

Traffic Growth on Cape Cod

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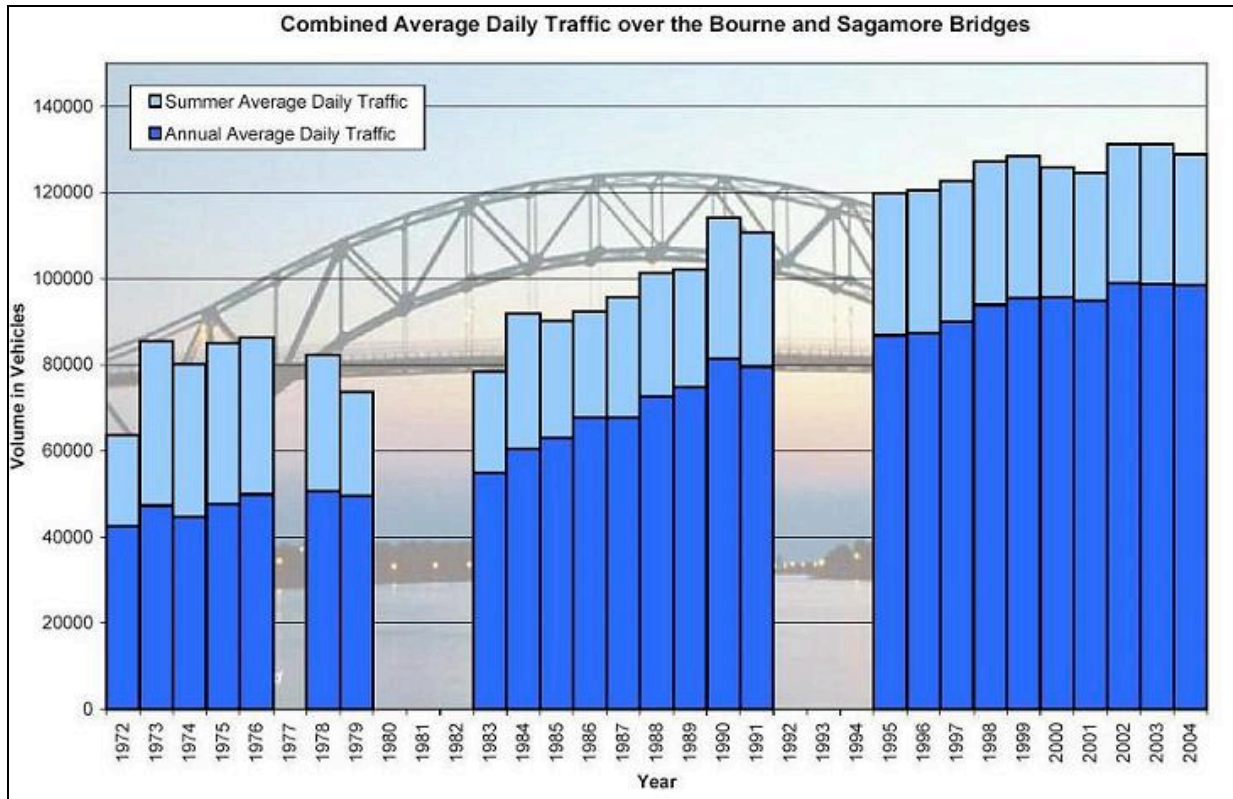
Vehicular traffic on Cape Cod in 2005 continued many of the trends observed in the *2003 Sustainability Indicators Report* (<http://www.capecodedc.org/2003Reportpdf.htm>). These trends include decreases in traffic Cape-wide, long-term growth focused in the Mid-Cape region and significant seasonal changes. Although traffic volumes show some signs of decreasing, current volumes are still far above those of the past.

The following table presents summer traffic growth during the last 10 years at all six of MassHighway's currently operating counting stations. These counting stations show a wide range of growth, from 0.28% through 1.87%. This table also shows some interesting information regarding canal bridge crossings. The average annual growth rate of the Bourne Bridge, which connects to Route 25 and I-495, is more than twice that of the Sagamore Bridge, which connects to Route 3 to Boston. This may indicate that motorists are using the Bourne Bridge in order to avoid longer traffic delays at the Sagamore Bridge, which has higher traffic volumes. It is also possible that the number of tourists/commuters coming to Cape Cod from southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island is increasing.

Permanent Counting Station Summer Traffic Growth: 1994-2004¹

Permanent Traffic Counting Station	Total Growth	Average Annual Growth Rate	95% Confidence Interval	Summer Growth Rate 2003-2004
#707: Bourne Bridge	14.29%	1.34%	--	-1.35%
#708: Sagamore Bridge	6.77%	0.65%	--	-2.04%
Combined Bridge Stations	10.39%	0.99%	±0.47%	-1.73%
#15: Rt. 6 E of 149 (Exit 5)	20.44%	1.87%	--	-1.66%
#20: Rt. 3 N of Bourne TL	6.39%	0.62%	--	-8.57%
#709: Rt. 28 E of Higgins Crowell	2.90%	0.28%	--	-1.81%
#7351: Rt. 28 W of Old Post Rd.	16.37%	1.52%	--	1.52%
All 6 MHD Stations	11.45%	1.09%	±0.44%	-2.33%

Source: Massachusetts Highway Department



The distribution of the growth in observed summer traffic is also interesting. The year round bridge crossings grew significantly faster than the summer crossings between 1983 and 1999 indicating that the major growth component is year round-traffic. This was distributed primarily on the Upper and Mid Cape as well as the Rte. 28 corridor, areas that exceed the 10-year average growth rate, with all other areas growing at a slower pace.

Cape Cod Summer Traffic Growth: 1994-2004

Region	# of Comparisons	Total Growth	Average Annual Growth Rate	95% Confidence Interval
All Roads	271	10.90%	1.04%	±0.21%
Upper Cape	70	12.29%	1.16%	±0.37%
Mid-Cape	67	11.62%	1.10%	±0.47%
Lower Cape	81	9.33%	0.89%	±0.37%
Outer Cape	53	7.27%	0.70%	±0.59%
Rt. 6 (All)	46	7.91%	0.76%	±0.37%
Rt. 28 (All)	30	12.10%	1.14%	±0.68%

“Upper” = Bourne, Sandwich, Falmouth, Mashpee	“Lower” = Harwich, Chatham, Brewster, Orleans
“Mid” = Barnstable, Yarmouth, Dennis	“Outer” = Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro, Provincetown

Comparing the traffic by month between 1974 and 2004, the average daily traffic occurring in the 1974 summer peak is now exceeded most months of the year with December 2004 traffic approximately equal to July/August 1974. It should also be noted that the ratio of the peak month traffic volumes and the winter low are decreasing, indicating the growing year-round traffic.

