

The Weekly Take

Fix You: How the Port of Baltimore survived a catastrophe

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Spencer Levy

On March 26th, a 984-foot, 106,000-ton cargo ship called the Dali lost power in the Baltimore harbor. It struck one of the city's vital transportation arteries, the Francis Scott Key Bridge, causing the structure to collapse into the Patapsco River. Tragically, and most importantly, the lives of six bridge workers were lost in the crash, and countless others were impacted. Since that morning, the recovery has been remarkable. By mid-May, an interagency effort cleared more than 200 tons of debris from the channel. The Dali was floated out of the shipping lane, back to the terminal. In all, it took just 78 days until the Port of Baltimore reopened at full capacity in early June. On this episode, a conversation with the Baltimore who has overseen the response.

Jonathan Daniels

As tragic as it was, we look at lessons learned. We look at opportunities to make sure that we create a more resilient transportation network, into, out of, and throughout the Port of Baltimore and beyond.

Spencer Levy

That's Jonathan Daniels, Executive Director of the Maryland Ports Administration. He was appointed to the post last February, the month before the incident. After spending more than three decades as a leader at various maritime and inland ports from Port Everglades in South Florida to others across the Gulf Coast and as far north as western New York and all the way to Maine. Coming up, a conversation about vital infrastructure: the Port of Baltimore, produced at Bisnow's recent Baltimore State of the Market event conference at CFG Arena. Reflections on the Key Bridge tragedy, on managing the complex response required to reopen Baltimore Harbor, and ultimately, a look at those lessons learned for the road ahead. I'm Spencer Levy, and that's right now on The Weekly Take.

Spencer Levy

Jonathan, thank you for coming out today. I'm delighted. My name is Spencer Levy, a Global Client Strategist for CBRE, proud Baltimore resident for 24 years, and Jonathan Daniels, Executive Director of the Maryland Ports Administration. Jonathan, thanks for coming out.

Jonathan Daniels

Great to be here today with you. Thank you.

Spencer Levy

So, Jonathan, the bridge tragedy will come up many times today, and we're going to get into the nitty gritty of the when and where. But let's start off with something very positive.

Congratulations on reopening the port 11 weeks after the tragedy. Tell us about how we got open so quickly.

Jonathan Daniels

I've had the opportunity through some of my previous port jobs, and I served as the CEO and Executive Director of the Mississippi State Port Authority down in Gulfport, Mississippi, which I had the opportunity – I led the rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. I then took a position as the CEO and Port Director of Port Everglades right at the beginning of the pandemic. You'd think, why would someone take the job as the CEO of the third busiest cruise home port in the world during the pandemic, when there was no cruise? I then started here on February 5th, six weeks before the bridge incident. And all of a sudden, walk into that situation. I've had the opportunity to work through crisis. I will tell you, I've never seen the level of cooperation and the way in which people came together at all levels. And I think that's in many respects, led by the persistence and the resiliency of the people in the state of Maryland, in Baltimore. When I went home on night two, my wife was there. She greeted me. It had been a very, very long day. And day two, you're still trying to figure out what happened. You're still looking out, you're still amazed at what happened. But she brought that up. She goes, you dealt with Hurricane Katrina. You dealt with the pandemic. And now, six weeks after arriving in Baltimore, the bridge goes in the water. Emergency seems to follow you. No one's going to want to hire you ever again. I was like, you know what? That is okay. What I have found here is a level of commitment by the maritime community, by the economic development and developer community. And then when you bring in the federal government, which essentially was marshaling resources within the hours of the incident and before any contracts were in, the leadership of Governor Moore, as he set forth his four priorities, really establishing the pace and the theme under which this was going to happen, the recovery and the opening of the port was going to happen. Three out of those four priorities have been met. The last one with the bridge rebuild. That's going to take a little bit of time, but ultimately we're going to get there. But what many people took a look at as possibly taking up to a year, some people were specific, said 11 months. It happened in 11 weeks. That was working with a unified command with the U.S. Coast Guard and the Army Corps of Engineers, making sure that they did it as expeditiously as possible, but as safely as possible, as well. I think all of us know that any call that comes in at 1:30 in the morning is not a good call. And I tell my kids that. You can call me at 1:30, but it's not ultimately going to be a good call. The way in which everybody came together during that period of time, getting the right equipment and marshaling the right resources, the planning that was necessary, and then bringing in the three salvage companies that had their various expertise outside the channel, inside the channel, and then the one that was brought in dealing with the vessel itself. That expertise was absolutely critical to be able to put together an engineering plan that changed each and every day with a commitment to be able to open the channel up. And yesterday we had the opportunity, even though we've been seeing some temporary channels open up, we've seen some deep draft activity, we've opened up the 700 foot wide, 50 foot deep channel with very, very limited restrictions based on environmental considerations. That channel is opened up. Any vessel can come in. Any vessel can go. And a lot of our cargo operations and vessel traffic has returned to pre-incident levels.

Spencer Levy

Amazing. Eleven weeks, pre-incident levels. Congratulations. So now let's go back. And I think you started our conversation on day two. Let's just go back to day one. And then the moment you got the call, what was that first day like? Tell me what happened.

Jonathan Daniels

Again, day one, anybody that's had the opportunity to deal with any type of crisis, day one, especially one of this magnitude, is what I call panic day. You know, the drive in that morning, though, was about 30 minutes. Spent about the first 20 minutes getting brief staff bringing me up to speed. What was happening, verification under the fact that there were people that were missing. And while we do train for, as port professionals, vessel collisions, for some type of crisis, closure of a channel, you're never prepared for the loss of life. We lost six Marylanders that day that were doing their work in order to be able to maintain that infrastructure. And from the governor's perspective, and certainly from our perspective, until that last victim was found and returned and allowed for some type of closure with their family, it was always a recovery effort. Even though we were involved in salvage, it was always, always recovery. Then had the opportunity to spend about five minutes just myself reflecting, what could I have done different? What could we as a board administration have done different? And you really start to take a look and you become very introspective as to how did this happen? What happened? Again, that's day one, is what happened? And then the magnitude of it didn't hit me until I had the opportunity to walk out of my house that morning, turned and saw the video, and it felt like a dream during that period of time. You just don't expect something of that magnitude to occur. The immediacy of it, of that catastrophe, is something that I will remember for certainly for the rest of my life. But I think as we go through these training opportunities and you have the type of support that we had from the governor, the federal government, the mood quickly changes. Your focus changes very rapidly from what happened to how do we get through this? And as I told my staff on about day two or day three, when I had the opportunity to meet with a lot of the directors and send the video out to our entire staff, I said, if you're worried about the bridge going into the river, don't. It's already happened. It was a very poignant point at that point because ultimately what we were doing was it got them away from worrying about something they could no longer control. You will not be judged on the fact that the bridge went into the river. You're going to be judged by the fact of how we respond to this. What is the human impact beyond the point of the six people that went into the water and unfortunately perished? How are we going to help the thousands of longshoremen, the men and women that make up our union labor? How are we going to help in minimizing the impact to the 8,000 people that work inside the gates, day in and day out? They're the freight forwarders. They're the truckers. They're the ones that when they went to bed on the 25th, the evening of the 25th, they had shifts that were in line the next day. They had the dispatch that called them. Now all of a sudden those jobs have stopped. So now they're impacted and they're impacted by the bridge closure, and they're impacted by the fact that the port, which supports more than 21,000 direct jobs, more than 270,000 jobs nationwide, all of a sudden, all of those jobs, their livelihoods impacted. We had a longshoreman that three weeks before the incident had signed the letter, had signed all the documents, and purchased a new house. How was his family going to make the mortgage? That afternoon one of the longshoremen bought a brand new truck. How was he going to make his first payment? So it immediately goes from feeling sorry for ourselves over what happened in the bridge closure, to what do we do next to be able to support the families of those that lost their lives? And how do we support the families that make a livelihood associated with the Port of Baltimore? And so that took my mind off of the incident very quickly. And it was also the same way with the unified command. Let's focus on what it takes to get back up and going.

Spencer Levy

And we're going to turn to that in just a moment of the future. But last question on the incident. Where is the boat today?

Jonathan Daniels

The vessel is sitting, right now, at Seagirt Terminal. On May 20th, it was floated. That was possible because of the controlled demolition that occurred. Resolved Marine out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, they were the solvers associated, and under contract with Maersk, and with the owners of the vessel. That controlled demolition allowed, a week later, for that vessel to be removed. It's sitting over at the Seagirt container terminal. There is still work that needs to be done to be able to remove material, make sure she is seaworthy. In the next week or so, she's supposed to depart, and will head down to Norfolk, where the removal of the containers, deal with some of the insurance, the general average, and all the legal aspects to come up with something like this. But she is in a safe position right now, and then will be moving out in the next week or so.

Spencer Levy

Let's talk big picture now. Pre-incident today. Just talk about how much tonnage, and that's the term that I think is used, goes through Baltimore, and what are the types of goods that go through Baltimore's port?

Jonathan Daniels

Sure. We are probably one of the most diverse ports that you're going to see in the United States, if not the world. In 2022, one of our best years and one of our record years, we moved about 44 million tons of cargo across not only the public docks, but the 33 private docks, and in its amalgamation, makes up the jurisdiction that is the Port to Baltimore. 2023, that was 52.3 million tons, a significant increase. And when you think of Baltimore, you can take a look and you throw a dart up on the type of cargo, we handle it. We are the 11th largest container port in the United States, and last year did 1.1 million TEUs. For those of you that don't know what a TEU is, it's a 20 foot equivalent unit. So when you see an MSC or a Maersk or a Dole or Chiquita box that's going down there and has product in it, that's 40 feet long. That's two TEUs. So we move 1.1 million TEUs on an import and export basis, on an annual basis. We are a large bulk handler as well, both on the import and the export. We're number one when it comes to sugar. We're the sweetest port in the United States, those of you who have the opportunity, that know the inner harbor and know Baltimore Harbor, you see that Domino sign? When that Domino sign comes on, it means that work is going on and the Port of Baltimore is strong. Even during the time when maritime traffic was shut down or suspended, that sign was coming on. The port never shut down during that period of time. We just slowed up a little bit. We're also number one when it comes into the import and export of automobiles. In 2023, we handled more than 847,000 automobiles and light trucks. And it's all the great names that you hear on an international stage. It's both traditional combustion as well as EV. We handled last year about 100,000 Mazdas on an import basis. We also handled 1600 McLarens. Even during the closure, as many of these vehicles needed to get into the U.S. market, they went to Virginia, they went to New York, New Jersey, they went to Georgia. But then they were put on the shuttle and brought to Baltimore for processing. We have four auto processors. Out of all the vehicles to enter the United States, 80% of those need some type of final work, whether it's some electrical work, some programming that needs to be done, whether it's a bumper hitch on some type of Toyota before it goes to the consumer. All of that is done to the largest extent in the United States through the Port of Baltimore. So while our marine activity was shut down and suspended, we still needed to engage in our port operations and make sure that our docks and our terminals were open and available to make sure that while there was a change in the supply chain, it wasn't cut off during that period of time. That just shows the importance of the port and the diversity that we have.

Spencer Levy

And while we were talking before getting on stage today, the port is open and operating with pre-incident volumes, but it's still going to take a while for the supply chain to get completely back to normal from an import perspective. And we talked about some of the short term impacts that may impact the Baltimore economy, including something that might be somewhat inflationary in the near term.

Jonathan Daniels

Absolutely. You know, I thank my colleagues, my counterparts in Virginia, in New York, and the other ports, for taking on our cargo. What we have told them and what we told Secretary Buttigieg, as well, during many of our briefings, is that while we're shut down on the marine side, certainly we need to make sure that the supply chain remains flexible, nimble, viable and allowing for those goods to enter the United States and also export. But make no bones about it, when the channel opens up, we want our cargo back. And we made that very, very clear. And it is coming back. The promises that were made to us that they were returning, those promises are being fully fulfilled. But as you did mention, it's going to take a while for that balance to occur. And a lot of that is going to be on the import side, specifically into the container market. The importance of the Port of Baltimore to this region cannot be overstated. 70% of all inbound containers are consumed within 70 miles of the port. As one of the largest MSAs in the United States, we're a large consumption zone. And as we talked with the lines coming in from Asia, coming in from the Med, from the rest of Europe, the rest of the world, they have all indicated that while our cargo traditionally is destined for Baltimore, while it was necessary to go elsewhere, it is not long term and sustainable because of inland transportation costs. You want to put as much cargo on the largest mode of transport, and get it as close as you can to market. That's the Port of Baltimore. And while we can build infrastructure, we can build facilities and make those investments, you can't build your geography. Where you are is where you are. We're the closest to one of the largest MSAs in the United States. We're also the closest port to the Upper Midwest. So when it comes to getting into the Chicago market, and unless you're going through the Saint Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes, this is the easiest way to get there. From project cargo to containerization and containerized cargo to automobiles, if you're getting into the Upper Midwest, the Port of Baltimore is it. And it's only in the opportunity now for us, with all eyes on us, to be able to expand, make sure that people understand the importance of Baltimore to the nation's economy, as well.

Spencer Levy

I want to go back to a stat that you mentioned just now on stage. Pretty remarkable. 70% of all goods that are shipped in are consumed within 70 miles of the port. I always thought the ratio was a little bit more balanced, in part because we have I-95 here, we have 83 here, we have 70 here, we have the train line here. But just talk about the, I guess, symbiotic, to use a fancy word, relationship between all the different modes of transportation and the Port of Baltimore.

Jonathan Daniels

We are truly multimodal, and we're only going to see an expansion of that in the next few years. That's why the importance of the Key Bridge was so big to us, not only for commuting patterns and moving people north and south, and moving people around Baltimore, but the ability to move north, south on the 95 corridor. If you're moving hazmat and you're not placarded to move through the tunnel, you have to utilize an alternative route. You can't use our tunnels. And because of that, you have about 500 trucks a day that we're moving north and south across the Key Bridge. That's now cutting off a major artery. 39,000 vehicles would move across that bridge on a daily basis. So the road connectivity that we have north and south and heading out west is absolutely fantastic.

The rail connections that we have here, both Norfolk Southern and CSX, and there will be a massive investment that's going to be made and it's going to open up the Howard Street Tunnel project, which is a series of projects to be able to elevate and access and allow for double stack capabilities between Baltimore all the way up through a variety of bridge elevations, alterations, all the way up to Philadelphia. It will allow the port for the first time to have double stack capabilities moving into the Upper Midwest. The commitment that has been made by the state, the commitment that's been made by the federal government financially, as well as CSX and the private sector, that gives Baltimore access to an additional 160,000 containers on an annual basis. And it's one of the reasons why you have the agreement between a large terminal operation at Tradepoint Atlantic, and the agreement that they have with Mediterranean Shipping Company, with MSC, and their terminal operations arm TIL, allowing them the opportunity to build out a \$1 billion – a billion dollar – terminal over at Sparrows Point, which now allows us the opportunity to see a significant increase in our capacity throughout the port, because that's going to move off the public docks, move to a private facility. So I end up getting access to a new container storage yard, and I don't have to pay a cent for it. That's a pretty good use of public funds right there, and a great return on the investment that's being made by the private sector. So when it is an integrated transportation network that gives us access to rail, road, water, because of the barge activities that are out there, you're looking at a transportation network within the state of Maryland and the connectivity beyond as you'd see at any port.

Spencer Levy

In one of the prior panels, somebody used the term, don't miss this moment. And do you think that this moment, however tragic it was, may be the moment to catapult Baltimore beyond, not just from the water port, but because the focus of so much of the world is now on Baltimore and its different modes of transportation. You mentioned several of the other sites where industrial is being done. Is this the moment where we can get Baltimore to the next level, whatever that might be?

Jonathan Daniels

You never waste a good crisis. And while as tragic as it was, we look at lessons learned. We look at opportunities to make sure that we create a more resilient transportation network, into, out of, and throughout the port of Baltimore, and beyond. And I think the biggest thing, and I heard from people throughout the world, they were talking about resiliency associated with their transportation network because they have bridge structures that go over their waterways, as well. So I think there's a measure of safety that everybody's going to be able to take a look at. That certainly will be a part of what the Department of Transportation looks at long term with the rebuild of the Key Bridge. But it certainly puts a focus on the Port of Baltimore and on ports as a whole. I oftentimes do a lot of my presentations, and I'll start out that if you want to find out how important a piece of infrastructure is to an economy, pull it out for a period of time and be without it. Now, I hope that I would never have to deal with that, but we do have to deal with that right now. And people see for job creation, for the economy as an economic driver, they all understand what it's like now to be without the port. And that even goes deeper into the hospitality and tourism sector, because we have Cruise Maryland as a component of what we do here. And last year moved about 109 vessels through our cruise terminal at South Locust Point, more than 444,000 passengers, the majority of them end up coming in. They drive in. And the first day that we opened up again, I spoke to people from Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, certainly Maryland, Georgia, North Carolina, New York. They're coming in the day before. They're staying in our hotels. They're eating in our restaurants. I don't know anything about this, but they are even having a drink in our bars. And that's fine. Enjoy everything that Baltimore and the state of Maryland, what we have to offer. And usually

about 35% of the people that sail out of a particular location end up coming back again outside of the cruise market. So you're looking at heavy industrial. You're looking at the Upper Midwest and the industrial corridor. You're looking at the agriculture industry in the Midwest, as well, because of the amount of combines that we handle, farm equipment, tractors. You're looking at hospitality and tourism. So certainly the silver lining is the focus on the port, the importance to the economy, and how do we now turn that into a situation where we can leverage and get additional funding in on the public and private sector, improve our infrastructure, improve our efficiency, and ultimately become a better Port of Baltimore. We started our strategic business plan and the internal documentation that we're going to be doing with that, about three weeks after the bridge incident. All right. So we can never stop planning for the future. We can never stop looking at ways in which we can improve.

Spencer Levy

So, Jonathan, I'm looking here at a list of the top 50 ports in the United States. And Baltimore ranks high in a lot of categories, but it's extraordinarily competitive. And how does Baltimore compete against Savannah? Against Philadelphia? Against Virginia? Against, I mean, against Los Angeles? I mean, who are your competitors now? Again, I want to take one step back first. These very same competitors, I think, shown during this crisis of actually stepping up. So this is not in any way knocking them because thank them for what they did. But at the same time, we're in a competitive business. How does Baltimore maintain its competitive stature versus these other great ports and move forward?

Jonathan Daniels

You know, what we end up doing—we are in a hyper competitive environment. Port directors are judged by tonnage. You're judged by revenue. You're judged by TEU count on an annual basis. And they did step up. And the fact is, I think many of them are going to owe me a Christmas card when it comes time to getting their bonuses on an annual basis, because 20,000 vehicles ended up going through with my friend Griff Lynch down in Georgia. You had 12,000 and went through with Beth Rooney up in New York, New Jersey. Steven Edwards, the amount of vessels that did not come up the Chesapeake and come up the Patapsco, stopped in Virginia. All right. So all their numbers are going to go up in certain categories. That's a temporary blip. And all the advantages that we had prior to the incident are still there. It's a historic blip, but it's temporary in nature. We are open. We are rebuilding. We will come back and we will ultimately be better. But just saying that is one thing. Doing it is something completely different. So you look at ways on an annual basis under which you improve, because a vessel and the investment that is made in that vessel, the only time they lose money is when they're sitting at the dock or sitting at anchor, when they're not moving. So how do we get them into the dock, move as quickly as possible, and get them off the dock? So we look at outside, third party verification, like the World Bank, like the Journal of Commerce, to make sure that we're doing things as efficiently as possible. We also need a consistent infrastructure development program. You can't wait for the new ships to arrive. You have to be ready and you have to anticipate. So we have, over the next five years, probably three quarters of \$1 billion of planned infrastructure development. Even with the new terminal, which is going to be paid for by private sector, we have a significant amount of work that needs to be done enhancing our facilities to make sure that we do not lose that competitive edge. And as you said, our competitors are New York, Wilmington, with the \$700 million development that they're going to be doing there, Philadelphia, Virginia, Georgia, on the roll on roll off, LA, Long Beach, because of rail bridge operations. You have to set yourself apart. One of the things that does set us apart is our work ethic, the fact that we have extremely strong labor, we

have extremely strong efficiencies across the dock and ultimately that allows us the opportunity to remain more competitive.

Spencer Levy

Well, we only have a couple minutes left here. So let me just ask a future question here. The ships just keep getting bigger. And, I understand that Baltimore's depth is 50 feet, but some of the larger ships may need 55 feet. Looking in your crystal ball, keeping Baltimore most competitive going forward, what are some of the changes that you would see to keep us competitive, whether it's making us 55 foot depth or having additional rail capacity, which you mentioned. What are the keys to the future for Baltimore's port?

Jonathan Daniels

Part of it is realizing where your strengths are. All right. Everybody talks about there was an arms race associated with infrastructure development in depth that talked about you need to be big ship ready. We don't look at it that way. We want to be right ship ready. And that means at some point, the amount of investment that's made just far outpaces the return on investment. Going to 55 feet, I don't see it happening, but maximizing 50 feet, maximizing air draft opportunities. And while we can handle 15 to 16,000 TEU ships that are in excess of 1100 feet long and in excess of 160 feet in beam, I'm not sure we want to bring a 20,000 TEU vessel in, because while it's great, it looks wonderful on social media and we can pound our chests and say we're handling this big ship, I don't want to drop that amount of containers or even 20% of that on the terminal. It will choke off the community, it will choke off the terminal, and once you lose cargo because of inefficiencies, you can't get it back. On top of that, we have communities that butt right up against our gates. We want to work hand in hand to make sure that we're developing the port in a way that's sustainable, but also it does not overwhelm the community. It evolves with the community. So external transportation infrastructure is something we're going to be keying in on very big. And while people say, well, that's not port improvement, it is because you have to get the cargo out, you need to get it in. And whether that's road, rail or water, you better do it efficiently. If you lose a cargo because of inefficiency, cargo damage or anything like that, you won't get it back. I have found that out before. And that is something that we're just not going to allow to happen. The Port of Baltimore separated itself in many ways. We're going to continue to do that. And we are going to play upon this to make sure that we're stronger going in the future.

Spencer Levy

I know we have one question, but I'm going to ask one personal question first, if you don't mind.

Jonathan Daniels

Please.

Spencer Levy

From Genesee, New York, upstate New York, inland, and yet you are the director of one of the most robust ports in the world. How'd you go from Genesee, New York, to be sitting here today?

Jonathan Daniels

When you say Genesee, oftentimes we think of Genesee beer, Genesee cream ale. Those of us that have had the opportunity, and I see some heads that are nodding, I see some eyes rolling back because many of us that enjoyed some Genesee cream ale will never forget that experience. Again, I'm from upstate New York, from the Finger Lakes. The

opportunity to come to Baltimore. I was in South Florida for the last four years down as the CEO of Port Everglades—I love this area. And I stumbled into this world. Graduated in 1991 with a bachelor's degree from The Citadel, the Military college of South Carolina. And I followed in my dad's footsteps in two ways. My dad was a college football coach for 30 years, and so I wanted to follow in his footsteps there. But my father also followed in my grandfather's steps and he was a longshoreman at the Port of Erie. So I followed my dad's footsteps, became a football coach in a small school called Maine Maritime Academy up in Castine, Maine. With my military background, was asked to take a position in the commandant's office, and one of the first things I had the opportunity to do was sail as a watch officer and be exposed to the maritime industry. Those of us that end up on the docks in one way or another, we can't leave. We try, but we can't leave. We always get pulled back in many respects. But it's the pride. I was third generation to work on the Great Lakes. My grandfather was an oar handler at the Port of Erie. My father started out as a green shovel man in the grain elevators at the Port of Erie as members of the ILA. My dad did that for a year and then said, you know what? This work is tough, ended up going to the Coast Guard. Then became a college football coach. I stumbled into it in some ways. I want to be a college football coach. Had the opportunity to meet that dream. But now I wouldn't be any other place. And I'm so happy to be here, part of this maritime community. And the decision I made to come up here, even with the incident. Someone asked me, do you regret coming up here? Well, if I could have seen that the bridge was going to go in the water before I got here, I may not have come. But the fact is, it happened. And I've seen a group that came together like none other in order to make this work. And we are going to see that. That's the type of attitude that's in Baltimore, in the state of Maryland. So those developers that are taking advantage of that can do and gritty attitude, and this is our time. It's Maryland's decade and it's Baltimore's time. And I've heard the governor say that and his leadership was one of the things that sold me on coming up here.

Spencer Levy

Great story, Jonathan. Thank you. We're gonna take one question and then we're going to wrap it up. One question.

Audience question

One question. As we look into the future, the bridge is going to get rebuilt. How does the port plan for that? Do you have to shut it down? What does it look like?

Jonathan Daniels

Great question. Because what we can't do is we can't... we were shut down for 11 weeks. We can't afford to do that again. There's a request for proposal that's out on the street right now, toward the end of June. It is due for a progressive design build, programmed to be able to design and then build the new bridge. We're looking at about four and a half years. So the completion of that in the last quarter of 2028. But the contractor will have to work with the port, will have to work with the U.S. Coast Guard to make sure that they minimize or negate any impacts to closures of the channel. If there is a large lift that's being done, concrete pour, something in that center span, we'll work with them to make sure that our carriers understand if there are going to be any potential closures. We're also going to ask if they do some work at night or off hours so it does not impact our ship schedule, but we will be very, very integrated in with the design and building concept to make sure that we negate and push those carriers. Shippers should not be worried about any impacts to the closure of the channel during the construction process.

Spencer Levy

Well, on behalf of Bisnow, I want to thank Jonathan Daniels, Executive Director of Maryland Ports Administration. First of all, congratulations for getting it reopened under the face of terrible tragedy.

Jonathan Daniels

Thank you. Baltimore's open. Baltimore's back.

Spencer Levy

And let's go Baltimore ports.

Event Emcee

Thank you gentlemen. Thank you Spencer.

Spencer Levy

Thanks once again to Jonathan Daniels and to the folks at Bisnow for helping to make this conversation possible. For more on the event, you can check out Bisnow's website. For more on our show, check out our website for additional content as well. You can find that at CBRE.com/TheWeeklyTake. And don't forget to subscribe, rate, and review The Weekly Take wherever you listen. We'll be back next week turning from ports to portfolios, and thoughts about strategies for optimizing corporate real estate holdings and investments, from the global real estate leader of a Fortune 15 company. Thank you for joining us. I'm Spencer Levy. Be smart. Be safe. Be well.