



For Immediate Release:
Oct. 3, 2019
Release No. MA 2019-090

Contact:
Tim Dugan, 978-318-8264
cenaepa@usace.army.mil

Draft Bridge Study recommendation: Replace Canal Highway Bridges

Corps of Engineers to hold public meetings on Cape Cod Canal Draft Bridge Study in October

CONCORD, Mass. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, will hold five public meetings in mid-October 2019 on Cape Cod, the South Shore and in Boston to provide its recommendation from the Cape Cod Canal Highway Bridges Major Rehabilitation Evaluation Study on the future of the highway bridges spanning the Cape Cod Canal in Bourne, Massachusetts.

“Our recommendation, documented in the draft Major Rehab Evaluation Report, is to replace the Bourne and Sagamore highway bridges with new structures built to include the 4 authorized travel lanes and 2 additional auxiliary lanes designed as acceleration/deceleration lanes built to modern highway standards with appropriate bike/pedestrian access,” said District Engineer Col. William Conde, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District.

The Draft Major Rehabilitation Evaluation Report (MRER) and Draft Environmental Assessment are available for review on the website at <https://www.CapeCodCanalBridgesStudy.com> under the “Documents” tab. The Corps will accept public comments on the recommendations in the draft bridge study through Nov. 1, 2019.

The goal of the Major Rehabilitation Evaluation Report is to determine whether major rehabilitation or replacement of either or both bridges will provide the most reliable, fiscally and environmentally responsible solution for future access across the Canal to Cape Cod. The existing bridges were constructed 84 years ago and require increasingly more frequent repair and maintenance, which is costly and causes significant impact to traffic crossing the Cape Cod Canal.

At the end of the public comment period, the Corps will address issues raised by the public and finalize the documents leading to a decision. In conjunction with the public comment period the report will also undergo an independent external peer review by highly experienced members of the private and academia sectors before producing a final recommendation on whether to replace or continue to repair the Cape Cod Canal bridges. The Final MRER will be submitted to Corps headquarters in Washington D.C. for decision in February 2020.

“The bridge study will result in a Major Rehabilitation Evaluation Report that will evaluate the risk and reliability of the structures as well as the economic impacts/benefits of a number of alternatives including continuation of routine maintenance, major rehabilitation, and bridge replacement,” said Project Manager Craig Martin, of the Corps’ New England District, Programs and Project Management Division in Concord, Mass. The MRER is comprised of four elements: 1) structural risk and reliability analysis of the bridges; 2) cost estimates for rehabilitation and/or replacement alternatives; 3) economic benefits of the alternatives; and 4) environmental effects of the alternatives.

– more –

Corps to hold public meetings on Cape Cod Canal draft bridge study/2-2-2-2-2

The major alternatives carried forward for full analysis in the MRER include: **1)** No Action, continue to repair bridges as needed (“without project baseline”); **2)** major rehabilitation of the current bridges as they currently exist with routine maintenance of the rehabbed bridges into the future; **3)** replacement of each bridge with a new structure built to current authorization of 4 total lanes, brought to modern highway standards with appropriate bike/pedestrian access; and **4)** replacement of each bridge with a new structure built to modern standards to include the 4 authorized lanes and 2 auxiliary lanes designed as acceleration/deceleration lanes (entrance/exit to local connecting roads) and with appropriate bike/pedestrian access.

As part of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance, the Corps is seeking public input and will continue to coordinate with appropriate state and Federal agencies and federally recognized Tribes to fully evaluate the draft environmental assessment.

At the public meetings, the Corps will provide an overview of the Draft MRER recommendations and Draft Environmental Assessment findings. The public will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments. At the four evening meetings registration will start at 6 p.m. There will be an open house from 6 – 6:30 p.m. with information posters and Corps subject matter experts on hand to answer questions. An overview of the study recommendations will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by a question and answer session.

The Corps will accept public comments on the draft study through Nov. 1, 2019. Public comments can be submitted at the public meetings or online at: www.CapeCodCanalBridgesStudy.com. Written comments can be submitted to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, (Attn: Craig Martin), 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751. Comments also can be emailed to nae-pn-nav@usace.army.mil.

Corps public meetings on the MRER bridge study are scheduled for:

- Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2019, Bourne High School auditorium, 75 Waterhouse Road, Bourne, Mass.
- Thursday, Oct. 17, 2019, Plymouth South High School Performing Arts Center, 490 Long Pond Road, Plymouth, Mass.
- Monday, Oct. 21, 2019, Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. Federal Building auditorium, 10 Causeway Street, Boston, Mass. Registration and open house at 1 p.m. Meeting starts at 1:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2019, Nauset Regional High School auditorium, 100 Cable Road, Eastham, Mass.
- Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2019, Barnstable High School Performing Arts Center, 744 West Main Street, Hyannis, Mass.

The Corps and MassDOT have collaborated throughout the bridge study process to ensure Cape Cod residents and visitors have reliable transportation routes to and from Cape Cod. The MassDOT Cape Cod Canal Area Transportation Study information is available on the MassDOT website at: <https://www.mass.gov/cape-cod-canal-transportation-study>. The MassDOT study examined options at a conceptual level such as modified and improved highway interchanges, and improvements for pedestrian, bicycle and transit access in order to improve multi-modal travel. The report includes analytical findings, a recommended plan of transportation improvements (short-term, medium-term and long-term), preliminary cost estimates for these improvements, and a comprehensive implementation plan for the recommended improvements.

#