

# A Call to Action for New Bedford Citizens



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There is a famous scene in *Braveheart* where William Wallace rallies his Scottish troops just before a battle with English forces. Atop a horse, he gave an amazing speech about taking action at that moment or living with regret. William Wallace, leading a rag-tag group of untrained soldiers, goes on to rout a much larger, well-trained force by out-witting his opposing general. Does New Bedford have a William Wallace to lead us?

For the next week, New Bedford residents have a chance to finish first in a competition that could mean hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions, in economic stimulus over the next decade. New Bedford has been chosen as one of the 12 Most Distinctive Destinations in the United States by The National Trust for Historic Preservation. It is a great distinction to even be put on the list, and New Bedford residents should feel proud of their historic city. This nomination has been covered by dozens of major newspapers throughout the United States, and as a result has boosted New Bedford's name recognition as a place to visit as a tourist.

Since 15 February, everyone has been allowed to visit an online poll and vote daily for their favorite city.

Currently, New Bedford is in third place in online voting, behind Sheridan, Wyoming, and Paducah, Kentucky. These two cities have significant leads

and it is obviously because they are more organized than New Bedford. Sheridan has a population of 15,000 and Paducah has a population of 27,000. Right now, it appears these small cities (1/4 and 1/6 the size of New Bedford, respectively) are being lead by a William Wallace, which would put us on the side of the English. We have until March 15 to change this. To me, there are two ways to win this competition outright.



First, NewBedfordGuide.com volunteers have made it easy for people to vote by visiting [votenb.com](http://votenb.com). This URL goes directly to the poll. We also put out 2,000 business size cards promoting the link throughout the city at high-trafficked locations like the Whaling Museum, Celtic Coffee House, No Problemo, Ginger Grill, The New Bedford Visitor Center, The New Bedford Art Museum, and dozens of other locations. Take a moment to grab some of these cards and distribute them to friends and family. Ask them to vote daily and pass the cards on to their friends.

Second, and the only real way of winning this contest, is for Mayor Lang (or someone in the city with influence) to contact Barney Frank, John Kerry or Scott Brown, and have them help promote this contest in Boston. The city of Boston's Facebook pages have 397,000 and 142,000 fans, and Boston.com's Facebook page has nearly 40,000 fans. A few shout outs for New Bedford would help solidify our chances for victory. Since New Bedford is the only Massachusetts city in this contest (and the only city in the Northeast), we should widen our voting

block and make this about Massachusetts pride and its economy. John Kerry, Barney Frank or Scott Brown could likely use their influence and assist the city where so many of their constituents reside. Really, the person that can make this happen the quickest is Mayor Lang. I ask everyone to e-mail him at [Scott.Lang@newbedford-ma.gov](mailto:Scott.Lang@newbedford-ma.gov), and ask him to pull some strings so we can win this award.

It's up to **YOU**, the reader, to take action; this award is within our grasp. Take two minutes to write the mayor and ask him to get our elected officials to lead us to victory by using the city of Boston to take this award home for all of Massachusetts. The difference from third place and first place can be worth millions. Voting ends on 15 March, so time is of the essence.

Hopefully, a William Wallace will emerge on our side to lead us to victory.