

## MassDOT Cape Cod Canal Area Transportation Study

### Cape Cod Canal Area Transportation Study

#### RE: Sixth Working Group Meeting

*Date and Time:* September 28, 2016, 4pm-6pm

*Location:* Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Admiral's Hall, 101 Academy Drive, Buzzards Bay

*Attendees:* [Sign in names attached]

#### Meeting Notes:

Ethan Britland, MassDOT Project Manager, welcomed the Working Group members and thanked them for attending the meeting. Mr. Britland reviewed the meeting's agenda. The agenda was: Welcome and Introductions, Study Process and Framework, Study Framework: Goals and Objectives, Alternatives Development: Potential Short-, Mid-, and Long-Term Alternatives, and Schedule / Next Steps. Mr. Britland then introduced himself, representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Study Team before reminding the Working Group of the project's goals, objectives, and Study Area before turning the presentation over to Michael Paiewonsky, the Stantec Project Manager.

Mr. Paiewonsky told the Working Group that the Project Team is seeking alternatives that satisfy the study goals and objectives, are based on the issues, constraints, and opportunities that were identified in Task 2: Existing Conditions, Future Conditions, and Issues Evaluation, and minimize impacts to property, communities, and the environment. Mr. Paiewonsky reviewed several of the issues, constraints, and opportunities identified during Task 2 before introducing the types of short-, mid-, and long-term alternatives. Some of the issues identified in Task 2 were: severe congestion at bridge approaches and intersections during peak travel periods, balancing visitor and resident needs, and a lack of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. He expanded that it is not just a lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, it's that there's a lack of connections between existing roadways and recreational trails in the Study Area.

Some of the constraints identified during Task 2 were: significant extensive environmental resources within and around the Study Area, development of much of the other land, and occupation of a large portion of the Study Area by Joint Base Cape Cod (JBCC) Study Area. Even though there are a number of issues and constraints, there are opportunities as well. Some of the opportunities are MassDOT and Army Corps collaboration, the chance to improve and enhance multimodal accommodations in and around the Study Area, and the chance to build additional infrastructure.

The alternatives to be discussed include a review of roadways/intersections, bridges, and bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements. Mr. Paiewonsky informed the group of the larger transportation improvements planned for Sandwich and Bourne in the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. He then reviewed the assumptions that the Project Team has used to develop and review the alternatives. These include: a focus on year-round safety and mobility problem locations, an understanding that short- and mid-term alternatives should not preclude new bridge construction, and it is assumed that two new bridges are anticipated to be built by the Army Corps of Engineers adjacent to the existing bridges and remain toll-free. Each of the proposed improvements also have a number of design understandings / requirements. These understandings are: designed for future (2040) fall

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weekday PM peak period volumes with further improvements sought for the summer peak periods, and that the Project Team is not seeking to resolve all of the peak-season traffic problems because of the associated significant impacts. Mr. Paiewonsky then paused for questions from the audience.

The first question, asked by a member of the public, was whether or not JBCC could also be considered an opportunity. The answer was that in general, yes, JBCC could be considered an opportunity, but in the context of alternatives development, it is not because it constrains much of the area. This person then asked whether or not JBCC was state land. The Study Team responded that the northern 15,000 acres of JBCC is owned by the federal government and managed by a combination of state agencies as a water supply and wildlife reserve.

There being no additional questions, Mr. Paiewonsky turned the presentation over to Fred Moseley of Stantec to present the short-term alternatives. These alternatives would have few environmental or property impacts. Intersection improvements include adjusting signal timing, installing adaptive signals, improving roadway striping and signage, and improving bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. Mr. Moseley then explained that Adaptive Signal Control is a technology that uses real-time traffic information to adjust signal timing to reduce both congestion and delay. In practical applications, delays are often decreased by about ten percent. He also explained that adaptive control helps to balance traffic even on intersections that are already at capacity. Mr. Moseley then reviewed the list of year-round problem intersections and showed how the proposed alternatives would improve operations at each. Eight intersections were presented: Scenic Highway at Canal Rd/State Rd, Route 6A at Cranberry Highway and Sandwich Road, Route 130 at Cotuit Road, Sandwich Road at Bourne Rotary Connector in Bourne, Sandwich Road at Harbor Lights Road, Scenic Highway at Nightingale Pond Road, Belmont Circle, and the Bourne Rotary. Mr. Moseley then paused for questions.

The first question concerning short-term improvements was about improving stormwater management and reducing environmental impacts. The answer was that yes, that is planned, but these improvements are often more associated with longer-term projects rather than these short-term improvements.

The second question was about closing the access to Dunkin Donuts at the base of the bridge. The answer was that the state manages curb cut permits.

The third question was about the potential development of a large Cumberland Farms in the Bourne Rotary. Mr. Britland explained that any application for a proposed Cumberland Farms must go through the local permitting process and he suggests that anyone who is concerned work with the local Planning Board, as they are the primary body for determining future use of this site.

Mr. Paiewonsky then restarted the presentation to discuss the short-term alternatives for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The first slide showed a map of the Study Area and mid-Cape with the existing bicycle facilities and bus routes. Mr. Paiewonsky highlighted the lack of connections between the existing bicycle infrastructure. He then moved on to look specifically at the Cape Cod Canal Bikeway and indicated that there are fewer formal accessways than informal, pedestrian-only access points. Formal access points allow for all users to enter and exit the Bikeway; all users meaning bicyclists, people with strollers, handicapped individuals, as well as pedestrians. Pedestrian-only and informal access points are often either informal paths or staircases that limit access to users who can safely

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traverse those surfaces. The Study Team focused on opportunities to transform informal accesspoints into formal ones since there is clearly a desire to access the Bikeway at these locations.

The Study Team identified potential new connections to the Cape Cod Canal Bikeway at Old Bridge Road in Bourne, Pleasant Street in Bourne, and at Bourne Ball Field. Mr. Paiewonsky then highlighted the potential for sidewalk and ADA-accessibility Improvements in Sandwich at Route 130, Route 6A, Cotuit Road, and Tupper Road and in Bourne at County Road and Shore Road.

Mr. Paiewonsky then transferred the presentation to Bill Reed to discuss potential mid-term improvements. Mr. Reed began by explaining that mid-term improvements are those that could be completed within three to eight years, but some may become long-term improvements if they are found to result in a higher cost. For the mid-term alternatives, the goal is to improve the mobility, reliability, and safety of the area's transportation system. The traffic patterns within the Study Area that have been discussed previously strongly influence the preliminary alternatives development, so Mr. Reed reviewed some of the area's traffic patterns. Notably, the majority of Cape-bound traffic eventually ends up on Route 6 and there is an even split of traffic going off-Cape on Route 6 that travels to either 25 or Route 3 once they cross the bridges; however, the vast majority of traffic heading off-Cape on Route 28 remains on Route 25. Since the backups often occur around the bridges, the Study Team focused on the Canal Bridges and nearby intersections to identify potential alternatives.

One of the potential mid-term improvements is a new ramp from Scenic Highway to Route 25 westbound beginning at the intersection of Scenic Highway and Nightingale Pond Road. This would divert traffic from Belmont Circle and provide access from Scenic Highway westbound only. This additional ramp may also improve traffic operations and safety in Belmont Circle.

The potential mid-term improvements to Belmont Circle include a fly-over ramp and roundabout. The new ramp would extend from Route 25 eastbound to Scenic Highway eastbound and could possibly also include a Scenic Highway to Route 25 westbound ramp. Additionally, Belmont Circle could be reconstructed into a modern roundabout that would improve traffic safety and operations.

At the Bourne Rotary, a reconstruction would provide enhanced southbound access to Sandwich Road. Other improvements include the use of Veterans Way to Sandwich Road with a new bridge under the Bourne Rotary Connector, eliminating the need for a signalized intersection. A new Route 28 northbound ramp could connect directly to the Bourne Rotary Connector. This solution is based on a 2006 MassDOT study and was re-evaluated with the current traffic volumes.

The existing Exit 1C creates congestion on Route 6 westbound due to a short acceleration lane and steep grades immediately before the Bourne Bridge. The potential improvement is to create a new Exit 1C approximately 3,400 feet east of the existing exit and create a new entrance road to Route 130 at Route 6A. These improvements could potentially reduce congestion and improve safety with longer acceleration lanes on Route 6 and would be a westbound entrance/exit only.

Another potential improvement to Route 6 is adding an additional travel lane in both directions from the Sagamore Bridge to Exit 2 (Route 130). The additional lane potentially reduces congestion and improves safety on Route 6 by allowing traffic entering or exiting the bridge to merge more smoothly.

At this point, Mr. Reed paused for questions.

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The first question concerning mid-term improvements from a member of the Working Group inquired about the possibility of retaining the Route 6 exit at the Christmas Tree Shops parking lot. Mr. Reed stated that the Project Team had assumed it would be closed, but they would look at how keeping that driveway would impact the traffic patterns.

The second question was about the connection between Route 6 and Sandwich; this question will be answered later in the presentation.

Mr. Reed then turned the presentation back over to Mr. Paiewonsky to talk about the mid-term bicycle, pedestrian, and freight improvements. Mr. Paiewonsky described potential construction of the Bourne Rail Trail which would connect the Shining Sea Bikeway to the Cape Cod Canal Bikeway and the Wareham Community Path. This would improve access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Mr. Paiewonsky then spoke about the existing Park and Ride Lots and indicated that the three Park and Ride lots on the Cape are all at or near capacity, but the Wareham lot is only 36% full. One of the potential alternatives is to add an additional Park and Ride lot at Route 6, Exit 2. He indicated that this is a prime location for a Park and Ride / Multi-Modal Center as the land is already controlled by the State and is on an existing Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) Bus Route.

The Project Team also studied freight ferry service. The Steamship Authority published a draft report in April 2016 that served as a resource. Its findings were consistent with the Project Team's finding that there is significant truck traffic through Falmouth and a strong desire to reduce truck traffic on Falmouth's local streets. However, the Steamship Authority study identified a number of challenges related to providing freight ferry access between New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard. A 2000 – 2001 pilot program carried fewer than twenty trucks per day and the fee charged covered less than nineteen percent of the actual cost of the service. Providing freight ferry access between New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard would require the Steamship Authority to buy or charter another vessel, which would be very expensive. The cost of providing this service would also be significantly higher than the existing service at Woods Hole and the Steamship Authority would need state or other funding to subsidize these costs.

Mr. Paiewonsky then paused for questions.

The first comment concerning mid-term bicycle and pedestrian improvements was about the Wareham Community Pathway. The audience member indicated that the map had a couple of errors. Part of the path was shown as complete, but it is still in progress and is included on the current TIP. The path now has a specific, proposed route that has been updated since the map was created.

There was a recommendation from the audience to maintain the rail connection along the Shining Sea Bikeway and the Cape Cod Canal Bikeway. Project staff responded that this would have to be evaluated during the design and public coordination process.

The next audience member asked about the Park and Ride lots and was wondering if MassDOT was working to address the problem with long-term parking at the Park and Ride lots and if MassDOT had considered charging for long-term parking. She was also wondering if any consideration had been given to making the existing parking lots into parking structures. Mr. Britland stated that this is something that

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MassDOT is aware of, but is outside of the scope of this project. Mr. Britland will bring this back to others at MassDOT to consider structured parking and explore any opportunities for charging.

There was a discussion about whether the goals of the Steamship Authority study were consistent with the goals of this study. The Steamship Authority study is ongoing and has a different focus than this study. Another consideration is that the amount of traffic that any change to freight ferry service would remove from the bridges might not be significant enough to impact the bridges' operation.

Glenn Cannon, of the Cape Cod Commission, informed the group that the Town of Bourne has been in discussions with the MBTA to provide regular commuter rail service to Buzzards Bay.

Mr. Paiewonsky then resumed the presentation to discuss the long-term alternatives. A number of factors were considered as the Project Team worked to develop these long-term alternatives. The Army Corps of Engineers is in the process of studying the feasibility of rehabilitating or replacing the two Canal Bridges. For the purpose of our study, the Project Team has assumed that both bridges will be replaced and will remain toll free. There is also ongoing examination of the P3 Alternatives and outside submissions.

In consideration of the prior P-3 alternatives, there were a number of environmental resources present to be evaluated. There are significant wetland, open space, rare species habitat, and other environmental resources that would be impacted by a Route 3 to Route 25 connection and the addition of a mid-Canal bridge. Due to the significant environmental impact, the Route 3 to Route 25 Connector and Mid-Canal Bridge alternatives were dismissed from consideration for this study.

In addition to reviewing the P3 Alternatives, the Study Team also reviewed submissions from members of the public. Tom Baron, Burton Pearlstein, David Oakley, and Steve Voluckas all submitted proposals. The submissions from Burton Pearlstein included a reconstruction of the Bourne Rotary that is actually quite similar to the alternative discussed earlier in the presentation.

Several of the community submissions included a tunnel. However, Mr. Paiewonsky described the significant impacts and challenges associated with the construction of a tunnel. A tunnel would need to be much longer than a bridge due to the area's topography, would require substantial ventilation equipment and structures, would require an Environmental Impact Study, would be difficult to accommodate pedestrians or bicycles, and the cost would be double or more what it would cost to construct a bridge. For these reasons, a tunnel of any kind was dismissed due to the impacts and cost.

Other suggestions from the public include facilities on JBCC, which would require right-of-way takings from the Base, and a mid-Canal Bridge crossing, which was already discussed and dismissed due to environmental impacts. Suggestions of modifications to the Bourne Rotary are undergoing additional evaluation.

A member of the public said they were sorry to see a mid-Canal crossing excluded from further consideration and that they felt strongly that it should be continued to be evaluated.

Mr. Paiewonsky then turned the presentation over to Mr. Reed who explained that the goal for each of these long-term alternatives is to improve the transportation system's mobility, reliability, and safety. The key solution is working to connect roadways. It is assumed that the Bourne Bridge would be

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replaced slightly to the east of the existing bridge while the Sagamore Bridge replacement is anticipated to be slightly to the west of the existing bridge.

Mr. Reed discussed potential reconstruction of the Bourne Rotary. There are currently three alternatives: a Route 28 fly-over, replacement of the Bourne Rotary with a highway interchange, and replacement of the Rotary with a modified interchange. Each of these alternatives were shown and discussed in more detail. Mr. Reed then concluded the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

A member of the public asked about coordination with the Wampanoag Tribal Council to identify any sacred or archaeological sites; the response was that yes, the Project Team had been in touch with the Tribal Council. The Project Team would like to connect with the audience member after the meeting to discuss further.

A member of the audience asked if it would be possible to host online meetings for members of the public. Mr. Britland responded that there were public meetings being scheduled, but MassDOT would be open to hosting an online forum. A follow-up question was asked about the meeting recordings, Ms. LeFlore responded that yes, the meetings are streamed on YouTube.

An audience member then asked if it might be possible to use the utility right-of-way to provide additional access. There are a lot of environmental impacts associated with trying to use the utility right-of-way.

The last comment from a member of the public was that often the simplest solution is the best solution and that a tunnel should be considered. The response was that the constraints and environmental impacts would render a tunnel un-permittable.

Mr. Britland thanked the audience and finished the presentation. The Project Team will continue to develop a combination of short-, mid-, and long-term solutions to address year-round problems. These solutions will hopefully lessen the peak seasonal challenges and may, in fact, change the future transportation needs. Mr. Britland showed the project schedule to inform the audience of upcoming activities.

Meeting notes compiled by Alison LeFlore; October 3, 2016

Attendees: Attendees are listed by name followed by their affiliation.

- Burton Pearlstein, Public Attendee
- Jennifer Saltalannachia, Public Attendee
- Mellisa Ferretti, Public Attendee
- Tom Baron, Public Attendee
- Patty Daley, Cape Cod Commission
- Paul Rendon, JBCC
- Melvin Holmes, Bourne Conservation Commission
- Ted Scribner, Public Attendee
- Ed Brabazon, Public Attendee
- Michael Rausch, Bourne Enterprise
- Barbara Nagle, Public Attendee

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- Walt Mryla, Public Attendee
- Neil Langille, Public Attendee
- Glenn Cannon, Cape Cod Commission
- Carter Hunt, Mass Development
- Charles Kilmer, Old Colony Planning Council
- James Plath, Mass State Police
- Thomas Bushy, Public Attendee
- Lance Lambros, Senate
- Enrico Picozza, Cadet
- Pamela Haznar, MassDOT District 5
- Marcie Redmond, Public Attendee
- Jacqueline Schmidt, SRPEDD
- Craig Martin, USACE
- Wayne Lamson, Steamship Authority
- Jeff Foster, National Railway Historic Society
- William Langulle, Public Attendee?
- Robert Mullenny, Public Attendee
- Clay Schofield, Barnstable DPW
- Michael Jackman, Rep. Keating Aide
- Paul Tilton, Town of Sandwich
- Chris Adams, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce
- Dottie Smith, State Rep Sarah Peake
- Sallie Riggs, BFDC
- Tim Finn, MSP
- Josh Peters, Public Attendee
- Steve Buckley, Public Attendee
- Ed Dowly, APCC

Also in attendance were the following team members:

- Ethan Britland, MassDOT
- Michael Paiewonsky, Stantec
- Bill Reed, Stantec
- Fred Moseley, Stantec
- David Perloff, Stantec
- Alison LeFlore, Harriman
- Steve Cecil, Harriman
- Frank Mahady, FXM Associates