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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 20, 2019

Contact: John Sales, 410-537-1017

****REMINDER****

BAY CROSSING STUDY OPEN HOUSES START NEXT WEEK

Information Available on Federal Process, Preliminary Alternatives

BALTIMORE, MD – Open houses begin Tuesday, September 24, and continue through October to discuss preliminary alternatives as part of the Chesapeake Bay Crossing: Tier 1 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study being conducted by the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The purpose of the Bay Crossing Tier 1 Study is to consider two-mile wide corridor alternatives for providing additional capacity and access across the Chesapeake Bay in order to improve mobility, travel reliability and safety at the existing Bay Bridge. The three primary project needs identified for the study are adequate capacity, dependable and reliable travel times, and flexibility to support maintenance and incident management. In addition to these project needs, financial viability and environmental responsibility will be considered.

MDTA has scheduled the following open houses for public review and comment:

- **Tuesday, September 24, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** – Kent County High School, 25301 Lambs Meadow Road, Worton, Md.
- **Thursday, September 26, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** – Calvert High School, 600 Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick, Md.
- **Tuesday, October 1, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** – Middle River Middle School, 800 Middle River Road, Middle River, Md.
- **Wednesday, October 2, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** – Anne Arundel Community College, Student Union Dining Hall, 101 College Pkwy., Arnold, Md. Parking available in Lot A.
- **Thursday, October 3, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** – Talbot County Community Center, 10028 Ocean Gateway, Easton, Md.
- **Wednesday, October 9, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** – Kent Island High School, 900 Love Point Road, Stevensville, Md.

Please note that the October 9 open house replaces a September 25 event at Queen Anne's County High School that was rescheduled at the request of local officials. In addition to these events, a second open house in Anne Arundel County is being planned. Details will be announced when they are finalized.

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To view the display boards being provided at the public open houses, click here: [open house display boards](#). To stay tuned to all Bay Crossing Tier 1 Study updates or submit a comment online, please visit baycrossingstudy.com.

As outlined in the [August 29 press release](#), the Bay Crossing Tier 1 Study is taking four preliminary alternatives to the public: three Preliminary Corridor Alternatives Retained for Analysis and a no-build alternative. At the open houses, attendees will learn about the environmental review process for the Bay Crossing Tier 1 Study, the overall study schedule, public comments received to date, and the alternatives development, screening process and results. There will not be a formal presentation. Staff will be available to answer questions. The same information will be provided at each open house.

The display boards will show how the screening process determined that as a standalone option, none of the Modal and Operational Alternatives meet the project needs. Therefore, Modal and Operational Alternatives have been eliminated from further analysis in this Tier 1 NEPA study.

It's important to note that Transportation System Management and Travel Demand Management, Ferry Service and Bus Rapid Transit would be studied in combination with alignment alternatives if a Tier 2 NEPA moves forward. The NEPA process could move into the Tier 2 study if a Corridor Alternative were to be approved by the Federal Highway Administration in the Tier 1 Record of Decision expected in summer 2021.

All open house locations will be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Sign-language interpreters, non-English language interpreters, real-time captioning and assisted listening devices can be provided upon request. Individuals requesting these accommodations or auxiliary aids are asked to contact MDTA at 410-537-1000 (711 for MD Relay) no later than three business days before the open house date they wish to attend.

NEXT STEPS:

After this round of open houses, the MDTA will begin analyzing the Corridor Alternatives Retained for Analysis and developing the Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement.

There will be more opportunities for the public to get involved during the study's public hearings, which are anticipated to be held in fall 2020. At these public hearings, the MDTA will present the results of analyses that will have been conducted to date as well as the Recommended Preferred Corridor Alternative.

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The Final Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement and the Record of Decision are expected to be completed by summer 2021.

If a corridor alternative is approved by the Federal Highway Administration in the Tier 1 Record of Decision, the NEPA process could move into a Tier 2 study. If a Tier 2 study proceeds, the study would take several years to review potential alignments and develop a financial plan that could lead to the Federal Highway Administration ultimately approving one alignment in the Tier 2 Record of Decision.

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2019 Open Houses

-  Tuesday, September 24 (6-8 p.m.)
Kent County H.S.

-  Thursday, September 26 (6-8 p.m.)
Calvert H.S.

-  Tuesday, October 1 (6-8 p.m.)
Middle River Middle School

-  Wednesday, October 2 (6-8 p.m.)
**Anne Arundel Community College
Student Union (SUN) Dining Hall
(Use Parking Lot A)**

-  Thursday, October 3 (6-8 p.m.)
Talbot County Community Center

-  Wednesday, October 9 (6-8 p.m.)
Kent Island H.S.