



New Bedford Port Authority  
Strategic Plan  
2018-2023

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# Introduction

New Bedford is first and foremost a port city. Since its establishment as a whaling village on the shores of the Acushnet River in the 18th Century, New Bedford's economy and culture have been tied to the sea. While the complexion of maritime industries has changed over time, the Port of New Bedford remains the economic engine of the region. In 2016, the economic consulting firm Martin Associates estimated that the Port supports approximately 6,600 jobs and that its annual direct and induced economic value totaled \$9.8 billion, a full 2% of Massachusetts's gross domestic product.

Most of this activity of course is associated with the fishing industry. New Bedford is the highest grossing commercial fishing port in the United States, and it is the undisputed center of the industry on the East Coast, with five times the annual landings of the next largest port. New Bedford's fishing fleet is the foundation of an industry cluster that includes numerous processors, fueling companies, equipment manufacturers, and various ancillary businesses.

Despite this success, there remains ample opportunity for the Port to grow and diversify. The emergence of the offshore wind industry is the most prominent new opportunity. Over the last two decades, the industry has reinvigorated mid-sized ports in Northern Europe, and promises to do the same here, as the industry is now beginning to establish itself on the East Coast. Because of its geographic proximity to the wind farms, its key infrastructure, and supportive state policy, New Bedford is one of the most attractive locations on the East Coast for the offshore wind industry to locate. The Mitchell Administration has seized on these advantages and has worked along multiple fronts to pave the way for long-term investment by the industry in New Bedford. The effort is beginning to pay off, as three major wind developers have established offices in the city and have made commitments to stage their projects from the Port.

Meanwhile, other key sectors in the Port are steadily growing. New Bedford has seen an uptick in refrigerated cargo tonnage that is likely to continue with the completion of upgrades to the Port's busiest cold storage warehouse. Recreational boating has made a comeback, as the Port's largest marina is now fully booked, and ferry service volume is at record numbers. And considerable interest has emerged cultivation and entrepreneurship related to fish processing.

These positive trends underscore that the Port remains a highly advantageous place for certain industries to do business. From the start of his administration, Mayor Jon Mitchell has emphasized that the Port is the centerpiece of New Bedford's economic development strategy, a point reaffirmed in his most recent inaugural address:

*“Our top priority remains the full utilization of the Port of New Bedford. The Port is the primary economic driver of the region because for a variety of reasons, it offers the industries that call it home distinct competitive advantages.”*

Ports that succeed in the long run are those that recognize and understand these advantages and develop them to their fullest. The starting point is knowing what you are good at. Few ports are competitive in every maritime industry. Here in New Bedford, geographic proximity to natural resources gives us an advantage in the fishing and offshore wind industries, whereas our harbor's depth and scarcity of lay-down space limit our ability to become a major container port. Thanks to a series of thorough market analyses in recent years, there is now a general understanding of the strengths and vulnerabilities of the Port's industries.

The Port of New Bedford must retain its status as America's leading fishing port, and continue to diversify in industries that can gain competitive advantages by being here, so that the Port can remain the backbone of the region's economy and generate economic opportunity for its residents in the long run. While geographic location, physical size and other immutable attributes dictate the nature of a port's competitive advantages, a high-functioning port management agency can accentuate those advantages by providing services that can help harbor users to lower their costs, reinvesting revenue derived from its assets, and otherwise facilitating private investment in the port.

## The New Bedford Port Authority

In 1957, the Massachusetts legislature created the New Bedford Harbor Development Commission (HDC) to manage New Bedford's waterfront assets and promote economic development and equal access. The HDC is governed by a board of seven commissioners, including the Mayor of New Bedford and six commissioners who are appointed by the mayor in staggered three-year terms. For much of its history, the HDC has operated in practice much like a traditional harbormaster organization ordinarily associated with much

smaller ports, utilizing a small staff primarily to maintain city owned piers and the municipally-managed marina. In recent years, a growing consensus has formed, however, that the organization must evolve into a more sophisticated economic development agency. Today, the Port needs to attract capital and job opportunities in the national and global markets in which New Bedford's harbor users compete. By delivering better services to harbor users and engaging in long-term planning informed by changing markets, the organization can strengthen the Port's competitiveness.

In recognition of the growing scale and complexity of the Port and the changing role of the organization in supporting its vitality, the HDC voted in January 2018 to change its name to the "New Bedford Port Authority" (NBPA). The mission of the NBPA is to create business and job opportunities in Greater New Bedford by facilitating the growth and diversification of maritime industries in and around the Port of New Bedford, while strengthening the physical, economic and cultural connections between the Port and the City.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to articulate clearly how the NBPA will execute its mission over the next five years. The plan sets forth a series of strategies with clear goals to provide services that will help harbor users compete more effectively. The plan is derived from a series of valuable analyses of the Port in recent years that offer valuable insight into the nature of the Port's competitive advantages.

## Strategy 1: Provide superior direct services to harbor users

The NBPA offers a variety of direct services to harbor users. For example, on fishing piers, as well as at Pope's Island Marina, the NBPA provides dockside power, night security, snow plowing, nearby parking, and trash removal. It also manages the Whale's Tooth parking lot, icebreaking, mooring rentals, and the recreational boat launch. Working with the New Bedford Police Department, which has primary responsibility over law enforcement on the water, NBPA personnel direct marine traffic to ensure the safety of vessels and their occupants. In providing these and other core services, the NBPA enables harbor users to lower their costs of doing business.

Although a port's location and infrastructure are its most important attributes, a port can gain a competitive advantage by offering its users higher quality services than its peer ports. The service offerings must be based on a nuanced appreciation of user needs that can come only through an open and active communication with port users and an understanding of the markets in which they operate. The services also must be cost-competitive, and delivered in a customer-oriented way. Much like any private enterprise seeking to gain customers, it is important for the NBPA to convey to harbor users that they are welcome here. The recent improvements in the operation of the Pope's Island Marina exemplify this approach. Through market research, user surveys and accessible, welcoming communication with recreational boaters, the marina's management has upgraded services, improved the physical appearance of the facility, significantly increased revenue, and helped to elevate the reputation of the Port as a recreational boating center.

With this approach to service provision in mind, the NBPA should pursue the following goals:

**Goal 1: The NBPA will offer services to harbor users that are as good as or superior to those offered in other East Coast ports.**

**Goal 2: The NBPA will work collaboratively with the New Bedford Police Department and other public safety agencies to ensure port security and public safety along the waterfront, including through formalizing policies governing municipal piers.**

The NBPA should construct a port security center that will facilitate communication across relevant agencies.

## Strategy 2: Ensure harbor users have access to useful and well-managed infrastructure

Although the term "infrastructure" ordinarily conjures up an image of a public structure such as a road or bridge, making useful infrastructure available to port users is perhaps the most important service a port development agency can offer. Ports are essentially transfer points between land and sea, and those ports that can facilitate the movement of goods and people in both directions by having the right infrastructure will achieve competitive advantage. The Port of New Bedford has long benefited from having useful waterfront infrastructure for the industries that call it home. For example, the Port's municipal piers are readily accessible to the commercial fishing fleet and vehicular traffic alike; nearby parking lots have enabled the growth of the island ferry services; and direct highway access along the waterfront has allowed shipping companies and fish processors to transport goods readily to their customers.

In the long run, the productivity of the Port's infrastructure will depend on how well existing infrastructure assets are managed and maintained, and the ability of the Port to add infrastructure and upgrade existing facilities to meet the evolving needs of Port users. In recent years, New Bedford has made considerable progress on both fronts. The NBPA has restructured the management of its piers and parking lots, conducted extensive analysis of the condition of municipally-owned bulkhead, replaced numerous finger piers, and installed fendering and cathodic protection systems, among other measures. Perhaps as significantly, the NBPA has established a reserve account for pier repairs, which has been supplemented by a recent grant by the Seaport Economic Council. When repairs currently underway are completed, all of the bulkhead and piers under the NBPA's control will have engineer ratings of "fair," "good" or "excellent" condition.

Not all of the infrastructure in the harbor falls under the purview of the NBPA. Most of the bulkhead is privately-owned or leased, and the state owns two major facilities, the New Bedford State Pier and the New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal (NBMCT), and has partial ownership of the Pope's Island Marina. The NBPA has a role in facilitating the development of infrastructure owned by others. For instance, dredging the privately-owned berths -- the funding for which the NBPA has been relentlessly advocating -- will spur

significant shoreside investment, according to a recent study. Moreover, the NBPA must continue to press the state to invest in its own facilities. While the NBMCT is new and in excellent condition, the state has neglected the State Pier for so long that it requires significant renovations. The State Pier's renovations cannot wait as the facility hosts the port's ferry and primary cargo-handling terminals. In general, the NBPA must do its best to effectively coordinate port operations alongside two major state-owned facilities in the harbor that are the responsibility of agencies headquartered in Boston.

Working with various government agencies and port businesses, the NBPA has established a clear pathway to upgrade the Port's infrastructure to address the changing needs of maritime industries. In the coming years, it is clear that each of the Port's main industries: fishing, cargo, offshore wind and recreational boating, will need more berthing space, either because of projected industry-wide expansion, growth in New Bedford's market share or both. Shoreside space also must be better utilized. The waterfront planning exercise over the last year has enabled the NBPA and the City alike to chart a path forward for the City's waterfront land, and in particular, where infrastructure useful to industry may be built or upgraded.

In the long run, it is inherently challenging for any port to adapt its infrastructure to the often rapid changes in the global markets in which its users compete. It is incumbent upon ports to build infrastructure versatile enough for use by more than one industry. More fundamentally, to adapt successfully to change, the NBPA must institutionalize the practice of long-term planning that is informed by a close working relationship with industry and other government agencies, and a clear sense of how the Port can continue to offer competitive advantages to its users.

Toward these ends, the NBPA should strive to achieve the following goals related to infrastructure:

**Goal 1: The NBPA will institutionalize best management practices over all existing port infrastructure, including the faithful implementation and funding of maintenance plans that result in clean, safe, resilient and highly-productive facilities.**

**Goal 2: The NBPA will plan, develop and secure funding for new port infrastructure and upgrades to existing facilities based on the anticipated needs of port industries in the foreseeable future. More specifically, the NBPA should continue to advance the following projects:**



## **North Terminal**

The development of North Terminal would provide greater water access for fish processors, international shipping companies, and island freight services. In addition, as the offshore wind industry continues to develop, the expansion of North Terminal would provide the Port with the capacity to handle two separate offshore wind installation projects in the future. The entire North Terminal bulkhead extension of 1,600 feet could be constructed in part with clean fill from the dredging of the harbor, yielding considerable savings. The NBPA continues to seek federal and state funding for the construction of the terminal.

## **EPA Facility**

For nearly 20 years the EPA has operated a "de-watering" pier and warehouse facility along the North Terminal area to support its Superfund cleanup of the harbor. Once the EPA removes the soil with the highest levels of contamination, it will no longer ship sediments out of the city by rail. This also means the EPA will no longer need the de-watering facility, whose ownership will revert to the City. The NBPA should develop a business plan for this facility.

## **Pope's Island Marina Upgrades**

With 198 seasonal slips and dozens of transient moorings, Pope's Island Marina has significant capacity to serve as the Port's primary recreational boating center. Many of the docks and slips are in need of repair or replacement, the entire marina is in need of electrical upgrades. The Welcome Center also would greatly benefit from updated amenities. The marina's recent success has led to a waiting list for space, and the need for expansion. Before major investment can occur, however, there will need to be a clearer understanding of who owns the facility now and who would be responsible for future repairs. The state's Department of Conservation and Recreation built the original marina but has no management role over the facility.

## **Berth and Navigational Dredging**

Harbor dredging is critical for ports to make their infrastructure available for use, yet New Bedford has not been able to undertake comprehensive harbor dredging in over 60 years. The primary problem has been the pervasive contamination of the harbor by nearby industry, which has made the cost of disposing dredge spoils prohibitively expensive, resulting in many shallow, unusable berths. The EPA's ongoing cleanup of the harbor and regular private berth dredging through the State Enhanced Remedy process, however, will open the door to more routine dredging in future.

The more immediate opportunity lies in a current proposal that NBPA has put before the state to undertake dredging along several shallow areas of the harbor to open them up for marine industrial development. This project will set the stage for waterfront businesses to go forward with their own infrastructure projects and continue investing in the city and local workforce. A recent economic study of the Port projects that this dredging project would create nearly 900 permanent jobs. This project will offer the added benefit of making clean fill available (from the excavation of related Confined Aquatic Disposal [CAD] cell) for use in constructing the North Terminal, which would reduce the cost of that project by several million dollars.

In the meantime, the NBPA must continue to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the harbor's main channel down to its authorized depth of -30 feet. This would remove the challenge posed to cargo freighters that at times must wait for the tide to rise before entering or leaving the inner harbor.

**Goal 3: Urge the state to invest in its state-owned facilities in the harbor, especially the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge and State Pier.**

#### **New Bedford/Fairhaven Bridge**

MassDOT has classified the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge as “functionally obsolete,” and projects repair costs to be approximately \$45 million. At the same time, the bridge is a physical barrier to North Terminal for larger vessels and stymies the growth of the cargo and offshore wind industries. The lower harbor lacks space for continued development, leaving the upper harbor ripe for growth, but until the bridge is replaced to allow for wider clearance, full growth potential will not be met. The NBPA will continue to press the state administration to fund the replacement of the bridge, which would cost approximately \$100 million.

#### **State Pier**

The state recently invested approximately \$3 million to refrigerate the warehouses on the State Pier, which will enable the break-bulk cargo business on the pier to operate year-round. Although this investment will increase job opportunities for the City's longshoreman, the pier itself needs to be in working condition and the state does not thoughtfully market the facility. As detailed in several recent studies, after years of neglecting the pier, the state must now repair significant portions of structure, either by replacing pilings or by building a bulkhead around the facility. This investment, which is estimated to be between \$20-25 million, will be critical to ensuring the long-term success of

both the growing cargo and ferry operations. And long-term investment cannot begin until there is an understanding between the NBPA, the city and the state about future uses for the pier.

## Strategy 3: Promote industry growth and diversification through business development and recruitment

In addition to its role as a provider of direct services to harbor users, the NBPA's job is to facilitate the growth and diversification of Greater New Bedford's maritime economy. As the port authority in one of the busiest and most diversified ports on the East Coast, the NBPA is situated amid a hive of business activity. It is well-placed to do what economic development agencies are expected to do, namely to connect businesses to one another concerning matters of mutual interest and to engage in long-term planning to accommodate the needs of industry. The primary goal of course is to attract capital to the city and help create job opportunities for its residents.

For those industries in which the Port will have a competitive advantage in the years ahead, the NBPA will need to develop the capacity to pursue certain strategic goals effectively, namely:

**Goal 1: The NBPA must continue to facilitate communication between maritime businesses in the Port and others with whom they have potentially mutual interests.** To improve business-to-business communication -- a core function of any economic development agency -- NBPA personnel must develop a deep working understanding of Port businesses and the markets they operate in, and maintain open and robust communication with existing Port businesses. The NBPA should be recognized as the nerve center of business-to-business engagement in the Port.

**Goal 2: The NBPA must work closely with relevant state, local and federal economic development agencies to extend the reach of its network.** The NBPA has a strong relationship with the New Bedford-based economic development agencies, including the New Bedford Economic Development Center (EDC), the New Bedford Wind Energy Center (WEC), the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and city government. It must work harder to interact with the state agencies that control major facilities in the

port, namely the Department of Conservation and Recreation, MassDevelopment and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), as neither agency has a primary focus in the maritime economy.

**Goal 3: The NBPA should extend its networking function beyond New Bedford and establish key recruitment targets.** This will be done by engaging in networking in its core industrial sectors and remaining alert to new business opportunities in these sectors as well as in emerging sectors that could operate successfully in the Port. The NBPA's continued involvement in industry groups such the American Association of Port Authorities, American Wind Energy Association, the Northeast Seafood Coalition and the Fisheries Survival Fund, will become more important.

**Goal 4: To ensure that the Port adjusts to changes in the markets its users compete in, the NBPA must institutionalize the practice of long-term planning with the fullest possible industry participation.** The recent waterfront planning exercise is precisely the type of undertaking that should happen with appropriate regularity.

**Goal 5: The NBPA should facilitate the convening of industry in New Bedford, especially fishing and offshore wind.** To sustain its leadership role, continue to attract capital and business opportunity and influence policy, the NBPA must be effective in convening industry members outside of New Bedford. As part of its role as a national leader in commercial fishing, New Bedford should play host to full meetings of the New England Fisheries Management Council. But the city has not hosted these and other important industry meetings because of insufficient hotel and conference space. In light of this problem, the NBPA should support the city's effort to establish larger conference facilities and hotel space.

### **Industry- Specific Goals**

With these general business development goals in mind, the NBPA also must home in on efforts that are tailored to opportunities for growth in the Port's core industries. Many of these industry-specific goals emerged from earlier planning exercises, while others have risen in priority more recently and will require more planning.

**Goal 6: The NBPA should continue to work closely with the commercial fishing industry to facilitate the industry's adaptation to changing markets, regulations and workforce needs.**

**Goal 7: The NBPA should work closely with the WEC to help the offshore wind industry to establish a base in New Bedford as quickly as possible.** The Port and City are entering into a critical period in their long effort to cultivate the development of the offshore wind industry here, as other East Coast ports are poised to pursue the industry. Although the WEC is the city's lead agency for business development in that industry, it will be incumbent for the NBPA to facilitate its development in the Port by helping the industry develop strong working relationships with existing port businesses, understanding the industry's port related needs, and supporting the WEC's offshore wind business development efforts.

**Goal 8: The NBPA should develop the full potential of the recreational boating sector in New Bedford by upgrading the Pope's Island Marina and facilities, improving the connection of recreational boaters to the downtown, and supporting the staging of competitive sailboat racing.** As the urban center on Buzzards Bay – one of the world's most popular sailing grounds – New Bedford is a highly appealing port for recreational boating. Among other attributes, it offers easy access to Buzzards Bay, the physical protection afforded by the Hurricane Barrier and a downtown with numerous restaurants within walking distance. A 2013 recreational boating planning study led to the establishment of a launch service, improved downtown connections, enhanced marina services and the establishment of competitive sail racing. A follow-up planning exercise could set the stage for further improvement.

**Goal 9: The NBPA should develop a plan to open up and manage aquaculture opportunities in waters under its control.** The aquaculture industry in the Northeast has grown significantly, and New Bedford waters could offer the industry the opportunity to develop larger scale operations close to our seafood supply chain connections. With thoughtful planning, New Bedford could reap the benefits of this industry without encroaching on recreational boaters or recreational shellfishermen.

**Goal 10: The NBPA should nurture entrepreneurship with direct support for the New Bedford Ocean Cluster and other "blue economy" programs that attempt to spur innovation and capitalize on the concentration of marine businesses in Greater New Bedford.** The NBPA's access to a vast network of commercial fishing businesses, the expansion of UMass-Dartmouth's marine science programs, and the arrival and rapid evolution of the offshore wind industry, combine to make New Bedford a potential center for marine innovation. The creation of the Ocean Cluster is a reflection of this recognition, as its mission is to connect entrepreneurs whose businesses depend on the availability of fish. The NBPA and the City are currently working on a plan to develop entrepreneurship

opportunities, especially in marine sectors. This work will be important to facilitating the diversification of the Port and creating new job opportunities.

**Goal 11: The NBPA will work with the state agencies that control major facilities in the Port to promote the expansion of the Port's cargo business.** Although the Port is not large enough to receive major container ships, its tonnage of refrigerated break bulk cargo has increased significantly in recent years in part because of the growing recognition of the Port's advantage as a distribution point to New England and Eastern Canadian food retailers. There is room for further growth, including possibly in the business of short-sea shipping, but it will require clear coordination with the state agencies that operate in the harbor about marketing and leasing arrangements.

**Goal 12: The NBPA will pursue opportunities to draw visitors to the waterfront.** The waterfront itself is a valuable visitor and tourist attraction, and should be made available to the public in ways and in places that do not interfere with marine industries. Conversely, waterfront industries, especially commercial fishing, stand to evoke greater appreciation and goodwill through broader public exposure. Toward this end, the NBPA supports the expansion of ferry, charter boating, cruise ships visits and harbor tours. The NBPA further supports the development of areas of the central waterfront for thoughtful public accommodation. Giving the public a place to learn about the fishing and marine industrial activities of the Port are an important part of the Port of New Bedford's authenticity and will further the region's economic goals without detracting from the working waterfront. Recent planning efforts have identified many sites where safe public access is possible in the central waterfront, including along the city-facing side of State Pier.

## Strategy 4: Advocate for state and federal policies that further the interests of Port users

The NBPA is in a unique position to be the voice of the Port's industries. While the NBPA should work closely with the WEC to advance the cause of offshore wind development, its primary policy work will continue to concern the commercial fishing industry. As pointed out in the *2015 New Bedford Economic Development Assessment Report*, "There is no other entity or organization, such as a local business association whose primary responsibility is to represent New Bedford's fishermen and preserve the present and future well-being...preserving the industry requires a coordinated, proactive approach to engage national regulators and elected officials." Mayor Mitchell has become a leading voice

nationally for fair regulation of the industry, and helped establish the National Coalition of Fishing Communities to promote the protection of fishing communities from unfair regulatory decisions.

The NBPA should continue to build its expertise in fishing issues, and direct a coordinated strategy to engage federal regulators and elected officials. It recently hired a full time Fisheries Director to focus on commercial fishing policy, and more specifically to serve as a liaison between the fishing industry and offshore wind industry. In addition, the NBPA has strong working relationships with industry associations and SMAST that allow it to tap into outside expertise. It is important that these relationships remain robust, and other connections are developed with fisheries researchers. Given the increasing concentration of the industry in the Port of New Bedford, there is a compelling need to draw more fisheries research to the Port. More importantly, the NBPA must continue to advocate that NOAA's new Northeast Science Center be built in New Bedford, as no other single measure would be more effective in bridging the gulf between NOAA's scientists and the regulated community.

**Goal 1: The NBPA will continue to advocate for fair regulation of the fishing industry.**

**Goal 2: To promote better understanding between federal regulators and the commercial fishing industry, the NBPA will continue to advocate for NOAA's new Northeast Science Center to be constructed in New Bedford.**

## Strategy 5: Promote and Market the Port

The NBPA plays an important role in promoting the Port of New Bedford. The Port is the center of the commercial fishing industry on the East Coast, and the City of New Bedford itself is the urban center of Buzzards Bay, one of the preeminent sailing locales in North America. The historic central waterfront is linked directly to the City's growing downtown and its arts and entertainment scene. All of these attributes can and must be accentuated for the good of the Port and the City alike.

The NBPA and the City have devoted considerably more resources to marketing and branding the Port over the last several years, through direct communication to targeted markets and by attracting more visitors and tourists to the working waterfront. Both prongs of this strategy should be enhanced in the years ahead so as to bolster the brand of the Port as an authentic and unique setting for traditional and cutting edge industry alike, and enhance the symbiotic connection between the Port and the City.

**Goal 1: The NBPA will take full advantage of the enormous branding potential of New Bedford's status as America's top commercial fishing port by launching and funding a marketing campaign for New Bedford seafood.** There are numerous examples of successful seafood marketing campaigns from ports and regions that generate a mere fraction of New Bedford's fish landings. In recognizing this potential, in 2017, the NBPA unveiled a New Bedford Seafood brand that has been used to promote locally landed seafood in Greater New Bedford. The NBPA needs to take the next step and devote resources to a broader campaign to establish a national brand that will support both New Bedford's fishing industry and the city.

**Goal 2: The NBPA will facilitate thoughtful supporting uses in the central waterfront.** Waterfront industries are beginning to recognize that the self-imposed isolation of the New Bedford waterfront from the city works against the interests of Port users, especially the commercial fishing industry. To build public support for the fishing industry, the public must have the opportunity to observe the industry firsthand. Having a modest number of supporting uses like restaurants or retail in areas that cannot be readily used by industry, such as along the front of the State Pier, provides an opportunity to educate and improve the public's appreciation of our maritime industries.

**Goal 3: The NBPA will work with the City's Marketing and Tourism Department to Promote New Bedford's recreational boating assets.** We continue to heavily promote



Pope's Island Marina in leading publications targeted to recreational boaters on the East Coast. The City of New Bedford's Tourism and Marketing Office also regularly promotes the marina and New Bedford's entertainment scene to recreational boaters.

**Goal 4: The NBPA will coordinate with MassDevelopment and MassCEC to market the international terminals in the Port of New Bedford.** While the NBPA does not directly operate any international cargo facilities, MassCEC's New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal and MassDevelopment's State Pier would benefit by marketing their facilities cooperatively with the NBPA. In addition, the Port and region would benefit from a cohesive marketing plan to breakbulk and project cargo carriers and shippers.

## Strategy 6: The NBPA will employ a business model and management practices that will sustain its mission

In 2015, an analysis of the NBPA's operations by the management consulting firm GMC Strategies concluded that the organization lacked the capacity to pursue its diffuse set of priorities all at once. Since that report was published, the NBPA has made considerable progress on this front. Among other steps, it significantly increased revenue by adjusting docking fees to a level much closer to market rate, has successfully landed grants to rebuild key infrastructure, and has deepened its partnerships with other public agencies on mutual interests. It has also modernized its maintenance practices, upgraded its finances and begun to measure service performance.

Now, as the HDC becomes the NBPA and formalizes its economic development mission, it must ensure that its business model and revenue streams can support its mission. Many of the goals set forth in this plan come with added costs that must be supported by more revenue. The NBPA has several potential new sources of revenue, including the lease of the EPA terminal once it reverts to the NBPA's control. But it must ensure that the revenue it receives from providing services to harbor users can sustain those services. And like any other successful enterprise, the NBPA must continually improve its management practices to ensure optimum performance.

**Goal 1: The NBPA will continue to manage its operations consistent with the New Bedford Way, the City of New Bedford's statement of organizational values that**

**emphasizes Accountability, Integrity, Innovation, Continuous Improvement, Teamwork and Respect.** To perform at its optimum potential, the NBPA should strive to create a culture of excellence in the organization. It will measure the quality of its services effectively, and continuously seek out ways to improve. To compete effectively, we need to be the best at what we do.

**Goal 2: The NBPA will build sufficient capacity to execute its mission.** To become a high performing organization, the NBPA must attract talent to the organization and develop that talent. That means, in addition to building a strong organizational culture, the NBPA must offer competitive compensation to its employees, ensure that their roles and expectations are clear, and are trained properly.

**Goal 3: To sustain its capacity to execute its mission, the NBPA will work to secure new sources of revenue, and ensure that its service fees are set at competitive levels.** Although the NBPA's revenue has grown significantly in the last two years, it must continue to increase its overall revenue and expand the sources of its revenue. For the foreseeable future, the NBPA will remain constrained by the below market leases for waterfront properties, some of which have terms that expire more than fifty years from now. Unlike the EDC, the NBPA does not receive direct funding from the City. The NBPA must consider whether the level of its docking, mooring and parking fees are adequate to sustain operations, as they are considerably below their market rates.

**Goal 4: The NBPA will strengthen its partnerships with the City and other government agencies to amplify its resources.** The NBPA works closely with city agencies such the Police Department and Marketing and Tourism Department, as well as the EDC on a wide variety of tasks. These partnerships must grow, and as necessary, may be formalized in written agreements. As noted above, the NBPA must develop as strong a working relationship as possible with the state agencies that have some responsibility in the Port.

## Conclusion

The Port of New Bedford has been the foundation of Greater New Bedford's economy for over 200 years. We believe that by pursuing the strategies set forth in this Strategic Plan, the NBPA will strengthen the competitiveness of Port businesses, spur investment in new enterprises and create opportunity for the region's residents for years to come.

DRAFT

**Information for this plan came from a number of sources, including:**

*Economic Impact Study of the New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor, 2016*  
*Groundfish Port Recovery and Revitalization Plan for the Port of New Bedford/Fairhaven*  
*Uniting in Pursuit of Growth and Opportunity, Final Report of the NB Regeneration Committee*  
*New Bedford Economic Development Assessment Report*  
*New Bedford—Fairhaven Bridge Corridor Study*  
*New Bedford Waterfront Framework Plan*  
*State Pier Business Plan*  
*Port of New Bedford Business Development Plan and Commodity Analysis*

## Commissioners

Mayor Jon Mitchell, Chairman  
Dr. Brian Rothschild, Vice Chairman  
Patricia Lareau, Treasurer  
Davis Sullivan, Clerk  
Richie Canastra  
James Dwyer  
Joe Tavares

## Port Leadership

Edward Anthes-Washburn, Port Director  
Jacob Gonsalves, Port Engineer  
Brian Joseph, Director of Operations/Assistant Harbormaster  
Pamela Lafreniere, Fisheries Director and In-House Counsel  
Penny Raimondo, Director, Marina & Recreational Boating  
Donna Roderiques, Director, Administration & Finance