

EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGY



The City will seek to increase its fiscal and operational sustainability by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal services. To achieve this goal, Lowell will prioritize data-driven practices, support revenue-generating activities within departments, regionalize appropriate services, eliminate wasteful activities, upgrade critical facilities and infrastructure, invest in technological enhancements, improve interdepartmental communication, and maintain a talented and professional workforce.

Photo: Ameresco

OPERACIONES, INFRAESTRUCTURA Y TECNOLOGÍA EFECTIVAS

La Ciudad buscará mejorar su sostenibilidad fiscal y operativa mediante el mejoramiento de la eficaces y la eficiencia de los servicios municipales. Para lograr dicha meta, Lowell priorizará procesos determinados por la información y apoyará actividades que generen ingresos dentro de los departamentos, regionalizará servicios apropiados, eliminará actividades desperdiciadoras, actualizará instalaciones e infraestructura crítica, invertirá en fortalecimientos técnicos, mejorará comunicación Inter-departamental, y mantendrá una fuerza laboral talentosa y profesional.

ប្រតិបត្តិការ, ហេដ្ឋារចនាសម្ព័ន្ធ, បច្ចេកទេសដែល មានប្រសិទ្ធភាពសមរម្យ

សាលាក្រុងនឹងស្វែងរកឱកាសដែលអាចទ្រទ្រង់បានផ្នែកសារពើពន្ធ និងកិច្ចប្រតិបត្តិការណ៍ ដោយមានភាពផ្តល់នូវផលល្អ និងប្រសិទ្ធភាពនៃ សេវាកម្មក្រុងកាន់តែប្រសើរឡើង។ ដើម្បីសំរេចគោលដៅនេះ, ឡូអែល នឹងធ្វើអាទិភាពការអនុវត្តន៍ជាទម្រង់បង្កើតក្បួនទិន្នន័យ, ឧបត្ថម្ភសកម្ម ភាពធ្វើឲ្យមានប្រាក់ចំណូលនៅក្នុងផ្នែកផ្សេងៗ, រៀបចំសេវាកម្មសម ស្របតាមតំបន់, បំបាត់ចោលសកម្មភាពដែលឥតប្រយោជន៍, ធ្វើឲ្យទី កន្លែងសំខាន់ផ្សេងៗនិងហេដ្ឋារចនាសម្ព័ន្ធនានាសម័យ, ធ្វើវិនិយោគ ផ្នែកបច្ចេកទេសឲ្យប្រសើរឡើង, ធ្វើឲ្យការប្រាស្រ័យទាក់អន្តរក្រសួង កាន់តែប្រសើរឡើង, និងរក្សាថាមពលពលកម្មដែលប៉ិនប្រសប់ ហើយ ដែលមានទេពកោសល្យឲ្យបានស្ថិតស្ថេរ។

OPERAÇÕES EFICAZES, INFRA-ESTRUTURA E TECNOLOGIA

A cidade vai procurar aumentar sua sustentabilidade fiscal e operacional, melhorando a eficiência e a eficácia dos seus serviços municipais. Para atingir este objetivo, Lowell vai priorizar práticas orientadas por base de análise de dados, apoiar atividades geradoras de receitas, regionalizar serviços apropriados, eliminar serviços inúteis, atualizar a sua infra-estrutura nos sectores críticos, investir em progressos tecnológicos, melhorar a comunicação inter-departamental e manter uma força de trabalho com talento e profissionalismo.

OBJECTIVES

- 1** Recruit and maintain a talented, professional, and well-trained workforce.
- 2** Ensure the health, safety and welfare of those who live in, work in, or visit the city.
- 3** Seek to regionalize and consolidate services where practical.
- 4** Evaluate, maintain and improve communication tools and infrastructure.
- 5** Continually monitor operations using data-driven practices, recommending and implementing efficiency measures as appropriate.
- 6** Increase the efficiency of city operations while providing quality public services.
- 7** Continue to find ways to make Lowell's existing infrastructure more sustainable.
- 8** Ensure that Lowell's public buildings and infrastructure meet current needs and standards and are properly maintained to preserve their functionality and value to the City.
- 9** Ensure implementation of responsible and sustainable fiscal policies.
- 10** Reduce energy costs.

1 RECRUIT AND MAINTAIN A TALENTED, PROFESSIONAL, AND WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE.



Photo: DPD

- ☐ Make municipal hiring decisions based on applicants' qualifications, experience, education, interests, and talents.
- ☐ Provide appropriate skill training for relevant city employees, such as safety training for public works and clerical employees, and customer-service training to all front-line employees.
- ☐ Provide cultural competency trainings to city staff.
- ☐ Continue to provide and support professional development opportunities for existing staff.
- ☐ Evaluate and make adjustments to benefit packages as deemed appropriate, so as to recruit and retain the most qualified, committed and healthy workforce possible.
- ☐ Ensure that employee compensation is competitive with market conditions for similar positions in other communities.
- ☐ Prioritize the hiring of Lowell residents and encourage non-resident employees to move to Lowell, but avoid strict residency requirements that will reduce the pool of available talent.

2 ENSURE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THOSE WHO LIVE IN, WORK IN, OR VISIT THE CITY.



Lowell Senior Center Photo: DPD

- ☐ Protect people and property throughout the city by developing public health campaigns and bolstering community-based problem solving practices.
- ☐ Respond to crime in a fair, expeditious and innovative manner.
- ☐ Provide services that enhance the well-being of our seniors, youth, and other populations that tend to be most vulnerable.
- ☐ Support adequate funding of state, federal, and non-profit programs that promote the health, safety and welfare of Lowell residents.

3 SEEK TO REGIONALIZE AND CONSOLIDATE SERVICES WHERE PRACTICAL.

- ❑ Explore the implementation of a locally or regionally owned electrical utility.
- ❑ Explore the feasibility of a regional 911 dispatch system, emergency center, and public safety team.
- ❑ Explore coordination among regional municipal public works departments and related infrastructure.
- ❑ Continue the successful regional program for sealing weights and measures.
- ❑ Explore strategic regionalization of educational programs to allow students in various districts to take advantage of the unique strengths and offerings of participating schools and capture efficiencies in special education service delivery.
- ❑ Ensure that regional implementation efforts align with objectives laid out in the Northern Middlesex Council of Government's (NMCOG) regional strategic plans.

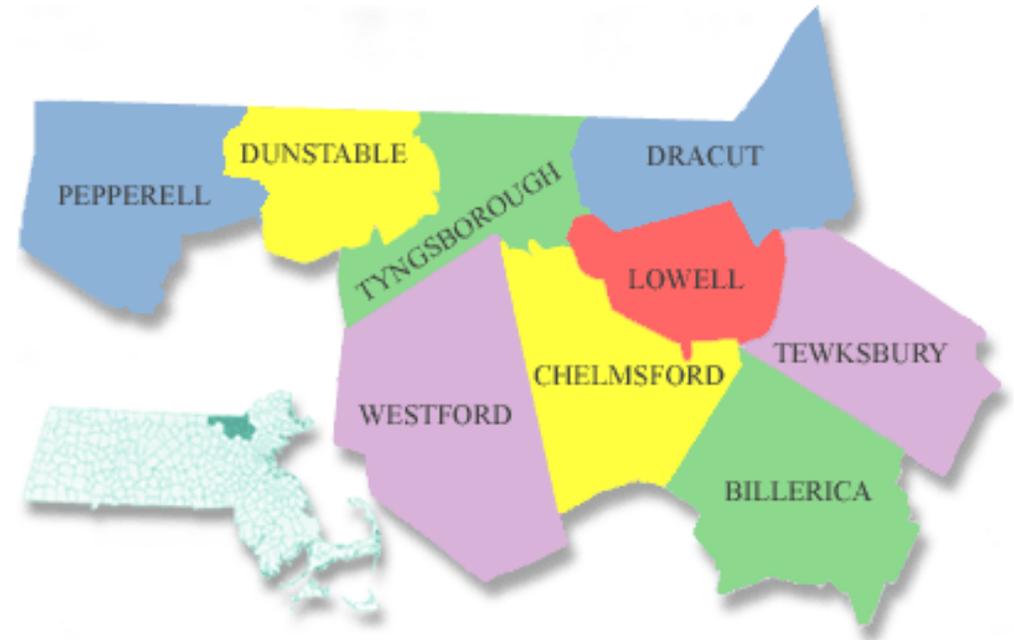


Image: NMCOG

- ❑ Explore the establishment of a joint Fire Wise Program with other communities in the region.
- ❑ Explore the feasibility of integrating various City commissions concerned with healthy living and environmental sustainability under a single umbrella, so as to increase communication and output amongst the membership and ensure alignment with the Sustainability Plan.



Finland has mandated that all of its residents will have access to 100 Mbps broadband by 2015

Photo: AravinoSivaraj

4 EVALUATE, MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

- ❑ Develop a strategic plan for technology and information systems, ensuring that staff are sufficiently trained to implement it.
- ❑ Complete and disseminate a technology policy manual.
- ❑ Upgrade to a new version of MUNIS and continue efforts to integrate more departments and municipal functions into the MUNIS system.
- ❑ Integrate department websites under a single City of Lowell website.
- ❑ Ensure that existing communications infrastructure is properly maintained and utilized.
- ❑ Upgrade computers, software, telephones, and other communications infrastructure to modernize operations and increase efficiency, where appropriate.
- ❑ Ensure sufficient and affordable broadband cellular and internet service coverage throughout Lowell and the region.
- ❑ Explore the feasibility of providing free public Wi-Fi access, identify priority locations, and install relevant systems to provide this service to the community.

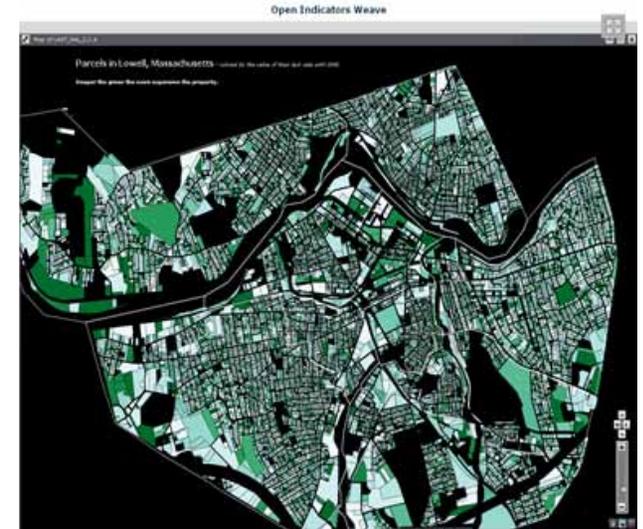


Photo: inhabitat

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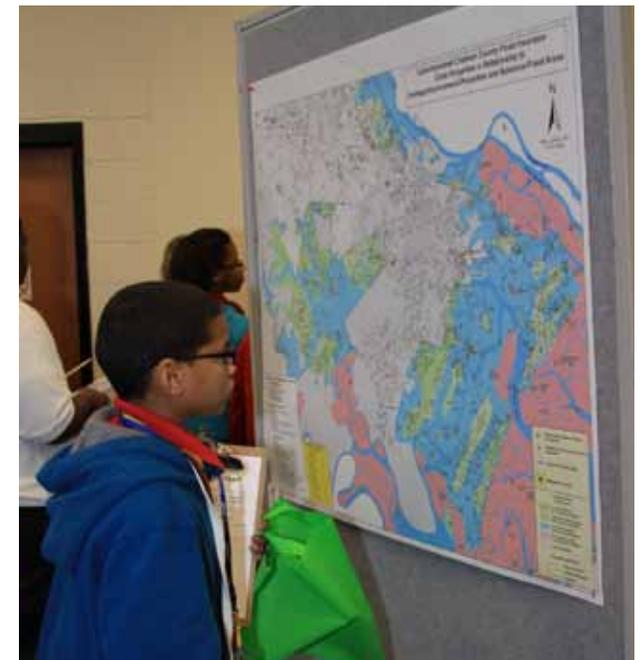
CONTINUALLY MONITOR OPERATIONS USING DATA-DRIVEN PRACTICES, RECOMMENDING AND IMPLEMENTING EFFICIENCY MEASURES AS APPROPRIATE.

- Encourage all departments to develop metrics and track relevant data on an annual basis so as to measure progress made on the City's strategic goals and objectives.
- Provide MUNIS training to appropriate employees in all city departments using a universal data management system.
- Expand the LowellStat program and publicize its findings and analyses to help instill a culture of data-driven management and decision-making in all departments.
- Incorporate all DPD permit functions into MUNIS and continue to improve efficiency of DPD's one-stop shop permitting center.
- Expand the City's capacity and use of GIS tools in the collection, visualization and analysis of data. Where appropriate, explore supplementing in-house resources through potential partnerships with UMass Lowell and other institutional stakeholders.
- Assess equity impacts as part of the annual budget cycle, and report how expenditures, levels of service, and other infrastructure conditions vary by neighborhood, ethnicity, and other demographic categories.
- Develop data-sharing agreements with regional municipalities to inform policy and better serve community stakeholders.



Many mapping tools now have interactive capabilities, enabling users to visualize and manipulate data.

Image: UMass Lowell



GIS Day provides an international forum for users of geographic information systems (GIS) technology to demonstrate real-world applications that are making a difference in our society.

Photo: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Photo: DPD



Central Street Repair Photo: DPD

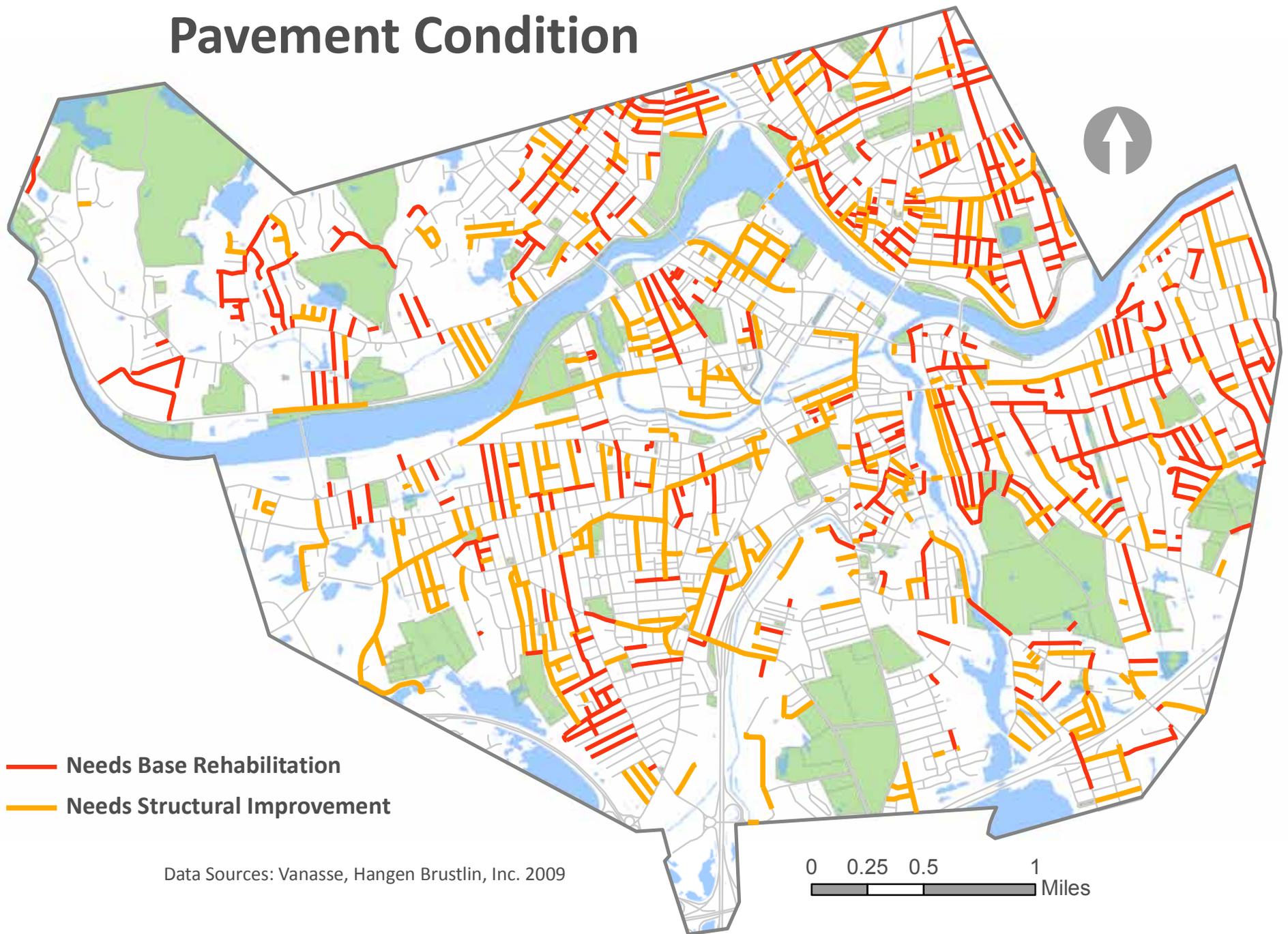


Parking Enforcement Photo: DPD

6 INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF CITY OPERATIONS WHILE PROVIDING QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES.

- Seek to consolidate and digitize municipal services and functions, where practical.
- Evaluate and implement improvements that allow residents and visitors to perform their City business online.
- Incorporate names and corresponding photographs of all appropriate staff into the City's online directory so to expedite the process by which residents may identify the appropriate contact person for their needs while familiarizing the public with the workforce that is there to serve them.
- Ensure effective and efficient project review, permitting, and code enforcement efforts through interdepartmental collaboration and service delivery.
- Consolidate city and school functions and operations where it may result in reduced costs to municipal taxpayers and the elimination of unnecessary redundancies.
- Conduct departmental staffing studies on a routine basis to evaluate the functionality of their structures and plan for future adjustments, as needed.
- Improve internal communication amongst city departments and staff to ensure that the most accurate and timely information is communicated to the public, and employees are performing their duties in the most effective ways possible.

Pavement Condition



7 CONTINUE TO FIND WAYS TO MAKE LOWELL'S EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE MORE SUSTAINABLE.

- ☐ Adopt a comprehensive environmental management strategy for all city facilities.
- ☐ Ensure proper maintenance of all systems and equipment installed under the energy services performance contract, a financing mechanism designed to accelerate capital investment in cost effective energy conservation measures whereby energy cost savings offsets debt service costs and minimizes or eliminates the net expense of the capital investment.
- ☐ Continue to identify and implement improvements to municipal facilities that will result in improved energy efficiency and reduced consumption of water and other resources.
- ☐ Build on the nationally recognized model set by the Lowell Wastewater Treatment Plant and continue to incorporate sustainable design upgrades into their facility.
- ☐ Complete stormwater upgrade plans.
- ☐ Encourage private developers to assist in the on-going maintenance of alternative transportation and other sustainable infrastructure which provides value to their properties.



Green Roof on Lowell Waste Water Treatment Facility

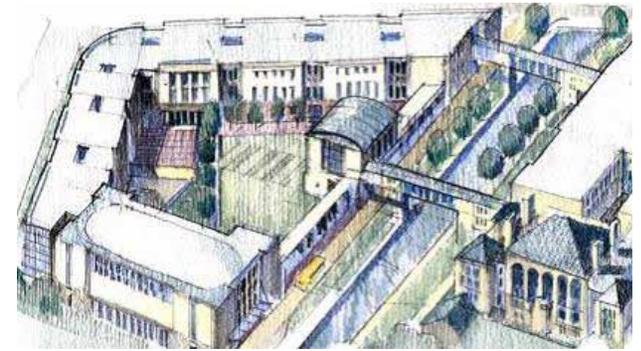
Image: DPW

SUSTAINABLE LOWELL 2025

8

ENSURE THAT LOWELL'S PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE MEET CURRENT NEEDS AND STANDARDS AND ARE PROPERLY MAINTAINED TO PRESERVE THEIR FUNCTIONALITY AND VALUE TO THE CITY.

- Strengthen the City's annual capital planning process to include more comprehensive capital needs and space planning to complement the project-based financing plans that have been developed in recent years.
- Implement the City's Capital Plan consistently and efficiently.
- Develop a program to more effectively monitor and fund preventative building maintenance at schools and other public buildings thereby reducing exposure to more significant replacement and repair costs in the future.
- Develop and implement a plan for comprehensive improvements to Lowell High School's physical plant.
- Develop and implement a plan for improving the central police and fire station facilities.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of municipal office requirements and existing facilities and identify opportunities for greater cost and space efficiencies as well as beneficial adjacencies and collocation.
- Continue to monitor utility, transportation, and other infrastructure conditions to prioritize, finance, and implement a regular program of capital improvements City-wide based on need, condition, and use levels.



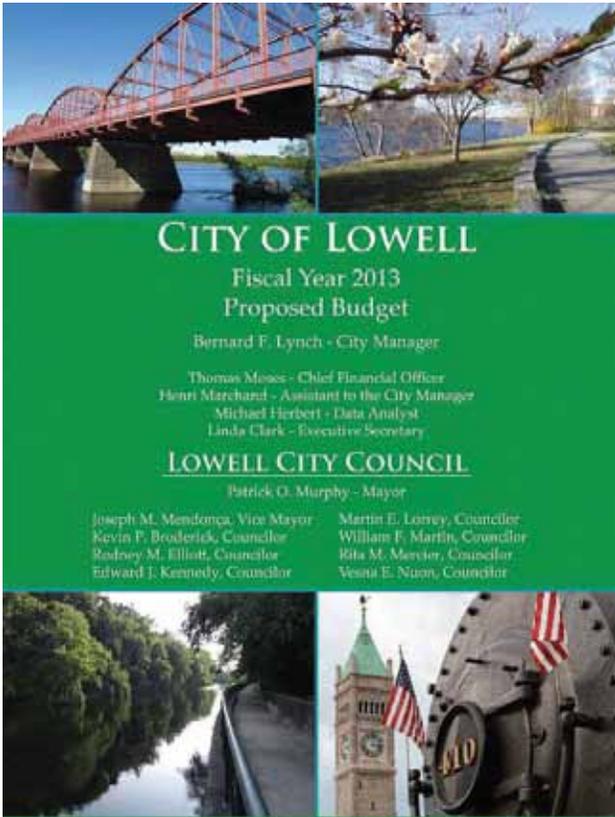
Future design plan for Lowell High School.
Image: Downtown Evolution Plan



Gorham Street Firehouse. Photo: Lowell Fire Department



Infrastructure investments at the Morey School.
Photo: DPD



9

ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE FISCAL POLICIES.

- Continue to ensure transparency, participation, and cooperation in financial processes by providing financial information to the City Council and general public in an informative and easily understood manner, as has been achieved through recent budgeting processes.
- Continue to enhance the format of the performance-based budget, which links documentation of goals, objectives, and quantifiable results to financial expenditure planning.
- Continue to improve free cash, stabilization fund, and excess levy capacity levels in order to provide financial flexibility.
- Continue to routinely evaluate fee policies for services, ensuring that they accurately cover service costs with appropriate subsidies.
- Continue to expand local preference and environmentally-friendly purchasing policies to the extent allowable under state procurement laws.
- Invest in local banks and credit unions as a way to spur economic development within the city and support the local economy to the extent that such investments are consistent with the City's financial interests and fiscal policies.
- Strive to maintain the City's fair share of state and federal entitlement allotments and other funds through careful monitoring of demographics and other data.
- Prioritize economic self-sufficiency at the departmental level, where feasible, by continuing to support departments already contributing to the enterprise fund, and encouraging other departments to engage in revenue-generating activities.
- Strive to involve interdepartmental committees in the development and update processes of major municipal documents and plans, such as the Annual Budget, Strategic Goals, Comprehensive Master Plan, and Capital and Maintenance plans to ensure consistency throughout each.

10 REDUCE ENERGY COSTS.

- Support the upgrading of the power grid infrastructure.
- Become an Energy Aggregator under Mass. General Law by serving as a bulk purchaser of energy, reducing costs to all users across the city.
- Utilizing Mass Energy efficiency trust funds, implement a comprehensive and aggressive energy efficiency program for commercial and residential energy users.
- Identify and explore opportunities for distributed power, such as co-generation and district heating.
- Employ a peak load demand management strategy.
- Support municipal aggregation and the development of local programming for energy efficiency to improve access to and participation in this programming among Lowell ratepayers.
- Prioritize use of energy efficient lighting throughout the city, through the development and implementation of an LED streetlight conversion plan, the replacement of holiday lights and decorations with LED bulbs, and other similar means.



SUSTAINABLE LOWELL 2025



The City of Lowell invested \$21.1 million in a performance contract to upgrade 47 public buildings with energy efficient and renewable energy features. Photo: DPD



Lowell has converted its traffic lights and many street lights to LEDs and is now exploring converting its other street lights.

Photo: DPD

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