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Town of Lawrence

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LAWRENCE

Lawrence, originally a rural farming town, was transformed into a major industrial center when Boston entrepreneurs developed huge textile mills on the Merrimack River to use the power of its water falls. The mill owners built canals, a dam and a reservoir, boarding houses and a machine shop for locomotives, creating one of the first industrial complexes in the country. Employees came first from other parts of New England to work in the mills, but the city has traditionally served as an entry point to immigrants and by the turn of the century, Irish, Polish, Italian, Syrian, and French-Canadian were following the jobs to Lawrence and setting a standard of proud diversification for the city which is maintained to this day with newcomers from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Vietnam and Cambodia. Despite the huge technological changes over the years, the manufacture of textiles and of men and women's clothing is still central to Lawrence's economy and some of the finest names in apparel are made in the city. City planners are working to broaden the city's industrial and business base and diversify.

Community Assets

The following assets were determined based on interviews with City residents, City officials, and the Greater Lawrence Chamber of Commerce.

- 1) Location – Close proximity to Interstates 495 and 93.
- 2) Workforce – Availability of the workforce and the low wage requirements.
- 3) The mill buildings act as incubators for new businesses or industries. Current rents are \$3 per s.f. in these buildings.
- 4) Several active projects are being administered that focus on infrastructure improvements.
- 5) Job training and educational development from local services, area colleges, or on the job training programs.
- 6) The entire City is an economic opportunity area (EOA).
- 7) The City is working with the Town of Methuen to establish a shared Empowerment Zone.
- 8) Lawrence offers a significant number of sites of revealing beauty.
- 9) Riverbank sites such as the Spicket offer quiet scenery.
- 10) Rich ethnic traditions and residential population

General

Established: 1847 (Town), 1853 (City)
 Type of Community: Urbanized Center (DOR), Central City (MVPC)
 Total Land Area: Approximately 6.97 square miles or 4,753 acres (MVPC)
 Location: 26 miles north of Boston, 92 miles south of Portland, NH (DHCD)
 Population per Square Mile: 10,194 (1999 DOR)
 Population: 68,807 (DOR, 1996 Population)
 Population Projections:

| | <u>Total Population</u> | | <u>White, Non-Hispanic</u> | | <u>Minority</u> | |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------|---------------|
| | % | # Growth | % | # Growth | % | # |
| | Growth | | Growth | | Growth | Growth |
| 1990 - 2000 | 22% | 15,484 | -19% | (7,265) | 72% | 22,749 |
| 2000 - 2010 | 24% | 20,941 | -20% | (6,141) | 50% | 27,082 |

(Source: David Hartleb, "Annual Legislator's Meeting," April 4, 1997)

Build-Out Projection: City is built out to capacity. Current demolition program has created approximately 400 vacant lots for reuse.
 Median Age: 28.7 (1990 U.S. Census)

Economic Data

Currently, Lawrence is the home of two major industrial parks and planning a third major industrial park. The city government is actively pursuing the reuse of former mill building manufacturing sites for clothing manufacturing, bakery production, offices, and housing. In addition, the City has an active demolition program that is being utilized to create space for business retention and attraction.

Labor Force

1990 Average Time to Work: 19.1 minutes (1990 US Census)
 1998 Labor Force: 28,130, 25,744 Employment (1999 DET)
 1998 Unemployment Rate: 8.5%, State Average 3.3% (1999 DET)
 1997 Wages (DET): Total annual payroll \$598.5M, average annual payroll \$28,603
 1997 Employment: 1,038 establishments, employing 20,925 persons.

| <u># of Persons</u> | <u>Type of Establishment</u> | <u>Percentage of Total</u> |
|---------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 23 | Agriculture | 0.1% |
| 2,658 | Government | 12.7% |
| 388 | Construction | 1.9% |
| 6,603 | Manufacturing | 31.6% |
| 535 | TCTU (Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities) | 2.6% |
| 2,969 | Trade | 14.2% |
| 418 | FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate) | 2.0% |
| 7,308 | Services | 34.9% |
| | Total: | 100.0% |

Largest Employers

1. Malden Mills, 1,400+/- full/part-time persons (1993 DHCD)
2. Lawrence General Hospital, 1,300 full/part-time persons (1993 DHCD)
3. Shawmut Bank, 650 full/part-time persons (1993 DHCD)
4. Grieco Brothers, Inc., 500 full/part-time persons (1993 DHCD)
5. Bull Worldwide Information Systems, 500 full/part-time persons (1993 DHCD)

1990 Income (US Census)

Per Capita Income: \$9,686, State Rank 351
 Median Household Income: \$22,183, State Rank 348

FY 99 Tax Levy and Assessed Value (1999 DOR)

| <u>Tax Classification</u> | <u>Tax Rate</u> | <u>Tax Levy</u> | <u>Assessed Value</u> | <u>Percentage of Total</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Residential | \$19.62 | \$15,730,733 | \$801,770,301 | 71.3% |
| Open Space | \$19.62 | \$ 16,514 | \$ 841,680 | 0.0% |
| Commercial | \$37.24 | \$5,973,648 | \$160,409,441 | 14.3% |
| Industrial | \$37.24 | \$3,327,323 | \$ 89,348,084 | 7.9% |
| Personal Property | \$37.24 | \$2,684,124 | \$ 72,076,360 | 6.5% |
| Total: | | \$27,732,342 | \$1,124,445,866 | 100.0% |

Education (DOE)

| | | |
|--|--|----------------------|
| Educational Attainment: | 56.9% High School Graduate or Higher (1990 US Census) 9.0% Bachelor's Degree or Higher (1990 US Census) | |
| Lawrence School District: | | |
| - Elementary/Middle | General Donovan, grades K-2 Arlington, grades K-8 John Breen, grades K-5 Alexander B. Bruce, grades K2-8 Robert Frost, grades K-8 James F. Hennessey, grades K-5 J. P. Kane, grades 3-8 Francis M. Leahy, grades K-5 James F. Leonard, grades 3-8 Henry K. Oliver, grades 2-8 John R. Rollins, grades K-5 Daniel Saunders, grades K-2 Charles S. Storrow, grades K-2 John K. Tarbox, grades K-5 Emily G. Wetherbee, grades K-5 Lawrence High, grades 9-12 | |
| - High School | | |
| Other (Public) High Schools: | Greater Lawrence Reg. Voc. Tech., grades 9-14 | |
| Statistic for Grades 9-12: | <u>District Average</u> | <u>State Average</u> |
| Number Students per Teacher (1996-7) | 21.4 | 18.0 |
| Percent Planning 4-year College (1996-7) | 41.8% | 53.4% |
| SAT Scores - Verbal (1998) | 370 | 502 |
| - Math (1998) | 375 | 502 |
| - Participation Rate (1998) | 51% | 86% |
| Drop-Out Rate (1996-7) | 10.4% | 3.4% |
| Colleges: | Northern Essex Community College | |

Metropolitan Statistical Area:

Lawrence

Tourist Facilities:

See other in the Cultural Resources section.

Hospitals:

Lawrence General Hospital, Anlaw Nursing Home, Berkley Retirement Home, Mi Nursing/Restorative Center, Town Manor Nursing Home, Wood Mill Rehab. & Nursing Center, Merrimack Valley Hospice Inc., German Old Folks Home Inc.

Housing

A total of 27,536 housing units or 86% of Lawrence's housing were built prior to 1950. Lawrence's residents see the community as an older, urban, industrialized city whose history parallels that of the country as a whole. Originally a rural farming town, the city was transformed into a major industrial center when Boston entrepreneurs developed huge textile mills on the Merrimack River. Therefore, most of the housing stock is former mill worker housing.

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| Number of Housing Units: | 27,536+/- (1990 US Census and MVPC Data) |
| Owner versus Rental-Occupied: | 32% vs. 68% (1990 US Census) |
| Subsidized Housing Inventory: | 3,567 units or 13% of all units in Town (1993 DHCD). |
| Public Housing Units: | 522 Conventional State (1993 DHCD) 1,060 Conventional Federal (1993 DHCD) |
| Rental Assistance: | 166 State (MVRP) (1994 DHCD) 1,101 Federal (Section 8) (1991 DHCD) |
| 1999 Tax Rate: | \$19.62 (Town Clerk) – 1998 State average \$16.96 (DOR) |
| 1999 Avrg. Single-Family Tax Bill: | \$1,547 (1999 DOR) |
| 1998 Median Sales Price: | (1999 Banker & Tradesman) |
| - Single-Family | \$ 90,000, 761 Single-Family Units |
| - Condominium | \$ 54,900, 77 Condominium Units |
| Jan-Feb 1999 Median Sales Price: | (1999 Banker & Tradesman) |
| - Single-Family | \$100,000, 149 Single-Family Units |
| - Condominium | \$ 36,000, 10 Condominium Units |
| House Lot Cost (2-acre): | \$30,000 to 50,000 per s.f. (1999 Assessor) |
| Zoning: | 5,000 sq.ft. minimum lot area (Zoning Bylaw) |

Transportation

The development of transportation resources in the Merrimack River Valley, where Lawrence is situated, was shaped by the history of the region as a major site of American industrial development in the nineteenth century. The area has exceptionally good highway and rail facilities linking the major cities and towns to each other and to the port, airport, and intermodal facilities of Boston.

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| Miles of Roadway: | Approximately 139 (1997 Massachusetts Highway Department) |
| Principle Highways: | Interstates 93 and 495, State Routes 28, 110 and 114. |
| Rail Service: | Commuter service is provided by Amtrak under contract to the MBTA (travel time 52-57 minutes). The Springfield Terminal Railway provides freight service to Lawrence. |
| Bus Service: | Member of the MVRTA. The MVRTA and Lawrence provide paratransit service for the elderly and disabled. Trombly Commuter Lines provides commuter service to Boston M-F, with limited service on Saturday. |
| Air Service: | The Lawrence Municipal Airport located in North Andover is the closest facility. Flight Line offers van service to Logan Airport and Manchester Airport in Manchester, NH. |

Natural Resources

Lawrence is in the process of opening public access to the City's rivers providing points of connections between them, landmark sites and neighborhood parks through nature and historic trails and urban corridors. This involves the need to create destination sites across the City by linking passive, active parks and historic areas and trails that provide more choices to users and create alternative tourism routes.

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| Rivers and Streams: | Merrimack River, Shawsheen River. |
| Water Supply: | Municipal water system. |
| Sewer: | Greater Lawrence Sanitary District (complete sewer system) |
| Ponds: | 1 (Stevens Pond) |
| Other Waterbodies: | 2 Canals (North and South) |
| Watersheds: | Merrimack River and Shawsheen River. |
| ACEC's: | None (DEM) |

Cultural Resources

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| Libraries: | Lawrence Public Library |
| Museums: | Immigrant City Archives, Historical Society of Lawrence and Its People, Hibernian Cultural Center |
| Other: | Heritage State Park, Essex Art Center (exhibition space, classes), Lawrence's Factory Stores & Outlets, Lawrence Riverfront State Park |
| Historic Districts: | 8 Districts (20 sites) American Woolen Mill Historic District, Arlington-Basswood Dis Mills Historic District, Downtown Lawrence Historic District, Me Historic District, Mechanics Block Historic District (Enlarged), N Historic District, Prospect Hill Historic District. |
| Historic Commission: | 7 member board that assists in designating historic buildings and sites, and works on behalf of Historic District Commission. |
| Churches: | 35 (mainly Catholic and Hispanic) |
| Farmers Markets: | 1 – 6 farmers participate |

Open Space and Recreation (DHCD)

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| Lawrence Riverfront State Park | 47 acres |
| Lawrence Heritage State Park | 26 acres |
| Den Rock Park | 81 acres |
| Law Stadium | 18 acres |
| Mt. Vernon Park | 16 acres |
| O'Connell Park | 11 acres |
| Storrow Park | 8 acres |
| O'Neill Park | 8 acres |
| Total | 215 acres |

The construction of ramps on I-495 and the Salisbury Rail Trail will be used for bicycle recreation.

Other Town-Supported Services

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| Council on Aging: | Provides meals, social activities, and some transportation and medical services for those age 60 and over. |
| Fire and Ambulance: | Full-time staff |
| Police: | Full-time staff |
| Solid Waste: | Curbside pick up and recycling provided. |
| Cemeteries: | 7 (over 75 acres) |
| Airport Commission: | 7-11 member board responsible for the planning or rehabilitation of the airport property or surrounding parcels. |
| Housing Authority: | 5 member board that plans and implements public housing. |
| Human Rights Commission: | 9 member board dedicated to preserving the rights of the citizens. |

Greater Lawrence Chamber of Commerce

Other Community Services

| | |
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| Newspaper: | Lawrence Eagle Tribune, Rumbo (Spanish paper) |
| Radio Stations: | WCCM 800 AM, WNNW 1110 AM (Spanish) |
| Cable TV: | MediaOne Cablevision |
| Lawrence Community Boating: | Located at Bashara Boat House (Eaton St.), rent a sailboat or canoe the second largest boating program in New England. |
| Ayer Mill Clock Tower: | Famous 1909 clock tower recently restored. World's Largest mill clock with dial just 6" smaller than that of Big Ben. |
| Great Stone Dam: | Built between 1845-1848 by immigrant workers, this granite dam provided water for the textile industry and now fuels an adjacent hydroelectric facility. |
| Tower Hill Water Tower: | Atop Ames Street, it is one of America's first water towers, in the "District of Mansions" |
| YMCA: | The Merrimack Valley YMCA |

Land Use (MVPC, 1991 MassGIS)

LAWRENCE

| Land Use Code | Land Use Category | Acres | % |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| 0 | Undetermined | 0 | 0.00% |
| 1 | Cropland | 6 | 0.13% |
| 2 | Pasture | 0 | 0.00% |
| 3 | Forest | 313 | 6.59% |
| 4 | Wetland | 15 | 0.32% |
| 5 | Mining | 0 | 0.00% |
| 6 | Open Land | 21 | 0.44% |
| 7 | Participation - Recreation | 76 | 1.60% |
| 8 | Spectator - Recreation | 63 | 1.33% |
| 9 | Water based recreation | 0 | 0.00% |
| 10 | Residential Multi-Family | 90 | 1.89% |
| 11 | Residential (< 1/4 acre lots) | 2,221 | 46.73% |
| 12 | Residential (1/4 to 1/2 acre lots) | 0 | 0.00% |
| 13 | Residential (>1/2 acre lots) | 0 | 0.00% |
| 14 | Salt Wetland | 0 | 0.00% |
| 15 | Commercial | 423 | 8.90% |
| 16 | Industrial | 629 | 13.23% |
| 17 | Urban Open (Parks, Cemetery) | 416 | 8.75% |
| 18 | Transportation | 194 | 4.08% |
| 19 | Waste Disp (landfill & sewage) | 12 | 0.25% |
| 20 | Water | 274 | 5.76% |
| 21 | Woody Perennial | 0 | 0.00% |
| | Total Area (Acres) | 4,753 | |

Total Number of Parcels 13,255 +/- (1999, Assessor)
Number of Parcels used for Residential Purposes 11,049 +/- (1999, Assessor)

Public Safety (Massachusetts State Police, Crime Reporting Unit)

| Lawrence | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total Crimes | 6,268 | 5,820 | 5,688 | 5,553 | 5,184 |
| Violent Crimes | 1,348 | 1,162 | 1,172 | 1,247 | 1,367 |
| Property Crimes | 4,920 | 4,658 | 4,516 | 4,306 | 3,817 |

References

Contacts included Robert J. Luongo, Chief Economic Development Officer (978) 794-1246, the City Assessor's Office (978) 794-5790, the City Clerk's Office (978) 794-5803, and the Greater Lawrence Chamber of Commerce. Document sources included the 1996 Consolidated Plan (Final), the 1997 Open Space Plan Update, DHCD Lawrence Community Profile, Town Stats by Banker & Tradesman, State Aid-Cherry Sheet FY 1999, At-A-Glance Report (3/1/99) DOR-DLS, Employment and Wages & Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment