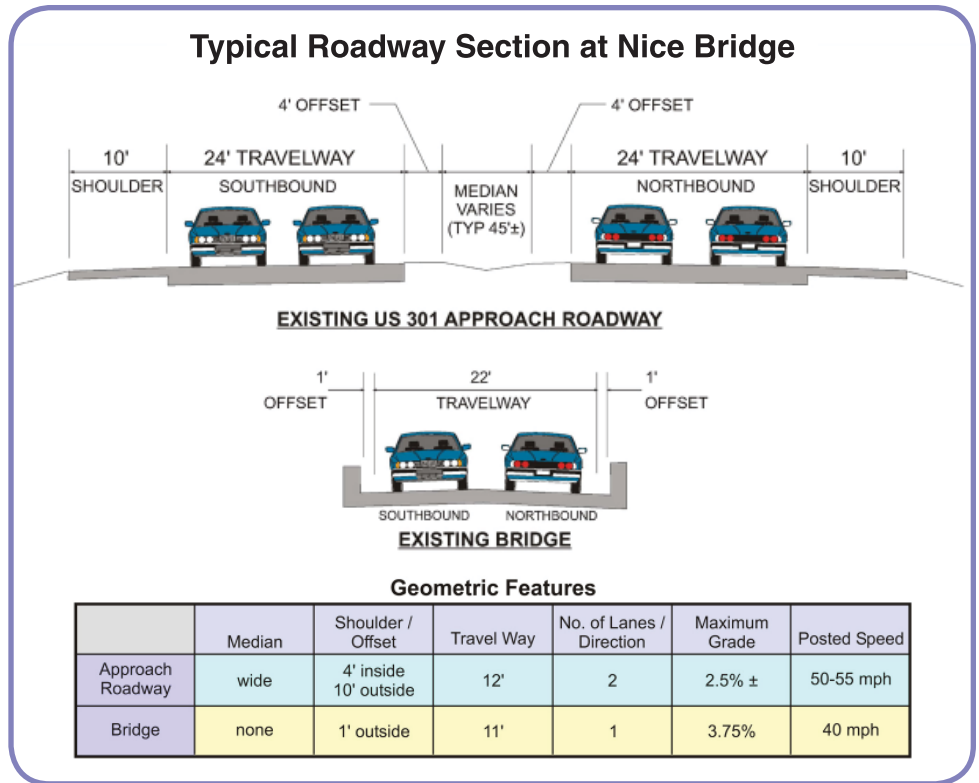
The purpose of the Nice Bridge Improvement Project is to:

- Provide a Potomac River crossing that conforms with existing roadway approaches to the existing crossing;
- Improve traffic operations and safety at the crossing; and
- Reduce impacts to traffic flow during maintenance, renovation and wide-load crossings.

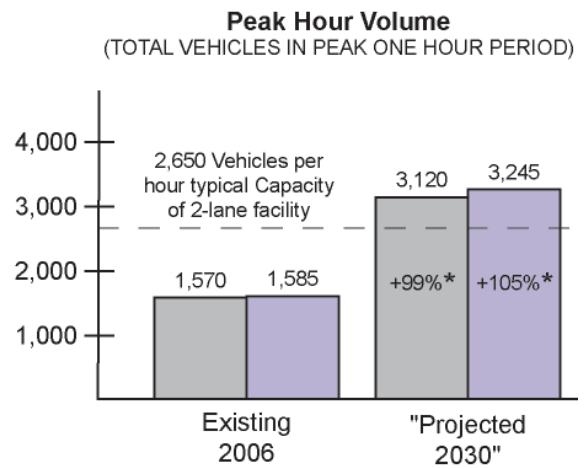
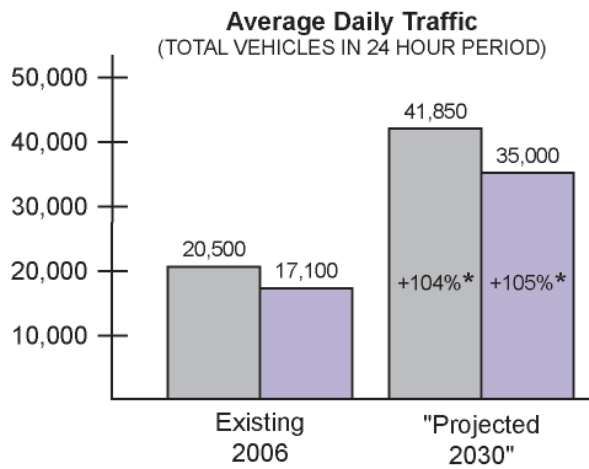
NEED

This project is needed to address the following conditions at the Nice Bridge:

- Bridge roadway features, including the lack of median barrier and shoulder area, narrow roadway widths and inconsistent number of travel lanes and greater vertical grade as compared to approach roadways;
- Projected peak-hour traffic demand that exceeds current bridge capacity;
- Extensive weekend and holiday traffic back-ups;
- Long-term single-lane closures or complete nighttime bridge closures for scheduled bridge renovation in near future;
- Frequency of truck related and opposite direction crashes, and
- Transportation significance of the facility



Travel Demand at Nice Bridge

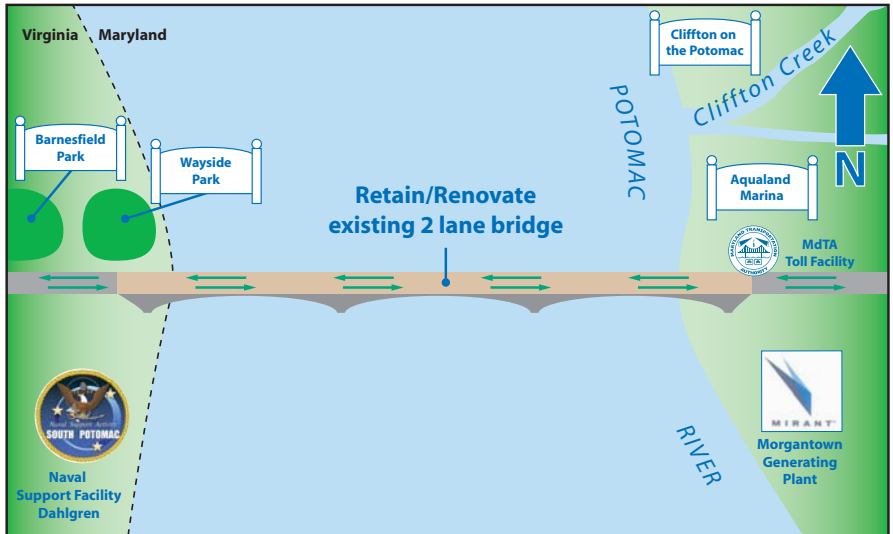
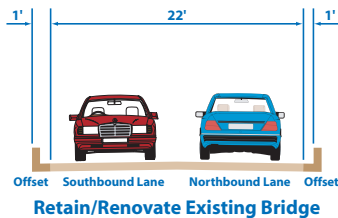


Description of Preliminary Alternates

In addition to the No-Build Alternate (Alternate 1), several build preliminary alternates are being considered at this stage of the project. The following graphic depictions of each alternate are not to scale and are for conceptual purposes only.

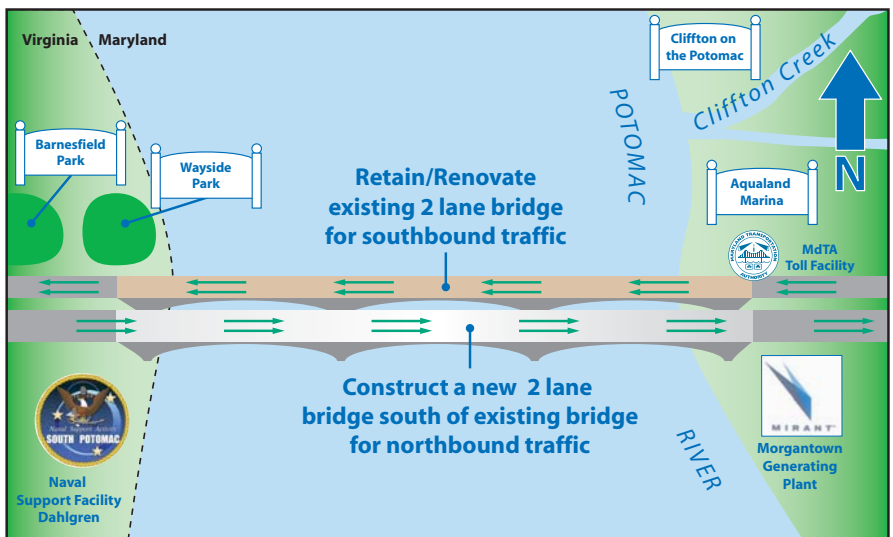
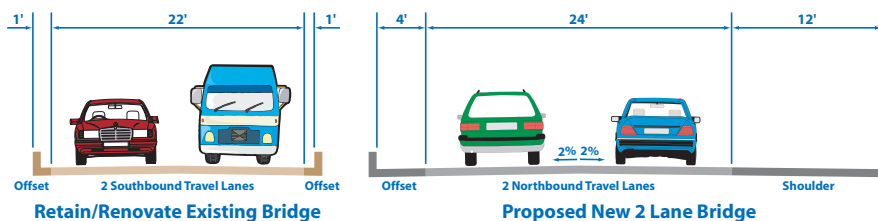
ALTERNATE 1 / NO-BUILD

The No-Build Alternate consists of scheduled maintenance and safety improvements to the existing bridge structure. No additional capacity or geometric improvements would be provided with this alternate. The existing bridge would require major renovation in this alternate including replacement of the existing roadway deck surface.

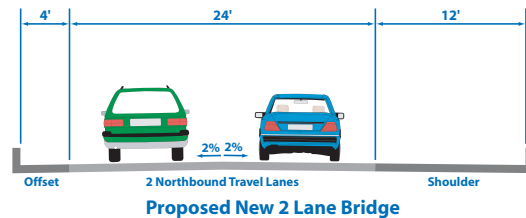
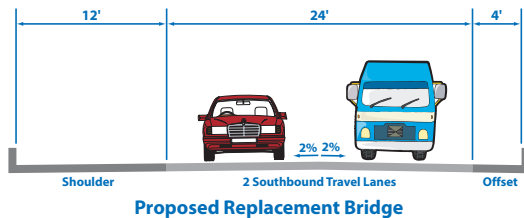
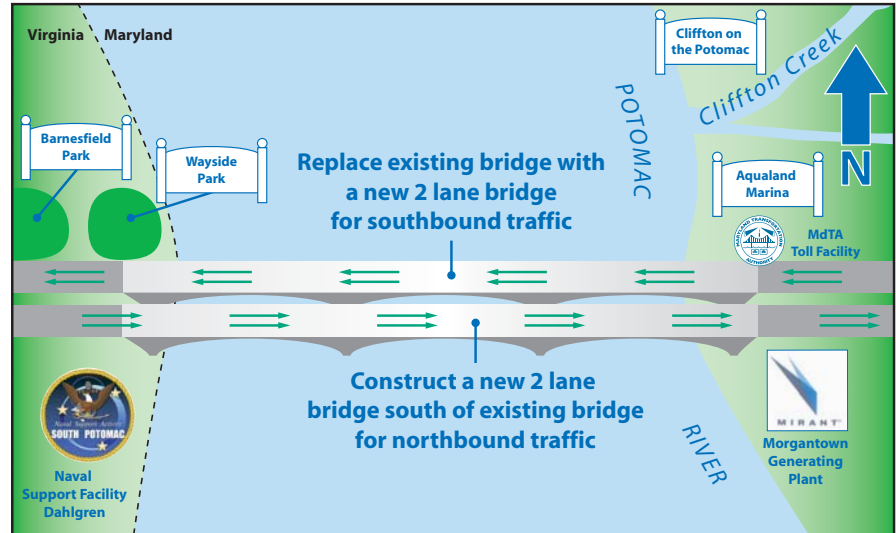


ALTERNATE 2

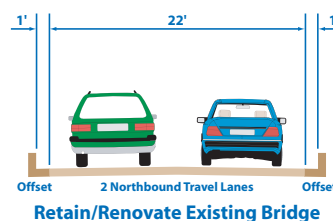
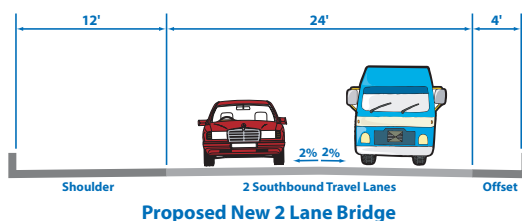
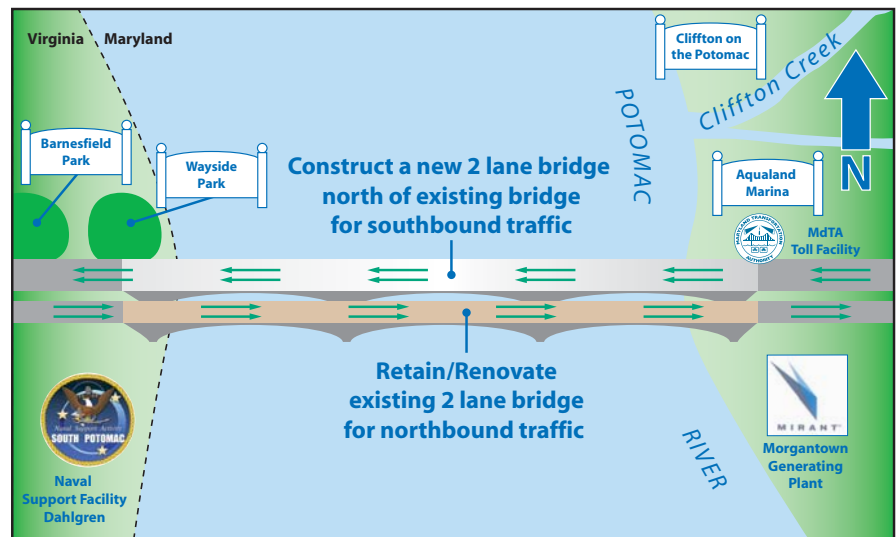
Consists of the construction of a new, two-lane parallel structure to the south of the existing bridge for northbound traffic. This new structure consists of a 40' wide travel width (2 - 12' travel lanes, 12' outside shoulder and 4' offset to a concrete barrier). The existing two-lane bridge with a 24' width would be renovated and remain in use for southbound traffic.



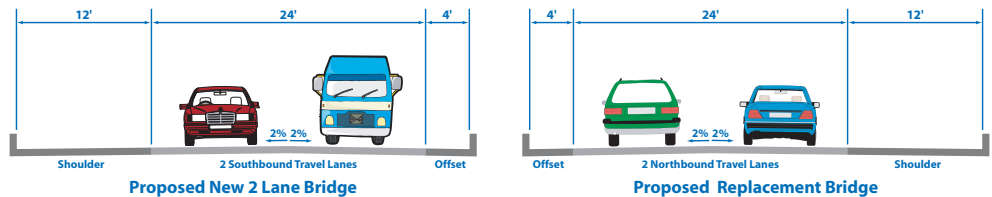
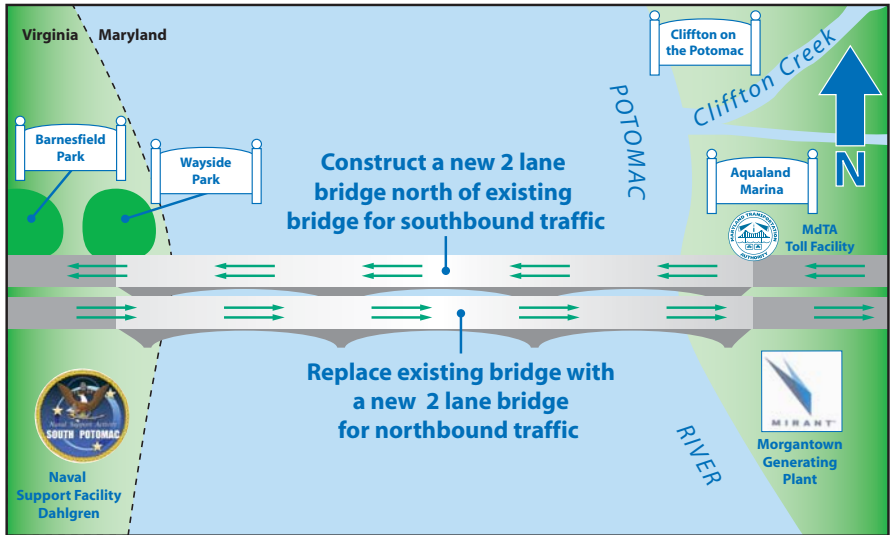
ALTERNATE 3 – Similar to Alternate 2 this Alternate consists of the construction of a new, two-lane parallel structure to the south of the existing bridge for northbound traffic. This new structure consists of a 40' wide travel width (2 - 12' travel lanes, 12' outside shoulder and 4' offset to a concrete barrier). The existing two-lane bridge would be replaced with a new structure for southbound traffic consisting of a similar 40' wide travel width (2 - 12' travel lanes, 12' outside shoulder and 4' offset to a concrete barrier).



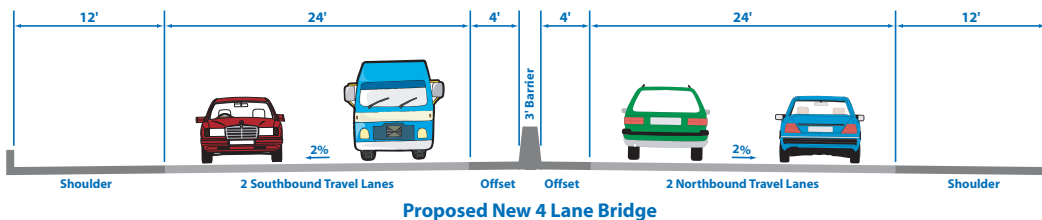
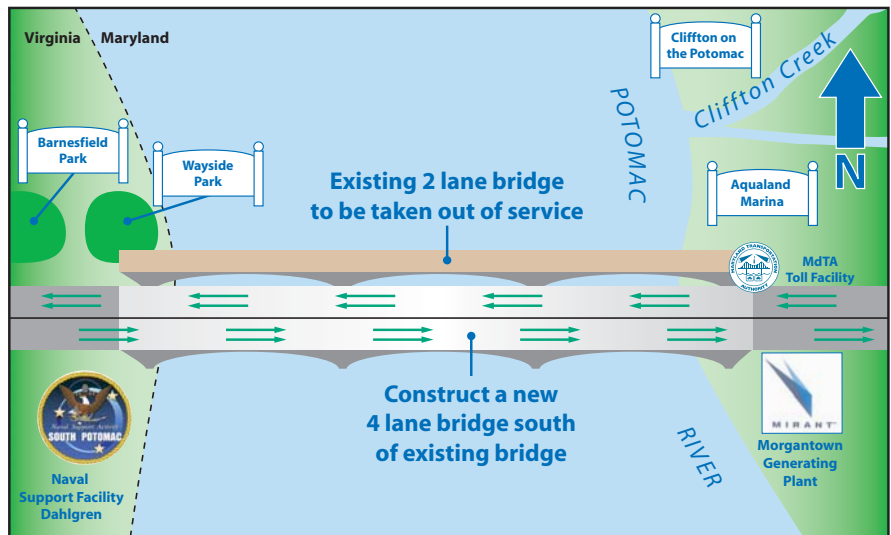
ALTERNATE 4 – Consists of the construction of a new, two-lane parallel structure to the north of the existing bridge for southbound traffic. This new structure consists of a 40' wide travel width (2 - 12' travel lanes, 12' outside shoulder and 4' offset to a concrete barrier). The existing two-lane bridge with a 24' width would be renovated and remain in use for northbound traffic.



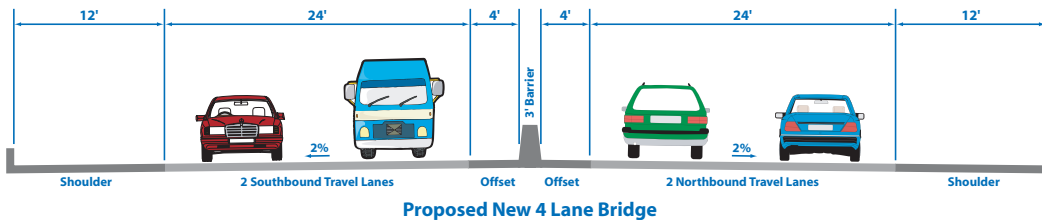
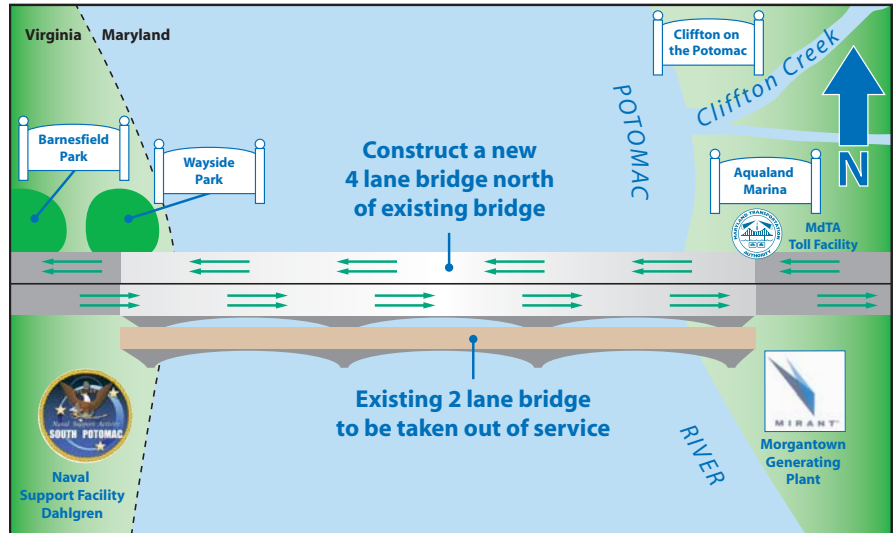
ALTERNATE 5 – Similar to Alternate 4 this Alternate consists of the construction of a new, two-lane parallel structure to the north of the existing bridge for southbound traffic. This new structure consists of a 40' wide travel width (2 - 12' travel lanes, 12' outside shoulder and 4' offset to a concrete barrier). The existing two-lane bridge would be replaced with a new structure for northbound traffic consisting of a similar 40' wide travel width (2 - 12' travel lanes, 12' outside shoulder and 4' offset to a concrete barrier).



ALTERNATE 6 – Consists of the construction of a new, four-lane parallel structure to the south of the existing bridge for all traffic. This new structure consists of an 83' wide travel width (4 - 12' travel lanes, two for northbound and two for southbound traffic, 12' outside shoulder in both directions, a 4' inside offset in both directions to the 3' median concrete barrier). The existing two-lane bridge would be taken out of service.



ALTERNATE 7 – Consists of the construction of a new four-lane parallel structure to the north of the existing bridge for all traffic. This new structure consists of an 83' wide travel width (4 - 12' travel lanes, two for northbound and two for southbound traffic, 12' outside shoulder in both directions, a 4' inside offset in both directions to the 3' median concrete barrier). The existing two-lane bridge would be taken out of service.



Design elements that will be considered with each Alternate:

- Open Road Tolling
- Off-line cash lanes
- Vehicle inspection areas
- Wide-load staging areas
- Authority Facility Campus Master Plan



The Maryland Transportation Authority Toll Facility at the Nice Bridge

Public Involvement

Public involvement is an important part of the planning study for the Nice Bridge Improvement Project. Public involvement ensures two-way communication between the public and the Study Team. Part of this communication comes from disseminating information on the study through newsletters, brochures, the project web page, fact sheets and public meetings. The other part is listening to the public's questions, comments and concerns and responding in a clear and timely manner and taking the comments into consideration during the evaluation and decision-making process.

Focus Group

Another form of communication for the project takes place through the Nice Bridge Improvement Project Focus Group.

In fall 2006, the project team contacted community leaders and commercial and business representatives to request their participation in the Focus Group. Serving as the voices for their communities and organizations, Focus Group members provide a local perspective on issues and potential improvement solutions at the Nice Bridge.

On Thursday, May 10, 2007, the Project Team met with the Focus Group for the second time to discuss the preliminary alternates and the information to be presented at the May 31st and June 7th Alternates Public Workshops. The group met at the Naval Support Facility Dahlgren in Dahlgren, Virginia.

The first Focus Group Meeting was held on Tuesday December 5, 2006, at the Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School in Newburg, Maryland. This meeting introduced the group to the project.

The Study Team will meet with the Focus Group periodically throughout the project planning study. More information on the group is available on the project web page.



Focus Group Meeting #1, December 2006, Newburg, Maryland

What We've Heard From You!

The public has provided feedback, by emails, letters and the project web page, to the Study Team since the Nice Bridge Improvement Project began. Concerns include:

- Backups resulting from holiday and weekend traffic;
- Safety on the bridge;
- Desire for bridge to have two lanes in each direction; and
- Difficulty accessing local communities when there are backups at the bridge.

Assessing the Surrounding Environment

The project planning study for the Nice Bridge Improvement Project includes identifying the natural environmental, community and cultural resources within the study area. An environmental inventory is conducted through observation of the study area, data research and coordination with the federal, state and local resource and regulatory agencies. The inventory provides information on the location and function of these valuable environmental resources.

Natural Environmental Resources

Natural environmental resources identified include:

- Potomac River
- Wetlands
- Floodplains
- Forests
- Wildlife (bald eagle habitat, waterfowl, colonial waterbirds)
- Fish spawning areas
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas (Maryland only)
- Natural Oyster Bars (Maryland only)
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation



Wayside Park, Virginia



Identifying and assessing water resources.



Barnesfield Park, Virginia

Community Resources

Identifying the places where people live, work and go to for recreation is also part of the environmental inventory. The community resources identified include:

- Residential Communities
- Businesses
- Schools
- Religious Institutions
- Aqualand Marina & Campground
- Morgantown Generating Plant
- Potomac Gateway Welcome Center
- Crain Memorial Visitors Center
- Wayside and Barnesfield Parks
- Naval Support Facility Dahlgren



Aqualand Marina & Campground, Maryland

Cultural Resources

Various historic and archeological resources are located throughout the Nice Bridge study area. The study team continues to work with federal, state and local agencies to ensure that all archeological and historic sites, structures and districts are identified and assessed.



What's Next?

Following the Alternates Public Workshops, the Nice Bridge Improvement Project will move forward by reviewing and responding to the comments received at the workshops. The Study Team will identify the alternates that will be studied in detail during the next stage of the project planning study. Detailed analyses will be conducted for each alternate carried forward to determine how each will affect the surrounding communities and natural environment. The public will continue to be updated on the study as it progresses and will have an opportunity to review these detailed analyses in the draft environmental document and at the fall 2008 Public Hearings.

Please continue to visit the project web page at www.mdtransportationauthority.com (Capital Projects link) where project updates will be posted and where you can submit a comment, ask a question or join the Project Mailing List.

Questions?

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