



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

## **Appendix G**

# **Public Comments on Draft Report**



The following comments were received on the Draft Report that was circulated for review between August 17, 2015 and September 18, 2015. Responses to each comment are provided below.

### COMMENT 1

August 17, 2015

Former local resident:

Today I am emailing you my comments to be added to the public record on the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor (Draft Study). All though I no longer live in Massachusetts due to my current employer and me being promoted to a higher position, I have been following the project to date along with my family. Upon reviewing the Draft Study, I would like to formally recommend Alternative 2W in place of the listed alternatives. My second choice would be Alternative 3W. I recommend these two choices because they allow maximum clearance for ships and these designs traditionally last longer.

As a recommendation for further analysis when ship traffic rebounds, I recommend a second Bascule Bridge in place of West bridge and implementing two one way channels; one on either side of Popes Island.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your input on the recommended bridge alternatives. The next phase in the project development and design process would include the completion of additional analysis of these two alternatives. A Bridge Type Study would be conducted to assess the design feasibility and costs of the two recommended bridge alternatives. A U.S. Coast Guard Navigational Evaluation would also be completed to determine the ability of the recommended bridge alternatives to meet current and future navigational needs concerning horizontal and vertical clearances.

### COMMENT 2

August 17, 2015

Dave Janik, South Coastal Regional Coordinator, Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management:

I quickly scanned the MDOT Bridge Study document. CZM may provide more detailed comments at a future date, but for right now I wanted to let you know that on page 5-18 the document references a New Bedford/Fairhaven Municipal Harbor Plan completed in 2002, and the Bridge Corridor Study recommends “that the City of New Bedford initiate a master planning process for the development of the harbor and New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge study area.” The 2002 Municipal Harbor Plan was the first State-Approved Harbor Plan for the area. Subsequently, an updated New Bedford/Fairhaven Municipal Harbor Plan was completed and approved in 2010. The 2010 plan is the one currently in effect.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your comment. Both the 2002 and 2010 New Bedford/Fairhaven Municipal Harbor Plans were used as references in conducting the study. As noted, the reference on page 5-18 was incorrect as it cited only the 2002 study. The date in Chapter 5 will be revised to the most recent 2010 Harbor Plan.



### COMMENT 3

August 17, 2015

New Bedford resident:

When will it be completed?

**RESPONSE:** This study represents the beginning two steps in MassDOT's eight step project development and design process. The study will conclude on September 30, 2015. The next steps are dependent on funding. It is anticipated that the project could proceed into the project initiation and environmental permitting, design, and right-of-way process in the next year. Completion of a new bridge would take at least 10 or more years for design, permitting, programming, procurement, and construction.

### COMMENT 4

August 18, 2015

Mary Rapoza, Director of New Bedford Parks Recreation & Beaches:

I am so pleased that I was able to participate in this thoughtful and thorough review of the needs along this corridor. Thank you for seriously considering the identified recreational and multi modal needs of the corridor. At the end of the process, I have to give my vote to the ALTERNATIVE 3W: WIDE DOUBLE-LEAF ROLLING BASCULE BRIDGE as the most feasible although it is definitely not the most aesthetic it does address most of the concerns.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your input on the recommended bridge alternatives. The next phase in the project development and design process would include the completion of additional analysis of the two recommended alternatives. A Bridge Type Study would be conducted to assess the design feasibility and costs of the two recommended bridge alternatives. A U.S. Coast Guard Navigational Evaluation would also be completed to determine the ability of the recommended bridge alternatives to meet current and future navigational needs concerning horizontal and vertical clearances.

Some general comments:

- Impacts to air quality and greenhouse gases from idling vehicles. We didn't spend much time discussing this issue. I was under the impression that there is a limit to the number of minutes a vehicle can legally idle in Mass. If this is so can we have signs letting motorists know to turn off their engines?

**RESPONSE:** Encouraging the reduction of vehicle idling is beneficial to local and regional air quality and consistent with the policies of MassDOT. In the context of the queues at the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge, installing signs requesting motorists turn off their vehicles at the bridge would need to be investigated further to assess any legal or safety issues. This will be included as a new recommended short-term action in the report.

- Community Impacts. I am concerned that there is no mention of Fairhaven High School in community needs. The students cross Route 6 at Park Avenue to access the school's athletic fields at Cushman Park. Consideration should be made for that safety concern.



**RESPONSE:** In 2013, significant improvements were made to the pedestrian environment, including sidewalks and crosswalks along Route 6 in Fairhaven. Although it was noted in study meetings that students cross Route 6 at that location, no specific safety concerns have been identified either through the data collection effort or by local safety personnel.

- In the report, it states, “A pedestrian path that provides a more direct path for pedestrians between the “Octopus Intersection” and the Route 18/Elm Street intersection is proposed for the corridor.” Thank you for addressing the concerns of pedestrians and bicyclists.

In the report, it states “However, even though Alternative 2 provides additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities, high pedestrian or bicycle volumes are not seen on the bridge and are not anticipated in the future. Alternative 2 will have no impact to high volume bicycle or pedestrian locations.” The Mayor hopes that improvements to access will indeed increase pedestrian access from the Marina to downtown New Bedford.

September 8, 2015 - Second set of comments:

We are concerned that the attached plan [2014 signage and striping plan for current MassDOT roadway project] does not show a sidewalk across Route 6 from the Marina/park to the businesses on the north side. We need to add a strong visual crosswalk preferably in line with the Marina building entrance across Route 6 to the north.

I have included some of the relevant sections from the bridge corridor study.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements.** The following bicycle or pedestrian improvements could commence as soon as the ongoing roadway construction projects are completed in late 2015:

- Bicycle and pedestrian path along Route 6 from Pleasant Street to Route 18;
- New pedestrian ramp and staircase between Route 6 and MacArthur Drive; and
- Completion of sidewalk network along MacArthur Drive.

### 3.1.7 Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

The New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge is the only pedestrian or bicycle access point between downtown Fairhaven and New Bedford. Pedestrians can use a sidewalk on either side of the travel lanes, but there is only one crosswalk between the New Bedford and Fairhaven shores. Pedestrian access to the bridge from New Bedford is limited to a new pedestrian ramp down to JFK Memorial Highway. A staircase on the north side of the travel lanes was closed in the last two years as part of the most recent roadway construction project. Pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited on Route 6 ramps between Purchase Street and MacArthur Drive. The primary concern along the bridge is the lack of crosswalks. A single crosswalk on Pope’s Island provides a safe crossing point for pedestrians between the New Bedford and Fairhaven shorelines.

4.10.2 Based on the assessment of bicycle and pedestrian conditions along the corridor, three potential improvements have been identified. As shown in Figure 4.8, these improvements include:

- A bicycle and pedestrian path along Route 6 from Pleasant Street to Route 18;



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

- A pedestrian ramp and staircase to replace staircase on north side of bridge; and
- Completion of sidewalk network along MacArthur Drive, which is the primary pedestrian route from the bridge to the proposed Whale's Tooth Commuter Rail Station.

RESPONSE: The 2014 signage and striping plan for the current repair project did not include permanent installation of the crosswalk on Pope's Island. This referenced crosswalk was originally installed in 2012 in order to provide pedestrian continuity during the construction project. In light of the importance of pedestrian connectivity along the corridor, MassDOT is evaluating the crosswalk and additional safety features at this location, including a potential High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) beacon. The completion of the enhanced crosswalk or evaluation of other options will be added as a new short-term recommendation of this study.

### COMMENT 5

August 18, 2015

Livable Streets Alliance:

I have a few quick questions about the Draft Study Report for the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge. I read the report, in particular all the sections about improving pedestrian and bicycle access through the project area. I was wondering if you could clarify the following for me regarding navigating around the stretch of Route 6 where bicycles and pedestrians are prohibited:

1. When proceeding on bike along Route 6 starting at the Pleasant St (Octopus) intersection heading east, what is the intended route for bicyclists to get to the bridge? Once they get to the bridge, are they expected to ride on the sidewalk or will there be a way to access the roadway shoulders as well?

RESPONSE: Bicycle access to the bridge from the west is not anticipated to be modified from the configuration that was completed in 2013. The reconstruction of Route 18, MacArthur Drive, and the ramp connecting northbound Route 18 with eastbound Route 6 included the construction of a wide sidewalk that can be used by both pedestrians and bicyclists to connect to Fish Island. At Fish Island, bicyclists ride along the shoulders or continue along the sidewalk depending upon their preference.

2. When proceeding on bike along Route 6 on the bridge heading west, riding in the roadway, what is the intended route for bicyclists to get to the Pleasant St (Octopus) intersection?

RESPONSE: With the completion of all improvements recommended in the plan, westbound bicyclists will be able to use the new ramp structure on the north side of the roadway to access MacArthur Drive. From MacArthur Drive, bicyclists can utilize the recently completed extension of Elm Street to then access the multiuse path recommended in the study that would connect Elm Street/Route 18 to Pleasant Street.



3. Was any consideration given to eliminating the bicycle/pedestrian prohibition on Route 6 through the Route 18 interchange and installing sidewalks/crosswalks and bike lanes along there (by either widening the roadway structures or dropping a lane)? It seems like this would be a much more direct connection than any of the current proposals.

**RESPONSE:** Consideration was given to alternative routes to provide connections between Pleasant Street and the bridge. The combination of the multi-use path and the ramp structures was thought to provide the best and safest connections. Modifications to the interchange ramps was not considered a viable option since the design that includes high speed merging and diverging traffic could not be effectively modified and allow for the safe use of the ramp structures by bicyclists.

## COMMENT 6

August 19, 2015

Marion resident:

The continued maintenance of the existing New Bedford-Fairhaven swing bridge and repair of the bridge superstructure in the same configuration as currently exists is not an option due to constant bridge malfunction, cost of repairs, safety, transportation impact and economic development.

When planning for the future, a taller Vertical Lift Bridge connecting New Bedford and Fairhaven could provide an air draft of 150 feet and a navigational channel width of up to 270 feet. Construction duration of 33 months would not be a greater hardship than what is presently endured every few years for swing bridge repairs, maintenance, and lane closures, after which, we still have an obsolete structure.

Some might consider a new Vertical Lift Bridge estimated to cost \$100-130 million an expensive project, but in the long run, a new bridge would offer many benefits, for example, decrease annual operating and maintenance costs saving both time and money, increase vehicular and pedestrian safety, improve navigation and enhance economic development by making the Port of New Bedford more attractive as a destination for large fishing and cargo vessels.

Other areas for improvement:

1. Alleviate existing corridor congestion by adjusting signal timing and lane configuration in the corridor at Kempton Street/Mill Street and Purchase Street and at Huttleston Avenue/Main Street.
2. Make improvements to accommodate future corridor congestion on existing Fairhaven bridge detour routes at Bridge Street and Route 240, Howland Road and Main Street and on Coggeshall Street in New Bedford at the intersections of Ashley Boulevard, Front Street, Belleville Avenue, and the I-95 off ramp.
3. Identify alternative routes and/or improve Intelligent Transportation Systems such as timely warning signs to motorists that the bridge is closed or will soon close to vehicular traffic, which would allow motorists to take an alternate route.



4. Improve corridor pedestrian/bicycle facilities by (a) segregating these uses onto separate sidewalks; (b) reducing the number of vehicle lanes to permit the addition of bicycle lanes; (c) creating new pedestrian connections between New Bedford and Fairhaven; and (d) improve pedestrian connections between downtown New Bedford, Route 6 bridge and the future Whale's Tooth Commuter Rail Station.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your input on the recommended bridge alternatives. The next phase in the project development and design process would include the completion of additional analysis of these two alternatives, with the goal providing more analysis to allow selection of one build alternative. A Bridge Type Study would be conducted to assess the design feasibility and costs of the two recommended bridge alternatives. A U.S. Coast Guard Navigational Evaluation would also be completed to determine the ability of the recommended bridge alternatives to meet current and future navigational needs concerning horizontal and vertical clearances.

Signal timing changes are recommended as part of the short-term recommendations from the study at Kempton Street/Mill Street and Purchase Street or Huttleston Avenue and Main Street. It is anticipated that these changes will be completed by MassDOT, the City of New Bedford, or the Town of Fairhaven as traffic volumes warrant. As part of another effort, intersection improvements, including pedestrian improvements, lighting, new walk signals, brick islands, and landscaping at Kempton Street/Mill Street and Purchase Street will be completed by the end of 2015.

No lane configuration changes are recommended in the short term beyond the anticipated MassDOT striping that will be completed as part of the current bridge maintenance project. The study concluded that reduced vehicular lanes to accommodate a bicycle lane would not work. The existing bridge right-of-way width limits the ability to reduce lane width and add in a bicycle lane. As part of a long-term bridge replacement project, a new bridge would be designed with a 64-foot-wide ROW, which would allow four 11-foot-wide vehicular travel lanes, two five-foot-wide bike lanes, and two five-foot-wide sidewalks. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements are proposed in New Bedford to accommodate movement between Kempton Street/Mill Street and Purchase Street intersection, the future Whale's Tooth Commuter Rail Station, and the Route 6 bridge.

Short and medium-term ITS improvements proposed for the study area are recommended to alleviate the existing and anticipated congestion and delay along the Route 6 corridor.

#### COMMENT 7

August 20, 2015

Local resident:

Who is funding the project? If individual nearby towns, please provide funding by town.

RESPONSE: A funding plan for the project has not been developed at this stage of project development. Since the bridge is owned by MassDOT and is along a state highway, the funding plan will be led by MassDOT. Major bridge projects such as this one are typically principally



funded through a combination of state and federal sources and any local municipal funding is for upgrades requested by the municipality.

### COMMENT 8

August 20, 2015

New Bedford business owner (AGM Marine Contractors):

We would like to clarify one item within the draft report. Within Chapter 4, there is a subsection within each of the alternative that discusses Impact to Business Access. Within this subsection, the report lists parcels around the middle bridge that could potentially be impacted by the alternative. Tucker Roy Marine Towing & Salvage is listed as a business that could be impacted; Tucker Roy is a tenant on the South side of Fish Island but their operation is confined to a smaller area on the South side of Fish Island. AGM Marine Contractors, Inc. is the main tenant and user of the South side of Fish Island (the parcel behind the gas station) with its operation extensively utilizing the parcel. AGM is the business that could potentially be the most disrupted or impacted by any of the listed bridge alternatives.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your comment. The referenced sections in Chapter 4 will be updated to include AGM Marine Contractors, Inc. as a business that could have impacts to access.

### COMMENT 9

August 21, 2015

New Bedford resident:

I was reading the article in the New Bedford Standard-Times regarding the design of the new bridge. It stated to submit our opinions. Well, my husband and I both agree that if they are going to build a new bridge that it should be the Vertical Bridge.

Why would you want to spend the money on the Bascule Bridge? It will not give you the amount of clearance that the Vertical Bridge would give you. If you are going to spend the money and time on replacing the bridge you might as well spend a little bit more and get the bridge that will work best for the New Bedford Harbor.

You know that if the Bascule Bridge gets voted in, they will no sooner be done building it and then they will find out that there will not be enough clearance to accommodate the larger ships that we are hoping to do business in our port.

This is just our opinion. Hopefully, it will help you decide which bridge would be best for the New Bedford Harbor.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your input on the recommended bridge alternatives. The next phase in the project development and design process would include the completion of additional analysis of the Vertical Lift Bridge and the Double-Leaf Dutch-Style Bridge alternatives. A Bridge Type Study would be conducted to assess the design feasibility and costs of the two alternatives. Additionally a U.S. Coast Guard Navigational Evaluation would also be completed to determine



the ability of the recommended bridge alternatives to meet current and future navigational needs concerning horizontal and vertical clearances.

#### COMMENT 10

August 26, 2015

Local resident:

Fix the bridge light on Purchase Street.

**RESPONSE:** The following signal-related intersection improvements are recommended for the Kempton Street/Mill Street and Purchase Street intersection.

From Section 4:10.1, Route 6 and Pleasant Street: “The proposed signal timing will combine north and south traffic movements into one concurrent phase. The same would be true for east and west traffic movements. In addition, the exclusive pedestrian phase would be distributed among the concurrent phases to operate in conjunction with each non-opposing signal phase. This results in a reduced cycle length of 120 seconds, thus optimizing the operations at the intersection as well as reducing the delays on all approaches.”

#### COMMENT 11

September 1, 2015

New Bedford resident:

Nothing in the article in the New Bedford Standard-Times "Choices Down to Two for New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge" (8/19/15) persuades me that either of the two new bridge options is a viable one. According to this article, the "new bridge would not decrease the wait for vehicle traffic," yet it is the current "wait" that bothers most drivers. Indeed, a new bridge may not be needed at all. According to a draft report of the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor Study to which this article refers, because of the width of the opening that the current bridge provides boats, the "existing swing span has been cited as an issue that *may be* [my italics] limiting port activity." Mayor Mitchell is noted as having said that "widening the channel . . . *would* [my italics] boost the economy." There's a big difference in likelihood between "may" and "would." Before being subjected to the time ("33 months for construction"--that is, almost 3 years) and expense [between \$100-\$130 million in "capital costs"] that replacing the current bridge would apparently require, let us first have credible evidence that a new bridge *will*-not "may"-be advantageous to our community. Until then, tell our leaders to order the repair of the "mechanical problems that periodically affect the [current] bridge" that engineers have said exist.

**RESPONSE:** As stated in the plan, “Due to the age of some original structural components and the fatigue and stresses that are put on the bridge members on a regular basis, options for replacing the entire swing truss section of the bridge need to be considered. At 120 years, the swing truss section is showing signs that it is beyond its useful life and will need to be replaced. It is estimated that this will need to occur within the next 15 to 20 years.” The No Build Alternative, which included the continued repair and maintenance of the existing swing span and bridge structure in its current configuration, is estimated to cost at least \$45 million. Based



on past inspections and maintenance requirements over the last decade, it is assumed that a full replacement of the superstructure will be required within the next fifteen years.

Analysis completed as part of this study is preliminary in nature and additional analysis would be required to move the project forward. The next steps in the project development and design process would be to undertake a Bridge Type Study to assess the design feasibility and costs of the two recommended bridge alternatives. A U.S. Coast Guard Navigational Evaluation would also be completed to determine the ability of the recommended bridge alternatives to meet current and future navigational needs concerning horizontal and vertical clearances.

## COMMENT 12

September 6, 2015

Ed Anthes-Washburn, Acting Port Director of New Bedford Harbor Development Commission (HDC):

One thing I'd like to comment on is the SER process described on pages 5.19 and 5.20.

Because the SER process is tied to the Superfund Cleanup, it may not be available after the EPA completes their cleanup. While the EPA will have significantly lowered the levels of PCBs in the harbor, they will not touch any material below 50ppm and that sediment will remain. This material is not suitable for offshore disposal. If the bridge project is completed after the EPA leaves NB Harbor and discontinues the SER process of placing impacted sediments in Confined Aquatic Disposal Cells (CAD Cells) then it must be removed and placed in upland Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)-approved and monitored landfills.

The cost of upland disposal is much higher- a factor of 10 the last time we investigated. The cost of placing the material in a CAD cell is around \$60/CY versus \$600/CY for upland disposal (I've cc'd Apex to provide more backup information as they have the bid costs available). The cost difference could be significant when dredging the area where the current bridge sits, as either recommended alternative will require. If there is 5,000-10,000CY of impacted sediment for the project the cost of disposal goes from \$300,000-\$600,000 to \$3,000,000 to \$6,000,000. This is significant, and getting this project on the current list of dredging projects should be seen as a priority before the EPA completes their cleanup.

Thank you for your attention on this important detail. The HDC is happy to work with MassDOT to ensure this project gets on the Phase V dredging list.

**RESPONSE:** It is noted that utilizing the on-going SER process and the existing CAD cells for disposal of contaminated sediment would present a significant cost savings to the project, somewhere on the order of \$5 million. The ability of any project to realize those savings would depend upon the project development process duration. As noted, it is typical for projects to take six to eight years to proceed through design and permitting. To the greatest extent possible given the typical project development timeframe, MassDOT would work to leverage the cost savings that could be achieved by utilizing the ongoing EPA cleanup activities. As any project is advanced through design, the potential cost savings opportunity would be incorporated into the project schedule evaluation.



### COMMENT 13

September 18, 2015

William M. Straus, State Representative 10<sup>th</sup> Bristol District

Antonio F.D. Cabral, State Representative 13<sup>th</sup> Bristol District

We write with respect to the Draft New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor Study report. We believe the project will provide significant improvements to the region and surrounding businesses, and we fully support the shore-, medium-, and long-term recommendations outlined in the report.

Variable messaging boards, intersection improvements, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements will increase vehicular and pedestrian safety, provide for better functionality of the corridor, and increase connectivity for all users.

Further, a replacement bridge is absolutely necessary. The current bridge is functionally obsolete, has long outlived its useful design life, and will require extensive ongoing maintenance. Moreover, replacing the existing structure will allow for reconfiguration of this narrow chokepoint and foster increased operability for the Port of New Bedford.

We note, however, that although both the Tall Vertical Lift Bridge and Double-Left Dutch Bascule Bridge options may have merit, due to the estimated 3-month road closure, impact to harbor operations from maintaining only one navigational channel, and unknown long-term reliability of the Double-Leaf Bascule alternative, we strongly recommend advancement of the Tall Vertical Lift Bridge option.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for both your time and participation in the study process. As you stated, there are multiple benefits to proceeding with the replacement of the existing swing span. We appreciate and understand your opinion regarding the recommended bridge option and it will be factored into the next phase of the project. During this next phase, additional detail would be developed to support a final evaluation of the two options and potential selection of one bridge type.



## PUBLIC COMMENTS (EMAILS AND LETTERS)

### COMMENT 1 (EMAIL)

**From:** George Chambers <ghchambers@ualr.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2015 8:39 PM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Subject:** New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor (Draft Study) Comments

Hello John Weston, Today I am emailing you my comments to be added to the public record on the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor (Draft Study). All though I no longer live in Massachusetts due to my current employer and me being promoted to a higher position, I have been following the project to date along with my family. Upon reviewing the Draft Study, I would like to formally recommend Alternative 2W in place of the listed alternatives. My second choice would be Alternative 3W. I recommend these two choices because they allow maximum clearance for ships and these designs traditionally last longer.

As a recommendation for further analysis when ship traffic rebounds, I recommend a second Bascule Bridge in place of West bridge and implementing two one way channels; one on either side of Popes Island.

Kind regards,

Mr. George H. Chambers III

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Confidentiality Notice: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

### COMMENT 2 (EMAIL)

**From:** Janik, David (DEP) <david.janik@state.ma.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2015 3:49 PM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Cc:** Washburn, Bradford (ENV)  
**Subject:** New Bedford/Fairhaven Bridge Corridor Study

Hello John,

I quickly scanned the MDOT Bridge Study document. CZM may provide more detailed comments at a future date, but for right now I wanted to let you know that on page 5-18 the document references a New Bedford/Fairhaven Municipal Harbor Plan completed in 2002, and the Bridge Corridor Study recommends "that the City of New Bedford initiate a master planning process for the development of the harbor and New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge study area." The 2002 Municipal Harbor Plan was the first State-Approved Harbor Plan for the area. Subsequently, an updated New Bedford/Fairhaven Municipal Harbor Plan was completed and approved in 2010. The 2010 plan is the one currently in effect.

Do not hesitate to call me if you have any follow-up questions.

Regards,

Dave Janik

South Coastal Regional Coordinator  
Office of Coastal Zone Management  
508-291-3625 ext 12

### COMMENT 3(EMAIL)



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

**From:** Rednebd8@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2015 3:07 PM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Subject:** (no subject)

Hello..Dave Bender here...live in New Bedford and wondered when it will be completed.? Thanks  
[rednebd8@aol.com](mailto:rednebd8@aol.com)

## COMMENT 4 (EMAIL)

**From:** Mary S. Rapoza <Mary.Rapoza@newbedford-ma.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 18, 2015 4:11 PM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Subject:** Mass DOT New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Working Group Update

Hi John,

I am so pleased that I was able to participate in this thoughtful and thorough review of the needs along this corridor. Thank you for seriously considering the identified recreational and multi modal needs of the corridor. At the end of the process I have to give my vote to the ALTERNATIVE 3W: WIDE DOUBLE-LEAF ROLLING BASCULE BRIDGE as the most feasible although it is definitely not the most aesthetic it does address most of the concerns.

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Best,  
Mary

**Mary S. Rapoza, Director**  
**New Bedford Parks Recreation & Beaches**  
181 Hillman St., Building 3  
New Bedford, MA 02740  
Phone: 508-961-3015  
Fax: 508-991-6175



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

**From:** Mary S. Rapoza <Mary.Rapoza@newbedford-ma.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 11:42 AM  
**To:** Larry Gordon; Weston, John  
**Cc:** Donna L. Roderiques; Edward Anthes-Washburn  
**Subject:** FW: Emailing - 20150710152248949.pdf  
**Attachments:** 20150710152248949.pdf

Hi Larry and John,

We are concerned that the attached plan does not show a sidewalk across Rte 6 from the Marina/park to the businesses on the north side. We need to add a strong visual crosswalk preferably in line with the Marina building entrance across Rte 6 to the north.

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Best,  
Mary



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● **4.10.2** Based on the assessment of bicycle and pedestrian conditions along the corridor, three potential improvements have been identified. As shown in Figure 4.8, these improvements include:

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- A pedestrian ramp and staircase to replace staircase on north side of bridge; and
- Completion of sidewalk network along MacArthur Drive, which is the primary pedestrian route from the bridge to the proposed Whale's Tooth Commuter Rail Station.

*Mary S. Rapoza, Director*  
**New Bedford Parks Recreation & Beaches**  
181 Hillman St., Building 3  
New Bedford, MA 02740  
Phone: 508-961-3015  
Fax: 508-991-6175



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

**From:** Donna L. Roderiques  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 9:46 AM  
**To:** Mary S. Rapoza  
**Cc:** Edward Anthes-Washburn  
**Subject:** FW: Emailing - 20150710152248949.pdf

Hi Mary,

Are you aware there is no crosswalk in the Route 6 plan in front of Pope's Island Park? Can this be amended?

Best,  
Donna



**Donna L. Roderiques, CPA**  
Director, Administration & Finance  
Port of New Bedford  
Harbor Development Commission  
52 Fisherman's Wharf, New Bedford, MA 02740  
Office: (508) 961-3000  
[Donna.Roderiques@newbedford-ma.gov](mailto:Donna.Roderiques@newbedford-ma.gov)  
[www.portofnewbedford.org](http://www.portofnewbedford.org)

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**From:** Larry Gordon [<mailto:lgordon@middlesexco.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 10, 2015 3:04 PM  
**To:** Donna L. Roderiques  
**Subject:** Emailing - 20150710152248949.pdf

Hi Donna, Here is the final roadway layout for the project. This was revised from original plan. 4/11 ft lanes and two 4 ft shoulders. No crosswalks in our scope. Enjoy your boating and talk next week.

Best

Larry Gordon/TMC

Larry Gordon  
The Middlesex Corporation  
Project Superintendent  
One Spectacle Pond Rd.  
Littleton, MA 01460  
Office: 508-726-2605  
Fax:  
Mobile: 508-726-2605



## COMMENT 5 (EMAIL)

**From:** Charlie Denison <charlie@livablestreets.info>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 18, 2015 12:33 AM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Subject:** New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge -- A few quick questions

Hello Mr. Weston,

I have a few quick questions about the Draft Study Report for the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge. I read through the report, in particular all the sections about improving pedestrian and bicycle access through the project area. I was wondering if you could clarify the following for me regarding navigating around the stretch of Route 6 where bicycles and pedestrians are prohibited:

1. When proceeding on bike along Route 6 starting at the Pleasant St (Octopus) intersection heading east, what is the intended route for bicyclists to get to the bridge? Once they get to the bridge, are they expected to ride on the sidewalk or will there be a way to access the roadway shoulders as well?
2. When proceeding on bike along Route 6 on the bridge heading west, riding in the roadway, what is the intended route for bicyclists to get to the Pleasant St (Octopus) intersection?
3. Was any consideration given to eliminating the bicycle/pedestrian prohibition on Route 6 through the Route 18 interchange and installing sidewalks/crosswalks and bike lanes along there (either by widening the roadway structures or dropping a lane)? It seems like this would be a much more direct connection than any of the current proposals.

Thank you.

Charlie Denison  
Advocacy Committee Chair  
LivableStreets Alliance



## COMMENT 6 (EMAIL)

**From:** Eileen Marum <[u\\_emarum@umassd.edu](mailto:u_emarum@umassd.edu)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 19, 2015 11:33 AM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Subject:** Public Comment New Bedford--Fairhaven Bridge

Eileen Marum  
41 Mill Street  
Marion, MA 02738  
[u\\_emarum@umassd.edu](mailto:u_emarum@umassd.edu)

508-748-1282

Dear Mr. Weston,

The continued maintenance of the existing New Bedford-Fairhaven swing bridge and repair of the bridge superstructure in the same configuration as currently exists is not an option due to constant bridge malfunction, cost of repairs, safety, transportation impact and economic development.

When planning for the future, a taller Vertical Lift Bridge connecting New Bedford and Fairhaven could provide an air draft of 150 feet and a navigational channel width of up to 270 feet. Construction duration of 33 months would not be a greater hardship than what is presently endured every few years for swing bridge repairs, maintenance and lane closures, after which, we still have an obsolete structure.

Some might consider a new Vertical Lift Bridge estimated to cost \$100-130 million an expensive project, but in the long run, a new bridge would offer many benefits, for example, decrease annual operating and maintenance costs saving both time and money, increase vehicular and pedestrian safety, improve navigation and enhance economic development by making the Port of New Bedford more attractive as a destination for large fishing and cargo vessels.

Other areas for improvement:

1. Alleviate existing corridor congestion by adjusting signal timing and lane configuration in the corridor at Kempton Street/Mill Street and Purchase Street and at Huttleston Avenue/Main Street.
2. Make improvements to accommodate future corridor congestion on existing Fairhaven bridge detour routes at Bridge Street and Route 240, Howland Road and Main Street and on Coggeshall Street in New Bedford at the intersections of Ashley Boulevard, Front Street, Belleville Avenue and the I-95 off ramp.
3. Identify alternative routes and/or improve Intelligent Transportation Systems such as timely warning signs to motorists that the bridge is closed or will soon close to vehicular traffic, which would allow motorists to take an alternate route.
4. Improve corridor pedestrian/bicycle facilities by (a) segregating these uses onto separate sidewalks; (b) reducing the number of vehicle lanes to permit the addition of bicycle lanes; (c) creating new pedestrian connections between New Bedford and Fairhaven; and (d) improve pedestrian connections between downtown New Bedford, Route 6 bridge and the future Whale's Tooth Commuter Rail Station.



## COMMENT 7(EMAIL)

**From:** Joseph Szaro [mailto:[jszaro54@gmail.com](mailto:jszaro54@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 20, 2015 3:34 PM  
**To:** Jill Barrett  
**Subject:** Bridge Funding

Hi Jill,

One question. Who is funding this project? If individual nearby towns, please provide funding by town.

Thank you,

Joseph P. Szaro

## COMMENT 8 (EMAIL)

**From:** Jonah Mikutowicz <[jonah.mikutowicz@agmmarine.com](mailto:jonah.mikutowicz@agmmarine.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 20, 2015 8:27 AM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Subject:** New Bedford - Fairhaven Bridge Draft Report

John:

We would like to clarify one item within the draft report. Within Chapter 4, there is a subsection within each of the alternative that discusses Impact to Business Access. Within this subsection, the report lists parcels around the middle bridge that could potentially be impacted by the alternative. Tucker Roy Marine Towing & Salvage is listed as a business that could be impacted; Tucker Roy is a tenant on the South side of Fish Island but their operation is confined to a smaller area on the South side of Fish Island. AGM Marine Contractors, Inc. is the main tenant and user of the South side of Fish Island (the parcel behind the gas station) with its operation extensively utilizing the parcel. AGM is the business that could potentially be the most disrupted or impacted by any of the listed bridge alternatives.

**Jonah Mikutowicz**  
**AGM Marine Contractors, Inc.**  
**30 Echo Road | Mashpee, MA 02649**  
p: 508.477.8801 | f: 508.477.8804 | m: 508.776.9759



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

## COMMENT 9 (EMAIL)

**From:** James N Besse <jbessefamily@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 21, 2015 9:46 PM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Subject:** Fairhaven Bridge

I was reading the article in the New Bedford Standard-Times regarding the design of the new bridge. It stated to submit our opinions. Well, my husband and I both agree that if they are going to build a new bridge that it should be the Vertical Bridge.

Why would you want to spend the money on the Bascule Bridge? It will not give you the amount of clearance that the Vertical Bridge would give you. If you are going to spend the money and time on replacing the bridge you might as well spend a little bit more and get the bridge that will work best for the New Bedford Harbor.

You know that if the Bascule Bridge gets voted in, they will no sooner be done building it and then they will find out that there will not be enough clearance to accommodate the larger ships that we are hoping to do business in our port.

This is just our opinion. Hopefully, it will help you decide which bridge would be best for the New Bedford Harbor.

Thank you very much,  
Susan and James Besse  
[JBesseFamily@verizon.net](mailto:JBesseFamily@verizon.net)

## COMMENT 10 (EMAIL)

-----Original Message-----  
**From:** [rosskess1@gmail.com](mailto:rosskess1@gmail.com) [<mailto:rosskess1@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 26, 2015 2:27 PM  
**To:** Britland, Ethan (DOT)  
**Subject:** New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Study

Fix the bridge light on purchase st

Sent from my iPhone



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

## COMMENT 11 (EMAIL)

**From:** 1catadam@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 01, 2015 12:18 PM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Cc:** letters@s-t.com  
**Subject:** bridge

Nothing in the article in the New Bedford Standard-Times "Choices Down to Two for New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge" (8/19/15) persuades me that either of the two new bridge options is a viable one. According to this article, the "new bridge would not decrease the wait for vehicle traffic;" yet it is the current "wait" that bothers most drivers. Indeed, a new bridge may not be needed at all. According to a draft report of the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor Study to which this article refers, because of the width of the opening that the current bridge provides boats, the "existing swing span has been cited as an issue that *may be* [my italics] limiting port activity." Mayor Mitchell is noted as having said that "widening the channel . . . *would* [my italics] boost the economy." There's a big difference in likelihood between "may" and "would." Before being subjected to the time ("33 months for construction"--that is, almost 3 years) and expense [between \$100-\$130 million in "capital costs"] that replacing the current bridge would apparently require, let us first have credible evidence that a new bridge *will*--not "may"--be advantageous to our community. Until then, tell our leaders to order the repair of the "mechanical problems that periodically affect the [current] bridge" that engineers have said exist.

Catherine Adamowicz  
312 Maple Street  
New Bedford, MA 02740  
774 202-1280

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."  
(Mohandas K. Gandhi)



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

## COMMENT 12 (EMAIL)

**From:** Edward Anthes-Washburn <Edward.Anthes-Washburn@newbedford-ma.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 06, 2015 12:51 PM  
**To:** Weston, John  
**Cc:** Jay Borkland; John C. Crowther; John McAllister  
**Subject:** Comments on New Bedford/Fairhaven Bridge Study

John-

I've been reading through the report and I think you and your team did a good job.

One thing I'd like to comment on is the SER process described on pages 5.19 and 5.20.

Because the SER process is tied to the Superfund Cleanup, it may not be available after the EPA completes their cleanup. While the EPA will have significantly lowered the levels of PCBs in the harbor, they will not touch any material below 50ppm and that sediment will remain. This material is not suitable for offshore disposal. If the bridge project is completed after the EPA leaves NB Harbor and discontinues the SER process of placing impacted sediments in Confined Aquatic Disposal Cells (CAD Cells) then it must be removed and placed in upland Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)-approved and monitored landfills.

The cost of upland disposal is much higher- a factor of 10 the last time we investigated. The cost of placing the material in a CAD cell is around \$60/CY versus \$600/CY for upland disposal (I've cc'd Apex to provide more backup information as they have the bid costs available). The cost difference could be significant when dredging the area where the current bridge sits, as either recommended alternative will require. If there is 5,000-10,000CY of impacted sediment for the project the cost of disposal goes from \$300,000-\$600,000 to \$3,000,000 to \$6,000,000. This is significant, and getting this project on the current list of dredging projects should be seen as a priority before the EPA completes their cleanup.

Thank you for your attention on this important detail. The HDC is happy to work with MassDOT to ensure this project gets on the Phase V dredging list.

Sincerely,

Edward C. Anthes-Washburn  
Acting Port Director



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

## COMMENT 13 (LETTER)



### The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives

State House, Boston 02133-1054

September 18, 2015

Mr. John Weston, HDR  
695 Atlantic Avenue  
Boston, MA 02111

Re: Draft New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor Study

Dear Mr. Weston:

We write with respect to the Draft New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge Corridor Study report. We believe the project will provide significant improvements to the region and surrounding businesses, and we fully support the short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations outlined in the report.

Variable messaging boards, intersection improvements, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements will increase vehicular and pedestrian safety, provide for better functionality of the corridor, and increase connectivity for all users.

Further, a replacement bridge is absolutely necessary. The current bridge is functionally obsolete, has long outlived its useful design life, and will require extensive ongoing maintenance. Moreover, replacing the existing structure will allow for a reconfiguration of this narrow chokepoint and foster increased operability for the Port of New Bedford.

We note, however, that although both the Tall Vertical Lift Bridge and Double-Leaf Dutch Bascule Bridge options may have merit, due to the estimated 3-month road closure, impact to harbor operations from maintaining only one navigational channel, and unknown long-term



NEW BEDFORD-FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE  
CORRIDOR STUDY

reliability of the Double-Leaf Bascule alternative, we strongly recommend advancement of the Tall Vertical Lift Bridge option.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

William M. Straus  
State Representative  
10<sup>th</sup> Bristol District

Antonio F.D. Cabral  
State Representative  
13<sup>th</sup> Bristol District