

**CITY OF LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**2014 LOWELL INTERN PROGRAM  
PROGRAM AND POLICY**

**1. *The Program***

Participants in the Lowell internship program are provided the opportunity to learn about the daily workings of a dynamic urban planning and community development department. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) helps shape the future of the City of Lowell, working for and with the City Manager and Lowell City Council. Neighborhood plans, park renovation projects, public participation projects, homelessness programs, zoning, urban design, cultural programs and urban policies are all crafted within the Department of Planning and Development.

The intern will be assigned to some specific project or projects, and also have the opportunity to participate in daily activities within the office as the Department prepares information for the City Council, various volunteer boards, and the public.

The work is varied and challenging. The intern has the opportunity to see government in action from a valuable inside perspective. The program is flexible, and the demand for interns from different backgrounds and skill levels will change depending on annual department needs.

Candidates interested in the program are asked to fill out the application form indicating their availability, including start and end dates for work, possibility of support from their educational institutions, and areas of work interest.

**2. *The City***

With a population over 106,000, the City of Lowell, Massachusetts is the fourth largest city in the Commonwealth. Its strategic location at the intersections of Routes 495, 93 and 3 makes it a prime community for living and conducting business. The Lowell stop on the MBTA Commuter Rail Line also provides an easy 40-minute ride to Boston's North Station.

The Lowell National Historical Park, located in Downtown Lowell, is a tribute to the Industrial Revolution and the textile industry that boomed in New England in the nineteenth century. The rehabilitated mill buildings in Lowell, complemented by 2 1/2 miles of trolley tracks, canal boat tours, and several museums, further highlight Lowell's historic significance in the development of America.

Lowell is home to the 3200-seat Lowell Memorial Auditorium, which hosts many of the country's best performers at affordable prices. The Merrimack Repertory Theatre, also located in Downtown Lowell, is one of the few self-sustaining repertory theatre groups in the northeast. Lowell is also home to the AHL Lowell Devils, who play at the UML Tsongas Center and the Single-A Boston Red Sox affiliate, the Lowell Spinners, who play at LeLacheur Park.

The 19th century mill buildings provide an opportunity for rehabilitation for small and large companies, and urban loft apartments and condominiums. The city offers many unique financial incentives to encourage new growth and development. In recent years, over 800 new residential loft units have been built in converted buildings in downtown Lowell. The City is working with a selected master developer for the Hamilton Canal District, a 15 acre extension of downtown Lowell that will be a new mixed-use transit-oriented development. The first phase of the development, known as the Appleton Mills, broke ground in November 2009, and was completed

in 2011. This development consists of 130 units of affordable living and work space for artists. Once complete, the Hamilton Canal District will feature up to 450,000 square feet of commercial and office space, 55,000 square feet of retail space and 700 units of housing. The Hamilton Canal District will also include a public park, public art and trolley.

The local school district completed nine new schools and five school rehabilitations. The education base also includes Middlesex Community College (MCC) and the University of Massachusetts (UML) Lowell. The student population further enhances the market for retail businesses in Downtown Lowell and its surrounding neighborhoods. Additional development by UML throughout the City promises to strengthen the future retail market.

This planned urban community is built around the Merrimack River and its diverse canal system, which provided power to the early manufacturers. Today these water amenities add to the character of the city and create an exciting, livable community for people of all ages and cultures. Special events occur throughout the year, including the Lowell Folk Festival, known as the best in New England and draws over 200,000 people annually, many Lowell events, highlighting Lowell's cultural diversity, the Southeast Asian Water Festival, Winterfest, and many other community and cultural events.

### **3. *About the Department of Planning and Development***

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has been the central clearinghouse for the development activities, projects, and programs that have been undertaken in the past, are currently underway, and those proposed in the near future in the City of Lowell.

The DPD's responsibilities include the following areas:

- Coordination of City Grant Applications
- Disposition of City Property
- Historic Preservation Activities
- Economic Development Activities
- Housing Rehabilitation Programs
- Human Service Program Funding
- Coordination of Industrial, Commercial and Residential Development
- Land Use Planning including development of Zoning and Design Standards
- Overall Administration of the Community Development Block Grant Program
- Traffic and Parking, Planning and Implementation
- Urban Planning, including Neighborhood Plans
- Energy Efficiency Programs for Commercial Historic Properties
- Park Restoration
- Canalway and Greenway Development
- Neighborhood Initiatives

Some more specific examples of DPD activities include:

#### **A. CITY PLANNING**

The DPD is responsible for all aspects of long and short range planning for the City. The DPD recently updated the 2003 Comprehensive Master Plan with Sustainable Lowell 2025; a Master Plan, and other plans to implement the 2003 Comprehensive Master Plan. In partnership with other local agencies such as the National Park Service, Heritage State Park and the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, the DPD coordinates and plans for the present and future needs of our community. The DPD also administers the Acre and JAM Urban Renewal Plans.

B. LAND USE

Services provided by DPD are directed toward zoning, subDepartment control, eminent domain taking, development rights and other land use restrictions. The DPD completed a comprehensive redesign of land use regulations of the city in 2003 and 2004, and is currently updating sign regulations and developing design standards for commercial districts.

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The DPD is responsible for developing and implementing the economic development strategy for the City of Lowell. Significant effort is put into commercial development in downtown Lowell and coordination of downtown business activity. The Economic Development Department also works to find locations for businesses interested in moving to Lowell. The Economic Development staff often helps secure financing and incentives for companies seeking large office or industrial expansions with the city.

D. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) ADMINISTRATION

For over 20 years, the DPD has been the administrative and implementation agency for the City of Lowell for the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program as well as the HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) Program. The CDBG Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and encompasses a wide range of eligible activities such as water and sewerage improvements, park improvements, streets and sidewalks, transportation improvements, housing and neighborhood rehabilitation and other similar activities in targeted eligible areas.

E. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The DPD also provides a full range of professional services to foster economic development activities in Lowell. Services include marketing of available properties, assisting with the financing for projects, coordination of permitting activities and serving as a liaison with other public agencies. Also, the DPD provides technical assistance to the Lowell Development and Financial Corporation (LDFC) as relates to the low interest loan program for industrial and commercial projects.

F. GRANTSMANSHIP

The DPD also provides the expertise in applying for and procuring any and all funding deemed necessary to serve Lowell's development needs. Sources of such grants include CDBG, Community Development Action Grants, Self Help Recreation Grants, Public Works Economic Development Program Grants, Off-Street Parking Grants, Economic Development Assistance Grants, transportation funding and other related grant programs are often administered through the DPD

G. TRAFFIC, PARKING AND ACCESS

Among the major issues in urban growth and development, traffic, parking and access issues are vital to the success of any undertaking. The DPD provides a full range of technical professional services in these critical areas, including traffic engineering, sign design and implementation. In an effort to encourage transportation by bicycle, many miles of bicycle lanes and sharrows have recently been added to City streets.

H. HOUSING REHABILITATION

A full service neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation Program operates within the DPD. The program offers assistance in financing, mortgaging, subcontractor procurement; construction supervision and final project review. All HUD, MHFA, DHCD, and LDFC programs relating to housing are available through the Rehab Office.

I. HUMAN SERVICES

The funding and oversight of a variety of federal funded human needs programs are carried out by the DPD. For example, the DPD provides funding for the operation of the Council on Aging and other related programs. DPD also coordinates the City's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

J. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Through a variety of programs the DPD furthers the City's efforts to preserve and protect the natural character, beauty and history of our City. Facade improvements, signage and other related activities to be carried out in Lowell must fulfill the requirements of review and approval by both the DPD and the Historic Board, in which DPD participates.

**4. Internship Eligibility**

Any full-time undergraduate or graduate student is welcome to apply for the internship. Applicants should have an interest in the work that is done in the department, and availability to work in Lowell. Applicants with or seeking degrees in City Planning, Urban Policy, Public Administration, Political Science, Economic Development and/or Civil Engineering are encouraged to apply, but the program is not limited to students from any particular background.

**5. Application**

Individuals interested in applying are requested to provide the following:

- a cover letter explaining why they would like to participate in the program,
- a resume indicating previous work and/or volunteer experience, and educational background, and,
- a completed copy of the attached application form, including an attachment with answers to the five questions on the form.

Applicants should be as specific as possible about their area of interest. Any requirements of their College or University should be outlined in the letter of interest. For example, if a student is required to perform a certain number of hours or if a student is required to complete a final written report to receive school credit, this should be noted in the cover letter.

**6. Selection**

The application will be reviewed and a determination made as to whether the individual fits the needs of the DPD. Applicants chosen by the Department of Planning and Development will be offered an interview to discuss their interests and the interests of the department.

If an individual is determined to fit well with the needs of the DPD, an offer for an internship will be provided to the student. The student will need to come into the office before the start of their internship to develop a work plan, and establish a regular work schedule for the term of the internship.

While DPD encourages interns to be full-time employees, a minimum of ten hours per week is required to fulfill the requirements of the work plan.

Each intern will be assigned a supervisor who will work with them on the work plan and work schedule. The supervisor will also provide a final evaluation at the end of the summer term. All internship opportunities offered through the DPD in 2014 will operate through this program. Applicants interested in this program should use this application process to express interest.

## **7. Funding**

Limited DPD funds have been made available for the internship program in past years; DPD has also been able to provide matching funds for university internship programs that require a match from a sponsor. But, due to budget constraints, there is no funding available for 2014. Applicants are encouraged to seek funding support from their school or from other sponsors. DPD will also consider interns willing to work for school credit or as volunteer. While DPD will review the funding situation for each intern on an individual basis, the selection of interns is based upon merit, not funding.

## **8. 2014 Summer Project Opportunities**

Possible projects for 2014 interns include:

- Developing Design Standards for Commercial Districts
- Assistance with the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness
- Review and update of local sign regulations
- Analysis of the impact of foreclosures on Lowell neighborhoods
- Development of regulations to encourage biotech and nanotech companies to locate in Lowell
- Update content on the DPD web site
- Review of licensing programs and procedures to develop additional city revenue sources (i.e. review of unlicensed dogs in the city, etc.)
- Downtown pedestrian/walkability planning
- Implementation of the goals of the 2025 Sustainable Lowell Master (available on the City's website)
- Grant writing in support of infrastructure projects (including the Hamilton Canal District)
- Development of a solar/renewable energy loan program with local lenders
- Transportation Planning Projects
- Assist with City Manager's Neighborhood Impact Initiative
- Assist with Brownfields Program
- Others to be named later

In addition to the above projects, interns are expected to assist in the preparation of products for the City Council and local appointed boards.

## **9. Application Submission and Deadline**

Please submit applications to:

Diane N. Tradd, Acting DPD Director  
The City of Lowell- Department of Planning & Development  
50 Arcand Drive  
Lowell, MA 01852  
tel: 978.446.7200  
fax: 978.970.4262  
[Dtradd@lowellma.gov](mailto:Dtradd@lowellma.gov)

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, but applicants are encouraged to apply before **May 16, 2014**, in order to provide enough time to complete interviews, offer positions and establish work plans before the start of the summer.

**CITY OF LOWELL  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
2014 LOWELL SUMMER INTERN PROGRAM APPLICATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Please list all educational degrees that you have received or have in progress, beginning with High School through your current educational institution.*

School	Department	Degree	Graduation Year
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

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***On an attached page, please answer the following questions.  
Use one simple paragraph or less for each answer:***

1. How did you learn about the Intern program in Lowell?
2. What type of projects would be of interest to you, if you were to work at DPD (land use, neighborhood planning, grant writing, economic development, homelessness programs, open space improvements, project management etc.)
3. Do you have funding available from your institution to support your summer work? Does your institution offer any programs that would match funds from DPD to help cover internship costs? Will you be interested in doing this program for school credit (if available) or on a volunteer basis?
4. What dates are you available to work in Lowell?  
How many hours per week would you be available to work (up to 35 hours maximum)?
5. Please describe your career goals for after graduation, and how this program will help you achieve these goals?