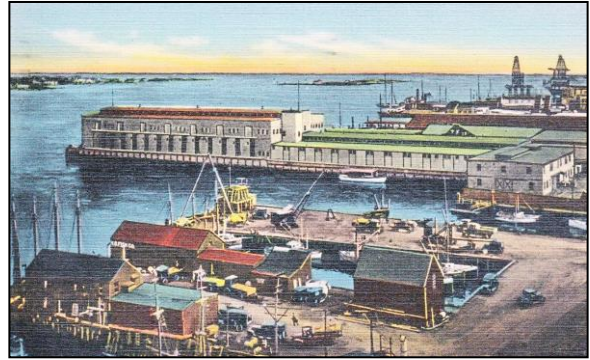


State Pier Documentation New Bedford, Massachusetts



Under an on-call contract with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, AHS documented the State Pier in New Bedford and evaluated its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Originally completed in 1917, the pier's warehouse capacity was expanded two years later to accommodate massive cotton cargoes bound for New Bedford's textile mills. After WWII more improvements were made and by the mid-1950s, the pier had been doubled in size to eight acres.

The early to-mid-20th century was a time of substantial investment in US waterways' infrastructure, and New England states built numerous state-funded piers. When it was built, the New Bedford State Pier was a representative example of early 20th-century pier engineering, as well as an example of the Commonwealth's investment in municipal economic development through improved water transportation. It was a successful venture: the pier kept New Bedford's textile factories well supplied with cotton through the 1930s. It also served as an important facility during World War II, and it remained valuable enough to warrant investment in a major expansion in the 1950s. As a working pier, it has undergone a series of renovations since then.



While not recommended as National Register-eligible, the State Pier remains an important multi-use state facility under the management of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Its primary uses are passenger services including ferries, cruise ships, and chartered boats; shipping and refrigerated cargo operations; commercial fishing; state and federal government offices and dockage; and marine support services.

