



## **New Bedford Tourism Summit**

# **REPORT**

**May 5, 2006**

City of New Bedford, Massachusetts  
Scott W. Lang, Mayor

*Prepared by*

City of New Bedford Office of Tourism & Marketing

## Executive Summary

In November 2005, Mayor-elect Scott W. Lang called for a comprehensive assessment on the state of all tourism activities in New Bedford. His call resulted the city's first tourism summit in more than a decade that took place on March 10, 2006 at the Whaling Museum. In preparation for the summit, a committee of 41 people met regularly to flesh the summit goals, its format and the activities of the daylong event. The list of stakeholders cut across all sectors of the city, including its museums, galleries, shops, restaurants, and event organizers. Also included were economic development leaders, real estate developers, lodging establishments, city department heads, as well as transportation and planning authorities. Over 140 participants attended from many organizations, businesses and attractions, representing a wide range of stakeholders in the growth in travel and tourism in New Bedford.

Craig Dutra, President, of the Southeastern Massachusetts Community Foundation, acted as the summit facilitator. Keynote speakers were Mayor Lang and Dan Hunter, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Advocates for the Arts, Sciences and Humanities (MAASH). Other speakers included: Alfred H. Saulniers, who discussed local and regional tourism statistics, Arthur Motta, on the city's tourism department operations and services, and Celeste Bernardo, Superintendent of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, on visitation trends of museums and other national parks in the northeast. Most of the morning was spent in open forum, during which attendees presented their ideas and concerns to the assembly, all of which were noted on large pads onstage, each under four general topics: Marketing, Visitor Support, Crime & Grime, and Asset Development.

Participants met in breakout sessions in the afternoon to discuss topics identified in the morning. The groups reconvened in the Whaling Museum Theater to hear summary presentations. Then, all participants were invited to vote on the presentation pads, which summarized the main concerns of the groups. For each topic category, participants identified the following top three issues (order determined by vote tallies) as key goals or deliverables necessary for the tourism growth:



### Top Tourism priorities by vote:

#### Marketing

1. Increase outreach to I-195/Rt.18 motorists. Provide daily info via sign system
2. Launch a local pride/education campaign.
3. Target marketing to Fast Ferry passengers and Martha Vineyard residents

#### Visitor Support

1. Transportation/parking improvements
2. Visitor services training programs
3. Directional signage system for city attractions

#### Crime & Grime

1. Clean up Exit 15/Gateway to Downtown

2. Address “street people,” vagrancy and panhandling issues
3. Parking Garages: must be clean, well lit, with security & cameras, properly maintained, doors unlocked with reliable elevators

Note: Parking & public garage improvements were also mentioned frequently in other groups. All addressed the vagrancy problem downtown, support efforts to address violent crime, proposed a clean-up of Exit 15/Gateway to Downtown, supported an anti-litter campaign, stressed improved maintenance/appearance of streets/sidewalks, better management of garbage collection, parking enforcement, and faster removal of graffiti.

## **Asset Development**

1. Ernestina: revitalize and reactivate
2. Increased marketing
3. Enhance NB atmosphere: Performances, Storefront rehab, Artists, Kid’s Art

Note Re.: #3 Participants considered these possibilities: an open air market of local produce/seafood, improved shuttle service from Ferry terminal to downtown, a pedestrian-safe crossing at route 18 to the waterfront, enhancement of downtown atmosphere with more performances, storefront rehab, and restoration of the Schooner Ernestina to community service.

## **Recommendations**

1. Reconvene the Tourism Summit Planning Committee to review summit results and determine which projects and/or deliverables identified and not yet underway (i.e. Operation Cleansweep) are to be taken up for action.
2. Establish taskforces for each category designated by the Mayor to construct an action plan, budget and timetable for implementation. Members of taskforces may initially be composed of summit attendees who participated in the corresponding breakout sessions.
3. Identify funding sources for projects and organizational responsibilities for each.
4. Incorporate the findings of the summit in to the city’s Master Planning process as it applies to tourism initiatives.

## **Initiatives**

1. Increase outreach to I-195/Rt.18 motorists. Install LED sign system covering the major arteries in the city: Interstate 195 East/West, Route 18 South.
2. Launch a local pride campaign to address civic morale, pride, and volunteerism (i.e. “Love Where You Live – New Bedford”).
3. Produce new cable access program featuring city history, cultural connections, ethnic communities, festivals, public buildings, religious architecture and nostalgic remembrances from citizens and community leaders, and tourism-related issues. Objective: Foster increased civic pride; encourage ambassadorship and positive awareness of New Bedford’s many assets.

4. Consider historical re-enactor volunteer program utilizing existing groups and resources, including the NB Preservation Society, Whaling Museum volunteer council, Civil War Weekend groups and Massachusetts Sons of the American Revolution.
5. Initiate plan and timetable for full restoration of Fort Taber.
6. Determine disposition of the New Bedford Lightship (WAL-536)
7. Downtown hotel: Consider multi-agency approach to site a national hotel chain with conference room facilities in the downtown.
8. Consider improvement projects in the north and south end districts to enhance historical and ethnic features (i.e. international district along Acushnet Avenue from Coggeshall Street to Lund's Corner, circa 1980).

[END OF EXECUTIVE SUMMARY]

## **Open Forum Brainstorming Ideas “In a Nut Shell”**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build hotel downtown (+4)</li> <li>2. LED message board for I-195W</li> <li>3. Address Street people problem (+1)</li> <li>4. Must feel safe on streets (+2)</li> <li>5. Civic pride, internal marketing</li> <li>6. Windblown trash &amp; sidewalk collections downtown</li> <li>7. Seafood market downtown</li> <li>8. Elm Street Garage improvements</li> <li>9. Market to MV day-trippers (+1)</li> <li>10. Market to Cape &amp; Isles (+1)</li> <li>11. Increase littering fines &amp; enforce (2)</li> <li>12. Inventory of overnight itineraries</li> <li>13. Adopt-A-Block Program</li> <li>14. Advertise to Cape Verdeans in Boston, Brockton and Taunton</li> <li>15. Package restaurants &amp; overnights</li> <li>16. Shared marketing campaign (+1)</li> <li>17. Resurrect the old trolleys (+1)</li> <li>18. Review parking &amp; meters</li> <li>19. Free shuttle during peak months</li> <li>20. Visitor services training</li> <li>21. Transportation &amp; parking study</li> <li>22. Slogan: Whales, Textiles &amp; Scallops</li> <li>23. Fairhaven Mills textile museum &amp; ctr.</li> <li>24. New maps &amp; printed map of bus routes</li> <li>25. Wider loop for ferry shuttle</li> <li>26. Traffic study of the one-way streets</li> <li>27. Place-based marketing focus</li> <li>28. Meter-feeders crackdown</li> <li>29. Meters in the historic district</li> <li>30. Billboards with a “money shot” of city</li> <li>31. Positive publicity</li> <li>32. “Take Five” billboard on I-195</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>33. Storefront artist project</li> <li>34. Food &amp; wine marketing focus</li> <li>35. Showcase Portuguese heritage</li> <li>36. Inscribed sidewalks with historical info</li> <li>37. Markers for defunct historic bldgs.</li> <li>38. Need to be a hub destination</li> <li>39. Hub &amp; spoke tours</li> <li>40. Address the empty storefronts</li> <li>41. Convention center in old NBI Bank</li> <li>42. Refurbish old NBHS auditorium</li> <li>43. A “Moby-Bus” duck boat/shuttle</li> <li>44. Campaign against litter &amp; trash</li> <li>45. New directional sign system (2)</li> <li>46. Restaurants create outdoor seating</li> <li>47. More venues for events</li> <li>48. Identify who is coming</li> <li>49. Change traffic flow on Johnny Cake</li> <li>50. Civic center (+1)</li> <li>51. More public parking</li> <li>52. A place to train young people</li> <li>53. Involve young people in tourism</li> <li>54. More restaurants</li> <li>55. Position as gateway to Buzzards Bay</li> <li>56. More retail and food</li> <li>57. Refurbish fire tower on I-195</li> <li>58. Scenic tours</li> <li>59. Involve Fishing industry in tourism</li> <li>60. Market on the pier</li> <li>61. Need large downtown anchor store</li> <li>62. Clean up Exit 15</li> <li>63. Reclaim the old New Bedford Hotel</li> <li>64. Establish Performing Arts High School</li> <li>65. Amplify NBSO music</li> <li>66. Positive message campaign</li> <li>67. Improve street lighting</li> <li>68. Performances on the ferry</li> <li>69. City image campaign (+1)</li> <li>70. Need the shoppers and the people</li> <li>71. Business-to-business tourism</li> </ol> |
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| 72. Clean up neglected parcels         | 82. Citizen Ambassador program |
| 73. Make waterfront more user friendly | 83. Immediate graffiti removal |
| 74. Recruit artists to NB              | 84. Sailboat rentals           |
| 75. More local advertising             | 85. Church tours               |
| 76. Onboard tours of fish boats        | 86. Add pushcarts downtown     |
| 77. Create a “Maritime Cove”           |                                |
| 78. Create a “come-back” campaign      |                                |
| 79. Safe pedestrian path to waterfront |                                |
| 80. Shuttle to Zoo & Ft. Taber Park    |                                |
| 81. Validated parking discounts        |                                |

## Summary of Brainstorming in Open Forum

### Open Forum – Marketing:

1. Visitors constantly ask about being able to tour fishing vessels and the lightship. They have come to visit the former whaling capital of the world and now America’s #1 commercial fishing port, however, they have no opportunity to board a vessel or learn hands-on about the industry that gave such success to New Bedford. Suggestion: a “Maritime Cove” where visitors can board fishing vessels, the lightship, and where visitors can learn more about our maritime history.
2. Consider a unified strategy to stay in touch with tourists that have visited here, or create a come-back campaign; look at successful gateway communities in the world; if New Bedford is willing to embrace the transitional nature of its residents and visitors—what would it take to make New Bedford “The Gateway Community to the World.” *Craig Baker, GNB Workforce Investment Board.*
3. The fast ferry to Martha’s Vineyard goes two ways. Vineyard tourists and residents should daytrip to New Bedford. *Ruth Smiler, Capt. Haskell’s B & B.*

### Open Forum – Visitor Support

1. Parking, shuttles, trolleys (June 15-Sept. 15), and directional signs are needed. Map 1: Expands basic “downtown.” Map 2: blocks to the west to include area where the B&Bs are located, as well as the County Street walking tours by the N.B. Preservation Society. Designate the walking tour area on appropriate maps. Map 2: A public transportation map (i.e. Martha’s Vineyard). Map 3: A transportation connection to Buttonwood Park Zoo and Ft. Taber with downtown included on Sunday with either SRTA or a special attractions loop. Map 4: Create pedestrian access/egress from upper floors of Elm St. Garage to the street. Map 5: Safe pedestrian access to the waterfront, outer State Pier and Fish Pier. *Chuck Smiler, Capt. Haskell’s B&B.*
2. Consider a jitney or small bus in the shape of a whale or elaborately decorated vehicle that is in itself an attraction, “getting there is half the fun.” This “Moby-Bus” would link the waterfront, Ft. Taber, The Zoo, North End, RJD, Fire Museum, etc. Think: Boston’s Duck Bus Boats. *Ruth Smiler, Capt. Haskell’s B & B.* (Note: this suggestion was implemented approximately six years ago as the “Catch the Whale” shuttle, utilizing a

ADA-complaint STRA vehicle. It had relatively low usage and was discontinued when federal funding was terminated).

3. Parking needs to be more accurately patrolled: marking tires, offering merchants a “discount” for garage use; “validated” parking for tourists to push the use of garages. Shuttles to auction/antiques, flea markets, etc. to get people shopping the entire city. Visitor center in ferry parking lot to allow people to look first. *Tee Bousquet, Phoebe’s*.
4. Pedestrian Signage/Highway Signage on I-195, Route 18 & Route 140 both ways. *Henry Bousquet, Cobblestone Restaurant*.
5. Consider a citizen ambassador program. Many groups could help train: Whaling Museum, National Park, RJD, etc.

### **Open Forum – “Crime & Grime”:**

1. Clean streets, sidewalks, improve garbage collection, parking enforcement and graffiti removal on buildings.
2. Every morning the streets and overpass need to be checked and cleaned. There are several self-guided tours available to visitors and there should be no hesitation in recommending them because of discarded liquor bottles, vomit, trash, etc.
3. Elm Street Garage - paint all walks and public areas with the help of artisans. Employ homeless and vagrants to clean up streetscapes. *Henry Bousquet, Cobblestone’s*.
4. Require a trash barrel system within National Park and downtown. Plastic bags, especially filled with any food waste, are attacked by seagulls are torn and then make a mess. *Chuck Smiler, Capt. Haskell’s B&B*.
5. Clean trash on streets, *Ruth Smiler, Capt. Haskell’s B&B*.

### **Open Forum – Asset Development:**

1. Establish a downtown seafood association market with daily fresh scallops and fish in a good-sized storefront (on Purchase Street?) in one of the new renovated buildings (like earlier unsuccessful attempts with Titleist). Also, market Portuguese sausage and baked goods. *Phil Beauregard, N.B. Port Society & Liz Isherwood, Moore & Isherwood*.
2. Consider an outdoor market on waterfront., or Centre Street (featuring seafood and scallops for sale). Transportation: shuttles to waterfront, and connecting to all attractions. Establish a new storefront rehab program for empty stores. Ernestina is a huge asset.
3. Sailboat rentals – examples are Community Boating operations in Fall River and Boston. Walking tours or designated open hours for significant churches. Grace Episcopal, First Unitarian, Pilgrim Methodist, St. Anthony of Padua, possibly regular organ concert series, open Sunday PM (after church services). Create a Purchase Street/Downtown

(William Street) retail festival marketplace. Fill the storefronts NOW with subsidized and start-up occupants. Add pushcarts. Revive Wing's Court entertainment. Schooner Ernestina – get it sailing again. *Chuck Smiler, Capt. Haskell's B&B.*

4. Fill Purchase Street with pushcart vendors free. Open to almost any kind of project (with very few limitations) One-month sign-ups with contracted organization to be open standard hours. Predictability and critical mass are essential! Long-term Event/conference venue (larger capacity than Whaling Museum). Restore of old NB High School auditorium on County Street. It is a beautiful space, great location, dependable condition...*Ruth Smiler, Capt. Haskell's B&B.*
5. A walking tour of ongoing renovation and of how New Bedford is fighting back against some tough historical odds is a good idea. We're not the only community with challenges. Let's use them in a positive way!
6. Consider the establishment of a High School of the Performing Arts  
Reclaim New Bedford hotel (for its original purpose) with community investment.  
*Henry Bousquet, Cobblestone Restaurant.*

### **Open Forum – “Parking Lot” of miscellaneous ideas:**

1. Long term: Downtown hotel/conference facility at old NB High School on County Street. Restore its auditorium for events, cultural as well as conventions and conferences, which will utilize the hotel. *Ruth Smiler, Capt. Haskell's B&B.*
2. Issue vouchers or show a receipt from a downtown business that will reduce the fee of a parking ticket, or a sticker, pre-paid that would allow for extended parking. *John Cox, Mediumstudio.*

### **Narrative of Summit Activities, 9 p.m.- 4 p.m.**

Craig Dutra, President, Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, facilitated the day's activities. He reviewed for the assembly the history leading up to the summit, noting it represented more than 10 weeks of planning by a dedicated group of 41 citizens to which Mayor Lang charged this task at the beginning of the New Year and his administration.

Mr. Dutra noted that the definition of “summit” means “a meeting of leaders and main stakeholders.” Consequently, it was planned with a more structured outcome, than the recent Great Ideas Forums. Thus, the summit is a dialogue that involves those organizations and individuals in the city of New Bedford most impacted by tourism, including museums, galleries, restaurants, arts communities and event organizers. This summit will determine a set of deliverables, which will impact New Bedford tourism growth. The summit committee has concluded that the plans and programs that emerge today will be the tasks for the stakeholders to follow through on as a community effort and not as a unilateral action plan for the municipal government.



The controlling idea guiding the committee in the planning of the summit was its Vision Statement: A critical engine for New Bedford's economic development. We will collectively improve the product, broaden the audience, strengthen the infrastructure and develop future assets.

It was agreed by the committee that this statement would be a guiding concept beyond the summit as well.

## Opening Remarks - Mayor Scott W. Lang [Extract]



Mayor Lang thanked Mr. Dutra for his overview. The Mayor emphasized a team effort approach; of everyone striving to embrace the idea of “the more the merrier.” The Mayor stressed that the more minds, the more energy applied to the challenges at hand, the more will get done for the betterment of the city. Mayor Lang related his excitement about the summit as it transfers the great ideas forum into action. It was encouraging to see the response to volunteerism for everything from Operation CleanSweep (commencing in April), to the tremendous outpouring of support of education efforts

including the SMILES program, and many other groups that are drawing on positive energy to move our city forward. He anticipated that this is a first formal effort to take ideas and turn them into an action plan.

“I will not intercede, but be here as one of the many minds observing, and perhaps making a comment or two. I am here because I am very excited. This is democracy in action. Each of you has a vested interest in our city, either as an obtrusive standpoint or from an actual business standpoint working together. Working together is a theme of this administration and this summit symbolizes it,” the Mayor said. Mayor noted several natural amenities of the city and harbor, calling on the assembly to imagine the opportunities. The upper harbor, the working waterfront, Pope’s Island, increased recreational boating, and the hurricane barrier as areas with many opportunities to grow tourism.

“I want NB to be a destination not a pass through. I want NB to be specifically a point on someone’s vacation itinerary that they spend a day or two in NB, go to the museums, enjoy the art culture and community, attend sporting events... We have everything in the world that people would want if we get it out and if we publicize it. The marketing committee here is obviously very important because I want people to understand that NB is not only a tourist destination, but NB is built and set up to accommodate tourism,” the Mayor said.

“Our history itself will draw people to NB, our festivals are again a built in-crowd and then we have an interstate that takes literally millions of people back and forth right in front of NB. Right now, it seems to me we do not give them in the way of publicity or outreach enough reason to stop and spend some time. When they come to the fast ferry parking lot, we need to be very, interactive and give them a reason to come downtown or come into our city and spend some money and enjoy the activities of our city while they are waiting for the boat today or take the boat the next day,” The Mayor said.

“I know there is a lot to work on. I know you envision the Ernestina as a major component in this. I see the Ernestina in two things; I see it as a museum when it sits in the inner harbor, a living museum; but then I see it as working vessel on a regular basis. What I envision is getting the Ernestina outside of the dike each day ready to sail, load her up, hoist the sails and off we go. One hour out, one hour back, some down time for the crew and then again. Now I can’t imagine if we market that correctly, why we would not get number of people who realize that they will get a once in a lifetime opportunity to enjoy the history and the actual ambiance and experience of sailing on that vessel. I think it is great resource, again we are very lucky with our location,” the Mayor said.

“We take things we have here for granted and sometimes we look at it with a jaundice eye. But we have great restaurants, great museums, we have a great arts community which is in its infancy stage and we need to build on all of that. Let me just tell you a couple of things I have in mind to help. First of all, I will help in any way I can that is number one. Any way the city can lend its resources we will in this effort. I see this as an economic development engine; there is no doubt about it. This is something that compliments everything else we are trying to do in this city. The other thing is we are working on very hard, and will complete before the tourism season starts, is plans for opening up a downtown sub-station....” the Mayor said.

“The other thing I can tell you is that I am willing to expand the city’s support of different downtown activities and festivals; if there are street days, or block parties built around some of our institutions that will create a festival atmosphere... have people book-in for a historic tour or whatever it might be, we will provide any of the city resources to do that. I am trying to have someone say the reason we need to go to NB on this particular day is because there is a specific event taking place there,” the Mayor said.

The Mayor concluded his remarks, saying “I will very anxiously await the outcome of today, watch it in progress, and I will read your report then will follow up and get this going. Thank you very much for all your hard work.”

## **Keynote: Dan Hunter, Executive Director Mass. Advocates for the Arts, Sciences and Humanities (MAASH)**

[Extract]

“ This is one of my many trips to NB and am very grateful to the Mayor, Senator Montigny and Anne Brengle for educating me about NB because of the exciting things happening here I have become an ex-officio ambassador for NB. I am from a relatively small town, Des Moines, and I have realized that sometimes when you are in town and dealing with the day-to-day plans and challenges, schedules and budgets, it is hard to have perspective about the accomplishments you have made.



“I feel NB has made some significant accomplishments in the past 14 or 15 years, and I feel even stronger that today through this summit you are on the cusp of new opportunities and a renaissance in NB. Because what you are doing here today, allowing new ideas, as somebody said to me last night ideas are bubbling up in NB, now is the time to come together assess your strengths, identify the challenges and there are a few, but the real key is right here in this room today. You are the leaders who are going to bring a renaissance to NB.

“...Perhaps you would not think of NB as a place that is a model for other communities in Mass. I often speak about NB and the AHA program, the historic buildings, about the opportunities NB has. In fact, there have been a couple of mayors brought to NB to see how it’s being done. So, you see, you are setting an example across the state and continuing in this great effort today. I applaud you for that.

“How do we think about our communities? I am an artist, songwriter and playwright and I have learned... to ask myself how do I see the world and see it in a way that no one else sees it. We think about this in education and we challenge our students to see the world in a new way and then have the responsibility to communicate that to an audience. How do you see the world and how do you see it in a way that no one else sees it? This also a community question and why you are here today. What is it that NB has that no other community has? NB is rich in these type of jewels: the Whaling Museum, RJD House, all the historic homes, the streets; it is an astonishing thing to me to be able to see a photo from the 1820’s and then stroll out on the street and stand in the same position where the photographer was and see the connection between the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have a legacy to build on here in NB.

“Now, we have an opportunity statewide for that same type of economic development, tourism and cultural tourism. The New England Council, which is a regional chamber of commerce, took a look at cultural tourism in the NE area and they estimated that cultural tourists spend 6.6 billion dollars a year in the NE region. These are people that come strictly for the heritage, arts and culture and they spend on an average two to three times more than the regular tourist. So this is our opportunity. And yet, as a state, are we capitalizing on that? In FY05, the state invested 7 million dollars in marketing tourism. They invested about the same amount of money supporting arts and culture. Does that seem like a lot for an industry that generated 150 million dollars in stateroom occupancy tax in FY02 and even with the decline in revenue still contributed \$89 million; with local option taxes, \$68.5 million dollars? Seven million dollars is not enough for the second largest industry in the state of Massachusetts.

“By comparison, have you seen the ads for Philadelphia? Next time you see an ad for Philadelphia, put your hand over Philadelphia and what are they marketing? They are marketing Massachusetts. They do not have the waterfront, but everything else they are marketing, NB has. They are marketing culture, heritage and the American tradition and its legacy, and they are marketing it in Europe and all across the USA.

“How much money does PA invest in marketing tourism? The same year we invested \$7 million, they invested \$33 million. And in the past 5 years, Philadelphia has gone, according to the Dept. of Commerce stats (which measures out-of country-arrivals), they went from being in 22<sup>nd</sup> place (while Boston was in 10<sup>th</sup> place), and they moved up to 12<sup>th</sup> place while Boston remained at 10<sup>th</sup> place. So we have an opportunity that we are not capitalizing on. And in fact, when you take a look at those figures and the \$7 million dollars, Massachusetts, is 35<sup>th</sup> in the nation, which puts us behind Illinois, behind Mississippi, behind South Dakota!

“We are not investing in this vital industry because our economy has changed in Massachusetts. We are not going back to an economy that manufacturers widgets. We are in an economy of ideas and innovation, where people want to find that creative spark. That is the opportunity for NB. You have so much going on here, a growing artist community, extraordinary architectural resources that don’t exist anywhere else, an exciting partnership that exists between Federal, State and city government. What you need is the commitment that comes from a passionate community and that is why you are here today. Because NB has the opportunity to grow, the

only thing holding you back is your imagination and your commitment. With those two together, you are going to see an astonishing renaissance, I believe, in NB.

“Because you have four major things that answer that question: ...What can I see in New Bedford that I can't see anywhere else? First, you have diversity, a wellspring of creativity. Remember, the tourists ask: What can I see in New Bedford that I can't see at home? So you have diversity that is celebrated through your great festivals and provides bonds between different cultures because it is easier to understand someone when we enter through their cultural experience of music, art, food, dance and theater. Second you have architecture. It is beautiful and it exists nowhere else in such a plethora of styles; and of course, the history and legacy. When you look at the architecture in NB and you think about how it was built and what it meant to those people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it says something very strongly to me. When you see the stonework, the names that are carved and the dates that it was built... 1889... that says that the people that built that building were doing something vital and important and they wanted to make a mark. Not just for the year 1889, but for the year 1909, 1999 and 2099. These building were built to last because when they thought about what they were building, it wasn't just for the budget of FY07, they were thinking about their legacy.

‘This again is one of the challenges you have in NB. Capitalize on that legacy. Go back to that tradition of people investing time in their community and realize that what you are doing today will be vital in 2 years, 3 years, 10 years, 100 years, and for the grandchildren for these children that were out here.

“The other thing you have that is great is this culture for artists. When you become a center for artists, you launch a renaissance in the neighborhoods. I hate to bring up another city in Massachusetts, the city of Lowell, a mill town that had lots of abandoned warehouses and had a lot of crime in the downtown area and gang problems. Many people were unwilling to go downtown for fear of safety. They took a look at these abandoned warehouses and instead of tearing them down they opened them up to artist housing, low-cost artist live/workspaces. You had a few artists move in, then a coffee shop, gallery, restaurant and bookstore. In five years, they created a downtown market for these lofts and condos. There are now 2,000 lofts and condos in downtown Lowell, some of them selling for as much as a half a million dollars, the highest one selling for eight-hundred thousand dollars. This in downtown Lowell, in a part of town no one would go. We have the opportunity; artists help revitalize neighborhoods in addition to building on the quality of life.

“I want to come back many times to NB to help you in this endeavor and bring my children down here and take a look around. The one thing I would like to say to you: if you look at the state room occupancy tax and saw how quickly it went down from 2002 (cut almost 1/3 from \$150 million to \$89 million), I want to recognize you cannot turn tourism revenue in a year. You have to be committed. It takes time to build up brand and awareness. So if you come to the end of the first year with your action plan, and the revenue hasn't risen don't be discouraged. It takes time.

“Also, I urge you to be consistent; stick with your plan because it takes a long time for the public to accept and learn something. It's taken a while, I believe, for NB to realize what it's own assets were. Do you realize that maybe fourteen years ago about 40 thousand people would come to this museum at a time? And I would wager that many of you, if I or Mayor Lang or Senator Montigny stood here fourteen years ago and said NB is going to become a cultural destination spot, I bet you would have thought Acme Liquors had delivered early! That is changing. It takes time. So you need to work together and stick with the plan. Identify what NB's assets are and continually hammer it home.

“I have been told sometimes that I am too repetitive on the stump, and so I ask how many times have you seen a Coca-Cola commercial in your life. Repetition and consistency... Coca-Cola is the most identified English word on the planet. So if Coca-Cola with all its resources can do that, NB has to be consistent and repetitive. Now how can you do that with very little money? This is why this summit is so important. You have to have imagination. Part of that key is to tie into press angles. What makes NB different? What is the news angle? And already you are doing things differently from other communities. I can help you spread the word, and Senator Montigny can help spread the word, and your legislative delegation and congressmen. But try to be imaginative and identify those areas where you are doing things that are different.

“The Schooner Ernestina is a good one. No other community has that. Try to use the press when you have a small amount of money. I want to leave you with this list of NB attractions from today’s packet: Don’t take them for granted! They are fundamental to your growth in tourism. I believe that what we are seeing here today is a vital collaboration between folks who have marketed tourism, folks who are devoted to arts & culture, and city, state and federal government. It is with that collaboration that you are going to be able to create the energy, the passion and the commitment to really make a difference in this community. I want to applaud you for your great efforts here, I want to thank Mayor Lang for his efforts and Senator Montigny and I want to leave you with this last statement. As you look at this community, ask yourself what are we seeing here that no one else in the world sees, and you will have a long list. Good luck to you and let me know how I can be of help to you.”

## **Alfred H. Saulniers**

### **Basic Data on Travel & Tourism in Massachusetts, Bristol County and New Bedford [Extract without graphics]**

[Intro: Alfred H. Saulniers, a member of the summit committee, previously taught economics/presentation graphics in Peru, Texas, and Morocco. He and his wife Suzanne, own and operate the Orchard Street Manor Bed & Breakfast in NB]

### **A comparison of Bristol County and Massachusetts travel / New Bedford Travel / Tourism Issues:**



When do people visit New Bedford?  
Where do they go when they come here?  
Who visits NB?  
Where do they come from?  
What is the current problem?  
What are the future prospects?

Comparison of Bristol County and Massachusetts over a 5-year period:

Domestic travel expenditure went up 17.3% in Bristol County; only 0.1% in Mass.  
Domestic travel generated payroll went up 26.5% in Bristol County, only 7.8% in Mass.  
Domestic travel generated total employment went up 9% in Bristol County, down 4.7% in Mass.  
Tax revenue for state government: up 19.2% in Bristol County, 9.2% in Mass.

Tax revenue for local government: up 26% in Bristol County, 14% in Mass.  
The message is: the situation is a lot better and improving a lot faster in Bristol County than it is in the rest of Massachusetts.

### When do people visit New Bedford?

There are two ways of answering the question:

*First, What time of year do they come* – that economists call Seasonal variation – For New Bedford, - three different patterns:

The first peak is right in the middle of the summer because of the festivals and feasts. It marks the downtown institutions.

The second: a more plateau-type development; appears as the further away you move from the downtown area, the more your tourists equal out over the course of the year. The zoo, from April to August, is fairly constant - rising to April, falling after August. The same pattern holds for the R-J-D House. Third: The Art Museum has a stable yearly pattern with only a slight variation in the summer, but what marks the Art Museum is those two dips in May and September, when, because it does not rely on a permanent collection, it must close to change exhibits

### The second “When” examines What days of the week do people visit New Bedford?

The National Park Service gathered day-of-week information over a four-year period. It shows that visitors overwhelmingly come on the weekends: 88% more on Saturday and 44% more on Sunday than on the average weekday. A question we need to ask ourselves is what else is there to interest our visitors downtown on Saturday and Sunday.

### Where do people go in New Bedford?

The two key fixed NB destinations are the Buttonwood Park Zoo and NB Whaling Museum, followed by the NPS Visitor Center and the Waterfront Visitor Center. After that, the Fire Museum, which is only open from July 4<sup>th</sup> to Labor Day, Ft Tabor Military Museum and NB Art Museum. Other episodic destinations include the various feasts and festivals.

### Who Comes To New Bedford?

The Whaling Museum maintains excellent demographics...[showing] the majority of adults and seniors has dropped over the last five years, but has been filled in by school groups, children and students.

### Where Do They Come From?

This information provided by the Zoo indicates 77% of tourists from April to August 2005 visited from less than 35 miles away from NB. The Whaling Museum has a broader demographic area, but an overwhelming 68.8% of the tourists came from New England. Looking in more detail, Massachusetts provided 4/5<sup>th</sup> of those, in even more detail, 80% of them came from Southeastern Massachusetts.

### What are future prospects? A quick comparison of January 2006 data with the same indicators for 2005 is instructive

First, the number of visitors the MA Visitor Center on I-95 in Swansea rose 19% over 2005 to the highest ever level. These are electronic eyes, not humans counting with a clicker. Second,

according to the website of the Southeastern Mass. Convention and Visitors Bureau, web visitors are up 138% and, web pages up sent to those visitors up over 150% from 2005. Third, January attendance is up at the Zoo is 150% up over last year. Fourth, Whaling Museum numbers in 2006 are up across the board for all demographic groups. Why? Average Jan. temperatures in NB in January 2005 were much colder than this year. Also, gasoline prices increased last year after a long upward trend; this year's January increase was after a last year's peak, which made travel more expensive last summer than it does now.

## **Arthur Motta – City tourism office overview**

“The outcome, ideas and strategies that will be identified today will go into how the city, as a partner with our many attractions and event organizations, determines how we use these resources we do have to promote the city as a partner. We operate as a destination marketing office, like an in-house agency. We wish we had money to use experts like advertising agencies, but we do not currently.

“We help to promote cultural heritage tourism to the city. We partner with all the major organizations and event organizers and we support their individual marketing efforts. Each of them has their own marketing budgets, specific missions and agendas. We provide critical-mass advertising (everyone on one page), mostly in print media. We also operate the Waterfront Visitor Center, which now offers a beautiful new exhibit, courtesy of the National Park Service. It focuses on the building's history, and includes the original fish auction board, and an 11-minute interpretive film on the fishery and port operations. It is a first-rate exhibit design by National Park Service's Harpers Ferry Design Center.



“When you look at [the tourism statistics just presented] the impact after 9/11 to the city's marketing budget for charges and services (which includes advertising and printing) has seen significant declines. In six fiscal years, these line items have been reduced by 73%. The biggest [reduction] was the first one, right after 9/11.

FY 2001 to FY 2002 = -41%  
FY 2002 to FY 2003 = -38%  
FY 2003 to FY 2004 = -40%  
FY 2004 to FY 2005 = -04%  
FY 2005 to FY 2006 = +21%

We are currently determining the budget for FY06 to FY07. We place these destination ads in major publications where and we produce them in-house. We place them in as many specific tourist media magazines that we can including the Massachusetts Getaway Guide, the Commonwealth's official guide for tourism, with more than 1.5 million circulation; SE Mass. Explorer Guide, Cape Cod Life, Cape Cod Arts, Yankee Travel Guide, ArtNow Gallery Guide, New England Group Tour Planner, Mass. Spring Tourism NP Insert going to 1.5 million households via NP inserts in the Boston Globe, NY Times, Berkshire Eagle, etc. We also do in-room hotel ads in guest books in hotel rooms in across southern New England: We are covered in the seven regional chains in NB, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Westport, Somerset, Seekonk, Raynham and Providence representing 1,153 rooms with average annual room occupancy of 505, 014. We

run in full-page ads in the RI Guest Guide and in the SE Mass. Guest Guide, which that represents coverage in an additional 6300 rooms.

“We do, as funding allows, street banner programs. They are typically themed in cultural, historical, commemorative, maritime subjects, and seasonal themes. We look for partnerships in with institutions and corporations to fund production of future products

“The I-195 Paul Revere Sign Message Sign is operated by our office. SERPEDD’s figures indicate that 48,500 vehicles daily (annualized) pass this sign and 15,622,000 vehicles are annually exposed. [Eastbound-only visibility represents a maximum exposure of 7,811,000 vehicles.] This gives you an idea of how visible, and thus how valuable, is NB’s interstate corridor, it exits and the land around them. The sign transmits on average 4.5 messages about city events per day, 20-hours/per day, represents approximately 1,600 city messages annually.

“We do what we can with the funding we have to outreach to the Ferry Terminal. We operate a large NB brochure kiosk in ferry lobby center. We have installed large format display graphics in the lobby of all major city attractions and we display transit graphics of city attractions in the ferry shuttles buses as well as brochures on each bus.

Additional services include:

- Brochure & poster production and distribution
- Tradeshow participation
- Customized information packets
- City tourism website (in 8 languages)
- Direct mail advertising and response
- Toll-free information line
- School group tours
- Cruise ship reception and assistance
- Group tour marketing and reception
- Calendar of Events (Summer and Holiday)
- Information kiosks
- Co-op marketing with state and county tourism
- Historical costumed guide tours and presentations
- Arts related co-operative marketing

“We have had some luck in attracting international film and television, including documentaries about NB, produced by several international groups: the BBC, History Channel, Discovery Channel, TV Japan, Spanish Public Television, PBS, and, of course, “Passionada,” an \$8 million production filmed mostly in the city.

“The 2006 season is looking very busy, and if weather and gasoline prices hold, we expect to see growth. The following is some of the upcoming events: Brooklawn SpringFest, Day of Portugal, Hazelwood Summer Fair, Summerfest, Whaling City Festival, Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, Civil War Weekend, Working Waterfront Festival, 14 Parish & Ethnic Festivals, and a top-notch lineup at the Z, including the Festival Theatre’s CATS, and the Symphony Orchestra's season.

**Celeste Bernardo, Superintendent, New Bedford Whaling NHP**  
**Visitation trends; putting it context**

**Superintendent Bernardo reviewed a survey of 56 area museums that circulate information through museum membership. This information is shared and tabulated.**

“What are the trends? Are there increasing or decreasing trends in visitation? For example, in 2001, [at] museums, attractions, zoos, cultural institutions, we saw that there was a 6% decrease in visitation, with an 11% increase in terms of the historical park visitation. In 2002 the NB National Park had an increase of 14% and a 0% change in terms of all of these area museums. In 2003, visitation dropped 5% across all the museums; our National Park’s visitation dropped 3%.

“In 2004, there was increase of 3% in the NB National Park and [visitation] flat-lined at the other museums. In 2005, visitation was down, the NB National Park was down 8%, where the rest [where] 1% down. But we must realize there was no visitation numbers from the Schooner Ernestina, which was a substantial loss to the Park figures. The federal government does share public information in terms of visitor stats for any National Park. The Cape Cod National Seashore has had a continual decline from 2000 to 2005. New Bedford’s National Park stayed pretty close in terms of visitation, compared to some of the other parks displayed. Boston had been on a steady decline, but did go up the past two years. Lowell has gone up and down. Salem had a lower year this past year.



“When you are looking for total stats for the park service, they do not count visitors, they count visits. Each site is visited and is added together to come to those totals. Minutemen count cars that are on the road. When there is a festival such as in Lowell, almost half of their visitation is derived from [one event] their “Folk Music Fest.” Trend visitation has been declining and has been going on in the region, and it’s something to be aware of. How are we unique, what do we have here that no one else has? We need to tie into that and really market it.

## **Brainstorming Ideas – Open Forum Narratives**

[INTRO.] Mr. Dutra explained the ground rules for this segment of the program, in which the Rules of Brainstorming apply to generate spontaneous ideas:

- Every idea is valid
- No critiquing of ideas
- No limits on wild ideas
- Quantity is more desirable than quality
- Piggybacking on ideas is encouraged
- Be solution-oriented, and constructive
- Be quick and concise



Ideas were organized under four main topics: Marketing, Visitor Support, Asset Development, and Crime/Grime. Miscellaneous ideas were also recorded. Each category would become the basis for discussion in the afternoon breakout groups.

Mark Hess, Hall/Keen Management: In the reviewing the tourism data, one thing I did not see here was discussion on overnight stays in NB. A visitor who stays overnight contributes a factor of three, four, five [times] in terms of what they spend versus a day-tripper. I think it is very important for NB to **establish an inventory of overnight opportunities**. You are not going to generate the same dollars unless the tourist spends the night. That ties, obviously, with having something for the tourist to do and have that delivered to them, spoon-fed through marketing. Creating overnight opportunities is a key, whether it be done with a city campaign to put in more B&Bs, put a directory together as a media way, or major overnight destination as a **hotel in the downtown. Market to day-trippers to the Vineyard**, to stay here as cost-effective, and take advantage of the fast ferry.

Peggi Medeiros, WHALE: The immediate idea is crime and grime. The **Elm Street Garage** is where I park everyday. The staff is great but the garage is a disaster. Supposedly, the city got a large grant to clean it up. The roof is leaking and there are piles of water everywhere and it is a total disaster. Also, there is going to be a sweep of the whole city, neighborhood by neighborhood, and I think we should think about an **Adopt-A-Block [program]** and keep clean what's in front of your building.

Thomas Grace, ACCESS Art Corp.: In 1994 we did a three-day celebration and we utilized the Paul Revere Sign. It is a very good sign but it only shows one way [I-195E], and perhaps we could **get a second [message board] for the other way [I-195W]**. We had a storyteller at 10AM, we thought we were going to get a weak audience, but a bus tour with about 80 people showed up who viewed the sign. The other idea I have is adding to the list of magazines and newspapers.



There are a lot of **Cape Verdeans [publications] in Boston, Brockton, and Taunton** and they have these little community magazines and maybe we could utilize them.

Katherine Knowles, Zeiterion Theatre: Between the NB Symphony, Zeiterion, and NB Festival Theatre: we will bring up to 80,000 people to NB this year. And it would be very interesting to see with the statistics you have what the tie-in would be in terms of attendance and restaurants. Also, what the first gentlemen said about **packaging restaurants, overnights**, other activities and galleries; the whole idea of a **shared marketing campaign** could have a major impact.

Donna Motta, Downtown New Bedford, Inc. A consideration for visitor support is to **resurrect the trolleys**.

Ellissa Paquette of CALICO: That is a great idea about the trolleys. I also just want to say that **downtown parking and the parking meters** can be an issue for people shopping.

Larry Roy, NB Fire Museum: I would like to see a **shuttle during the peak months** of summer from July 5<sup>th</sup> to Labor Day going from the visitor center to the sites such as the fire museum, the zoo and come back to the visitor center and stop for fifteen minutes. We had trolley cars for years, but they would not stop. Pick up the tourists at the visitor center, take them to a museum

and wait fifteen minutes for them to come back out. An organized shuttle like they have at Harper's Ferry that has a bus that takes people all day long.

Theresa Coish, New Bedford Free Public Library: I think people like to walk around and explore and that's how they spend their tourism dollars, but they **need to feel safe on the streets** and they don't need to incur experience negatives that is not going to bring them back. Law enforcement could be more pro-active in addressing things, because 95% of what happens is predictable and could be addressed before it happens.

Milton P. George, Spinner Publications, Inc.: I would like to suggest programs to familiarize the contact people with tourists with hotels, motels, B&Bs, restaurants to become familiar with all the products NB has, and answer all the questions of the visitors [**i.e. visitor services training**]. The more they know, the more they can help.

John Szymanski, Whaling City Expeditions: For a long time we have been thinking about what we need is a comprehensive **transportation and parking study**, so that we can have regular scheduled routes.



Gerard Bourassa, Bourassa Hardware: We have owned our hardware store since 1924, and before that, my grandfather and great-grandfather were involved in the textile industry. New Bedford was not only a great whaling center but also a great textile center. We should not only market our whaling industry, but also our textile heritage. Maybe we could form a **new nickname for NB** that could be

*“City of Whaling, Textiles & Scallops”* instead of just the whaling city. Or you might want to consider preserving some of our mills, especially **Fairhaven Mills #4, as a textile museum or cultural center**. We could also market our city as a *“stew of humanity,”* because we have so many different cultures among us. We have heroes from NB including Frederick Douglass, Herman Melville and Louis Hine, a child labor advocate, and also a great photojournalist. Some of his work led to the Child Reform Act of 1916. I think we should promote him a bit more, perhaps rename the Riverside Park the Louis W. Hine Park.

Chuck Smiler, Capt. Haskell's Octagon House B&B: Under “Visitor Support,” I would like to see **a map**, the basic designation map of the downtown and park area extended two blocks to the west to include the four B&Bs that actually exist, all of which are off the map presently. We have to continually explain to our guests in order to get on the map, they have to walk two blocks this way or that way. It should also include the Preservation Society's walking tour west of County Street featuring some of the major residential architecture in this city. And along that line, maybe the city map should have a watermark of these walking tours. Also there should be a **transportation map**, or **bus map of the bus routes**. I would second the comment that was made about a **wider loop shuttle**, which would connect the Zoo, Ft. Taber military museum and fire museum so that people can get easily to these. We should be **market to Cape and Martha's Vineyard** that are either residents or visiting there, to day-trip to NB and make it easy for them to get off the ferry and to get to places.

Yvonne Drayton, YWCA of Southeastern Mass.: We are located on the corner of So. Sixth and School streets, both of which are one-way streets. In support of the concerns about parking and transportation, I think that we would benefit greatly from a **traffic study of the one-way streets** in this city. We spend a lot of time telling people how to get there from here because of these streets. It would benefit the city not only for visitors, but also for local people and businesses.

Deb Hynes, Tourism/Marketing Office:

On the subject of accommodations, I think it is key that we get a **downtown hotel**. I do not stand alone; it is not an original idea and I have thought this parallel over with Arthur Motta. I am not a developer. The NBIS would make a great hotel, with an overpass to the Zeiterion, and create shops in that area. It is the key, the stumbling block to putting NB on the map.

Anne Louro, City Preservation Planner: Maybe we should expand our tourism efforts [to] more of a **place-based city [marketing focus]** than attraction-based, because we have a wide breath of history, culture and architecture. Our attractions are immense and fabulous, but we have so much more to offer that I do not think we have investigated and marketed as well as we can. The other thing I want to mention is that part of our marketing strategy also has to go to **civic pride, our internal marketing**. The general public does not appreciate what we have. They don't think we are doing a good enough job marketing to the residents of this city. If we are creating a vision of tourism that is going to attract tourists, we need to attract our own residents. Place-based tourism is essential. I am going to compare us to Newport. People go to Newport because of the mansions; people come to NB to go to the Whaling Museum. They are going to spend the whole day in Newport; they have culture, neighborhoods, and beaches. Place-based.

Peter Blatchford, NB Port Society: I am the immediate past-president of the NB Port Society. [The attraction sheet in the conference folder] does not [contain] the Seamen's Bethel that was built in 1832, or the Mariners Home built in 1700'. We have our president of the ladies branch here (Lee Heald) and two past-presidents of the Port Society. We are kind of taken for granted. More emphasis should be put on the Port Society, the Seamen's Bethel and the Mariners Home. [Note: Mr. Dutra then clarified that attraction sheet to which Mr. Blatchford referred was a sampling, not an inclusive list.]

Philip Beauregard, NB Port Society: I am the first vice-president of the Port Society. I would echo Mr. Blatchford's comments, which is really one of little NB's prizes and a wonderful organization. Little, but good quality and should not be forgotten. It could also serve as an absolute draw for the city and should be used more. The other comment is my office is at the Robeson House on William St. I have a lot of difficulty understanding the civil spirit of the all day-parkers, not so much the **meter-feeders**. On our block, we have 15 meters with two hours each on them. Shame on the people who work in offices and intentionally park there all day long. Where there are no meters for the most part, there is no enforcement. We have made efforts time and again to try to press officials, but nothing happens. It is not the most serious problem downtown, but especially in the area of the Whaling Museum and the Seamen's Bethel, people should not be exploiting this for the sake of saving \$20 or \$30 a month in a parking garage. I think the solution is enforcement. You hate to see **meters in the historic district**, but if that's the only way it is going to be enforced, then that is the way it should be. Either the mayor who has a lot of other things to do would start doing some serious enforcement. New Bedford, among other things, has Titlest golf balls and the seafood industry, why don't we have something like eastern Pennsylvania that



has a Crayola factory that has been a prime draw. An extreme example of this is Hershey, Pennsylvania. Hershey has the entire town and that is what Hershey is all about. Why can't we have something, if it takes city government or by some organization, put this together and have a **seafood market downtown** with fresh seafood. Not only will you get more business from the surrounding area, but it could also be a tourist draw. Something that is prominently displayed, with fresh scallops and fish, and I feel would be an absolute winner. The final thing I'd like to say in the category of grime, on windy mornings like today, **garbage is blown** everywhere downtown and there should be a little better control of it. Government or somebody should take control of this.

Peter Fairfax, NB Port Society: I want to mention is one thing I like about coming to NB is the Paul Revere Sign. But for most people, Paul Revere riding a horse in NB does not make sense. Why don't we have a **sign that shows whales, or fishing** or something like that would entice people to come to NB? The other thing I don't notice is that Standard-Times is listed as an asset. I must say that from a point of view of the Port Society the Standard-Times has not been an asset. Not only to us, but to a lot of organizations mentioned in this program today. I think it's about time that they **write articles that are favorable** to all of these organizations we are talking about today. I don't know if they are here today, I hope they are. I know that from the point of view of the Port Society, for the last 8 or 10 years the only things they have focused on are our weaknesses that have been colored incorrectly. There are a lot of wonderful things to say, not just about the Port Society but all our museums, art galleries and organizations. I think it's time the Standard-Times designate somebody to pick an organization and every week write something telling us what we have. Not what we have that we do not like; but we have and what we do like about it.

Orren Robbins, Downtown New Bedford Inc: I have been president of DNB, Inc. for 12 years and I understand some of the issues we have been speaking about today. The first thing I want to talk about is crime & grime. I believe there is \$250 fine for feeding the pigeons and disposing of garbage on the streets in downtown NB. I think no one has ever been fined for doing this. My suggestion is to have an intense campaign with a **\$25, \$30 or \$40 fine** and make it stick. My next suggestion is a traffic issue – I gave Arthur Motta a sample of what might appear on a sign out on the highway. The downtown heart of NB is less than 5 minutes off the interstate with 115 million cars going by, and I think if we had a [advertising] **campaign to “Take Five,” come off the highway.** *Take* a taste of our food, *take* a look at our museums & art galleries, and *take* 5 minutes. I am sure they would come and it would work.

Ann Wolfe, 123 Sawtooth, LLC: Pittsfield, MA, had a successful **storefront artist project**, where vacant storefronts that didn't look so good were utilized. It's a great way to showcase the vacant space for the owners and the local artwork. I also think this area could do well to **focus on food & wine.** The **Portuguese heritage here could be showcased.** Also, there was a public arts project in Berkley Ca. where they had **stone pavers inscribed with text** pointing out points in their local history.

Cynthia Yoken, UMASS Dartmouth Center For Jewish Studies: I am interested in history something that Dan Hunter said about building in NB. I did a brochure on Jewish NB. A lot of the buildings are not here anymore, and I think it would be beneficial if we had **signs to identify where these historic buildings once stood.** Route 18 was Water Street, which was a very popular place for the Jewish, French and Portuguese immigrants and are not here anymore. I think it would be useful to have signs indicating where it once stood and it would help marketing to the tourists. The brochure I did was very popular and it's continuing to be.

Pam Cole, Church Women United: One of the things our organization does is provide warm bodies to attend cultural events. As far as Saturday night tourism goes, we had an event on a Saturday night here in the Whaling Museum and we were told it was one of the first times the museum was filled to capacity on that night. We had a speaker who played Paul Revere and another who portrayed Rachel Revere, visit the Unitarian Church because that is the church they would have attended if they lived here. We had a Civil War re-enactment service for the Civil War Weekend [and] celebrated the church where Henry Martin Robert attended. In terms of asset development, we stand ready to attend events and in period costumes of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In terms of marketing, **we need to be a hub destination**. A few years ago, I put together a freedom-of-religion tour suitable for all ages. When we mention Philadelphia, the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, one of the men that are on the Bicentennial web page of the Constitution was Samuel West, who was the first pastor of this city and one of the first to speak about the separation of church and state. People in this city do not know about his contribution. We have this **hub & spoke tour** designed; we are just waiting for someone to try it as a pilot project. We do not have a **downtown hotel**, so it is difficult to have these groups come here without a downtown hotel to stay. The first civil rights case was tried here. Quaker assessors sued Massachusetts and won in the courts in England. These are all things we could do as a hub. We are just looking for someone to partner with us.

Jeff Pontiff, Whaling City Expeditions/Jeff Pontiff Real Estate: Whaling City Expeditions has been working on some ideas that might incorporate with some of the ideas we are hearing today and I am very excited about that. I am also a real estate broker downtown here with about 40,000 square feet of empty storefronts and offices I am trying to market. I am looking forward to attending the breakout session to **address the empty storefronts**. If you are not going to attend this session, please contact me. I am looking for ideas for some exciting ways to fill these storefronts. A particular thing I would like to see, if we are going to declare tourism is an industry, I would like to see Sheila Martines-Pina and Arthur Motta on the Economic Development Council. I would ask the see the president of DNB, Inc. but have since added that position to the Council.

Ruth Smiler, Capt. Haskell's Octagon House B&B: I have three comments I would like to make. One is on the **hotel** in terms of room space, but [also] a **convention center in the old Sovereign Bank (NBIS) Building**. For example, when we had the Melville/Douglass Conference last year or a draw of a very large event, it would be crucial and good for everyone, no matter how you participate in the life of the city. It would be nice to have a venue with more seating than this auditorium for those types of events. **[Refurbish for public use the old NBHS auditorium]:** I have had the honor and privilege of working on a project with the NB School Dept and I have been in that County Street building lately and every time I walk by that fabulous huge auditorium, which is in deplorable shape, near the downtown area, easy to get to and in terrible condition. Isn't there something we could do to use that space for a convention venue site? Second, people are talking about a bus making stops at Ft. Taber, The Zoo, Fire Museum and all these different places. You know that old thing about getting there is half the fun. What about a jitney or small bus in the shape of a whale or **a Moby-bus like the duck boats** so when you come to NB, everyone will want to ride it. It could be a symbol of the city. It is in itself a draw. It will integrate all the different venues. The third thing I want to talk about is crime and grime. I live within walking distance of downtown, and when I walk down, whether it is windy or not, I see people using pedestrian garbage containers to put their large trash bags in; this is outrageous. The city should be enforcing this and it should not be allowed. Also, I would like to address the **finest for littering** and whether they should be high or low. A number of years ago because there was a lot dog poop complaints in New York City, they announced a very high fine for not "pooper-scooping." The Police Dept. was adding staff specifically to fine these people \$350 for not

picking up the poop. What they neglected to mention to the public was that they hired one policeman, but within the two months of the campaign, they decreased by some 75% the amount of poop on the sidewalks. I am not sure if a high big visibility **campaign for trash** that says we have members of the police dept. and trash patrol people out patrolling the city.

Robert Luongo, NB Economic Development Council: Jeff Pontiff made a good suggestion about getting Arthur Motta and Sheila Martines Pina on the economic development council. Two issues: **signage system** to get people into the city and to the various venues within the city. Not just for tourists, but people who use our court systems and other cultural and civic buildings. There is **no directional system** to get people to these places. The second thing I would like to see is to encourage **restaurants to create outdoor seating**. There would have to be standards implemented for consistency with the furniture and umbrellas. We would not want kitchen tables out there. Create an ordinance that would encourage restaurants to move dining outdoors during the good months and set some standards.

Derek Santos, NB Whaling NHP: New Bedford's National Park was just awarded funding to do the sign system in 2006 that Mr. Luongo just talked about.

Jono Billings, Cuttyhunk Ferry Co: I represent one of the many companies on State Pier that run a ferryboat out to the Elizabeth Islands and particularly Cuttyhunk Island and I want to point out to the local businesses, that in a given year, easily 25,000 people go out to Cuttyhunk and therefore pass through NB. [**Market to ferry passengers**] These people are interested in the arts, eating, rock climbing and whatever venue is available. I would like to point out that I see a lot of people who do not stop in NB; they simply park here and move on; not just to the Vineyard, but the Elizabeth Islands as well. They are in our backyard and a great draw with seal-watching and lighthouse tours. It is really a great opportunity for local business, and all of us that go outside the harbor, will be more than happy to make NB successful.

Rob Suddoth: I have a couple things: We have a parking problem in NB, but one of our venues is the parking lot at Custom House Square, where [when] we have events, we take parking away. We need **more venues for events**. We need to look at events that will bring in more money. We could do regattas, put boats very quickly in the water at Ft. Taber and it is a good place to have sailing. One thing I learned in marketing called "perfuming up the pig." We have a challenge in marketing the city, what I call "Passionada-izing" the city. Passionada did a great job in highlighting the city and I think we need to continue doing things like that.

Donald Moss, Ft. Taber Historical Assoc: The Ft. Taber Military Museum is kind of the new kid on the block. We have had over 5,000 visitors, though. What I would like to see is to include our museum in AHA Night; maybe **a trolley** in the good weather could bring the people from downtown to the museum.

Willi Bank, formerly of Schooner Ernestina: I live downtown, in the south central area and really like it. I want to applaud the AHA night that went on last night. It was great to come out and enjoy the downtown. I like NB the way it is; I do not think it's a pig, it is gritty and a working waterfront that is very unique, and I was very proud to be part of it for a while.

Mike Yorston, West Marine: I have been active on the waterfront for about 30 years. When you talk about tourism you talk about sales. We want people to come here and spend money. You need to **identify who is coming** here and spending money and how we can get that money out of their pockets while they are here. Are the boaters? Or the mega-yachts? Or is it the family man

with his wife and kids that are coming? We need to find out how much are they spending while they are here and then we could market accordingly to those people.

John Tiernan, Martha's Vineyard Fast Ferry: I am a fifth generation Martha's Vineyard resident and let me say we need **more marketing on the Vineyard**. We do not have a big brother. We do not consider Cape Cod our big brother. New Bedford, as you know, built Martha's Vineyard and that's not pressed enough. Every islander gets a free newspaper in his or her post office box daily, but there is nothing about New Bedford. We may only have 17,000 year round residents, but we have 150,000 in the summer. These people ask us daily what do to, and I would gladly send them on a day trip to New Bedford. You have a tremendous amount of things to do. You have a great presentation at the state pier, but you have nothing on the island. We need NB marketing on the island.

Cliff Roderiques, NPS Volunteer & State Pier traffic director at the Fast Ferry: The shuttle that comes from the "Whale's Tooth" Parking lot now takes a detour through the center of NB. The detour goes up Second St. heading north and what do they see? A closed doghouse restaurant, an empty parking lot and the back of the Seamen's Bethel. If we **change the traffic flow on Johnny Cake Hill** heading north instead of south, they would instead see at least three major buildings from the front. And also change Water Street or Second Street going one-way heading north or south from Elm to Union St. Maybe we would get a few more tourists from the ferryboat.

Chuck Dade, Dade Development: First of all, a couple of piggyback thoughts: The Vineyard idea... if we could get some of the New Bedford B&Bs to partner with some of the ones on the Vineyard, you could set up tours where they stop and move on. In new real estate development, now people are afraid of new venues, such as how will the Orpheum affect the Zeiterion. In terms of a hotel, I think about multiple hotels. In terms of venues, I think of multiple venues. We do **need a downtown hotel**, but I think we should think in terms of a campus, like a campus to host big events. I had a vision of Fairhaven Mills site as a NB hotel at Fairhaven Mills with a Hines museum section, an even larger venue than anything we have seen. It would be nice to be able to host large events, with bigger talent and attracting people from 75 miles away on a regular basis. They could come here to see this venue and stay there at a Hyatt or large-scale hotel. We **need a civic center**. If you want to get married or have a high school reunion, where do you go? To Dartmouth or Acushnet? What do we have in NB? We need a decent size site and Fairhaven Mills is an open canvas, which is a possibility. Also, shame on the parking commission to selling off parking sites of public parking being privatized. We **need [more] public parking**.

Irene Buck, ArtWorks: In the context of the wonderful kind of energy being a part of the tourism industry and being a part of groups in NB addressing gang violence, a community center, what's happening to arts in schools and the amazing resurgence of people coming together to come up with good ideas... A simple contribution to asset development: the young people of this city; train them to speak loud and clear about all of the things that you all are expressing here today. It is critical with all the components that are here, that we all have **a place to train young people** and make sure that it is not just for our benefit; but also for the future that we **involve a whole core of young people** in whatever happens in all of this.

Armand Marchand, NB Festival Theatre: In the 40 years I have working in NB, I have been a performing arts advocate. As such, I have been fortunate to work at NB High School, and over the years worked at Festival Theatre as a producer. We have many existing standing places such as the Whaling Museum, but I want to call our attention to - as a tourist magnet - would be live performances events held in NB on a regular basis. This is a historic year for performance arts. For the first time, Festival Theatre has been recognized as a resident company of the Zeiterion

Theatre, as well as the NB Symphony Orchestra. During the 2005 season, the three organizations together attracted over 80,000 people. These are people who come to a specific event and it is important to recognize that fact because that is a strong tourism and marketing tool. I listen to people that come and between those who attend that will say to me, “Where is the closest restaurant? Is it open? Do I have to wait in line?” All of these issues come up. I think we need **more restaurants**, and a downtown hotel. When I contract performers, these are people who come from all over the country and they want to know where they can stay. It is difficult during the summer months, primarily because most of the hotels are booked. That is why it is **vital to have a downtown hotel** as a central place for everyone to meet and gather, and for **convention space**. The other thing, I asked Katherine, is that we have a terrific space at the Zeiterion that can accommodate 1,200 people to host meetings. I do think we are undergoing a major renaissance, and today is a testimony to that.

Nelson Hockert-Lotz, Dominos Pizza: I think we have some good news to celebrate and some bad news and I have a suggestion. The good news is that NB continues to be a great magnet for people who come here and fall in love with it. I came here 21 years ago, and we have been dealing with a lot of the same issues. We have been working on the problem of perception of crime in NB. We have made tremendous strides in making it a safe city. The bad news is, even while the background level of crime is a fraction of what it was a generation ago, we still have a



serious problem with unsolved murders. Even with all of our great energy in the arts, culture and tourism, we need the passion of everyone in this community putting their shoulder to the wheel and providing the leadership and passion to solve this issue. They are solvable **public safety issues** that underline our problems in making NB a destination, despite all of the wonderful [things] in this area that

we love. This is something we really need to address in a unified way and passionate way and I not think that law enforcement is someone else’s problem. Finally, I hear Mayor Lang bring great energy to the idea that we need to be a go-to place not a go-through place. I think that is very true and there are opportunities we miss. If we **position ourselves as a gateway to Buzzards Bay** and pull all of our partners from across the pond, from Martha’s Vineyard, Nantucket and the lower Cape, there might be a position where the ferries can be moving bridges and build them through these communities.

Adam Buck, Sawtooth, LLC: I have a few ideas how to increase tourism. The ferry terminal: When people pass through NB to the Island, they don’t cross Rte. 18. There is nothing for them to see or eat on the [State] pier and all they do is read a book and get on the ferry. I think it would be good idea to **have [more] retail and food** or a starting point for them in their experience in NB instead of just passing through. I love the Paul Revere sign, but you come into NB and just beyond the sign is that **fire tower** that has windows that are blown out and it has four signs on top. It would be nice to see something happen and getting it fixed up a little bit; putting in new windows, cleaning it up, possibly making it a weather indicator or something to improve that initial image of the city as you come in. The other thing is the “whale’s tooth” **buses coming from the ferry**, maybe giving these people a more **scenic tour** of the city prior to dropping them off.

Alda Roderiques, White Night Gallery: Do we spend or participate with our own money here? Maybe if we can answer that question, we can also know how we can let others promote our cause here. Do we support ourselves and promote our cause.

Kirsten Bendickson, Working Waterfront Festival: We have a gem in this fishing industry. It is one of the few working waterfronts in this country. My family also owns a trawling gear shop and when we make deliveries on the pier you would be amazed at the people that come over and ask questions when we unload the trucks about fishing. I think the **fishing industry should be incorporated into tourism**. You could incorporate an **open-air market on the pier** with fresh fish and vegetables. We come down and support the Thursday Evenings in the Park every summer, but I do wish that there were someplace to go, after the concerts, that is open for a cup of coffee or some retail stores to shop in. Also, what the **city needs is a large [downtown anchor] store** that would draw people to the city. And when you get people down to the big store, they will go to the smaller stores and shop.

Andrea Schofield, Centre Street Gallery: **[Clean up] Exit 15**. It is a dump. I have talked to many people to clean this up. Why can't we get these big, bad boys in their orange jumpsuits to clean this up? Everyone that comes here must go past exit 15 and it is a dump.

Henry Bousquet, Cobblestone Restaurant: Two things for asset development. We do have a hotel downtown, except that it is senior housing. If there was a way to kindly, gently, move those folks to other senior housing then we could **reclaim the [old New Bedford] Hotel**. I read an article on research done on redeveloping downtowns and one of the stories was about an old hotel that was abandoned. The city took it back and sold shares in the property to the residents. This is one way to encourage public investment. Then the building was rebuilt. We have a vocational school that



could go in there and redevelop that entire hotel, then farm it out to the appropriate agencies to operate it as a destination hotel. There is conference and dining space, as well as all the rooms. The other thing on asset development is about educational attainment. With the growing arts and cultural development that is booming here, if we had a **performance high school** to grab the kids that did not necessarily fit in Voke, or do not care

about school in a traditional sense that NB high offers, we could offer them a structured, accredited curriculum for them and give them something to explore in their creative sides. That would be tremendous. Also, everyone needs to volunteer for SMILES, another tremendous thing that is coming out.

Brian Miller, Mayor's Office: The mayor gave Arthur the charge to get this summit together and revamp tourism for the summer. I am a college student and I came up with this idea: There is a music system that plays music out of city hall and I am thinking that during the summertime we could utilize that, **[amplify] music of the NB Symphony Orchestra** in the form of a tape or a CD, for people to listen to some fine classical music while they are walking downtown. This is something I would be willing to facilitate during my internship at the mayor's office.

John George, SERTA Bus: I think asset development, hotels, new stores, new businesses is great. One of the biggest problems we have is the **street people**. It is a major problem at the bus company. The trolley and free small bus service is a great idea, but guess what? It is not going to

work. We operated this service before and the street people would hop on the bus and the average person or tourist that is trying to get around did not want to be bothered by these people. So what do we do with these people? Some of these people are Vietnam Vets. We have to address this problem. We can build that hotel, and have three or four people out in front of it hanging around. This an issue the Chamber has taken on, through Arthur Bennett. If we don't address this issue of the street people, all of these good ideas we have today are just not going to work. One other point of information: the trolleys that the city owns were built in 1984 and are not handicap accessible.



Jim Mathes, New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce: The Chamber did two studies that focused on NB residents and how safe they felt in different parts of the city. For the most part, the first survey indicated most people feel safe in the city but there are pockets that are adjacent to downtown where they do not feel safe. The following year, we asked the same questions, and it was a different result. They do not want to come to NB. They are **afraid to come to NB**. It substantially changed our work that we do in public safety. We do have a

crime problem in NB. There are a number of groups working on it, New Bedford ACTS, as well as the Chamber and DNB, Inc. I believe that what Orren Robbins tried to tell me years ago, that we should get a **positive message in a promotional campaign**. I do feel safe in NB. But there are people I know that do not feel the same way I do. Addressing the safety issue in the right way, as well as trying to get the message out the NB is a safe place to spend time and money. The other thing I would like to say: every morning vendors put their **trash out on downtown sidewalks** and it does not look like we are serious about tourism because we have of these mini-landfills pretty much on every street corner.

Katherine Knowles, Zeiterion Theatre:

**[More] lighting on the streets** at night changes people's perceptions. It is something we found out. We asked our audiences about how they felt about leaving the theatre at night and they said proper lighting make them feel safe. Another idea I have, is to have small **performances on the ferry**, shuttle and at the gateway to NB. It could be a fun thing.

Fernando Coelho As a member of this summit committee, I want to thank everyone on the committee for putting this together. On March 19<sup>th</sup>, the city will have its half-marathon. There is a great article on coolrunning.com, where a man wrote about NB and its beauty. I heard a lot of great ideas today and about our assets. We have beautiful parks down by the beach. A lot of people need to get out and explore our city. There is so much architectural beauty to see. We can build off what we have and make it better **[i.e. city image campaign]**.

Ruth Smiler, Capt. Haskell's B&B: [Regarding] Dan Hunter's comments about being aware of our assets and competitive advantages: This also draws on some of what the waterfront people said, and apologizing for the grittiness of NB, which is nonsense. At Capt. Haskell's, we get a lot of very experienced travelers. They have seen all the cappuccino waterfronts. They come to NB to find out that this is a working waterfront and they think it is extraordinary. When I hear people say we are not as nice as Marblehead or Gloucester, or other competitive shore places in Mass., I say let's make that an affirmative thing **[i.e. city image campaign]**.

Elaine Lima, The Black Whale: This is unbelievable that all of these ideas have been sailing around in our heads, when we know for a fact that all we need are people. We **need the shoppers and the people**. We need to address how we get these people that are moving into our city around. There should be some kind of a plan to greet these people and introduce them to store owners and events in the city. We ran a shuttle every morning, and we also did have a **problem with the homeless people**. How do we curtail this and stop them from getting on the bus? We did not have a hard time with these people; we would just talk to them. I go to Newport every year and I asked the owner of s store if she had street people there. She said they have them there, but you do not see them because they are just people. We need to get people on the streets. We have to hang in there and continue to do what we can to help NB.

Michael Sullivan, Mass. Export Center: I have some short-term ideas on marketing and infrastructure. I feel that there is a segment called **business-to-business tourism** and it is a great opportunity that exists. I am involved in a visiting delegation to tour the working waterfront of 40 individuals in the seafood industry from 14 countries; a half-day tour that we are pulling them out of a Boston at a local tradeshow to showcase our fishing industry, the Whaling Museum and in that short window of time, we are hoping to share with them a story about NB. This is an opportunity under your marketing segment, not only with the seafood industry but through your connections of the many economic development avenues, is to let the many businesses out there know that there are places in the city and the greater NB area that can be coordinated to accommodate. These companies have sales meetings where they go to Boston and Providence and they might need to know what is in their back yard. On the infrastructure side, someone mentioned the waterfront and ferry terminal. The Mass. Dept. of Recreation is currently under way to totally rehabilitate one of the buildings near the ferry terminal, possibly for retail or restaurants. The state is working on this project as a multi-use facility.

Kevin Pelland, DNB, Inc.: In addition to being president of DNB, Inc., I also have a paying job with Citizens Savings Union Bank, who just made a major investment in downtown, restoring the beautiful Merchants National Bank Building, and we employ about a dozen people now. Some people have commented on the beauty of this city, and it is a gorgeous city. But one of the things that strikes me in downtown is there is some slum there [i.e. **clean neglected parcels**]. There are some areas that look more like Baghdad. They turn into dumping grounds and send a negative image of this city. People that come here pass through Union Street and see this. There needs to be enforcement. I understand it's a private investment and it is a touchy issue, but there should be enforcement and it should not be a dumping ground.



Lou Garibaldi, Buttonwood Park Zoo: I would like to make some comments about the working waterfront. I think the Working Waterfront Festival is a great idea but, like Monterey, CA, and San Pedro, and I am not talking about cappuccino waterfronts but **make the working waterfront more user-friendly**. There are areas that have safety issues, particularly boats loading and unloading. In a perfect world, 75% of our boats would be out to sea; but most of them are docked here on the waterfront and they are an attraction and people would like to see them. If there is an

effort to allow the public to board these boats on tours and see the waterfront in a safe way that does not compromise the fisheries, people would come to NB to see what they cannot see anywhere else.

Ray Khalife, RTS New Bedford: We have heard some great ideas today. I think we need to do a lot more of what we are doing. I am going to speak a little bit about my personal experience with ARTS-NB, and I want to touch on something Dan Hunter spoke of. We need patience. ARTS New Bedford is trying to **recruit artists to NB**. When we started, we had five artists; now we have 120 on our website. That is an achievement. We need also do **more local advertising** to our own residents of local events. During the Open Studios Weekend we had [nearly] 800 visitors, and 45% were from out of the city. We would like to have more residents attend more events as well as people from outside the city.

[END OF OPEN FORUM]

## Summaries of the breakout groups to the general assembly

### Group 1 – Marketing Breakout Group Summary:

“The first idea was that we needed another **pride & education campaign** like the “Reason Campaign” from two years ago in the Standard-Times, of people saying why do we live on the south coast. The idea is that tourism starts at home, so if we could turn everyone here into people who exude this “I want to be in NB”, this would be a **local pride campaign**.



“The second idea is a smart **strategic plan to target the islands** of Martha’s Vineyard and Cuttyhunk. There are a lot of people coming through that gateway from to the islands and from the islands back here. It is high quality tourism, and these are people who are interested in what we have, such as the working waterfront and the history and culture here.

“The third idea is **city branding**.

How do we come together and say this is what the NB experience stands for? And in turn, all of us could embrace some kind of descriptor or a common experience that we are building toward. The hardest thing is what the brand stands for. We put it up there as a goal.

The fourth idea is **cross marketing**. This would be to extend the stay, visit or experience in NB. The thought is that when they go to the Zoo, how do you get them to eat in our restaurants, buy a ticket to the Z and visit Ft. Taber. One of the best examples is where Armand Marchand’s marketing of the production of “CATS.” He is going to promote a cats theme of cats on the stage and cats in a cage, as in the zoo, and go to the Catwalk Restaurant. This is a very creative idea,

and a low-cost promotion. You are taking an audience that is already at one venue, and you take them to two or three other venues.

“The fifth idea is I-195 signage. Whether it is putting up more money for **another LED sign on the opposite side of the interstate**, or a money shot of the city. When you are driving through the city on the highway, people only see a downtrodden view, and it does not necessarily get them off the highway. What if we show them the most beautiful shot of downtown [**i.e. billboard**] and get them off onto Exit 15.

## **Group 2 – Visitor Support Breakout Group Summary:**

“It is very interesting to note that we had a hard time talking about visitor support. We did narrow it down to three main bullets.

“The first idea is **transportation and parking**. One of the things was **a shuttle bus** and vans. On AHA night there used to be a Whale Bus and it used to drive around. We talked about the importance of a regular schedule for this type of bus, so that the visitor feels comfortable leaving their car, knowing they can get back to their car. Also, it would serve to get around to the various venues. We thought we could try a test/time period of this idea from June 15 to Oct. 15.

The second idea is **a single go-to place** so that people are directed there with advertising. A place **preferably on the waterfront with temporary parking**, so that when the tourists drive in they could pick up information and it would direct them to the various sites and venues around. It is also important to make the investment of the proper staffing.

“The third idea is comes down to **information flow**. AHA had an evening a couple of months ago of the venues present and everyone had a couple of minutes to talk about what was going on with them. We thought this would be a great idea as a **kick off campaign** in April. People could come together and talk about what was coming up for the summer. We would put together a piece of paper, with 50 words or less about their particular venue, get them laminated and out there. We need to get the people who work in the businesses around knowing what is going on and where the attraction is.



## **Group 3 - Asset Development Breakout Group Summary (Jen Gonsalves, spokesperson):**

“During our session, we realized that the infrastructure for tourism is already there. It is just a matter of **partnering, collaborating**, better utilizing and thinking more creatively on how to do things.

“The first idea is an **outdoor market**. There was some discussion as to where it should be, but overall we agreed that the waterfront is one of our most dominant assets. However, we have to acknowledge the limitations that exist in going to the waterfront. We would have to work out some issues with Route 18, in order to get the tourists there. Seafood is our main selling thing,

and we would like to see it sold there; such as a lobster roll or a pound of scallops. Jeff Pontiff has tried some of these businesses with a kiosk or pushcarts and has run into some difficulties.

“We would have to talk to the mayor to get together with someone like Jeff and find out about this from someone who has been there and done it, and what the obstacles are and how to get this done. Maybe, in the short-term, a pushcart or kiosk business, in the long-term that turns out to be a fixed location at a building down there already that could use that business. Because of the difficult access to Route 18, we thought about possibly a location of this market on Centre Street.



“The second idea is transportation. We feel a **shuttle** would be a solution. It is very difficult to get across the highway now, even though they are working on the lights at Route 18 and Union Street. We heard that the trolleys are not handicap accessible, so they are not an option. There would have to be an investment as to what this vehicle would be. We all agree we need a

transportation system back-and-forth from the ferry terminal to the downtown and the outline areas such as the Zoo, Ft. Taber and the RJD House.

“The third piece was the **atmosphere and environment [enhancement]** concept. Highlighting surprise performances both on the waterfront and in the historic district, store front rehab using local artists bringing in kids and working with existing **youth programs** to do **murals** and painting canvases on the front of **empty stores**.

“The fourth idea is the fact the **Schooner Ernestina** is an asset and we need to support it. There are alternative ways to use it and understand it, even if we have to go back to shore-side programs such as the films on the sails that will bring people back to the waterfront. We would love to see her evolve into 80 days cruises or live performances. Some little steps could begin to again bring people down to her. We need to continue to foster collaborations and partnerships. We were fortunate to have Brian Sheehan of Mass. Dept of Conservation and Recreation in our breakout group to talk to us about their commitment in Ernestina.

#### **Group 4 – Crime & Grime Breakout Group Summary (James Mathes, spokesperson):**

“The first issue was the **parking garages**. They should be clean, well lit, properly maintained, with doors unlocked when you are attempting to exit a level to the stairwell, and reliable elevators that are properly run.

“The second idea is to **address the street people issue**. This does impact tourism and the community needs to deal with this problem in a humanistic as well as proper way. We do not want to punish them or kick them out; but we have to be mindful of them as it does impact businesses in the downtown.

“The third idea is to support efforts in the community to **address violent crime**. There are a number of agencies such as New Bedford ACTS that are going on to help right now. This is what

casts a **negative image of NB**, and has a way of hurting us in tourism and other ways. All of you here today have the ability to participate in existing efforts that are taking place, and we would like to encourage you to do that as well as encourage the mayor to continue his efforts.

“The fourth idea is to **clean up Exit 15, the gateway to downtown**. Also to develop and implement an **anti-littering, public relations campaign citywide**. Clean our streets and sidewalks and keep them clean. **Better-managed garbage collection** in all visitor and business districts.

“The National Park could use **more trashcans**; a specific trash can that fits the venue that is properly maintained and serviced. Another would be downtown businesses not having a lot of **garbage out on sidewalks**. If you are going to be serious about tourism, come up with a way that this does not happen. When refuse is collected from an area that visitors are going to be, it should be collected at an early time of day or using dumpsters so that this trash is not out on the sidewalks.



“The fifth is parking enforcement. If you are parked on the street longer than you should, this vehicle should be ticketed. **Meter feeding** should be discouraged and enforced. We also discussed places in the historic area that are not metered and having meters installed. Next is the continual emphasis for the **immediate removal of graffiti** and encouraging property owners to maintain their buildings and the surroundings and an **anti-litter program in the public schools**.

## Overview of Assembly Votes - Narrative Summary



[INTRO] Mr. Dutra discussed the top vote getters in each category, displayed on easels on stage:

The top category was marketing, receiving 144 votes.  
 The next highest category was asset development, receiving 108.  
 The third was crime & grime, receiving 64.  
 The last was visitor support, receiving 59.

Mr. Dutra broke down each top voter by committee:

1. Marketing: I-195 signage was the top vote getter.  
 How do we get people off the highway to see what we have to offer?
2. Asset Development: the next highest vote getter was the Schooner Ernestina in terms of day cruises, theater, spot happenings and integrating it with the HDC master plan on the waterfront.
3. Marketing: the local pride and education campaign.
4. Marketing: a target market to the islands.
5. Asset development: open-air market on either the waterfront or Center Street with either a kiosk or cart.

6. Visitor support: transportation and parking, as well as a shuttle service.
7. Crime & Grime: Clean up the gateway to downtown Exit 15.
8. Visitor Support: Visitor services training in April for venue operators and service industry.
9. Marketing: City Branding/Cross Marketing

## Complete Voting Results

The following tallies represent all the votes in the general assembly for four (4) main areas: Marketing, Visitor Support, Crime & Grime, and Asset Development. At the conclusion of the afternoon breakout sessions, summit participants reconvened in the whaling museum theater to hear summary presentations from each group. The \*asterisk marks the top issue in each group.



### Marketing

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Local pride/education campaign             | 42         |
| 2. Target marketing to the Islands            | 30         |
| 3. City branding: logo, descriptor            | 20         |
| 4. Cross market to extend stay in New Bedford | 09         |
| <b>5. I-195 Signage:</b>                      | <b>43*</b> |
| LED Sign System on Route 18, & 195;           |            |
| Billboards, beautiful visuals                 |            |

**Total Votes** **144**

### Visitor Support

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>4. Transportation/Parking</b>                    | <b>26*</b> |
| Need a regular schedule                             |            |
| So that visitor feels comfortable leaving their car |            |
| know they'll be able to get back to it              |            |
| Shuttle buses/vans.                                 |            |
| Test time period – June 15 – Oct. 15                |            |
| 5. Need a single <u>go to place</u>                 | 13         |
| People directed with signage and advertising        |            |
| - Preferably on the waterfront                      |            |
| - Temporary free parking at this spot               |            |
| Visitor directed to National Park Visitor Center    |            |
| 6. Visitor services training in April               | 20         |
| for venue operators and service industry.           |            |
| Create inventory of New Bedford attractions         |            |
| Laminate and send out to local businesses.          |            |

**Total Votes** **59**

## “Crime & Grime”

4. Parking Garages: Must be clean, well lit, with security & cameras, properly maintained, doors unlocked with reliable elevators	09
5. Address “street people” issues	13
6. Support efforts to address violent crime	06
<b>7. Clean up Exit 15/Gateway to Downtown</b>	<b>23*</b>
8. Develop/implement anti-littering campaign	02
9. Physical maintenance of streets/sidewalks	02
10. Better manage garbage collection in visitor/business districts	02
11. Parking enforcement	03
12. Continued emphasis on the immediate removal of graffiti	00
13. Encourage property owners to maintain bldgs./surroundings	02
14. Anti-litter education in public schools	02
<b><u>Total Votes</u></b>	<b><u>64</u></b>

## Asset Development

1. Market Concept: Rte. 18 / Waterfront / Centre Street? Use information in Plan/SE corner Open air/local produce/seafood with prepared food and Food-to-go. Carts/seafood/lemonade/ice cream	30
2. Transportation Concept: Shuttle from Ferry terminal to downtown Kid’s access. Route 18 – pedestrian safe/enhancing Understanding/movement Connecting assistance	17
4. Atmosphere Surprise Performances Storefront rehab Artists Kid’s Art	19
5. <b>Ernestina:</b> Day Cruises Movies projected on the sails at night Heritage Theater Happenings Use for Youth	<b>42*</b>
<b><u>Total Votes</u></b>	<b><u>108</u></b>

## **Closing Summary of Votes and the Next Step - Arthur Motta**

“When Craig Dutra spoke of another summit he facilitated about 13 years ago, I thought we could possibly compare notes from that last time. It is interesting that the I-195 outreach is still a big issue. And it is! With 48,500 cars-per-day passing by. If we can pick up ½ a percent of those cars, we would fill this museum.

“Mayor Lang charged this planning committee with not just another meeting. We are going to keep these vote pads in a way sort of like the dead-sea scrolls and very carefully record everything everyone has said including what did not get up here. There is obviously a lot of overlap and tie in. There are so many things on these pads that cut across a lot of sectors, including economic development, hospitality, asset development.

“The first deliverable will be a report on this summit. Included in the report, will be some of the ideas that came out of the Great Ideas Forum about tourism specifically. The top tourism priorities identified today will be submitted for inclusion in the city’s new master planning process, which is about to get underway. We’ve essentially done the hard work of finding out what the community and stakeholders feels are New Bedford’s tourism priorities. Now we can say to our state representative and county agencies, that on tourism issues, we know what our priorities are and we are in agreement.

“When you chose a breakout session, please know that you will be asked assist on going forward. The community dialogue has to be ongoing. We can’t expect that someone else is going to make this happen. That someone else is us. The city will be a partner, sometimes as a leader, but always at the table.

“We will need to find ways to grow the pie for funding and resources, and to work with our state, county and federal partners. We have what most places don’t have in the National Park, which is an enormous resource.

“So, the first deliverable is the summit report and the second deliverable will new committees/taskforces to work on each challenge.

[END OF OVERVIEW]

## **Appendix**

### **Tourism Summit Sponsors & Partners**

The Tourism Summit Planning Committee Expresses its sincere thanks to these Community-minded businesses for their generous support...

Acme Liquors of Dartmouth St.  
Café Arpeggio  
Candleworks Restaurant  
Carlsonfoods Southcoast  
Cobblestone Restaurant  
D & D Caterers  
Friendly Donuts  
Greater New Bedford Regional Voc-Tech High School  
Hallsmith/Sysco  
Homelyke Bakery  
Isaiah's Restaurant  
Lydia's Bakery  
M & C Restaurant  
Mediumstudios  
Spring Valley Natural Spring Water Co.  
Sunrise Bakery  
Valet Linen Supply

### **Tourism Attendee Confirmations**

123 Sawtooth. LLC.  
Access Art International  
AHA! New Bedford  
Arthur Moniz Gallery  
ARTS New Bedford  
ArtWorks! At Dover Street  
Buttonwood Park Zoological Society, Inc.  
Buyer's Professional Real Estate  
Café Arpeggio  
Candleworks Restaurant  
Captain Haskell's Octagon House B&B  
Centre Street Gallery  
Church Women United  
City of New Bedford Office of Cultural Affairs  
City of New Bedford Office of Community Development  
City of New Bedford Dept of Public Facilities  
City of New Bedford Free Public Library  
City of New Bedford Planning Dept.  
City of New Bedford Traffic Commission  
City of New Bedford Zoo Services Dept.  
Cobblestone Restaurant  
Councilor Ward 5, Jane Gonsalves  
Councilor, Ward , Linda Morad

Culture Park  
Cuttyhunk Boat Lines, Inc.  
Cuttyhunk Ferry Co.  
Days Inn / Whaler Banquet Facility  
Dominos Pizza, Inc.  
Downtown New Bedford, Inc.  
EncorEntertainment, Inc.  
Fernando Coelho  
First Night New Bedford, Inc.  
Fort Taber Historical Assoc.  
G. Kenneth Garrett  
Gallery X  
Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.  
HallKeen Management  
Massachusetts House Rep. Stephen Canessa  
Mediumstudios  
Melville House B&B  
Moore & Isherwood, Inc.  
New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce  
New Bedford Art Museum  
New Bedford Art Museum  
New Bedford Economic Development Council, Inc.  
New Bedford Festival Theatre, Inc.  
New Bedford Fire Museum  
New Bedford Historical Society, Inc.  
New Bedford Oceanarium  
New Bedford Port Society  
New Bedford Whaling Museum  
New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park  
New England Fast Ferry, Inc.  
Office of Mass. Rep. Antonio Cabral Office  
Orchard Street Manor  
Phoebe's Closet  
Rob Sudduth  
Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum  
Saulnier Studio  
Schooner Ernestina  
South Coast Education Compact  
South Coast Insider  
Southeastern Massachusetts CVB  
Spanish-American Assoc.  
Spinner Publications, Inc.  
SRPEDD  
The Black Whale  
UMASS Dartmouth French Dept.  
Waterfront Historic Area League  
Weekly Compass  
Whaling City Expeditions  
Wilson Gallery  
Working Waterfront Festival Committee  
YMCA

## **Breakout Session Participants: Marketing**

Ashley, Dagney  
Beauregard, Philip  
Bendiksen, Kirsten  
Bettencourt, George  
Billings, Jono  
Bourassa, Gerald  
Bousquet, Henry  
Bousquet, Tee  
Butler, Jim  
Butler, Margie  
Caton, Steve  
Charbonneau, George  
Costa, Lisa  
Dade, Chuck  
Garibaldi, Louis  
Glazer, Julie  
Grace, Susan  
Hockert-Lotz, Nelson  
Isherwood, Liz  
Kelley, Jamie  
MacKenzie, David  
Marchand, Armand  
Moniz, Arthur  
Moniz, Cheryl  
Morin, Bill  
Motta, Arthur  
Nemer, Kathleen  
Prentiss, David  
Rouxinol, Lee  
Saulnier, George  
Saulniers, Al  
Scofield, Andrea  
Smiler, Chuck  
Sudduth, Rob  
Szymanski, John  
Tiernan, John  
Tripp, Howard  
Vincent, Karie  
Yorston, Mike

## **Visitor Support**

Allen, Karen  
Corkum, Kate  
Grace, Thomas  
Lewis, Don  
Morin, Bill  
Szymanski, John

## **Crime & Grime**

Berube, Diane  
Blanchard, Ken  
Coish, Theresa  
Garrett, Kenneth  
Hockert-Lotz, Nelson  
Mathes, Jim  
Medeiros, Peggi  
Moss, Donald  
Roderick, Michelle  
Roderiques, Alda

## **Asset Development**

Bank, Willi  
Bernardo, Celeste  
Buck, Adam  
Buck, Irene  
Coelho, Fernando  
Cole, Pam  
Drayton, Yvonne  
Gonsalves, Jen  
Heald, Lee  
Knowles, Katherine  
Louro, Anne  
McDowell, Annie  
Miller, Brian  
Motta, Donna  
Pontiff, Jeff  
Roderiques, Cliff  
Schade, Rebecca  
Shanahan, Brian  
Shwedo, Robyn  
Smiler, Ruth  
Wolfe, Anne

Citizens put several comments related to tourism forward during this public forum:

1. Paul: Advertise the city more. "It's a gem," he said. He works in Boston and his coworkers are unaware of the Zeiterion's offerings. They would come if they knew Wynton Marsalis was playing here. The city needs to advertise more in the Boston area, especially the Zeiterion.
2. David Lima (HDC ferry parking lot worker): He sees many ferry passengers leaving the city at the end of their trip. His idea: Downtown restaurants "should get together" to create a coupon booklet in which discounted meals are offered. The shuttle bus already goes downtown, he said, and the coupon booklet would be an incentive to have them check out the downtown.
3. "Put New Bedford on the map." Use more marketing and P.R. to promote it as the #1 port in America.
4. "The youth should know more about city history." They should be exposed to the city's rich architectural heritage and the arts. This would increase pride and tourism. we must involve youth in civic efforts such as litter cleanup."
5. "Create a living history museum (it should probably be a private entity). This would help tourism, (i.e. the Hetty Green Museum, now closed due to the death of it operator)

[PHOTOGRAPHY: DEBORAH L. HYNES]





**APPENDIX: Tourism Summit Photo Gallery**

