

# Fall 2018 - Report to Public Works Committee

## Movable Bridge Operations



# Update to 2018 Movable Bridge Operations

## Agenda

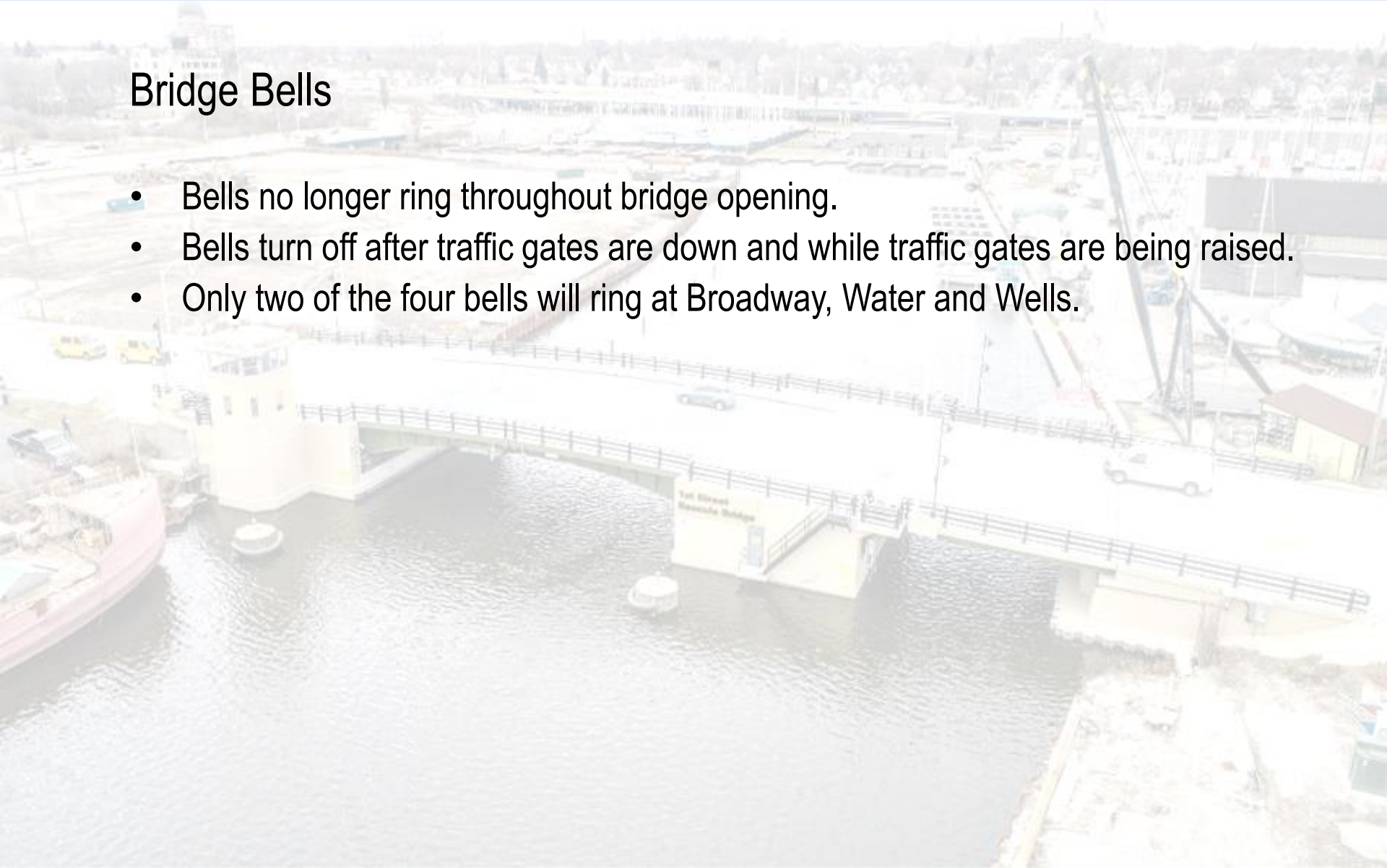
- Discuss improved operations for movable bridges
  - Reduce noise from bridge bells.
  - Take measures to reduce traffic congestion.
  - Investigate duration of bridge hours to determine if these hours should be extended.
- Feedback from commercial boat owners after the season.
- Proposed letter to 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
<b>Total Bridge Openings for 2017</b>	<b>19,519</b>	<b>20,306</b>	<b>787</b>

23,244 total openings in 2017.

Wells Street and 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

