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Cape Cod Bridges: Sagamore Bridge Design Public Hearing Frequently Asked Questions

On July 23, 2026, MassDOT held a Design Public Hearing for the replacement of the Sagamore Bridge in Bourne. MassDOT accepted public comments and questions during the hearing and, following the hearing, through email, an online comment form, and U.S. mail.

The following summarizes MassDOT's responses to common questions, comments, and topics of interest raised by local residents and others attending the hearing.

Each question presented below is a compilation of comments received and is intended to reflect common themes. The questions do not represent the exact wording of any individual comment.

GENERAL BACKGROUND: MassDOT provides the following information as general background followed by specific topic areas of questions.

Project Location and Purpose

MassDOT is advancing the replacement of Sagamore Bridge and associated roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, drainage, utility, landscaping, and access improvements within the Cape Cod Canal area in Bourne, Barnstable County, Massachusetts. The Sagamore Bridge Replacement Project is Phase 1 in replacing both Cape Cod Bridges, the Sagamore and Bourne Bridges. The existing bridges are 91 years old, are functionally obsolete, require frequent maintenance, and no longer meet modern transportation needs.

The Sagamore Bridge Replacement Project will improve mobility and accessibility for all road users crossing the Cape Cod Canal. MassDOT developed the project to modernize this critical transportation connection and support the region's long-term transportation needs. MassDOT will own, operate, and maintain the replacement Sagamore Bridge and associated approaches upon completion of construction.

Scope of work

As Phase 1 of Cape Cod Bridges, the Sagamore Bridge Replacement Project includes constructing new bridge structures and the roadway, multimodal, drainage, utility, environmental, and community improvements needed to connect them to the surrounding transportation network. Major elements include:

- Replacing the existing Sagamore Bridge with twin network tied-arch bridge structures, with one bridge carrying traffic onto Cape Cod and the other carrying traffic off Cape Cod.



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- Constructing barrier-separated shared-use paths for pedestrians and bicyclists on the eastbound bridge, including a mid-span overlook and protective mesh screening.
- Realigning portions of Route 3 and Route 6 and reconstructing the Sagamore interchange approaches, ramps, and local roadway connections to improve traffic operations and better separate local and regional traffic movements.
- Installing new intersection controls to improve traffic operations, safety, and access within the Project area.
- Adding and improving sidewalks and shared-use paths that connect the bridge to Scenic Highway, Canal Street, State Road, Sandwich Road, Cranberry Highway, the Canal Service Roads, the Bourne Park and Ride, and other local destinations.
- Upgrading drainage and stormwater systems and incorporating climate-resilient design measures to address future flooding, storm events, and fluctuations in sea level.
- Relocating and protecting utilities affected by project construction.

DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Scope

1. Is MassDOT renaming Sagamore Bridge?

MassDOT is not aware of any proposals to change the name of Sagamore Bridge.

2. Does the scope of work include additional transit options such as commuter rail, bus, or ferry service?

The project includes replacing the existing Sagamore Bridge and improving the associated roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and interchange connections needed to support mobility and accessibility across the Cape Cod Canal. MassDOT's primary focus is to replace the Sagamore Bridge and ensure safe and efficient travel across the canal. The project scope does not include new or expanded commuter rail, bus, ferry, or other transit services.

3. Does the project include new Park and Ride options?

MassDOT continues to consider opportunities to enhance multimodal access and parking infrastructure within the project limits and through the future Bourne Bridge Replacement Project, including evaluating concepts such as park-and-ride facilities. The Sagamore Bridge Replacement Project does not include construction of a new Park and Ride facility.

4. Will MassDOT enter into a Memorandum of Understand (MOU) with the Town of Bourne regarding the replacement of Sagamore Bridge?

MassDOT acknowledges the Town's interest in establishing a formal framework to support communication, planning and coordination during construction. MassDOT has worked closely



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with the Town of Bourne throughout project development and commits to continued coordination throughout project delivery.

MassDOT and its design-build contractor will work with Bourne officials regarding construction activities, traffic management, public outreach, and other matters affecting the surrounding community. Binding project requirements are now established through environmental approvals, permit conditions, and contract requirements, and MassDOT will discuss options for reciprocal agreements with the Bourne Select Board.

Project Design

5. What is the design of the replacement Sagamore Bridge?

MassDOT will replace the existing Sagamore Bridge with two parallel steel network tied-arch bridge structures supported by delta frames. One bridge will carry traffic onto Cape Cod, and the other will carry traffic off Cape Cod. Separating opposing traffic onto different structures will improve safety and will also allow MassDOT to stage construction while maintaining traffic across the canal.

Each bridge will include two 12-foot through travel lanes, a 12-foot merging lane, a 4-foot left shoulder, and a 10-foot right shoulder. The merging lane will help drivers enter and exit more safely; it is not a new continuous through lane that extends beyond the interchanges. The bridge to Cape Cod will also carry a separate 14-foot-wide shared-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists.

With input from historic preservation consulting parties and the public, MassDOT selected the replacement bridge type - a network tied-arch - that is compatible with the defining characteristics of the existing Sagamore Bridge and the Cape Cod Canal Historic District as a whole. The replacement bridge type would include similar prominent features to those on the existing historic truss bridge and would provide a similar “gateway” experience across Cape Cod Canal.

6. Why were roundabouts selected for portions of the Sagamore interchanges, and how will they improve safety and traffic operations?

MassDOT selected roundabouts at specific locations after considering traffic operations, safety, property impacts, and constructability, among other factors. Roundabouts generally create fewer vehicle conflict points than conventional intersections and require drivers to enter at lower speeds. Those characteristics can reduce the severity of crashes and make vehicle movements more predictable.

MassDOT’s traffic analysis also concluded that roundabouts reduce unnecessary stopping and queuing at the selected locations because drivers do not have to wait through a red signal when



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the intersection has available capacity. MassDOT designed the roundabouts to accommodate large trucks and emergency vehicles and will provide safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings. At other locations, MassDOT selected traffic signals when signal control better serves the projected traffic and multimodal needs.

7. What safety features will MassDOT incorporate into the new bridges for drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and individuals in crisis?

MassDOT designed the replacement Sagamore Bridge to improve safety for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. Each new bridge structure will carry traffic in only one direction, which will greatly reduce the risk of head-on collisions. Wider 12-foot lanes, modern bridge barriers, a 10-foot outside shoulder and 4-foot inside shoulder, and auxiliary entrance/exit lanes will provide more room for disabled vehicles, emergency response, merging, and other unexpected conditions.

For pedestrians and bicyclists, MassDOT will provide a 14-foot-wide shared-use path separated from motor vehicles by a physical barrier. The project will add safer connections to local streets and trails, accessible crossings, bicycle and pedestrian signals where appropriate, wayfinding, and a scenic overlook on the bridge.

MassDOT will install protective mesh screening along the bridge to discourage climbing and reduce risk for people in crisis. The final design will also include modern lighting, barriers, railings, and other features that meet current safety and accessibility standards.

8. Will MassDOT reuse or recycle materials from the existing bridge?

Yes. MassDOT will require the design-builder to identify opportunities to reuse or recycle materials from the existing Sagamore Bridge and other structures that construction removes. Steel, reinforcing steel, concrete, and other demolition materials may offer recycling opportunities, but the final quantities will depend on demolition methods, material condition, environmental requirements, and available recycling markets.

As part of the project's cultural-resource commitments, MassDOT has committed to the adaptive reuse of bridge components, including salvage and re-use of sections of the steel truss, granite from the piers and abutments, and granite sidewalk, as well as other existing bridge components, such as portions of the steel truss or bridge lighting, for reuse and incorporation in the Sagamore Project area, including the bridge site and the shared use paths. MassDOT will also solicit interest from USACE, other state agencies, municipalities, non-profit art and/or historic preservation groups, schools, and the public for the transfer and adaptive re-use of select components of the existing historic Sagamore Bridge for public education, art, historic preservation, or other uses in publicly accessible spaces.

In coordination with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), MassDOT is requiring the Design-Builder to salvage portions of the deconstructed existing Sagamore Bridge concrete piers, shoreline riprap, granite bridge pier facing, and/or other suitable material, and



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place the material at a DMF-approved and permitted marine artificial reef site off the coast of Massachusetts to enhance the existing artificial reef.

As required, the Design-Builder will handle, transport, recycle, treat, or dispose of any material that contains lead, asbestos, contaminated soil, or other regulated substances in accordance with applicable environmental requirements. MassDOT will coordinate with the appropriate environmental agencies as this work advances.

9. Will this project induce more travel demand and increase Vehicle Miles Traveled?

MassDOT's extensive traffic analysis has concluded that this project will not generate new development on Cape Cod beyond what is already forecasted. While transportation projects can sometimes influence growth patterns, this bridge replacement project will not change regional access, open new land for development, or create new travel corridors.

The replacement bridges will maintain the same connections that exist today; therefore, they will not introduce the types of network changes typically associated with "induced" development. Cape Cod's broader demographic and infrastructure conditions further limit the potential for additional growth regardless of transportation improvements.

Based on traffic modeling, MassDOT expects that the replacement of the Sagamore Bridge will reduce daily vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours traveled in 2050, compared with conditions without the project. This project will also reduce daily pollutant emissions, including carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter.

Traffic Management

10. How will traffic be managed during construction to minimize congestion on local roads and neighborhoods?

MassDOT will require the design-builder to implement a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan that addresses the movements of drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, construction vehicles, and emergency responders. MassDOT will keep at least two travel lanes open in each direction across the canal throughout construction and will maintain existing roadway and ramp connections until the new connections are available.

MassDOT will use real-time and near-real-time traffic monitoring, temporary traffic-control devices, variable message signs, traveler information, signal adjustments, and other smart-work-zone tools to respond to changing conditions. MassDOT will coordinate construction activities with the Town of Bourne, neighboring communities, law enforcement, emergency-management agencies, schools, regional partners, and nearby projects.

With MassDOT approval, the design-builder will also establish designated truck routes, staging areas, and worker-parking plans. MassDOT will direct major truck deliveries toward off-peak



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periods and avoid school arrival and dismissal periods and the busiest seasonal travel times where possible. If monitoring identifies significant unanticipated congestion or neighborhood cut-through traffic, MassDOT may adjust traffic-control measures, communications, signal operations, or construction activities within the requirements of the contract. MassDOT will direct the Design-Builder to route construction traffic toward major transportation corridors and project work zones whenever practicable rather than relying on residential streets.

11. Is MassDOT working with GPS navigation providers (Google Maps, Waze, Apple Maps)?

Yes. MassDOT will provide construction, closure, detour, and traffic-condition information to major navigation and mapping providers so those platforms can reflect current roadway conditions as accurately as possible. MassDOT will also use the Cape Cod Bridges website, variable message signs, media outreach, social media, email updates, and other traveler-information tools to communicate planned traffic changes.

MassDOT has no role in the routing algorithms used by Google Maps, Waze, Apple Maps, or other third-party services, and cannot prevent individual drivers from choosing a public local road. MassDOT will combine digital information-sharing with field signage, traffic monitoring, enforcement coordination, and local-road traffic-management strategies to discourage cut-through traffic and direct travelers toward the intended routes.

12. How will Bourne Bridge be maintained while the Sagamore Bridge is under construction?

The US Army Corps of Engineers owns the Bourne Bridge and will be responsible for its maintenance until it is replaced as Phase 2 of Cape Cod Bridges Program.

As the two bridges function as an interconnected regional transportation system, MassDOT will direct the contractor to monitor and respond to traffic conditions at both bridges.

MassDOT will coordinate with the USACE to minimize construction-related traffic impacts. MassDOT will coordinate with Bourne officials, police, fire, emergency responders, schools, and regional transportation partners regarding incident management and traffic messaging. We will further refine these strategies during the development of traffic management plans.

MassDOT will require the implementation of “quick- clearance” actions in response to crashes and disabled vehicles to reduce secondary crashes.

Construction

13. What are the anticipated construction milestones, including when each new bridge span is expected to open to traffic?

MassDOT expects to issue the design-build Notice to Proceed in late 2027 and expects major construction to begin in spring 2028. Under the current plan all Sagamore Bridge traffic will start



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to shift to the first new bridge span in 2033. In this phase, the first new bridge will temporarily carry two lanes of traffic in each direction, followed by the removal of the existing Sagamore Bridge, construction of the second new bridge span, and completion of the new interchanges. The design-builder will further refine the construction schedule when MassDOT awards the contract. Specific milestones, including bridge float-in operations, traffic shifts, demolition periods, utility relocations, and final roadway completion dates may change as design development, utility coordination, marine operations, weather conditions, and construction planning advance. MassDOT will provide schedule updates as the project approaches those milestones.

14. How will construction workers, trucks, and equipment affect local traffic, and what measures will MassDOT take to reduce these impacts?

MassDOT expects construction work to generate construction-worker trips, truck deliveries, equipment movements, and marine construction activity over several years. MassDOT will require the design-builder to manage those movements through a traffic management plan that will include construction traffic, worker access, designated truck routes, staging areas, worker-parking locations, traffic control, and public notices. The design-builder will route construction traffic toward major transportation corridors and project work zones, not residential streets, whenever possible.

MassDOT will direct major deliveries to occur during off-peak periods, where practicable, and will coordinate school arrival and dismissal periods, seasonal peaks, special events, and other known traffic constraints. Police details and temporary traffic control will support larger or unusual traffic movements when necessary. Based on the current concept, the tied-arch span bridge components will be fabricated off-site and transported to the bridge site for installation. This approach will reduce on-site assembly activities and limit construction-related traffic, and work-zone impacts where feasible.

Throughout construction, MassDOT will monitor traffic conditions and coordinate with the Town of Bourne and other local partners to address specific construction-traffic issues as they arise. If monitoring identifies unanticipated congestion, cut-through traffic, or other construction-related transportation concerns, MassDOT may require changes to traffic-control measures, routing strategies, or construction operations.

15. How will MassDOT minimize impacts to residents living adjacent to the project, including noise, vibration, and dust?

MassDOT is committed to minimizing impacts to the community and will continue to communicate with those residents living near the work zone. MassDOT will require the design-builder to implement a Construction Noise and Vibration Control Plan that establishes procedures for monitoring noise and vibration and implementing mitigation measures during



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construction, and documenting and responding to concerns from affected residents and businesses.

The design-builder will also develop and implement a Dust Control Plan that incorporates monitoring stabilization, and other measures to minimize impacts on nearby properties and sensitive receptors.

16. How will emergency vehicles, first responders, school transportation, and evacuation routes be maintained throughout construction?

MassDOT will require the design-builder to implement a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan that addresses emergency access, school transportation, regional mobility, and incident response throughout construction. The project will maintain at least two lanes of traffic in each direction across the canal throughout construction, while preserving roadway and ramp connections needed to serve local and regional traffic. The plan will also address emergency evacuation needs and identify procedures to maintain access during major incidents or emergency events.

MassDOT will coordinate traffic shifts, work-zone layouts, detours, lane restrictions, and major construction activities with Bourne Police, Bourne Fire/Rescue and Emergency Services, Massachusetts State Police, schools, neighboring communities, and other regional partners. MassDOT will communicate major traffic-pattern changes in advance so responders and school transportation providers can update routes and operating plans.

17. The construction contract will include incident-management requirements and support “quick-clearance” procedures for responding to crashes and disabled vehicles. How will MassDOT ensure continued access to residents, businesses, tourism destinations, and community facilities during construction?

MassDOT will require the selected design-builder to maintain access to residences, businesses, schools, emergency services, recreation areas, and other community facilities throughout construction. Construction activities may require easements and temporarily impact paths, parking access, or travel routes, but MassDOT will require the design-builder to provide safe alternate access when work restricts an existing connection.

MassDOT will require the design-builder will be required to implement a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan to maintain access and mobility throughout construction. MassDOT and the design-builder will coordinate construction sequencing and traffic management measures with Bourne officials, public safety agencies, property owners, businesses, recreation managers, and other stakeholders. Maintaining access to businesses and community destinations during construction will be high-priority considerations as we develop construction staging plans.

MassDOT will use advance notices, directional and detour signs, website and email updates, variable message signs, and other public communications during each construction phase.



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MassDOT will also monitor traffic and access conditions and may require adjustments if construction activities create an unanticipated access or safety problem.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

18. How will bicyclists and pedestrians cross the canal and navigate the project area during construction?

MassDOT will prioritize bicycle and pedestrian connections during construction, using signed temporary routes and staged construction. While active construction will require temporary closures of portions of the Canal Service Roads within work zones, MassDOT will maintain pedestrian and bicycle access through signed alternate routes where practicable. On the mainland side, the current construction concept includes a detour route along Scenic Highway and reconnects to the Canal Service Road near the Sagamore Recreation Area. MassDOT will also provide a temporary connection to north Canal Service Road by way of Herring Run Recreation Area and Scenic Highway. On the Cape Cod side, MassDOT plans to connect the Mid-Cape Connector Extension area to the Keith Field Recreation area.

MassDOT will further refine bicycle and pedestrian routing as construction phasing advances. The construction phase will include use of temporary facilities to provide clear directional signs and safe separation from active construction activities and vehicle traffic. MassDOT will continue to coordinate accessible route details, railroad crossings, and temporary connections with the agencies and operators that control those facilities and will communicate significant route changes before they take effect.

19. Will the temporary bicycle/pedestrian facilities become permanent after construction?

MassDOT has planned detour as a temporary route around the construction work zone. After construction, MassDOT will direct pedestrians and bicyclists to the new shared-use path network around the new bridge and its approaches.

If the Town requests continuation of the detour route following construction, MassDOT may evaluate its long-term viability and consider this option.

20. How will the project improve access to the Canal Service Roads and other bicycle and pedestrian routes?

The project will create a barrier-separated shared-use path across the new Sagamore Bridge and connect it directly to a broader network of local paths and streets. On the mainland side, the network will connect with Scenic Highway, Canal Street, State Road, the Sagamore Recreation Area, the Canal Service Road, and the existing Bourne Park and Ride lot. MassDOT also plans



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to reconfigure the shared-use path around the Park and Ride lot to create a 12-foot-wide path along its perimeter.

On the Cape side, MassDOT plans to connect the Sagamore Bridge shared-use path to Factory Outlet Road, Sandwich Road, the Mid-Cape Connector area, Cranberry Highway, local destinations, and the south Canal Service Road. In coordination with multiple state and federal partners, MassDOT also plans two shared-use-path connections/railroad crossing to the south Canal Service Road across from the Mid-Cape Connector/Sandwich Road intersection and at Keith Field Recreation Area. The proposed public railroad crossings will eliminate barriers within the multimodal network; improve connectivity to recreational, community, and commercial destinations; and support safe, efficient travel for residents and visitors.

These improvements to the shared-use path network will create safer, more direct walking and bicycling connections across the canal, improve access to the Canal Service Roads and nearby recreational destinations, and help close existing gaps between existing local facilities, recreation areas, and regional routes. The new facilities will be designed to meet current ADA and accessibility standards and will include wayfinding elements to help users navigate connections to local destinations, recreation areas, and the broader bicycle and pedestrian network.

21. Does the project include the completion of the Bourne Rail Trail?

The Sagamore Bridge Replacement does not include completion of the Bourne Rail Trail.

Current And Future Activities

22. What are the future public engagement opportunities and how can I stay informed?

MassDOT will continue public engagement throughout design and construction. The project team will coordinate with local officials, residents, businesses, property owners, emergency responders, recreation users, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, environmental organizations, and area residents as the project advances and the design-build team further develops construction plans. We will continue to meet with the Cape Cod Bridges Advisory Group and will hold additional public meetings and briefings as the project nears construction. We will continue to consider public input throughout the procurement and construction phases.

MassDOT posts meeting materials, recordings, project updates, renderings, environmental documents, and construction information on the Cape Cod Bridges website. Those interested in further information submit questions or comments to the project team at any time through the online comment form on the project website.

- Cape Cod Bridges website: <https://www.mass.gov/cape-cod-bridges>
- Latest updates: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/latest-updates-cape-cod-bridges>
- Documents and meeting materials: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/documents-and-meeting-materials-cape-cod-bridges>



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23. What are the current activities?

MassDOT has recently issued a Request for Proposals to three design-build teams on September 24, 2026. This action formally launches the final phase of procurement, and MassDOT will select a team and award a contract to start construction of the new Sagamore Bridge in late 2027. The Federal Highway Administration approved the Final Environmental Impact Statement and issued the Record of Decision on June 26, 2026, completing the federal NEPA review process. FHWA has also recently authorized \$956 million in federal grant funding for construction of the new Sagamore Bridge, with an additional \$371 million expected to be authorized in mid-October 2026. MassDOT is conducting foundation load testing at four locations near the Sagamore Bridge, with two locations on each side of the canal. Crews are drilling test shafts and driving piles to collect data for the future bridge-foundation design. MassDOT is also conducting borings, field surveys, subsurface utility engineering, and related investigations.