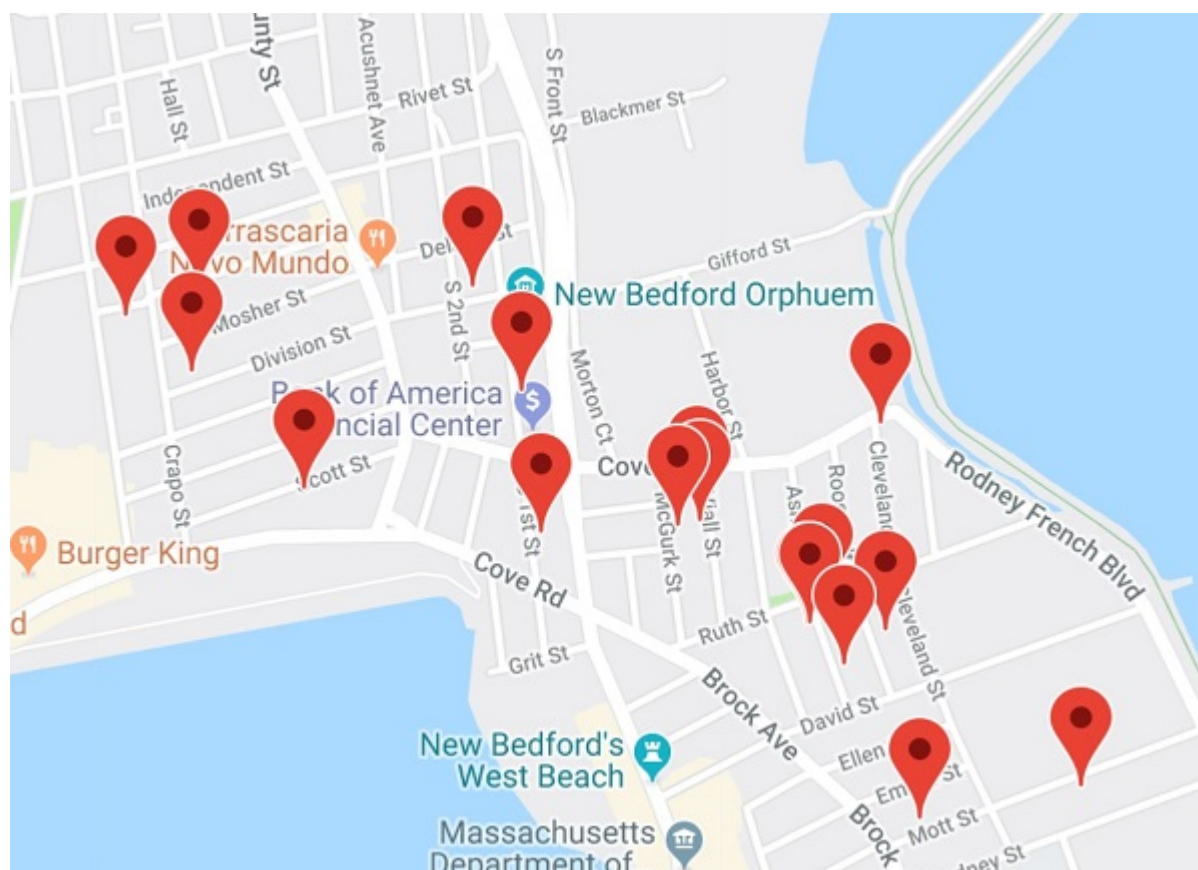


The South End of New Bedford's Drug Dealer Mile

While working on a database of all those charged in New Bedford in 2019 with distributing/trafficking hard drugs like heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, crack, and other hard drugs, it's painfully clear that the dealers live in concentrated areas of New Bedford. **Nearly one-third (29%) of those arrested for distribution/trafficking of hard drugs lived on six streets in New Bedford.** No other area shows the divide than the south end of the city where ALL the dealers live in the northern half of the peninsula.



To date in 2019, the New Bedford police department made 75 distribution/trafficking arrests. All of the busts in the south end are north of Rodney Street. 17 of the alleged drug dealers live within a mile of each other going from Winsor Street to Mott Street.



The worst street in the south end was Ashley Street with four people arrested for drug dealing calling that street home. The people arrested for dealing live at 37 (three roommates) and 50 Ashley Street. Charges include opioid/cocaine or Class E drug distribution.



37 Ashley Street New Bedford.



50 Ashley Street New Bedford.

The second worst street in the south end was Division Street with three people arrested for drugs living on the street. The people arrested for dealing live at 43 (two roommates) and 195 Division Street. Charges include Class E drug or fentanyl distribution.



43 Division Street New Bedford.



195 Division Street in New Bedford.

Check out our article on **New Bedford's six worst drug dealer infested streets.**

New Bedford Police Union cancels this year's Whaling City Festival

The following message was posted to the New Bedford Police Union's Facebook page:

A MESSAGE FROM NEW BEDFORD POLICE UNION PRESIDENT HANK TURGEON

Dear Family & Friends:

We regret to inform you that we will not be holding this year's Whaling City Festival which was scheduled to be held on July 11-14 at Buttonwood Park.

For the last several years, the New Bedford Police Union has taken great pride in sponsoring this event. Our priority has always been delivering a fun, safe and family-friendly event at an affordable cost.

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, including the severe and ongoing staffing shortages within the City of New Bedford's Police Department, the 2019 Family Fun Festival Carnival & Circus cannot take place as we had hoped. The City of New Bedford has chosen to operate its Police Department without a full complement of officers, and unfortunately, this decision has negatively impacted the Union's membership and resources.

Security deposits sent in by vendors will be returned shortly. We apologize for any inconvenience, and have made an effort to inform all affected parties as soon as possible.

The New Bedford Police Union remains committed to proudly protecting and serving the citizens of New Bedford, and sincerely hopes to sponsor this wonderful community event in the summers to come.

**Nomination papers available
for New Bedford's 2019**

municipal election

The New Bedford Board of Election Commissioners has announced that nomination papers to run for local municipal office in the November 2019 municipal election will be available beginning on Monday, May 20, 2019. Nomination papers may be obtained from the Election Commission Office in New Bedford City Hall, 133 William Street, Room 114. The Election Office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Nomination papers are available for the following offices: Mayor, Assessor-at-Large, School Committee, Councillors-at-Large and Ward Councillors.

Before issuance of nomination papers, a candidate must sign a statement containing his or her name, address, and the office for which he or she intends to be a candidate. Anyone other than a candidate must present a signed authorization in order to secure papers on behalf of a candidate.

Candidates must obtain 50 certified signatures in order to be eligible to appear on the Preliminary Municipal Election ballot, which New Bedford voters will consider on Tuesday, October 1, 2019. The final day and hour to submit nomination papers to the Board of Election Commissioners for certification of signatures is August 16, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. Nomination papers must be filed with the Board of Election Commissioners by 5:00 p.m.

The Preliminary Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, October 1, 2019. The Final Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2019.

New Bedford receives four new recreational marijuana applications

The City of New Bedford has received four new applications for recreational marijuana businesses in New Bedford:

Metro Harvest, Inc. (based out of Bridgewater, MA)

Proposed site in New Bedford: 606 Tarkiln Hill Road, New Bedford

Solar Therapeutics (based out of Somerset, MA)

Proposed site in New Bedford: 525 Church Street, New Bedford

Southcoast Apothecary, LLC (based out of New Bedford, MA)

Proposed site in New Bedford: 115 Coggeshall Street, New Bedford

Tree Beard Inc. (based out of New Bedford)

Proposed site in New Bedford: 1 Nauset Street, New Bedford

Last December, three companies unsuccessfully attempted to make it past the early stages of opening a retail marijuana business in New Bedford – most notably, Whisk & JANE LLC failed to get approval to open up a recreational marijuana shop at the former strip club on Popes Island.

City of New Bedford to accept Lincoln Park original ticket booth donation

Mayor Mitchell submitting an order to the City Council for the City of New Bedford to accept a donation of an original ticket booth from the Lincoln Park Amusement Park in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts, restored and given by John Nicolaci, Jr.

The booth was restored to working condition at the cost of

\$10,000, but is appraised at \$8,500. It will be used by the City of New Bedford for ticket sales and other promotions.

COMMUNICATION-ORDER-DONATION_OF_TICKET_BOOTH_FROM_LINCOLN_PARK

Lack of recreational marijuana sales will cause headaches for 2019 New Bedford incumbents

One of the biggest negative issues incumbent New Bedford city councilors and Mayor Mitchell will face in this year's election will be the lack of delivering a recreational marijuana store to New Bedford residents. The usual issues like potholes, high property taxes, and high crime will most certainly be an issue, but those will always be an issue.

At the time of this writing, 21 businesses have been given licenses to sell retail marijuana in Massachusetts by the Cannabis Control Commission. Locally, one recreational store is operating in nearby Wareham and three are already operating in Fall River with as many as 10 more hoping to be operating by the end of 2019.

There is little traction for a store in New Bedford because of the very **strict zoning** that the City Council and Mayor's office have imposed on any business hoping to operate in the city. It's crystal clear that places like Fall River want recreational stores in the city and New Bedford politicians do not. Last month, Whisk & JANE was denied a zoning variance to operate a recreational marijuana facility at the old strip

club spot on Pope's Island.

For the first time, New Bedford will have a mayor's race that will allow the winner to serve a 4-year term. 2019 will also be the first time Mayor Mitchell will likely face some real competition since his first race in 2011 when State Representative Tony Cabral and City Councilor Linda Morad battled Mitchell for the vacant spot left by Scott Lang who didn't seek re-election. Mitchell ran unopposed in 2013. He then ran against Maria Giesta in 2015 and Charlie Perry in 2017, but they weren't challengers with much of a chance of winning.

With a 4-year term that includes a salary of almost \$120,000 a year, I would expect plenty of people entering the race – who wouldn't want a 4 year, nearly half a million dollar contract? With two more years of higher taxes and the lack of a retail marijuana facility in the city, a strong opponent would have a lot to run on.

New Bedford City Councilors, especially the at-Large ones, generally have to die or retire to be replaced – unless you are Jon Saunders who voted to give himself a 44% pay raise and said, "If people don't like the job I'm doing, they can vote me out." He was voted out the following year.

I have a feeling with another year of **increasing property taxes** and the lack of recreational marijuana sales, the incumbent city councilors and the mayor will be vulnerable in this year's New Bedford elections. Even a usually apathetic New Bedford might decide enough is enough. If New Bedford doesn't see a recreational store by this summer, expect the natives to get restless and put up a fight at the ballot box in October and November.

The real story about conditions at Congdon Elementary School

The following was submitted in response to the comments on the recent story: **Congdon School teacher details rodent infestation, severe mold and bats at school:**

“After reading online stories and comments implying that the James B. Congdon Elementary School just needs a good cleaning, I felt a responsibility to address some of the misconceptions that are out there.

The reasons we need a new building for the students at Congdon (and at John B. DeValles) are not related to the building being unkempt. The issue is that the building is too old to accommodate the educational and social-emotional needs of students living in the 21st century.

A look inside Congdon further proves my point.

For example, the principal is unable to add more technology in the classrooms because the electrical system in the building is unable to support it. There is no access to student bathrooms or water fountains anywhere except the basement. The cafeteria is also in the basement of the building.

Four classrooms on the third floor have no windows and two offices on the third floor have no heat in the winter. The third floor is used as a library, a gymnasium, and an auditorium. The specialist teachers' desks are on the stage in the auditorium/gymnasium/library because there aren't enough classrooms for all teachers. There isn't adequate office space; the main office and nurse's office is a shared space.

There are two English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in one classroom. The special education teachers are doubled up

in one classroom, and the reading specialist shares a space with an ESL teacher. There is limited space for speech therapy, occupational therapy, or counseling in the building. The classrooms don't have drop ceilings, causing noise to travel and it to be noisy in the building at times.

The current principal at Congdon took the position almost five years ago. Since her first day, she has worked tirelessly to clean out the building and address and remedy any and all health and safety concerns.

The recent problem with rodents came about immediately following a pipe repair in the basement, which created easier access for rodents to enter the building. An exterminator is in the building weekly to address the problem, which is making trapped rodents more visible. The current custodial staff work very hard to maintain the cleanliness of the building and address any and all concerns.

Many visitors have come to Congdon this year after it was designated a school of recognition by the state. The Mayor, members of the school committee, the Commissioner of Education, delegates from many other districts, State Senators, newspaper, radio, and television reporters, Leadership Southcoast members, and New Bedford firefighters have all toured Congdon this year. Many of the visitors commented on how clean the building is despite its' age and that they would love for their own children to attend Congdon.

Despite the limitations the staff and teachers face at Congdon, they do what is necessary to make the best of the facility and give the students what they need to be successful. Needless to say, I was disappointed with the city council's vote not to send a statement of interest to the state to begin the process of building a new school.

I spend more time at Congdon than my home, by choice. Congdon is not my child's neighborhood school, but I love Congdon so

much I requested special permission for her to attend Congdon. It is an amazing place to work and have my child attend. I would never put my child or myself in a school that was dirty, unhealthy and/or unsafe. The teachers and staff work hard every day to provide the students with a great educational experience. Trust me, I know first-hand.”

Justine Santos – Assistant Principal at Congdon

Upgraded Buttonwood Senior Center officially reopened

Mayor Jon Mitchell and City officials formally reopened the Buttonwood Senior Center at a ceremony on Thursday, April 25, after an extensive renovation project. The renovation began in 2018 and concluded at the beginning of 2019.

The upgrades to the senior center included extensive interior and exterior renovation work on the building’s plumbing, windows, doors, masonry, security, lighting, and entrances. The building was constructed during the 1930s as a public works project.

Renovations included a new roof for the building including surface, insulation and trim; new electrical service and interior lighting; repointed masonry; new windows and doors for the building; a significantly updated kitchen and bathrooms; new accessibility ramp for handicapped entrance/exit; a new security system; and new exterior lighting.

The aging building was in need of repairs to its windows,

doors, and masonry, as well as general upgrades in order to improve the offerings at Buttonwood Senior Center for local residents to use for socializing, dining and events. The project is part of the City's ongoing effort to maintain New Bedford's status as an Age-Friendly Community, a designation the City earned in 2018 as just the fourth municipality in Massachusetts to be named Age-Friendly. The designation is a livability index that measures quality of life for older residents in a community.

"The updated Buttonwood Senior Center will be an even better place for residents to gather and enjoy for years to come thanks to the significant upgrades to the building," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. "New Bedford has been recognized for its commitment to its seniors because of projects like this one, which seek to enhance quality of life for residents of all ages."

Council on Aging Director Debra Lee said, "We are excited to officially reopen the Buttonwood Senior Center for our residents to use after its renovation. The Council on Aging is grateful to the Department of Housing and Community Development for its key role in providing federal grant funding for the project, and for all City departments involved in this collaborative effort. I also thank our seniors who gave up their space for six months to make this beautiful renovation a reality – it was well worth the wait."

The project utilized federal funding of \$475,000 through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered locally by the New Bedford Department of Housing and Community Development. The renovation was a collaboration among City departments including the Council on Aging, Department of Facilities and Fleet Management, Department of Parks, Recreation and Beaches, and Housing and Community Development.

Congdon School teacher details rodent infestation, severe mold and bats at school

New Bedford City Councilor Joe Lopes submitted a copy of an email and pictures to the City Council from Christine Pereira-Vasquez, a teacher at Congdon School regarding the condition, health and environmental dangers at the Congdon School:

Dear City Council:

It was with great dismay that I read about your decision to “nix” plans to build a new school for the J.B. Congdon and the DeValles Elementary Schools. As a life-long resident and “NorthEnder” of New Bedford, as well as NBPS teacher at the Congdon School for close to thirty years, I can truly say you have made a “mistake” on this one. I understand your concern for the northend schools, but the condition, health, and environmental dangers at our two schools far supersedes anything that the north-end schools are experiencing.

Although I cannot speak for the condition of DeValles-although I hear that it may, in fact, be worse than Congdon, I can give you first hand information of what students and staff face every day here at Congdon. I, for example, am unable to keep any posters up on certain walls of my room because of the water that drips down when it rains. I have used buckets in my shared

closet to catch the water as it drops from ceiling to floor. I am not alone in this. I need to cover my shelves, books, and other materials near these walls as they not only get wet from time to time, but the paint curls and peels because of the moisture. This leads to the paint "bubbling" on the walls and then crumbling over everything, leaving a big mess to clean. We are constantly breathing this "dust" in the air as well as the musty smells from the dirt-floor basement that enters through our vents.



I have had very "hairy", black mold grow in a shared closet. The principal at the time, was "afraid they would close the school down" so did nothing about it for two years. When it got so bad and he could no longer ignore it, a custodian came in to scrape and clean it with bleach, never following the proper protocol in securing the area and cleaning black mold, putting all children and staff at risk for the spreading of spores. I had a child that year in remission from leukemia. I was truly petrified for her wellbeing. We had a

teacher test positive for mold who became ill from it, and there are many of us that suffer chronic sinus, throat, and cough related conditions. Whether this was related to the incident or not, I can't say. But mold and mildew in the air exist. What is this doing to the children whose immune systems and bodies are developing? The school is a giant health hazard.



We also have an infestation of rodents. It is rampant in our school. We are not able to leave food-based materials (pasta, fish crackers for graphing, etc.) unless in plastic or glass containers- in our shelves or closets as they are eaten through by the mice and/or rats. Their droppings are everywhere- on floors, in cabinets, behind shelves. Again, we are all breathing this in on a daily basis. As if this is not enough, we have had issues with bats on the third floor. I believe DeValles has its problems with birds and their droppings.



We also have run out of space at Congdon. We are utilizing old storage rooms for small group space- no windows or ventilation, some with cement walls. The nurse shares space with the school secretary in the main office and our specialists use the auditorium stage for their space. We need a new school!

– Christine Pereira-Vasquez, a teacher at Congdon School
April 13, 2019

Councilor Gomes proposes City

crews fill potholes at night and on weekends

New Bedford City Councillor Brian Gomes is proposing crews work nights and weekends to resolved New Bedford's pothole problem. The following motion is scheduled for discussion at the City Council meetings on Thursday, April 25th:

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that Mayor Mitchell and DPI Commissioner Ponte consider that the Department of Infrastructure put on a night and weekend crew to deal with the pothole situation that is erupting all over the City due to the recent rain storms and the warm weather approaching; this action will give an opportunity to the crew to get a lot more work done while there is less congestion throughout the City.