

Project Update and Field Activity Report

I-495 Express Lanes Northern Extension (495 NEXT) Project

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Current Field Activities

Georgetown Pike Bridge Demolition Progress

Demolition of the northern portion of the Georgetown Pike Bridge over I-495 (side facing the George Washington Memorial Parkway) began on July 28. The bridge demolition is on track to be completed this month. Removal of this section of the bridge is necessary to begin construction of the center pier of the replacement bridge.

The demolition work requires nighttime triple- and double-lane closures on the Beltway and periodic stoppages of all I-495 lanes for brief intervals of up to 30 minutes.

In addition, certain demolition activities require a detour for nighttime travelers on northbound George Washington Memorial Parkway who are bound for southbound I-495. Instead of merging onto the Beltway in the normal location, drivers are routed up the ramp to Georgetown Pike, through the traffic signal and down the ramp to I-495 South. [Learn more about this detour here.](#)



Crews are making progress on the demolition of the Georgetown Pike Bridge, as pictured above.

The demolition also requires periodic lane closures on the Georgetown Pike Bridge during off-peak travel periods (midday and overnight hours). Travelers approaching the bridge should anticipate delays and plan their trips accordingly.

While every effort is being made to control noise, demolition is unavoidably noisy and must be performed during nighttime hours when Beltway traffic below the bridge is lightest and necessary lane closures can occur.

Following demolition, the northern portion of the bridge will be rebuilt. Traffic at that time will be shifted to the north and the southern portion of the bridge will be demolished and rebuilt.

Once completed in 2025, the reconfigured Georgetown Pike Interchange will provide several improvements over the existing interchange, including:

- A channelized, free-flow right turn from westbound Georgetown Pike to northbound I-495;
- An on-ramp to northbound I-495 that will provide increased merge distance; and
- A wider Georgetown Pike Bridge that will include a six-foot-wide sidewalk and a trail connection to Scotts Run Nature Preserve.



Pictured above: The new configuration of the Georgetown Pike and Balls Hill Road intersection. [Click here](#) to view the 495 NEXT Interactive Map to explore other project elements and improvements being constructed.

Ramp from George Washington Memorial Parkway West to I-495 South Reduced to One Lane to Enable Construction Vehicle Haul Route

The ramp from westbound George Washington Memorial Parkway to southbound I-495 (Capital Beltway) recently was reduced from two lanes to one

lane to make room for a construction vehicle haul route that will be barrier-separated from traffic.



Travelers should expect possible delays when approaching and traveling on the narrowed ramp. This traffic change will be in effect throughout construction on the 495 NEXT project.

Tree and Vegetation Clearing

To make room for construction to occur within the 495 NEXT project corridor, it is necessary to clear trees and vegetation in certain locations. Crews have begun these clearing and grubbing activities at a few locations within VDOT right of way. Examples of where this work has or is occurring include:

- The northeast quadrant of the Georgetown Pike and Balls Hill Road intersection.
- Near the ramp from westbound George Washington Memorial Parkway to southbound I-495.
- Inside the northeast cloverleaf of the Dulles Corridor and I-495 interchange (not shown on the maps).



Tree clearing areas adjacent to the Beltway and George Washington Memorial Parkway ramps.



Tree clearing area at the intersection of Georgetown Pike and Balls Hill Road.

During the active construction phase, temporary erosion and sediment controls will be installed to prevent untreated stormwater from leaving the project limits. Temporary silt fences, rock check dams, and sediment traps will be used where required in cleared and grubbed areas.

Back to School Safety

With Fairfax County students returning to classrooms on August 22, pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic are expected to increase in the vicinity of the 495 NEXT project – at the same time that project construction activity is increasing.

No priority is more important than safety for the 495 NEXT project team. All meetings kick off with a focus on safety and every construction plan is built around keeping the public and workers safe. With schools going back into session, work crews are being reminded to take extra care on local roads.

Likewise, the project team urges Langley High School, Cooper Middle School, and Churchill Road Elementary School students and parents to pay extra attention when approaching and traveling through work zones. Unlike normal road conditions, work zones involve large equipment, traffic pattern changes, lane closures, uneven pavement and variable speed limits.

The following are several VDOT work zone safety tips for drivers and pedestrians:

- **Driving is the only thing you should be doing behind the wheel.** Avoid distractions such as eating and drinking, fiddling with the stereo or navigation system and using your phone.
- **When you approach a work zone, be alert and slow down.** Pay attention, move over, check your speed, be careful around large vehicles, do not change lanes, allow extra space between your vehicle and the one in front of you and stay cautious while driving through work zones.
- **Plan your travel ahead of time.** We try our best to give drivers as much notice as possible about work zones and lane closures, with the exception of emergencies. Plan your travel by downloading the 511 Virginia Traffic app from the [Apple Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#) to get information on traffic, lane closures, work zones and incidents.
- **Driving behavior can be changed through mindfulness.** The statistics of work zone fatalities are staggering. According to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, fatalities increased by 155% in 2021. The majority of lives lost in work zones are motorists, not road workers. Nationwide, 85% of those who died in a work zone were motorists or passengers. Work zone crashes occur on all types of roadways. Following the guidance on work zone signs will help to keep you and work crews safe while on the road.
- **A work zone may include lane closures, detours, full traffic stops and moving equipment.** On the interstate, full traffic stops are closely coordinated with law enforcement. Flagging operations where a flagger will alternate, one-way traffic is usually set up far enough away that there are no sudden stops for traffic. Expect changes in traffic patterns as a project progresses.

New Grant Program Launches to Benefit

495 NEXT Communities

Transurban, VDOT's private project partner and operator of the 495, 95 and 395 Express Lanes, has launched a new competitive grant program to benefit the local community as part of the 495 NEXT project. The 495 NEXT Community Grant program will award multiple grants every quarter, each worth up to \$3,000, to non-profit organizations, educational institutions and other entities that sustain, enhance or protect the local environment and neighborhoods in proximity to the 495 NEXT project corridor.

The funding will build on the success of Transurban's existing grant programs, which have contributed more than \$2.3 million to over 350 organizations in Northern Virginia over the past decade. These organizations are creating healthier communities across the region, providing educational programming, support to the vulnerable, environmental sustainability and other critical services.

Deadlines to apply for the Community Grant programs occur quarterly, with the next deadline set for September 30. To learn more about Transurban's Express Lanes Community Grant programs and how to apply, [click here](#).

Project Background

The I-495 Express Lanes Northern Extension (495 NEXT) project is extending the existing 495 Express Lanes north by two-and-a-half miles from the Dulles Corridor interchange to the George Washington Memorial Parkway interchange in the vicinity of the American Legion Bridge. The project will provide new and improved connections at the Dulles Corridor and George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Other project benefits include four miles of new bicycle and pedestrian connections including a shared-use path parallel to I-495 from Lewinsville Road to near Live Oak Drive, replacement or rehabilitation of seven bridges with pedestrian accommodations, replacement of nine existing noise walls and construction of a new noise wall along Live Oak Drive in the vicinity of the George Washington Memorial Parkway interchange, environmental improvements introducing stormwater management facilities and funding restoration of the stream at Scotts Run, and dedicated funding to support transit improvements in the corridor including new bus service over the American Legion Bridge.

495 NEXT is a public-private partnership project between the Commonwealth of Virginia and Transurban, operator of the existing 495 Express Lanes. Lane Construction is the design-build contractor for the project. The new extended lanes are scheduled to open in 2025.



Learn More About the Project

Check out www.495NEXT.org for additional information.

[Sign up](#) here to receive project email updates.



Questions?

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