

***The Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study:*** Uses readily available information, including existing data from the previous National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) evaluations, to compare impacts across current alignments. It will then determine unreasonable alignment(s) and will look to see if reasonable alignment(s) can be broken into smaller stand-alone projects that could be advanced as funding becomes available.

## Where has this project been?

- The project was initiated in March 1999 by PennDOT in a report titled, *Needs Analysis, US Route 219, I-68 (Maryland) to Somerset, Pennsylvania*.
- Work on the NEPA project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was initiated in 2002.
- Several meetings were held with the public between 2002 and 2007.
- As a result of the EIS analysis and public input, the project team identified four alternatives to advance – Alternatives D, AE, E, and E-Shift.
- In 2007, due to lack of funding, the project was placed on hold. In October 2014, the study was re-initiated with the intent to prepare an EIS, but again lack of funding stopped progress.

## Where are we now?

- Maryland Governor Larry Hogan announced the US 219/I-68 interchange & US 219 north of I-68 as one of the state's top priorities.
- MD SHA has funding for a stand-alone project once the planning phase is complete.
- PennDOT does not currently have any additional funding available.
- Due to the different funding levels available, both states are moving forward together with the PEL study to develop a plan for US 219 between both states.
- Once the PEL study is completed, Maryland would proceed with a project that has independent utility\* and logical termini.\*

## Where are we going?

- The study will proceed using existing data.
- Public outreach efforts are underway to gather information to be used to compare alignments.
- The PEL study will determine reasonable alternative(s) to be carried forward and whether portions of the alignment(s) can be constructed as stand-alone projects.
- MD SHA, PennDOT and FHWA will publish the results of the PEL study in July 2016.

### \* Independent Utility:

The project must be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements are made in the area. (i.e., Can the project stand on its own and satisfy the purpose and need for the project without building anything else?)

### \* Logical Termini:

(1) Rational end points for a transportation improvement; (2) rational end points for a review of the environmental impacts. Improvements cannot restrict alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.