

# **Mayor Mitchell requests approval for \$6.1 million capital improvement bond**

The City develops a five-year capital improvement program (CIP) to coordinate community planning, financial capacity and physical development requirements. A complete CIP facilitates coordination between capital needs and the operating budget, enhances the City's credit rating, and provides a mechanism to more effectively incorporate capital decisions into ongoing fiscal planning.

Forecasting the City's highest priority capital projects over a multi-year period provides a roadmap for facility improvement and vehicle replacement needs. The initial version of the CIP covered the five years from FY 2014 through FY 2018, and the plan has been updated annually as projects have been further refined and updated.

Projects are first identified through the biennial Capital Needs Assessment (CNA), submitted by City agencies and the School Department, which helps identify those projects, based on service needs, physical condition and usage requirements that should be considered for funding consideration in the CIP. The CIP helps to prioritize agencies' requests in relation to demonstrated need and the availability of funding.

The CIP provides a financing plan to meet the City's facility and equipment needs, taking into account the impact of construction costs on the City's debt load, as well as the potential effect of project costs on the annual operating budget. Potential projects are evaluated in relation to each other to ensure that the highest priority projects receive public funding, with essential improvements planned in a manner commensurate with the City's ability to pay. The CIP is

funded annually through a capital improvement bond authorized by the City Council, and through project-specific authorizations, grants and lease agreements.

### **Capital Improvement Plan Summary**

The Capital Improvement Program covers General Fund-supported projects from FY 2018 through 2022, and totals \$93.6 million. Of this amount, \$13.8 million would be allocated for capital asset preservation projects for public safety, road repairs, public use buildings and other government facilities, and approximately \$7.6 million would be allocated for ongoing replacement of capital vehicles and general fleet replenishment. \$42.9 million would be allocated for major renovations and/or replacements at general government facilities, while \$29.3 million would be allocated for school projects.

What follows is a summary of the projects proposed to be funded in this year's capital improvement bond, and a summary of the projects that would be addressed in the ClP's later years.

The FY 2018 bond, which totals \$6,115,000, consists of the following eight projects:

**Fleet Maintenance Improvements (\$260,000):** This project would fund design for the repair and renovation of the fleet maintenance facility located at City Yard. Funding for construction would be requested in FY 2019.

**City Hall Elevator (\$900,000):** Initial funding to design a second elevator in City Hall was included in the FY 2017 capital bond. The existing elevator was constructed in 1906, and is well beyond its service life, requiring frequent repairs. Replacement parts are no longer readily available, and the potential exists for a significant breakdown that would eliminate disabled access to City Hall above the first floor.

Core IT Infrastructure Support (\$430,000): This project would replace HVAC equipment utilized to cool the MIS server room. Temperatures in the facility are currently maintained by an array of small units, which are prone to failure, causing great risk to the City's IT and communications infrastructure.

Main Library Repairs (\$775,000): This project would replace windows, doors, and alarm systems at the main library on William Street. The current infrastructure is past its useful life. Additional compact shelving would also be purchased to house reading materials.

West Beach Community Building (\$300,000): This project would be utilized in combination with proposed Community Preservation Act funding for the renovation of the community building located at West Beach, to ensure structural stability and to allow for storage and possible waterside recreational activities.

High School Renovations (\$1,580,000): This project would provide funding for badly needed repairs at New Bedford High School, including renovation of the auditorium, swimming pool locker rooms and restoration of the campus athletic grounds, all of which have been deteriorating since the construction of the school in the early 1970s. These repairs are ineligible for reimbursement by the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Buttonwood Park Zoo (\$870,000): This project would continue renovations at the Buttonwood Park Zoo. FY 2018 funding would support the construction of a Zoo Education Center, which would utilize the existing domestic animal barn, and new red panda and Asian aviary habitats, along with better viewing opportunities for visitors to the elephant exhibit, and would be matched nearly dollar-for-dollar by \$840,000 in committed private donations.

Roads & Infrastructure (\$1,000,000): The FY 2018-2022 CIP

includes an ongoing infrastructure program intended to augment State-funded and utility-related improvements to roads and sidewalks. Work is assigned based on conditions as assessed through the City's pavement management program. This program was initiated in FY 2017, and is proposed to continue in FY 2018.

Due to their grant-reimbursement structure, the annual capital bond does not include authorization for MSBA or other state-funded capital projects. A proposal to implement repairs at Carter Brooks Elementary School has been submitted as a separate loan authorization, and the City Council approved a loan order to fund land acquisition and design work on the South Public Safety Center in December 2017.

The Capital Improvement Program includes 21 projects during the five-year planning period.

The following section provides a brief description of each project by category. The complete CIP may be found at the end of this discussion.

### **General Government Renovations & Replacements**

Hillman Street Complex Renovations (FY 2019 & 2021, \$1,250,000): This project would continue renovations begun in FY 2014 to the Hillman Street Complex. Activities would include renovation of Building 9, which serves as annex office space, repointing of the exterior walls, and replacement of deteriorated brickwork.

Zeiterion Theater Repairs (FY 2022, \$2,000,000): This project serves as a placeholder for the renovation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Zeiterion Theater. Efforts will be made to obtain outside funding for the project.

Agnes Braz Accessibility Improvements (FY 2021, \$1,200,000): This project would implement accessibility improvements at the Agnes Braz building located on Coggeshall Street. Activities

would include installation of wheelchair access ramps and an elevator.

East & West Beach Improvements (FY 2018 & 2019, \$800,000): This project would renovate the East Beach bathhouse and the community building at West Beach. The initial appropriation in FY 2018 would be utilized in combination with CPA funding for the renovation of the West Beach facility to ensure structural stability and to allow for storage and possible future retail activity. Funding in FY 2019 would renovate the facility at East Beach.

Zoo Renovations (FY 2018-2020 & 2022, \$5,075,000): This project would continue renovations at the Buttonwood Park Zoo. FY 2018 funding would support the construction of a Zoo Education Center, which would utilize the existing domestic animal barn, and new red panda and Asian aviary habitats, along with better viewing opportunities for visitors to the elephant exhibit. Future years would provide for improvements to existing exhibits and educational facilities. The City's FY 2018 allocation would be matched by \$840,000 in private donations as part of the continuing effort to mitigate funding needs.

Fleet Maintenance Improvements (FY 2018 & 2019 & 2022, \$3,545,000): This project would provide for the development of an integrated fleet management solution for City vehicles. Initial funding in FY 2018 provide for design of renovations and expansion to the existing facility at City Yard, with construction anticipated for FY 2019. Funding in FY 2022 serves as a placeholder for a future renovation and/or replacement of the City's secondary facility.

Roads & Infrastructure (\$1,000,000): The FY 2018 bond includes the second installment of the commitment to supplement existing road repair funding, consisting largely of Chapter 90 funding from the state, by including \$1 million per year in the capital program. Work projects are assigned based on

conditions as assessed through the City's pavement management system.

South End Public Safety Center (FY 2018 & 2019, \$15,000,000): Initial funding for a feasibility study and preliminary design of an integrated public safety center to provide fire, EMS and police services currently provided by Fire Stations 6 & 11, and Police Station 2 was included in the FY 2016 Capital Improvement Bond. Consistent with the recommendations of the FACETS study, these outdated facilities would require extensive capital expenditures well in excess of the cost of a single consolidated facility in order to bring them into compliance with modern standards. The new facility would be constructed on a site that would maximize the response capabilities of the public safety personnel who would be deployed from that location.

The City Council approved a second appropriation in FY 2018 to fund land acquisition and full design. Funding in FY 2019 serves as a placeholder for construction. Public Safety Communications System (FY 2019-2022, \$7,000,000): This project would provide for the replacement of the City's public safety communications system, which is utilized by the three public safety agencies (Police, Fire and EMS) to dispatch and manage emergency response. The current system, which dates to the mid-1990s, is obsolete and in need of replacement. The project will also address regulatory changes which are requiring public safety agencies nationwide to migrate to a new set of frequencies.

City Hall Elevator (FY 2018, \$900,000): Initial funding to design a second elevator in City Hall was included in the FY 2017 capital bond. The FY 2018 bond proposes \$900,000 for construction. The existing elevator was constructed in 1906, and is well beyond its service life, requiring frequent repairs.

## **School Renovations & Replacements**

Projects in this category represent major capital improvement needs for the School Department. The City makes use of construction grants from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), when available. The costs reflected in the CIP represent the amounts to be locally financed.

Schools Deferred Maintenance (FY 2018-2022, \$2,927,000): This project would provide for renovations to School Department facilities that would not be eligible for reimbursement from the State. Funding in the FY 2018 capital bond would be utilized to renovate locker, auditorium and grounds facilities at New Bedford High School.

MSBA Accelerated Repair Projects (FY 2018, 2019, 2021 & 2022, \$6,350,904): This project would provide the local share for renovations to Carter Brooks Elementary School in FY 2018, and for planned boiler and roof replacements at Trinity and Parker in FY 2019. Future appropriations would support planned a planned roof replacement at Carter Brooks and renovations to Campbell Elementary School MSBA Core Projects (FY 2020-2021, \$20,000,000): This project would provide the local share for a planning study and construction of a future school replacement project.

### **Capital Vehicle Replacements**

The CIP includes a number of projects intended to address ongoing replacement needs for the City's vehicle fleet. Projects included during this period were limited to those that could be financed through a lease purchase arrangement.

E MS Vehicles (FY 2018-2022, \$1,525,798): This project provides for the acquisition and outfitting of six ambulances and three squad vehicles for Emergency Medical Services over the course of the planning period. The City instituted a policy beginning in 2013 of acquiring replacement vehicles through a series of capital leases, which in turn provides sufficient flexibility to finance ongoing replacements.

Fire Apparatus (FY 2018, 2021, & 2022 \$2,645,000): This project provides for the ongoing replacement of fire apparatus over the course of the planning period. The Fire Department currently operates ten front-line apparatus, which average about seven years in service.

Acquisition of the replacement vehicles will involve a series of capital leases, providing sufficient flexibility to finance ongoing replacements. The City has purchased four replacement pumpers and one aerial ladder since FY 2013. Decisions regarding the specific apparatus to be replaced in future years will be determined based on operational needs.

Mobile Command Center (FY 2019, \$480,000): This project would replace the Police Department's mobile command center. The existing vehicle, which was initially purchased in 2003, is rapidly becoming outdated and contains obsolete aspects in terms of design and technology that have been repeatedly identified in post-incident reviews. Acquisition of the replacement vehicle would be financed by a capital lease.

Fleet Replenishment (FY 2018-2022, \$2,917,795): This project addresses deficiencies identified in the condition of the City's general use fleet, which averages about 15 years old and requires significant investment of maintenance resources to maintain operability. The City Council approved an initial expenditure of \$920,465 in FY 2016, principally to address replacement and improvement needs for snow removal, followed by subsequent appropriations in FY 2017 and 2018. Future allocations will provide for the continued replacement of 10-15 vehicles per year, to ensure that the general fleets are kept in a state of good repair. Financing would be accomplished through a series of capital leases.

### **Capital Asset Preservation**

The Capital Improvement Program includes ongoing funding to address deferred maintenance issues throughout the City's



physical plant. The Capital Needs Assessment process identified about \$220 million in deferred maintenance, infrastructure and facility needs for General Fund agencies, largely resulting from a historic insufficiency of resources allocated for that purpose.

As a result, the City's physical assets have continued to depreciate and the capital requirements needed to bring facilities to proper working order have grown.

The Capital Asset Preservation portion of the CIP is intended to provide resources needed to ensure the continuation of basic operability for the City's facilities. Funding estimates are based on the Asset Depreciation Method, which uses nationally-promulgated standards as guidelines for the maintenance of aging facilities. For example, the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers and the International Facility Management Association recommend annual capital asset preservation funding ranges that are equivalent to 1.5%-3.0% of the replacement value for an entity's physical plant. Similarly, the Federal Internal Revenue Service and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue has established depreciation standards of 2.5% per year on fixed assets. As of FY 2016, the City's outside auditor estimated the City's physical inventory at \$253.2 million.

The CIP includes \$13.8 million over the five year planning period for capital asset replacement. In addition, the CIP includes \$9.3 million to fund the local share of renovation projects for City schools. Combined, these allocations would average approximately 1.8% annually over the course of the five-year planning period, assuming that the City receives repair grants from the MSBA on a consistent basis. Funding is assigned according to four functional project categories:

- Public Safety – Facilities operated by the Police, Fire & EMS departments.
- Public Facilities – Facilities designed principally for

public use (parks, community centers. Free Library, Buttonwood Park Zoo).

- Government Facilities – Facilities designed to house general government operations (City Hall, City Yard, and other shared use-type facilities).
- Roads & Infrastructure – The FY 2018-2022 CIP includes an ongoing infrastructure program intended to augment State-funded and utility-related improvements to roads and sidewalks. Work would be assigned based on conditions as assessed through the City's pavement management program.
- Renovation projects for City schools are included in the Schools Deferred

### **Maintenance and the MSBA Accelerated Repair Projects categories.**

Projects qualifying for capital asset preservation funding are limited to existing facilities in need of capital-eligible renovation and/or repair. Examples of such projects might include interior and/or exterior renovations, roof replacements, HVAC repairs and measures required to maintain compliance with regulatory and/or licensing requirements, and artificial playing field replacements. The capital asset preservation component constitutes a minimal baseline of funding over the course of the CIP planning period, and specific allocations are determined as part of the annual CIP appropriation.

### **Energy Management Services Contract**

The City issued a Request for Qualifications for a comprehensive energy management contract in May 2013. The intention of this program is to identify physical improvements to existing facilities that could be financed by a combination of utility provider rebates and reduced energy costs. The initial stages of the energy project began with conversion of the City's street and traffic lights to LED fixtures in 2014. The City Council approved lease financing for the first phase

of facility retrofits in October 2015; Phase 1 consisted of upgrades to HVAC, lighting and building envelope improvements at 19 facilities, which resulted in significant reductions to energy consumption and improvements to the existing infrastructure. Phase 2, which was approved by the City Council during FY 2018 and is currently underway, built upon the initial work by implementing energy management at another 19 facilities and continuing work at New Bedford High School and Parker Elementary School.

## **Project Financing**

The CIP will be funded by a combination of general obligation debt for facilities projects, lease purchasing for capital vehicle purchases, and grant funding. The CIP is designed to work within the City's existing debt profile to the greatest extent possible, although the impact of debt issuance for new facilities such as the South Public Safety Center and school renovation projects will contribute to a projected increase in net outstanding debt from \$73.1 million in FY 2018 to \$94.7 million in FY 2022, and annual debt service payments would increase by about \$0.8 million through the end of the five-year planning period. Capital lease payments would also increase to support the acquisition of fire apparatus and other public safety vehicles identified in the program.

## **Affordability Indicators**

The City Council adopted an organization-wide debt management policy in November 2013. Included in the policy are a series of indicators intended to determine the appropriateness of assuming additional tax-supported general obligation debt:

- Outstanding debt as a percentage of per capita income – The policy target is 6% or less. The projected ratio would increase from 3.4% in FY 2018 to 4.2% in FY 2022.
- Outstanding debt as a percentage of assessed valuation – The policy target is 3% or less. The projected ratio would

increase from 1.2% in FY 2018 to 1.4% in FY 2022.

- Annual debt service as a percentage of the General Fund operating budget – The policy target is 10% or less. The projected ratio would decrease from at 3.7% in FY 2018 to 2.8% in FY 2022.

---

## **Congressman Keating issues statement on vote to re-open government**

Below is a statement from Congressman Bill Keating on tonight's vote to reopen the federal government.

"I want to reinforce the bipartisan efforts of my colleagues in the Senate who fought hard for a chance to protect the 800,000 Dreamers who came here as children. While I share a degree of skepticism that Republicans will keep their word to resolve this critical issue in good faith, I believe the best course is to hold them to their commitment and reopen the government for the next three weeks.

"The hard reality remains that we found ourselves in a shutdown because of a core inability of Republicans – who are in complete control of all three levers of government – to govern. Almost 100 people a day are dying from the opioid epidemic; community health centers are on the verge of closing due to lack of funding; despite a year of catastrophic weather events, disaster relief for far too many families hasn't come; and the list goes on and on. The Trump Administration and Republican majority cannot continue to lurch from crisis to crisis, stripping money from fundamental needs here at home."

---

# OPINION: Where's the leadership from the Oval Office during the #TrumpShutdown?

By Bruce Ditata

On the anniversary of his inauguration as POTUS, Donald J. Trump yearned for a Mar-a-Lago getaway, celebratory gala with his deep-pocketed cronies, the exhilaration of basking in praise he always yearns for.

Instead, he found himself shuttered in the White House, unable to join the opulent festival at his beloved Florida retreat. Outside the security moat on Pennsylvania Avenue, protestors chanted slogans, pounded drums, carried signs-against Trump and his policies, as well as for women's and immigration advocacy. It was one of hundreds of women's marches across the nation to coincide with the anniversary of the President's inauguration.

A short distance away from the executive offices on Capitol Hill, lawmakers lobbed verbal grenades across the aisles in the United States Senate after a vote to keep the government running, which failed on the day before Trump's anniversary.

The vitriol flowed like the champagne at Mar-a-Lago with Democratic and Republican members blaming each other for the government shutdown which, officially, began on January 20.

Democratic Senators perseverated on their unwillingness to "kick the can down the road" on the need to establish long

term funding and public policy agreements to fund the Dream Act, border security, military personnel, children health insurance, medical facilities, and immigration legislation.

Republican Senators, conversely, accused their Democratic colleagues of being intransigent on issues they have always supported for the sake of one single issue- the Dream Act- the long established program due to expire in March of 2018 which offers a path to citizenship for the offspring of illegal immigrants, young people who call America their home, the only country they have even known.

Meanwhile, the stalemate in the Senate rages on and the government shutdown continues, a situation labelled as “trench warfare.” It has elicited harsh attacks against Democratic Senators by Trump subordinates, while the President has remained, mostly, silent with the exception of an anti-Democratic Party tweet and an aggressive, campaign style attack advertisement.

Where is the leadership from the Oval Office, the decisive intervention of a self-proclaimed deal maker, who railed against his predecessor, Barack Obama, for failure to bring both political parties to the negotiating table?

Without Trump working decisively to end the impasse, does this stalemate, causing the federal government to grind to a halt- the question becomes will historians in point of fact, accurately categorize it as the #TrumpShutdown?

---

## **2018 New Bedford City Council**

# Committee Assignments

- COUNCILLOR LINDA M. MORAD, CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT
- COUNCILLOR JOSEPH P. LOPES, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT
- COUNCILLOR BRIAN K. GOMES, SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

## **STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

- APPOINTMENTS & BRIEFINGS: Councillors COELHO, Chair; MORAD, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Dunn, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Markey and Rebeiro
- CITY PROPERTY: Councillors CARNEY, Chair; LOPES, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Coelho, Dunn, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Markey, Morad and Rebeiro
- FINANCE: Councillors LOPES, Chair; ABREU, Vice-Chair; Carney, Coelho, Dunn, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Markey, Morad and Rebeiro
- INTERNAL AFFAIRS: Councillors GOMES, Chair; REBEIRO, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Coelho and Markey
- LABOR & INDUSTRY: Councillors DUNN, Chair; ABREU, Vice-Chair; Carney, Lima and Lopes
- ORDINANCES: Councillors DUNN, Chair; REBEIRO, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Coelho, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Lopes, Markey and Morad
- PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOODS: Councillors GOMES, Chair; COELHO, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Dunn, Giesta, Lima, Lopes, Markey, Morad and Rebeiro
- VETERANS AFFAIRS, ELDERLY, YOUTH, HEALTH & HOUSING & DISABILITY ISSUES: Councillors GIESTA, Chair; DUNN, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Coelho and Lima
- AUDIT: Councillors LIMA, Chair; LOPES, Vice-Chair; Dunn, Gomes and Morad
- FISHERIES: Councillors REBEIRO, Chair; LIMA, Vice-Chair; Dunn, Giesta and Lopes

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

- THE AIRPORT: Councillors MARKEY, Chair; GOMES, Vice-Chair; Carney, Giesta and Morad

- ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS: Councillors REBEIRO, Chair; DUNN, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Coelho, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Lopes, Markey and Morad
  - MEMORIALS & DEDICATIONS: Councillors ABREU, Chair; CARNEY, Vice-Chair; Coelho, Markey and Rebeiro
  - BUDGET REVIEW: Councillors LOPES, Chair; MARKEY, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Giesta and Lima
  - DOG PARK (Feasibility of Creating A): Councillors CARNEY, Chair; COELHO, Vice-Chair; Emanuel Maciel, Director, Animal Control; Local Veterinarian; Greater New Bedford –
  - Coalition for Animals Member; Two (2) New Bedford Residents
  - LICENSING AND ZONING FOR CANNABIS: Councillors ABREU, Chair; Giesta, Vice-Chair; Carney, Gomes and Rebeiro
  - TRAFFIC COMMISSION: Councillors Gomes and Markey
  - ENERGY RESOURCE COMMISSION: Councillor Carney
  - SCHOOL TRAFFIC COMMITTEE: Councillor Rebeiro
  - SIGN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD: Councillor Lopes
  - MAYOR’S YOUTH COUNCIL: Councillor Rebeiro
  - WATER BOARD: Councillor Carney
  - TIF BOARD: Councillors Lopes & Morad
  - CONDOMINIUM REVIEW BOARD: Councillor Rebeiro
  - EXHIBITION HALL COMMITTEE: Councillor Coelho
- 

## **2018 New Bedford City Council Committee Assignments**

- COUNCILLOR LINDA M. MORAD, CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT
- COUNCILLOR JOSEPH P. LOPES, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT
- COUNCILLOR BRIAN K. GOMES, SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

### **STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

- APPOINTMENTS & BRIEFINGS: Councillors COELHO, Chair; MORAD,



Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Dunn, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Markey and Rebeiro

– CITY PROPERTY: Councillors CARNEY, Chair; LOPES, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Coelho, Dunn, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Markey, Morad and Rebeiro

– FINANCE: Councillors LOPES, Chair; ABREU, Vice-Chair; Carney, Coelho, Dunn, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Markey, Morad and Rebeiro

– INTERNAL AFFAIRS: Councillors GOMES, Chair; REBEIRO, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Coelho and Markey

– LABOR & INDUSTRY: Councillors DUNN, Chair; ABREU, Vice-Chair; Carney, Lima and Lopes

– ORDINANCES: Councillors DUNN, Chair; REBEIRO, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Coelho, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Lopes, Markey and Morad

– PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOODS: Councillors GOMES, Chair; COELHO, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Dunn, Giesta, Lima, Lopes, Markey, Morad and Rebeiro

– VETERANS AFFAIRS, ELDERLY, YOUTH, HEALTH & HOUSING & DISABILITY ISSUES: Councillors GIESTA, Chair; DUNN, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Coelho and Lima

– AUDIT: Councillors LIMA, Chair; LOPES, Vice-Chair; Dunn, Gomes and Morad

– FISHERIES: Councillors REBEIRO, Chair; LIMA, Vice-Chair; Dunn, Giesta and Lopes

### **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

– THE AIRPORT: Councillors MARKEY, Chair; GOMES, Vice-Chair; Carney, Giesta and Morad

– ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS: Councillors REBEIRO, Chair; DUNN, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Carney, Coelho, Giesta, Gomes, Lima, Lopes, Markey and Morad

– MEMORIALS & DEDICATIONS: Councillors ABREU, Chair; CARNEY, Vice-Chair; Coelho, Markey and Rebeiro

– BUDGET REVIEW: Councillors LOPES, Chair; MARKEY, Vice-Chair; Abreu, Giesta and Lima

– DOG PARK (Feasibility of Creating A): Councillors CARNEY,

Chair; COELHO, Vice-Chair; Emanuel Maciel, Director, Animal Control; Local Veterinarian; Greater New Bedford –

- Coalition for Animals Member; Two (2) New Bedford Residents
- LICENSING AND ZONING FOR CANNABIS: Councillors ABREU, Chair; GUESTA, Vice-Chair; Carney, Gomes and Rebeiro
- TRAFFIC COMMISSION: Councillors Gomes and Markey
- ENERGY RESOURCE COMMISSION: Councillor Carney
- SCHOOL TRAFFIC COMMITTEE: Councillor Rebeiro
- SIGN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD: Councillor Lopes
- MAYOR’S YOUTH COUNCIL: Councillor Rebeiro
- WATER BOARD: Councillor Carney
- TIF BOARD: Councillors Lopes & Morad
- CONDOMINIUM REVIEW BOARD: Councillor Rebeiro
- EXHIBITION HALL COMMITTEE: Councillor Coelho

---

## **Mayor Mitchell pushes property owners to remove trash in 5 days instead of 14**

The following communication is being submitted by New Bedford mayor Jon Mitchell to the New Bedford City Council for consideration on January 11th:

M3. COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDINANCE, amending Chapter 12, Section 12-41, that property owners have only five (5) days as opposed to fourteen (14) to dispose of litter that is a source of filth or that is dangerous to the public health, safety or welfare.

DOC010318\_\_011118\_\_ORDER\_\_Amending\_Chapter\_art.II

---

# **Mayor Mitchell pushes to strengthen problem property ordinance**

The following communication is being submitted by New Bedford mayor Jon Mitchell to the New Bedford City Council for consideration on January 11th:

M1. COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDINANCE, amending Chapter 6, Buildings and Other Structures, which lowers the number of valid police complaints necessary for a property to be designated a problem property from eight to four.

DOC010318\_\_011118\_\_ORDER\_Amending\_Chapter\_6\_art.\_VII

---

# **New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell's 2018 Inaugural Address**

Mayor Jonathan F. Mitchell

January 1, 2018

Zeiterion Performing Arts Center, New Bedford, Massachusetts

[text as prepared]

Judges Veary and Fernandes, members of the City Council, School Committee and Board of Assessors, honored guests, citizens and friends of New Bedford:

Let me begin by thanking everyone for braving the cold tonight, and those of you who went the extra mile and recorded today's college bowl games. The rest of us will have to do our part and refrain from sharing the updated scores with you.

Tonight, as we turn the page to a new calendar year and new term of office, we size up the challenges before us with the strength of confidence gained in recent success. And that confidence is well-placed.

In the last few years, New Bedford has achieved unmistakable progress along multiple fronts. The pace of job growth, the condition of the city's physical environment, the stabilization of municipal finances, the purposeful operation of our schools, and the strength of the city's reputation are unlike anything we've seen in a long time. Together we have done things once assumed to be out of New Bedford's reach.

There are more achievements in the pipeline to celebrate – more ribbon cuttings and announcements that affirm the growing recognition that New Bedford is an ascending city.

### **Shaping the Strategy**

But we're not in it for recognition; we don't play the game for the trophy; we don't seek praise for its own sake. Our focus – our devotion – is to build a city that will be fertile ground for our children and grandchildren to live fulfilling lives. Our success will depend on our ability to think strategically in light of what lies ahead of us, and to have the discipline to implement our strategy faithfully – and together.

As we look ahead, we have to take stock in what I believe is the single most important trend in our national economy.

America today is enjoying a prolonged period of economic growth that is disproportionately concentrated in its largest cities. America's big cities are living in a golden age right now, driven by the presence of major research universities, international airports, and corporate headquarters. They are home to virtually all of America's venture capital, new office construction, and foreign investment. Unemployment is negligible in these places, real estate prices are skyrocketing, and the gap between the haves and have-nots is growing. These places are marked by construction cranes, fifty-dollar-a-plate meals, and more recently, driverless cars. Boston and New York are the two closest of many examples, and their seemingly unabated growth may have profound implications for the rest of America.

So what does that mean for a mid-size city like us that is not part of a large metropolitan area, and doesn't have the same cards to play?

It means that we have to compete. We operate in the same global economy as these cities after all. At the same time, we shouldn't see ourselves as trying to be like them or beat them at their own game. But we can be something different. In an America where the biggest cities are becoming more congested, expensive and in some cases, more violent, cities our size offer a more manageable alternative. Here, and in other mid-size cities, one can have those things that people like in cities – the public spaces, the walkable streets, the cultural amenities, and so forth – but without feeling crushed and disconnected at the same time. Portland, Maine and Charleston, South Carolina are good examples of cities – one a little smaller than us and the other little bigger – that are succeeding along these lines.

My point is that a city doesn't have to be a major metropolis to be successful in offering its residents an opportunity for a good life.

So how do we make that happen here?

## **Quality of Life**

First and foremost, we have to focus relentlessly on making New Bedford, quite simply, a really nice place to live. This might sound like stating the obvious. Of course everyone wants to have safe neighborhoods, more pleasant parks, cleaner streets, and higher performing schools. Local government after all is set up to accomplish such things. But the point I'm making is that enhancing the city's quality of life should be seen not simply as an end in itself, but also as a means of sustaining the city in the long run. We will attract more business and excite greater civic participation the more people believe that this is a place they'd like to be in. A high quality of life is a great selling point for any city.

We are proud of how we've been able to elevate the city's quality of life these last few years. But there's more to do.

We will continue to invest in those things that make living in New Bedford pleasant, interesting and rewarding. In the year ahead, we will continue to build and restore our public spaces, which in recent years has included the construction of five new parks and the HarborWalk and CoveWalk. A staple of a good city life is being able to walk to an inviting park, and that's exactly what we are going to deliver, for everyone in this city.

To exalt New Bedford's glorious past, we will invest in historic preservation more than ever before. To beautify our streets and clean our air, we will continue the most ambitious tree planting program in our lifetime. And to provide relief to shock absorbers, we will dedicate steady funding for road improvement so that they are not allowed to fall into disrepair again as they had for decades.

We will make our city cleaner and more put together than it has been in anyone's memory.

We will make the most of our access to the water by working to connect the downtown and the waterfront, and begin constructing the RiverWalk with the goal of giving the North End what the same kind of waterfront amenities that the South End has had.

We will prioritize public safety. New Bedford is a safe city, but not every neighborhood is nearly safe enough. We will intensify our community policing and code enforcement efforts in our most distressed neighborhoods so they are not left behind as the rest of the city as a whole progresses.

### Schools

To be successful, a city also must create pathways for its citizens to reach their full potential. More than anything else, that means we must offer our city's children a public school education that enables them to thrive as adults.

Our schools have come a long way these last few years, because we refused to sit idly by while our kids were losing out on the education they deserved. The progress has been marked not only by the state's recent decision to end its monitoring of the district but also the steady rise in test scores across many schools, and the significant rise in the four year graduation rate. It is a school district that is far more accountable to the public and parents alike, as it should be.

But make no mistake, the work is not done. Indeed, we should do everything in our power to accelerate school improvement. Each child has only one chance at a great education, and doesn't have the luxury of waiting long for improvement.

The most important decision we will make for our school children these next few years will be to select a first rate leader for our school district.

In undertaking this task as a community, we must be crystal clear about one thing: the change in leadership should not be understood as an occasion to ease up on the pedal of reform.

Our students cannot afford for us to lower the bar.

Similarly, we must resist the temptation to seek a school leader based on opinions about the current school leadership. The selection rather should be based solely on which candidate can lead the district most effectively toward its goals, namely to offer a high quality education to every child and to build a system of schools that attracts families to the city.

Achieving these goals will take energy and persistence. It will require the building and rebuilding of relationships that are necessary to support and nurture a strong school culture. For our kids and our city, we want to build a school system where kids are eager to go to school in the morning, parents are proud to send them there, and teachers and principals derive personal satisfaction from the hard and important work they do.

## **Finances**

All of our efforts to improve our city will depend on our ability to manage our finances. Our heightened bond rating reflects that we have been effective at it, but it has not been easy.

The reality is that money is tight – very tight. We might all agree on our financial priorities, namely to sustain and improve the level of services our residents expect, invest in the city's physical plant, attract talent to city government by offering competitive salaries, fully fund our schools, and ease the burden on tax payers. Under our current fiscal conditions, however, not all of these can be achieved. None of them can be achieved as much as we'd like.

We have made significant cuts to city government, and city government is considerably smaller and more efficient than it was ten years ago, yet the pressure on taxpayers has only increased.

And this is during a time of relative growth. What will happen



when the national economy turns downward, as it inevitably will at some point, and state and local tax receipts start to fall.

Something has to change. I want to make very clear that I will not allow our city to be put in a precarious financial position when this happens.

Other cities might drift toward the waterfall, but not New Bedford. We will continue to make the tough decisions so that our city will be stable in even when the economy slows down.

There aren't many painless options. We will continue to reorganize city government to increase efficiency, as we have done with considerable success. We will make every effort to expand the tax base by encouraging the development of underutilized parcels of public property. This is why the municipal golf course redevelopment project is important.

Unfortunately, these steps alone won't do the trick. Spending has to be reined in.

The budget busters are pension, health care and charter schools costs. And you have heard me criticize the state for making it difficult on municipalities to control these costs because the expenses are largely dictated by state policy.

Although we have few options here, it's harder to criticize state policy when we can't credibly claim that we've exhausted all our options.

That's why last year I proposed to the city council that we pull the one lever available to us that could materially help us reign in health care costs. Under state law, a city or town may adopt a provision that enables it to seek binding arbitration when the public employee unions refuse to accept changes in health care plans. Right now, we have no recourse when the unions say no, and we are effectively stuck paying for the health plans they want. It's an unsustainably expensive approach to managing health care, and it's no wonder

the majority of city and towns in the state, including Fall River and just about every other community in Greater New Bedford, have adopted it. Each of these communities has enjoyed significant savings as a result, without compromising the health of their employees.

We can't avoid tough decisions any longer. We must adopt this provision for the financial well-being of our city and for benefit of hard working tax payers.

I look forward to working with the City Council on these matters. I appreciate the thoughtful discussions we've had of late. It is a discussion this city must have.

### **Economic Competitiveness**

A high quality of life is not possible without a diverse and vital regional economy. It bears emphasizing that we are competing in a global economy for investment and jobs, and if we don't compete effectively, they will go elsewhere, as our city has come to realize the hard way over the years, as the city's quality of life suffered.

We will persist in our effort to build a stronger regional economy centered around New Bedford and that makes the most of the region's advantages.

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. It generates a full two percent of the state's gross domestic product, and I believe there is room for more growth still.

We will not let up in our support for the fishing industry. As the industry on the East Coast continues to consolidate here, it will be critical for New Bedford to make its voice heard in the halls of Congress and before fisheries regulators, and that is what I will continue to do.

At the same time, our port should continue to diversify the mix of industries that call it home. As we have seen, it is an advantageous place to bring refrigerated cargo, and the expansion of freight will yield considerable job opportunities.

This is especially true for the offshore wind industry. Just a few years ago, there was no shortage of folks who claimed that we were putting too many eggs in one basket by spending so much time on offshore wind, and many thought it would never materialize. Well, it is happening. Less than two weeks ago, the state's three major offshore wind developers – all of whom now with offices here – made public bids to invest billions of dollars in wind farms off our coast, staged right from New Bedford.

As encouraging as this is, we need to continue playing our cards right. We are entering a key phase in our long cultivation of the offshore wind industry here. In the next few years, developers and their business partners will make decisions about where to establish facilities. And we want as much of it here as possible. It'll be incumbent upon to us to anticipate the industry's needs, work closely with the fishing industry so that both industries can thrive alongside one another, and pursue wise investments in port infrastructure.

We also must ensure that investment in these two industries helps to support our city's marine science entrepreneurs, including those associated with the expanded SMAST facility, and enable our city to attract and retain talent, and energize our economy.

In the long run, the goal is this: we want businesses that have some connection either to commercial fishing or offshore wind to say, "We need to be in New Bedford."

Every successful city has a vibrant downtown, and now that is becoming true here in New Bedford. We will continue to

cultivate residential development in the downtown that can support the thriving restaurant scene, and nurture and support the growing entrepreneurship class there.

And like any other city, our downtown must have strong anchor institutions. We must support our existing anchor institutions, and seize every opportunity to develop or recruit new ones.

And finally, because it is incumbent upon to improve our links with the rest of the American economy, we will continue to develop the capacity of our airport, which just took a major step forward by restoring commercial air service for the first time in decades.

I have no doubt that we in city government can do our part to help make New Bedford a stronger, more vibrant, and sustainable city. I am eager to work with our City Council to advance the City's long term interests, and I know that they feel the same.

### The Imperative of Citizenship

I emphasize that in building a city, municipal government has a part to play. We here who were elected to our positions have an indispensable role in marshalling the power and resources of municipal government to advance the city's interests.

But government cannot do it all, and maybe not even most of it. It should not be seen as the default solution to every problem, however minor. It will take the collective efforts of our community to make New Bedford a city that lives up to its full potential. Something is expected of each of us.

The notion of citizenship is rooted in the idea that we have obligations to others. It requires more than simply expressing an opinion about what someone else should do. Being a responsible citizen requires actual action – even when it's not perfectly convenient, even when it's not easy, and even when you think someone else should be doing it.

What's expected may vary from person to person, but everyone has something to offer. If you are business leader, chances are that you have more to offer than most. Successful cities are invariably ones where business leaders own the problem of urban renewal, and work collaboratively with government toward that end. They recognize that it is their own enlightened personal interest, and as well as that of their organizations, to support the city's long term prosperity. They have not only expertise and leadership skills to offer, but also the resources and prestige of their organizations.

We have had many business leaders who have stepped up to the plate and worked collaboratively with government, but New Bedford needs even more from its regional business community.

To our business leaders, if you aren't on a non-profit board yet, please find one whose mission excites you. There many civic organizations that can use your help.

If you already serve on a board, serve actively. Ask yourself how can I move the needle of the organization?

And I ask every business leader in the region to view their bottom lines more strategically and less tactically. Consider whether a given business decision advances the city's interests. This is not a call for altruism, although that is always welcomed. Nor is it a dismissal of the fact that businesses pay tax bills that we in government should be striving to lower. It's a way of highlighting the importance of what is often referred to as "self-interest rightly understood." Your organization will benefit in the long run if your city is improving in the long run.

But everybody has a role, not just people who lead big businesses. Everyone can pitch in. Constructive participation in the life of your city isn't about simply venting the city's problems on social media. Citizenship requires us to understand that we may have a role to play in addressing them. It recognizes the difference between posting a picture of a

littered sidewalk on Facebook and lamenting the mess, and instead picking the trash and throwing it away.

Your city needs you to get in the game. If you have ideas, bring them forward, but also be prepared to say what you will do to support their implementation. Join a neighborhood organization and work with it to make your corner of the city a better place. Mentor a child; there are many who could sure use your support.

There are ample opportunities to work on a political campaign of someone you believe in, or better yet, run for office yourself. There's no better way to connect with your community. If you believe you have something to offer, jump in with both feet.

My point is that if you've been sitting on the sidelines, I want you to know that your city – our city – needs you.

You will find that it is well worth the time and effort. A city is more than a place on a map. The city shapes and frames our relationships with one another, and is woven into our individual identity. It is part of who we are, and when we devote ourselves to making our city better, we've committed to improving ourselves.

On this New Year's Day, let us resolve together to make New Bedford a better place for all of us.

Thank you, and God Bless the City of New Bedford.

– New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell

---

# Mayor Mitchell, Chief Cordeiro announce major new investment in public safety

Mayor Jon Mitchell, Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro, and members of the City Council announced an important new investment in public safety, proposing to expand the use of police cameras in public areas of key neighborhoods.

The plan comes in response to recent feedback from neighborhood leaders and residents in key neighborhoods. Particular camera locations have been chosen based on information gathered by the Police Department, including data collected as part of the new CompStat initiative, a police management program. CompStat allows for the logging of crime activity and the mapping of areas in a way that give police a better understanding of the public safety threat and possible responses.

Under the plan, neighborhoods around Monte Park, lower County Street, Ashley Park, and the Temple Landing neighborhood would all see expanded use of police cameras.

The new cameras will complement several other steps being taken under Chief Cordeiro's leadership to address crime in these areas, including changes in community policing tactics, changes in station-level leadership, implementing additional reforms based on a strategic planning exercise for the department, and the use of "saturation patrols" to allow for a sustained police presence over a multi-week period.

The cost of the new cameras is estimated at \$194,000. The Police Department has already installed cameras costing approximately \$42,000 in locations in the near North End this year.

Mayor Jon Mitchell said, “Investments like this are being made by the best, most forward-thinking police departments across the country. The reason for their emphasis on camera technology is simple. Cameras are an extremely valuable, cost-effective tool when targeting crime in a defined geographic area. It’s not a practical or affordable strategy to put a cop on every corner, but cameras are a commonsense approach that effectively puts more law enforcement eyes on the street at exactly the places that need the most attention.”

Chief Cordeiro said, “Cameras are a tremendous force multiplier. They will allow the New Bedford Police Department to maximize the use of existing police resources, and give our officers on the street more information about what is happening in these key areas. It’s another tool to help our officers do their job better.”

The Chief added, “It’s also important to recognize that cameras are a tested, proven deterrent. Criminals know that their risk of being caught goes way up when police cameras are watching—and I can assure you, we will be watching.”

---

## **New Bedford Guide’s Top 25 Stories of 2017**

It’s been an interesting year in New Bedford. We had municipal elections and a spike of homicides year-over-year to include a double-murder and a 16-year old murder suspect.

Click on the title to read the story. Here are the top 25 New Bedford Guide stories of 2017 based on readership:

**25. 16-year-old David Lima arrested for Wednesday’s murder**





In March, 16-year-old David Lima was arrested and charged with the morning New Bedford homicide of Jonas Trinidad Jr.

#### **24. 19 year old New Bedford man dies after being shot by Fall River police**

19-year old Larry Ruiz-Barreto was driving away from a gathering when a police officer shot into the vehicle. Ruiz-Barreto, 19 was transported to Charlton Memorial Hospital where he was pronounced dead a short time later.

#### **23. State Police Investigating Fatal Crash in New Bedford**

In late October, a 25-year-old Acushnet man was involved in a single-vehicle roll over crash on Route 140 near Exit 4 in New

Bedford which resulted in his death.

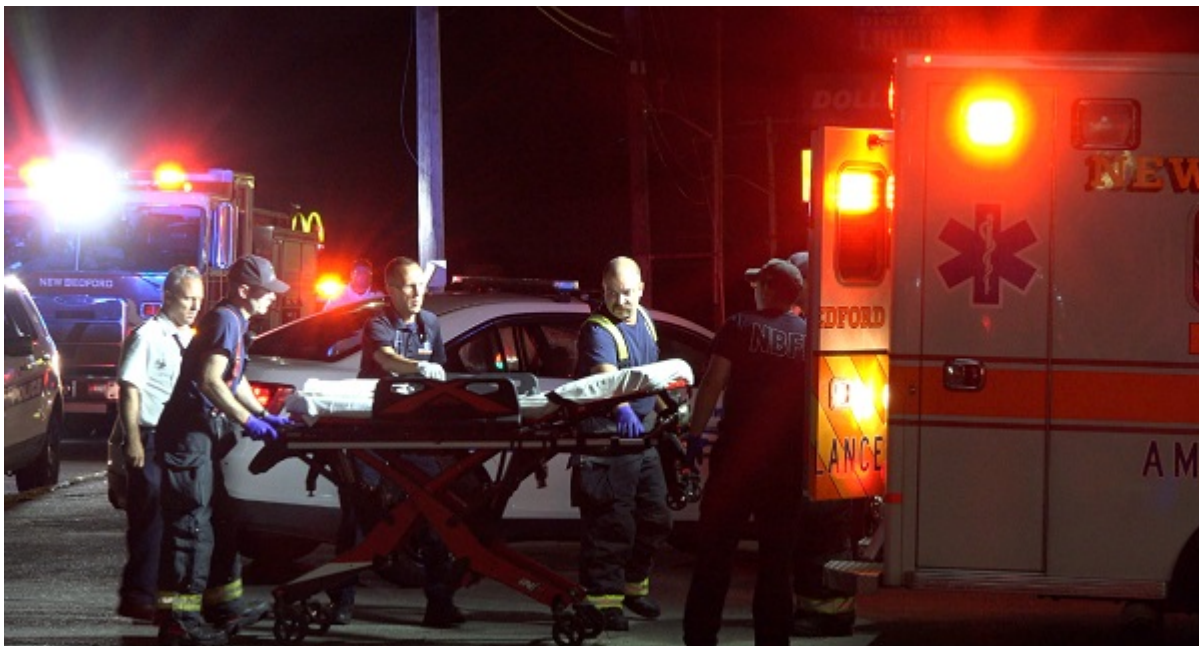
## **22. My confrontation with a future New Bedford murder suspect and her victim**

Ever had a confrontation with a future murder suspect and her male victim? I did and told my story.

## **21. Dartmouth police arrest 5 males with three loaded firearms at Thai Taste II**

Four adults and one juvenile were arrested with three firearms in their vehicle after a disturbance at Thai Taste II in Dartmouth.

## **20. Sunday Night Homicide In New Bedford Leads to Quick Arrest; Arraignment Slated for Today**



This is the homicide referred to in story #22 – 23-year-old allegedly sliced her ex-boyfriends four car tires, smashed the windows and then reportedly stabbed 45-year-old Juan Roman.

## **19. Wanted fugitive crashes stolen car, loses arm near Route 18 in New Bedford**

A man driving a stolen car drove down the wrong way on

Acushnet Avenue near Beetle Street. The car thief was chased by police down Route 18 and then crashed on the Purchase Street exit. Video in the article.

### **18. Sunday Night Homicide In New Bedford Leads to Quick Arrest; Arraignment Slated for Today**

23-year-old Zaishary Gonzalez of New Bedford was arrested during the early morning hours in September in connection to a homicide of her former boyfriend. See story #20 and #22 for more details.

### **17. Police arrest 15 in prostitution sting in New Bedford's north end**

Unfortunately, prostitution is a way of life in New Bedford, especially in Ward 2 north of Coggeshall Street. The New Bedford Police Department do at least one major "john" sting each year to let you know they are watching.

### **16. 16-year old crashes into home on Orleans Street while getting driving lesson**



A 16 year old male was driving was getting lessons form a 19 year old passenger when they left the parking lot of the

Normandin Middle School. The 16 year old accelerated west through the parking lot jumping the curb, taking out a sign post and then colliding into 119 Orleans Street. Video in the article.

#### **15. Police searching for suspects who slashed tires on 21 vehicles in New Bedford**

21 vehicles had one to two tires slashed in the area of Highland Street, Loftus Street, Harvard Street and Phillips Avenue. Less than a week earlier New Bedford police officers arrested an adult male and two juvenile males for “keying” 23 vehicles. June was a bad month for vandalism in New Bedford.

#### **14. Murder suspect of 20-year old New Bedford man still at large**

A 20-year old New Bedford man was shot multiple times around 11am near the intersection of Matthew Street and Bank Street near the Rural Cemetery. Police arrived to find a young man laying on the ground with multiple gunshot wounds.

#### **13. 33-year old New Bedford man shot and killed on Acushnet Ave**

At 2:44 am, New Bedford Police responded to reports of shots fired by the city’s Shot Spotter gun shot detection system in the area of 1669 Acushnet Avenue. When first responders arrived on scene, they located a male victim lying in the street.

#### **12. Movie trailer: The Highway Murders**

In 1988, eleven women vanished from the streets of New Bedford, Massachusetts. By the spring of 1989, the remains of nine victims had been discovered along the highways surrounding the city. Two of the women were never found. Trailer in the article.



## **11. New Bedford woman charged with abandoning 11-year old on dark road in Mattapoisett**



Police arrested 28-year old Marina Johnson of New Bedford and charged her with 2 counts of reckless endangerment of a child under 18 and 1 count of abandonment of a child under 18.

## **10. State Police Investigating Fatal Crash in New Bedford on Route 140 at Nash Street Overpass**

A 2004 Lexus ES 330 operated by a 21-year-old female from Fall River and a 2010 Buick Enclave operated by a 35-year-old female from New Bedford, had a side swipe collision. As a result of this collision the Lexus went off the right side of the road into the woods and the Buick was stopped in the left lane. The Buick was possibly disabled at this time with its lights off.

## **9. Victim of New Bedford Homicide Identified**

The victim of the August 17 homicide in New Bedford was publicly identified as 33-year-old New Bedford resident, Marcus A. Roberts. This is an update to story #13.

## **8. One dead after three attempted suicides in New Bedford last night**

There were three suicide attempts in New Bedford on July 30 with one person succumbing to their injuries.

## **7. 22-year old New Bedford man stabbed to death**

Yes, another homicide made the list. In January, a 22-year old New Bedford man was stabbed to death on Ashley Boulevard.

## **6. 39-year-old New Bedford man found hanging at Fort Taber**

Besides the man who hanged himself in Buttonwood Park a few years ago, this was the most public suicide that New Bedford has seen in recent memory.

## **5. Letter: Reflecting on the man who passed away on Route 140**



This is a letter sent to us in regards the man that passed away after a single-vehicle crash on Route 140 in Lakeville in April. According to reports, a dozen people attempted to assist the man.

## **4. Man dies in fatal crash on Route 140 in Lakeville**

This is the accident referenced in Story #5. State Police responded to a single-vehicle crash on Route 140 northbound in Lakeville which resulted in the death of the operator.

### **3. Opinion: Resident disgusted with new luxury cars in New Bedford public housing**

This story stirred a LOT of discussion on our **Facebook page**. It can be upsetting to some to see luxury cars in government housing.

### **2. 10 people who should run for mayor of New Bedford in 2017**

2017 was an election year for New Bedford. I wrote an article showcasing 10 people I felt should run for mayor and it was our second most read article of the year. Unfortunately, none of them ran and only two people ran against Mayor Mitchell.

### **1. Mom's dead. Not sure if anyone told you**

Drug addiction has touched us all. There wasn't an essay on the subject better than this one.