

Fall 2018 - Report to Public Works Committee

Movable Bridge Operations



Update to 2018 Movable Bridge Operations

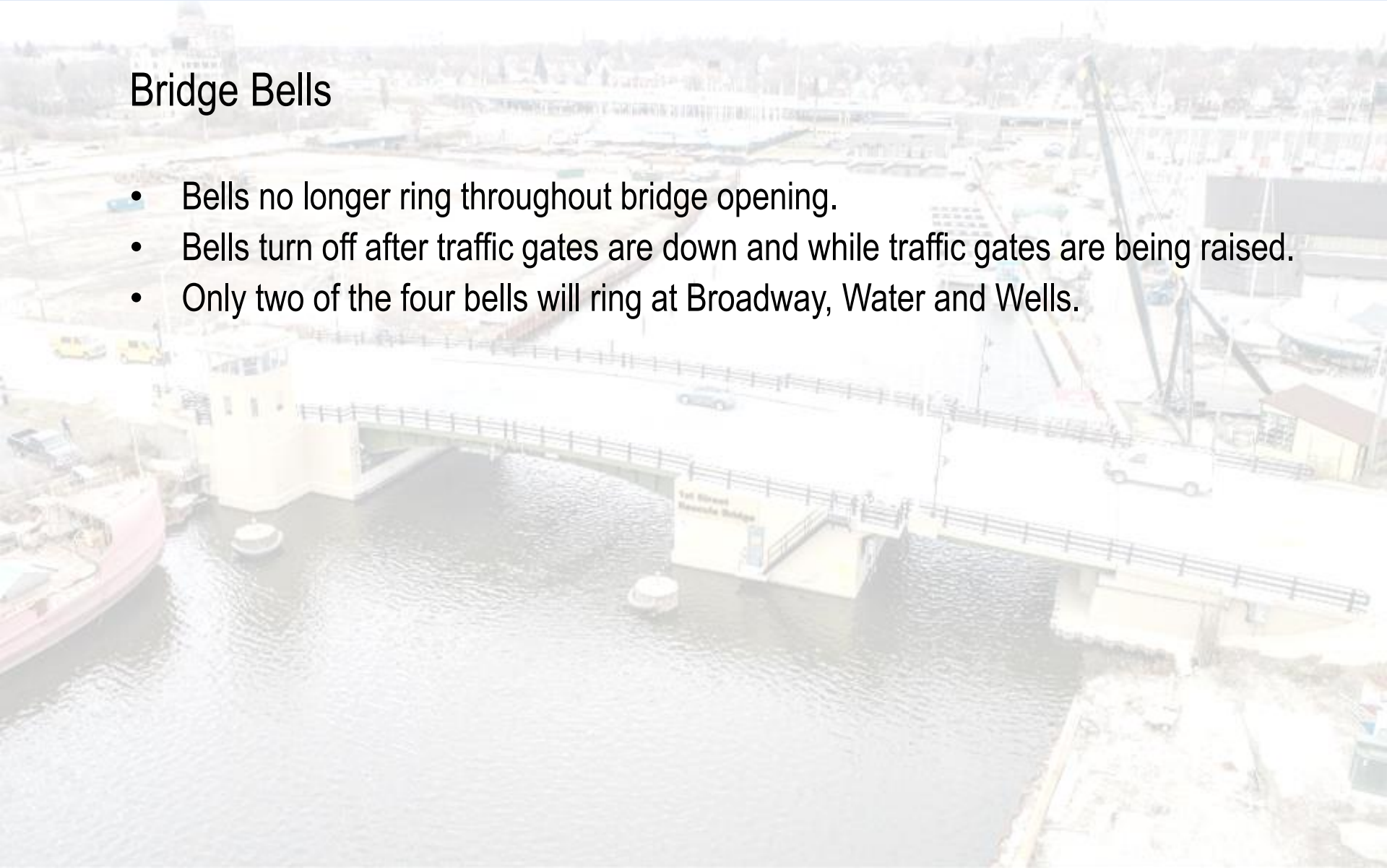
Agenda

- Discuss improved operations for movable bridges
 - Reduce noise from bridge bells.
 - Take measures to reduce traffic congestion.
 - Investigate duration of bridge hours to determine if these hours should be extended.
- Feedback from commercial boat owners after the season.
- Proposed letter to Coast Guard to request operational changes.

Reduce Noise From Bridge Bells

Bridge Bells

- Bells no longer ring throughout bridge opening.
- Bells turn off after traffic gates are down and while traffic gates are being raised.
- Only two of the four bells will ring at Broadway, Water and Wells.



Measures to Reduce Traffic Congestion

- Vehicular and pedestrian traffic taken into account prior to bridge openings.
- Increase time between openings by allowing five minutes between openings.
- Openings staged to let several boats through at one opening.
- Enforce bridge hours to all applicable vessels.
- Get buy-in from commercial boat owners to minimize tours during bridge hours.

Number of Openings (through October)

Bridge	2017	2018	+/-
West Wisconsin Avenue	3,642	3,334	-308
West Michigan Street	3,555	3,547	-8
West Wells Street			
North Water Street	3,069	2,894	-175
North Broadway	3,042	3,068	26
East Clybourn Street	1,873	2,030	157
West St. Paul Avenue	1,711	2,030	319
South Kinnickinnic Avenue	991	903	-88
West Kilbourn Avenue	680	1,051	371
West State Street	635	977	342
South 1st Street			
North Plankinton Avenue	211	207	-4
Remaining Eight Bridges	110	265	155
Total Bridge Openings for 2017	19,519	20,306	787

23,244 total openings in 2017.

Wells Street and 1st Street were under rehabilitation in 2018, therefore the numbers for the two bridges were excluded for comparison.

Number of Openings (through October)

Reasons for greater number of openings

- Increased River Usage
 - Commercial Boat Owners noted increased bookings.
- Milwaukee River Cruise Lines boarded at Highland due to Wells Street rehabilitation
 - Dock at Pier 106 was unavailable.
 - Needed openings at Kilbourn Avenue and State Street.
- Work barge traversing upriver north of Highland.

Feedback from Commercial Boat Owners

Major Commercial Boat Owners (Vessels rated for 50 passengers or more)

- **Milwaukee Boat Line**
 - Dock: West side of the river, south of Michigan
 - Boats: Vista King, Voyager
- **Milwaukee River Cruise Lines**
 - Docks: South of Highland Avenue, North of Wells Street (Pier 106)
 - Boats: Edelweiss, Edelweiss 2, Harbor Lady, Miss Wisconsin, Lakeside Spirit

Feedback from Commercial Boat Owners

- Milwaukee Boat Tours
 - Stated operations went well with the reduced number of openings and longer closure times.
 - Does not travel upriver during noon tours (affected bridges: Michigan, Wisconsin, Wells).
 - Altered afternoon tours to return closer to 5:30 to reduce disruption to traffic.
 - Willing to wait for traffic to clear.
 - Observed bridge operators have been more proactive at closing the bridges and telling boaters to stand-by for traffic to clear.
- Milwaukee River Cruise Line
 - Stated operations went well and worked within our guidelines.
 - Did not have scheduled tours during afternoon bridge hours.

Feedback from Commercial Boat Owners

- Paddle Tavern
 - Adjusted to reduced on-demand access.
 - Open to expanded bridge hours, as long as it isn't two hours long, which interferes with tours.
- Riverwalk Boat Tours and Rentals
 - Communication regarding restricted access was better between bridge operators and their captains as the summer went along.
- Private Boat Owners
 - No major complaints were made regarding wait times for traffic.

Letter to Coast Guard

- Bridge Hours: Period when bridge openings are restricted to commercial vessels only (rated 50 passengers or more).
 - 7:30 am to 8:30 am (Monday through Friday)
 - 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm (Monday through Friday)
- DPW-Traffic Engineering conducted a traffic study.
- Suggested expanding afternoon bridge hours to 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm.

Letter to Coast Guard

- Request change in regulations.
 - Broadway, Water, Michigan and Kinnickinnic are on demand, 24 hours a day.
 - Request a two-hour notice between 11:00 pm and 7:00 am.
 - Allows DPW to reduce third-shift staffing.
 - Allows DPW to move additional staff to first and second shift for better operational efficiencies.

