

**Cape Cod Bridges Program
Advisory Group Meeting
September 8, 2026, 3 PM
Mass Maritime Academy
101 Academy Dr, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532**

Meeting Summary

The 11th meeting of the Cape Cod Bridges Project Advisory Group took place on September 8, 2026, at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. At this meeting, the Project Team provided a brief presentation regarding the procurement timeline, request for proposals, environmental status and other general project and design updates followed by a discussion. Attendees included the Program Team, elected and appointed officials from local, state, and federal levels and their representatives, community organization leaders, and members of the public.

Please note the information contained herein serves as meeting notes and not an exact transcript.

Meeting Notes

1. Project Team Presentation
 - Project updates were given by Luisa Paiwonsky (MassDOT) and John Smith (HNTB).
2. Discussion and Comments
 - Advisory Group Member: Question about whether the pedestrian safety fencing will extend the full length of the bridge and address concerns about gaps in the existing fencing.
 - i. John Smith (HNTB): Response that the new pedestrian safety fencing will extend the entire length of the bridge, all the way to the abutments. The fencing will use a fine mesh design that is more difficult to climb than the current fencing and was developed in response to concerns raised by local officials and community members.
 - Marc Brunco (Bourne Commission on Disabilities): Question about whether the shared use path will meet ADA requirements and what the maximum grade will be for users traveling on and off the bridge.
 - i. John Smith (HNTB): Response that the bridge and shared use path were designed to meet ADA requirements, with grades generally kept at or below 4% on newly constructed sections of the pathway.
 - Representative Kip Diggs: Question about whether local contractors and workers will have opportunities to participate in the project.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the project cannot require the use of local workers or contractors, but it is expected to create significant employment opportunities for residents over several years of construction. The project team is also working with local educational and workforce organizations to share information about available jobs.

- Peter Meier (Town of Bourne Select Board): Question about how the project will recognize and preserve the history of homes and families affected by property acquisitions.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the project team appreciates the historical significance of the affected neighborhood and will consider suggestions such as informational markers or displays that explain the area's history and the families who previously lived there.
- Peter Meier (Town of Bourne Select Board): Question about how residents living near the construction area will be kept informed about project activities and impacts
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the project team has committed to ongoing communication with nearby residents through a dedicated liaison, regular updates, meetings, and direct outreach throughout construction to ensure concerns are addressed and project information is shared in a timely manner.
- Steve Tupper (Cape Cod Commission): Question about how the project team plans to maintain public communication during procurement, design, and construction planning activities.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the team intends to continue public engagement throughout the procurement and planning process by providing updates on project progress, procurement activities, construction expectations, traffic management strategies, and other key project developments.
- Steve Tupper (Cape Cod Commission): Question about whether transit services and other transportation options are being considered to help reduce construction-related traffic impacts.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that transit improvements and alternative transportation options are being considered as part of the overall construction planning effort, and the project team will continue coordinating with transportation agencies to identify opportunities that may help mitigate traffic impacts.
- Steve Buckley (Member of the public): Question about whether the temporary bridge configuration will improve traffic operations compared to the existing Sagamore Bridge during construction.
 - i. John Smith (HNTB): Response that the temporary bridge will be wider and include modern safety features such as shoulders, making it safer than the current bridge. However, it is not intended to increase overall traffic demand, and no specific estimate was provided regarding how much additional traffic it could accommodate.
- Representative Kip Diggs: Question about what will happen to the temporary roadway and traffic configuration once construction of the permanent bridge is completed
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the temporary roadway and traffic configuration are currently intended to be used only during construction. Once the permanent bridge is complete, traffic is expected to return to its normal patterns, although future discussions could occur if local officials express interest in retaining elements of the temporary configuration.

- John York (Member of the public): Question about how bicyclists and pedestrians will be engaged and consulted as the project moves forward.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the project team recognizes the importance of bicycle and pedestrian users and has committed to continuing outreach, information sharing, and discussions with those stakeholders throughout project development.
- John York (Member of the public): Question about discrepancies in the reported grades of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along portions of the project corridor.
 - i. John York (HNTB): Response that while newly constructed roadway sections were designed with grades generally below 4%, some shared use paths and facilities located alongside existing roadways may have steeper grades. The project team acknowledged the need to clarify these details and provide additional information.
- John York (Member of the public): Question about how the project team will respond to public requests for information and ensure meaningful two-way communication with the community.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the project team views public engagement as a two-way process and stated that it will continue working closely with the Town of Bourne, local officials, community organizations, and residents to provide information, gather feedback, and address questions throughout the project.
- Member of the public: Question about whether congestion at the Sagamore Bridge is driven more by the bridge approaches and interchanges than the bridge itself, and how the proposed improvements are expected to reduce backups traveling to and from Cape Cod.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the project team agrees congestion is caused not only by the bridge but also by outdated interchanges that were not designed to handle current traffic volumes. The project will replace the existing interchanges with more direct and efficient connections, add a merging lane across the bridge to improve traffic flow, and separate local and regional traffic movements where possible. While the improvements will not eliminate all traffic congestion on Cape Cod, they are expected to reduce bottlenecks and improve traffic operations in the bridge area.
- Joel Whitman (Foss Offshore Wind): Question about whether the procurement shortlist will be publicly announced and where that information will be available.
 - i. Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT): Response that the selected teams will be announced publicly once federal approvals are complete and the procurement process advances. The project team anticipates issuing a public announcement when the Request for Proposals (RFP) is released and will also provide updates regarding major project milestones, including the transfer of federal funding into state accounts.

Attendees

Program Team

1. Anne Canadady, MassDOT
2. Craig Cashman, MassDOT
3. Shaun Handy, MassDOT
4. Luisa Paiewonsky, MassDOT
5. Mikayla Rooney, MassDOT
6. John Theriault, MassDOT
7. Mark Kolonski, HNTB
8. Patrick Marvin, HNTB
9. John Smith, HNTB

Advisory Group and Members of the Public

1. Peter Bertling, Town of Barnstable
2. Steve Buckley, Member of the public
3. Marc Brunco, Bourne Commission on Disability
4. Harrison Contos, Member of the public
5. Ken Cheitlin, Friends of the Bourne Rail Trail
6. Brandon Esip, Bourne Police Department
7. Rebecca Fernandes, Barnstable County Sheriff's Office
8. Mike Jackman, Representing U.S. Rep. Bill Keating
9. Kathleen Jensen, Cape Cod RTA
10. Peter Meier, Town of Bourne
11. Marie Oliva, Cape Cod Region Chamber of Commerce
12. Seth Pickering, MassDEP
13. Kristy Senatori, Cape Cod Commission
14. Peter Sutton, MassDOT
15. Paul Tilton, Town of Sandwich
16. Steven Tupper, Cape Cod Commission
17. Joel Whitman, Foss Offshore Wind
18. MA State Representative Steven Xiarhos, 5th Barnstable District
19. John York, Member of the public