



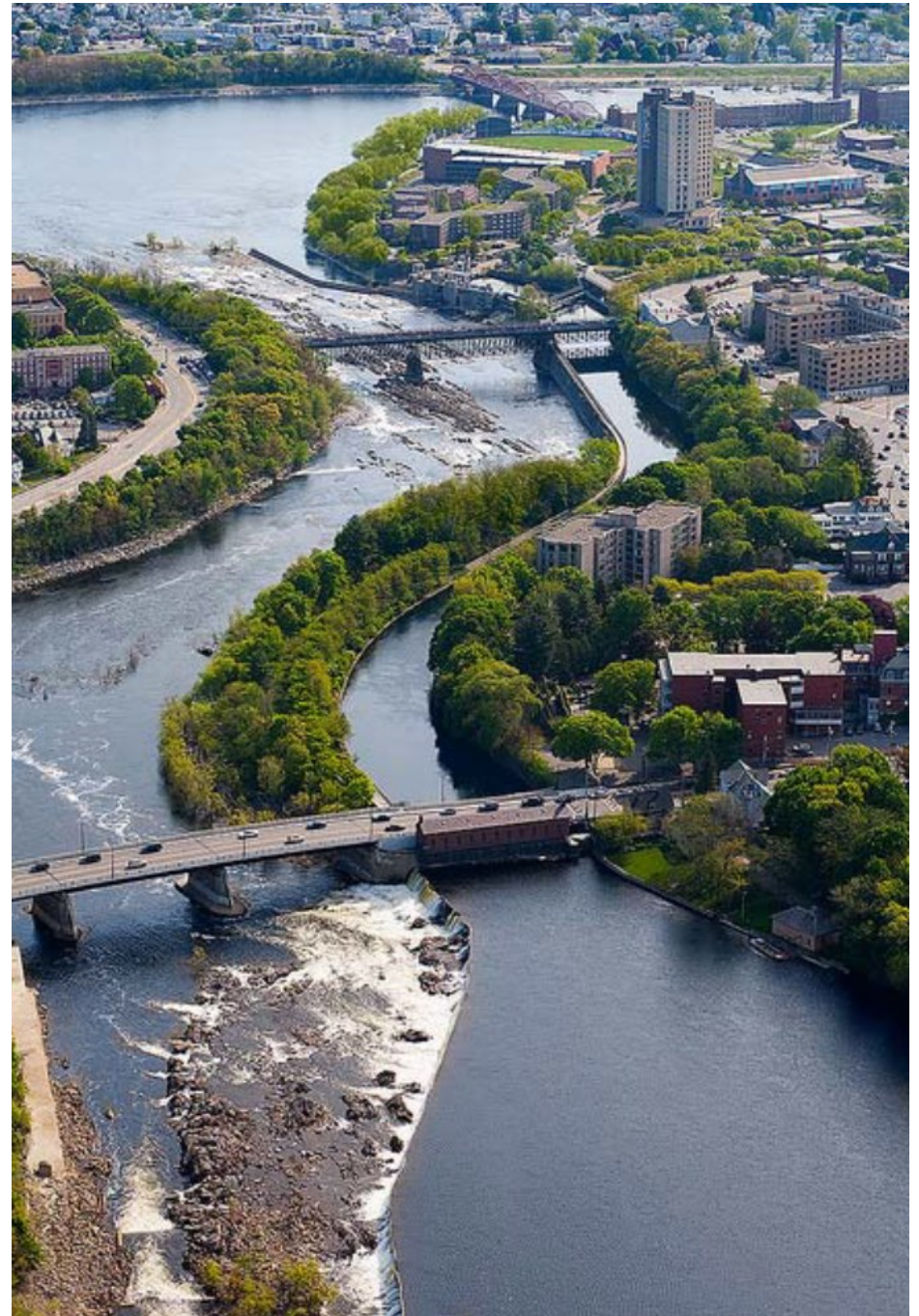
Greater Lowell Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for 2020-2024 (Appendix)



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APPENDIX I: PUBLIC REVIEW AND 30 DAY COMMENT PERIOD

The following public notice providing a 30-day public comment period was posted on April 10, 2020 on NMCOG's website at: www.nmcog.org and on NMCOG's social media.

Public Review and Comment Period for the draft Greater Lowell CEDS for 2020-2024

Good Morning Regional Stakeholders,

Based upon guidance from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, NMCOG is making the draft *Greater Lowell Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for 2020-2024* available for a 30-day public review and comment period.

The CEDS document is a regional economic development strategy developed through a “grass-roots” planning process and overseen by the Greater Lowell CEDS Committee. NMCOG serves as EDA’s regional economic development partner in the Greater Lowell region and provides staff support to the Committee. The CEDS document summarizes the demographic and economic data for the region, includes input from the public SWOT sessions, identifies goals, outlines an action plan, and develops an evaluation framework for the CEDS program.

A copy of this document is available on our website <http://www.nmcog.org/ceds>. The public comment period will be open through May 10, 2020. You may comment on these documents by e-mailing jowen@nmcog.org or calling our office at 978-454-8021 x 118. You may also mail comments to us at 40 Church Street, Suite 200, Lowell MA 01852.

If you have any questions or need further information, please let me know.

Thank you,

Jeff Owen
Regional Planner

Comments Received During Comment Period

The following comments were submitted via email. No telephone comments or written comments were received.

Received: Monday, April 13, 2020

Well done, especially the intro accurately reflecting current situation.

After listening to some recent news stories, I note that as it pertains to resiliency planning/assessment that the CEDS committee & partners will need to drill down to secondary & tertiary effects & considerations. E.g. Hospitals focused on Covid19 ==> no elective surgeries ==>reduced revenues (elective surgeries are major sources of profit for such institutions)==>potential cuts in hospital services/staff cuts==>increased vulnerabilities. **To be addressed in the implementation phase.** Not suggesting any edit to document, just something for future brainstorming.

Received: Monday, April 13, 2020

I did quick review.

A couple of questions/comments:

- Is there high confidence that EDD designation will be granted for NMCOG? This appears to be critical for seamless execution of the CEDS. **Will work with the EDA on this moving forward.**
 - Regarding diversifying skills & retraining workforce, I assume that references to MHLCC draws upon the recently published resource guide of MassHire BizWorks **Yes.**
 - While other evaluation framework items are highly challenging, it seems that "reduce poverty" (while obviously being critical) also has a degree more aspirational in terms of the dependency of governmental and other factors **Agreed.**
 - Under the goal of Infrastructure, consider a eval criteria for telecommunications dealing with Internet availability. E.g. one of the factors referenced as a challenge to remote education now is school districts cannot confirm that Internet is available at all homes even if they provided computers. **Added to the infrastructure evaluation.**
-

Received: Tuesday, April 14, 2020

I just completed reading the 2020-2024 CEDS document. I think it's very well done, especially given so many unknowns regarding COVID-19.

I noticed two minor typos:

- on Page 17, the paragraph describing the Subsidized Housing chart refers to 'Greater Lowell dad'. I'm not sure what it really should say, but I don't think you're talking about fathers.
- on Page 37, in the middle column, there is a mismatched parenthesis on the third item **Typos have been corrected.**

APPENDIX II: GREATER LOWELL CEDS COMMITTEE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Allison Lamey	Lowell Plan/LDFC
Ann Vandal	Town of Dracut
Arthur Ford	Sullivan Bille P.C.
Bill Lipschitz	CTI/Common Ground
Bruce Rosenberg	Westford Econ. Develop. Committee
Danielle McFadden	Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce
Frank Carvalho	Mill Cities Communities Investment
Jerry Frechette	Washington Savings Bank
Lianna Kushi	EforAll Lowell-Lawrence
Lisa Marrone	Chelmsford Econ. Develop. Commission
Maria Dickinson	DPD, City of Lowell
Patricia Coffey	UMass Lowell
Peter Farkas	MassHire Greater Lowell WDB
Rob Anderson	Town of Billerica
Shannon Norton Calles	Lowell Career Center
Sovanna Pouv	Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
Stacie Hargis	Middlesex Community College
Stephanie Cronin	Middlesex 3 Coalition
Stephen Themelis	Town of Pepperell
Steve Joncas	Jeanne D'Arc
Steve Sadwick	Town of Tewksbury



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Greater Lowell CEDS Committee Meeting

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
for the Greater Lowell region

October 3, 2019

12:00-1:30 P.M.

NMCOG Conference Room

40 Church Street, Suite 200, Lowell, MA

A Multi-Disciplinary

Regional Planning

Agency Serving:

Billerica

Chelmsford

Dracut

Dunstable

Lowell

Pepperell

Tewksbury

Tyngsborough

Westford

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Introductions**---Beverly Woods, Executive Director
2. **Greater Lowell CEDS program** – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director
 - EDA Planning Grant Contract
 - Responsibilities of the CEDS Committee
 - Proposed Schedule
 - SWOT locations – Lowell, Tewksbury and Chelmsford
 - Additional Public Input
 - Approval and Submission of Five Year CEDs
3. **Components of the CEDS document** – Jeff Owen, Regional Planner
 - Summary Background
 - SWOT Analysis
 - Previous SWOT input throughout the region
 - Additional SWOT information
 - Strategic Direction/Action Plan
 - Evaluation Framework
 - Economic Resilience
 - Opportunity Zones
 - Examples of accepted CEDS Documents
4. **Next Meeting** – December 5, 2019
5. **Adjournment**

Pat Wojtas
Chair

Beverly A. Woods
Executive Director

40 Church Street
Suite 200
Lowell, MA
01852-2686

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FAX: (978) 454-8023

www.nmcog.org

Greater Lowell CEDS Committee
NMCOG Conference Room
40 Church Street, Suite 200
Lowell, MA 01852

Meeting Minutes
October 3, 2019

CEDS Committee Members: Rob Anderson, Frank Carvalho, Patricia Coffey, Jim Duggan, Peter Farkas, Jerry Frechette, Stacie Hargis, Steve Joncas, Allison Lamey, Lisa Marrone, Danielle McFadden, Shannon Norton, Sovanna Pouv, Bruce Rosenberg, Steve Sadwick, Andrew Shapiro, and Stephen Themelis.

NMCOG Staff: Beverly Woods, Jay Donovan and Jeff Owen

1. Welcome and Introductions

Beverly Woods, NMCOG Executive Director, opened the CEDS Committee meeting at 12:05. Ms. Woods welcomed the CEDS Committee members and stated that the CEDS “grass-roots” planning process was expected to last a year and include four CEDS Committee meetings. She then asked the attendees to introduce themselves around the table.

2. Greater Lowell CEDS Program

Mr. Donovan provided an overview of the EDA Planning Grant Contract for the development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In 2003 NMCOG received a technical assistance grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for \$15,000 to complete its first Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Since then, NMCOG has received several EDA Planning Grants to produce two additional Five-Year CEDS documents and an Annual CEDS Update document. NMCOG received an EDA Planning Grant contract effective April 29, 2019 through April 2020 to develop a Five Year CEDS. Mr. Donovan provided an overview of the purpose for the CEDS document. He described the responsibilities of the CEDS Committee and ways that individuals and organizations could contribute to the process and document, including input on emerging industries and skill sectors.

Mr. Donovan discussed the proposed CEDS Timeline and noted that, in addition to the four CEDS Committee meetings, there would be three public Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis forums. Mr. Donovan suggested that the SWOT Analysis forums be held in Lowell, Tewksbury and Chelmsford, with the first being held in Lowell in November. Mr. Donovan stated that the draft CEDS Summary Background section should be ready for the CEDS Committee to review prior to the second CEDS Committee meeting on December 5th. The second and third SWOT Analysis Forums would be held in January and early February. Public comments on the draft CEDS document could be provided in March, if necessary, through an advertised Public Meeting.

The final Five Year CEDS would be presented to the CEDS Committee at their April meeting so that it could be recommended for approval to the NMCOG Council at their April 15th meeting. The NMCOG Council would then approve the document and NMCOG staff would submit the final document to EDA no later than May 1st. Upon submission of the Five-Year CEDS, NMCOG would apply for additional EDA funding to keep the CEDS “grass-roots” planning process in place. Mr. Donovan asked for recommendations for soliciting additional public input, including from minority communities and small businesses.

Mr. Joncas asked about the advantages of participating in the process, such as access to EDA funding. Mr. Donovan responded that in the early 2000s, the Greater Lowell area was not involved with EDA. Since NMCOG became EDA’s regional economic development partner, the City of Lowell has received two major EDA public works grants for bridges in the Hamilton Canal District. Without the development of the Five Year CEDS, the City would not have been eligible for this public works funding from EDA. However, it would be more difficult for smaller communities such as Pepperell, to be eligible for EDA public works funding, due to the unemployment and per capita income requirements.

Mr. Farkas asked if the intention was to hold future meetings at the same time of day. Mr. Donovan confirmed that is the intention. Mr. Themelis asked about other examples of public works projects that might be eligible. Mr. Donovan responded that water and sewer projects could be eligible, but they need to be tied to an active project that meets EDA job creation criteria and other criteria. Mr. Rosenberg asked if the public meetings for the SWOT Analysis would be specific to the municipalities where those meetings were being held. Mr. Donovan replied that they were open to and intended for people from across the Greater Lowell region.

Mr. Carvalho asked if transportation projects would be eligible for EDA funding. Ms. Woods stated that some types of improvements to roadway infrastructure could be eligible as long as there was a specific connection between the improvements and job creation. Bridge projects in Lowell are an example of eligible transportation projects. Mr. Anderson asked if housing could be a component for CEDS funding. Mr. Donovan responded that it could be useful to show a project’s benefits to housing, but job creation is the primary focus of EDA grant funding. Mr. Anderson asked if the CEDS could be used to actively promote mixed-use development. Mr. Donovan replied that it could.

Mr. Joncas asked if the CEDS document could help local communities access EDA planning grants. Mr. Donovan responded that the EDA is more focused on regional planning. EDA will consider local feasibility studies if there is an economic impact, although this funding is limited. Mr. Donovan stated that communities that are interested in feasibility studies should contact NMCOG staff and we can follow up with EDA staff. Ms. Marrone asked if a match is required. Mr. Donovan replied that NMCOG does have a dollar-for-dollar match for the EDA funds, and that would be also be required for EDA public works grants. Local, state and private funds can be used as a match, but federal funds cannot be used to match federal funds.

3. Components of the CEDS Document

Mr. Owen provided an overview of the new CEDS Content Guidelines that were released in March 2016. The most significant change is the recommendation to limit the document to 25 to

30 pages, with an additional three to five page executive summary. Only data and tables that are related to the goals, objectives and actions should be included in the document, with other data and information that are not directly applicable put in an appendix or left out of the document.

Mr. Owen continued with the sections required by the CEDS Content Guidelines. The first required section is the Summary Background, which is an overview of the economic conditions of the region. Mr. Owen discussed the Regional Overview handout, which includes demographic, employment and industrial data that is likely to be included in the Summary Background. Mr. Anderson noted that the industry employment projections do not include biotech, which is growing in Billerica. Mr. Donovan pointed out that some of the sources for statistics are inaccurate and the Workforce Development Board, Career Center and other organizations could assist the CEDS process by providing more accurate data and asked that people forward that information to Mr. Owen. Mr. Owen stated that NMCOG was considering grouping some of the data by Small Towns (Dunstable, Pepperell and Tyngsborough), Large Towns (Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Tewksbury and Westford) and Lowell. Mr. Donovan added that this would also be done for the SWOT analysis results.

Mr. Owen discussed the SWOT Analysis, the second required section of the CEDS, and added that the SWOT Analysis will incorporate the public SWOT analyses and past SWOT analyses from local municipal plans and strategic plans. Mr. Owen discussed the summary of SWOT issues in local plans and stated that if municipalities or local organizations were having public input sessions in the near future, it would be useful to have NMCOG staff attend. Mr. Rosenberg asked if the full CEDS document would be organized by Small Town, Large Town and City. Mr. Donovan stated that this would only apply to some sections.

Mr. Owen continued with the third required section, the Strategic Direction and Action Plan, which builds on the SWOT Analysis to capitalize on strengths and opportunities and address weaknesses and threats. The Strategic Plan includes the Vision Statement, the Goals and Measurable Objectives, and answers “Where do we want to go?” The Action Plan answers “How do we get there?”, and should not just be a list of projects, but should be wide-ranging actions addressing the regional economy, including issues such as transportation and housing initiatives. The Action Plan should also include activities that are supported by non-EDA sources.

Mr. Owen then discussed the Evaluation Framework, the fourth required section, which includes performance measures that evaluate progress toward priorities and goals and highlight implementation shortcomings and weaknesses. Mr. Owen noted that the Ashville, NC region’s CEDS document has milestones in its evaluation framework rather than performance measures that are measured in percentage increase or decrease, such as a 15% increase in childcare availability. That particular CEDS document does have detailed metrics in its Action Plan, which Mr. Owen suggested as a good source for ideas. Similarly, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) CEDS does not include percent change in most of its performance measures. Instead, the PVPC records changes in specific metrics and notes if the trend is positive, negative or neutral, thereby indicating if progress is being made toward the overall priorities and goals.

Mr. Owen noted that the fifth CEDS requirement, the concept of economic resilience, can be addressed as a separate section, as a distinct goal or action item, in the SWOT analysis, or integrated throughout the document. Economic resilience refers to “the ability to avoid, withstand and recover from economic shocks including natural disasters, climate change, or economic disruptions such as the closure of a large employer or shifts in demand for a locally produced product”. Mr. Owen stated that the EDA recommends a two-pronged approach. The first area being steady-state initiatives that support the region’s economic durability and ability to withstand shock, an example being support for a flexible workforce that can shift jobs and industries as necessary. The second area is response initiatives that support the region’s ability to recover from shock, with examples including pre-disaster recovery planning and the creation of communication networks to monitor business community needs both pre- and post-disaster. Mr. Owen stated that the Ashville Region’s CEDS has a good description of resilience reflecting EDA’s two-pronged approach.

Mr. Duggan stated that Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permitting is an unfunded mandate that could be considered a threat to area businesses due to its expense. He asked if this could be addressed in the CEDS. Ms. Woods noted that Massachusetts is behind many other states in addressing the stormwater issue and the MS4 permit will prepare communities and businesses to withstand significant storms and flooding events. Ms. Woods and Mr. Donovan stated that the CEDS could address MS4 and its impacts, but because it is a federal requirement, it cannot be undone or avoided. Ms. Woods added that due to extensive economic disruption and damage caused by severe hurricanes, EDA is suggesting that the CEDS include a recommendation that every business have a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in case of a disaster.

Mr. Rosenberg recommended incorporating more traceability in the Evaluation Framework. Mr. Carvalho asked how different communities coordinate on implementation once the CEDS has been adopted. Mr. Donovan explained that the municipal staff and city councilors/selectmen coordinate on specific project proposals, as well as at monthly NMCOG meetings. NMCOG staff and local planners coordinate and get together to discuss current issues. Ms. Woods provided additional examples of municipal officials and representatives coordinating on regional transportation, hazard mitigation and emergency dispatch in the Greater Lowell area. Mr. Duggan added that the Chamber of Commerce is also a good resource for regional coordination by municipalities and businesses. Mr. Carvalho suggested that the CEDS public input process could be a vehicle for raising awareness of local resources, such as UMass Lowell. Mr. Joncas suggested making a recommendation for a more formal process for inter-community dialogue and cooperation.

Mr. Shapiro provided an overview of the federal Opportunity Zone program and the five Opportunity Zones located in Lowell. These five zones are the only ones in the Greater Lowell area. The zones are mapped on a handout provided for the meeting, which also includes a summary of the Opportunity Zone program. Created in 2017, the Opportunity Zone program provides tax incentives for investments located in designated Opportunity Zones. EDA has encouraged their regional economic development partners to actively promote the Opportunity Zone program.

The City of Lowell has a page on its website to promote the Opportunity Zones in the City. That page includes an interactive map where users can look up specific parcels as well a list of available properties in the zones. Mr. Donovan asked about examples of developments in the Opportunity Zones. Mr. Shapiro discussed the Winn Development mixed-use development in the Hamilton Canal District, but noted that based on data currently collected by the City, it's not possible to determine if the development is due to the Opportunity Zone tax incentives or would have happened anyway.

Mr. Frechette asked if it was possible to collect this data during the permitting process. Mr. Shapiro answered that it could be appropriate during some part of the permitting process or when developers apply for subsidies. Mr. Themelis asked how a "distressed area" was defined for the Opportunity Zones. Mr. Shapiro answered that they are defined using the New Markets Tax Credits criteria. Mr. Anderson asked how these would be included in a regional strategy if they are only located in Lowell. Mr. Shapiro answered that regional employment and housing opportunities are likely to be located in the zones. Ms. Hargis asked how the Opportunity Zones benefit small business. Mr. Joncas provided an overview of the tax breaks for specific types of investment in the zones.

Ms. Hargis recommended including comparisons of average wages with the cost living in order to understand if average wages are high enough, and to plan for improving education and employment opportunities to provide living wages. Mr. Owen responded that this data could be included. Ms. Hargis noted that the Asheville Area CEDS includes Per Capita Living Wage.

Mr. Shapiro asked why the population in the Regional Overview handout is projected to decrease by 2040. Mr. Donovan replied that the projections are done by the Donahue Institute and are more accurate at the state level. He noted that NMCOC staff do not agree with the numbers, and that the state level projections are divided among thirteen (13) regions. Mr. Donovan noted that the Donahue Institute favors the Greater Boston area in its projections. Ms. Woods stated she had been told that the projections are based primarily on mortality and fertility rates, with less emphasis on immigration and population movement. She added that the Donahue Institute staff had told her that despite population decreases, there will still be a demand for additional housing due to shrinking household size.

4. Next Meeting

Mr. Donovan stated that the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, December 5, 2019. We will provide information on the SWOT session scheduled in Lowell.



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Greater Lowell CEDS Committee Meeting

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
for the Greater Lowell region

December 5, 2019

12:00-1:30 P.M.

NMCOG Conference Room

40 Church Street, Suite 200, Lowell, MA

A Multi-Disciplinary

Regional Planning

Agency Serving:

Billerica

Chelmsford

Dracut

Dunstable

Lowell

Pepperell

Tewksbury

Tyngsborough

Westford

Pat Wojtas
Chair

Beverly A. Woods
Executive Director

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AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Introductions**---Beverly Woods, Executive Director
2. **Approval of October 3rd minutes**
3. **Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session** – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director
 - Handout material
 - Lowell CEDS SWOT results
 - Next sessions:
 - Tewksbury Public Library, January 21st, 6-8 P.M. (snow date – January 28th)
 - Chelmsford Police Department Community Room, February 4th, 6-8 P.M. (snow date – February 6th)
4. **Draft Greater Lowell CEDS Summary Background section** – Jeff Owen, Regional Planner
5. **Next Meeting** – February 27, 2020
6. **Adjournment**

Greater Lowell CEDS Committee

NMCOG Conference Room
40 Church Street, Suite 200
Lowell, MA 01852

Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2019

CEDS Committee Members: Rob Anderson, Patricia Coffey, Maria Dickinson, Peter Farkas, Arthur Ford, Jerry Frechette, Steve Joncas, Bill Lipchitz, Sovanna Pouv, Bruce Rosenberg, Steve Sadwick, Stephen Themelis, and Ann Vandal.

NMCOG Staff: Beverly Woods, Jay Donovan and Jeff Owen

1. Welcome and Introductions

Beverly Woods, NMCOG Executive Director, opened the CEDS Committee meeting at 12:05 P.M. Ms. Woods welcomed the CEDS Committee members and asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of October 3rd Minutes

Mr. Themelis made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Frechette seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session

Mr. Donovan provided an overview of the Economic Development Visioning Session held at Lowell City Hall on November 21, 2019. There are two additional Visioning Sessions scheduled, one at the Tewksbury Public Library on Tuesday, January 21st (snow date on January 28th), and another at the Chelmsford Police Department Community Room on Tuesday, February 4th (snow date on February 6th). CEDS Committee members were provided copies of the packets that had been available at the Visioning Session, which included the directions for participating in the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Mr. Donovan stated that a similar packet with an updated agenda will be used for the Tewksbury and Chelmsford Visioning Sessions.

Mr. Donovan stated that seventeen (17) participants attended the session and provided an overview of the SWOT process that was utilized during the Visioning Session. Mr. Donovan continued with a summary of the results of the exercise, which had been provided to the Committee, and listed to the top five (5) Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats identified during the session.

Mr. Donovan encouraged Committee Members to reach out to people to attend the Visioning Sessions in Tewksbury and Chelmsford, particularly business people, residents and other stakeholders in the region.

Mr. Joncas stated that representatives of diverse organizations attended the Lowell Visioning Session, and noted that he was surprised by some of the results, expecting that some items would have had higher priority. Ms. Dickinson noted that some residents, including younger residents, added useful perspectives on the workforce development challenges and housing costs. Mr. Rosenberg asked about the lack of comments on competition from other regions, including New Hampshire. Mr. Donovan responded that competition from other Massachusetts communities came up more than competition from New Hampshire.

The group discussed how the SWOT results focused more on diversity issues than business and economic issues. Mr. Anderson asked what happens if Chelmsford and Tewksbury Visioning Sessions also focus on issues less directly related to business and economics, noting the lack of votes for energy costs as one example. Mr. Donovan stated that it is important to have businesses and stakeholders attend the Visioning Sessions. Ms. Vandal asked if there a short write-up available for publicizing the upcoming Visioning Sessions. Mr. Donovan stated that NMCOG staff would send that out. Mr. Frechette asked if the CEDS Committee could add input and recommend priorities in addition to the SWOT session input. Mr. Donovan said that is part of the CEDS Committee's role.

Ms. Dickinson asked if it was possible to send out a survey to businesses in the region. The group discussed options for a region-wide survey or similar tool for collecting input from businesses. Mr. Donovan noted that the grant funding for the CEDS process is limited in size. Ms. Woods suggested adding a page to the NMCOG website where people could submit input and ideas, and disseminating a link to that page. The group agreed on this approach.

4. Draft Greater Lowell CEDS Summary Background Section

Mr. Owen introduced the draft Summary Background section of the CEDS, noting that it contains less data than the overview sections of previous CEDS so as to keep the document to around 40 pages, as suggested by the EDA. Mr. Owen noted that EDA recommends that data not directly related to the SWOT analysis, Strategic Direction and Action Plan, or Evaluation Framework be either placed in the appendix or removed altogether. Therefore, the section will be revised following input from the SWOT analysis and during the drafting of the Strategic Direction and Action Plan.

Mr. Owen noted differences between NMCOG's draft Summary Background and the Summary Background sections found in the two sample CEDS documents that had been previously discussed – from the Land of Sky region of North Carolina and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC). Mr. Owen noted that PVPC's Summary Background is only two pages, but they had placed a significant amount of data in their Evaluation Framework for use as benchmark performance indicators, instead of putting the data in the Summary Background. Mr. Owen noted that PVPC also used a 2018 report by their Regional Employment Board, now

called MassHire Springfield, to identify industries that are most important to region's economic success.

Based on elements within the PVPC document, Mr. Owen noted that the Greater Lowell Workforce Development Board's Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 lists industries that are most important to the Greater Lowell economy, and suggested that the CEDS include that list. Mr. Farkas provided an overview of how these industries were selected. Mr. Farkas noted that while manufacturing, one of the identified important industries, may not be growing in the region, there is a demand for new employees as older employees retire. Mr. Rosenberg asked about the types of manufacturing in the region. Mr. Farkas stated that manufacturing is broadly defined. Mr. Owen noted that the available data tracks employment in specific sectors within manufacturing, and a substantial amount of the industry could be described as advanced manufacturing, including electronic instrument manufacturing and semiconductor manufacturing, which are both listed in the Summary Background's location quotient tables. Mr. Rosenberg recommended clarifying the types of manufacturing and other industries that are in the region. Mr. Owen agreed. Mr. Owen noted that the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) lists manufacturing as having average annual wages of more than \$100,000, though the group agreed that there should be skepticism regarding the precision of EOLWD data. Mr. Owen agreed and noted that even with imprecise data and questions about what occupations are counted within this sector, manufacturing in the region generally provides higher wages.

Mr. Themelis asked what the sources for the employment and industrial data were. Mr. Owen responded that most of the employment, industry and occupation data comes from EOLWD, while demographics and housing data is from the US Census Bureau's decennial census and their annual American Community Survey (ACS). Mr. Owen noted that the sources are listed at the bottom of each table in the draft Summary Background. Mr. Farkas stated that the MassHire data on job openings comes from Burning Glass.

Mr. Anderson questioned the accuracy of the EOLWD data, noting the EMD Serono was not on the list of employers with 500 or more employees, despite having more than 600 employees. Ms. Dickinson stated that Lowell maintains a list of top employers. Ms. Vandal stated that all of the municipalities maintain a list of top employers if they issue debt, and the data should be located in the demographic section of all bond statements. Mr. Joncas noted that Lowell General Hospital and Tewksbury Hospital are both part of Circle Health. Mr. Owen agreed to contact the municipalities for their most recent bond statements.

Mr. Joncas noted that Table 11 indicates that Lowell's median household income declined by almost 2% between 2013 and 2017 and suggested the CEDS address remedies for barriers to employment, such as transportation, lack of childcare and lack of skills training. Mr. Donovan stated that these issues will be identified in the SWOT analysis section of the document. The information from the SWOT analysis would then feed into the CEDS Strategic Direction and Action Plan. Additional input from the CEDS Committee and other sources will help to identify these critical issues.

Mr. Themelis asked about the employment projections listed in Table 16. Ms. Woods noted that NMCOG staff do not agree with the numbers, and explained that MassDOT and the UMass Donohue Institute based the projections primarily on mortality, fertility and retirement rates, with less emphasis on developable land, immigration, and population movement. Mr. Donovan noted that the Donohue Institute favors the Greater Boston area in its projections. However, this is the best data available to us and is utilized in other NMCOG documents.

Ms. Dickinson asked if the industry clusters could be mapped. Mr. Donovan responded that NMCOG can do that and noted that the Middlesex 3 project included similar data mapping. Mr. Anderson suggested adding information about transportation and traffic, commute times, and mapping of the workforce catchment area, including commute-time data by educational attainment. Ms. Woods noted that available commute time data shows basic commute times by municipality of employment and municipality of residence, and additional transportation information is available in the recently updated Regional Transportation Plan. Mr. Themelis suggested adding the cost of commuting versus using transit. The group discussed telecommuting and potential for encouraging businesses to promote telecommuting. However, Ms. Woods was not sure who collects data on telecommuting.

Mr. Rosenberg suggested adding text to better identify trends, themes and issues in the tables and data. This will help to lead into the vision, goals and strategy portions of the document. Mr. Donovan suggested adding an introduction section that provides an overview of the trends, themes and issues, as well as the importance of housing, transportation, and other topics.

Mr. Owen went through the draft Summary Background and gave a brief overview of the data and text on each page. Ms. Woods noted that because the US Census Bureau's ACS is only a sampling of the population, the ACS margin of error is much higher than the decennial census. However, the ACS is performed every year and includes a broader range of questions than the decennial census, including income data. Mr. Sadwick noted that Table 1 lacked a citation for data with the double asterisks (**) notation. Mr. Owen stated that this would be fixed. Ms. Woods explained that the projected housing growth in Table 8 is much greater than the projected population growth because seniors are staying in their homes longer and there is a projected increase in one- and two-person households.

Mr. Rosenberg noted that several of the high growth occupations in Table 17 required only a high school diploma or no formal education and had low mean annual wages. Mr. Farkas recommended using a multi-month average unemployment rate rather than the single-month snapshot in Table 10. Mr. Owen stated a revision would be done to incorporate a multi-month average. Mr. Joncas asked if the labor force participation rate was available. Mr. Owen responded that it is and can be included. Mr. Donovan asked the source of the EOLWD data on new business creation and the group discussed requirements for registering new businesses. Mr. Owen will find out where that data comes from.

The group discussed the Location Quotient (LQ) tables. Mr. Donovan suggested that Mr. Owen send the full LQ tables to the CEDS Committee. Mr. Rosenberg suggested that the text describe trends and themes related to the LQ data. Mr. Owen will send the full tables to the CEDS Committee and revise the LQ summary tables and text. Mr. Joncas expressed concern about the

high projected growth for low-paying occupations in Table 17, including home health aides and personal care aides that will be increasingly needed as the population ages. Mr. Anderson noted that the employment projection tables are organized by percent change in employment, even if the total number of jobs in a particular industry is relatively small. Mr. Anderson suggested focusing more on the number of jobs or focusing on industries with at least a minimum number of employees. The group was also interested in seeing projections focusing on high wage occupations. Mr. Frechette noted that construction and skilled trades are forecast to have shortages of workers due to the retirement of current employees and a lack of skilled younger workers to replace them. Mr. Frechette noted that the data in the draft did not raise this topic. Mr. Owen noted that replacement of existing employees with new employees would not typically show up as job growth, as opposed to the creation of new positions. The group discussed data sources on the job openings for skilled trades, including MassHire data on open positions, from local vocational and technical schools, UMass Lowell, and Middlesex Community College.

Mr. Donovan asked the group to send additional comments and suggestions on the section Mr. Owen.

4. Next Meeting

Mr. Donovan stated that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 27, 2020. NCMOG will provide information on the additional SWOT sessions scheduled in Tewksbury and Chelmsford.

5. Adjournment at 1:34 P.M.



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Greater Lowell CEDS Committee Meeting

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
for the Greater Lowell region

March 12, 2020
12:00-2:00 P.M.

NMCOG Conference Room
40 Church Street, Suite 200, Lowell, MA

A Multi-Disciplinary
Regional Planning
Agency Serving:

AGENDA

Billerica

Chelmsford

Dracut

Dunstable

Lowell

Pepperell

Tewksbury

Tyngsborough

Westford

1. **Welcome and Introductions**---Beverly Woods, Executive Director
2. **Approval of December 5th minutes**
3. **Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Sessions** – Jeff Owen, Regional Planner
 - Tewksbury SWOT Results
 - Chelmsford SWOT Results
 - CEDS Survey Results
4. **Components of the CEDS document** – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director
 - Updated draft Summary Background section
 - Draft SWOT section
 - Draft Strategic Direction and Action Plan
 - Draft Priority Projects
 - Next steps
5. **Next Meeting** – April 2, 2020
6. **Adjournment**

Pat Wojtas
Chair

Beverly A. Woods
Executive Director

40 Church Street
Suite 200
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www.nmcog.org

Greater Lowell CEDS Committee
NMCOG Conference Room
40 Church Street, Suite 200
Lowell, MA 01852

Meeting Notes
March 12, 2020

CEDS Committee Members: Rob Anderson, Maria Dickinson, Bruce Rosenberg, and Stephen Themelis.

CEDS Committee Members by Telephone Conference Call: Steve Joncas, Steve Sadwick, Arthur Ford, and Frank Carvalho.

NMCOG Staff: Jay Donovan and Jeff Owen

1. Welcome and Introductions

Jay Donovan, NMCOG Assistant Director, noted that there was no quorum at 12:20 and that the meeting would therefore be informational.

2. Approval of December 5th Minutes

Mr. Donovan stated that due to the lack of a quorum, approval of the December 5th meeting minutes would be postponed until the next meeting.

3. Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Sessions and Survey Results

Bruce Rosenberg noted that Westford held a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) session for businesses at its Business Forum in November 2019 to update the economic development section of its master plan. The session was attended by more than 40 representatives of the Westford business community. Mr. Rosenberg requested that this information be included in the CEDS SWOT analysis as well. Mr. Donovan noted that we were trying to keep the document within EDA's 35 page limit and perhaps it could be included in the appendix. Mr. Rosenberg suggested including reference to the Westford SWOT in the text of the CEDS SWOT section with the specific details in the appendix. The group agreed with this approach.

Mr. Owen provided an overview of the Visioning Sessions held at the Tewksbury Public Library on Tuesday, January 21st and at the Chelmsford Police Department Community Room on Tuesday, February 4th. Mr. Owen noted that these sessions followed the same format as the initial Visioning Session in Lowell.

Mr. Owen stated that fifteen (15) participants attended the Tewksbury session and seven (7) participants attended the Chelmsford session. Mr. Owen summarized the results of both sessions and listed the top Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats identified for each session.

Mr. Owen provided an overview of the results of the CEDS survey that has been available on NMCOG's website since January 15, 2020. The survey is scheduled to close on March 20, 2020, and Mr. Donovan requested that Committee members urge their municipal staff to put the survey on their municipal website. Mr. Themelis asked if the survey was only for business owners and non-profit managers, or if it was also for residents. Mr. Owen responded that the survey was for business owners, non-profit managers, and residents. The survey begins asking if the respondent is a business or non-profit owner or manager, and then based on the answer to this question, the survey questions vary slightly. This format was used to track different viewpoints of owners and managers rather than residents and employees. Mr. Owen reviewed the highlights of the survey, including the most commonly identified benefits of locating in the region, the most commonly identified challenges to operating a business or organization in the region, as well as opportunities to improve the region's business environment. Mr. Themelis recommended that the title of the question regarding how long the respondent has lived in the region be clarified to show that business owners and non-profit managers did not answer this question. Mr. Owen stated that he would clarify the title.

Mr. Carvalho asked if the EDA grades the CEDS document on the level of community participation. Mr. Donovan responded that the EDA essentially approves or disapproves the CEDS document and does not score based on the level of community participation.

4. Draft Components of the CEDS Document

Mr. Donovan reviewed the full Location Quotient tables that were sent to the Committee members. The highlights of the Location Quotient tables are included in the main body of the draft CEDS document and the full tables will be included in the appendix.

Ms. Dickinson noted that Mr. Owen had requested a list of top employers in each municipality. Ms. Dickinson will send the recently updated information on the largest Lowell employers to Mr. Owen. The group agreed that a list of the region's top employers should be added to the CEDS.

Mr. Donovan discussed the updated Summary Background section. Mr. Anderson noted that the American Community Survey (ACS) demographic data was the 2013-2017 period and asked if newer data was available. Mr. Donovan responded that some 2014-2018 ACS data had been released in December 2019, but we had developed the draft Summary Background section prior to December. Mr. Donovan noted that despite the overall strong unemployment numbers for the region, there were still pockets of high unemployment in Lowell. Due to Lowell's per capita income being below 80% of the national per capita income, this region is eligible for EDA funding. Mr. Themelis asked if the towns were eligible for EDA funding. Mr. Donovan replied that the EDA generally steers its funding to distressed areas with per capita income below 80% of the national per capita income or unemployment 1% greater than the national unemployment rate for the past 24 months.

Mr. Joncas asked if the CEDS could generate additional assistance for an existing collaboration between Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union, Community Teamwork, Inc. and the Lowell Working Cities Coalition (WCC) that provides funding for small businesses in the Acre neighborhood. Mr. Donovan responded that the State is likely a better source for additional assistance, although a specific project in the Acre neighborhood building on the program might be eligible. Mr. Joncas noted that the Massachusetts Food Trust provides funding for improving access to nutritional foods in low-income areas through their LEAF program. Ms. Dickinson added that inclusion in the CEDS helps projects seeking funding from State or Federal sources.

Mr. Rosenberg noted that the timeframe for Table 8 is 2016 to 2026, which is different from other tables, and there appeared to be discrepancies between those projections and the employment projections in Table 7. Mr. Donovan noted that different data sources were used: Table 7 reflects total employment, while Table 8 focuses on the top twelve (12) occupations forecast for growth. Mr. Rosenberg noted that several of the occupations in Table 8 pay low annual wages and do not require bachelor's degrees. Mr. Donovan responded that the CEDS document should focus on increasing jobs in occupations paying higher wages.

Ms. Dickinson noted that the Average Monthly Employment column in Table 13 was missing the dollar sign. Mr. Owen stated that would be fixed. Additional required corrections for the tables, including industry names in Table 16, were noted and Mr. Owen will address those as well.

Mr. Donovan discussed Map 1, the Employment Density Map, which maps all employment in the region, and asked Mr. Owen if maps of health care, manufacturing, and IT sectors had been provided. Mr. Owen responded that all employment had been mapped in the Employment Density Map to keep the document at the recommended length. Mr. Donovan responded that, given the information provided specific to those industries, they should be included in the appendix.

Mr. Donovan noted that the new EDA guidance requires that the CEDS documents include information on the region's Opportunity Zones and stated that NMCOG staff will meet with DPD staff to discuss ways that NMCOG staff can help promote Lowell's Opportunity Zones. Mr. Themelis asked what the criteria is for Opportunity Zone designation. Mr. Donovan responded that the criteria are related to economic distress indicators and local communities submitted their recommended areas to the State. The State then submitted these areas to the federal government for final designation. The Opportunity Zones are unrelated to the HUBZone program and do not provide any fast-track benefits. Instead, they provide tax incentives to developers and investors related to projects located in the Opportunity Zones.

Mr. Themelis asked if the project lists had a breakdown of Federal spending per project. Mr. Donovan responded that the EDA is looking more at the total project costs and if the projects have been completed. Mr. Rosenberg asked if the projects were collected from the municipalities. Mr. Donovan replied that a survey was sent out during the previous CEDS planning process, but this time the municipalities and organizations, such as UMass Lowell and Middlesex Community College, were contacted via e-mail and telephone.

Mr. Rosenberg noted that the Location Quotients indicate that the region's industries are fairly well diversified, which provides a level of resilience in the case of economic shifts. Mr. Donovan stated that diversification and the ability to adjust to economic shifts is an economic resilience goal.

Mr. Donovan stated that he plans to send the draft Strategic Direction and Action Plan and the Evaluation Framework sections to Committee members prior to the next meeting. Committee members were asked to provide feedback on the draft sections before the next meeting.

5. Next Meeting

Mr. Donovan stated that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2020.

6. Adjournment

The meeting ended at 1:38 p.m.



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

The Greater Lowell CEDS Committee will meet virtually on Thursday, April 2, 2020 from 12:00 Noon to 2:00 P.M. Due to the recent Open Meeting Law policy change set forth by Governor Baker during his State of Emergency, the meeting will be held through the Zoom platform. To join the meeting, please follow the link <https://zoom.us/j/231137763>; The Meeting ID is 231 137 763. Additional dial-in options are listed below the agenda. For assistance connecting to the meeting, please contact our office at (978) 454-8021, x115.

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Chair

Beverly A. Woods
Executive Director

40 Church Street
Suite 200
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01852-2686

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Greater Lowell CEDS Committee Meeting

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
for the Greater Lowell region

April 2, 2020
12:00-2:00 P.M.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Introductions---**Beverly Woods, Executive Director
2. **Approval of December 5th minutes/review of March 12th meeting notes**
3. **Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act** – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director
4. **Components of the CEDS document** – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director
 - Updated draft Summary Background section
 - Draft SWOT section
 - Draft Strategic Direction and Action Plan
 - Draft Priority Projects
 - Draft Evaluation Framework
5. **Recommendation to NMCOG Council**
6. **Adjournment**

Additional options to join meeting:

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Dial by your location

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+1 253 215 8782 US

Meeting ID: 231 137 763

DRAFT

Greater Lowell CEDS Committee
Via Zoom Video Conference

Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2020

CEDS Committee Members: Rob Anderson, Frank Carvalho, Stephanie Cronin, Maria Dickinson, Peter Farkas, Arthur Ford, Stacie Hargis, Steve Joncas, Lianna Kushi, Allison Lamey, Bill Lipchitz, Lisa Marrone, Danielle McFadden, Bruce Rosenberg, Steve Sadwick, and Stephen Themelis.

NMCOG Staff: Beverly Woods, Jay Donovan, Carlin Andrus, and Jeff Owen

1. Welcome and Introductions

Following a change of the Zoom location due to disruptive Zoom hackers, Carlin Andrus gave a brief introduction to Zoom and basic operating instructions. Beverly Woods, NMCOG Executive Director, opened the CEDS Committee meeting at 12:23 P.M. and welcomed the CEDS Committee members. Ms. Woods noted that the EDA will be receiving significant funding from the CARES Act and that NMCOG is working with our member communities to ensure that their issues are being addressed and that their funding needs may be addressed. Ms. Wood noted that completing the CEDS document will maintain our eligibility for funding.

2. Approval of December 5, 2019 Minutes and Acknowledgement of Receipt of March 12, 2020 Meeting Notes

Stephen Themelis made a motion to approve the December 5 minutes. Stephanie Cronin seconded the motion. Bill Lipchitz noted that his name was misspelled in the minutes. Mr. Donovan stated that it would be corrected. The minutes were approved unanimously with the identified edit.

Mr. Donovan noted that the March 12th meeting did not have a quorum and, therefore, meeting notes were taken instead of minutes. Mr. Donovan confirmed which members had called into the meeting. Steve Sadwick and Arthur Ford were on the call, while Allison Lamey and Stacey Hargis were not on the call. The meeting notes will be corrected to reflect this.

3. Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the EDA

Mr. Donovan provided an overview of the CARES Act. The Act provides \$2.2 trillion in funding to address the coronavirus pandemic and to initiate economic recovery efforts. EDA is slated to receive \$1.5 billion in economic adjustment assistance to be made available to states, regions and local communities. EDA will be issuing a Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) within the next 2-3 weeks .

Mr. Donovan summarized his conversation with Debra Beavin, the EDA Economic Development Representative (EDR) for Massachusetts, that the CEDS document being completed in the next few weeks would not adequately reflect the economic impact that the pandemic has had on the Greater Lowell region. Due to the lag in the availability of economic data, these conditions would not be reflected in the document. The EDR recommended that the CEDS be submitted according to the original timeline and an update be performed as part of the Annual CEDS Update. Mr. Themelis asked if that meant the CEDS Committee would continue to be active the future. Mr. Donovan responded that NMCOG would like to keep the CEDS Committee involved in the implementation of the CEDS document, including specific actions and projects related to the economic recovery assistance. These meetings would likely be held on a quarterly basis, except in those situations that required more frequent meetings. Mr. Themelis replied that he would be interested in remaining involved.

4. Components of the CEDS document

Mr. Donovan asked Committee members to continue submitting comments regarding the draft CEDS sections that had been provided previously to the Committee. Mr. Donovan recently e-mailed the draft Strategic Direction and Action Plan section and stated that the draft Evaluation Framework section should be e-mailed early the following week.

Mr. Donovan reviewed the Strategic Direction and Action Plan section that had been e-mailed to the Committee. He noted that the Coronavirus section has been updated and will continue to be updated until it is submitted to EDA. Mr. Donovan noted that it should read \$1.5 billion instead of \$150 billion in the second to last sentence of the first paragraph of the Coronavirus page.

Stephanie Cronin asked if the first goal was the highest priority. Mr. Donovan responded that the goals were listed alphabetically, but could be arranged by priority. Ms. Cronin and Bruce Rosenberg agreed that the goals should be arranged by priority.

Mr. Rosenberg asked about the Economic Resiliency goal being labeled an “overall goal” and recommended considering another term, possibly “overarching”. Allison Lamey suggested interspersing economic resiliency throughout the other goals rather than separating it out. Mr. Donovan stated that the resiliency portion was a summary of actions and objectives from throughout the section, but that resiliency could be plugged into the six goals instead. Mr. Rosenberg stated that interspersing economic resiliency throughout the goals makes sense, but recognized that some resiliency items may not neatly fit under the specific goals. Mr. Donovan stated that NMCOG would look into this, but noted that the time to address this might not be available.

Rob Anderson suggested that the term “biotech” be added to the Economic Development goal. Mr. Donovan agreed. Peter Farkas asked for clarification on the database mentioned under Objective 3 under the Economic Development goal. Mr. Donovan responded that the information to be included in the database had not yet been finalized, but there was a need to collaborate on the development of a database for the region.

Mr. Donovan noted that the NMCOG Council is scheduled to meet on April 15th and that we are scheduled to send a draft CEDS document to the Council by April 10th. Mr. Donovan asked for final comments and recommendations by Wednesday, April 8 in order to make those changes in time to send the draft CEDS document to the Council for their review.

Ms. Cronin recommended addressing park and ride lots that are at capacity in the Transportation section, including the Tyngsborough Park & Ride facility and North Billerica commuter rail parking lot. Ms. Cronin added that the City of Nashua is interested in expanding bus routes to Gallagher Terminal in Lowell and Alewife Station. Ms. Woods noted that this was still in the feasibility study stage.

Mr. Anderson suggested adding references to technical high schools under the Workforce Development goal. Mr. Farkas recommended adding reference to using technical high schools for adult learning at night.

Mr. Themelis recommended adding Pepperell Mills to the list of new and continuing projects. Mr. Donovan agreed.

Mr. Themelis recommended that Objective 2 under the Economic Resiliency goal be updated to better address unemployment, telecommunications and a coronavirus recovery taskforce. Mr. Donovan stated that this objective would be reviewed and updated as necessary.

Mr. Rosenberg asked if the Evaluation Framework section would seek to measure progress toward each specific bullet point in the Strategic Direction and Action Plan. He continued that many of the bullet points were aspirational and could be difficult to measure. Mr. Donovan responded that we would not measure each bullet point. Ms. Woods added that the Evaluation Framework would look at measurable metrics.

5. Motion to Approve the CEDS Document

Mr. Themelis made a motion on behalf of the CEDS Committee to recommend that the NMCOG Council approve the draft CEDS document, assuming that the recommended edits had been included. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Adjournment

The CEDS Committee adjourned at 1:26 P.M.

APPENDIX IV: NMCOG COUNCIL MEMBERS

COMMUNITY	SELECTMEN/CITY COUNCIL	PLANNING BOARD	ALTERNATE
Billerica	Andrew Deslaurier - <u>Vice Chair</u>	Chris Tribou - <u>Asst. Clerk</u>	Mary McBride
Chelmsford	Pat Wojtas – <u>Chair</u>	Henry Parlee	S. George Zaharoolis
Dracut	Tami Dristiliaris		Philippe Thibault
Dunstable	James Tully		
Lowell	Daniel Rourke	Gerard Frechette – <u>Treasurer</u>	
Pepperell	Bill Greathead	Chuck Walkovich	Stephen C. Themelis- <u>Clerk</u>
Tewksbury	Jayne Wellman	Stephen G. Johnson, Jr.	
Tyngsborough	Rick Reault – <u>Asst. Treasurer</u>	Steven O’Neill	Ronald Keohane - <u>MPO Rep.</u>
Westford	Elizabeth Almeida	Darrin Wizst	James Silva

APPENDIX V: NMCOG CEDS APPROVAL AGENDA AND MINUTES



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

NOTICE OF MEETING

The next meeting of the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) will be held virtually on Wednesday, April 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. using Zoom.

A Multi-Disciplinary

Regional Planning

Agency Serving:

Billerica

Chelmsford

Dracut

Dunstable

Lowell

Pepperell

Tewksbury

Tyngsborough

Westford

Pat Wojtas
Chair

Beverly A. Woods
Executive Director

40 Church Street
Suite 200
Lowell, MA
01852-2686

TEL: (978) 454-8021

FAX: (978) 454-8023

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Zoom link information:

<https://zoom.us/j/729946647?pwd=NG5wQk5kRkttQ3FoRkVnWnRoclRiUT09>

Meeting ID: 729 946 647

Password: 546384

You can also participate using the audio only by calling in: +1-301-715-8592

AGENDA

- I. **MINUTES OF MEETING:** February 19, 2020
- II. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
- III. **FINANCIAL REPORT AND WARRANT**
- IV. **OLD BUSINESS**
 1. Update on Staffing Issues in Light of the Pandemic
 2. Approval of the Draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
 3. Other Old Business
- V. **NEW BUSINESS**
 1. Community Reports
 2. Project Referrals
 3. Proposed Amendment of the FY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program
 4. Draft FY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program
 5. Other New Business
- VI. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

CITY/TOWN CLERKS: PLEASE POST PURSUANT TO OPEN MEETING LAW

**Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
40 Church Street, Suite 200
Lowell, MA 01852**

Minutes of Meeting: April 15, 2020

The April 15, 2020 meeting was held virtually on the Zoom platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Chair Pat Wojtas presiding. The following were in virtual attendance, as indicated in Attachment #1:

Councilors

- Andrew Deslaurier, Billerica Board of Selectmen
- Christopher Tribou, Billerica Planning Board
- Mary McBride, Billerica Alternate
- Pat Wojtas, Chair, Chelmsford Board of Selectmen
- Phil Thibault, Dracut Alternate
- Chuck Walkovich, Pepperell Planning Board
- Stephen Themelis, Pepperell Alternate
- Jayne Wellman, Tewksbury Board of Selectmen
- Darrin Wizst, Westford Planning Board
- Jim Silva, Westford Alternate

Other Attendees

- Ken Pappas

Staff

- Beverly Woods, Executive Director
- Jay Donovan, Assistant Director
- Bert Almeida, Financial Officer
- Justin Howard, Transportation Program Manager
- Carlin Andrus, GIS Specialist
- Katrina Garavanian, Executive Assistant

I. Minutes of Meeting: February 19, 2020

The minutes were distributed to all Councilors for review. Based on a motion made by Steve Themelis and seconded by Phil Thibault, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2020 as amended. Chris Tribou, Mary McBride and Darrin Wizst abstained as they were not present for the February meeting.

II. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director's Report was previously distributed to the Councilors for review. Upon a motion made by Phil Thibault and seconded by Chuck Walkovich, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Executive Director's Report as presented. The report is included as Attachment #2.

III. Financial Report and Warrant

Bert Almeida presented the Financial Report and the Warrant for review and approval. Based on a motion made by Steve Themelis and seconded by Darrin Wizst, the Financial Report and Warrant were unanimously approved. The Financial Report is included as Attachment #3. The warrant was sent out by mail for signatures due to COVID pandemic.

IV. Old Business

1. Update on Staffing Issues in Light of the Pandemic

Beverly Woods informed the Council that staff is working remotely through NMCOG's VPN and using Zoom for meetings when appropriate. Staff members visit the office occasionally to retrieve materials that are needed for projects, check the mail or make copies. All calls are forwarded to staff cell phones and each member of the staff can be reached using the general NMCOG phone number and the usual extension numbers.

Phil Thibault inquired regarding receivables and ability to sustain the agency financially during the COVID-19 crisis. Beverly stated that currently invoicing and contractual receipts are continuing as usual.

Beverly advised the group that Alicia Geilen, Environmental Planner, left NMCOG at the end of March to become the wetlands circuit rider for DEP's Wilmington office. The position was her dream job and something that she had coveted for 15 years. She was at NMCOG for only 10 months but felt this was an opportunity she could not pass up. In light of the current situation, it was recommended that advertising of the Environmental Planner position be delayed until a there is clearer sense of whether there will be 9C cuts to address the financial implications of the pandemic, and to ascertain how the financial impacts caused by the pandemic will impact FY 2021 state budget decisions.

Beverly Woods requested that the Council allow a one-time exception regarding the Personnel Policy relative to the carry over of vacation time to the next fiscal year, as the health crisis has required the cancellation of planned vacations and travel plans. Based on a motion made by Chuck Walkovich and seconded by Chris Tribou, the Council voted unanimously to allow NMCOG staff to carry over earned but unused vacation time to the next fiscal year, with individual requests being approved by the Executive Director.

2. Approval of the Draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Jay Donovan explained that NMCOG staff has been working on the CEDS Update for the past several months. The Draft CEDS document was included in the Council packet and Jay provided a quick on-screen overview as well. Three public input sessions were held locally and a regional survey was distributed to gather public input for the project. Jay went on to explain that, as a result of the coronavirus epidemic, EDA will be receiving \$1.5 billion in funding through the CARES Act that can be spent over the next 2.5 years for economic development activities. Over the past few weeks, significant revisions have been made to the draft CEDS document to add discussion about the pandemic and its anticipated impact on the region's economy. NMCOG is planning to submit the CEDS to EDA within the next few weeks, following the close of the public comment period on May 10th. This will ensure that the NMCOG region and member communities are positioned to apply for CARES funding when it becomes available. It is expected that EDA will be issuing a NOFA within the next two or three weeks. EDA staff has already reached out to the Massachusetts regional planning agencies to solicit input as to what each region will need to recover from this crisis from an economic perspective.

Based on a motion by Steve Themelis and seconded by Jim Silva, the Council voted unanimously to approve the Draft CEDS document for submission to the EDA following the close of the public comment period.

3. Other Old Business

There was none.

V. New Business

1. Community Reports

Jayne Wellman informed the group that the Tewksbury Center Fire Station will be going to bid in the near future. Several Council members in attendance stated that their Annual Town Meetings have been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Project Referrals

Beverly Woods informed the Council that currently there are no projects under MEPA review within the NMCOG region.

3. Proposed Amendment Three of the FY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program

Justin Howard advised the Council that the MPO will meet on April 22nd and will consider amending FY2020 element of the FY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to address a cost increase of \$555,515 in Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds for the

Boston Road/Concord Road intersection improvement project in Chelmsford. The new cost estimate is \$2,996,437, an increase of \$555,515 from the current programming level. Justin requested the Council authorize the Chair to vote in favor of the amendment at the upcoming MPO meeting.

Based on a motion by Phil Thibault, seconded by Jayne Wellman, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Chair to vote in favor of the proposed FY2020-2024 TIP Amendment as presented.

4. Draft FY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program

Justin Howard provided an overview of the draft FY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program and included a copy of the proposed highway and transit project listings in the Council packet. He requested the Council authorize the Chair to vote in favor of releasing the document for the required 21-day public review and comment period at the April 22nd MPO meeting.

Based on a motion by Jayne Wellman and seconded by Darrin Wizst, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Chair to vote favorably to release the Draft FY 2021-2025 TIP at the April 22nd MPO meeting.

5. Other New Business

There was none.

VI. Announcements

There were none.

VII. Adjournment

Following a motion made by Jayne Wellman and seconded by Chris Tribou, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm.

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that this is a true copy of the Minutes of the meeting of April 15, 2020.

Attest: _____

Stephen Themelis, Clerk

APPENDIX VI: LOCATION QUOTIENTS

Table 1: Economic Statistics for Greater Lowell Goods-Producing Industries in 2018 (Q3)

Note: Data is for the nine Greater Lowell communities. The Location Quotient was calculated by comparing the combined data for the nine Greater Lowell communities to the State of Massachusetts.

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
	Total Goods-Producing Domain	1,461	27,221	\$1,742	21.1%	1.39	1.75
	Natural Resources and Mining	15	286	\$586	0.2%	0.42	0.72
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	13	223	\$428	0.2%	0.40	0.62
112	Animal production and aquaculture	4	32	\$960	0.0%	0.93	0.42
	Construction	1,084	8,492	\$1,349	6.6%	1.40	1.33
236	Construction of buildings	244	861	\$1,248	0.7%	1.17	0.70
2361	Residential building construction	217	567	\$996	0.4%	1.26	0.96
2362	Nonresidential building construction	26	292	\$1,742	0.2%	0.70	0.46
237	Heavy and civil engineering construction	41	892	\$1,519	0.7%	1.00	0.92
2371	Utility system construction	17	390	\$1,692	0.3%	1.33	1.49
2373	Highway, street, and bridge construction	16	464	\$1,406	0.4%	0.82	0.74
238	Specialty trade contractors	798	6,709	\$1,339	5.2%	1.53	1.61
2381	Building foundation and exterior contractors	115	906	\$1,661	0.7%	1.55	1.49
2382	Building equipment contractors	370	3,807	\$1,256	2.9%	1.81	1.92
2383	Building finishing contractors	168	887	\$1,235	0.7%	1.18	1.04
2389	Other specialty trade contractors	145	1,108	\$1,444	0.9%	1.42	1.56
	Manufacturing	362	18,443	\$1,941	14.3%	1.49	2.09
DUR	Durable Goods Manufacturing	279	14,994	\$2,055	11.6%	1.87	2.64
NONDUR	Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing	80	3,433	\$1,450	2.7%	0.85	1.09
311	Food manufacturing	15	299	\$871	0.2%	0.54	0.33
3118	Bakeries and tortilla manufacturing	8	36	\$290	0.0%	0.51	0.09
313	Textile mills	5	196	\$1,098	0.2%	1.38	2.24
321	Wood product manufacturing	4	28	\$1,488	0.0%	0.58	0.29
3219	Other wood product manufacturing	4	28	\$1,488	0.0%	0.70	0.35
322	Paper manufacturing	5	308	\$1,325	0.2%	1.11	1.12
3222	Converted paper product manufacturing	4	305	\$1,296	0.2%	1.05	1.45
323	Printing and related support activities	21	593	\$1,166	0.5%	0.96	1.69
3231	Printing and related support activities	21	593	\$1,166	0.5%	0.96	1.69

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
325	Chemical manufacturing	15	758	\$2,254	0.6%	1.31	1.26
3254	Pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing	4	511	\$2,659	0.4%	1.14	1.40
3256	Soap, cleaning compound, and toiletry mfg.	4	53	\$1,425	0.0%	3.02	2.64
326	Plastics and rubber products manufacturing	9	809	\$1,378	0.6%	0.99	1.75
3261	Plastics product manufacturing	9	809	\$1,378	0.6%	1.09	1.90
327	Nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing	12	182	\$1,235	0.1%	1.28	0.85
3272	Glass and glass product manufacturing	3	35	\$1,019	0.0%	1.71	0.90
3273	Cement and concrete product manufacturing	5	90	\$1,272	0.1%	1.33	1.14
332	Fabricated metal product manufacturing	84	1,512	\$1,253	1.2%	1.84	1.33
3323	Architectural and structural metals mfg.	13	282	\$1,283	0.2%	1.39	1.66
3324	Boiler, tank, and shipping container mfg.	3	48	\$693	0.0%	4.20	1.38
3327	Machine shops and threaded product mfg.	48	829	\$1,154	0.6%	2.18	2.18
3328	Coating, engraving, and heat treating metals	12	243	\$1,275	0.2%	2.15	1.52
3329	Other fabricated metal product manufacturing	5	16	\$1,388	0.0%	1.38	0.10
333	Machinery manufacturing	31	1,740	\$1,783	1.3%	1.70	2.84
3332	Industrial machinery manufacturing	11	979	\$1,854	0.8%	2.96	6.20
3339	Other general purpose machinery manufacturing	11	546	\$1,749	0.4%	2.88	3.78
334	Computer and electronic product manufacturing	94	7,702	\$2,211	6.0%	3.69	3.97
3341	Computer and peripheral equipment mfg.	6	91	\$1,517	0.1%	3.00	0.28
3342	Communications equipment manufacturing	10	420	\$2,538	0.3%	4.59	4.81
3344	Semiconductor and electronic component mfg.	36	2,412	\$1,750	1.9%	4.64	4.54
3345	Electronic instrument manufacturing	42	4,779	\$2,428	3.7%	3.34	5.28
335	Electrical equipment and appliance mfg.	8	243	\$1,345	0.2%	1.14	0.82
3359	Other electrical equipment and component mfg.	6	205	\$1,309	0.2%	1.71	1.46
337	Furniture and related product manufacturing	6	127	\$1,366	0.1%	0.66	0.91
3371	Household and institutional furniture mfg.	3	46	\$1,264	0.0%	0.52	0.75
339	Miscellaneous manufacturing	28	922	\$1,867	0.7%	1.37	1.30
3391	Medical equipment and supplies manufacturing	20	609	\$1,591	0.5%	2.10	1.51

Source: Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development ES-202 Reports (2018 Q3)

Table 2: Economic Statistics for Greater Lowell Service-Providing Industries in 2018 (Q3)

Note: Data is for the nine Greater Lowell communities. The Location Quotient was calculated by comparing the combined data for the nine Greater Lowell communities to the State of Massachusetts.

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
	Total Service-Providing Domain	7,767	101,883	\$1,162	78.9%	0.95	0.90
	Trade, Transportation and Utilities	1,276	19,965	\$910	15.5%	0.83	0.92
22	Utilities	19	271	\$1,845	0.2%	1.05	0.53
221	Utilities	19	271	\$1,845	0.2%	1.05	0.53
2211	Power generation and supply	8	75	\$2,878	0.1%	1.01	0.23
2213	Water, sewage and other systems	8	156	\$1,292	0.1%	1.00	1.36
42	Wholesale Trade	372	4,328	\$1,634	3.4%	0.74	0.97
423	Merchant wholesalers, durable goods	237	2,965	\$1,593	2.3%	1.07	1.26
4231	Motor vehicle and parts merchant wholesalers	13	449	\$889	0.3%	0.92	2.32
4232	Furniture and furnishing merchant wholesalers	5	53	\$1,090	0.0%	0.54	0.66
4233	Lumber and const. supply merchant wholesalers	28	414	\$1,437	0.3%	1.48	1.93
4234	Commercial equip. merchant wholesalers	55	765	\$2,068	0.6%	1.02	1.01
4235	Metal and mineral merchant wholesalers	11	48	\$1,164	0.0%	1.20	0.75
4236	Appliance and electric goods merchant whls.	48	583	\$1,920	0.5%	1.43	1.65
4237	Hardware and plumbing merchant wholesalers	15	149	\$1,339	0.1%	0.76	0.69
4238	Machinery and supply merchant wholesalers	39	368	\$1,527	0.3%	1.03	1.20
4239	Misc. durable goods merchant wholesalers	17	113	\$1,104	0.1%	0.70	0.69
424	Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods	45	798	\$1,679	0.6%	0.37	0.51
4241	Paper and paper product merchant wholesalers	6	120	\$1,470	0.1%	0.61	0.80
4242	Druggists' goods merchant wholesalers	3	11	\$648	0.0%	0.19	0.05
4244	Grocery and related product wholesalers	13	333	\$1,891	0.3%	0.32	0.50
4246	Chemical merchant wholesalers	8	156	\$1,771	0.1%	0.53	2.02
4249	Misc. nondurable goods merchant wholesalers	11	109	\$1,474	0.1%	0.59	0.66
425	Electronic markets and agents and brokers	88	539	\$1,829	0.4%	0.55	1.00
4251	Electronic markets and agents and brokers	88	539	\$1,829	0.4%	0.55	1.00
44-45	Retail Trade	702	10,611	\$550	8.2%	0.83	0.83
441	Motor vehicle and parts dealers	92	1,259	\$928	1.0%	1.18	0.90

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
4411	Automobile dealers	33	626	\$1,167	0.5%	0.92	0.64
4412	Other motor vehicle dealers	8	123	\$880	0.1%	0.98	1.47
4413	Auto parts, accessories, and tire stores	47	489	\$637	0.4%	1.39	1.45
442	Furniture and home furnishings stores	22	183	\$758	0.1%	0.59	0.50
4421	Furniture stores	8	69	\$904	0.1%	0.58	0.54
4422	Home furnishings stores	14	113	\$676	0.1%	0.60	0.47
443	Electronics and appliance stores	12	147	\$624	0.1%	0.57	0.55
4431	Electronics and appliance stores	12	147	\$624	0.1%	0.57	0.55
444	Building material and garden supply stores	43	709	\$676	0.5%	0.84	0.75
4441	Building material and supplies dealers	30	597	\$684	0.5%	0.75	0.73
4442	Lawn and garden equipment and supplies stores	13	112	\$630	0.1%	1.14	0.94
445	Food and beverage stores	172	4,042	\$332	3.1%	0.96	1.11
4451	Grocery stores	101	3,655	\$322	2.8%	1.00	1.20
4452	Specialty food stores	19	121	\$450	0.1%	0.72	0.45
4453	Beer, wine, and liquor stores	48	214	\$430	0.2%	0.93	0.66
446	Health and personal care stores	75	905	\$831	0.7%	0.84	0.96
4461	Health and personal care stores	75	905	\$831	0.7%	0.84	0.96
447	Gasoline stations	83	495	\$500	0.4%	1.24	1.09
4471	Gasoline stations	83	495	\$500	0.4%	1.24	1.09
448	Clothing and clothing accessories stores	35	287	\$405	0.2%	0.31	0.24
4481	Clothing stores	25	260	\$386	0.2%	0.33	0.29
4483	Jewelry, luggage, and leather goods stores	7	13	\$830	0.0%	0.32	0.12
451	Sports, hobby, music instrument, book stores	27	209	\$325	0.2%	0.61	0.45
4511	Sporting goods and musical instrument stores	23	159	\$337	0.1%	0.64	0.44
452	General merchandise stores	33	1,350	\$405	1.0%	1.01	0.75
4522	Department Stores	9	817	\$355	0.6%	0.83	0.68
4523	General Merch Stores, incl Warehouse	24	532	\$483	0.4%	1.09	0.89
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	71	515	\$484	0.4%	0.85	0.77
4531	Florists	19	74	\$359	0.1%	1.67	1.29
4532	Office supplies, stationery, and gift stores	17	247	\$348	0.2%	0.70	0.89
4539	Other miscellaneous store retailers	32	193	\$704	0.1%	0.89	0.80
454	Nonstore retailers	31	449	\$1,335	0.3%	0.68	0.73

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
4541	Electronic shopping and mail-order houses	14	347	\$1,382	0.3%	0.71	0.85
4542	Vending machine operators	3	6	\$686	0.0%	1.17	0.36
4543	Direct selling establishments	14	96	\$1,203	0.1%	0.60	0.51
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	183	4,755	\$1,004	3.7%	1.06	1.21
484	Truck transportation	81	1,254	\$1,241	1.0%	1.27	2.08
4841	General freight trucking	48	783	\$1,271	0.6%	1.24	2.16
4842	Specialized freight trucking	36	474	\$1,189	0.4%	1.42	1.97
485	Transit and ground passenger transportation	46	930	\$535	0.7%	1.41	0.93
4853	Taxi and limousine service	20	142	\$410	0.1%	1.30	0.94
4854	School and employee bus transportation	10	477	\$514	0.4%	1.73	1.38
4859	Other ground passenger transportation	13	206	\$478	0.2%	1.92	1.20
488	Support activities for transportation	19	201	\$1,073	0.2%	0.67	0.55
4884	Support activities for road transportation	10	53	\$765	0.0%	0.94	0.56
4889	Other support activities for transportation	5	109	\$1,053	0.1%	2.19	5.25
4922	Local messengers and local delivery	5	45	\$876	0.0%	1.24	0.75
493	Warehousing and storage	7	152	\$1,147	0.1%	0.93	0.31
4931	Warehousing and storage	7	152	\$1,147	0.1%	0.93	0.31
	Information	150	4,113	\$2,123	3.2%	0.73	1.17
511	Publishing industries, except Internet	53	1,366	\$2,465	1.1%	0.78	0.88
5112	Software publishers	42	774	\$3,107	0.6%	0.90	0.67
512	Motion picture and sound recording industries	10	150	\$361	0.1%	0.56	0.65
5121	Motion picture and video industries	7	144	\$343	0.1%	0.45	0.65
515	Broadcasting, except Internet	6	31	\$978	0.0%	0.57	0.16
5152	Cable and other subscription programming	3	22	\$995	0.0%	0.66	0.46
517	Telecommunications	42	1,877	\$1,946	1.5%	0.98	3.01
5173	Wired and Wireless Telecommunication Carriers	36	1,590	\$1,866	1.2%	1.07	3.24
518	Data processing, hosting and related services	12	394	\$3,379	0.3%	0.55	1.23
5182	Data processing, hosting and related services	12	394	\$3,379	0.3%	0.55	1.23
519	Other information services	20	261	\$1,020	0.2%	0.46	0.43
5191	Other information services	20	261	\$1,020	0.2%	0.46	0.43
	Financial Activities	431	3,558	\$1,293	2.8%	0.69	0.45
52	Finance and Insurance	237	2,556	\$1,336	2.0%	0.64	0.42

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
522	Credit intermediation and related activities	117	1,881	\$1,318	1.5%	0.92	0.91
5221	Depository credit intermediation	91	1,477	\$1,131	1.1%	0.96	0.85
5222	Nondepository credit intermediation	21	197	\$1,728	0.2%	1.10	0.90
523	Securities, commodity contracts, investments	36	104	\$1,903	0.1%	0.30	0.06
5231	Securities and commodity contracts brokerage	8	26	\$2,084	0.0%	0.28	0.06
5239	Other financial investment activities	28	78	\$1,842	0.1%	0.30	0.07
524	Insurance carriers and related activities	82	556	\$1,305	0.4%	0.70	0.23
5242	Insurance agencies and brokerages	80	509	\$1,277	0.4%	0.80	0.59
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	194	1,002	\$1,185	0.8%	0.75	0.57
531	Real estate	159	587	\$1,192	0.5%	0.74	0.45
5311	Lessors of real estate	39	196	\$1,359	0.2%	0.72	0.46
5312	Offices of real estate agents and brokers	46	145	\$1,139	0.1%	0.64	0.57
5313	Activities related to real estate	73	244	\$1,095	0.2%	0.81	0.38
532	Rental and leasing services	32	400	\$1,199	0.3%	0.80	0.95
5321	Automotive equipment rental and leasing	11	150	\$1,293	0.1%	0.77	0.88
5322	Consumer goods rental	11	90	\$751	0.1%	0.85	0.71
5324	Machinery and equipment rental and leasing	9	156	\$1,378	0.1%	0.97	1.69
	Professional and Business Services	1,376	22,482	\$1,954	17.4%	0.81	1.04
54	Professional and Technical Services	892	14,088	\$2,543	10.9%	0.75	1.18
541	Professional and technical services	892	14,088	\$2,543	10.9%	0.75	1.18
5411	Legal services	125	466	\$1,161	0.4%	0.75	0.45
5412	Accounting and bookkeeping services	104	573	\$1,466	0.4%	0.97	0.68
5413	Architectural and engineering services	126	2,145	\$2,207	1.7%	1.04	1.41
5414	Specialized design services	10	74	\$1,398	0.1%	0.31	0.66
5415	Computer systems design and related services	224	4,503	\$3,268	3.5%	0.75	1.49
5416	Management and technical consulting services	135	2,317	\$2,199	1.8%	0.59	1.31
5417	Scientific research and development services	64	3,145	\$2,760	2.4%	0.76	1.20
5418	Advertising, PR, and related services	20	75	\$1,210	0.1%	0.39	0.17
5419	Other professional and technical services	74	654	\$1,278	0.5%	0.74	1.03
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	34	1,831	\$1,624	1.4%	0.64	0.68
551	Management of companies and enterprises	34	1,831	\$1,624	1.4%	0.64	0.68
5511	Management of companies and enterprises	34	1,831	\$1,624	1.4%	0.64	0.68
56	Administrative and Waste Services	450	6,563	\$784	5.1%	0.97	0.95

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
561	Administrative and support services	426	6,183	\$754	4.8%	0.99	0.96
5611	Office administrative services	16	128	\$1,324	0.1%	0.62	0.64
5613	Employment services	66	2,136	\$696	1.7%	0.81	0.88
5614	Business support services	23	156	\$615	0.1%	0.78	0.57
5615	Travel arrangement and reservation services	18	40	\$743	0.0%	0.82	0.15
5616	Investigation and security services	23	1,229	\$772	1.0%	1.16	1.81
5617	Services to buildings and dwellings	261	2,168	\$781	1.7%	1.14	0.91
5619	Other support services	13	170	\$775	0.1%	0.64	0.94
562	Waste management and remediation services	24	380	\$1,288	0.3%	0.73	0.81
5621	Waste collection	7	216	\$1,426	0.2%	0.63	1.29
5629	Remediation and other waste services	16	122	\$913	0.1%	0.99	0.67
	Education and Health Services	2,988	31,242	\$937	24.2%	1.24	0.90
61	Educational Services	126	10,600	\$962	8.2%	0.74	0.92
611	Educational services	126	10,600	\$962	8.2%	0.74	0.92
6111	Elementary and secondary schools	23	6,996	\$928	5.4%	0.60	1.18
6114	Business, computer and management training	10	56	\$978	0.0%	0.98	0.92
6115	Technical and trade schools	9	39	\$708	0.0%	1.26	0.61
6116	Other schools and instruction	67	491	\$313	0.4%	0.99	0.80
6117	Educational support services	14	122	\$612	0.1%	0.44	0.54
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	2,855	20,450	\$923	15.8%	1.27	0.88
621	Ambulatory health care services	373	6,823	\$1,066	5.3%	0.94	0.99
6211	Offices of physicians	96	1,703	\$1,715	1.3%	0.84	0.81
6212	Offices of dentists	122	1,075	\$1,129	0.8%	1.08	1.20
6213	Offices of other health practitioners	87	730	\$816	0.6%	0.91	1.01
6214	Outpatient care centers	22	633	\$1,327	0.5%	0.82	0.65
6215	Medical and diagnostic laboratories	9	88	\$933	0.1%	0.72	0.40
6216	Home health care services	28	2,032	\$573	1.6%	0.99	1.20
6219	Other ambulatory health care services	6	500	\$891	0.4%	0.67	1.61
622	Hospitals	8	4,387	\$1,307	3.4%	0.83	0.60
623	Nursing and residential care facilities	111	3,960	\$760	3.1%	1.18	1.00
6231	Nursing care facilities, skilled nursing	15	2,497	\$845	1.9%	0.88	1.37
6232	Residential mental health facilities	79	780	\$669	0.6%	1.47	0.73
6233	Continuing care, assisted living facilities	12	630	\$561	0.5%	0.88	0.78

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
6239	Other residential care facilities	5	53	\$469	0.0%	0.51	0.21
624	Social assistance	2,363	5,279	\$541	4.1%	1.36	1.05
6241	Individual and family services	2,262	3,652	\$519	2.8%	1.38	1.06
6242	Emergency and other relief services	16	307	\$702	0.2%	1.12	1.29
6243	Vocational rehabilitation services	5	70	\$691	0.1%	0.55	0.18
6244	Child day care services	80	1,251	\$558	1.0%	1.10	1.32
	Leisure and Hospitality	709	12,783	\$407	9.9%	0.95	0.87
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	111	2,490	\$436	1.9%	0.77	0.86
711	Performing arts and spectator sports	21	231	\$443	0.2%	0.56	0.46
7111	Performing arts companies	6	67	\$575	0.1%	0.56	0.47
7113	Promoters of performing arts and sports	6	77	\$392	0.1%	0.86	0.37
7115	Independent artists, writers, and performers	5	11	\$684	0.0%	0.44	0.32
713	Amusements, gambling, and recreation	82	2,083	\$377	1.6%	0.85	0.97
7139	Other amusement and recreation industries	80	2,061	\$377	1.6%	0.85	1.02
72	Accommodation and Food Services	596	10,290	\$401	8.0%	0.98	0.87
721	Accommodation	22	726	\$525	0.6%	0.50	0.48
7211	Traveler accommodation	21	721	\$525	0.6%	0.56	0.51
722	Food services and drinking places	573	9,562	\$391	7.4%	1.02	0.93
7223	Special food services	59	729	\$574	0.6%	1.28	0.93
7224	Drinking places, alcoholic beverages	22	138	\$265	0.1%	0.88	0.58
7225	Restaurants and other eating places	491	8,685	\$378	6.7%	1.00	0.94
	Other Services	712	3,877	\$734	3.0%	0.91	0.88
81	Other Services, Except Public Administration	712	3,877	\$734	3.0%	0.91	0.88
811	Repair and maintenance	253	1,547	\$1,039	1.2%	1.30	1.57
8111	Automotive repair and maintenance	196	951	\$910	0.7%	1.36	1.36
8112	Electronic equipment repair and maintenance	20	398	\$1,256	0.3%	1.41	4.07
8113	Commercial machinery repair and maintenance	20	154	\$1,414	0.1%	1.14	1.26
8114	Household goods repair and maintenance	14	39	\$487	0.0%	0.75	0.58
812	Personal and laundry services	274	1,424	\$605	1.1%	1.17	0.87
8121	Personal care services	187	851	\$474	0.7%	1.30	0.99
8122	Death care services	21	99	\$861	0.1%	1.31	0.95
8123	Drycleaning and laundry services	35	325	\$979	0.3%	1.07	1.13

NAICS	Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Percent of Regional Avg. Monthly Employment	Location Quotient - Number of Establishments	Location Quotient - Avg. Monthly Employment
8129	Other personal services	28	141	\$362	0.1%	0.68	0.37
813	Membership associations and organizations	86	816	\$407	0.6%	0.61	0.52
8132	Grantmaking and giving services	7	65	\$707	0.1%	0.36	0.57
8133	Social advocacy organizations	14	60	\$789	0.0%	0.44	0.19
8134	Civic and social organizations	35	528	\$305	0.4%	0.98	0.66
8139	Professional and similar organizations	28	146	\$513	0.1%	0.55	0.46
814	Private households	99	91	\$513	0.1%	0.46	0.40
8141	Private households	99	91	\$513	0.1%	0.46	0.40
	Public Administration	119	3,794	\$1,455	2.9%	0.78	0.76
92	Public Administration	119	3,794	\$1,455	2.9%	0.78	0.76
921	Executive, legislative and general government	31	777	\$1,017	0.6%	0.70	0.67
9211	Executive, legislative and general government	31	777	\$1,017	0.6%	0.70	0.67
922	Justice, public order, and safety activities	37	2,130	\$1,706	1.6%	0.68	0.95
9221	Justice, public order, and safety activities	37	2,130	\$1,706	1.6%	0.68	0.95
924	Administration of environmental programs	8	134	\$1,467	0.1%	0.76	0.65
9241	Administration of environmental programs	8	134	\$1,467	0.1%	0.76	0.65
925	Community and housing program administration	9	183	\$1,187	0.1%	0.87	0.93
9251	Community and housing program administration	9	183	\$1,187	0.1%	0.87	0.93
926	Administration of economic programs	7	62	\$813	0.0%	0.74	0.21
9261	Administration of economic programs	7	62	\$813	0.0%	0.74	0.21
	Total All Industries (Goods-Producing and Service-Providing Domains)	9,228	129,104	\$1,284	100.0%	1.00	1.00

Source: Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development ES-202 Reports (2018 Q3)

APPENDIX VII: TOP EMPLOYERS IN THE GREATER LOWELL REGION

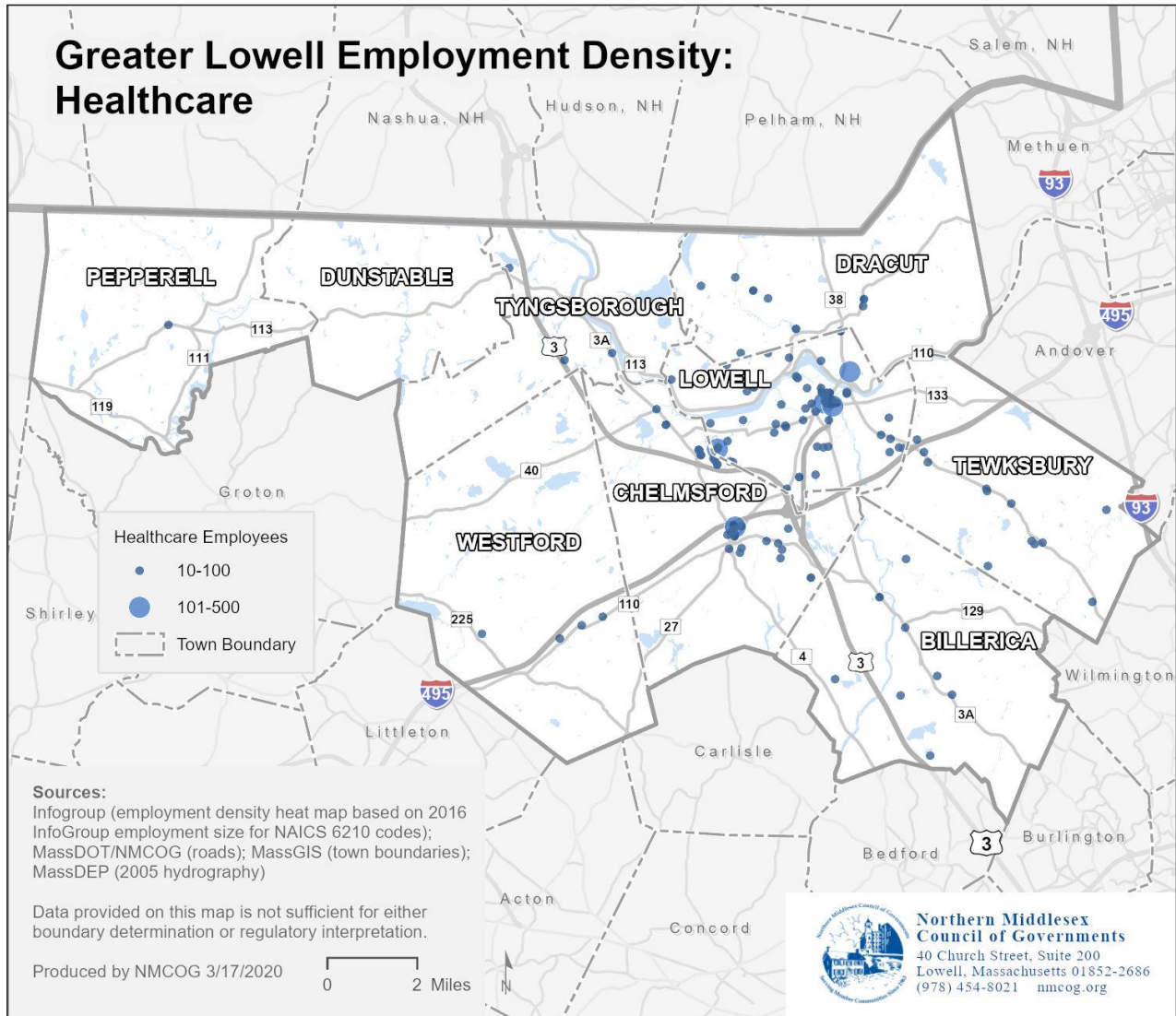
Top Employers in the Greater Lowell Region

Employer	Employees (approximate)	Location
Lowell General Hospital & Saints' Campus	3,800	Lowell
Market Basket	2,750	Region-Wide
UMass Lowell	2,260	Lowell
Raytheon	2,000	Tewksbury
United Parcel Service	2,000	Chelmsford
Kronos	1,637	Lowell
Zoll Medical Group	1,077	Chelmsford
PAREXEL International	1,000+	Billerica
Tewksbury State Hospital	936	Tewksbury
Lockheed Martin	900	Chelmsford
Verizon	876	Lowell
Waddington North America	700	Chelmsford
Juniper Networks	650	Westford
EMD Serono	600+	Billerica

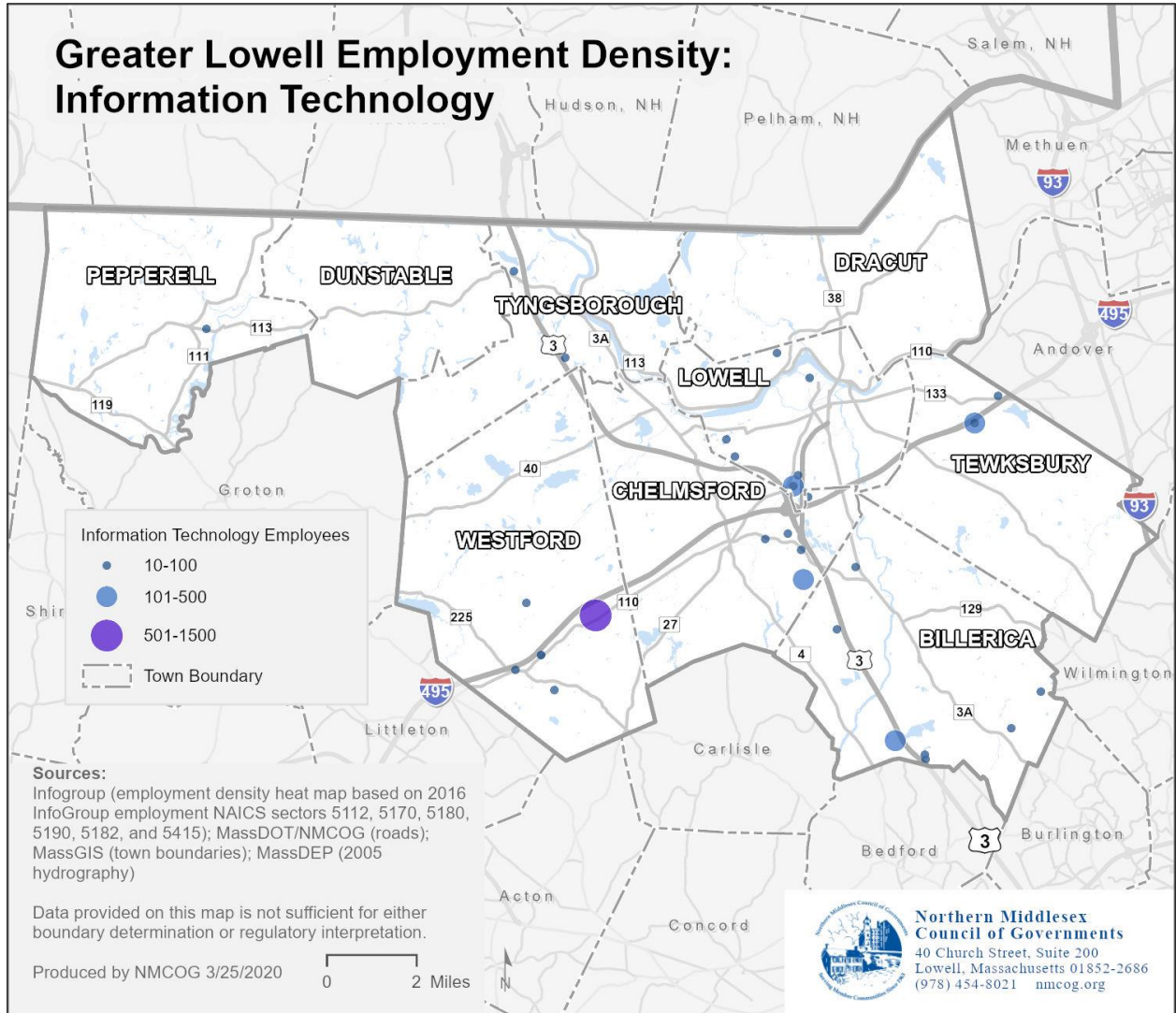
Source: Number of Employees Provided by Municipalities

APPENDIX VIII: EMPLOYMENT DENSITY MAPS BY INDUSTRY

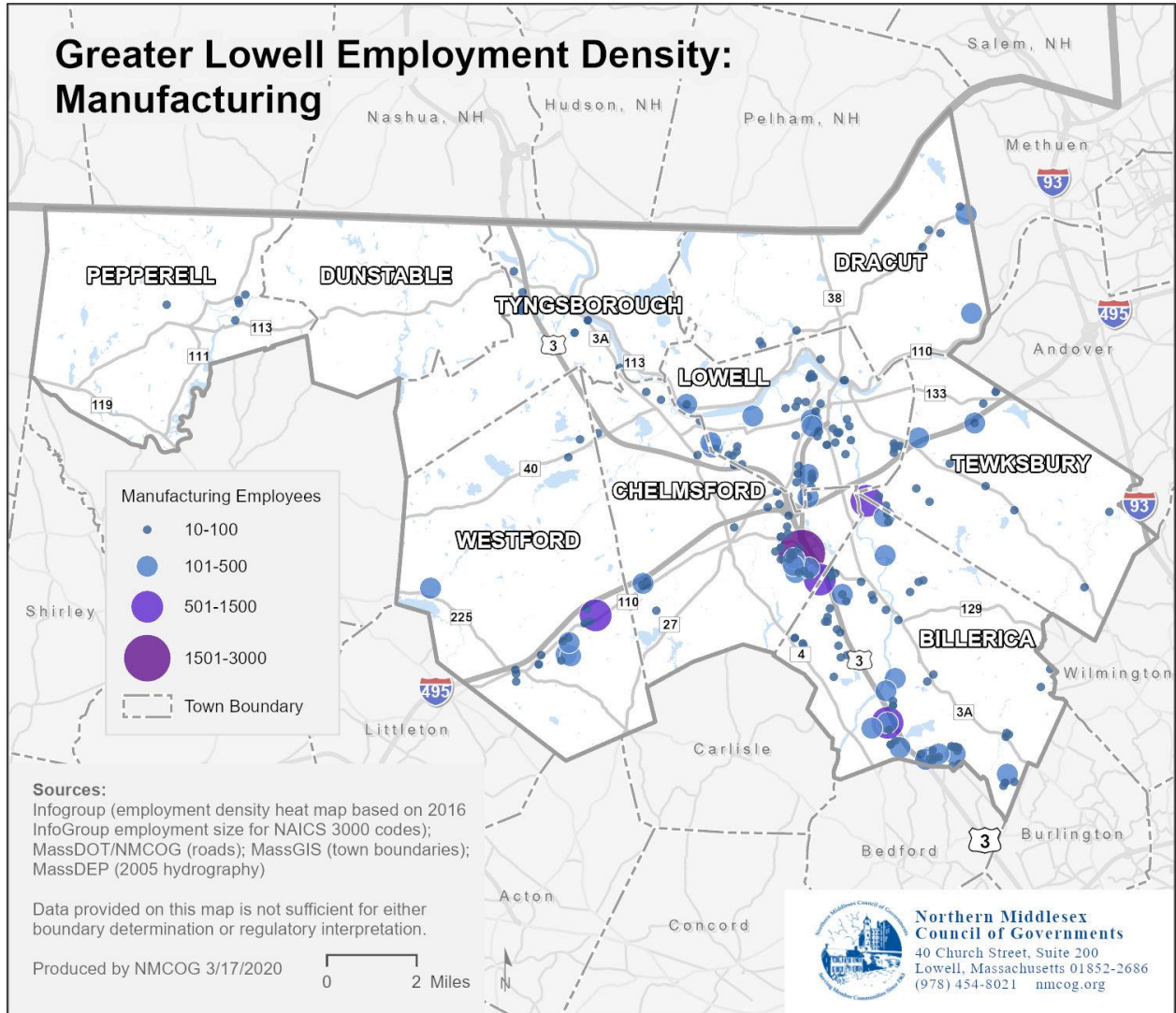
Map A1: Greater Lowell Employment Density: Healthcare



Map A2: Greater Lowell Employment Density: Information Technology



Map A3: Greater Lowell Employment Density: Manufacturing



Economic Development Strategy for Greater Lowell

As the economy of the Greater Lowell region continues to grow and evolve, what threats does the region face and what goals should be set?



Come participate in our

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT)

analysis session on November 21st and provide input for the development of a **Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)**.

The CEDs serves as an economic development blueprint for the region.

Thursday, November 21st from 6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Mayor's Reception Room, Lowell City Hall (375 Merrimack St.)

Parking is available at the Dummer St. Surface Lot at 366 Market St. and on-street along Merrimack St., Cardinal O'Connell Parkway, Dummer St., and Arcand Dr. Parking is free after 6:00 P.M.

Refreshments will be served

The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), in conjunction with the City of Lowell, will be hosting the SWOT session.

For additional information please contact:

Jeff Owen, NMCOG Regional Planner, jowen@nmcog.org, Phone: (978) 454-8021, Ext. 118

Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session

November 21, 2019
6:00-8:00 P.M.
Lowell City Hall

Hosted by Northern Middlesex Council of Government
and the City of Lowell

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Introductions – Craig Thomas, Deputy Director, Lowell Department of Planning and Development**
2. **Forum Overview and Background – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG**
 - **Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**
3. **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) Analysis – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG**
 - **What are the strengths and weaknesses of doing business in the Greater Lowell region?**
 - **What opportunities should communities in the Greater Lowell region take advantage of to stabilize and expand private investment?**
 - **What future threats do you see to the business community in the Greater Lowell region?**
 - **Prioritizing SWOT responses through colored dots**
4. **Next Steps and Future Opportunities for Public Input – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG**
5. **Closing Remarks – Craig Thomas, Deputy Director, Lowell DPD**

*Funded through a grant from the
Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce*

Memorandum

To: Greater Lowell CEDS Committee members
From: Jay J. Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
Subject: Lowell CEDS SWOT Results
Date: November 27, 2019

The Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session was held on November 21, 2019 at the Mayor's Reception Room at Lowell City Hall and seventeen (17) people from across the region participated in the meeting. Through the combined efforts of the City of Lowell Department of Planning and Development (DPD) staff and the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), this event attracted a diverse group of participants. The purpose of the Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session was to provide an overview of the Five Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), both in terms of its components and timeline, and to receive input from the Greater Lowell community on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Greater Lowell region and the City of Lowell. The results of the SWOT exercise will be used in developing the SWOT Analysis section of the Five Year CEDS document. Additional SWOT sessions are scheduled at the Tewksbury Public Library (1/21/20) and the Chelmsford Police Department Community Room (2/4/20).

The session began with a Welcome and Introduction from Craig Thomas, Deputy Director, Lowell DPD. Jay Donovan then provided an overview of the Five Year CEDS document and "grass-roots" planning process. Jay proceeded to discuss the Visioning Process and began the SWOT Analysis. NMCOG staff recorded the responses on large sheets of paper, and after the discussion, participants were given an opportunity to indicate their priorities by placing colored dots next to each recorded idea. For this exercise, red dots (4 points) indicated their first priority, green dots (3 points) indicated their second priority, blue dots (2 points) indicated their third priority and yellow dots (1 point) indicated their fourth priority.

Based upon the tabulated point totals for each response, the top five priorities for the SWOT session for each category were as follows:

Strengths

- Diversity (27)
- Historical richness (18)
- Partnerships (16)
- Active and vibrant non-profits (16)
- Philanthropic community (14)

Note: The next strength was Well managed communities (13), closely followed at 12 points by Proximity to and integration with Greater Boston, Institutional knowledge/human capital, and Affordability/living costs.

Weaknesses

- Housing costs (25)
- Traffic (23)
- Perceived lack of diversity in leadership across Massachusetts industries (18)
- Lack of developable land (16)
- Language barriers (13)
- Human resources in all municipalities – e.g. professional development and talent acquisition (13)

Note: The next three weaknesses at 12 points were Aging infrastructure, Poverty and Limited regional transit.

Opportunities

- Attract new businesses (24)
- Integration of region in regional visions (17)
- Regional strategy (17)
- Transportation resources & traffic mitigation (13)
- Development in Hamilton Canal district (12)

Note: The next two opportunities at 11 points were Culture & arts and Housing Choice.

Threats

- Cost of housing (25)
- Under-employment/lack of participation in the workforce (25)
- Increase in cost of living (23)
- Climate change & other environmental threats (21)
- Lack of female leadership (18)

The complete results from the SWOT session, as well as the flyer and agenda, are provided as an attachment to this brief memorandum. The results are summarized by category and the responses are listed by total dots and points based upon the values assigned to each dot. While these results do not represent a scientific sampling of the Lowell community or region, they do represent the views of the participants who attended the Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session. We appreciate the support of the City of Lowell DPD in making this event possible and believe that the participants appreciated your extensive efforts as well.

CEDS SWOT Session Results, Lowell 11-21-19

Strengths	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Diversity	5	2	0	1	8	27
Historical richness	1	2	4	0	7	18
Partnerships	3	1	0	1	5	16
Active & vibrant non-profits	0	2	4	2	8	16
Philanthropic community	1	1	3	1	6	14
Well managed municipalities	0	4	0	1	5	13
Proximity to and integration with Greater Boston	3	0	0	0	3	12
Institutional knowledge/human capital	2	1	0	1	4	12
Affordability/living costs	0	4	0	0	4	12
Higher education community	2	0	0	2	4	10
Entrepreneurial spirit & organizations like EforAll	1	2	0	0	3	10
Restaurants	0	0	4	2	6	10
Knowledge resources, financial resources, equipment & physical facilities	2	0	0	0	2	8
Natural resources/recreation	1	1	0	1	3	8
Entertainment	1	0	1	2	4	8
Regional Cooperation	0	1	2	1	4	8
Educated workforce	1	1	0	0	2	7
Cooperation among regional government and financial community	1	1	0	0	2	7
Proximity to recreation across New England	0	1	1	0	2	5
Support from state government	0	1	0	0	1	3
Airports	0	0	0	3	3	3
Mobility/public transit	0	0	1	0	1	2
Accessible to municipal resources	0	0	0	2	2	2
Economical	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diversity of real estate	0	0	0	0	0	0

Weaknesses	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Housing costs	4	1	3	0	8	25
Traffic	1	4	2	3	10	23
Perceived lack of diversity in leadership across Massachusetts industries	3	2	0	0	5	18
Lack of developable land	2	1	2	1	6	16
Language barriers	1	3	0	0	4	13
Human Resources in all municipalities - e.g. professional development & talent acquisition	1	3	0	0	4	13
Aging infrastructure	2	0	2	0	4	12
Poverty	1	0	3	2	6	12
Limited regional transit	0	3	0	3	6	12
Big city costs without market returns	1	1	1	0	3	9
Competition between towns for business	1	1	0	2	4	9
Failure of suburbs to share social costs	0	1	2	2	5	9
Perceived safety issues	2	0	0	0	2	8
Low inclusive practices	1	1	0	0	2	7
Opioid crisis	1	1	0	0	2	7
NIMBYism	1	0	1	1	3	7
Lack of financial education	0	2	0	1	3	7
Achievement gap between different schools & a lack of funding	1	0	0	2	3	6
Lack of workforce development in the trades	0	2	0	0	2	6
Salaries in municipal government	0	1	0	2	3	5
Aging workforce	0	0	2	1	3	5
Lack of new revenue	1	0	0	0	1	4
Lack of long-term political vision	1	0	0	0	1	4
Lack of a national immigration policy	0	1	0	1	2	4
Slowness to adapt to new economy	0	1	0	1	2	4
Vacant store fronts	0	1	0	1	2	4
Need for more inclusiveness of disabled population	0	0	2	0	2	4
Lack of communication & obsolete systems	0	1	0	0	1	3
Energy costs	0	1	0	0	1	3
Homelessness	0	0	1	1	2	3
Lack of a clear & consistent value proposition from the city	0	0	1	1	2	3
Transportation challenges - walkability, access	0	0	1	1	2	3
Healthcare costs	0	0	1	0	1	2
National grid	0	0	0	1	1	1

Weaknesses	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Proximity to low-tax/low-cost NH	0	0	0	1	1	1
Inefficiency of town meeting form of government	0	0	0	1	1	1
Lack of environmental resilience & planning	0	0	0	1	1	1
Regulations, both state & local	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lack of participation from youth	0	0	0	0	0	0

Opportunities	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Attract new businesses	4	2	1	0	7	24
Integration of region in regional visions	3	1	1	0	5	17
Regional strategy	3	1	1	0	5	17
Transportation resources & traffic mitigation	2	1	1	0	4	13
Development in Hamilton Canal district	0	3	1	1	5	12
Culture & arts	2	1	0	0	3	11
Housing Choice	2	1	0	0	3	11
New high school	2	0	0	1	3	9
UMass Lowell as a business incubator	1	1	1	0	3	9
Young people	2	0	0	0	2	8
In-migration from Boston area	0	2	1	0	3	8
Infrastructure improvements	1	1	0	0	2	7
Integrating Middlesex Community College into workforce development	0	0	3	1	4	7
Identify new funding sources	0	2	0	0	2	6
Reputation of UMass Lowell	0	1	1	1	3	6
Change in Lowell government structure	0	1	1	1	3	6
Use vocational schools at night	0	0	3	0	3	6
Cohesive branding/message	1	0	0	1	2	5
Market region internationally	1	0	0	1	2	5
Engage Latino community	0	1	1	0	2	5
UMass Lowell students staying in area	0	1	0	2	3	5
Volunteer engagement	0	0	2	1	3	5
Break down barriers between Lowell and suburbs	0	1	0	1	2	4
Lack of spaces in trade & vocational schools	0	0	1	0	1	2
Anchor institution spin-offs	0	0	1	0	1	2
More resilient economy	0	0	0	2	2	2
Integration with the economy of Southern NH	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical student residency program	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attract more federal money for UMass Lowell	0	0	0	0	0	0

Threats	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Cost of housing	5	1	1	0	7	25
Under-employment/lack of participation in the workforce	2	5	0	2	9	25
Increase in cost of living	5	1	0	0	6	23
Climate change & other environmental threats	2	3	1	2	8	21
Lack of female leadership	4	0	1	0	5	18
Lack of developable land	2	2	0	0	4	14
Increase in poverty	2	1	0	0	3	11
Lack of saving by youth	1	1	2	0	4	11
Slow innovation within municipalities	1	1	2	0	4	11
Cost of education	1	1	2	0	4	11
Restrictive immigration policies	2	0	1	0	3	10
Lack of affordable childcare	1	1	1	1	4	10
Lack of retirement resources	2	0	0	0	2	8
Cyber-security/infrastructure threats	1	1	0	1	3	8
Lack of social safety net	1	0	2	0	3	8
Aging energy infrastructure	0	1	2	1	4	8
Homelessness and addiction	1	0	1	1	3	7
Economic downturn	0	2	0	0	2	6
Tribal mentality	0	0	3	0	3	6
Demographic decline	0	1	1	0	2	5
Political dysfunction	0	0	2	1	3	5
Decrease in state funding	0	1	0	1	2	4
College debt	0	0	1	2	3	4
Competition from other regions	0	1	0	0	1	3
Lack of youth participation	0	0	1	1	2	3
Aging workforce	0	0	0	1	1	1
Lack of opportunities to obtain wealth	0	0	0	1	1	1
Local media muckrakers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lack of opportunities to re-integrate convicts	0	0	0	0	0	0

Economic Development Strategy for Greater Lowell

As the economy of the Greater Lowell region continues to grow and evolve, what threats does the region face and what goals should be set?



Come participate in our

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS SESSION

Provide input for the development of a Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS serves as an economic development blueprint for the region.

Tuesday, January 21st

from 6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Tewksbury Public Library

(300 Chandler Street)

Snow Date: January 28th from 6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

Refreshments will be served

The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), in conjunction with the Town of Tewksbury, will be hosting the SWOT session.

For additional information please contact:

Jeff Owen, NMCOG Regional Planner, jowen@nmcog.org, Phone: (978) 454-8021, Ext. 118

Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session

January 21, 2020
6:00-8:00 P.M.
Tewksbury Public Library

Hosted by the Town of Tewksbury and the Northern
Middlesex Council of Governments

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions – Steve Sadwick, Assistant Town Manager, Town of Tewksbury
2. Forum Overview and Background – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
 - Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
3. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) Analysis – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of doing business in the Greater Lowell region?
 - What opportunities should communities in the Greater Lowell region take advantage of to stabilize and expand private investment?
 - What future threats do you see to the business community in the Greater Lowell region?
 - Prioritizing SWOT responses through colored dots
4. Next Steps and Future Opportunities for Public Input – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
5. Closing Remarks – Steve Sadwick, Assistant Town Manager, Town of Tewksbury

*Funded through a grant from the
Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce*



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Memorandum

To: Greater Lowell CEDS Committee members

From: Jay J. Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG *JJD*

Subject: Tewksbury CEDS SWOT Results

Date: February 12, 2020

A Multi-Disciplinary

Regional Planning

Agency Serving:

Billerica

Chelmsford

Dracut

Dunstable

Lowell

Pepperell

Tewksbury

Tyngsborough

Westford

The second Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session was held at Tewksbury Public Library on January 21, 2020 and fifteen (15) people from across the region participated in the meeting. Through the combined efforts of the Tewksbury Community Development Director and the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), this event attracted a diverse group of participants. The purpose of the Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session was to provide an overview of the Five Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), both in terms of its components and timeline, and to receive input from the Greater Lowell community on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Greater Lowell region and the City of Lowell. The results of the SWOT exercise will be used in developing the SWOT Analysis section of the Five Year CEDS document.

Pat Wojtas
Chair

Beverly A. Woods
Executive Director

40 Church Street
Suite 200
Lowell, MA
01852-2686

TEL: (978) 454-8021

FAX: (978) 454-8023

www.nmcog.org

The session began with a Welcome and Introduction from Steve Sadwick, Tewksbury Community Development Director. Jay Donovan then provided an overview of the Five Year CEDS document and “grass-roots” planning process. Jay proceeded to discuss the Visioning Process and began the SWOT Analysis. NMCOG staff recorded the responses on large sheets of paper, and after the discussion, participants were given an opportunity to indicate their priorities by placing colored dots next to each recorded idea. For this exercise, red dots (4 points) indicated their first priority, green dots (3 points) indicated their second priority, blue dots (2 points) indicated their third priority and yellow dots (1 point) indicated their fourth priority.

Based upon the tabulated point totals for each response, the top five priorities for the SWOT session for each category were as follows:

Strengths

- Educated workforce (18)
- Proximity to transportation (i.e. highways) (11)
- Easy commute (9)
- Strong high tech (9)
- Commercial space is affordable (9)
- Strong healthcare infrastructure (9)

Note: The next strength was Open Space (8), closely followed by Low interest rates for investments (7) and variety of Housing options (5).

Weaknesses

- Lack of affordable housing (41)
- Traffic (23)
- Transportation infrastructure (17)
- Cost of doing business (16)
- Permitting process is cumbersome (15)

Note: The next three weaknesses were Proximity to tax-free New Hampshire (14), Lack of access to Boston (10) and Lack of existing ecosystems for developing tech and research (10).

Opportunities

- Attract diverse types of businesses to drive economy (14)
- Incubator space for new business opportunities (13)
- Convert single-family homes to multi-family to increase affordability – re-zone (13)
- Diversify housing stock for older and younger owners (12)
- Use underutilized rail infrastructure (12)
- Vocational education (12)

Note: The next four opportunities were Tap into trade and tech school in the area (9), Connect open spaces (8), Find businesses that are the right fit for areas that have been losing businesses (8), and Combine financial resources to market the region (8).

Threats

- Higher taxes (36)
- Increased traffic (19)
- Lack of housing opportunities (12)
- Aging infrastructure (11)
- No sales tax in New Hampshire (9)
- High energy costs (9)
- Climate change (9)
- Poor transportation service (9)

The complete results from the SWOT session, as well as the flyer and agenda, are provided as an attachment to this brief memorandum. The results are summarized by category and the responses are listed by total dots and points based upon the values assigned to each dot. While these results do not represent a scientific sampling of the Lowell community or region, they do represent the views of the participants who attended this specific Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session. We appreciate the support of the Town of Tewksbury in making this event possible and believe that the participants appreciated your extensive efforts as well.

Tewksbury CEDS SWOT Session Results, 1-21-2020

Strengths	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Educated workforce	3	1	1	1	6	18
Proximity to transportation (i.e. highways)	1	2	0	1	4	11
Easy commute	2	0	0	1	3	9
Strong high tech	2	0	0	1	3	9
Commercial space is affordable	0	3	0	0	3	9
Strong healthcare infrastructure	0	2	0	3	5	9
Open space	1	0	1	2	4	8
Low interest rates for investments	1	1	0	0	2	7
Variety of housing options	0	1	1	0	2	5
Diversity of industries	1	0	0	0	1	4
Proximity to hospitals	0	0	2	0	2	4
Cultural amenities	0	0	2	0	2	4
Regional cooperation	0	0	1	0	1	2
Great places to eat	0	0	1	0	1	2
Cooperation between municipal government & communities	0	0	0	1	1	1
Proximity to recreational areas	0	0	0	1	1	1
Access to trains	0	0	0	1	1	1
Workforce development network is strong	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Educational infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
New high school in Lowell	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access to water	0	0	0	0	0	0

Weaknesses	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Lack of affordable housing	7	3	0	4	14	41
Traffic	5	1	0	0	6	23
Transportation infrastructure	1	4	0	1	6	17
Cost of doing-business	0	4	1	2	7	16
Permitting process is cumbersome	1	3	1	0	5	15
Proximity to tax-free NH	2	1	1	1	5	14
Lack of access to Boston	1	2	0	0	3	10
Lack of existing ecosystems for developing tech & research	1	1	1	1	4	10
Funding for infrastructure improvements	2	0	0	1	3	9
Lack of amenities to attract workforce	2	0	0	1	3	9
Aging workforce	1	1	1	0	3	9
High cost to start a new business	0	2	0	3	5	9
Lack of retail/high-end restaurants	0	1	3	0	4	9
Transportation connectivity	2	0	0	0	2	8
Lack of manufacturing/jobs	1	0	1	1	3	7
Lack of sewers (in some communities)	1	0	1	1	3	7
Diminishing citizen engagement	0	2	0	0	2	6
Attracting private investment	1	0	0	1	2	5
Smaller communities face challenges competing against high density population areas that have more amenities for the workforce	0	0	2	1	3	5
Region does not plan ahead (for 10 years out)	0	0	2	1	3	5
Opioid crisis	0	1	0	1	2	4
Homelessness	0	0	0	1	1	1
Lack of businesses that could host/serve large meetings	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lack of economic development locally (Pepperell)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not all communities can create transport hubs	0	0	0	0	0	0

Opportunities	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Attract diverse types of businesses to drive economy	2	2	0	0	4	14
Incubator space for new business opportunities	0	3	2	0	5	13
Convert single-family homes to multi-family to increase affordability. May have to re-zone.	0	3	2	0	5	13
Diversify housing stock for older and younger owners	3	0	0	0	3	12
Use underutilized rail infrastructure	0	3	1	1	5	12
Vocational education	0	1	3	3	7	12
Tap into trade and tech school in the area	0	1	3	0	4	9
Connect open spaces	2	0	0	0	2	8
Find businesses that are the right fit for areas that have been losing businesses	0	2	1	0	3	8
Combine financial resources to market the region	0	2	1	0	3	8
Expand life sciences, high tech and other science resources and opportunities outside Boston area/in our region. Capitalize on UMass Lowell.	1	1	0	0	2	7
Attract STEM companies	1	1	0	0	2	7
Regionalize resources	0	0	3	1	4	7
Senior living facilities have potential for economic development	1	0	1	0	2	6
Plan as a region instead of as individual communities.	0	0	2	1	3	5
Transfer skills from dying industries to up and coming industries	1	0	0	0	1	4
Train up and coming workforce	1	0	0	0	1	4
Identify the right type of storefronts to target blighted areas	1	0	0	0	1	4
Attract robotics industry	1	0	0	0	1	4
Use collective resources as a region	0	0	2	0	2	4
Tap into youth	0	0	0	4	4	4
Identify and build on industry clusters	0	1	0	0	1	3
Large employers may have an untapped pool of resources that could be utilized	0	0	0	0	0	0
Market region for climate change resilience/environmental sciences	0	0	0	0	0	0

Threats	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Higher taxes	9	0	0	0	9	36
Increased traffic	4	1	0	0	5	19
Lack of housing opportunities	3	0	0	0	3	12
Aging infrastructure	1	2	0	1	4	11
No sales tax in New Hampshire	1	1	1	0	3	9
High energy costs	1	1	0	2	4	9
Climate change	0	3	0	0	3	9
Poor transportation service	0	3	0	0	3	9
Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) attitude	2	0	0	0	2	8
Difficult to make zoning changes to allow for higher density housing	1	1	0	1	3	8
Aging workforce	1	1	0	1	3	8
Internet competition	1	0	2	0	3	8
Reluctance to change	0	2	0	0	2	6
Cost of living/energy	1	0	0	0	1	4
Competition from other communities	1	0	0	0	1	4
Economic downturn	0	1	0	0	1	3
Lack of community involvement	0	1	0	0	1	3
MS4 compliance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aging suburban office parks	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perception of area/region	0	0	0	0	0	0

Economic Development Strategy for Greater Lowell

As the economy of the Greater Lowell region continues to grow and evolve, what threats does the region face and what goals should be set?



Come participate in our

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS SESSION

Provide input for the development of a Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS serves as an economic development blueprint for the region.

Tuesday, February 4th

from 6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Chelmsford Police Department

Community Room (2 Olde North Road)

Snow Date: February 6th from 6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

Refreshments will be served

The Town of Chelmsford, in conjunction with the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), will be hosting the SWOT session.

Economic Development Survey

In addition to the SWOT session, a short online survey focused on identifying challenges, opportunities and benefits for businesses and economic development in the Greater Lowell region is available at www.nmcog.org/ceds

For additional information please contact:

Jeff Owen, NMCOG Regional Planner, jowen@nmcog.org, Phone: (978) 454-8021, Ext. 118

Greater Lowell

Economic Development Visioning Session

February 4, 2020
6:00-8:00 P.M.

Chelmsford Police Department Community Room
2 Olde North Road

Hosted by the Town of Chelmsford and the
Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions – Lisa Marrone, Director of Business Development, Town of Chelmsford
2. Forum Overview and Background – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
 - Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
3. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) Analysis – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of doing business in the Greater Lowell region?
 - What opportunities should communities in the Greater Lowell region take advantage of to stabilize and expand private investment?
 - What future threats do you see to the business community in the Greater Lowell region?
 - Prioritizing SWOT responses through colored dots
4. Next Steps and Future Opportunities for Public Input – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
5. Closing Remarks – Lisa Marrone, Director of Business Development, Town of Chelmsford

*Funded through a grant from the
Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce*



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Memorandum

To: Greater Lowell CEDS Committee members

From: Jay J. Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG *JJD*

Subject: Chelmsford CEDS SWOT Results

Date: February 12, 2020

A Multi-Disciplinary
Regional Planning

Agency Serving:

Billerica
Chelmsford
Dracut
Dunstable
Lowell
Pepperell
Tewksbury
Tyngsborough
Westford

The third Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session was held at the Chelmsford Police Department Public Meeting Room on February 4, 2020 and seven (7) people from Chelmsford and Pepperell participated in the meeting. Through the combined efforts of the Chelmsford Business Director and the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), this event offered an opportunity for business owners and residents to express their views on the regional economy. The purpose of the Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session was to provide an overview of the Five Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), both in terms of its components and timeline, and to receive input from the Greater Lowell community on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Greater Lowell region and the City of Lowell. The results of the SWOT exercise will be used in developing the SWOT Analysis section of the Five Year CEDS document.

Pat Wojtas
Chair

Beverly A. Woods
Executive Director

40 Church Street
Suite 200
Lowell, MA
01852-2686

TEL: (978) 454-8021

FAX: (978) 454-8023

www.nmcog.org

The session began with a Welcome and Introduction from Lisa Marrone, Chelmsford Director of Business Development. Jay Donovan then provided an overview of the Five Year CEDS document and "grass-roots" planning process. Jay proceeded to discuss the Visioning Process and began the SWOT Analysis. NMCOG staff recorded the responses on large sheets of paper, and after the discussion, participants were given an opportunity to indicate their priorities by placing colored dots next to each recorded idea. For this exercise, red dots (4 points) indicated their first priority, green dots (3 points) indicated their second priority, blue dots (2 points) indicated their third priority and yellow dots (1 point) indicated their fourth priority.

Based upon the tabulated point totals for each response, the top five priorities for the SWOT session for each category were as follows:

Strengths

- Pro-business attitude (17)
- Educated workforce (16)
- UMass Lowell and education (11)
- Quality of life (11)
- Green energy opportunities (10)

Note: The next two strengths were Opportunities for new private development (9) and Recreation and open space (8).

Weaknesses

- Lack of affordable housing (14)
- High cost of living (10)
- Regional competition (8)
- Proximity to tax-free New Hampshire (7)
- Traffic (7)

Note: The next two weaknesses were Limited infrastructure (6) and Lack of ability to communicate with the public (5).

Opportunities

- Re-zoning (10)
- Expansion of biotech industry (10)
- Rehabilitation of vacant buildings (8)
- Expansion of robotics industry (7)
- Solar industry expansion (6)
- Grant programs (6)
- Regionalization (6)
- Business recruitment (6)
- UMass Lowell (6)

Threats

- Aging infrastructure (16)
- Aging workforce (12)
- Resistance to change (12)
- Declining state aid (12)
- Lack of citizen engagement (9)
- Resistance to housing construction (9)

The complete results from the SWOT session, as well as the flyer and agenda, are provided as an attachment to this brief memorandum. The results are summarized by category and the responses are listed by total dots and points based upon the values assigned to each dot. While these results do not represent a scientific sampling of the Lowell community or region, they do represent the views of the participants who attended this specific Greater Lowell Economic Development Visioning Session. We appreciate the support of the Town of Chelmsford in making this event possible and believe that the participants appreciated your extensive efforts as well.

CEDS SWOT Session Results, Chelmsford 2-4-2020

Strengths	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Pro-business attitude	2	3	0	0	5	17
Educated workforce	4	0	0	0	4	16
UMass Lowell and education	2	1	0	0	3	11
Quality of life	2	0	1	1	4	11
Green energy opportunities	2	0	1	0	3	10
Opportunities for new private development	1	1	1	0	3	9
Recreation and open space	0	2	1	0	3	8
Local government (instead of county)	1	0	0	1	2	5
Proximity to Boston	0	1	1	0	2	5
Cultural offerings	0	1	1	0	2	5
Low unemployment	0	0	2	1	3	5
Healthcare network	0	0	2	0	2	4
Low interest rates	0	0	2	0	2	4
Regional cooperation and organizations	0	0	1	2	3	4
Highway network	0	0	0	3	3	3
Business development resources	0	0	1	0	1	2
Job availability	0	0	0	1	1	1
Historic assets	0	0	0	1	1	1
Rehabilitation of mills	0	0	0	0	0	0

Weaknesses	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Lack of affordable housing	2	1	0	3	6	14
High cost of living	1	2	0	0	3	10
Regional competition	1	0	2	0	3	8
Proximity to tax-free NH	0	1	2	0	3	7
Traffic	0	1	1	2	4	7
Limited infrastructure	1	0	1	0	2	6
Lack of ability to communicate with the public	0	1	1	0	2	5
Lack of coordination by regional transit providers	1	0	0	0	1	4
Aging workforce/population	0	0	0	4	4	4
Limited land for development	0	1	0	0	1	3
Lack of regional government	0	1	0	0	1	3
Lack of regional identity/branding	0	0	1	1	2	3
Lack of vocational training	0	0	1	1	2	3
Vacant spaces in existing buildings	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taxes	0	0	0	0	0	0

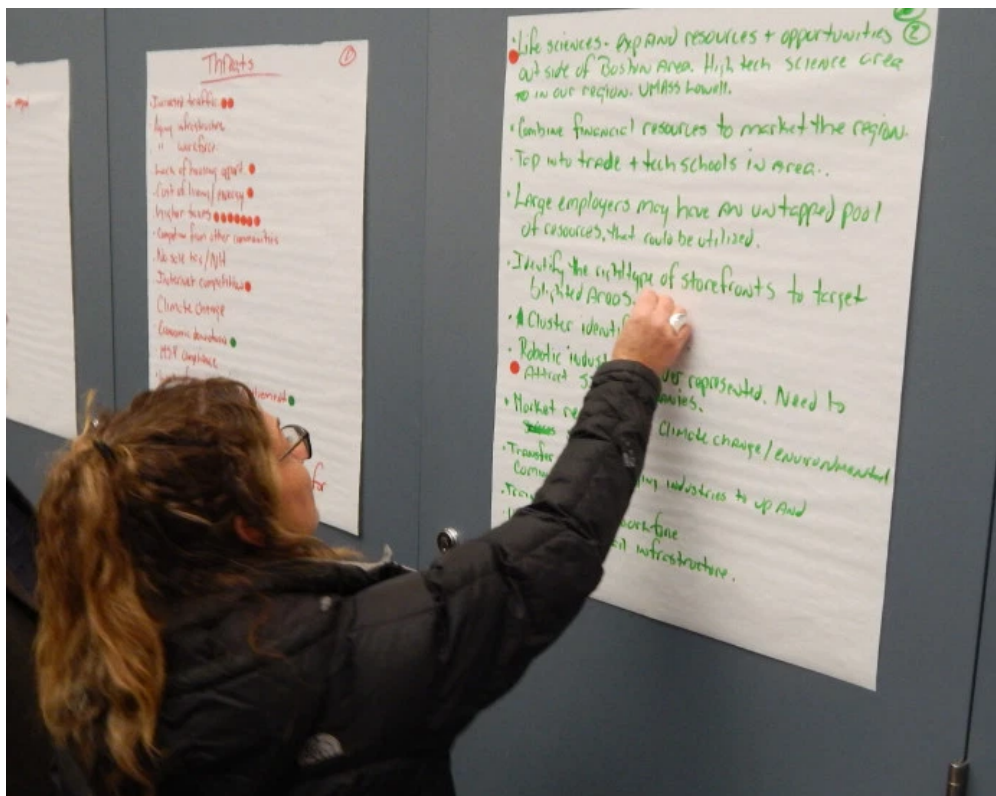
Opportunities	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Re-zoning	1	2	0	0	3	10
Expansion of biotech industry	1	2	0	0	3	10
Rehabilitation of vacant buildings	2	0	0	0	2	8
Expansion of robotics industry	0	2	0	1	3	7
Solar industry expansion	1	0	1	0	2	6
Grant programs	1	0	1	0	2	6
Regionalization	1	0	0	2	3	6
Business recruitment	0	2	0	0	2	6
UMass Lowell	0	1	0	3	4	6
Business shuttles	0	0	2	1	3	5
Job opportunities for low-skilled workers	1	0	0	0	1	4
Innovation/incubators	0	1	0	1	2	4
Flexible zoning	0	0	1	0	1	2
Entrepreneurs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Low interest rates for business expansion	0	0	0	0	0	0
MS4 and environmental cleanup	0	0	0	0	0	0

Threats	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Aging infrastructure	4	0	0	0	4	16
Aging workforce	0	3	0	3	6	12
Resistance to change	0	2	3	0	5	12
Declining state aid	1	1	2	0	4	11
Lack of citizen engagement	2	0	0	1	3	9
Resistance to housing construction	1	1	1	0	3	9
Competition to fill business space	2	0	0	0	2	8
Cost of education	0	2	1	0	3	8
Increasing wages	0	1	1	3	5	8
Lack of involvement in civic and social groups	0	1	2	0	3	7
Costs and regulations in MA	1	0	0	2	3	6
Climate change	0	2	0	0	2	6
Shrinking populations leading to fewer workers	0	0	2	0	2	4
Recession and decline in tax revenues	0	0	1	0	1	2
High cost of electricity and other utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Declining federal support	0	0	0	0	0	0

NEWS > BUSINESS

Community members identify economic threats, opportunities in Greater Lowell

Economic Development Visioning Session takes place in Tewksbury



By **AARON CURTIS** | acurtis@lowellsun.com | Lowell Sun

PUBLISHED: January 22, 2020 at 4:35 pm | UPDATED: January 23, 2020 at 1:47 pm

TEWKSBURY — What are the strengths and weaknesses of doing business in Greater Lowell?

What opportunities should communities in the region pursue to stabilize and expand private investment?

What future threats does the business community in Greater Lowell face?

Community members came together to brainstorm and provide answers to those questions during a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats — or SWOT — Analysis Session at the Tewksbury Public Library on Tuesday night.

The session was hosted by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments to gather opinions about hot-button economic development issues across the region.

The opinions provided will be used as a tool in the development of the Greater Lowell Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, according to Jay Donovan, assistant director of NMCOG.

The CEDS — funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration — will summarize the economic resources of Greater Lowell, establish an economic development vision for the region and lead to a five-year action plan with priority projects for the area.

The five-year “blueprint” will then be submitted to the EDA in May, Donovan said before Tuesday night’s session.

Roughly 20 people attended Tuesday night’s SWOT Analysis Session — the second of three sessions held in the region.

A common weakness and threat to the region’s economy identified by the group included increased traffic, aging infrastructure, high taxes and a lack of affordable housing.

“The housing costs is one of the biggest impediments because employers won’t^{APPENDIX} move into the region if their employees can’t find affordable housing,” said session attendee and Lowell Economic Development Officer Maria Dickinson.

Rob Anderson, the community development director for Billerica, also addressed the high costs of living, as well as its impact on the aging workforce and the development of a younger workforce.

“What’s going to happen with people when they transition out of the workforce and how can we make sure the quality of life maintains at a high level?” Anderson said.

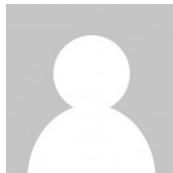
Strengths identified by the group included an educated workforce, regional cooperation, and strong healthcare and educational infrastructure. Opportunities mentioned by attendees were large employers with untapped resources and the potential to expand the high-tech science within the region using resources like UMass Lowell.

Tuesday night’s SWOT Analysis was part of the one-year CEDS process that began with the first CEDS Committee meeting last October. The submission of the five-year CEDS document is scheduled to take place May 1.

The third and final public SWOT Analysis meeting is slated to take place at the Chelmsford Police Department Community Room on Feb. 4, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

An online survey was also developed to allow people to identify challenges, opportunities and benefits for economic development in the Greater Lowell region. The survey can be accessed at nmcog.org/ceds.

Follow Aaron Curtis on Twitter @aselahcurtis



Aaron Curtis

Aaron Curtis is designated as the nighttime emergency response reporter throughout Greater Lowell. A native of upstate New York, Aaron Curtis previously worked as a reporter for upstate daily newspapers including The Palladium-Times, based in Oswego, and The Daily Messenger, located in Canandaigua. Aaron is a graduate of the State University of New York at Oswego.

 Follow Aaron Curtis [@aselahcurtis](https://twitter.com/aselahcurtis)

APPENDIX X: GREATER LOWELL CEDS SURVEY

**Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey**

*** Do you own or manage a business or non-profit organization in the Greater Lowell region?**

- Yes
- No



Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey

Where is your business or organization located? (Select all that apply.)

- Billerica
- Chelmsford
- Dracut
- Dunstable
- Lowell
- Pepperell
- Tewksbury
- Tyngsborough
- Westford
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following best describes the principal industry of your business or organization?

- Finance, Insurance and Real Estate
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (including architects, engineers and life sciences)
- Manufacturing
- Retail Trade
- Accommodations and Food Services
- Other Services (including auto repair, beauty salons and funeral homes)
- Recreation, Arts and Entertainment (including fitness)
- Educational Services
- Government, Social Assistance and Non-Profits
- Construction (including plumbing and heating)
- Other (please specify)

What do you feel are the benefits of locating in the Greater Lowell region?

	Not a Benefit	Minor Benefit	Major Benefit
Proximity to Boston	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Industry Clusters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Qualified Employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interstate Highway Access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of Life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of Local Schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Space / Property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presence of UMass Lowell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Image	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other benefits of locating in the Greater Lowell region.

What are some of the challenges to operating your business or organization in the Greater Lowell region?

	No Concern	Minor Concern	Major Concern
Taxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to New Hampshire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Age / Condition of Properties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Qualified Employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Sewer / Limited Sewer Capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Public Water / Limited Water Capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Municipal Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy Costs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Image	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Business Development Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of Rent / Real Estate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to Capital	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Public Transit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other challenges to operating in the Greater Lowell region.

Please indicate whether the following initiatives represent an opportunity to improve the business or operating environment in the Greater Lowell region.

	Not an Opportunity	Minor Opportunity	Major Opportunity
Reuse Vacant Buildings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase Promotional Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Local Arts and Culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve the Appeal of Commercial Areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Local Agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduce or Streamline Regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expand Local Business Development Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Capitalize on UMass Lowell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhance Public Transit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other opportunities for improving the business or operating environment in the Greater Lowell region.

*** Does your business or organization own commercial or industrial property in the Greater Lowell region?**

- Yes
- No



Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey

What are your main challenges related to property vacancies? (Select all that apply.)

- Lack of Interest
- Lack of Credible Tenants
- Risky Startup/Early-Stage Businesses
- Lack of Parking
- Other (please specify)



Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey

*** Do you own or operate a private sector business in the Greater Lowell region?**

- Yes
 No

*** Do you operate a non-profit organization in the Greater Lowell region?**

- Yes
 No



Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey

What is the name of your business or organization? (Optional, leave blank if you prefer not to answer.)

How long has your business or organization been located in the Greater Lowell region?

- 0 - 2 years
- 3 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- 11 – 19 years
- 20+ years

How many employees does your business or organization have?

- 1 – 4 employees
- 5 – 9 employees
- 10 – 49 employees
- 50 – 200 employees
- 201+ employees
- Prefer Not to Answer



Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey

Please indicate the community in which you live.

- Billerica
- Chelmsford
- Dracut
- Dunstable
- Lowell
- Pepperell
- Tewksbury
- Tyngsborough
- Westford
- Other (please specify)

Please indicate the community in which you work.

- Billerica
- Chelmsford
- Dracut
- Dunstable
- Lowell
- Pepperell
- Tewksbury
- Tyngsborough
- Westford
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following best describes the principal industry in which you work?

- Finance, Insurance and Real Estate
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (including architects, engineers and life sciences)
- Manufacturing
- Retail Trade
- Accommodations and Food Services
- Other Services (including auto repair, beauty salons and funeral homes)
- Recreation, Arts and Entertainment (including fitness)
- Educational Services
- Government, Social Assistance and Non-Profits
- Construction (including plumbing and heating)
- Other (please specify)

Please rate the factors below according to their importance in attracting economic development to the Greater Lowell region.

	Not a Benefit	Minor Benefit	Major Benefit
Proximity to Boston	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Industry Clusters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Qualified Employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interstate Highway Access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of Life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of Local Schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Space / Property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presence of UMass Lowell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Image	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate some of the challenges to doing business or establishing a business in the Greater Lowell region in terms of whether they are a concern.

	No Concern	Minor Concern	Major Concern
Taxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to New Hampshire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Age / Condition of Properties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of Qualified Employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	No Concern	Minor Concern	Major Concern
Lack of Sewer / Limited Sewer Capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Public Water / Limited Water Capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Municipal Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy Costs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Image	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Business Development Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of Rent / Real Estate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to Capital	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Public Transit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate whether the following initiatives represent an opportunity to improve the business environment in the Greater Lowell region.

	Not an Opportunity	Minor Opportunity	Major Opportunity
Reuse Vacant Buildings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase Promotional Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Local Arts and Culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve the Appeal of Commercial Areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Local Agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduce or Streamline Regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expand Local Business Development Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Capitalize on UMass Lowell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhance Public Transit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How long have you lived in the Greater Lowell region?

- 0 - 2 years
- 3 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- 11 – 19 years
- 20+ years



Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the Greater Lowell Economic Development Strategy Survey.

Town of Westford Business Forum



Please join us for a dynamic discussion to talk about the future of the town of Westford, and hear your valued input as a member of our business community.

Thursday, November 7, 2019

7:30 am - 9:00 am

NETSCOUT, 310 Littleton Road, Westford, MA

[Please click here to register](#)

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*Sponsored by the Westford Economic Development Committee
and the Westford Business Association*



Town of Westford Business Forum

Hosted by Netscout

November 7, 2019
7:30-9:00 A.M.

AGENDA

1. Welcoming Statement – Jodi Ross, Westford Town Manager
2. Introduction: Bruce Rosenberg, Chairman, Westford Economic Development Committee and Paul Playe, Incoming President, Westford Business Association
3. Forum Overview and Background – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
 - Economic Development Component of Westford Master Plan
 - Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
4. SWOT Analysis - Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of doing business in Westford?
 - What opportunities should Westford take advantage of to stabilize and expand private investment in the community?
 - What future threats do you see to the business community in Westford?
 - What can the town of Westford do to ensure continued support for the business community?
 - Prioritizing SWOT responses through colored dots
5. Closing Remarks
6. Adjournment

Funded through grants from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Economic Development (DHCD) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce

Memorandum

To: Bruce Rosenberg and the members of the Westford Economic Development Committee
From: Jay J. Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG *JJD*
Subject: Westford Business Forum SWOT Results
Date: November 20, 2019

The Westford Business Forum was held on November 7, 2019 at Netscout and forty-eight (48) business people participated in the meeting. Through the combined efforts of the Town Westford, the Westford Economic Development Committee (WEDC) and the Westford Business Association (WBA), this event attracted a diverse group of participants. The purpose of the Westford Business Forum was to receive input from the business community on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of doing business in Westford. The results of the SWOT exercise will be used in updating the Economic Development Goals and Strategies in the 2008 Westford Master Plan and to complete the updated Economic Development section of the Master Plan.

The session began with a Welcoming Statement from Jodi Ross, Westford Town Manager. The Introduction to the session was provided by Bruce Rosenberg, Chairman, Westford Economic Development Committee and Paul Playe, Incoming President, Westford Business Association. Jay Donovan then provided an outline of the economic development work that the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) had done related to the 2008 Westford Master Plan and the Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Jay then proceeded to discuss the Visioning Process and began the SWOT Analysis. NMCOG staff recorded the responses on large sheets of paper, and after the discussion, participants were given an opportunity to indicate their priorities by placing colored dots next to each recorded idea. For this exercise, red dots (4 points) indicated their first priority, green dots (3 points) indicated their second priority, blue dots (2 points) indicated their third priority and yellow dots (1 point) indicated their fourth priority.

Based upon the tabulated point totals for each response, the top five priorities for the SWOT session for each category were as follows:

Strengths

- Retail shopping centers (33)
- Access to highways (33)
- Good schools (26)
- Business friendly (26)
- Location (26)

Note: The next two strengths were Strong town government (25) and Amenities – restaurants, skiing, hotels, etc. (23).

Weaknesses

- Difficult, expensive & time consuming permitting process (44)
- Lack of sewer (43)
- Limited public transit (40)
- Getting variances (32)
- Lack of senior housing (28)

Note: The next two weaknesses were land-related: Land cost (24) and Lack of available land (20).

Opportunities

- Public transit (34)
- Streamline permitting (30)
- College interns/student housing (26)
- Allow denser housing/multi-family housing (26)
- Ease special permit process (25)
- Incubation of start-ups (25)

Threats

- Failure to attract young adults (62)
- Lack of developable land (43)
- Strain on town services (28)
- Property tax (22)
- Competition from neighboring towns (17)

When asked what the Town can do for the business community, the two responses were Install sewer (21) and Assist with cyber-security (6). Jeff Morrisette received a response from a local businessman who couldn't attend the Westford Business Forum as follows: "I'm thrilled with the cooperation, professionalism and efforts of both the staff and the boards in Westford. Other towns would do well to emulate the way the Town of Westford conducts its business. If there's one place I think the permitting process could improve, it would be in the area of coordination between staff, boards and applicants to avoid unnecessary continuances and board face time. Applicants need to get feedback from staff with sufficient time to prepare comments, corrections or revisions prior to a scheduled meeting".

The complete results from the SWOT session, as well as the flyer, agenda and sign in sheets, are provided as an attachment to this brief memorandum. The results are summarized by category and the responses are listed by total dots and points based upon the values assigned to each dot. While these results do not represent a scientific sampling of the Westford business community, they do represent the views of the participants who attended the Westford Business Forum. We appreciate the support of the Town of Westford, the WEDC, the WBA and Netscout in making this event possible and believe that the participants appreciated your extensive efforts as well.

Westford Business Forum SWOT Session Results: 11-7-19

Strengths	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Retail shopping centers	5	1	5	0	11	33
Access to highways	4	5	1	0	10	33
Good schools	5	1	1	1	8	26
Business friendly	5	0	2	2	9	26
Location	4	2	2	0	8	26
Strong town government	3	3	2	0	8	25
Amenities - restaurants, skiing, hotels, etc.	3	2	1	3	9	23
Citizen population with high-tech skills	4	1	1	0	6	21
Protected open space	3	0	3	0	6	18
Excellent EMS response times	0	2	5	1	8	17
Technology parks	2	1	2	0	5	15
Small town feel	1	0	3	5	9	15
Transparency	0	1	4	3	8	14
Housing stock & improving values	1	2	1	0	4	12
Convenience of services - daycare, dry-cleaning, etc.	1	1	2	1	5	12
Volunteerism/sense of community	0	1	2	2	5	9
Historic preservation	0	0	2	5	7	9
Recreation - golf, skiing, etc.	2	0	0	0	2	8
Availability of commercial property	1	0	1	1	3	7
Community Center	0	1	1	2	4	7
Master Plan	0	0	1	4	5	6

Weaknesses	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Difficult, expensive & time consuming permitting process	10	1	0	1	12	44
Lack of sewer	6	4	2	3	15	43
Limited public transit	8	2	0	2	12	40
Getting variances	3	6	1	0	10	32
Lack of senior housing	4	3	0	3	10	28
Land cost	3	2	3	0	8	24
Lack of available land	2	2	3	0	7	20
Walkability	2	2	1	2	7	18
Lack of drive-thrus	3	1	0	0	4	15
Traffic - certain times of day	2	0	2	0	4	12

Westford Business Forum SWOT Session Results: 11-7-19

Opportunities	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Public transit	4	5	1	1	11	34
Streamline permitting	2	6	2	0	10	30
College interns/student housing	5	2	0	0	7	26
Allow denser housing/multi-family housing	2	6	0	0	8	26
Ease special permit process	4	3	0	0	7	25
Incubation of start-ups	3	3	1	2	9	25
Innovative, flexible overlay districts	2	2	0	0	4	14
Take advantage of co-op education	1	0	2	0	3	8
Fill in empty commercial space	0	2	0	0	2	6
Assistance finding housing	0	1	0	0	1	3

Threats	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Failure to attract young adults	11	6	0	0	17	62
Lack of developable land	4	8	0	3	15	43
Strain on town services	4	1	2	5	12	28
Property tax	0	4	4	2	10	22
Competition from neighboring towns	0	2	2	7	11	17
Traffic	0	4	0	3	7	15
Lack of senior housing	3	0	0	1	4	13
Relocation of businesses	0	2	1	1	4	9
School overcrowding	1	0	2	0	3	8
Economic slowdown	0	0	3	1	4	7
Increase in poverty level	0	1	0	2	3	5
Climate change	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transient population	0	0	0	0	0	0

What can the Town do?	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Install sewer	2	3	2	0	7	21
Assist with cyber-security	0	0	3	0	3	6

ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY LOCAL SWOT & PLANNING PROCESSES

LARGE TOWNS (MORE THAN 15,000 RESIDENTS)

BILLERICA, CHELMSFORD, DRACUT, TEWKSBURY AND WESTFORD

The following issues were previously identified over recent years during local planning processes, including Master Plan Visioning Sessions and SWOT analyses, and by Northeastern University's Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT). The issues were not necessarily identified by each municipality, but the lists are summaries of common issues raised by multiple towns.

STRENGTHS

- Quality Local Schools
- Diverse Housing Stock with Somewhat Affordable Options (some towns)
- Highly Educated & Skilled Population
- Historic Character of Town Centers
- Strong Local/Small Businesses
- Cultural Amenities
- Local Agriculture
- Open Space / Outdoor Recreational Opportunities
- Highway Access
- Proximity to Greater Boston
- Healthcare Facilities

WEAKNESSES

- Timeliness of Permit Approvals
- Lack of Public Transit (some towns)
- Lack / Cost of Developable Land
- Lack of Affordable Housing (some towns)
- Traffic
- Proximity to Tax-Free New Hampshire
- Lack of Affordable Senior Housing
- School System Funding
- High Commercial and Industrial Rent (some towns)
- Weak or Non-Existent Industrial Attraction Policies (EDSAT)
- Lack of Public Sewer (some towns and portions of towns)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve Traffic Conditions
- Enhance Public Transit
- Increase Tax Base
- Support Local Business Community
- Support Local Agriculture
- Capitalize on Proximity to UMass Lowell, Particularly the Tech and Research Programs
- Streamline Permitting

THREATS

- Traffic
- Loss of Youth/Failure to Attract Youth
- High Taxes
- Lack of Funding for Schools, Infrastructure, etc.
- Competition from New Hampshire

ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY LOCAL SWOT & PLANNING PROCESSES

SMALL TOWNS (LESS THAN 15,000 RESIDENTS) DUNSTABLE, PEPPERELL AND TYNGSBOROUGH

The following issues were previously identified over recent years during local planning processes, including Master Plan Visioning Sessions and SWOT analyses, and by Northeastern University's Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT). The issues were not necessarily identified by each municipality, but the lists are summaries of common issues raised by multiple towns.

S	W	O	T
<h3>STRENGTHS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Character (rural/small town, historic) • Open Space/Conservation Land • Agriculture • Small/Local Businesses • Library • Local Schools (EDSAT) 	<h3>WEAKNESSES</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Low-Income Housing for Seniors • Lack of Recreational Opportunities • Road Safety on Main Streets • High Taxes • Proximity to Tax-Free New Hampshire • Timeliness of Approvals (EDSAT) • Public Transit (EDSAT) • Weak or Non-Existent Industrial Attraction Policies (EDSAT) 	<h3>OPPORTUNITIES</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Small Town/Historic Character • Preserve Open Space for Agriculture and Recreation • Support Arts and Artists • Support Small/Local Businesses • Increase Tax Base • Redevelop/Reuse Vacant Buildings • Support Local Agriculture • Outdoor Recreation Businesses • Appropriate Development of Village Centers • Develop Amenities for Seniors and Youth • Improve Village Center Streetscape 	<h3>THREATS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chain/Big Box Stores • High Taxes • Overdevelopment/Loss of Character • Lack of Historic Preservation • Traffic • Loss of Youth/Failure to Attract Youth

APPENDIX XIII: SUMMARY OF COMPLETED CEDS PRIORITY PROJECTS

Within the *2013 Annual CEDS Update*, the Greater Lowell CEDS Committee identified Short-term (up to 18 months), Intermediate (2-4 years) and Long-term (5+ years) project that addressed the established goals for the CEDS document, as well as the FY 2013 EDA Investment Priorities. These projects included a public funding component (federal, state and/or local) and addressed the economic needs of the region. Outlined on the next two pages is our CEDS Priority Project Status Report as of April 1, 2020, which identifies all the CEDS priority projects completed since the *2013 Annual CEDS Update* was submitted to EDA.

As part of the *Greater Lowell CEDS for 2020-2024*, we listed the current CEDS Priority Projects similar to what was done previously. Through our knowledge of the region and utilizing feedback from our member communities, the next section identifies the CEDS Priority Projects broken down by Regional, EDA-funded, Short-term, Intermediate and Long-term projects. This priority project listing identifies those projects with public funding components that will assist the region in its economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Greater Lowell CEDS Committee and the NMCOG staff will work closely with EDA and other federal and state agencies to fund these critical projects.

CEDS Priority Project Status Report (as of April 1, 2020)

Completed Projects:

EDA Planning Grant (2012)	Proponent
Siting of Renewable Energy Facilities	NMCOG
Hamilton Crossing Mill 2	NMCOG/MRPC
Hamilton Crossing Mill 4	Winn Development
	Bank of America CDC, Lowell Community Health Center and Arch. Heritage Foundation
Sewer Plant Upgrade and Evaluation	Town of Billerica
Allen Road	Town of Billerica
Sewer Plant Upgrade and Evaluation Phase 2	Town of Billerica
43 Katrina Road	Town of Chelmsford
UMass Lowell – West Campus	Town of Chelmsford
Dracut Town Hall	Town of Dracut
Dracut High School	Town of Dracut
Sewer Project Contract Number 30/31	Town of Dracut
Arlington Street Reconstruction	Town of Dracut
Sewer Project Contract Number 32	Town of Dracut
Route 113 Retaining Wall	Town of Dunstable
Waterline Upgrade	Town of Dunstable
Downtown Improvements	City of Lowell
Pawtucket Canal Bridge Construction	City of Lowell
Lowell Connector/Thorndike Street Improvements	City of Lowell
Water Treatment System Assessment and Upgrade	Town of Tewksbury
Tewksbury Master Plan	Town of Tewksbury
East Street Reconstruction Phases 1 and 2	Town of Tewksbury
Old Town Hall Renovation	Town of Tyngsborough
Affordable Housing at Red Pine Terrace	Town of Tyngsborough
Sewer Expansion Phase 1	Town of Tyngsborough
New Senior Center Building	Town of Tyngsborough/ Tyngsborough Partners, LLC
Boston Road Affordable Housing Development	Town of Westford
Minot's Corner Route 110	Town of Westford
Princeton Westford Apartment Homes	Town of Westford
Central Fire Station	Town of Westford
Route 110/Tadmuck Road Intersection	Town of Westford
Route 40 at Oak Hill Intersection	Town of Westford
Bruce N. Freeman Rail Trail (Phase II-A)	Towns of Westford, Acton and Carlisle
Stonybrook Housing II	Westford Housing Authority/Common Ground
Greater Lowell Ex-Offender Re-Entry Partnership	Greater Lowell Workforce Development Board
Safe and Successful Youth Initiative	Greater Lowell Workforce Development Board
Capital Maintenance (2013)	LRTA
Capital Assistance – buses, lifts and spare parts (2013)	LRTA
Capital Spare Parts (2013-2019)	LRTA
Operating Assistance – JARC (2013)	LRTA
Operating Assistance (2013-2019)	LRTA
Planning Assistance (2013-2019)	LRTA
ITS Equipment (2013)	
CNG buses and mid-life overhaul 2008 Gilling buses	LRTA
30' bus rolling stock (12) and mini buses (3)	LRTA
Gallagher Parking Garage Construction (2014-2015)	LRTA

Completed Projects:	Proponent
CNG buses (6) and mid-life overhaul 2008 Gilling buses	LRTA
Preventive Maintenance (2015-2016)	LRTA
Transit buses (3)	LRTA
ITS Security	LRTA
Capital maintenance equipment (2019)	LRTA
Mobility assistance vehicles (2019)	LRTA
University Ave./Howe Bridge	MassDOT
Lowell Connector Lighting Upgrades	MassDOT
Main Street Bridge over Salmon Brook	MassDOT
Bridge Street, Lakeview Avenue and VFW Highway	MassDOT
East Street, Dascomb Road and Shawsheen Street	MassDOT
Interstate Maintenance – I-495	MassDOT
Route 38 Resurfacing	MassDOT
Bridge Improvements at Hunt Road over I-495	MassDOT
Tewksbury Route 38 Resurfacing	MassDOT
Lowell Connector Safety Enhancements	MassDOT
Mill Street Bridge over Shawsheen	MassDOT
Wood Street/Rourke Bridge Study	NMMPO

APPENDIX XIV: SUMMARY OF CONTINUING AND NEW CEDS PRIORITY PROJECTS

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Regional Projects								
JAM Plan	Neighborhood Revitalization	City of Lowell	\$850M	Federal, state, private and local funds	2020	170 full- time jobs	Yes, positive	1,2,4,6,7
Hamilton Canal Innovation District (HCID)	Development of residential, commercial and institutional uses.	City of Lowell	\$800M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2020	1,000 full-time and temporary jobs	Yes, positive	1,2,4,5,6,7
Acre Plan	Neighborhood revitalization with new infrastructure, housing and job creation	City of Lowell	\$150M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2020	200+ full-time jobs	Yes, positive	1,2,4,6,7
Rourke Bridge	Replacement of the Rourke Bridge	City of Lowell, MassDOT	\$100M	Federal, state, or local	2020	TBD	Yes, permitting underway	2,5
Ayer's City Industrial Park	Industrial district redevelopment and Silresim transformation	City of Lowell	\$200M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2020	500 full-time and temporary workers	Yes, positive	1,2,4,6,7
Middlesex Turnpike (Phase III)	Reconstruction of Middlesex Turnpike from Bedford line	Town of Billerica, MassDOT	\$34.4M	Federal and state	2020	80 const. jobs ; Unknown permanent jobs	Yes, permitting complete	2,5,6
EDA Projects								
Greater Lowell CEDS for 2020-2024	Development and submission of five-year CEDS document	NMCOG	\$120K	Federal, state and local funds	Done by 5/20	NA	NA	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
Two Bridges and Streets F & G-HCID Phase 2 (public works)	Reconstruction of two bridges and realignment of streets within the HCID	City of Lowell	\$7.8M	Federal, state and local funds	Done by 9/20	TBD	Yes, permitting complete	1,2,4,5,6,7

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Economic Recovery Project (CARES Act)	Strategy to address COVID-19 impacts and economic recovery	NMCOG	\$150K	Federal, state and local funds	2020	NA	NA	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
Annual CEDS Update for 2021	Development and submission of Annual CEDS Update	NMCOG	\$120K	Federal, state and local funds	2021	NA	NA	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
Economic Development District Designation (EDD)	Designation of NMCOG as EDD	NMCOG	NA	Included with Annual CEDS Update	2021	NA	NA	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
Short-term Projects (up to 18 months)								
Sewer Line Extension	Extension of sewer lines	Town of Billerica	\$ 3M per contract	Local	2020	TBD	Yes, positive	1,2,4,7
Chelmsford Intersection Improvements	Intersection improvements at Boston Road and Concord Road	Town of Chelmsford	\$2.8M	Federal and state	2020	NA	Yes, permitting complete	2,5
Veteran Housing at Town Hall Annex	Veteran housing development in Town Hall Annex.	Town of Dracut/ Coalition for a Better Acre	\$3.768M	State and local	2020	25 const. and 1-2 full-time jobs	Yes, positive	2,6,7
Elderly Housing Development	Sixty unit elderly housing development.	Town of Dracut/ Common Ground	\$22.65M	Federal, state, local and private	2020	75 const. jobs	Yes, positive	2,6,7
Tanner Street Realignment and Associated Infrastructure	Create 4-way intersection at Plain Street. Organize and create development parcels.	City of Lowell	\$ 15M	Federal, state, and local	2020	60 full-time and 150+ const. jobs on new industrial parcels	Yes, positive	1, 2, 4, 5

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Lord Overpass/Thorndike Street	Transformation of highway rotary into multi-modal boulevard	City of Lowell	\$ 23M	Federal, state, and local	2020	250+ const. jobs	Yes, positive (GHG reduction-mode shift)	2,5
GoLowell Implementation	Downtown sidewalk reconstruction for separated bike lanes and multi-modal transfer stop(s)	City of Lowell	\$10M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2020	100+ const. and 5+ new retail jobs	Yes, positive	2,5
Central Business District Signalization – to Lowell Connector	Synchronize traffic lights along Thorndike/ Dutton Streets from Lowell Connector to CBD	City of Lowell	\$1M	State (some portions completed within existing projects)	2020	10+ const. jobs	Yes, positive (GHG reduction)	5
Downtown (CBD) Buildings – Adaptive Reuse	Replacement of existing sidewalks focused on underground vaults and associated ADA compliance to spur private investment	Private developers/ City of Lowell (partnership project)	\$100M	Federal, state, local and private	2020	120+ const. and 30 full-time jobs	Yes, positive (infill developments)	1,2,4,7
Neighborhood Business Center Improvements	Business assistance, traffic calming, sidewalk and street improvements	City of Lowell	Unknown	Federal and local	2020	TBD	No	2,5,7
Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO – Phase 1A)	Treatment plant and collection system improvements to reduce discharges	City of Lowell	\$ 40M	Federal, state and local	2020	TBD	Yes, positive-eliminates untreated discharges to the river	2,4,7
River Meadow Brook Trail	Construction of a rail trail; connection to a larger trail network	City of Lowell	\$3M	Federal, state, local, and private funds	2020	TBD	Yes, encourages mode shift	1,2,7

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Reuse of Peter Fitzpatrick School	Redevelopment and reuse of the Peter Fitzpatrick School as a community center.	Town of Pepperell and the Fitzpatrick Collaborative	\$150-250K	Local (107k) and private	2022	3-4 full-time jobs for management firm plus other jobs	Yes, positive	2,4,7
Central Fire Station	Construction of new fire station	Town of Tewksbury	\$18.6M	Local	2020	98 const. jobs	Yes	2,4,7
Tewksbury Intersection Improvements	Intersection Improvements at Andover Street (Route 133) and River Road	Town of Tewksbury	\$4.7M	Federal and State	2020	NA	Yes, permitting complete	5
New Elementary School	Build new elementary school to replace two existing facilities	Town of Tewksbury	\$95M	State and Local	2020	TBD	Yes	2,4,7
Water Distribution System Improvements	Improve fire flow/reduce breaks	Town of Tewksbury	\$ 10M	5 year capital improvement plan	2020	NA	NA	2,4,7
Stormwater Improvement Plan	Develop plan to prevent local drainage problems, flooding	Town of Tewksbury	\$ 2.68M	Stormwater utility	2020	NA	NA	1,2,4,7
Town Center Development/ Preservation	Adams Barn Removal and First Parish Meeting House Restoration	Town of Tyngsborough	\$2.9M (includes pedestrian bridge)	Federal, state, local, private and nonprofit	2020	6-10 const. jobs	No	2,4,7
Town Beach and Playground Improvements	Improve features and ADA access	Town of Tyngsborough	\$90K	Local	2020	2 const. jobs	Yes, positive	1,7
Route 40 at Dunstable Road Intersection Improvements	Safety Related Improvements to intersections in Westford	Town of Westford	\$2.7M	Federal and State	2020	No	Yes, permitting complete	5

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth	Provide career services to low-income youth between the ages of 14-24	GLWDB	\$389K	Federal (U.S Department of Labor)	2020	82 clients served	No	2,3,7
Disaster Recovery - Dislocated Worker Grant	Provide career and employment services to unemployed individuals impacted by the opioid epidemic.	GLWDB	\$2.1M	Federal (U.S Department of Labor)	2020	150 clients served	No	2,3,7
Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult	Provide career, employment, and skills training services to unemployed individuals	GLWDB	\$436k	Federal (U.S Department of Labor)	2020	42 clients served	No	2,3,7
Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker	Provide career, employment, and skills training services to low-income individuals	GLWDB	\$471k	Federal (U.S Department of Labor)	2020	137 clients served	No	2,3,7
LRTA TIP projects for 2020	Buses and vans, rehab intermodal hub, maintenance, operating and planning assistance, spare parts and equipment	LRTA	\$13.279M	Federal and state	2020	NA	No	2,5,7
Replacement of VFW Highway Bridge over Beaver Brook	Bridge Replacement	MassDOT	\$ 17M	Federal and State	2020	TBD	Yes, positive with hazardous material remediation	5

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Route 38 intersection improvements	Reconstruct four intersections in Lowell	MassDOT	\$4.1M	Federal and State	2020	NA	No	5
Route 4 (North Road) over I-495	Bridge Deck Replacement	MassDOT	\$4.2M	Federal and State	2020	No	No	5
Route 3 Highway Interchange	Market studies – assessment of existing and future market to determine options for future land use considerations.	Town of Chelmsford	\$60K	State	2021	NA	No	2,5
Wastewater Study	Town wide assessment for additional wastewater capacity	Town of Chelmsford	Unknown	Local	2021	NA	Yes, positive	2,4,7
Route 129 improvements	Roadway, sidewalk, bicycle and streetscape improvements	Town of Chelmsford	\$250K	State and local	2021	NA	Yes, positive	2,5,7
Dunstable Roadway/ Corridor Improvements	Route 113 Improvements from Pleasant Street to 750 feet east of Westford Street	Town of Dunstable	\$4.5M	Federal and State	2021	NA	Yes, positive with enhanced stormwater management	2,5,7
Drinking Water Treatment Upgrades	Improve reliable treatment of Lowell's drinking water	City of Lowell	\$6M	Federal, state, or local	2021	60+ const. jobs	Yes, positive	4,7
East Merrimack Street/ Kearney Square/Davidson Lot	Redevelop area for traffic calming, pedestrian improvements, and commercial development	City of Lowell, Middlesex Community College, LNHP	\$20M	Federal, state, or private	2021	TBD	Yes, will address flooding in Davidson Lot	2,4,5,7

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Drinking Water Treatment Upgrade	Improve the reliable treatment of Lowell's drinking water – mains, ponds, pumps	City of Lowell	\$6M+	Federal, state, or local	2021	60+ const. jobs	Yes, positive	2,4,7
Pawtucket Falls Overlook Trail	Improvements to existing walking trail along Pawtucket Blvd and new scenic overlook	City of Lowell and LNHP	\$2.5M	Federal and State	2021	No	Yes	1,5,7
DPW/School Maintenance Facility	New construction facility	Town of Tewksbury	\$25M	Local	2021	TBD	Yes	4,7
Tyngsborough Dam Restoration	Dam restoration at Tyngsborough Town Center	Town of Tyngsborough	\$2.3M	State	2021	2 const. jobs	Yes, positive	2,4,7
Old Town Hall Parking Lot	Improve parking lot on Kendall Road for Old Town Hall use	Town of Tyngsborough	\$150K	Private	2021	2 const. jobs	No	5
Sewer Expansion Phase II	Expansion of sewer capacity to accommodate economic growth	Town of Tyngsborough	\$14.67M	State and local	2021	Const. jobs leading to retail and commercial full-time jobs	Yes; positive	1,2,4,7
Connecting Activities	Sustaining statewide school-to-work system	GLWDB	\$105K	State	2021	NA	NA	2,3,7
Workforce Training Fund Program – Greater Lowell Initiative	Provide resources to Mass. Businesses and workers for training current and newly-hired employees	GLWDB	Varies: Grants up to \$250K	Administered by Commonwealth Corporation	2021	NA	NA	2,3,7

CEDS Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
LRTA TIP projects for 2021	Buses and vans, maintenance, operating and planning assistance, spare parts and equipment	LRTA	\$15M	Federal and state	2021	NA	No	2,5,7
Resurfacing of Route 38 in Tewksbury Old Boston Road to Colonial	Roadway Resurfacing and related improvements	MassDOT	\$4.2M	Federal and State	2021	No	No	5
Intermediate Projects (2-4 years)								
Boston Road Improvements (Town Center to Floyd Street)	Resurfacing of town-owned property and construction of new sidewalks and drainage system	Town of Billerica	\$10.9M	Federal and State	2022	27 const. jobs	Yes	2,4,5
Vinal Square Revitalization	Wayfinding, street furniture, streetscape, and overhead utility depression.	Town of Chelmsford	\$5-10M	State, local and private	2022	NA	Yes, positive	2,4,5,7
Center Village Revitalization	Housing development, brook walk, wayfinding, street furniture, streetscape, and overhead utility depression.	Town of Chelmsford	\$5-10M	State, local and private	2022	NA	Yes, positive	2,4,5,6,7
Dracut Roadway/ Corridor Improvements	Improvements on Nashua Road	Town of Dracut	\$5.2M	Federal and State	2022	NA	Yes, positive	5,7

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Merrimack Riverwalk Phase 3	Provide access to Merrimack River from Bridge Street and other improvements to support access to Downtown and key economic sites: Tsongas Arena & UML	City of Lowell	\$7M	Federal, state, or local	2022	70+ const. jobs	Yes, positive (mode shift)	2,4,5,7
Lower Locks Revitalization	Comprehensive upgrade for historic assets, pedestrian corridor and retail hub	City of Lowell, LNHP, UML, Middlesex Community College, DCR	\$20M	Federal, state, local, and private funds	2022	200+ const. jobs and 15 full-time jobs	Yes, positive	1,2,5,7
Church Street Improvements	Converting one-way traffic to two-way traffic. Includes signal upgrade at Church/ Central Street	City of Lowell	\$5M	Federal, state, or local	2022	50+ const. jobs	Yes, positive (GHG reduction)	4,5
Gallagher Terminal TOD District	Implement MassDevelopment study to increase housing and job opportunities within 0.5 mile radius of transportation hub	City of Lowell	\$5M+	Federal, state, or local	2022	50+ const. jobs and 30 full-time jobs at new development parcels	Yes, positive (GHG reduction)	2,5,6,7
Redevelopment of former Jeanne D'Arc bank site/ infrastructure	Mixed-use redevelopment of 1.5 acre urban site with associated infrastructure improvements	Private developer and City of Lowell	\$30M+	Federal, state, local and private funds	2022	250+ const. and 15 full-time jobs	Yes, positive (stormwater improvement)	2,4,5,7

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Redevelopment of Pawtucket Street corridor and Infrastructure	Mixed-use redevelopment from University Avenue to Wilder Street (includes Franco-American school) and associated infrastructure requirements.	Private developers and City of Lowell	\$60M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2022	350+ const. and 10 full-time jobs	Yes, positive (stormwater improvement and GHG for mode shift)	2,4,5,6,7
Markley – Prince Building redevelopment and Moore/ Gorham Street infrastructure	Continued site redevelopment, including 500,000 sq. ft. existing building with necessary infrastructure improvements	Private developer and City of Lowell	\$75M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2022	300+ const. and 10 full-time jobs	Yes, positive (stormwater improvements)	2,4,7
National Amusement Redevelopment	Infrastructure to support mixed-use redevelopment along Reiss Avenue	Private developer and City of Lowell	\$10M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2022	100+ const. and 40+ full-time jobs	Yes, positive (stormwater improvement and GHG for mode shift)	2,4,7
Former Friends Lumber Site and Infrastructure	Mixed-use redevelopment of 2 acres that includes new roadways and environmental remediation	Private developer/ City of Lowell (partnership project)	\$15M	Federal, state, local and private funds	2022	125+ const. jobs and 10 full-time jobs	Yes, positive (hazardous material remediation)	2,4,5,7
CSO Storage Projects	Building storage facilities that will reduce the impacts of wet-weather sewer surcharging in the community	City of Lowell	\$10M	Federal, state, or local	2022	TBD	Yes, positive	2,4,7

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Upper Pawtucket Canalway – Lord Overpass to Broadway	Construct the Upper Pawtucket Canalway, including a pedestrian bridge to the Western Avenue Studios	City of Lowell, LNHP	\$20M	Federal, state, or local	2022	150+ const. and 5 full-time jobs	Yes, positive (hazardous material remediation and mode shift)	2,4,5,7
Chelmsford Street Corridor Reconstruction	Corridor infrastructure improvements to leverage Opportunity Zone private Investments	Private developers/ City of Lowell (partnership project)	\$50M	Federal, state, or local	2022	300+ const. and 50 full-time jobs	Yes, positive (infill development)	2,4,5,7
Merrimack Riverwalk Expansion	Expand all river pathways on the north side of the Merrimack River	City of Lowell	\$5M	Federal, state, or local	2022	TBD	Yes	1,2,5,7
ADA and Trail Improvements for Kiwanis Camp	Improve ADA access and trails at Kiwanis Camp	Town of Tyngsborough	\$170K	Federal, state and local (CPC)	2022	5 const. jobs	Yes, positive	5,7
Westford Bridge Rehabilitation/ Reconstruction	Bridge Rehabilitation - Beaver Brook Road over Beaver Brook (W-26-014)	Town of Westford	\$1.8M	Federal and State	2022	NA	Yes	5
Westford Bridge Rehabilitation/ Reconstruction	Bridge Replacement, W26-002, Stony Brook Road over Stony Brook	Town of Westford	\$2.3M	Federal and State	2022	NA	Yes	5
LRTA TIP projects for 2022	Vans, maintenance, operating and planning assistance, spare parts and equipment	LRTA	\$11.44M	Federal and State	2022	NA	No	2,5,7
Navy Yard Mill Redevelopment	Redevelopment of vacant space.	Town of Dracut	\$ 3.8M	Private	2023	TBD	No	2,4,7

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Riverside Senior Affordable Housing	Develop town-owned parcel for affordable housing.	Town of Dracut	\$4.5M	Federal: \$3.15M Private:\$1.13 M Nonprofit:\$220k	2023	49 const. jobs	Yes	6
Pepperell Paper Mill Redevelopment	ETA and Chapter 43D Designation granted; Master Plan site study underway	Town of Pepperell and 1A Auto	Unknown (several million)	Federal, state, and private funds	2023	TBD	Yes, some permitting completed	2,4,7
Lowell/Tewksbury Intersection Improvements/Safety	Route 38 Intersection Improvements	Lowell/Tewksbury	\$3.3M	Federal and State	2023	NA	Yes, positive	2,5,7
Graniteville Mills/Westford Anodizing/12 North Main Street	Conversion of vacant former industrial building/brownfield site to productive use	Town of Westford	Unknown	State – MassDevelopment Brownfield Fund and private developer	2023	N/A	Yes, positive	2,4,7
LRTA TIP projects for 2023	Buses and vans, maintenance, operating and planning assistance, spare parts and equipment	LRTA	\$11.6M	Federal and State	2023	NA	No	2,5,7
Commuter Rail Station in North Chelmsford	As part of commuter rail expansion	MassDOT	Unknown	Federal and State	2023	TBD	Yes	2,5,7
Capital Corridor Project	Expansion of Commuter Rail from Lowell to Concord NH	NHDOT	Unknown	Federal and State	2023	TBD	Yes	2,5,7

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
Long-term Projects (5+ years)								
Yankee Doodle Bike Path	Construction of multi-use trail	Town of Billerica	\$9.6M	Federal and state	2024	NA	Yes	1,2,5,7
Glad Valley-Lexington Road	Intersection Design and Reconstruction	Town of Billerica	\$2.5M	State	2024	TBD	Yes	5
Route 110 at I-495 traffic signal installation	Traffic Signal Installation	Chelmsford	\$1.4M	Federal and State	2024	No	No	5
Upper Merrimack Traffic Calming & Street Improvements	Redevelop commercial core to include a multi-modal path	City of Lowell	\$6M	Federal, state, and local	2024	60+ const. jobs	Yes, positive	2,5,7
Westford Roadway/ Corridor Improvements	Westford - Rehabilitation of Boston Road	Westford	\$8.5M	Federal and State	2024	NA	Yes	2,5
LRTA TIP projects for 2024	Buses, maintenance, operating and planning assistance, spare parts and equipment	LRTA	\$12M	Federal and State	2024	NA	No	2,5,7
I- 495- Woburn St. (Exit 37) improvements	Interchange improvements to support redevelopment of former Raytheon site (warehouse)	MassDOT/ City of Lowell	\$8M	Federal and state	2024	80+ construction and 400+ permanent jobs	Yes	2,5,7
970 Broadway Industrial Redevelopment	Redevelop brownfield site for industrial use.	Town of Dracut	Unknown	Federal and state	2025	TBD	Yes, positive	2,4,7

Project Name	Project Description	Project Proponent	Total Cost	Funding Source(S)	Start Date	Jobs Created	Environmental Impact	Goals Addressed
VFW Highway Improvements	Resurfacing and related work.	City of Lowell	\$7.7M	Federal and State	2025	N/A	Yes, positive with stormwater separation to address CSOs	2,5,7
Billerica Intersection Improvements/ Safety	Intersection Improvements to Boston Road/ Glad Valley Drive/ Lexington Road	Town of Billerica	\$3.9M	Federal and State	2026	NA	Yes	5
Lowell Roadway/ Corridor Improvements	Connector Reconstruction from Thorndike Street to Gorham Street	City of Lowell	\$3.4M	Federal and State	2026	NA	Yes	2,5,7
Chelmsford Intersection Improvements/ Safety	Improvements on Chelmsford Street (Route 110)	Town of Chelmsford	\$11.0M	Federal and State	2027	NA	Yes	2,5



Middlesex Community College is a key player in building a stronger region and is a leader in innovative alliances, both internal and external, and responding nimbly to the needs of our community and local economy. To meet increasing demands for middle- and highly-skilled workers and to provide greater numbers of students with the skills needed to succeed in well-paying careers and starting businesses, Middlesex Community College recognizes its role in supporting a diverse population with diverse needs through education. To that end, we will continue to focus and improve upon the following initiatives that support our role in the regional economy.

- Build an equity-minded culture to sustain inclusive excellence at MCC to improve access to higher education and increase student success.
- Monitor, support and help stimulate workforce development initiatives, including ensuring the alignment of degree and certificate programs with the needs of statewide, regional and local employers. Examples:
 - Established a learn-and-earn biotechnology program aimed at formalizing relationships with industry partners and providing career opportunities for students at the Middle Street STEM Hub.
 - Established a robust Dental program that serves 600+ community members a year and trains the workforce.
 - Established a robust nursing and radiology program which trains and certifies the workforce.
 - Established a venture fund for seed money to MCC students launching or growing community-based businesses.
- Strengthen guided pathways for student opportunity and growth:
 - Academic divisions and departments have developed 15 new associate's/transfer degrees and certificate programs; revised 81 existing programs; launched 53 new courses; developed/revised student learning outcomes for all courses; and aligned math courses to majors across the college. Additionally, faculty and administrators have participated in MA Department of Higher Education's statewide initiative to align foundational community college courses with bachelor's degree requirements.
- Leverage the power of community college to transform our collective future.
 - A dynamic Academic Arts Building that provides programming and economic impact to the region.
 - Providing necessities such as meals and housing to meet the needs of our students and an extended MCC family.

APPENDIX XVI: NEWS ARTICLES

COVID-19 FALLOUT

Unemployment numbers surge

Staggering 6.6M applications in U.S. last week

By Mary Markos
Boston Herald

More than 6.6 million people nationally and over 180,000 in Massachusetts applied for unemployment benefits last week as layoffs continue to accelerate in the midst of the coronavirus shutdown.

"We knew that these initiatives around gatherings and restaurants and businesses and social distancing were going to have a profound impact on our economy," Gov. Charlie Baker said Thursday, adding attacking the spread of the virus has to remain "priority No. 1."

State reports show 181,032 people filed initial unemployment claims between March 22 and March 28. The new numbers represent a 22.3% increase from the 147,992 claims filed the week prior, according to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

The state and national



AP FILE

Unionized hospitality workers wait in line in a basement garage to apply for unemployment benefits at the Hospitality Training Academy in Los Angeles on March 13. Applications have skyrocketed during the pandemic.

unemployment data was released Thursday morning, with the U.S. Department of Labor reporting that the number of unemployment applications doubled the record high set just one week earlier.

Baker started beefing up

operations in the state's labor departments ahead of the surge in claims, expanding a 50-person operation into a 500-person remote call center. State employees are processing claims via phone and online, and have returned

calls to over 34,000 people.

"We are going to continue to work our way through all the folks who are applying for this to make sure people get the resources they need to stay in place while we go through this very difficult

period," Baker said.

The surging layoffs have led many economists to envision as many as 20 million lost jobs by the end of April. The unemployment rate could spike to as high as 15% this month, above the previous record of

10.8% set during a deep recession in 1982.

In Massachusetts, the food and accommodation industries continue to see the biggest blow, with 25,993 workers filing new claims, though that number is 41.4% lower than the previous week when that sector posted a 44,353-person increase.

Other particularly affected industries include retail trade, which registered the largest single increase in new initial claims of 15,444, followed by manufacturing, which was up by 7,674 claims.

The Department of Unemployment Assistance is "focused on supporting workers through these challenging times and continues to process new claims as quickly as possible," according to a spokesman. "DUA will continue to work collaboratively with government, business, labor, and nonprofit partners on implementing innovative solutions to support individuals eligible for unemployment and provide the financial assistance they need during this difficult time," a spokesman said.

Hospital prepares for the surge

21% of staff furloughed due to revenue losses

LOWELL GENERAL

By Nicole DeFeudis

ndefeudis@lowellsun.com

LOWELL » Despite steep financial losses amid the pandemic, Lowell General Hospital is prepared to handle a surge in coronavirus cases expected to hit the state in the next two weeks, CEO Jody White said.

The hospital has lost about 40% of its monthly revenue due to canceled elective procedures and appointments, White said.

As a result, about 21% of hospital and Circle Health staff have been furloughed.

White, joined by other top LGH administrators, discussed the hospital's preparations for the surge, and its finances, in a conference call Thursday with members of The Sun's editorial team.

Hospitals nationwide are in a "double-edged" position, White said.

"We've got to stay afloat to care for all these

patients, but then at the same time, we're dealing with what results in, you know, millions and millions of dollars a month of lost revenue," he said, in reference to elective medical procedures that have been postponed.

Massachusetts is expected to see a spike in COVID-19 patients between April 10 and 20, Gov. Charlie Baker announced Thursday.

Based on models of the virus' spread in China and Italy, about

HOSPITAL » 5A

Hospital

FROM PAGE 1A

2,500 more individuals per day could come in contact with the virus in Massachusetts, White said.

"I am confident that we are (as) prepared as an organization can possibly be given the resources that we have available to us," LGH and Circle Health Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Amy Hoey said.

The hospital expects that it can triple its normal critical care volume, tending to upwards of 70 critical care patients, Hoey said. As of Thursday, the hospital housed 27 confirmed COVID-19 patients, and another 18 under investigation.

"We... could never have enough these days given what we know about this virus and the way it affects patients, but we feel very confident again in our surge capacity," she said.

White said there has been conversation about opening a field hospital in the Merrimack Valley similar to the one established at the DCU Center in Worcester to handle overflow COVID-19 patients.

"We are actively looking across the Merrimack Valley to see if there would be a space available to us," he said. White, chairman of the board of the Massachusetts Hospital Association, is in regular contact with other health care providers, City Manager Eileen Donoghue, and UMass Lowell Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney.

Fourteen hospital employees have also tested positive, although LGH did not elaborate.

“Every day that we can continue to say that we’re having a slow and steady increase of these patients in the hospital is a good day, and we continue to have a slow and steady increase of these patients in the hospital,” Hoey said.

The hospital has taken measures to expand surge capacity in critical care, traditional inpatient and emergency departments. For example, behavioral health arrivals at the hospital’s two emergency departments have been consolidated to the Saints Campus, which has allowed for the creation of respiratory evaluation units.

Those who test positive for the virus are separated within the hospital, and an “all-mask policy” has been implemented, Hoey said. All staff are required to wear masks except in office spaces, and patients who arrive at the hospital are masked upon entry.

“Many of our physicians stepped up to be cross-trained and cross-credentialed in the areas of critical care and emergency medicine, and offer what support is appropriate to their scope based on their specialty,” Hoey added.

The hospital’s biggest need will be critical care beds and ventilators, according to White. The facility has also kept a “constant line of sight” on available personal protective equipment, Hoey said.

“We feel that we are stable right now in terms of being able to activate our personal protective equipment policies and practices given our current inventory levels,” Hoey said. But even after the surge, hospital staff will be caring for COVID-19 patients for a “very long duration,” she added.

“There’s all sorts of indications that supply chains are opening up,” Hoey said. “But we don’t count on anything until it’s on our loading dock,” she added later.

As of now, workers are only using hospital-issued masks. As for ventilators, Hoey said the hospital is in good supply.

Outflow facilities would be used to house patients who no longer require critical care, but cannot yet return to nursing facilities, group homes, or other congregate living spaces, Hoey said.

“One of the challenges of activating a pandemic plan is it’s difficult to disposition patients out of the organization when they no longer require a hospital level of care,” she said.

LGH is currently conducting drive-thru COVID-19 testing at its main campus. To be tested, patients must have a referral from a primary care physician, or in the case of first responders, an occupational health department.

“We’re in the middle of a worldwide crisis with this pandemic, and it’s affecting the economies across the U. S., across the world, and health care is not exempt,” White said.

Indeed, several Boston medical facilities have announced similar measures.

On Thursday, LGH and Circle Health announced that just over 21% of staff will be furloughed for 90 days. This includes 684 employees who will work reduced hours, and 163 who will lose all hours.

“We’re not laying people off. These are folks that are staying on our books, they’re getting their benefits, they’re employees of the hospital. We are just reducing their hours to balance what is a huge reduction in work,” White said.

Furloughed employees will continue to receive their salaries for a full two weeks. The entire executive staff will receive reduced salaries for the next 90 days.

“It in no way... makes up for the decrease in business that we’re seeing, and we are going to rely on the federal government to step in, and the state to step in across all the hospitals in the commonwealth,” White said.

“Listen to all of the guidance about staying home and social distancing — this is very real,” Hoey said. “The best thing that people can do to support their hospitals and to support each other is to follow those social distancing guidelines.”

STATE UNEMPLOYMENT

Report: Jobless rate could hit 25%

By Michael P. Norton
State House News Service

BOSTON » The Massachusetts unemployment rate could race up to more than 25% by June, according to a new policy brief that suggests large federal block grants are the state's best hope for staving off a severe budget crisis.

The Pioneer Institute brief noted that 8.6% of the state's civilian work force made an unemployment claim during the week ending March 28, ranking the state sixth by that metric. In February, before the COVID-19 pandemic rocked the United States, the state's unemployment rate was 2.5%.

But research authors Greg Sullivan and Charles Chieppo cited a prediction from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis economist Miguel Faria-e-Castro that the number of unemployed

Americans will rise from 5.76 million in February to 52.8 million in June. Under that scenario, about 975,000 Massachusetts residents, or 25%, would be unemployed — up from 106,526 in February.

“Massachusetts should join with other states to lobby Congress for large block grants to assist state governments during this unprecedented time,” Sullivan, a former state inspector general and Massachusetts House member, said. “The alternative is a state budget crisis of unprecedented severity.”

The pandemic's grip has slowed business activity, with some businesses closed altogether. At the same time, according to the report, it has reduced consumer spending, MBTA revenue and pension fund investment earnings while also forcing major increases in government spend-

ing.

“It is critically important for state government leaders to formulate a best case/worst case analysis of the potential effects of the COVID-19 recession on state government revenues and expenditures and make plans to address the crisis,” the authors conclude in their report.

Four weeks into the COVID-19 state of emergency, Massachusetts House and Senate leaders have not outlined plans for tackling a budget for fiscal 2021, which begins July 1. A hearing scheduled for Tuesday to evaluate revenue impacts of the pandemic was postponed for a week due to a livestreaming failure.

Unemployment in the U.S. hit 25% in 1933, but that milestone occurred four years after the 1929 stock market crash, according to the brief, which

notes the national unemployment rate didn't return to the pre-market crash level of 3.2% until 1943. The policy brief did not include an estimate of when employment levels might bounce back, but the researchers observed that other economists have projected that unemployment will not rise as much as Faria-e-Castro estimates. Goldman Sachs forecast a 15% rate by mid-2020, according to the report, and St. Louis Federal Reserve President James Bullard forecast “that it will skyrocket to 30%, but that the economy will then snap back strongly.”

During the Great Recession, unemployment peaked in Massachusetts at 8.3%, according to the report, and state income tax revenues fell from \$12.5 billion in fiscal 2008 to \$10.1 billion in fiscal 2010.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Third wave of jobless claims crashes nationwide

Fed directs \$2.3T in relief loans for govts., businesses

By Chris Lisinski
State House News Service

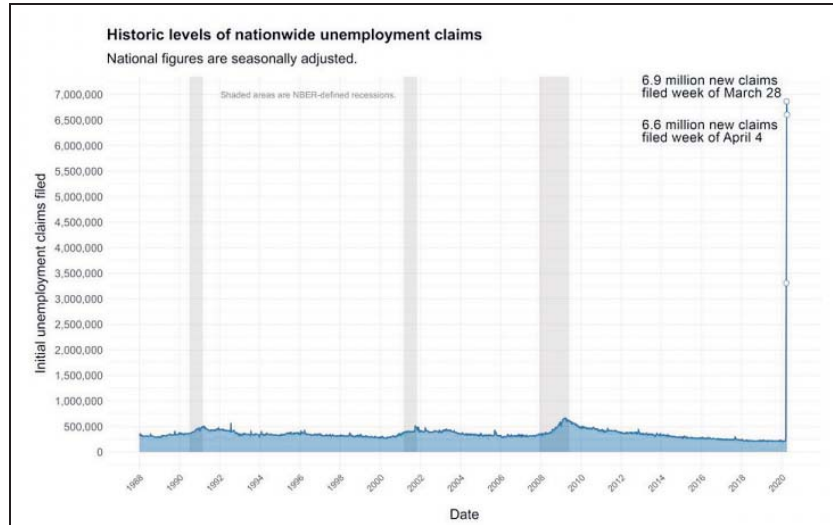
New unemployment claims remained at near-historic levels this week in Massachusetts and nationwide, and the Federal Reserve on Thursday morning took sweeping action to direct \$2.3 trillion in relief loans to help businesses and state and local governments address cash flow needs.

The simultaneous announcements of updated unemployment application figures and central bank action reflect the latest evidence of a dire economic picture amid the coronavirus pandemic, and efforts to address the situation.

Another 6.6 million seasonally adjusted initial claims were filed nationwide between Sunday, March 29 and Saturday, April 4, according to data published Thursday by the federal Department of Labor. Over the same span, the non-seasonally adjusted number of new claims in Massachusetts totaled more than 139,000.

With businesses shut down to enforce social distancing and layoffs piling up, more than 10% of the country's entire labor force — a rate almost mirrored in Massachusetts — has sought jobless aid in the past three weeks alone, an unprecedented escalation in the decades for which data are available.

The 6.6 million new claims filed during the week ending April 4 represented a decrease of about 261,000 over the record set in the week ending March 28, which was slightly revised in Thursday's update. Even with a drop, new claims were still about 10 times higher than the Feb-



New unemployment claims by week filed nationwide since 1988. Claims are seasonally adjusted

ruary 2009 weekly peak during the Great Recession.

Massachusetts officials reported 139,582 initial claims for unemployment benefits last week, almost a quarter fewer than the 181,423 residents than the number filed a week earlier. But like the national trend, the Bay State's latest figures still constituted an enormous jump: about 18 times higher than the week ending March 7.

Over the past three weeks, close to 16.8 million Americans and 469,000 Massachusetts residents have submitted applications seeking jobless benefits.

Scores of previously ineligible workers can begin filing claims for unemployment insurance by the end of the month, the Baker administration announced Thursday.

Self-employed, gig economy and other workers did not qualify for the system but the CARES Act President Donald Trump signed last month makes up to 39 weeks of benefits available to them as relief from the COVID-19 crisis.

Gov. Charlie Baker's office said in a Thursday

press release that it is working with an outside vendor to prepare for those claims and expects to begin processing them around April 30. The administration also said currently eligible claimants can now receive the additional \$600 per week authorized in the federal act.

An Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development spokesman could not be reached Thursday for comment on whether the eligibility expansion would lead to a further surge in applications or to describe how the system has handled the increased work.

Last week, the office said it has managed increased needs so far thanks to more than 500 additional employees added to the department.

The Federal Reserve responded to the recent climate by announcing Thursday that it would distribute up to \$2.3 trillion in loans to soften the blows for households, employers, and both state and local governments.

That plan involves bolstering the Paycheck Protection Program that gives loans to businesses to keep

workers on the payroll, establishing a Municipal Liquidity Facility that will offer \$500 billion in short-term notes to give states, counties and cities more cash breathing room amid budget crunches, and directing up to \$600 billion to increase loan availability for small- and mid-sized businesses.

Loans through the Main Street Lending Program will last four years, and the first year of principal and interest payments will be deferred. The increased funding will allow banks to make new Main Street loans or use the program to increase the size of existing business loans, according to the Fed.

"Our country's highest priority must be to address this public health crisis, providing care for the ill and limiting the further spread of the virus," Federal Reserve Board Chair Jerome Powell said in a press release. "The Fed's role is to provide as much relief and stability as we can during this period of constrained economic activity, and our actions today will help ensure that the eventual recovery is as vigorous as possible."

NEWS > MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts unemployment reaches 'eye-popping' 573,000 in coronavirus era, says Gov. Baker



BOSTON, MA: April 16, 2020: Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker updates the media on Coronavirus in the state during a press conference at the Massachusetts State House in Boston, Massachusetts.(Staff photo by Nicolaus Czarnecki/MediaNews Group/Boston Herald)

By **ERIN TIERNAN** | etiernan@bostonherald.com | Boston Herald

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New federal employment data puts Massachusetts jobless claims at an “eye-popping” 572,562 amid coronavirus shutdowns — nearly half of whom are still waiting for payouts, stymied by a clogged-up claims system.

Nationwide, 5.2 million more people sought unemployment benefits last week, federal labor data released Thursday showed. Roughly 22 million Americans have sought jobless benefits in the past month — easily the worst stretch of U.S. job losses on record.

Roughly 315,000 people in Massachusetts — or 54% of those who have applied — are now receiving unemployment benefits. Baker pointed out that’s triple the number of people who were being paid jobless benefits at the beginning of the month, but it’s not keeping up with the volume of new claims.

“We are making progress to get checks out the door,” Baker said Thursday during a coronavirus briefing at the State House.

Massachusetts officials received 103,040 initial claims for unemployment benefits during the week ending April 11 — a 26% drop in from the previous week, when the state received 181,423 claims but it’s still a 12-fold increase over the number of claims made in early March before coronavirus struck, according to federal labor data released Thursday morning. Only 7,449 Massachusetts residents submitted new applications in the week ending March 14.

“The number of claims here is eye-popping,” Baker said.

Massachusetts has processed and paid out about 75,000 additional claims since last week, by the administration’s numbers. To keep up with increasing demand, Baker said the Department of Unemployment Assistance’s call center has ballooned from 50 workers to 850 remote call center workers. They have made over 115,000 calls since the coronavirus crisis began he said.

All told, roughly nearly 12 million people nationwide are now receiving unemployment checks, roughly matching the peak reached in January 2010, shortly after the Great Recession officially ended.

The economy has virtually shut down in every state as governor after governor has ordered a halt on all business deemed nonessential. In Massachusetts, Gov. Charlie Baker shuttered schools on March 17 followed by nonessential businesses one week later on March 24.

Baker said the system for gig and self-employed workers who were extended benefits by the CARES Act is being “refined.” Last week he said the system to help connect those workers who are not traditionally covered by unemployment would be ready by April 30.

“The process is not happening as quickly as any of us would like but it’s moving in the right direction,” Baker said.

As high as unemployment is now, economists at the Pioneer Institute have warned Massachusetts’ unemployment rate could spike to 25% by June. Others are saying the national unemployment rate could hit 20% this month which would be the highest rate since the Great Depression.

Tags: [Charlie Baker](#), [coronavirus](#), [COVID-19](#), [Gov. Charlie Baker](#), [Jobs](#), [Unemployment](#), [Unemployment Rate](#)



Erin Tiernan | Reporter