

# Chelsea Street Bridge Improvement Program Voluntary Advanced Notification Program



**Chelsea Community Meeting  
Thursday, August 15, 2019**



# Background: Chelsea Street Bridge

**Project Background**

**USCG Regulation and  
MassDOT Actions**

**Voluntary Advanced  
Notification Program (ANP)**

**Methods of Communications**

**ANP Feedback Survey – Help  
Wanted**



# Background: Chelsea Street Bridge

- The Chelsea Street Bridge carries the MBTA Silver Line 3, and 112 buses, freight, autos, pedestrians and bikes between Chelsea and East Boston, over the Chelsea Creek
- The majority of maritime users include tug boats and vessels that supply 80% of the region's fuel needs to three (3) companies (Gulf, Irving and Global)
- USCG Regulations require that this bridge **MUST** open upon demand by any vessel to its full height of 175 feet. MassDOT operates bridge lifts upon request by mariners.
- When open, no vehicles – including the MBTA's 112 and Silver Line 3 buses – can cross the bridge. This causes significant and unpredictable delays for all roadway users



# Overview of Regulations - USCG



**MassDOT has NO legal authority to control or regulate the operations of the Bridge**

- US Coast Guard (USCG) has the sole legal authority

**MassDOT needs permission to make changes to Bridge regulations to improve operations for roadway users**

- USCG needs to determine no adverse impact to waterways

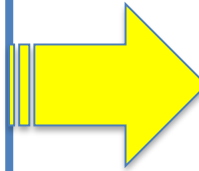
**Hard data, pilot programs and support from stakeholders is needed to make case for any and all regulation changes**

- Applications to the USCG can take up to six years to approve due to federal rules

# Requested USCG Regulation Changes

## Three Potential Regulation Changes

1. **Advanced Notification** to create more predictability for all users of the bridge
2. **Add dual-lift Height full (175') and mid-lift to reduce wait times** for roadways users
3. **Time of Day Restrictions** for bridge lifts for roadway users



## Current Goal

**Begin ANP** - collect and analyze data and get ideas to improve notifications and operations of the bridge and MBTA service



# Overview: Chelsea Street Bridge Improvement Program

## Phase I: Oct 2018 – Jan 2019

- Policy and Regulatory Review

## Phase II: Feb 2019 – On-Going

- Voluntary Advanced Notification Program (ANP)
- Identify Bridge and Traffic Improvements
- Collect data for other potential USCG regulation changes





# MassDOT Actions To Advance Regulation Changes with USCG

## **Taking action NOW to accelerate change and gain support for rule change applications:**

- 1. Making engineering, traffic and operational changes to the Bridge**
  - Reduces wait times for roadway users by 2 – 4 minutes
- 2. Started a Voluntary Advance Notification Program (ANP)**
  - Provides roadway users more information on closures for better trip planning – initiated on July 8
- 3. Collecting data and performing design work to prepare an application to the Coast Guard**
  - Further reduce wait times during bridge openings by adding a dual lift height– to be filed in the early Fall 2019

# Purpose of Voluntary Advanced Notification Program (ANP) – Initiated on July 8<sup>th</sup>

***Goal: Work with the USCG and stakeholders to implement a Voluntary ANP to:***

1. Provide Reliable and Accurate Bridge Lift Information to roadway users
2. Improve Operational Performance of the bridge
3. Manage Disruption (delay and congestion) Caused by Bridge Lifts

## ***Important to Note:***

- Bridge will continue to open ***on-demand*** and be messaged in real time
- This is a **Trial** Voluntary Program and **continually improving based on user feedback and operational improvements**

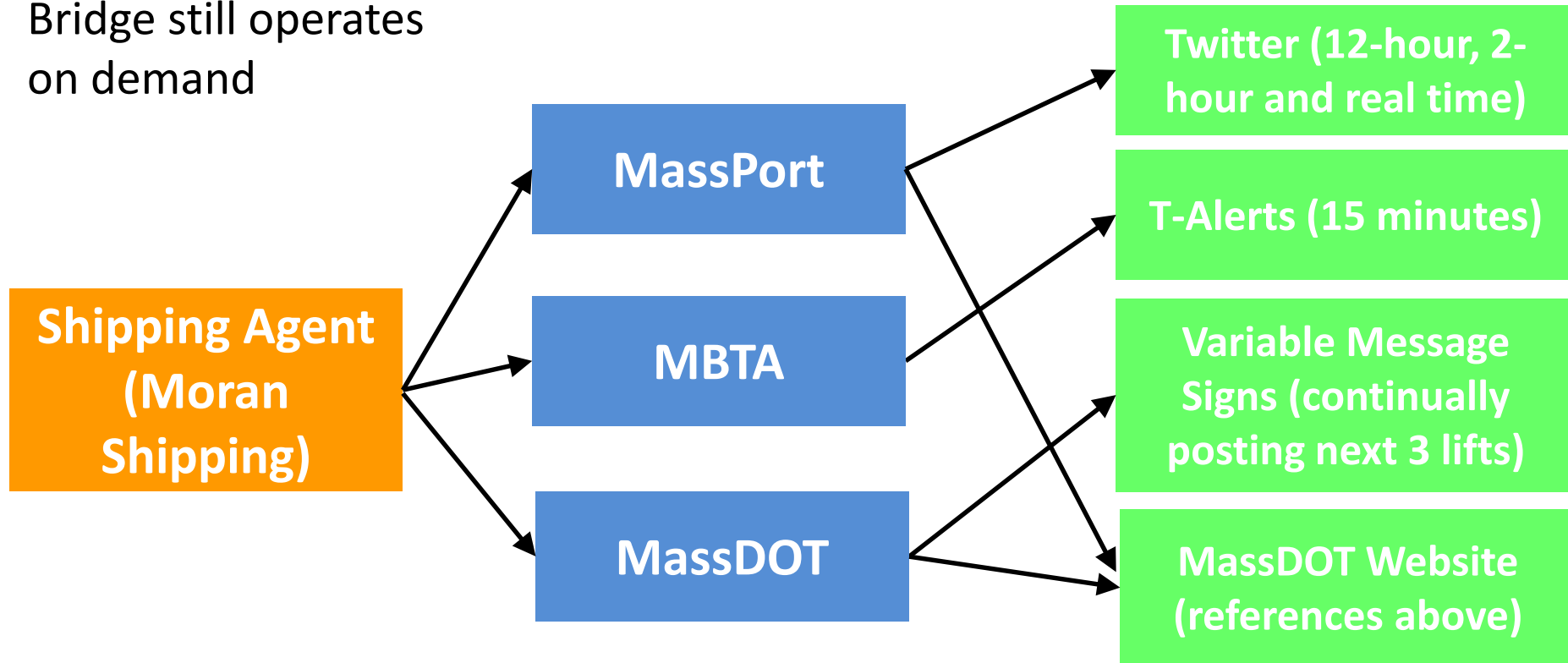


# Voluntary Advanced Notification Program Process

**Step 1:** Predict  
Estimated Vessel  
Arrival Times –  
Bridge still operates  
on demand

**Step 2:** Data  
Clearinghouse

**Step 3:** Message  
Advance Notice to  
End Users



# Current Status of the ANP



LoganToChelsea  
@LoganToChelsea

Following

7/17-Chelsea Bridge Lifts Expected-7/17/19

@ 8:45am estimated duration approx 15min

@ 9:15am estimated duration approx 25min

@ 10:15am estimated duration approx 25min

@ 10:55am estimated duration approx 15min

\*subject to change

1. Current status of accuracy and reliability of advanced notice.
2. Peak hour impacts
3. Causes of unknown lifts and actions to address
4. Primary sources of notification unreliability are vessel schedule delays, unfamiliar vessels, and weather
5. Takes time but collective effort and commitment is strong
6. Ideas for action



# Outreach & Response

**Packet for Community Distribution-** English & Spanish

**Flyer Drops-** English & Spanish (7/2/19)

## Community Events

- Chelsea Night Market (7/13/19)
- Community Meeting (8/15/19)
- Chelsea Night Market (9/21/19)
- Others?

## Response from Users

- Initially overwhelmingly positive – until an on-demand lift occurred
- Comments are directed toward: using Facebook; more texts, paper, emails notices; and, include a coordinate approach with McArdle Bridge (owned and operated by the City of Boston).



# MassDOT Actions to Date & Next Steps

## Continue to improve operational performance of the bridge to reduce delay

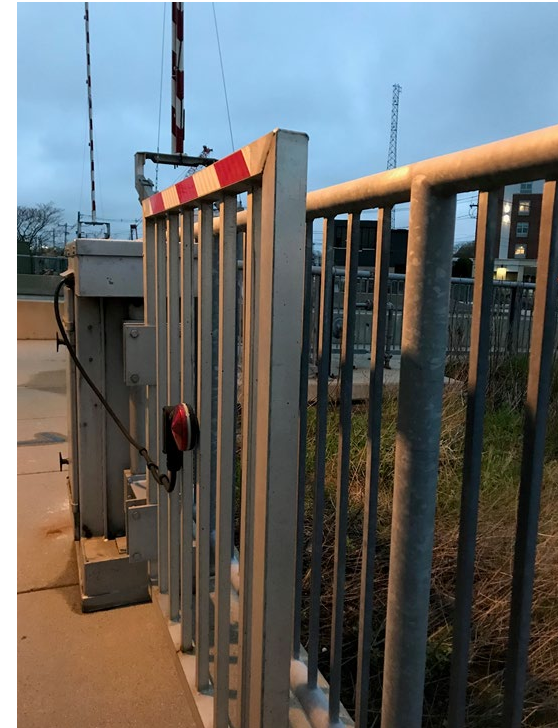
- Updated cameras
- Separate pedestrian gates from vehicles
- Installed new signage
- Connected bridge into highway operation center (HOC)
- Looking at locations for real time signage

## Continue to work with stakeholders to improve the ANP

- Communications, Reliability of Notifications and Automation, etc.
- Working to reduce wait times for roadway users for a minimum of 2 – 4 minutes

## Collect data and finalize design work to submit an application to the USCG to add a dual lift

- Further reduce wait times during bridge openings by adding a dual lift option – Fall 2019





## We need your help to make ANP successful

1. Get the word out!
2. Support our application to the Coast Guard
3. Give us feedback on the advanced notification system, messages, etc.



<https://tiny.cc/ChelseaLift>

# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

