

Smiths Lane Over Route 3 Bridge Replacement Project, Kingston

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – UPDATED JULY 2026

Design and Safety

Why did MassDOT choose roundabouts?

MassDOT is proposing roundabouts because they are shown to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for people cycling, driving, and walking. The Federal Highway Administration identifies roundabouts as an effective design for transitioning traffic between highway ramps and local streets – just like the transition between Smiths Lane and the ramps connection to and from Route 3.

The proposed roundabouts would include splitter islands and a steeper angle of entrance and exit to reduce drivers' speeds, particularly where vehicles cross pedestrian paths. In addition to shorter crossing distances, these features help provide more separation between pedestrians and vehicles, and refuge areas where pedestrians can pause while crossing. The roundabout layout also improves visibility by making it easier for drivers and pedestrians to see one another as they approach and move through the intersections.

Will blinking lights be added to signal motorists when pedestrians or cyclists are crossing?

Based on current roundabout design guidance, flashing pedestrian beacons are not proposed as part of this design. The project instead focuses on improving pedestrian safety through design: shorter crossings, improving visibility, and providing pedestrian refuge areas. The 10-foot-wide pedestrians crossings would be much shorter than those found in existing conditions.

Does this design meet the current needs of the pedestrian traffic?

The design adheres to MassDOT's Complete Streets policy, which supports safe and accessible

travel for all roadway users. The project is intended to improve access and safety for current users while also accommodating future travel needs.

What improvements are proposed where highway ramps meet Route 3?

This project does not currently plan modifications to the ramps where they meet the Route 3 mainline, but replacing the Smiths Lane bridge will create additional space around the highway that would allow changes to ramp geometry to be made. Concerns raised at the 25% design public hearing about the condition of the pavement on the Route 3 connecting ramps have been shared with MassDOT District 6 maintenance for investigation.

Traffic Operations, Access and Construction

How will access to Ocean Hill Drive change as part of this project?

Ocean Hill Drive connects to Smiths Lane just south of the intersection with the Route 3 northbound ramps. From there, it travels a roughly crescent-shaped path through a residential neighborhood before connecting to Braunecker Avenue which intersects with Smiths Lane further to the north. Under the proposed design, the splitter island of the Smiths Lane/Route 3 northbound ramps roundabout would physically prevent left turns into or out of Ocean Hill Drive. Motorists seeking to make an outbound left turn, for example towards the Kingston Collection Mall, would instead turn right and use the Smiths Lane/Route 3 northbound ramps roundabout to reverse direction. Motorists seeking to make an inbound left turn, having exited Route 3 northbound for example, would cross the Smiths Lane bridge

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above Route 3, use the Smiths Lane/Route 3 southbound ramps roundabout to reverse direction, recross the bridge, and turn right into Ocean Hill Drive.

Did the project account for traffic growth, such as the growth associated with the Amazon facility?

Yes. The traffic study considered forecasted traffic growth, including growth associated with the Amazon facility. The current design reflects anticipated increases in truck and automobile traffic and is intended to support safer and more efficient traffic operations.

As part of MassDOT's intersection design process, proposed improvements are evaluated using criteria that include vehicle and truck delay. In this location, roundabouts are expected to help improve traffic flow and reduce delays. The roundabouts will also include truck aprons, which are designed to accommodate larger vehicles as they move through the intersections. Trucks will be able to navigate the roundabouts at low, controlled speeds.

When does construction start and how long will it last?

Construction will be staged to allow traffic to continue to move through the project area while this project is completed. Bridge construction is currently expected to begin in fall 2028, with the new, four-lane bridge anticipated to open to traffic in fall 2030. While under construction, the bridge will maintain one lane of traffic in each direction.

Roundabout construction will follow and will involve a multi-stage process to convert the existing signalized intersections to roundabouts. Minor lane shifts on Route 3 are expected, but the number of

lanes is not anticipated to be reduced. The full project is currently anticipated to be completed by fall 2031.

Will roads be closed during construction?

If needed, occasional nighttime lane and ramp closures with detours may occur. MassDOT will provide advance notice before any closure takes place.

What are the safety measures in place while roadways remain open during construction?

MassDOT will use a range of measures to support work zone safety during construction, including advanced public notifications, construction updates, and protective measures such as shielding where appropriate. MassDOT anticipates kicking off construction with a public information meeting. Throughout the project, regular bulletins will be provided by email to give interested parties a preview of upcoming construction operations.

How will this impact my property?

MassDOT has sent a set of the preliminary right-of-way (ROW) plans to the Kingston Public Library for public review and comment. Affected property owners will be contacted by personnel from MassDOT ROW Bureau or consultants representing MassDOT. This project does not propose to alter the access to any property or to take any home or business.

Will there be disruptions to public transportation, including MBTA or GATRA service?

MassDOT has coordinated with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) regarding the project. As construction

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begins, MassDOT will request a specific point-of-contact from GATRA which operates a route over the Smiths Lane Bridge to receive construction updates.

Will utilities be maintained during construction?

Utilities have been identified as part of the project planning process. During construction, utilities would be removed, replaced, or relocated as needed, with the goal of maintaining service continuity and avoiding lost connections.

Was the project reviewed for potential wetland impacts?

Yes. MassDOT conducted environmental review for the project, including review of potential impacts to nearby wetland resources and Smelt Brook. The project team will continue to coordinate through the applicable environmental review and permitting agencies as the design advances.

Looking Ahead

What are the next steps?

The project is expected to reach 75 percent design milestone in winter 2026, with approval anticipated the following year. Staged bridge construction is currently expected to begin in fall 2028, and the full bridge is anticipated to be open to traffic in fall 2030.

Roundabout construction would follow, with the full project currently anticipated to be completed by fall 2031.

How do I stay informed?

Everyone who attended the public meeting on June 9, 2026, has been added to the notification list. Questions or comments may be submitted by email to massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us with **Attention: Major Projects, Project File No. 608615** included in the subject line.

Comments may also be mailed to [Carrie Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Major Projects, Project File No. 608615.](#)

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This image shows the proposed Smiths Lane Bridge Replacement and roundabouts at the 25% design level. Under this proposal, the existing Smiths Lane Bridge would be expanded from two vehicle lanes, one in each direction, to four, with two in each direction. A shared use path would run along the north side of the bridge and a sidewalk along the south. Each of the intersections providing connections between Smiths Lane and both directions of Route 3 would be upgraded into modern roundabouts. The shared use path and sidewalk would be extended through the roundabouts. Beyond each roundabout, the four lane cross-section would transition back to two lanes to match adjoining sections of Smiths Lane.