This framework report is one part of multiple documents that have been created to describe the 2014-2015 New Bedford waterfront land-use planning efforts. This document is intended to summarize the process, analysis, overall vision, key recommendations, and implementation strategy.

Additional supporting detail on the market synthesis, wind energy opportunities, assessment of blight, and public process can be found in the Technical Appendix.

The separate New Bedford Redevelopment Plan document details the urban renewal plans created for the waterfront and subsequent implementation steps.
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PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

HDC – New Bedford Harbor Development Commission (Edward Anthes-Washburn)

NBEDC – New Bedford Economic Development Council (Derek Santos)

NBRA – New Bedford Redevelopment Authority

EDA – United States Economic Development Administration

City of New Bedford, Massachusetts

Steering Committee Members (invited)

David Kennedy – New Bedford Planning Department, New Bedford Redevelopment Authority
Terrence Lewis – New Bedford Redevelopment Authority
George Smith – New Bedford Planning Board, New Bedford Redevelopment Authority
Celia Brito – Downtown Business Owner (Womens Clothing)
Coleen Dawicki – University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
David Alves – Realtor, New Bedford City Council
Jim Oliveria – New Bedford City Council
Bob Gardner Jr. – Waterfront Business Owner (Bayline Boatyard)
Richie Canastra – Whaling City Seafood Display Auction
Jim Dwyer - Harbor Development Commission
Roy Enokson – Eastern Fisheries
Lars Vinjurud – Ocean Fleet Fisheries, Inc.
David Wechsler – Maritime International, Inc.

Matt Morrissey – New Bedford Economic Development Council Senior Advisor
Jeff Pontiff – E.J. Pontiff Real Estate
Conrad Roy Jr. – Tucker-Roy Marine Towing & Salvage
Charlie Quinn – Quinn Fisheries, Inc.
Pat Kavanagh – K&K Fishing Corporation, Inc.; Sustainable Harvest Sector
Ray Cullum – Michel Cullum Associates, Inc.
Captain Rick Cunio – New Bedford State Pier Manager, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Laura Foley Ramsden – Foley Fish
Meghan Kish – National Parks Service
Dagny Ashley – New Bedford Tourism & Marketing Director
Carlos DaCunha – Webster Bank
Jill Maclean - City of New Bedford Planning
Chapter One
VISION
INTRODUCTION

The New Bedford waterfront is a vibrant and thriving center of economic and cultural activity for the city and the South Coast today. Along the estuary of the Acushnet River, before entering Buzzards Bay, lies the New Bedford Harbor, a body of water shared with the City of Fairhaven. The harbor is home to the most productive fishing port in the country, due in part to its preeminence as a high-value scallop fishing port and its long history as a working waterfront. This rich and diverse waterfront has been a vital part of New Bedford’s economy for the last century as cross-continental trade gave way to whaling and commercial fishing.

As New Bedford looks to the future of its waterfront, the city plans to maximize the benefits of its strategic location in order to leverage the expansion of existing industries, the introduction of synergistic new industries, and the creation of critical connections for the public to the working waterfront. The future vision is of a waterfront that continues to represent New Bedford’s rich history, supports industries of today and tomorrow, and broadens public access - demonstrating that within the approximately 3-mile long waterfront area, there is room for all of these to co-exist.

The New Bedford Port is the number one fishing port in the country, a record the Port has held for fifteen consecutive years. It is also the second largest deep water port in Massachusetts. The working waterfront is host to myriad activities, from fishing boats arriving and departing daily, ferry boats moving back and forth through Nantucket Sound, and the large freighters offloading clementines from Morocco, to the sailboats gliding into the harbor from a sunny day spent sailing around Buzzards Bay. Today, these activities add up to approximately 4,000 direct jobs and nearly $3 billion in direct sales. Yet, at the same time, the need exists for better definition of ideal land-use adjacencies and improved land utilization to support economic development and ensure continued stewardship of the working waterfront. This plan is intended to create a vision for land-side improvements and land-use efficiencies in support of the harbor plan and the city’s broader goals.

New Bedford is a working waterfront - a land-use type slowly being replaced across the country by industry and housing that is not dependent on a deep harbor or efficient access to the ocean. In order to preserve the vibrancy and history of New Bedford’s working waterfront, the New Bedford Economic Development Council and the Harbor Development Commission realized the
city needed to create a shared vision to inform investments. Through broad conversations and engagement across all sectors, this plan seeks to create a flexible framework to guide decision-making for land-use, infrastructure, and access along the waterfront over the next decades.

**Purpose of the Study**

In April 2014, the New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, received $200,000 in Economic Adjustment Assistance from the United States Economic Development Administration for the development of strategy and an urban renewal plan for New Bedford’s working waterfront. The purpose of the grant was to focus on advanced port development and redevelopment that will attract diversification of manufacturing and other industries within the South Coast region and encourage job creation in wind power, commercial fishing, and tourism industries. This grant was augmented by matching funds from the city.

This framework report is one part of multiple documents that have been created to describe the 2014-2015 New Bedford waterfront land-use planning efforts. This document is intended to summarize the process, analysis, overall vision, key recommendations, and implementation strategy. Additional supporting detail on the market synthesis, wind energy opportunities, assessment of blight, and public process can be found in the Technical Appendix. The separate New Bedford Redevelopment Plan document details the urban renewal plans created for the waterfront, and subsequent implementation steps.

**Waterfront Framework Vision**

Through public meetings, workshops with the steering committee, and online platforms for engagement, several consistent themes emerged. These themes included maximizing economic development and flexibility for future land-uses, engaging and educating the community about the historic working waterfront, balancing the current needs of the waterfront with future needs, and enabling public access to a more environmentally sound waterfront.

The waterfront framework vision statement incorporates the themes that evolved over the 14 month process and form the basis for our recommendations: the New Bedford waterfront integrates the history of place with the continued success of a robust industry hub that is accessible and flexible for a variety of
New Bedford’s waterfront vision links its strong history with the continued success of existing and future waterfront industries and increased public access, anchoring the city’s role as the economic and cultural hub for the greater South Coast region.
uses. The New Bedford Waterfront is a vibrant and active center for the economy and culture of the City and greater South Coast region. The waterfront is a valuable economic engine for the seafood industry and an important node along the North Atlantic Ocean trade route that supports diverse industries, including water dependent industries and advanced manufacturing and assembly for emerging industries.

The vision for the working waterfront will enable waterfront redevelopment to occur without losing valuable industrial land to other uses. The strategy focuses on phased development over a 10 to 15 year timeframe, integrating the potential for new industries such as offshore wind manufacturing and assembly, commercial fishing expansion, and new forms of tourism along the waterfront that do not impede industry activity along the waterfront.

**Working Waterfronts**

Working waterfronts are defining features of the culture and character of many coastal cities. They provide space for water-dependent uses to thrive and support a major portion of the United States economy. In 2009, over $217.78 billion accounted for waterfront economic activities that employed about 2.4 million people (Sustainable Working Waterfronts Toolkit). Working waterfronts are place-based: they are reliant on local geography and natural resources for success - it is this specificity of place that makes preservation of land-use so important.

Although working waterfronts are representative of a major component of our industrial history, movement away from an industrial economy towards a service economy has brought into focus the importance of preserving working waterfronts for current and emerging industries and for the cultural significance of the waterfront. Working waterfronts are often affected by
external environmental, economic, and social forces that impact the function and viability of its industries. These external forces cannot always be predicted or resolved by the communities impacted, so focused efforts towards planning for their future is necessary to maintain the level of productivity in these specialized areas.

**Diverse Existing Industries**

The New Bedford waterfront serves a variety of both non-water-dependent and water-dependent industries, including commercial fishing, shipping, ferries and excursion boats, cruises, and opportunities for recreational boating. Today, New Bedford’s waterfront is home to over 200 maritime-based businesses, including a cargo shipping and cruise industry, bulk and break-bulk cargo facilities, shipyard and vessel repair facilities, and a significant fishing and ferrying operations. Additional related and non-water dependent uses comprise additional space. Within the waterfront study area, exist an estimated to be 372 business establishments, supporting 3,855 employees, and $2.7 billion in business sales.

One of the original reasons to conduct this waterfront plan was the economic development potential of prospective offshore wind industry projects. The $100 million investment of the state to develop the Marine Commerce Terminal (MCT) was a deliberate choice to designate the New Bedford Port for Massachusetts offshore wind logistics. That now completed project positions New Bedford for a wide-range of staging, shipping, labor, construction, assembly and maintenance of offshore wind farms in the Northeast. As a nascent industry opportunity with a relatively modest project off of Block Island, Rhode Island providing the country’s first-ever offshore wind project under construction, the economic potential for New Bedford remains uncertain. The private development purchase and plans for larger, more significant wind farms in Massachusetts suggest that this opportunity is still coming but likely will not be realized for a more few years. This plan attempts to understand these opportunities, including the land-intensive needs of component manufacturers that could locate near an active wind logistics port. But, it is also mindful that the New Bedford waterfront currently has limited large land sites available, and that once offshore wind projects are underway, economic development efforts should also explore operating and maintenance business opportunities that fit the character of a working waterfront, and have relatively modest landside needs compared to economic impact.
PLAN FRAMEWORK

Master Plan Framework

The purpose of the vision is to motivate the preservation of land for the working waterfront and to generate capacity for the waterfront to support emerging industries. The focus of the master plan will be to set up a framework for successful implementation of the vision over the next 10 to 15 years, with focus placed on the following areas: Central Waterfront, North Terminal, and South Terminal.

The following principles will guide implementation of the framework for the district and focus areas:

1. Create a flexible land-use framework and implementation strategy that supports new and expands existing industries, maximizing economic development and flexibility for the future.

2. Promote, reinforce, and educate the community about New Bedford’s historic working waterfront.

3. Balance the needs of existing users with new industries and public access.

4. Strategically incorporate public access proximate to downtown and at key points along the waterfront.
FUTURE WATERFRONT FRAMEWORK PLAN
NEW BEDFORD WATERFRONT FRAMEWORK PLAN

Implementation

The framework for the waterfront and the implementation of the district plan cannot come to fruition without the support of local, state and federal agencies partnering with private enterprise to generate and support new development along New Bedford’s waterfront. Chapter 5 identifies implementation recommendations based on the redevelopment subareas identified by the Determination of Blight document as part of the city’s urban renewal plan. The document identifies four areas for redevelopment - Subareas 1, 3, 6, and 8. Implementation strategies in each of these subareas within the waterfront district will require unique actions regarding funding, governance, and tools for successful implementation.
Chapter Two
EXISTING CONDITIONS
Wharf Scene, New Bedford Mass.
**HISTORY**

*Whaling and Spinoff Industries*

Unlike many historic port cities along the waterfront that shifted use as industries changed, the New Bedford working waterfront has been preserved as a major fishing and manufacturing node along the eastern seaboard. The city shifted over time from whaling port to fishing and mill port, and has managed to sustain and evolve the fishing uses into the 21st century.

Around the same time New Bedford officially became a city in 1847, it also became the nation’s preeminent whaling port over Nantucket. New Bedford’s success grew from its strategic locational advantages around the depth of its harbor, its location on the Atlantic seaboard, and the city’s proximity to railways and large tracts of land for storage and staging. For most of the century, New Bedford’s economy was focused on the whaling industry garnering the city’s nickname of “The Whaling city”. An economic industry mix was not introduced into the city until the late 1800s as the Industrial Revolution expanded its reach across the Atlantic from England to the United States. The waterfront changed drastically in New Bedford’s formative years, from boatyards and docks to different types of industrial land-uses, including factories and mills that also needed proximity to marine shipping and railways. After the 1930’s, as the whaling industry slowed with the introduction of strict whaling regulations and populations moved out of cities and into the suburbs, New Bedford’s industry began to shift focus to traditional non-water-dependent industries. The major water-dependent industries that still remain on the New Bedford waterfront are commercial fishing, marine construction, and ferries.

Despite the longevity of the commercial fishing industry and the robustness of the industry in New Bedford, the fishing industry is vulnerable to a variety of environmental, regulatory, and physical limits. Regulations on fishing are increasingly strict as fish populations decrease and the risk for ocean acidification increases, threatening New Bedford’s most valued catch, scallops. Limited docking and overcrowding problems along the harbor have induced debates over the amount of space needed for commercial fishing and the spaces that support it. These vulnerabilities and limits present opportunities both for partnerships to sustain the fish population and commercial fishing industry as well as new spinoff industries that will need to compete for space in the already populated harbor.
An opportunity also exists to improve the physical links between the fishermen and seafood processing firms. Seafood is currently brought to the New Bedford Seafood Auction where local, national and international buyers bid on it. A direct connection between fishing boats and the seafood auctions would improve the efficiency of getting fish to the consumer and make the process a transparent experience for the public. Enhancing the relationship between the fisherman and the sale of fish will increase tourism interest in the waterfront and promote long-term stewardship of New Bedford’s waterfront legacy.

**Global and Local Context**

For its waterfront industries, New Bedford boasts many advantages that make it attractive among other competing destinations. These include the ability to command high market prices for New Bedford scallops, proximity to the fish auction, and a protected, deep harbor. Additionally, fisherman can find competitive prices for fuel and ice, and easy access to mechanics and to the Coast Guard for inspections. At the local scale, New Bedford’s fish auction is an asset for commercial fishing operations, fish processors, the food and restaurant industry, and tourists. New Bedford’s cargo operators link the City to a global export market.

In 2014, the population within the waterfront study area is estimated at about 700 persons and 300 households. Both population and households have grown much more rapidly than city and regional averages since 2000, owing largely to conversion of former mills to apartments in the northern portion of the study area, where the vast majority of all persons in the waterfront area live. Within the Hicks-Logan-Sawyer area, household incomes are well below city and region averages, and poverty rates are high.

In 2014, business establishments in the waterfront study area numbered over 370, providing over 4,000 jobs and generating about $2.7 billion in sales. Wages totaled approximately $238 million with an average annual wage of $57,000. This average annual wage compares favorably to the $44,500 average annual wage for all industries in New Bedford, and is largely accounted for by wages in the fishing and seafood-related businesses.

**Site Regulations**

Massachusetts established ten Designated Port Areas (DPAs) to protect and promote water-dependent industrial uses. The DPAs are unique in their capacity to support water-dependent uses, including commercial fishing, shipping, and other vessel-related marine commercial activities or for manufacturing, processing,
and production activities that require marine transportation or require large volumes of water for withdrawal or discharge. All of these water dependent uses can vary in size and scale of activity, but all uses need a specific type of infrastructure that caters to the following needs – a waterway and waterfront that is specifically developed for commercial navigation or other direct use of the water/port; additional space that enables both physical configuration and use appropriate for the development of industrial facilities and operations; and land-based transportation connections and public utility services that can support general industrial purposes.

Massachusetts is proactive in ensuring DPA uses and boundaries are preserved to address existing water-dependent industrial uses and require proactive planning to promote and accommodate future uses and emerging industrial uses through the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM). The CZM plans and supports planning efforts by ports and updates the DPA boundary as appropriate to serve the needs of the individual ports.

The New Bedford – Fairhaven (New Bedford Harbor) Designated Port Area contains an area of approximately 597 acres along the Acushnet River; much of the waterfront study area is included in the DPA.
Commercial Fishing

The Port of New Bedford is the highest grossing fishing port in the country with 140 million pounds of seafood valued at over $329 million (2014). The port has been the number one fishing port since 1999. The types of sea harvesters include scallop and lobster boats, trawlers, clammers, longliners, offshore carb, offshore lobster, herring, and gil netters. Support for the fishing industry includes a full-service port which includes ship chandlers, ice houses, welders, net designers, boatyards, gear builders, engineers, maritime attorneys, insurance brokers, settlement houses, and other marine support facilities. New Bedford is also home to a highly successful display auction and other facilities offloading fresh fish.

The fishing and seafood-related industries accounted for about 54% of all jobs in the waterfront study area in 2014 and 78% of payrolls, despite the fact that jobs in both sectors have fallen from their historical highs in 2009 and 2011, respectively, in New Bedford. The seafood processing industry has lost both in absolute numbers of jobs and in the city’s relative share of all seafood processing jobs in Bristol County. Bristol County overall, where seafood processing employment is growing, had more than 400 new seafood processing jobs in 2014 than in New Bedford alone – in 2004 the county-city difference was about 60 jobs.

National regulations directly affect the fishing industry for sustainability purposes, which has a direct effect on New Bedford’s port. The scalloping industry is regulated by a permit system established by the National Fishery Management Plan which issues 350 scalloping permits nationally. Each scalloping permit allows a limited number of days at sea per year, each vessel is allowed one permit, and no individual may hold more than 5% of the permits. The permits also set poundage limits, off-shore locations (establishing open or closed areas), and crew size on boats. Stakeholders suggest that limitations on days at sea and the inability to “stack permits” on a vessel leads to a large number of vessels tied to the dock for large portions of the year. This over-capitalization increases the demand for places to dock boats. There are also concerns that the limits on crew numbers on trips to open areas results in difficulties training new generations of crew members.

Ground fishing is also regulated by national laws. Each year, NOAA determines the total catch limit for each of the nineteen regulated groundfish. This total catch limit is based on the previous years’ catch, scientific estimates of available stock, and
a determined margin of error. Each vessel is granted an “Annual Catch Entitlement” (ACE) for each regulated species. ACE can be traded, but never exceeded. Within the industry, there are sectors. Individuals are invited to participate in “sectors” - cooperatives of operators who can pool their ACE, mitigating risks among themselves.

Unlike in scalloping, no market share cap exists on the percentage of the overall catch for a single entity. Stakeholders reported that operators who are not part of a sector or have limited ability to trade ACE risk exceeding their catch entitlement for one species while leaving ACE “on the table” for other species.

In the future, scallopers and ground fishing boats both reflect a desire to consolidate their operations in one area, rather than have scattered facilities along the waterfront. Additionally, there is a need for additional cold storage; however, cold storage facilities could be accommodated in multiple ways: either along the waterfront, in another location (such as the industrial park), or aboard new, larger vessels with cold storage capacity.

*Recreational Boating, Ferries, and Excursion Boats*

Like many coastal New England towns, New Bedford’s community has a strong connection to the water. The harbor supports a range of boating options including rowing, sailing, and motoring, and has even more options for accessing the City from larger boats; through moorings, boat slips, and anchoring, there are ample marinas and boating clubs to support residents and visitors. Currently, recreational boating connections to the downtown are limited to north of the central harbor and south of Palmer Island. Stakeholders from the recreational boating industry participated in the study and expressed a desire and demand for growth in the New Bedford market.

The State Pier Ferry Terminal is a terminus for ferries between Martha’s Vineyard and Cuttyhunk in the Elizabeth Islands. The central location of the ferry terminal at State Pier is important for the continued success of the ferry and excursion boats.
**Cargo and Shipping**

The port of New Bedford is a deep water commercial port and serves as a niche inter-modal shipping center for the North American market. The Port both imports and exports cargo and is designated as a Foreign Trade Zone. In fact, the majority of the seafood processed in New Bedford arrives frozen and leaves frozen. Regulations exist around certain foods and their handling. The industry has expressed a need for more cold storage facilities to meet regulations, particularly for food whose end destination is the United States.

Today, cargo operations center on State Pier and potential investments in additional on-site cold storage have been proposed to support the industry within the city. For cargo operations to continue on the pier, State Pier is in need of capital updates. Both the buildings and the pier’s infrastructure require significant investment.

The possibility also exists for marine highway (short sea shipping) in New Bedford. The market viability hinges, in part, on operational issues such as filling ships with cargo on the back haul. Yet, short sea shipping is a land consumptive operation and would need significant real estate to thrive in New Bedford.
Related and Supporting Industries

A strong network of industries related to commercial fishing, recreational boating and cargo exists in New Bedford. These businesses include all manner of supply, service, storage, fabrication, and supporting business operations. Many of these industries have some water-dependent operations, such as access to boat launches for boat repair.

Skills from one industry to another can be transferable and New Bedford draws from a number of schools and colleges, including the New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School (Voc-Tech) for skilled labor. Given the robust fishing market, there is a broad customer base, supplier network, and group of collaborators.

As related industries grow in New Bedford, new “soft infrastructure” needs arise: jobs training facilities, a visitor center, information center, and a rest facility. Better internet access is also needed along the New Bedford waterfront.

Opportunities for New Industries

The focus of the master plan is to support commercial fishing activity, while allowing the expansion to other industries to create a more diversified economic structure. Off-shore wind and cargo-handling have been a focus, but challenges to the financing of new businesses and the cost of necessary environmental clean-up of industrial sites along the waterfront make it difficult for private enterprise to undertake these initiatives without public assistance. Government assistance will be an important component in financing public infrastructure and improvement projects to support the efforts of private enterprise that will help diversify economic activity along the waterfront.

Wind Energy

Currently, the United States does not generate commercial power using offshore wind turbines. This fact stands in contrast to the prominent global place that the US holds in total wind energy production capacity. The United States is second only to China with 61.1 gigawatts (GW) of total production capacity at the end of 2013 compared to 91.3 GW in China (of which 1.7 GW is offshore capacity). Globally, new investments in offshore wind
continue at a healthy rate. The total capacity of projects under construction is approximately one-third of existing capacity: 4 GW under construction with 12.5 GW existing. The potential development of an offshore wind industry in New Bedford needs to be considered in light of various obstacles and uncertainties including demand and location. Only 30 MW of the current 4 GW of offshore wind capacity under construction globally is in the US yet findings suggest manufacturers will require sufficiently high and predictably stable levels of new annual turbine installations prior to undertaking the risk of investing in new plants and equipment. It remains uncertain when the necessary levels of investment will occur in the US, although there has been significant progress in the last few months toward development of the areas south of Martha’s Vineyard.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has shown a broad commitment to renewable energy and has recently begun to focus on offshore wind. Through its investments in MassCEC, the Marine Commerce Terminal, and the introduction of H2881, a broad energy bill that would include a carve out for offshore wind, Massachusetts is gradually laying the groundwork for the growth of the offshore wind industry. While not yet a leader with financial incentives, Massachusetts is exploring a policy environment conducive to the industry that is at least similar to other east coast states seeking to attract offshore wind.

The city of New Bedford is well-placed to leverage the state policy environment into local economic growth. It is the location of the MCT and is taking into account the needs of the offshore wind industry in its redevelopment plans. The city is also home to a long maritime and manufacturing tradition which provides many of the necessary businesses and labor to meet the demands of the new firms the city wants to attract.

Alongside the regional advantages, there are also many potential obstacles to development. The growth in demand for offshore wind turbines will determine when there is a business case for new investment in plants and equipment, yet the timing of this demand is highly uncertain. Furthermore, many of the costs of doing business in Massachusetts are high and could dissuade some companies from locating there. Finally, any incoming component manufacturing would require the availability of large sites for a factory and lay down space, meaning that for the city to have a chance to compete for this kind of economic opportunity, they will at least need to demonstrate vision and a commitment to creatively developing larger available sites at and near the waterfront.
EXISTING WATERFRONT RELATIONSHIPS

With such an active, layered history and port, one thing that is clear today is that New Bedford’s waterfront land is scarce and precious. At the same time, with large land-uses and episodic activities, it can be difficult to clearly discern the pattern and logic of uses today on the waterfront. An analysis of parcel ownership alone does not tell the full story; rather, a combination of leases, easements, shared-use buildings and bulkheads, and transient uses must be factored in.

To better understand New Bedford’s waterfront uses today, a detailed parcel-by-parcel analysis of water dependency, regulations, and stakeholder feedback was created to describe which parcels are currently utilized for water-dependent, water-related, transportation-dependent, or non-water-dependent practices. This assessment resulted in an up-to-date picture of the waterfront usage today. The analysis integrates data from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management’s 2011 data for Chapter 91 designated properties, from the New Bedford Assessor’s Offices’ 2014 parcel database, and from initial site reconnaissance and stakeholder verification.
CONDITIONS OF BLIGHT

An introduction of the determination and conditions of blight, reported on at length in the Determination of Blight report and New Bedford Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan are summarized below:

Blighted Open Area

A Blighted Open Area is one in which the underlying site conditions and surrounding context make development by the private market infeasible. The conditions included in the definition appropriate to this analysis are as follows:

1. Required improvements that are unduly expensive, such as measures for waterproofing structures, draining the area, or preventing flooding

2. Improvements to make the area appropriate for sound development that are unduly expensive, such as building around or over rights-of-way

3. Substantial change in business or economic conditions

The New Bedford Waterfront as a whole has been substantially developed over time and contains many successful business. Under normal circumstances, this area, or subsections of this area, might not qualify for determination as a Blighted Open Area.

However, certain conditions are common to one or more subareas as a consequence of their proximity to the New Bedford Harbor. The entire waterfront is at some level of risk due to flooding, and the entire waterfront is expected to be at a greater risk from both the more rapid increase in sea level rise predicted for the remainder of this century and the exacerbated impact from storm surge due to more powerful storms.

The analysis that follows is not intended to denigrate the effectiveness of the hurricane barrier, but to note that even the most well-maintained levee can be over-topped by a hurricane at a particular strength, wind direction and speed, and timing (high tide). The ability of the New Bedford Redevelopment Authority (NBRA) to assist the city in preparing for the impact of such a storm and helping businesses and residents recover from it is critical.

New Bedford participates in both the regional economy and the global economy, and recent challenges and initiatives at both levels will have impacts on all four subareas. The proposal to link New Bedford and Boston with residential and freight services as
part of the South Coast Rail expansion would have a significant positive impact on economic development of the waterfront area and on changes in land-uses for Subareas 1 and 3. The ability to create additional cargo-handling operations in Subarea 6, and to a lesser extent, Subarea 8, can take advantage of potential future short-sea shipping opportunities and will further support New Bedford’s cargo and off-shore wind industries.

However, recent changes for two potential business initiatives in 2015 had an immediate impact on expectations for the waterfront area. Cape Wind withdrew from its lease of the Marine Commerce Terminal in April 2015 and KG Urban withdrew its proposal for a gaming facility in July 2015. Regional economic issues affected the conditions surrounding these proposals - both Cape Wind and KG Urban had difficulty securing the financing they needed to continue. Cape Wind was challenged by a number of lawsuits related to its proposed location in Nantucket Sound; KG Urban faced competition from proposed gaming facilities in Brockton, Taunton, and Tiverton, Rhode Island.

*Decadent Area*

The conditions of blight that contribute to a determination of the subareas as Decadent Areas are based on the following existing conditions:

1. Land-uses that are either incompatible with recommended future uses or indicate the presence of environmental contaminants that would be difficult for the private market to address on its own

2. A structure of ownership and parcelization that makes land assembly and development of large-scale projects that would support the recommended uses more difficult for the private market to achieve

3. Public infrastructure in poor condition that does not support the recommended land-uses

The presence of these conditions indicate a need for public intervention to create the conditions necessary to attract and support private investment to these land areas.
Chapter Three
ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH
ENGAGEMENT

Public outreach and engagement with important stakeholders was critical during the 14-month planning process that identified existing and future land-use potential for New Bedford’s Waterfront District Plan. At key points in the project, the planning team met with the steering committee; an organization of land and business owners, waterfront advocates and industry representatives that guided the process and development of the framework.

As part of the public outreach effort there were five steering committee meetings, two public meetings, and additional meetings with local experts, advisory groups and agencies. These groups provided specific feedback around topical areas and provided insight into the implementation process. The steering committee provided critical direction at all stages of the process, with meetings on November 12, 2014; January 11, 2015; June 9, 2015; August 24, 2015; and December 9, 2015. Public meetings were held on June 9, 2015, and October 7, 2015. Additional public hearings will also be held at later dates.

Additionally, one-on-one outreach was targeted to existing waterfront business owners and leaders. In order to develop confidence in the plan, the client leadership conducted many direct visits at all stages of the process. Likewise, the consultant team participated in both in-person tours of waterfront businesses and confidential phone interviews in order to understand facility needs.
MOBEMENT OF PEOPLE

• Where is your place of employment?

• Where else do you do business?

• Where do you park at work?

• Where do you spend leisure time on the waterfront?

MOBEMENT OF GOODS

• Where do your customers wait prior to boarding?

• Where do your customers board?

• Where do your customers disembark?

• Where are your products stored, warehoused, processed?

• Where are your products gathered, distributed, auctioned?

• Where do you provide value-added services?

• At what point does your product leave your supply chain?

• Where does your product leave New Bedford?

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

• Where do you keep major equipment?

• Where do you fix major equipment?

• Where do you fabricate major equipment?

• Does your organization have multiple locations in New Bedford?

• Where are your suppliers located?

• Where are your buyers located?

• Where are your collaborators located?
PHASE ONE

Project Foundation

The initial phase of work establishes a foundation of understanding for vision and plan creation. The planning team met one-on-one or in joint meetings with key stakeholders, including members of the NBEDC, NBRA, representatives from city departments, the Harbor Development Commission (HDC), and other public, private, and non-profit stakeholders. These interviews supported the concurrent efforts of the redevelopment plan and overall waterfront district vision. Confidential interviews were also held with waterfront business owners to understand current impediments to growth and success. The purpose of these interviews was to elicit the critical issues, goals, and ideas from each of these participants, including a discussion of recent and ongoing planning and economic development processes and aspirations for future waterfront industries, character, connections, and uses. The stakeholder discussions built upon previous work sessions with waterfront stakeholders.

Initial conversations framed overall project parameters and focused the analysis of opportunities and constraints around focus areas and over strategies for the district plan. Initial sessions included walkthroughs and tours of the waterfront with the NBEDC, HDC, and business and property owners to provide an expanded understanding of the existing industries, their operational needs, site conditions, property ownership and the overall character of the New Bedford waterfront.

The planning team met with the steering committee twice during this phase to report on emerging themes from the stakeholder interviews and to discuss next steps as part of the initial fact finding process. Touchdowns with the steering committee, HDC, NBEDC, and NBRA were critical to defining the goals, depth, and focus of the redevelopment plan.

Online Outreach

Online outreach to the steering committee was launched towards the end of phase one in the steering committee meeting in February 2015. The online tool was an interactive mapping platform and survey called MyHarbor which was developed to gather input from the community to determine current and future use patterns along New Bedford’s waterfront. The feedback on movement of people, movement of goods, and business operations helped determine the direction of the plan by identifying important existing connections and missed opportunities for new uses along the Acushnet River. The largest number of responses came from people within the recreational
boating industry and government or non-profit sectors so the input was used to develop an understanding of their waterfront needs.

**PHASE TWO**

*Explored Alternatives*

The concept alternatives phase explored different options as alternatives for both the overall New Bedford Waterfront District Master Plan and the redevelopment plan. This phase provided the opportunity to bring together the existing conditions analysis with stakeholder visions and goals. The planning team presented ideas about the future characteristics of a working waterfront, public access, infrastructure, economic development, transportation, and ecological/environmental improvements to the steering committee as part of the third committee meeting. Feedback from the NBEDC, its partners, and the broader public was incorporated into discussions with the steering committee to identify a preferred direction.

*Public Meeting #1*

The first public meeting focused on goals and objectives of the master plan and allowed the general public to review and add feedback to the analysis findings. At the conclusion of the meeting the Team worked with NBEDC to evaluate stakeholder input for incorporation into the next phase’s development of alternative strategies.
PHASE THREE

Master Plan Development and Implementation Strategies

Phase three aggregated the findings and alternatives from phases one and two and identified a comprehensive and flexible framework and preferred alternatives for waterfront focus areas. The vision serves to reposition New Bedford’s waterfront toward ongoing economic prosperity, improved connectivity, and enhanced public access, among other goals established through the process and outreach. In this phase, the steering committee identified catalytic projects that can accelerate economic progress downtown, in the City, and the region.

Public Meeting #2

The second public meeting focused on the exploration of different scenarios for land-uses, development patterns, public realm improvements, and infrastructure, and relative priorities for potential plan initiatives. The community explored ideas for the urban renewal districts. At the conclusion of these meetings, the planning team again worked with the NBEDC to evaluate stakeholder input and weigh the various alternative strategies to develop a preferred direction for the creation of draft plans.

PHASE FOUR

Building Capacity and Governance

Once the redevelopment plan and master plan were finalized, the planning team along with HDC presented their findings and the final plans to the NBRA and the City of New Bedford Planning Board for approval.
The waterfront framework reflects the historical phasing of industries into the New Bedford waterfront over time and repositions it to adapt to today’s needs and future opportunities. Today, there is a legible shift from north to south in non-water-dependent uses to water-dependent to water-related uses. While other fishing ports have been contracting, waterfront stakeholders agree that New Bedford’s port is uniquely positioned to continue to support a “growing piece of a shrinking pie.” This land-use framework seeks to support this growth, while diversifying the waterfront economy for a stable future.

To reinforce the port’s position as the preeminent commercial fishing hub in the country and preserve the viability of existing uses amid constant waterfront development pressures, it is vital to create a framework that ensures a mix of water-related and water-dependent land-uses where possible. At the same time, the plan remains cognizant of the importance of flexible land-uses that introduce public open spaces and redevelopment sites to encourage a new series of connections from the downtown to the waterfront.

**PRINCIPLES**

1. Create a flexible land-use framework and implementation strategy that supports new and expands existing industries, maximizing economic development and flexibility for the future.

2. Promote, reinforce, and educate the community about New Bedford’s historic working waterfront.

3. Balance the needs of existing users with new industries and public access.

4. Strategically incorporate public access proximate to Downtown and at key points along the waterfront.
FOCUS AREAS

In addition to an overall land-use framework for the waterfront, this study has focused attention to several zones along the waterfront. These three focus areas represent potential areas where existing investments or potential future uses have already begun to catalyze change:

- South Terminal
- Central Waterfront
- Northern Mixed-Use Waterfront

South Terminal Area

The South Terminal area includes the marine commerce terminal, a cluster of historic brick mills, a robust fishing center, and related industries. In the future, this zone represents major growth potential for large land uses along the waterfront; however, this expansion must be done carefully to ensure the continued health of existing businesses.

The brick mill buildings occupy the southern edge of the area and many have been locally identified as having historic value by the city’s 2008 Historic Mill Inventory. Today, these mills encompass largely non-water dependent uses, but are home to a mix of contemporary businesses and jobs, such as the successful New England Demolition and Salvage. One large mill has recently been demolished and cleared as part of the Marine Commerce Terminal project to allow additional lay down space. The mills buffer the dense residential neighborhood to the south from the heavy industry of the marine commerce terminal. In the future, these mills could become adaptively reused and infilled with denser activity related to jobs training for growth in the wind sector and advanced manufacturing and research zones related to the adjacent industrial uses. Along the western edge of the mills, a row of small residential homes is a relic of the city’s textile heyday. Their proximity to existing and future heavy industrial uses is incompatible and, over time, they may be transformed into a more contextual use, allowing additional room for cargo expansion and a gateway redevelopment opportunity for the district.

The Marine Commerce Terminal is a catalytic opportunity for this area – and the overall waterfront – that has significantly expanded New Bedford’s waterfront infrastructure. The multi-year project by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center is
FRAMEWORK FOCUS AREAS
nearly complete, giving the City a competitive edge. The terminal, which is located inside New Bedford Harbor and protected by the hurricane barrier, is in close proximity to offshore wind planning areas along the East Coast that are under consideration for development. Additionally, the City has studied the extension of the waterfront freight rail from State Pier to the Marine Commerce Terminal. A preferred alignment offers the opportunity to create a large waterside site with immediate freight and truck access. Similarly, the city and state are examining alternatives for changes to the New Bedford-Fairhaven/Route 6 bridge that will improve waterside connections between the lower and upper harbors.

The 21 acre terminal has been developed as the first facility in the nation that was specifically designed to both handle bulk, break-bulk, container shipping, and large specialty marine cargo and to support the construction, assembly, and deployment of offshore wind projects. This project has given New Bedford’s south harbor new linear bulkhead and the ability to support extremely strong point
and distributed loads. The Main Terminal site has the ability to sustain uniform loads of 20 metric tons per square meter and concentrated loads of up to 100 metric tons per square meter, rivaling the strongest bulkheads in the world. This will allow for broader use of the entire site, allowing for assembly of large components like wind turbines, increasing the efficiency of the work on site, and providing flexibility with logistics. The construction also included dredging, removal of 280,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment, and landside environmental clean-up of contaminated sediment and soil.

While there have been recent changes to anticipated off-shore wind projects, the terminal is a strong asset for the city’s future positioning to capture wind industry growth, allowing for cargo expansion in the city, and demonstrating the city’s support for long-term water-dependent industries in this area. The land-use framework envisions using this asset as an anchor for the South Terminal focus area, with spin-off industries expanding into mills space to the south and cargo expansion to the west over time. Key city-owned parcels, such as the Standard Times Field, may be relocated over time if large tracts of contiguous land are needed for future cargo or wind-related uses in this zone. To the immediate north, designated space for the fish industry, including both waterside occupation along the South Terminal and inland water-related space for flash freezing and processing, will remain. Additional waterside space for the fishing industry can also be created through strategic relocation of existing non-water dependent uses in the South Terminal area.
Central Waterfront Area

The central waterfront zone is a critical “hinge point” between New Bedford’s waterfront and commercial downtown. Pier 3, State Pier, Leonard’s Wharf, Homer’s Wharf, and the Eversource/Sprague site comprise a large, multi-faceted zone that is representative of the diversity of New Bedford’s waterfront history and future. The Wharfinger building, the power plant and foundry on Eversource site, the Waypoint building, and the Crystal Ice building are all viewed as historic resources within this district. Looking ahead, the central waterfront is a prime location to bring together all of New Bedford’s waterfront assets in one place through enhancements that allow greater public access while maintaining operations for existing industrial users.

Through modest improvements, a reimagined State Pier can create a new center for the waterfront tourism experience, while carefully balancing industrial operations. Located at the geographic heart of New Bedford’s diverse waterfront experience, State Pier is found at the bottom of Union Street, where recent streetscape and crossing improvements have been made to enhance the pedestrian realm. The plan imagines strategic changes to the downtown side of State Pier to attract more visitors to the site and better define the public and private realms of the pier. Enhanced public awareness of the industrial uses and magnitude of operations at State Pier will support stewardship of the city’s working waterfront legacy over time, helping to educate the community about the complexity and value of the city’s port. At over eight acres, State Pier’s large size allows it to continue to accommodate cargo operations, fishing vessels, ferry operations, and parking while adding a more multi-functional public zone. During development of the site, the city may also consider rebranding the pier with a historic name or other identifiable name.

Already, the community benefits from use of Pier 3 and some parts of State Pier to host festivals such as the city’s wine festival or the New Bedford Folk Festival. A flexible-use public space at the southwest corner of the site, adjacent to the Schooner Ernestina where open parking exists today, can provide a welcoming zone for these festivals, as well as expand access
EXISTING LAND-USES
to the waterfront every day of the year. The open space is envisioned for the southwest quarter of the site, comprising a space similar in size to downtown’s Custom House Square or the undeveloped portions of Pier 3. Site improvements could include lighting, benches, and new materials for the ground plan to welcome visitors, while still be designed to allow for use as a parking zone when needed. Future programming can integrate and support National Park Service goals and proposals for the area. A new gateway to the pier will draw people on foot down Union Street and into the space, keeping them clearly away from vehicular traffic for ferry access or fishing and cargo needs.

Additionally, a new building on the pier can help to clearly define public and private zones and provide an exciting “mixing space” between public access and industrial uses. This gateway building, located midway on the southern edge of the site, could house uses such as a relocated fish auction, fish market, welcome center, interpretive center for the Schooner Ernestina, retail, and visitor services. The successful Whaling City Seafood Display Auction is a critical part of New Bedford’s fish industry. Today, it is located on the south terminal amid other water-dependent uses. The fish auction could benefit from a more visible, central location to capitalize on tourism and everyday traffic and provide more visibility to the industry within the city. In cities ranging from Chatham, Massachusetts, to Tokyo, Japan, fish auctions have become a core part of the waterfront tourism experience, with public markets and ways for people to watch the spectacle of the morning’s fish off-loading and auction. This new building can be sited and designed to screen truck service and loading from the downtown gateway entrance. It can also serve as a dividing line between public and private spaces and should be developed as part of a revised security plan for international cargo vessels.

The northwest corner of the site can also be redeveloped for commercial uses that support the Ferry Terminal and Designated Port Area (DPA), the existing retail on Pier 3, and Union Street. This urban village cluster of a few commercial buildings will face Route 18 and further strengthen walkability to and along the central waterfront. Taking into consideration existing ferry operations, space for recreational boating could exist along the northern edge of the pier.
STATE PIER OPTIONS

EXISTING PIER

STATE PIER VISION

NEW BEDFORD WATERFRONT FRAMEWORK PLAN
STATE PIER FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OPTION

Ferry Terminal/Designated Port Area (DPA) ‘Supporting Uses’ (Retail, Restaurants)

Connection to Downtown New Bedford

Vehicles entry & waiting area to NB Ferry Terminal

Parking for Ferry Terminal

Vessel Access

NB Ferry Terminal

State Pier Storage Facility

Loading Area

Flex Space

New Bedford Fish Auction 50,000 sf

Large Vessels Staging Area

Vessel Access
AT TOP: STATE PIER SCALE COMPARISONS
BOTTOM: NEW BEDFORD FOLK FESTIVAL
NEW BEDFORD WATERFRONT FRAMEWORK PLAN
STATE PIER FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OPTION
**STATE PIER: OPEN SPACE**

State Pier allows for a flexibility of uses throughout the year. With over 1.2 acres of open, usable space that can support a variety of programs, State Pier has the potential to successfully connect people from the downtown to the waterfront. In addition to maintaining existing ferry and marine industrial operations, the southwest corner can create a welcoming visitor experience.

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**STATE PIER: FARMERS/FISH MARKET**

Within proximity of the most successful fishing harbor in the country, an outdoor fish market would engage the public directly with the fishing boats and fish auction. The site has capacity for 56 temporary booths that could also serve as spaces for a farmers market or other movable sale opportunity.
**STATE PIER: PERFORMANCE VENUE**

The open area in front of the proposed fish auction space measures approximately 250 by 350 feet. It can accommodate a stage area of about 45 to 60 feet and overhead lighting would set the tone for performances as part of major festivals like the New Bedford Folk Festival or intimate concerts and shows.

**STATE PIER: PARKING LOT**

During the winter season when the weather is too cold for outdoor programming, the open space can support 148 parking spaces for employees of the fishing boats, the pier or fish auction, and other waterfront-related uses. The space is also large enough to serve as a staging area.
## STATE PIER TENANTS: SPACE MOVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TENANT</th>
<th>CURRENT LOCATION</th>
<th>FUTURE LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seastreak</td>
<td>Ferry Terminal</td>
<td>Ferry Terminal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pier Oil</td>
<td>NW Corner</td>
<td>Further east in the NW Corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliveira Shipping</td>
<td>Building 2</td>
<td>Building 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford Ship Supply</td>
<td>Building 6</td>
<td>NW Corner (in retail area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaport Economic Council</td>
<td>Building 6</td>
<td>Building 1, 2nd floor or another 2nd floor location at the auction or in the NW Corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Environmental Police</td>
<td>Building 6; vessels on North Side</td>
<td>Building 1, 2nd Floor; vessels on North Side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass State Police</td>
<td>Building 6; vessels on North Side</td>
<td>Building 1, 2nd Floor; vessels on North Side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Customs and Border Protection (USCBP)</td>
<td>Buildings 1 and 2</td>
<td>Buildings 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Department of Agriculture</td>
<td>Building 1, 2nd Floor</td>
<td>Building 1, 2nd Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public commercial fishing vessel support</td>
<td>East Face, South Face</td>
<td>East Face, South Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuttyhunk Ferry</td>
<td>South Side</td>
<td>South Side or Ferry Terminal (depending on preference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey</td>
<td>Southwest Corner</td>
<td>Southwest Corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime International</td>
<td>Buildings 1,2</td>
<td>Building 1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice Day Too</td>
<td>South Side</td>
<td>South Side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Cruise Lines</td>
<td>East Face/South Face</td>
<td>East Face/ South Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blount Small Ship Adventures</td>
<td>East Face/South Face</td>
<td>East Face/ South Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herring Vessels</td>
<td>South Face</td>
<td>South Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Auction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>South Side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail (Ferry Supporting Uses)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>NW Corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing interpretive center</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Above Fish Auction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible public space/parking</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>SW Corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Market</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>South Side or in retail area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATE PIER TENANTS: EXISTING TENANT LOCATIONS
STATE PIER TENANTS: FUTURE TENANT LOCATIONS

1. Seastreak
2. Pier Oil
3. Oliveira Shipping
4. New Bedford Ship Supply
5. Seaport Economic Council
6. Mass Environmental Police
7. Mass State Police
8. US Customs and Border Protection (USCBP)
9. US Department of Agriculture (2nd fl)
10. Public commercial fishing vessel support
11. Cuttyhunk Ferry
12. Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey
13. Maritime International
14. Nice Day Too
15. American Cruise Lines
16. Blount Small Ship Adventures
17. Herring Vessels
18. Fish Auction
19. Retail (Ferry Supporting Uses)
20. Fishing interpretive center
21. Flexible public space/parking
22. Fish Market

Path of Tenant Move
Same Future Location
Multiple Potential Future Locations
New Tenant
Central Waterfront: Eversource/Sprague Opportunities

Just south of State Pier and adjacent to Leonard’s Wharf, a group of large underutilized waterfront parcels offers tremendous opportunity for the City. Today, the agglomeration of parcels referred to as the “Eversource/Sprague site” is owned by a combination of the Commonwealth Gas Company and the Sprague Oil Company. Some portions of the site are still actively used by the Sprague oil operations including several oil tanks, however much of the site is vacant and underutilized. Efforts to redevelop, change ownership, or change uses are complicated by significant environmental contamination. The scope and cost of future environmental cleanup will ultimately be determined through further study and will relate to the final use.

The site is of significant scale and, while it is within the designated port area (DPA) boundary, portions of it are outside of the Chapter 91 jurisdictional line. The large size and varied regulatory conditions suggest that the site itself can foster multiple uses in the future. The northwest corner may be redeveloped for uses that are compatible with an extension of the central waterfront, such as commercial uses or an entertainment venue. The waterfront edge of the site should be reserved for expansion of water-dependent uses. On the southern tip, these could logically be related to the fishing cluster along the south terminal. Additional potential uses include large-scale boat repair and related industrial uses. Inland areas provide additional space for fish processing expansion or cold storage if needed proximate to the water.

Northern Waterfront District

The northernmost district of New Bedford’s waterfront illustrates its diversity, and clearly highlights some of the largest challenges and opportunities. In the future the district will remain multi-faceted, strengthening the housing anchor on the western edge, creating more room for usable public space and connections to the waterfront, supporting growth for recreational boating, and linking industrial areas along the waterfront to expansion for the north terminal.
LAND-USE FRAMEWORK AT EVERSOURCE SITE
In particular, two major infrastructure improvements have the potential to lead to improvements and redevelopment in the area. The extension of South Coast Rail to a potential new commuter rail station in the “whale’s tooth” area creates strong synergies with existing and future adaptive reuse of historic mill structures as well as impetus to strengthen the deteriorated mill neighborhood. On the waterside, the North Terminal expansion (through the creation of 1500 linear feet of additional bulkhead with clean soil from future dredging operations) creates space for the fishing industry to grow along the water’s edge and logic for expansion of fish processing facilities inland.

This zone includes the 150-acre Hicks Logan Sawyer district, an area that has been subject to other planning by the city as well. Reflecting the city’s earlier days as a textile center, three major mill structures from the nineteenth century remain today and have been designated on the city’s mill inventory: the Revere Copper and Brass facility, the Fairhaven mills, and the Wamsutta mills. The Wamsutta mills have recently been transformed into loft housing. This district has the most residential uses along the waterfront; in addition to 250 units in the recent mill conversion, mill-era housing remains in a small
housing district in the Hicks/Washburn area. Between 2000 and 2010 both population (+43%) and household (+41%) growth in the waterfront study area significantly exceeded city and regional averages. This residential growth is largely due to the mill reuse in the northern district.

Some recreational uses exist, but they are not easily accessible. A small park and an unlicensed makeshift marina exist just south of I-95, however their location and quality limit their utility today. Like the downtown waterfront, the northern waterfront district will benefit from improved public space and waterfront access. If the active use from the existing public park is able to be relocated closer to the housing sites, the northern tip remains a logical place for public water access and can be improved with a more formal marina and passive waterfront park to attract recreational boaters.
**LAND-USE SUBAREAS**

The master plan divides the waterfront district into land-use subareas to redefine potential development sites and acknowledge the preservation of existing uses within other areas. The land-use subareas are defined, and described in more detail in the urban renewal document as the following:

**Subarea 1: Transit-oriented Mixed-use**

General Boundary – I-195, North Front Street, Wamsutta Street, and Acushnet Avenue

Purpose – Mixed residential and commercial that capitalizes on the proximity of this area to the planned South Coast Rail improvements and the The Lofts at Wamsutta Place. The playground between Washburn Street and I-195 should be relocated to this area.

**Subarea 2: North Terminal, Public Access #1**

General Boundary – I-195, the harbor, the extended line of Wamsutta Street, and North Front Street

Purpose – This subarea comprises waterfront Industrial or related activities. This subarea is outside of the DPA line. Public access to the harbor from Washburn Street is part of this area as is rethinking the use of the land between Washburn Street and I-195 (see note above on playground).

**Subarea 3: Transit and Transit-Oriented Development**

General Boundary – Wamsutta Street, Herman Melville Boulevard, Acushnet Avenue

Purpose – South Coast Rail is planning new freight and commuter services.

Transit-oriented development here should be connected to the mixed-use in Subarea 1. Freight connections should be made to Subareas 4 and 6, and 7, if possible.
LAND-USE SUB AREAS
**Subarea 4: Waterfront Industrial (including new bulkhead)**

General Boundary – Wamsutta Street, the harbor, the border with Pier 3, MacArthur Drive to US-6 then Hermann Melville Boulevard.

Purpose – This subarea is water-dependent industrial. No public access along the waterfront is anticipated.

**Subarea 5: State Pier, Pier 3, and Homer’s Wharf; Public Access #2**

General Boundary – Pier 3, the harbor, Leonard’s Wharf, and MacArthur Drive

Purpose – This subarea is a combination of water-dependent uses with the second public access point along the waterfront. Relocating the fish auction here is a possibility; public access should take into account the requirements of the working waterfront - safety is an important consideration. The focus of any public access should be the ability to observe the working waterfront.

**Subarea 6: Cargo-handling and Water-dependent Industry**

General Boundary – Leonard’s Wharf, the harbor, the southern boundary of parcel 42-178 (Eversource/Commonwealth Electric), and MacArthur Drive

Purpose – This area comprises of waterfront-dependent uses, and possible cargo uses. No public access along the waterfront is anticipated.
Subarea 7: Waterfront Industrial (including Marine Commerce Terminal)

General Boundary – Southern boundary of parcel 42-178, the harbor, Gifford Street, the extension of Silva Street, Blackmer Street, South Front Street

Purpose – This subarea comprises water-dependent industrial. No public access along the waterfront is anticipated. Uses from elsewhere in the waterfront may be relocated here and some of the parcels may be a possible site for wind energy-related enterprises.

Subarea 8: Supporting Water-dependent Industry

General Boundary – Gifford Street, the harbor, Cove Street, South Front Street, and one-two parcels depths in back to Gifford Street

Purpose – This subarea comprises waterfront-related uses such as processing or cold storage. This area is outside the DPA.
Chapter Five

IMPLEMENTATION
IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

The New Bedford Waterfront Framework Plan establishes a framework for New Bedford’s land-use activities along the waterfront and identifies focus areas for reinvestment in public and private spaces that help to guide the city in accomplishing its goals. The plan is intentionally flexible and is meant to provide the city with the tools to work collaboratively with private businesses as opportunities arise to support economic development and improve the sense of place along the waterfront.

In order to plan for a dynamic future, the implementation strategy needs to include policy recommendations, regulatory tools, and a prioritization of public and quasi-public investments. The priorities are sorted into short-term projects that can catalyze change and medium-to-long term investments. Additionally, policies and regulatory changes are needed to support implementation. This plan includes a redevelopment plan (full documentation is included under separate cover). The redevelopment plan creates four subareas within the waterfront district and enables authorities to the NBRA to undertake real estate development and related steps to implement the plan. Finally, policy recommendations to support both security of the fishing industry and additional redevelopment are included.

Priorities and Sequencing

The implementation framework outlined below specifies strategies and regulatory requirements to advance the framework through the following proposed focus areas:

1. Central Waterfront and State Pier
2. South Terminal and Eversource/Sprague Site
3. North Terminal

Central Waterfront and State Pier

There is already a great deal of momentum around revitalization of State Pier for additional cargo use and public access. Recent state efforts to add refrigeration to Building 1 and improvements along Union Street signal that State Pier is ripe for continued transformation. The framework plan envisions a strategy that allows all of these uses to co-exist, and implementation of this vision requires a similarly collaborative and partnership-based approach.

At State Pier, near-term goals include capitalizing on the large size of the site for greater public access and programming it with enhanced commercial and flexible multi-use spaces. It should
FUTURE WATERFRONT FRAMEWORK PLAN
be noted, however, that these changes may also necessitate addressing current deficiencies in the pier’s structure. Plans and funding for public access, greater cargo capabilities, or additional recreation boat dockage should also consider the need for repairs to the pier itself.

**Short-term:** Public spaces are an ideal first step since they have a high impact and are relatively low cost. For State Pier, this means that investment can logically begin with site improvements to the southwest corner of the pier that transform the asphalt parking lot into a more active, usable, and flexible open space (that still accommodates parking when needed). This park improvement can bring more events and activity to the pier, setting the stage for additional development on site. The proposed southernmost building, highlighted in the plan as a possible new fish auction building, is an important early development project that will bridge public and private uses on the pier.

**Medium and Long-term:** Continued investment in the infrastructure of State Pier will demonstrate the City’s commitment to cargo expansion on the northern edge of the site. Along with changes to the southwest open space and a new public/commercial building, improvements to truck access should be made, creating new space for loading and offloading.

As a strong brand for State Pier develops over time, the urban village area along MacArthur Drive will present significant opportunities for supporting retail or commercial buildings to be developed through public/private collaboration. MassDevelopment is a potential partner for redevelopment of this area. These sites will anchor the entrance to State Pier, provide a welcoming impression along the street edge, link the site to Union Street, and draw more people from Downtown to the waterfront.
FUTURE WATERFRONT OPEN SPACE CONNECTIONS PLAN
South Terminal & Eversource/Sprague Site

**Short-term:** Significant infrastructure investments have recently been made to transform the Marine Commerce Terminal into one of the waterfront’s greatest commercial and industrial assets. In the near-term (within the next two years), continuing to operationalize the Marine Commerce Terminal for enhanced cargo, including off-shore wind functions, is a priority. Expansion of cargo operations on the site may require additional investment in adjacent cold storage facilities.

Given the complexity and opportunity of the Eversource/Sprague site, additional planning is recommended as an immediate next step. A future site planning and urban design study should explore future changes to support development opportunities, such as improved access, reparcelization, environmental remediation, partnerships, and funding.

**Short or Medium-term:** Throughout the planning process, many buildings were identified as having historic value with all three site areas. The brick mill buildings at the southern end of the site, the mill cottages and the power station on the Eversource site are frequently discussed for their historic character. While these structures are partially captured in the city’s mill inventory, there is not yet a clear decision for their future. A study that results in a statement expressing the historic value, and adaptive reuse potential will help the city proactively and realistically plan within the context of these structures.

Additionally, the Standard Times Baseball Field in subarea 8, is underutilized, on a critical site, and difficult to access from the dense neighborhoods nearby that would benefit from more active outdoor recreation space. As a next step, the city can identify potential sites to relocate the field west of JFK Memorial Highway. This project can be completed when funding allows and land-use requirements necessitate additional large, contiguous sites near the Marine Commerce Terminal.

Within the central waterfront, there are many additional economic development initiatives that could grow the tourism and recreational capacity of this zone. Expansion of the Popes’ Island Marina; attraction of an excursion vessel for dinner, party, and business function cruises at Pier 3; and an initiative to use the roll-on-roll-off facilities already built at State Pier for freight ferry service to Nantucket and Martha’s Vineyard have all been studied and recommended through separate plans.
**North Terminal**

The North Terminal area is one of the most complex areas of the waterfront. The long-term evolution of this district and the pace of implementation will hinge on the timing of external factors such as the future of the South Coast Rail extension, the EPA expanded bulkhead project, and actions by many small property owners in the district.

A full planning study of subarea 1, including the blighted conditions near the rail corridor, is an important next step in the process of revitalizing the area north of the commercial fishing industry. This revitalization can open up new opportunities for redevelopment for both water-related and non-water-related uses. Another near-term goal will be to explore land swaps to relocate active recreation areas along the waterfront, including the basketball court are the edge of subarea 1. The basketball court would better benefit the community if it were relocated closer to areas of activity. A future site could be identified on vacant land near the growing residential neighborhoods.
Waterfront and related industries contribute significantly to New Bedford’s economy. The waterfront generates over 4,000 jobs and $2.7 billion in sales; economic development and policy initiatives that support waterfront industries’ growth and expansion in New Bedford are central to this plan.

As national regulations continue to become more stringent reflecting a response to global sustainability concerns, commercial fishing industries will likely continue to respond with efforts to consolidate operations in one area, rather than have scattered facilities along the waterfront.

Interviewees report that seafood processors have encountered difficulties gaining the permits necessary for them to expand in New Bedford and that this factor accounts for job migrations outside the city limits, since both labor force in the city and infrastructure in the waterfront area remain positive assets. Policy and other economic development initiatives are needed to retain and help expand this industry in New Bedford. This includes strengthening steps that enable seafood and related businesses to expand, whether on the waterfront or elsewhere in the city, such as expedited permitting, zoning changes, and bulkhead extensions.

Additionally, the NBEDC can explore ways to use additional city land, such as available parcels at the New Bedford Industrial Park, to support its vision for the waterfront. By providing clear, simple ways for waterfront businesses to relocate or expand non-waterfront dependent uses at the industrial park or similar locations, critical waterfront assets can be better utilized.

**Infrastructure Recommendations**

Similar to policy changes, improvements to infrastructure on the waterfront will both encourage diverse investment into New Bedford and enable expansion of important waterfront-dependent industries. In many ways, future commercial expansion and business growth is dependent on infrastructure upgrades.
Many of the relevant infrastructure changes are already under formal study, but will require significant resources to implement. These include:

- Expanded North Terminal -bulkhead (EPA dredge area)
- Rail expansion to the Marine Commerce Terminal
- Fairhaven Bridge replacement
- Additional dredging for the federal channel and the state Enhanced Remedy Phase V project
- Remediation of Eversource/Sprague site

The HDC is currently pursuing funding for dredging and this effort if successful will result in additional jobs and business activity according to potentially affected businesses.

The Eversource/Sprague site in the central waterfront area continues to represent a significant untapped potential for locating a variety of water-dependent and related uses. Remediation costs as currently estimated are a deterrent to development, but need to be revisited based on actual potential uses. The future development strategy may also offer opportunities to achieve major mixed-use development. Towards this end it is recommended that the HDC reinstitute the eligibility credit trading initiative for the DPA established in the first municipal harbor plan. If reinstated, that program could represent an opportunity to utilize more than 25% of the Eversource site for non-marine industrial uses.

Additionally, the framework plan process highlighted the need for additional improvements within the waterfront district. Next steps toward implementation should include deeper investigation of the following issues:

- Expansion of cold storage and other needs for cargo on additional sites in the future (such as Marine Commerce Terminal or Eversource/Sprague waterfront)
- Improvements to road configurations in the South Terminal area to allow for large truck access and egress

Today, State Pier remains the city’s core resource for handling ocean cargoes, and investments to enhance cargo potential at State Pier are ongoing. Additional investments may be needed at the newly developed Marine Commerce Terminal for that facility to be able to efficiently handle non-wind energy related cargoes and to attract a private terminal operator and other shipments. The continuance of cargo operations at State Pier does not preclude other uses and activities, and should be accommodated to ensure local jobs, household income, and business sales are protected.
The redevelopment plan is an integral component of the implementation strategy for the waterfront framework plan. A combination of physical characteristics and economic conditions render portions of the waterfront difficult to develop by the private market alone. The NBRA will be authorized by this redevelopment plan to undertake actions whose purpose will be to create conditions that encourage investment by private entities in the subareas of the waterfront identified by this plan.

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) must approve this redevelopment plan in order for the NBRA to undertake actions that this plan authorizes. In order to approve this plan, DHCD must make certain findings with respect to the content of the plan.

This redevelopment plan accomplishes the following:

- It is an implementation plan for the New Bedford Waterfront Master Plan and reinforces the recommendations in that plan for waterfront-oriented uses.
- It creates four subareas within the larger waterfront district and authorizes the NBRA to undertake real estate development and related actions consistent with their authority under Chapter 121 B of the Massachusetts General Laws.
- It identifies the goals of the NBRA with respect to the purpose of the subareas and the ability of the NBRA to conduct development-related activities within each subarea.
- It defines the initial strategies to address each goal, identifies related actions and a time frame for each strategy and recommends possible funding mechanisms for undertaking planning and development projects.

The purpose of any redevelopment authority is to create and support conditions that encourage private investment in the development of the areas under the authority’s control.

As part of this purpose, the NBRA has identified several secondary goals and related objectives that would allow it to act more effectively within the four designated subareas.

- Build capacity (initiate within the next six months)
- Address existing debt obligations (address the existing obligations within the next 18 months)
- Establish a development regulations and review process (begin discussion on the regulatory and review process within the next six months)
- Undertake planning projects (begin planning for one or more subareas within one year)
- Identify and undertake catalyst developments (NBRA should
plan to undertake its first project within the next three years, either with an in-house development team or though a public/private partnership)

This redevelopment plan would have to be amended, as noted in Section 7 Future Plan Changes, to incorporate new projects or regulatory changes.

**Funding**

The NBRA needs to consider three different categories of needs when reviewing possible strategies to fund its activities.

- Outstanding Obligations
- Operations
- Future Projects

The following is a list of some of the sources that could be used for both operations and project planning and development. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list, or applicable to all four subareas, but does provide some initial sources for consideration. Some of these sources would form the financing structure for bonds issued by the NBRA.

**Operations**
- City Funds
- Community Development Block Grants
- Priority Development Funds

**Infrastructure**
- MassWorks grant program
- Business Improvement District
- Community Preservation Act (CPA)
- Local Infrastructure Development Program
- Infrastructure Investment Incentives Act (I-Cubed)
- District Improvement Financing (DIF)

**Development Projects**
- Tax Credits – New Markets, Federal Historic, State Historic
- Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing (UCH-TIF)
- Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP)

MassDevelopment and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development would be good sources for discussing the requirements and applicability of these funding sources.
This implementation plan is tied to the city’s goals and supporting objectives and to the activities allowed under Chapter 121B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build capacity</td>
<td>Establish staffing and operating procedures.</td>
<td>Discuss using city planning staff in the short-term and hire own staff once operating funds established.</td>
<td>6 months – 1 year</td>
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<td>Begin regular communications with city and related agencies.</td>
<td>Schedule regular meetings with city staff and agency representative to develop working relationships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address existing debt obligations</td>
<td>Reduce obligation to city through disposition of land or production of income.</td>
<td>Identify land that is surplus to operations and dispose of to create capital for repayment.</td>
<td>18 months</td>
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<td>Identify land that could be income-producing and create plan to realize such income.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Work with city solicitor and city CFO first to develop payment plan and strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish development regulations and review process.</td>
<td>Work with Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development.</td>
<td>Identify and implement regulatory changes that enhance the purpose of each subarea; may include design guidelines.</td>
<td>6 months – 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake planning projects.</td>
<td>Create specific plans for each subarea targeted to the purpose of that subarea; fully evaluate environmental conditions contributing to blight.</td>
<td>Undertake in-house or hire consultant team to create subarea plan. Focus plan on identifying specific projects for the NBRA to undertake that will act as catalysts to private development.</td>
<td>1 – 2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and undertake catalyst developments.</td>
<td>Begin specific planning for catalyst project based on planning efforts above.</td>
<td>Create plans for financing, site improvements, timing, and relocation.</td>
<td>3 – 20 years</td>
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<td>Amend this redevelopment plan to add project. Secure funding.</td>
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<td>Bring together development team to undertake project.</td>
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<td>In-house team or public/private partnership. NBEDC could help with development projects.</td>
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