

SUSTAINABLE LOWELL 2025



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SUSTAINABLE LOWELL 2025

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OVERVIEW

In recent years, as cities have begun addressing climate change, social equity, and other pressing community concerns more proactively, the concept of sustainability has begun to permeate many long-range planning documents. In Lowell's case, the concepts of social, economic and environmental sustainability have been interwoven into each section of its Comprehensive Master Plan in an effort to better adapt to changing local, regional, and global trends over the next 12 years.

The result of this Comprehensive Master Plan update process is Lowell's new Sustainability Plan, an officially adopted public document that establishes long-term policies and a shared vision for smart, responsible development within the city. Included herein are recommendations regarding

transportation, economic development, housing, the physical environment, and other community resources.

The Plan also guides the development and maintenance of the many facilities and services provided by the City. As such, the Sustainability Plan is one of the primary policy tools utilized by the City Council, the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the City's Administration, including the Department of Planning and Development, the Department of Public Works, and other entities. Ultimately, the City hopes that this document will be embraced and utilized citywide by both private and public stakeholders, as well as residents in Lowell, as a way to ensure its implementation and positive impact on the community as a whole.



Public Participation Process

Photos: DPD



INTRODUCTION

COMPONENTS OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS INCLUDED:

- An 800-Household telephone survey conducted in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Khmer by Research America, Inc., a consultant firm hired by the City. Raw data was provided by the consultant, and data was analyzed and formatted by DPD.
- Hosting of 5 public visioning sessions that were attended by over 160 community members and were conducted in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer. Visioning topics included: Housing & Public Services, Transportation & Mobility, Economic Development & Institutional Partnerships, Open Space & Natural Resources, & Community Character, Engagement & Identity.
- The launch of a free, fun, online participatory planning tool in partnership with Emerson College, over 60 young people from 6 local youth organizations, and Lowell Telecommunications Corporation, who provided their

Continues on facing page

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process undertaken by Lowell’s Department of Planning and Development (DPD) in developing this Sustainability Plan was consistent with efforts generally employed in other comprehensive planning processes. This process is further outlined below:

STEERING COMMITTEE

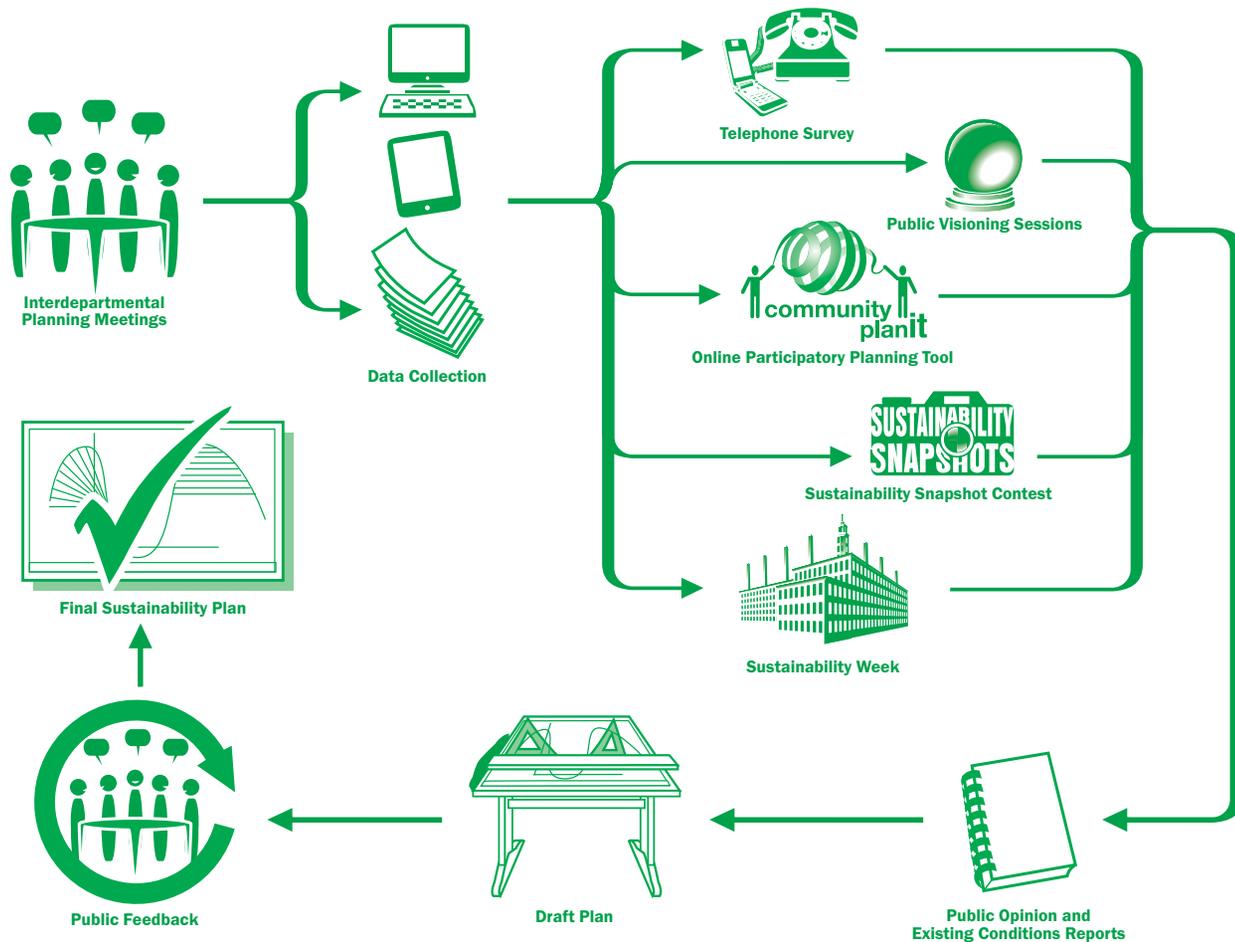
A Steering Committee comprised of members from the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) was formed to oversee the planning process between the Winter of 2011 and the Fall of 2012. The committee held a series of 10 interdepartmental meetings on topics relevant to the development of the plan to collect initial input from employees with particular expertise. The Committee was also involved in the data collection and public participation processes to follow.

DATA COLLECTION & EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

Existing conditions data was compiled into a final report to provide a snapshot of current conditions in Lowell today and to map trends over time. The information collected – comprised of demographic, land-use, transportation, housing, open space, and economic development data – served as a foundation for the visioning and planning of the city’s direction in the future.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The City believes that a long-range plan has the greatest value when the vision behind it is truly shaped in collaboration with the local community. For this reason, Lowell’s Department of Planning and Development sought to engage as broad a sample of the population as possible throughout its public planning process. Using a multi-pronged approach, DPD succeeded in reaching over 1,000 community members over the Spring and Summer of 2011, all of whom offered valuable input on how to make the City more sustainable in the future. During the Fall and Winter of 2011, all of this data was analyzed and compiled into Public Opinion and Existing Conditions Reports.



DRAFT PLAN

Drawing upon the existing conditions data, as well as lessons learned through the public participation process, a draft plan was developed and presented to the Planning Board and City Council in the Winter of 2012 for initial comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Following these presentations, the draft plan was made available to the public for their review and feedback.

FINAL PLAN

After incorporating feedback from the Planning Board, City Council, and general public, the final plan was presented for adoption and endorsement in the Spring of 2013.

computer lab free of charge to those without computers or internet access at home. The launch inspired 175 community members to sign up and participate, sharing over 1,000 comments about how to improve the city during the two week launch.

- Organization of the Sustainability Snapshots Photography Contest to encourage residents to think about aspects of their city that they would like to be able to pass on to future generations, and to encourage their ownership over and participation in the long-term planning process. As a result, 113 photographs were submitted by the local community for incorporation into the Final Plan.
- Organization of the City's 1st Annual Lowell Sustainability Week in conjunction with the public planning process as a way to celebrate and promote Lowell's accomplishment's as a green community while engaging residents to think about how they might make their city more sustainable in the future.



Photo: Norm Caron

PLAN FRAMEWORK

A Sustainability Plan is a living document, evolving in response to changing community needs. The process of developing and implementing the plan is, therefore, cyclical in nature. The vision statement informs the goals, which inform the objectives and action areas, which ideally result in the achievement of outcomes identified through the community planning process. As new community concerns arise, the vision and processes take on new forms.



Photo: Jane Albert



Photo: Mary Cutter

VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement – shaped by both public opinion and practical understanding of development trends impacting the City and region – provides a guiding framework for the document as a whole.

GOALS & ACTION AREAS

Eight goals have been identified as priorities through the planning process. Each goal chapter contains a series of objectives and corresponding action items.

OUTCOMES

Twenty-one plan outcomes were identified through the public planning process as key areas in which the community would like to see greater emphasis and investment placed. Charts on the last page of each goal chapter identify how the city intends to achieve these outcomes and meet community needs through the implementation of each chapter's objectives and action items.



Photo: Donald Hogan



Photo: Deb Forgione

vision

LIVABILITY
PLACE-MAKING
LONGEVITY
RESPONSIBILITY

goals & action areas

-  SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOODS
-  HOUSING CHOICE
-  MOBILITY & ACCESS
-  VIBRANT & UNIQUE URBAN HUB
-  HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMY
-  ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE
-  EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS, INFRASTRUCTURE, & TECHNOLOGY
-  SUSTAINED PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

outcomes

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
|  HISTORIC CHARACTER & PRESERVATION |  RESOURCE & INFORMATION SHARING |  ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & POLICY |
|  HOUSING QUALITY & VARIETY |  COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS |  NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION |
|  PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY |  EDUCATION & TRAINING |  CARBON EMISSION REDUCTION |
|  SOCIAL EQUITY |  LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION |  ENERGY COST REDUCTION |
|  CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY PRIDE |  JOB CREATION |  EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT OPERATIONS |
|  RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITY |  TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY |  ARTS & CULTURAL INVESTMENT |
|  MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION |  INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT |  SHOPPING & ENTERTAINMENT |



VISION

Lowell's Sustainability Plan provides a framework for development over the next 10-15 years and establishes a comprehensive and shared vision for the future. It is grounded both in public opinion and practical understanding of development trends impacting Lowell and other Gateway Cities.

As a city that enjoys an authentic urban character and possesses many unique physical, cultural, and social amenities that are attractive to the populations driving growth and development trends across the country, Lowell has the potential to continue serving as a desirable place to live and work for years to come. It is therefore incumbent upon the City to make choices that will enhance its unique assets and appeal particularly to retiring baby boomers, young members of the Millennial Generation, and immigrants moving to and within the country, as these three population cohorts have demonstrated a preference for living in urban as opposed to suburban settings, and will be responsible for nearly all projected growth and migration shifts in America over the coming decade.

The Lowell community, whose insights informed this Sustainability Plan, intuitively understands these trends, as it is itself a reflection of these population shifts. As a result, the shared vision that forms the foundation of this plan is based upon the following principles, which if continually invoked will help position Lowell for economic, social, and environmental success:

Photo: DPD

LIVABILITY

Lowell will offer a high quality of life for residents of all backgrounds and stages of life by building upon the strength of its neighborhoods as diverse, accessible communities whose established character is celebrated and preserved, and whose lifestyle amenities are well integrated and readily available.

PLACE-MAKING

Drawing upon its rich and authentic natural, cultural, institutional, and historical resources, Lowell will serve as a local and regional hub for innovation and sustainable economic development with an unmistakable pride of place and a vibrant urban downtown.

LONGEVITY

By proactively preparing for and adapting to social, economic, and environmental trends at the local, regional, and global level, Lowell will maintain an effective and innovative municipal government, foster an engaged community, support a diversified and sustainable economic base, and preserve its environmental assets, striving to put policies in place that will endure beyond any given set of leaders.

RESPONSIBILITY

Through increased accountability, education, civic engagement, and action Lowell will cultivate a community-wide, shared ethic of sustainability whose implications and merits - for both the present and future - are broadly understood.

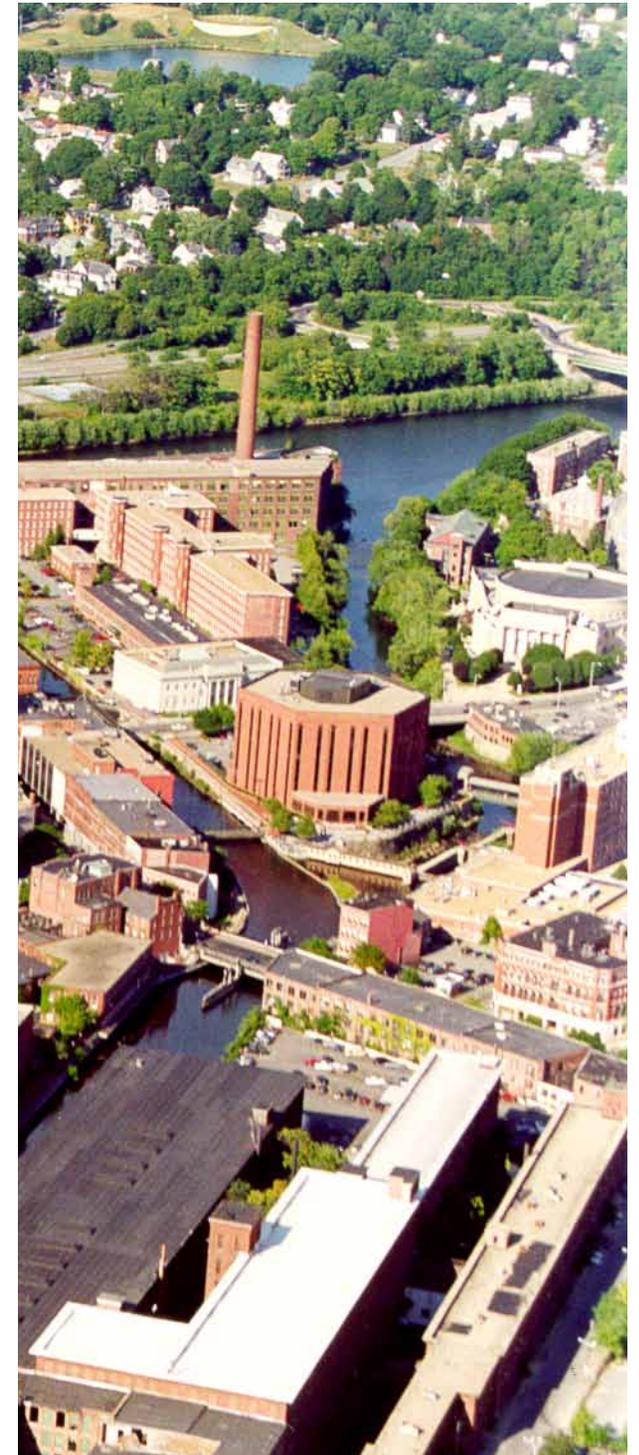


Photo: DPD



VISION

El Plan de sostenibilidad de Lowell brinda un marco para el desarrollo durante los próximos 10-15 años y establece una visión abarcadora e integral para el futuro. Se basa en la opinión pública y en el entendimiento práctico de las tendencias del desarrollo que impactan a Lowell y las demás Ciudades Portales (“Gateway”).

Lowell es una ciudad que disfruta de un carácter urbano auténtico y posee muchas instalaciones y servicios singulares en lo físico, cultural, y social, características que son atractivas a las poblaciones que están impulsando las tendencias de crecimiento y desarrollo a lo largo del país. Como tal Lowell tiene el potencial de seguir sirviendo como un lugar deseable de vivir y trabajar durante los años venideros. Es imperativo entonces que la Ciudad tome decisiones que enriquezcan estos bienes singulares y el encanto de Lowell, particularmente para tres poblaciones cohortes que han demostrado su preferencia de vivir en lugares urbanos en vez de suburbanos: los “baby boomers” (nacidos durante la explosión de natalidad en los años posteriores a la segunda guerra mundial) que se jubilan, miembros jóvenes de la Generación Milenio, e inmigrantes que entran al país o se mudan dentro del mismo. Dichas poblaciones serán responsables de casi todo el crecimiento y los cambios migratorios proyectados en América durante la próxima década.

La comunidad de Lowell, cuyas percepciones informaron este Plan de Sostenibilidad, entiende estas tendencias por intuición y en sí, refleja estos cambios poblacionales. Como resultado, la visión compartida que forma el fundamento de este plan se basa en los siguientes principios. Si se invocan constantemente, los principios ayudarán a colocar a Lowell ante el éxito económico, social y ambiental:

Photo: DPD

HABITABILIDAD

Lowell ofrecerá una alta calidad de vida para todos(as) los residentes de cualquier lugar y en todas las etapas de la vida, sumando la fortaleza de sus vecindarios como comunidades diversas, acogedoras cuyo carácter establecido se celebre y se preserve, y cuyas necesidades y comodidades diarias se integren bien y sean fácil de acceder.

LUGAR ATRACTIVO E INTERESANTE

Haciendo uso, acogiendo y enriqueciendo los ricos recursos – naturales, culturales, institucionales, e históricos, Lowell servirá como núcleo local y regional para el desarrollo económico innovador y sostenible con un orgullo inconfundible de lugar y un centro urbano dinámico.

LONGEVIDAD

Mediante una proactiva preparación para y adaptación a las tendencias sociales, económicas, y ambientales a nivel local, regional y global, Lowell mantendrá un gobierno municipal efectivo e innovador, fomentará una comunidad participativa, apoyará una base económica diversificada y sostenible, y preservará sus bienes ambientales, esforzándose en la fijación de políticas que perduren más allá de cualquier conjunto de líderes.

RESPONSABILIDAD

A través de mayor transparencia, educación, participación cívica y acción, Lowell cultivará una ética de sostenibilidad que compartirá toda la comunidad, cuyas implicaciones y méritos – tanto para el presente como el futuro, sean ampliamente comprendidos.

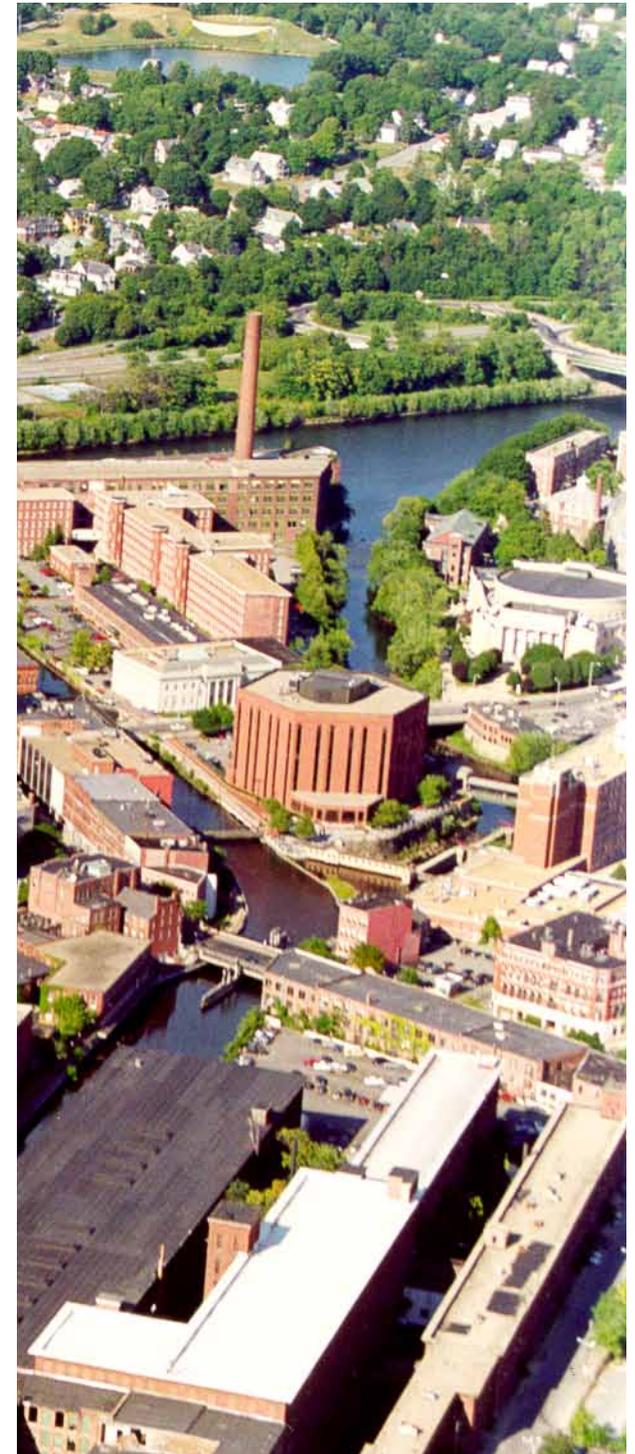


Photo: DPD



ចក្ខុវិស័យ

គម្រោងការរក្សាទុកមានទទឹងរបស់ក្រុងឡូ វែល ឆ្នាំ៧៧នូវគម្រោងសំរាប់ការអភិវឌ្ឍ នីតិវិធីរយៈពេល ១០-១៥ឆ្នាំខាងមុខ ហើយបង្កើតចក្ខុវិស័យទូលំទូលាយនិងចែករំលែកសំរាប់អនាគត។ វាត្រូវបានបង្ហាញប្រាប់គោលការណ៍ជាមូលដ្ឋានសំខាន់ៗ ទាំងយោបល់សាធារណ៍និងទាំងការយល់ដឹងពិតប្រាកដនៃនិទ្ទាណ៍អភិវឌ្ឍ នីតិវិធីរយៈពេលលើក្រុងឡូ វែល និងគ្រូ រួចលើក្រុងផេដេរ៉ា ឡេត។

ជាទីក្នុងដែលសហគ្រាសនិងលក្ខណ៍ទីក្នុងដែលតិចតួចតាមចាប់ ហើយមានកន្លែងតម្លាភាព, វប្បធម៌, និងសង្គម មនុស្សប្រក្រតីគេជាច្រើន ដែលធ្វើឲ្យប្រជាពលរដ្ឋ១/២ចាប់អារម្មណ៍ បណ្តាៗលទ្ធកំណើន និងនិទ្ទាណ៍អភិវឌ្ឍ នីតិវិធីរយៈពេលប្រទេស, ឡូ វែល មានសក្តានុពលបន្តបំរើការដូចជាកន្លែងគួរចង់រស់នៅ និងកន្លែងធ្វើការច្រើនទៅមុខឡើយ។ ហេតុដូច្នោះ វាគឺជា ភារកិច្ចទីក្នុងធ្វើការដើរសំរេចដែលនឹងធ្វើឲ្យអតិថិជន ប្រយោជន៍ប្រក្រតីគេប្រសើរឡើង ហើយធ្វើការអំពាវនាវដល់អ្នកចូលរួម៧, សមាជិកក្មេងៗនៃជំនាន់សហស្សវត្ស៧, និងជនអនេៗប្រទេស ផ្សេងទៀតនៃក្រុងមករស់នៅ ហើយនៅក្នុងប្រទេស, ពោះថា ប្រជាពលរដ្ឋ១/២ទាំងបីកុម្មុយនេ បានបង្ហាញការចាប់អារម្មណ៍រស់នៅក្នុងទីក្នុងជាជាងរស់នៅជាយក្នុង, ហើយនឹងត្រូវទទួលខុសត្រូវ សំរាប់គំរោងកំណើនសេដ្ឋកិច្ចនិងទាំងអស់ ហើយនិងទេស៧ប្រទេស៧សំប៧ រនៅក្នុងប្រទេសអាមេរិកច្រើនទសវត្ស៧ខាងមុខឡើយ។

សហគមន៍ ឡូ វែល, ការយល់ច្រឡំរបស់ក្រុងបាន៧៧ពត មានពីគម្រោងការដែលអាចរក្សាទុកមានទទឹងបាននេះ, ការយល់ដឹងនិទ្ទាណ៍ទាំងនេះតាមសភាពគតិ, ដូចជាការច្របូបច្រាញខ្យល់ និង «ការផ្សព្វផ្សាយ ៧ រចន្តប្រជាពលរដ្ឋ១/២។ ហេតុដូច្នោះហើយ, ចក្ខុវិស័យចែករំលែកដែលបង្កើតមូលដ្ឋានគឺនៃគម្រោងការនេះ យោលទៅលើគោលការណ៍ខាងកោម, បសិនបើបានយកមកបើ ម៧ហើយម៧ទៀត នឹងជួយស ានភាពជំហរក្នុងឡូ វែលឲ្យមានភាពជោគជ័យខាងសេដ្ឋកិច្ច, សង្គម, និងបរិស្ថាន

Photo: DPD

ការគោរពសំណើប្រធាន

ឡូ វែល ឆ្នាំ ៧ ជូននូវគុណភាពជីវិតដ៏ខ្ពស់ សំរាប់អ្នករស់នៅជាអចិន្ត្រៃយ៍ គ្រប់ស្ថានភាពនិងគ្រប់ដំណាក់កាលជីវិតទាំងអស់ ដោយអាស័យលើភាពរឹងមាំនៃសង្គម រាត្រីរបស់ក្រុង ដែលជា សហគមន៍ឆ្នាំ ៦១១ គ្នា, សហគមន៍អាចចូលទៅដល់បាន ដែលកិត្តិយសបានបង្កើតឡើង ត្រូវបានគោតសរសើរ និងរកទុកឲ្យមានសុវត្ថិភាព ហើយកន្លែងដែលមានរបៀបរស់នៅត្រូវបានធ្វើ សម្រាប់រាល់យុវវ័យ ហើយបើប្រសិនបើប្រយោជន៍បានយុវវ័យអាយុស្នូល។

កន្លែងកសាង

ការធ្វើនិស្សិតណាមួយក្នុងចំណោម ០ ណាមួយនិងគឺមិនត្រូវតាមចាប់, ធនធានវប្បធម៌, ធនធានវិជ្ជាសាស្ត្រ, និងធនធានបរិស្ថាន ៧, ឡូ វែល ឆ្នាំ ៧ បំពេញការងារជាមួយមូលដ្ឋានសហគមន៍ ១/២ និងភូមិភាគ ឲ្យមានការបង្កើតព្រំដែន និងការអភិវឌ្ឍន៍សេដ្ឋកិច្ចដែលអាចរកឲ្យមានទុនដ៏បាន ជាមួយនិងកន្លែងដែលមានមោទនភាពចាស់លាស់ ហើយនិងមណ្ឌលក្នុងដែលគួរឲ្យចាប់អារម្មណ៍ «កំលែង»។

និយាយភាព

ដោយការរៀបចំសកម្មភាពជាមុន និងការសម្របសម្រួលទៅតាមនិទ្ទាភាពសង្គម, សេដ្ឋកិច្ច, និងបរិស្ថាននៅមូលដ្ឋាន ១/២, ភូមិភាគ, និងទូទាំងពិភពលោក, ឡូ វែល ឆ្នាំ ៧ នឹងរកឲ្យបានដ្ឋានក្នុងដែល មានបសិទ្ធ ភាពសមរម្យនិងដែលបង្កើតព្រំដែន, ជួយឲ្យផ្តល់ការចូលរួមសហគមន៍, ជួយគាំទ្រមូលដ្ឋានសេដ្ឋកិច្ចឆ្នាំ ៦១១ និងអាចរកឲ្យមានទុនដ៏បាន, និងរកទុកទុនស្របច្រក ៧ បរិស្ថានឲ្យមានសុវត្ថិភាព, ខិតខំបង្កើនប្រកួតប្រជែងគ្នាដែលនឹងនៅបិទផ្សារកោលដោយមានអ្នកដឹកនាំជំនាញយុវវ័យ។

ការទទួលខុសត្រូវយុវជន

តាមរយៈកំណើនភាពទទួលខុសត្រូវ, ការសិក្សាអប់រំ, ការចូលរួមកិច្ចការនិរន្តរ៍ ១/២, និងសកម្មភាព ឡូ វែល ឆ្នាំ ៧ នឹងជួយជំរុញឲ្យមានភាពទទួលបានសហគមន៍ទាំងមូល, ចែករំលែកសីលធម៌ «និរន្តរ៍ រកឲ្យមានទុនដ៏បាន ដែលមានការជាប់ពាក់ព័ន្ធ និងភាពត្រឹមត្រូវ – សំរាប់ទាំងបច្ចុប្បន្ននិងទាំងអនាគត – គឺត្រូវយល់ដឹងជាទូទៅ។

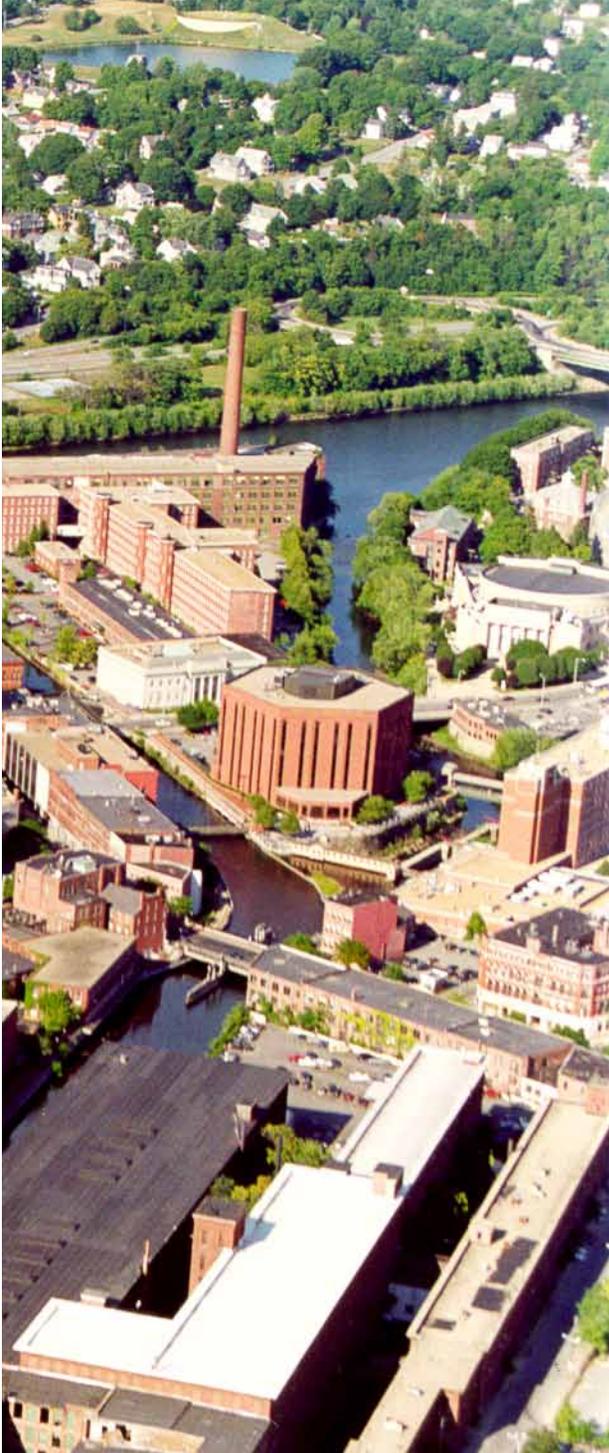


Photo: DPD



VISÃO

Plano de sustentabilidade de Lowell fornece uma estrutura de desenvolvimento nos próximos 10-15 anos e estabelece uma visão global e compartilhada do futuro de Lowell. Esta visão baseia-se não só na opinião pública geral mas também na compreensão prática das tendências de desenvolvimento em Lowell e outras cidades consideradas “Gateways”.

Como uma cidade que goza de um autêntico carácter urbano e possui muitas amenidades únicas físicas, culturais e sociais que são desejáveis aos segmentos da população em crescimento em todo o país, Lowell tem potencial para continuar servindo como um lugar desejável para viver e trabalhar. Cabe, portanto, á cidade de fazer decisões para aperfeiçoar o seu património e atrair em particular as gerações de aposentados: “baby boomers”, os jovens membros da geração milenar, e imigrantes vindos de outros países ou de outras partes do país, como estes três grupos da população demonstram uma preferência para viver nos centros urbanos em oposição ás áreas suburbanas, e serão responsáveis pela crescimento populacional projectado e responsáveis pelas trajetórias migratórias na América na próxima década.

A Comunidade de Lowell, cujas ideas informaram este Plano de Sustentabilidade, intuitivamente compreende estas tendências, como ela própria é um reflexo destas alterações populacionais. Como resultado, a visão compartilhada que constitui a fundação deste plano baseia-se nos seguintes princípios, que posta em prática ajuda Lowell a posicionar-se para o sucesso económico, social e ambiental:

HABITABILIDADE

Lowell vai oferecer uma qualidade de vida elevada aos seus residentes de várias circunstâncias familiares e etapas de vida através do potencial dos seus quarteirões diversos, acolhedores, saudáveis e acessíveis onde habitação, transporte, recreação, educação, emprego, como também necessidades diárias e comodidades de vários estilos de vida são facilmente acessíveis e bem integrados, e onde as características dos quarteirões são comemorados e preservados.

LUGARIZAÇÃO (“PLACE-MAKING”)

Tirando partido, acolhendo, e melhorando os seus ricos recursos naturais, culturais, institucionais e históricos, Lowell servirá como um centro local e regional de inovação e desenvolvimento económico sustentável, com inconfundível senso de orgulho do espaço urbano e centro da cidade vibrante.

LONGEVIDADE

Por proativamente se preparar e adaptar à evolução social, económica e ambiental, a nível local, regional e global, Lowell vai manter um governo municipal eficaz e inovador, promoverá uma comunidade colaboradora, apoiará uma base económica diversificada e sustentável, e preservará seus recursos ambientais, se esforçando por adoptar um plano que endure futuros líderes políticos.

RESPONSABILIDADE

Através de maior responsabilidade, educação, participação cívica e acção, Lowell cultivará uma ética comunitária, compartilhada e sustentável, cujas implicações e méritos - para o presente e o futuro é amplamente compreendida.

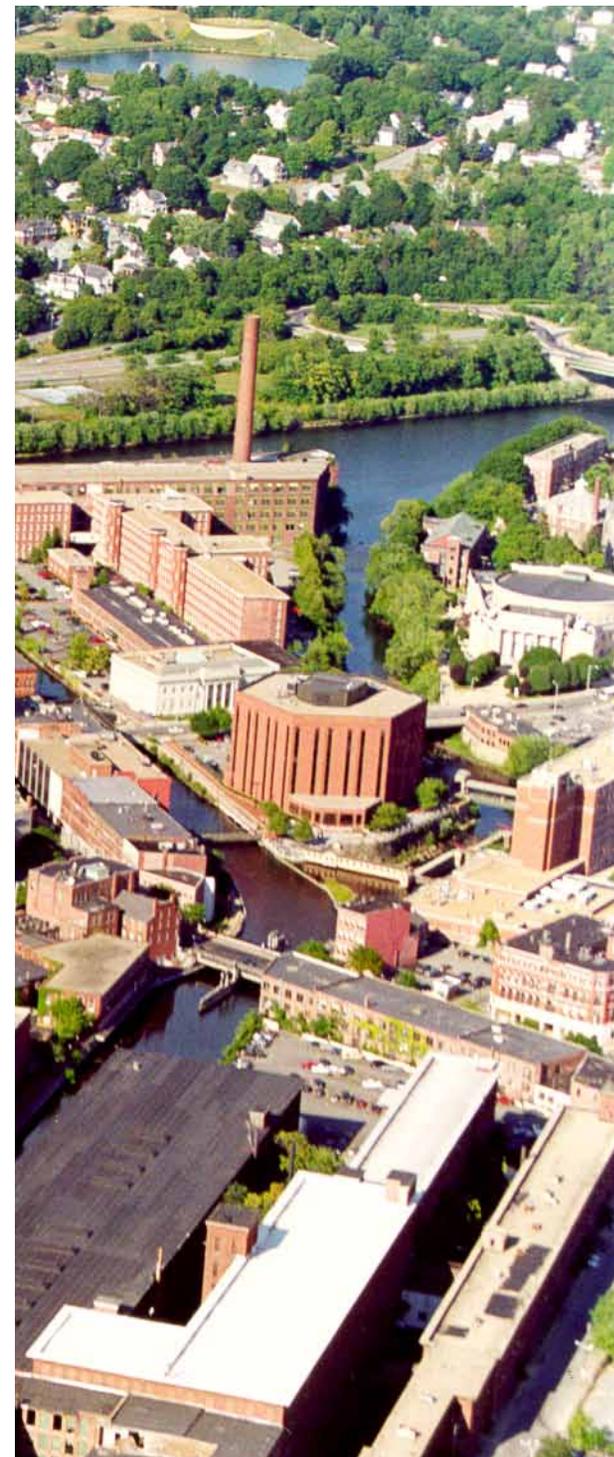
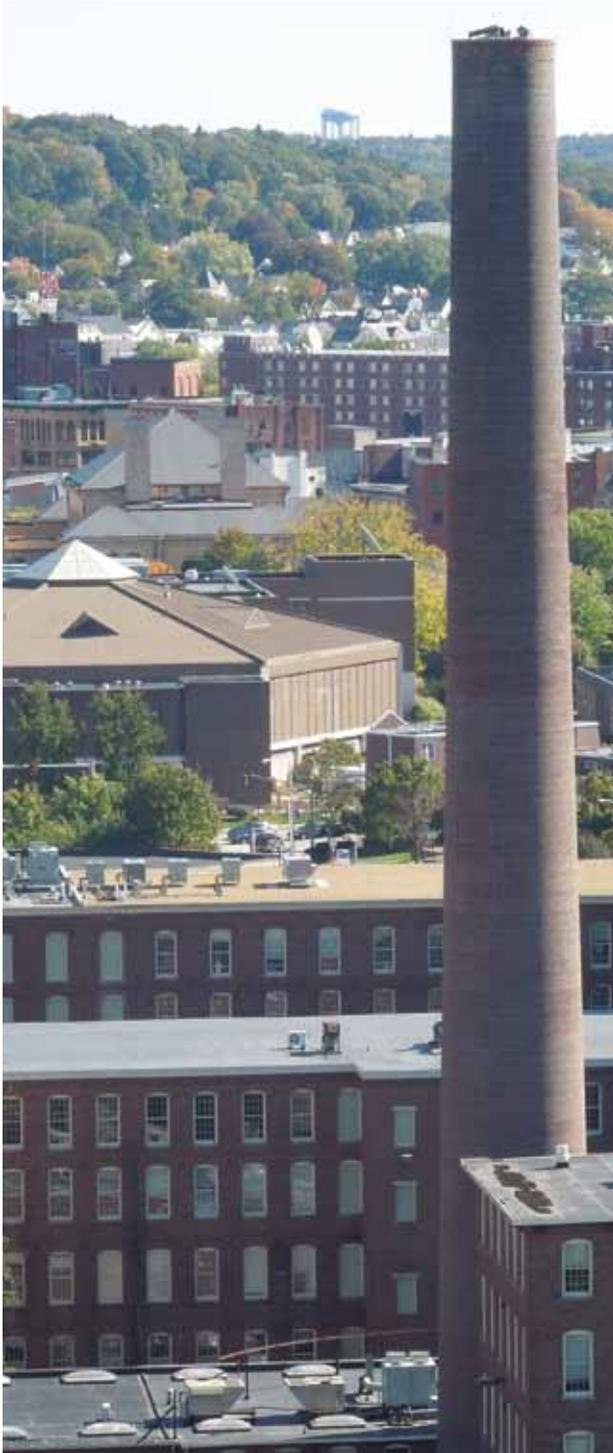


Photo: DPD



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

HISTORY

Throughout its history, Lowell has drawn upon its natural and cultural resources to facilitate its growth and development. The City's location at the confluence of the Merrimack and Concord Rivers initially attracted settlers to its banks 10,000 years ago. Lowell served as an ideal place for Native American fishing camps, and later on, floodplain farming by the English. Incorporated in 1826 as America's first, large-scale planned industrial community, Lowell became emblematic of the country's transition from a rural agrarian to an industrial society, utilizing its rivers and canals to provide inexpensive, reliable waterpower for the mills, and as a means of transport to nearby communities for trade.

Lowell's industrialization was among the most rapid the country ever saw. Its mills helped transform American life with the rise of the large corporation, the growth of an urban working class, and the influx of immigrants to an increasingly diversified community. By 1840, Lowell had become the principal manufacturing center of the United States, and by the 1860s, the industrial system could not keep pace with the very forces it had generated. Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, the use of alternative forms of power

production became widespread and many aging textile mills were forced to move south, where raw materials and labor were less expensive. As a result, Lowell's mills fell into disrepair and its economy began to stagnate.

Since the 1970s, however, Lowell has seen a remarkable rebirth and revitalization. The designation of the Lowell National Historical Park as the first urban National Park, along with complementary local and state efforts to promote historic preservation, heritage tourism, and economic renewal stimulated a restoration of the Downtown. The early 1980s wave of immigration, especially from Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America, has enabled Lowell to carry on its proud tradition of drawing upon the vitality of its immigrant communities. More recently, through the diversification of its local economy, the City's job base has broadened beyond its traditional manufacturing core. Emerging technology, education, healthcare, and creative economy sectors have contributed to Lowell's recent vibrancy and renewed spirit of innovation. As Lowell transitions into the 21st century, it continues to value its rich natural and cultural treasures, honoring its past while looking ahead towards a more sustainable future.

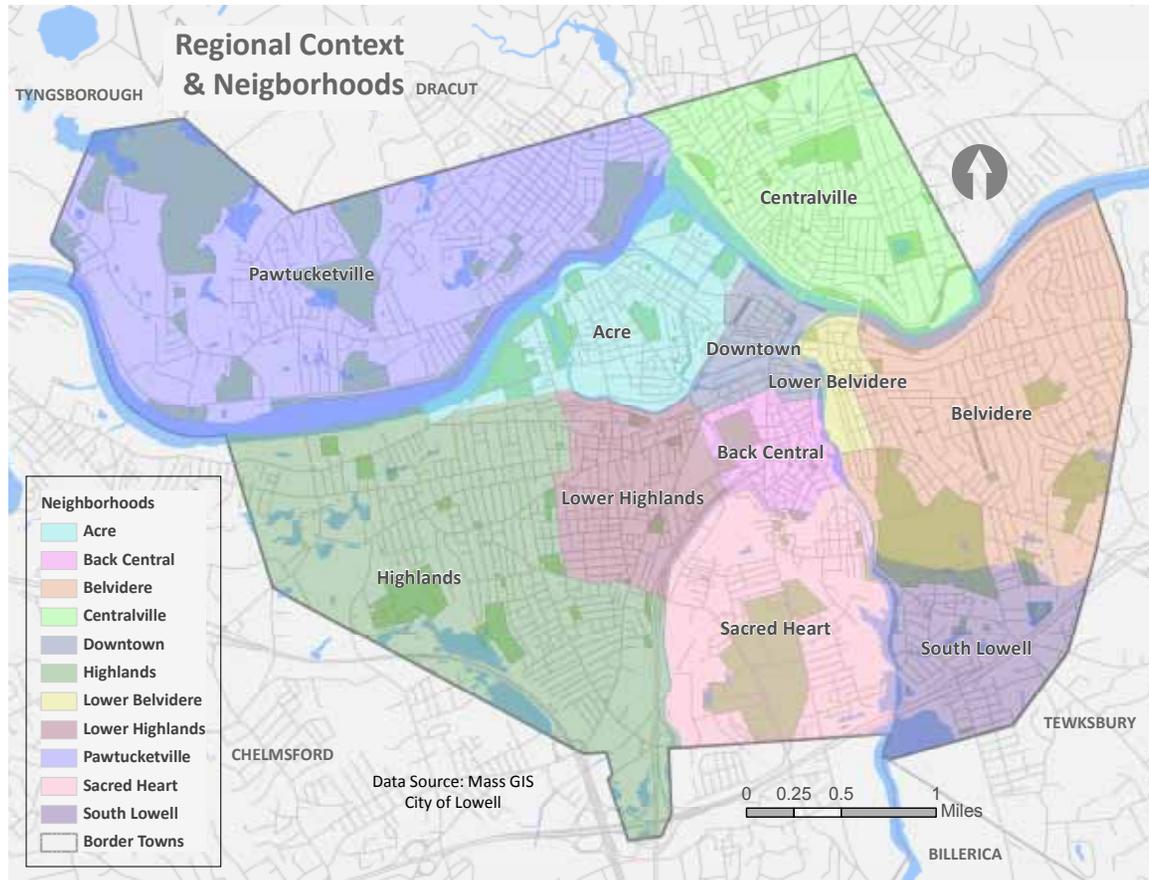
Photo: DPD

A SNAPSHOT OF LOWELL TODAY

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Lowell's geography and regional locale are unique in a number of ways. The City serves as an urban oasis for the largely suburban communities that surround it, including Tewksbury, Chelmsford, Dracut, Billerica, and Tyngsborough, and is also located at

the convergence of an extensive network of waterways. Similarly unique are the City's neighborhoods. Each with its own distinct history, character, and evolution, they are amongst Lowell's greatest assets.



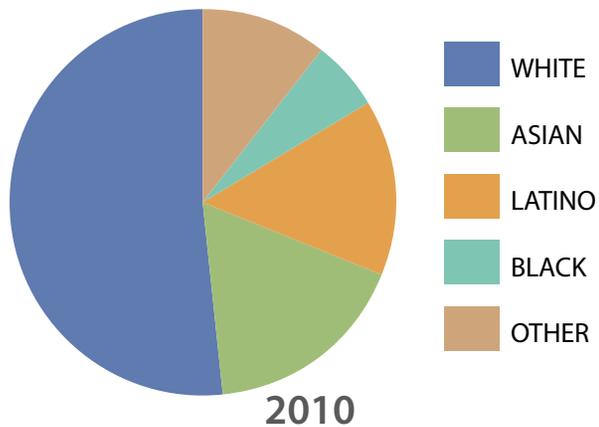
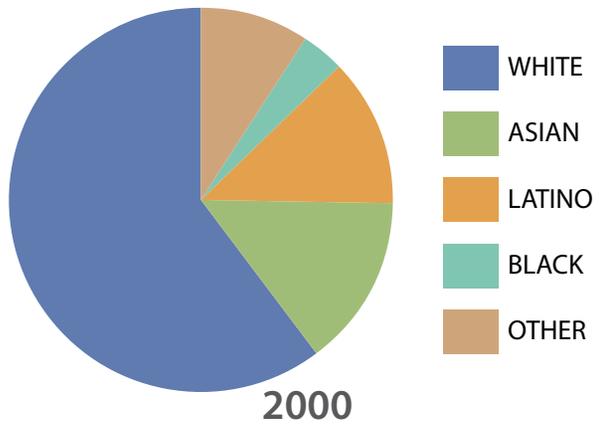
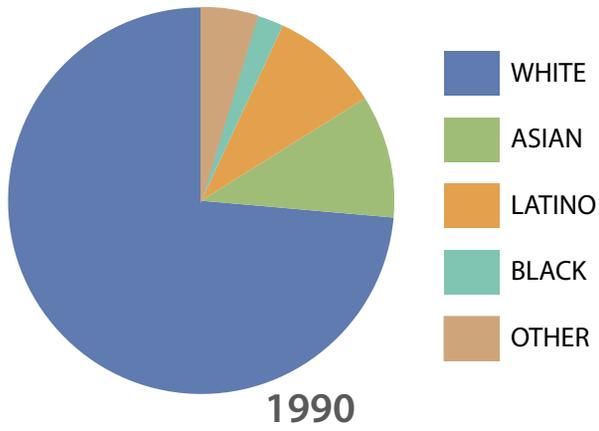
POPULATION

With a 2010 population of 106,519, Lowell is currently the 4th largest city in the Commonwealth. Although predominantly built-out, the City has continued to witness incremental, but steady, population growth over the past several decades, and is once again nearing the size it was during its industrial peak in the 1920s.

YEAR	POPULATION
1900	94,969
1910	106,294
1920	112,759
1930	100,234
1940	101,389
1950	97,249
1960	92,107
1970	94,239
1980	92,418
1990	103,439
2000	105,167
2010	106,519

Data Source: U.S. Census

LOWELL'S ETHNIC GROWTH



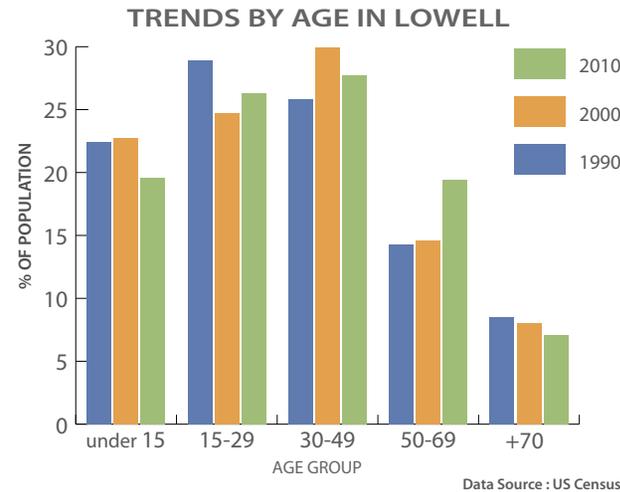
Data Source: U.S. Census

Density

As of 2010, Lowell had a population density of 12.1 persons per acre, an increase of 15.3% since 1980. Since 1970, Downtown has seen the greatest increase in density, with an increase of 512%. Other areas with relatively high population densities include Back Central (26.6 p/a), the Lower Highlands (25.5 p/a), and portions of the Acre (30 p/a).

Age

While no age group dominates the population of Lowell, over the past 20 years, the most notable change in the age of the population of the City has occurred with those between the ages of 50-69. While this cohort represented 14.3% of the population in 1990, it had grown to 19.4% by 2010. Other significant patterns since 1990 include a 10% decrease in the population of persons under the age of 15 and a 15% decrease in the population over the age of 70.



Ethnicity

The most predominant change has occurred with the City's ethnic population, which has doubled in the span of just two decades. In 1990, Lowell's ethnic population consisted of 23.5% of the total population, whereas it represented 47.2% in 2010. Although White residents currently make up the largest population within the City, they are the only group with a declining population. According to the Brookings Institute, this phenomenon is also occurring at the national level. By 2042, the nation will become majority persons of color, and the White population will become the minority.

LAND-USE

Similarly to other gateway cities, the majority of Lowell's land has been developed for residential use. However, the percentage of land dedicated to residential development in Lowell (63.2%) exceeds the average percent dedicated by the other communities (59%). The percentages of land allocated for other types of uses, such as industry and recreation, are similar as compared with its peers.

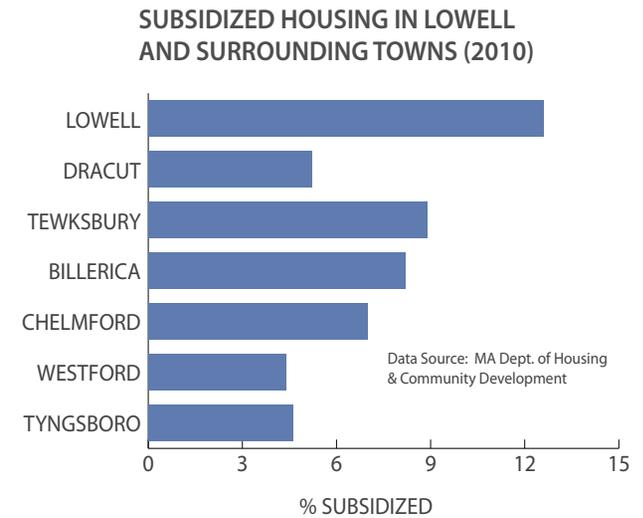
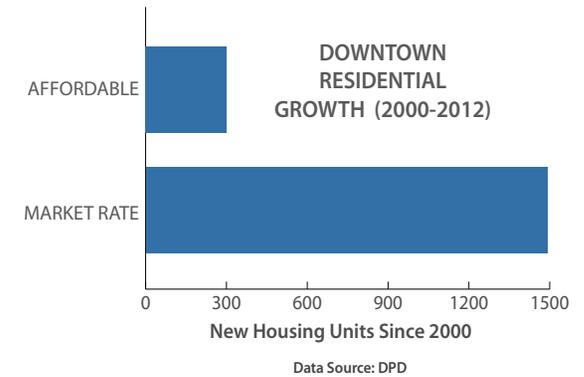
HOUSING

Housing trends in Lowell have tended to mirror those throughout the Commonwealth. While the City saw a significant housing boom in the early 2000s, with an increase in home prices and an influx of new residents, the national foreclosure crisis coupled with high unemployment rates has significantly impacted the housing market in recent years.

In spite of these challenges, the City's Downtown has experienced tremendous growth since 2000 as a result of significant redevelopment efforts, with over 1,500 market rate and 300 subsidized units being added to existing housing stock. Other neighborhoods experiencing high percentages of new construction include Pawtucketville and the Highlands.

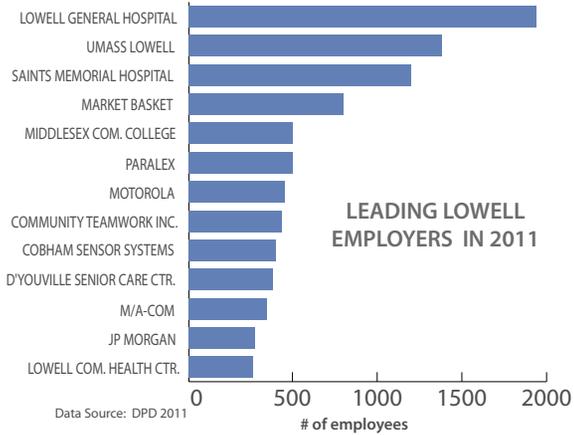
With nearly 50% of Lowell's housing stock having been built before 1940, the City recognizes the value of supporting redevelopment projects, particularly in cases where planned improvements result in safer, higher-quality, and more energy efficient homes for Lowell residents.

Lowell remains one of only a handful of communities that exceeds the State's goal of 10% affordability under MGL Chapter 40B, thereby providing housing to assist low-income residents in need. According to the Department of Housing and Community Development's Subsidized Housing Inventory, Lowell subsidizes 12.6% of all its residential units, a far greater percentage than most communities, including its neighbors.



	LOWELL		LAWRENCE		NEW BEDFORD		SPRINGFIELD		WORCESTER		AVERAGE	
	ACRES	%	ACRES	%	ACRES	%	ACRES	%	ACRES	%	ACRES	%
RECREATION	318	4.6	103	2.7	422	5.3	643	4.2	954	5.5	530	4.8
TRANSPORT	283	4.0	154	3.9	672	8.4	623	4.0	1,133	6.6	646	5.81
WASTE	17	.25	0	0	85	1.1	38	.2	29	.2	38	.3
INDUSTRIAL	621	8.9	556	14.4	822	10.3	1,187	7.7	12.8	7.4	961	8.6
URBAN PUBLIC	749	10.7	420	10.9	840	10.6	1,715	11.1	2,094	12.2	1,267	11.4
COMMERCIAL	573	8.2	416	10.8	734	9.2	1,608	10.4	1,507	8.8	1,066	9.6
RESIDENTIAL	4,410	63.2	2,220	57.3	4,380	55.1	9,614	62.3	10,188	59.2	6,600	59.4
TOTAL DEVELOPED LAND	6,972	75.1	3,868	81.3	7,955	61.6	15,428	72.9	17,186	69.9	11,109	70.0

Data Source: MassGIS



ECONOMY

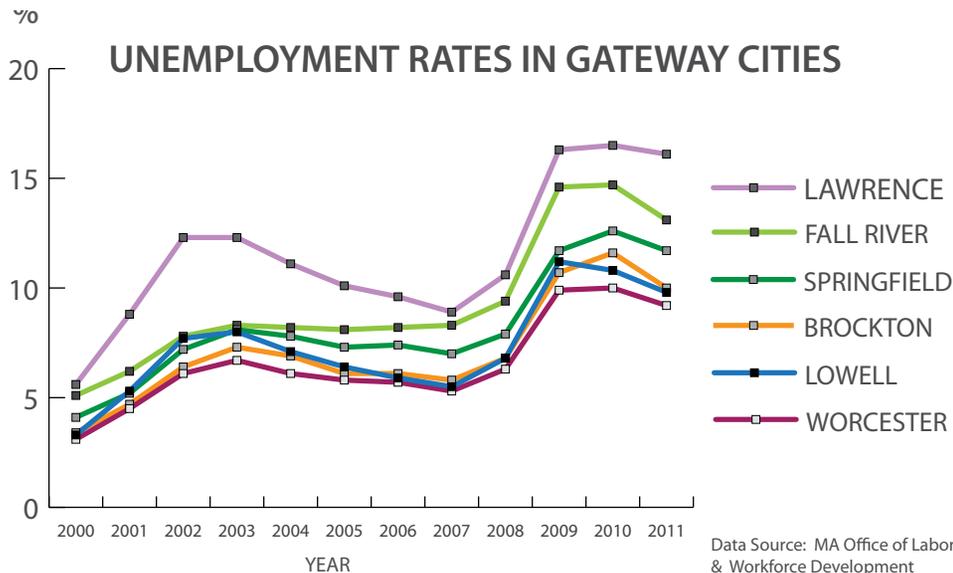
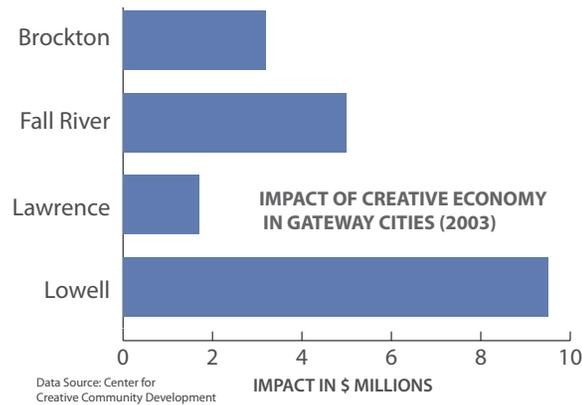
Over the course of the past decade, Lowell and the surrounding Merrimack Valley region have been impacted by shifts in the nation's economy. In spite of a national recession which prompted a rise in unemployment rates, however, Lowell has fared well in comparison to other gateway cities, and has continued to make strides in growing a healthy and sustainable local economy. Employment in the City has increased and the City's unemployment rate has fallen as the recession has waned.

Significant redevelopment has occurred Downtown and within the Hamilton Canal

District, bringing new residents with disposable income to support the growing number of Downtown restaurants and retail shops. Lowell has diversified its economic base from its traditional manufacturing roots to more

knowledge based industries, including technology, health care, education and service sectors. Amongst the City's leading employers are local hospitals, institutions of higher education, and high tech companies. The growth of UMass Lowell's student population in particular has contributed to a greater sense of vibrancy throughout the City and to an emerging identity of Lowell as a college town.

Lowell's creative economy has also grown substantially over the past 10 years with the development of hundreds of new artist live/work spaces and the emergence of dozens of creative businesses. Lowell has continued its tradition of welcoming immigrants to the City, many of whom bring with them a strong spirit of entrepreneurship, which has been made visible throughout the City. The City's diverse cultural community, comprised of dozens of galleries, museums and other creative organizations, has continued to support the presentation of over 200 annual festivals, attracting over 3 Million visitors to the city each year. All of these factors have helped contribute to an annual economic impact of \$9.5 Million in Lowell as a result of cultural activity.



ENVIRONMENT

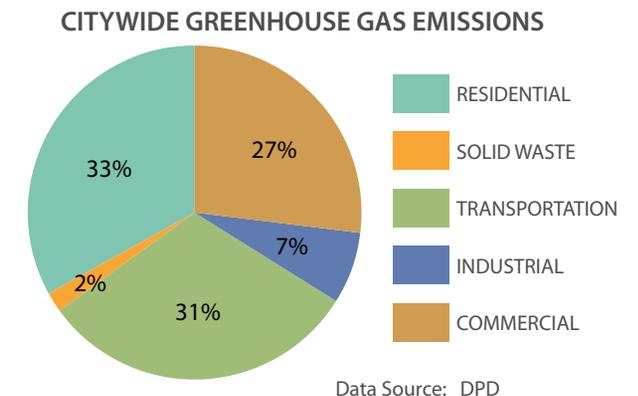
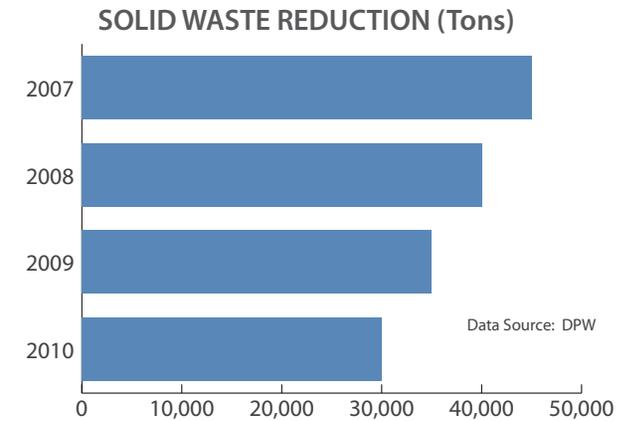
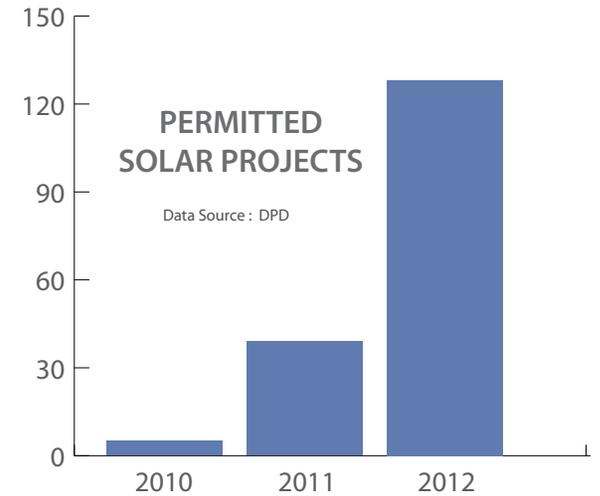
In the past ten years, Lowell has successfully modeled ways that older, industrial cities can integrate historic preservation with environmentally sustainable development. In 2011, the City received accolades from the State's Department of Energy Resources as a 'Leading by Example' award recipient, and continues to serve as a leader in renewable energy and energy efficiency investments, brownfields redevelopment, and transit-oriented development. Improvements to water quality and increasing support for local food access have also contributed to Lowell's emerging identity as a sustainable community.

Consistent with its heritage, Lowell continues to be a leader in the production of renewable energy, with nearly 30 Megawatts of solar and hydropower production capacity. Public and private investment in solar technologies in particular has increased tremendously in recent years. As a component of Lowell's \$21 Million performance contract, the City has made renewable energy and energy efficiency enhancements in 47 city owned buildings,

including installing solar arrays on four public schools and the Lowell Memorial Auditorium. The number of privately funded solar projects has also grown significantly, leaping from 5 projects in 2010 to over 125 in 2012.

Since the City transitioned to a new bin collection system in 2008, the annual tonnage of solid waste being collected citywide has been reduced from 45,000 to 30,000, and recycling has increased proportionally.

Although Lowell has made great strides over the past decade to better preserve and protect its natural environment, further reduction of greenhouse gas emissions still remains a high major priority. A Greenhouse Gas Analysis conducted in 2008 by the Department of Planning and Development found that the majority of emissions were generated by transportation uses and commercial and residential properties. By implementing the goals and objectives laid out in this plan, however, the City is confident that Lowell will continue to reduce its emissions and leave its environment in a better condition for future generations.





A DECADE OF SUSTAINABILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2003 – 2012)

- 2011 Recipient of the Commonwealth Department of Energy Resources' 'Leading by Example' Award
- Over 29 MW of Renewable Energy Generated
- 47 City-owned Buildings have had Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Enhancements Made through a \$21M Performance Contract
- \$12.2 Million Invested in Private Commercial and Residential Solar Arrays
- 500,000 Square Feet Downtown Historic Commercial Space Retrofitted for a Projected Energy Savings of 31% through the Department of Energy's Better Buildings Program
- 33% Energy Reduction at the Lowell Regional Waste Water Utility through Energy Enhancements
- Public Electric Vehicle Charging Station Installed Downtown
- 9 Solar Arrays Installed on Municipal Facilities, Producing Enough Electricity to Power 850 Homes Over the Next 20 Years
- 33% Reduction in Solid Waste Tonnage through New Bin Collection System
- \$9.5 Million Economic Impact of Lowell's Creative Economy with dozens of Creative Businesses and over 200 Artist Work Spaces
- 75 Acres of Land Investigated for Brownfields redevelopment since 1996
- 34 Lane-Miles of Roadway Incorporate Bike Lanes and Sharrows
- 3rd Largest Transit Authority Fleet in Massachusetts using Clean Air Natural Gas and Hybrid Electric/Diesel Buses
- 100% Traffic Lights Converted to LED
- One of the first communities in MA to Adopt the Stretch Energy Code and become Certified as a Green Community

Photo: Bob Philpot