

Lawrence CommunityWorks (LCW) is a community development corporation that weaves together community planning, organizing, and asset-building efforts with high-quality affordable housing and commercial development to create vibrant neighborhoods and empowered residents. By facilitating conversations and action on community priorities, LCW engages partners and a network of youth and adult residents in opportunities to move themselves and the city of Lawrence forward.

Lawrence is a former textile-manufacturing powerhouse that over the past 40 years has become the most heavily Latino city in New England. It is one of the poorest and youngest cities in Massachusetts and the nation, and struggles with low levels of homeownership and educational attainment, high unemployment, and physical blight from industrial contamination and neighborhood divestment. It has great strengths in its historic mill buildings and prime location, but also in its young, striving population, blessed with an entrepreneurial spirit and a strong ethic of community involvement and mutual support.

LCW began in the early 1980s struggle to build affordable housing in North Lawrence, and has since built or renovated over 300 units of affordable housing for the people of Lawrence. Following a rebirth in 1999, we have become a powerful vehicle for community revitalization, attracting over \$90 million dollars in local, regional, and national public and private investment and catalyzing collaborative, community-wide revitalization efforts. In the past fifteen years, LCW has grown our membership base to over 5,000 residents and stakeholders, restored over 1 million square feet of derelict property to productive use, created Asset Building programs for more than 1,000 adults annually (leveraging over \$80 million in local asset purchases), implemented creative youth programs that send 95% of program graduates to college, engaged thousands of families in NeighborCircles and Community Education Circles to improve local neighborhoods and schools, and won over 20 awards for our work in community organizing, planning, housing development, and physical and economic revitalization (including first prize in the 2014 Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Working Cities Challenge competition).

Based on the aspirations and needs of our community, our investment goals over the next three years are:

- 1. The Network:** We will strengthen our resident Network by deepening connections among members, increasing the depth of member activity within the Network, and increasing the level of leadership among members. This includes implementing at least 30 Community Education and Neighbor Circles each year, expanding our local and regional leadership development efforts to graduate 75 people annually from Poder (Spanish-language), Mill Cities Leadership Institute (Lawrence & Lowell), and GoLead (youth), and involving 100 people as core volunteers with LCW. We will also pursue and strengthen strategic partnerships with other key organizations to strengthen the institutional fabric of the City.
- 2. Asset Building (Financial and Personal Assets):** We will increase educational attainment and financial resilience for the people of Lawrence, through financial education and coaching for 350 individuals, ESL and computer classes for 150 individuals, career and job readiness training for 75 individuals, matched savings for asset ownership for 75 people, homeownership services (including foreclosure prevention) for 800 people, and youth development opportunities for 150 young people.
- 3. Physical and community development:** We will create a vibrant mixed use community in the heart of the city, linking the revitalization of the North Common neighborhood and the Mill District. This includes production of 71 affordable rental homes and 5 homeownership properties, 25,000 square feet of new commercial space, and collaboration to develop two new green spaces in the area. We will also aggressively pursue acquisition and redevelopment of remaining derelict properties in response to resident mandates.
- 4. Economic Development:** We will position and prepare ourselves, our partners, and our members to effectively advocate for a comprehensive, city-wide economic development strategy through our collaborative leadership in the Lawrence Working Families Initiative, the North Canal Coalition, and the Lawrence Partnership (as well as other regional forums), and our coordination of a Resident Design Team and planning process to shape and inform Lawrence's economic development.

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