



OPENING OF FIRST SEGMENT OF THE ICC (CONTRACT A) IN THE FALL OF 2010 March 19, 2008

The first segment of the Intercounty Connector (ICC) will be completed and is planned to be opened to traffic by the fall of 2010, approximately 12 to 15 months prior to opening of the remaining segments connecting to I-95. This seven-mile segment of the ICC (also referred to as Contract A) between I-270/I-370 and MD 97 (Georgia Avenue) was advertised for construction first because it will help relieve traffic congestion and provide a safer travel route for motorists currently using some of the most congested secondary roadways in the area. Opening this segment to traffic will have immediate and measurable benefits to all people that currently use these secondary roads, whether for access to home, work or other activities.

This segment of the ICC will serve to relieve traffic congestion at a number of major intersections and along several segments of highly congested roadways. For instance, the volume of traffic along portions of Shady Grove Road, Rockville Pike, Muncaster Mill Road, Norbeck Road, and Randolph Road are expected to be reduced, some by as much as 30% to 40%. These are nearly immediate benefits that the ICC can provide to the users of these roads and to the neighbors living along them.

For METRO users that access the Shady Grove METRO Station via local roadways, this segment provides a high-quality, new connection to the station. In addition, MTA is studying the ability to provide an express bus service for this portion of the ICC, in advance of the ultimate service planned for 2012.

As approved in the May, 2006 Record of Decision, the ICC will be operated as a toll facility. The Maryland Transportation Authority (Maryland's toll agency) will own and operate the ICC. Toll collection will be state-of-the-art, with congestion managed variable rate tolls collected at highway speeds. The Authority has not yet set the toll rates for the ICC; rates will be established in late 2009 or early 2010, in the 12-month period prior to the opening of the first segment. Given that rates have not yet been established, it is not possible to predict what revenues would be during the period in which the first segment of the ICC between I-270/I-370 and MD 97 (Georgia Avenue) alone is open to traffic.

The first segment of the ICC will not only bring traffic and safety benefits to the residents of the communities between I-270 and Georgia Avenue, but also to all travelers who use these secondary roads. Those travelers trying to access jobs will have a choice starting in late 2010 for this portion of their trip. Many of the secondary roads between I-270 and Georgia Avenue are also experiencing an unusually high volume of accidents, and they all have accident rates significantly higher than the rate for a highway designed like the ICC. The rate, intensity and frequency of accidents are expected to be reduced on many of these roadways once the first segment of the ICC is opened. Examples include, Muncaster Mill Road, Gude Drive, Norbeck Road, Midcounty Highway and portions of Randolph Road.

Opening the first segment of the ICC will require some temporary roadway connections for the eastern terminus of the ICC. The two options being considered are improvements in the vicinity of the existing MD 97 / MD 28 intersection or a temporary connection to MD 28 just west of the MD 28 overpass. These temporary improvements are needed to ensure an adequate connection to the ICC can be made so that all of the aforementioned benefits can be realized. As expected, the temporary connection will increase traffic along MD 28 until the remaining segments of the ICC are completed.