



MassDOT Travel Advisory

Tobin Bridge and Route 1 Chelsea lane closures start in April

During project: free inbound MBTA SL3 bus service at some stops and additional Blue Line trains added using MassDOT Highway Division project funds

Customers will be able to use CharlieCards on Commuter Rail between North Station and Chelsea

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) announced the Department will be rehabilitating the surface of the Tobin Bridge and complete required maintenance to improve the structure which will require lane closures and result in significant traffic impacts on the Tobin Bridge and Chelsea Curves section of Route 1 beginning April 1. These impacts will lead to increased travel times on sections of Route 1 northbound and southbound for drivers and MBTA bus customers.

The Department also released details about transit options available to travelers such as free fares in the inbound direction on the SL3 bus line offered at the Chelsea, Bellingham Square, Box District, and Eastern Avenue stops for the duration of construction. The MBTA also announced that they will be running additional MBTA Blue Line trains to additional capacity, and these measures will be funded by MassDOT Highway Division project funds.

Beginning April 1, lane closures on the Tobin Bridge northbound will be put in place, although two of three travel lanes will be open during daytime hours. One of the three travel lanes on the Tobin Bridge northbound will be open during overnight hours.

Beginning by early May, Route 1 travel lanes in the Chelsea Curves area will be reduced so that two of three north and southbound travel lanes will be open in the daytime. One of three north and southbound travel lanes will be open during overnight hours.

“MassDOT is carrying out simultaneous work on this infrastructure which was constructed in the middle of the 20th century and hasn’t been rehabilitated since the 1970s in order to ensure its continued use and reliability and minimize the overall impact on commuters and the local community,” **said Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver**. “We thank travelers for their patience as MassDOT begins this necessary project, and we encourage everyone traveling throughout the Route 1 area to make smart commuting decisions such as considering public

transit, using the appropriate technology apps to find the best route and time to travel, and building extra time into their commutes to account for potential roadway congestion.”

“During construction, free fares are being offered for Silver Line 3 (SL3) inbound customers at certain station stops and additional Blue Line train capacity is being added. In addition, public transit customers will be able to use a CharlieCard to travel between North Station and Chelsea on the Commuter Rail,” **said MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak**. “Some MBTA customers on certain bus routes will experience delays, so we urge riders to consider taking advantage of these additional travel options being offered during construction.”

MassDOT is advising the public to also consider using the Haverhill or Newburyport/Rockport Commuter Rail lines and note that the Haverhill Line historically has parking capacity at Haverhill and Bradford stations. The Newburyport/Rockport Line historically has parking capacity at Newburyport, Salem and Lynn station. Customers can monitor @MBTA_Parking on Twitter for capacity updates and information.

MassDOT’s traffic modeling suggests that on Route 1 northbound, afternoon peak travel times could increase in duration and have significant delays. Vehicle backups are expected to extend onto the I-93 ramps, along the Leverett Connector, and towards Rutherford Avenue. On Route 1 southbound, morning peak travel times could similarly increase in duration with significant delays expected. Vehicle backups are expected to extend to the Route 60 Rotary in Salem and may intermittently extend beyond Salem Street.

MassDOT is carrying out work on the Tobin Bridge and Chelsea Curves section of Route 1 at the same time so that these projects will be completed in 2021. If the projects were done at separate times, drivers would be inconvenienced for additional years. This work will eliminate the need for weight restrictions and postings, and MassDOT will use accelerated construction techniques to shorten the overall construction time.

MassDOT encourages the public to be mindful of these impacts and seek alternate routes. Those traveling through the area should reduce speed and use caution. These operations are weather dependent and subject to change without notice.

For more information on traffic conditions travelers are encouraged to:

- Dial 511 before heading out onto the roadways and select a route to hear real-time conditions.
- Visit www.mass511.com, a website which provides real-time traffic and incident advisory information, access to traffic cameras, and allows users to subscribe to text and email alerts for traffic conditions.
- Follow MassDOT on Twitter @MassDOT to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.
- Check parking availability at the T’s 8 largest garages @MBTA_Parking.
- Download MassDOT’s GoTime mobile app and view real-time traffic conditions before setting out on the road.