



GATEWAY PLUS ACTION GRANT FINAL REPORT





Massachusetts
Department of
Housing & Community
Development

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Gateway Plus Action Grant

Final Report

2010

Community Planning for Neighborhood Revitalization

A Message from The Department of Housing & Community Development

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to present this report on the activities and recommendations of DHCD's Gateway Plus Action Grant. These grants, awarded to 18 Gateway Plus Cities, spurred successful civic engagement with residents and other stakeholders, produced implementation plans addressing the major needs of these cities and their neighborhoods, and served as a catalyst for greater involvement with nonprofit organizations, businesses and institutions in the region to help these cities improve local conditions.

The planning undertaken by these cities demonstrates that residents want to be involved in community decision making and value the opportunity to identify those concerns most affecting their quality of life, whether they be poor pedestrian access to downtown, lack of sidewalks or traffic signals, housing in need of rehabilitation, or design of multi-purpose park space.

The Gateway Plus revitalization plans will serve as an excellent starting point for these cities to set priorities for improvements, pursue funding opportunities and sustain neighborhood dialogue. We are pleased to report that actions are already underway to realize the vision of these plans in several cities, including:

- ◆ Fitchburg: \$700,000 in federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding for the acquisition and rehabilitation of foreclosed and abandoned properties, primarily in the Elm Street Neighborhood.
- ◆ Lawrence: \$480,465 from EOEEA's Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities (PARC) program to support upgrades at Howard Playstead, a popular ball field in the Arlington Neighborhood.
- ◆ Leominster: \$500,000 in state historic tax credits to rehabilitate the historic Whitney building for housing in the Comb and Carriage Neighborhood.
- ◆ Lowell: \$13M Growth District Initiative grant from EOHEd and \$35.6M in loans from MassHousing to support the Appleton Mills project, creating 130 new affordable live/work spaces in the historic Hamilton Canal District.
- ◆ Westfield: nearly \$4.6M in federal stimulus funding to support rehabilitation of 3 downtown buildings for affordable housing and commercial uses.

DHCD welcomes these efforts and looks forward to continuing our collaboration with the Gateway Plus Cities.

Tina Brooks,
Undersecretary



GATEWAY PLUS ACTION GRANT

Community Planning for Neighborhood Revitalization

Final Report

Introduction

DHCD awarded grants of up to \$75,000 each, for a total of \$1.35M, in November 2008 to 18 Gateway Plus Cities: Chelsea, Chicopee, Fitchburg, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Methuen, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Revere, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield, and Worcester (see Page 4 for descriptions). The grants were used for strategic planning in target neighborhoods to:

- ◆ Increase diversity of housing options
- ◆ Expand economic opportunities
- ◆ Foster and strengthen civic engagement
- ◆ Promote neighborhood stability

These cities worked with consultants to complete plans responsive to locally identified needs and that included neighborhood visioning, feasibility and market analyses of specific sites, neighborhood/downtown improvement strategies, redevelopment of foreclosed and vacant properties, and urban renewal. Goals and objectives were developed with active involvement of neighborhood residents and other stakeholders, including: lower income populations; ethnic and linguistic minorities; community-based organizations; social service providers; property and business owners; and institutional partners (e.g., colleges, hospitals). Gateway Plus Action Grant plans identified (1) short, medium and long-term strategies for addressing identified neighborhood needs and (2) the parties responsible for implementation (e.g., city department, service provider, state).

Program Design and Requirements

The Gateway Plus Action Grant resulted in a true neighborhood planning process that was enthusiastically supported by stakeholders, grantee cities and consultants. This grant was unique and highly successful because the program design:

- ◆ Allowed each city to select its own target neighborhood and planning approach
- ◆ Required that grantees hire consultants pre-qualified by DHCD to conduct the planning process and produce the final plans
- ◆ Required broad-based civic engagement that was integral to the planning process and resulted in active stakeholder involvement

DHCD compiled a master list of pre-qualified consultants that expedited the selection process for participating cities, thus allowing planning activities to get underway quickly. By pre-qualifying consultants, DHCD ensured high quality work performance and product. DHCD staff was also very involved in grant activities, including assisting communities with their civic engagement efforts.

The short time frame of grant implementation (generally 6-7 months) also contributed to a more dynamic civic engagement process, as neighborhood input was followed quickly by consultant feedback, i.e., visioning was quickly translated into proposed actions. This quick turn-around of information facilitated faster decision making by both the cities and consultants and resulted in a focused planning process. The time frame did not allow for distractions or tangents. Residents saw results of their participation in each phase of the process and consequently, became more active.

Distinct Study Areas

Grantee cities identified three types of target neighborhoods for their planning efforts.



Downtown

These plans focus on commercial sector activity, attracting tourism, creation or revitalization of arts venues, institutional uses, and retention of housing, often in mixed-use settings.

Chicopee	Methuen	Taunton
Holyoke	New Bedford	Westfield

Neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown

Many of these neighborhoods serve or can serve as “gateways to downtown.” Plans focus on quality of life issues, maintenance of housing, and reuse of buildings no longer appropriate for neighborhood settings (e.g., older factories, warehouses).

Fitchburg	Lowell	Salem
Haverhill	Lynn	Worcester
Leominster	Pittsfield	



A Distinct Neighborhood

These neighborhoods serve the housing, commercial and recreational needs of their residents. They often serve as home to the cities’ newcomer/immigrant populations. Plans focus on the need for more attractive open space to beautify the area and serve the needs of the neighborhood for both play space and quiet enjoyment of green areas, and address city service needs (e.g., code enforcement, public safety, access to services) cited by residents. In addition, plans suggest ways to promote cultural understanding and cooperation.

Chelsea	Revere	Lawrence	Springfield
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Other Influences Affecting Gateway Plus Cities

These cities have been characterized as missing out on many of the economic gains of the 1990s and as having had more difficulty attracting and retaining economic activity during the previous several decades. They face low or negative population growth, populations older than the state average, older housing stock (much built before 1950), and incidences of overcrowding, abandonment and foreclosure. There is little current demand for housing or commercial space; lack of financing options in the private sector hinders housing efforts; and most proposed housing projects cannot go forward without subsidy assistance for both the developers/contractors and occupants (e.g., rental assistance subsidies, first time homebuyer assistance).

There are vacant storefronts and underutilized buildings in downtown areas. Most target neighborhoods have average incomes lower than the city as a whole; several of these neighborhoods have a modest to moderate segment of the population living below the poverty level. Several have industrial buildings that are unsuited for locations that are now primarily residential and/or commercial. Many also serve the newcomer/immigrant population and have a high need for various social services, such as homelessness prevention, job training, Adult Basic Education, and English language classes.

Revere: Demographics of the Shirley Avenue Neighborhood

By mining the available data sources, the final plan for the improvement of the Shirley Avenue neighborhood provides an excellent statistical picture of the neighborhood's residents. The neighborhood is younger than the city as a whole, with more residents under age 45. The majority of the neighborhood's residents earn less than \$50,000/year, with over 20% earning below \$15,000; few have an education beyond a high school degree; and they own fewer cars than the overall city population. In addition, the neighborhood has the highest proportion of city residents employed in service and sales positions. Such information can be useful to the City in prioritizing services, attracting education and training programs to serve these populations, and developing programs and outreach services for youth.

Some of the target neighborhoods are affected by other state actions or proposed development/redevelopment, including:

- ◆ Salem — waterfront park to be developed by the MA Department of Transportation
- ◆ New Bedford — Route 18 redesign and presence of National Historic Park
- ◆ Lawrence — plans for storm water management and flood mitigation
- ◆ Revere — proposed redevelopment of Wonderland Park
- ◆ Taunton — construction of a trial court complex and a commuter rail station
- ◆ Westfield — working actively with Westfield State College for a college presence

Neighborhood Perspectives

Establishing or improving a neighborhood's identity (and in some instances a downtown's identity) is an overarching theme in each Gateway Plus City. Their plans emphasize improving target neighborhoods, but also honoring their unique qualities (e.g., cultural/ethnic diversity, mix of commercial uses, access to downtown and/or public transportation). A better physical appearance, the perception of safety, and/or showcasing distinct features (e.g., preservation of historic structures, signage, murals or other public art, a community garden) were viewed as fostering and sustaining a special sense of the target neighborhood.

	Project Descriptions
Chelsea	Addison-Orange Neighborhood Revitalization Plan: Recommendations for foreclosure assistance and homeownership opportunities, infrastructure improvements, public safety measures, enhancements to major gateways, new open/green spaces, and measures to integrate benefits of proposed development in the adjacent Everett Avenue urban renewal area.
Chicopee	Chicopee Downtown Revitalization Plan: Strategic plan to increase housing options downtown, including homeownership and rental opportunities, homelessness prevention, and the redevelopment of an underutilized site for mixed-use development. The plan also addresses the beautification of the Center Street Gateway and the need for a strategic market plan.
Fitchburg	Elm Street Neighborhood Revitalization Plan: Tracks critical property information for foreclosed and abandoned properties, recommending actions to support housing stabilization.
Haverhill	Haverhill Lower Acre Revitalization Strategy: Vision plan recommending quality of life improvements and revitalization strategies, including improvements to the Winter Street gateway to downtown.
Holyoke	Holyoke's Center City Vision Plan: Comprehensive study to guide the preparation of an urban renewal plan, including data collection and analysis to identify key parcels for housing, commercial and industrial development.
Lawrence	The Arlington Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy: Revitalization strategy, addressing foreclosures and focusing on housing, commercial development, public improvements, zoning, and quality of life.
Leominster	Comb & Carriage/French Hill Gateway Plus Action Plan: Revitalization strategy, including land use, housing rehabilitation, and infrastructure improvements (streets, sidewalks, intersections, and gateways).
Lowell	A City-Building Vision for the Hamilton Canal District and the Neighborhoods: Vision Plan examining the housing, physical and economic development connectivity of four surrounding neighborhoods to the Hamilton Canal District; making recommendations to harness positive and mitigate negative impacts posed by this redevelopment project.
Lynn	Downtown Market Street Vision Plan: Redevelopment strategy, addressing housing, business development, green space, and infrastructure improvements to connect this area to ongoing revitalization efforts in downtown.
Methuen	Methuen Development Feasibility Analysis: Redevelopment feasibility of three sites, two for mixed-income housing and one in downtown for mixed-use.
New Bedford	Downtown New Bedford Revitalization & Redevelopment Study: Assessment of redevelopment potential of downtown, recognizing the need for infrastructure improvements, creating a pedestrian friendly downtown, encouraging mixed uses, and building partnerships with the National Park Service and area institutions of higher education.
Pittsfield	Housing Needs Analysis & Development Recommendations -- Westside and Morningside Neighborhoods: Assessment of housing needs in two neighborhoods adjacent to downtown and an action plan addressing those needs, including assembling blighted vacant property for future development, housing rehabilitation and open space development.
Revere	Shirley Avenue Gateway Initiative: Strategic plan to improve many "quality of life" features, including streets, sidewalks, parks, and other open space; to address housing conditions, especially for renters; and to enhance the commercial vitality of area.
Salem	Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Revitalization Plan: Vision plan identifying preferred strategies to stabilize and revitalize mixed-use neighborhood.
Springfield	South End Urban Renewal Plan Amendment #8: Proposed amendment to existing urban renewal plan to allow for expansion and redevelopment of Emerson Wight Park, including land use changes, permitting requirements and relocation plan.
Taunton	Downtown Taunton Development Study: Downtown development study, including the redevelopment feasibility of three key historic sites for mixed-use development, including affordable housing.
Westfield	Re-thinking Downtown Westfield: Comprehensive Downtown Housing and Economic Development Action Plan: Revitalization plan that prioritizes strategies and actions, including expanding housing opportunities and creating a mixed-use downtown.
Worcester	The Beacon/Federal Neighborhood Revitalization Plan and Project: Market analysis of existing housing and building stock and potential housing opportunities; recommendations to create a sustainable, mixed-use, walkable, and safe destination for business and living.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing: Integral To Neighborhood Fabric And Identity

The plans identify housing as integral to the future viability of the neighborhood or downtown, and generally, the cities seek to retain a diverse housing supply. Recommendations include:

- ◆ Expand and improve code enforcement
- ◆ Support the repair/rehabilitation/restoration of older housing stock
- ◆ Create and maintain affordable rentals, perhaps through reuse of underutilized industrial and institutional structures
- ◆ Promote neighborhood stabilization by encouraging owner-occupancy of small multi-unit buildings and single-family homes through homebuyer counseling, affordability criteria, and specific mortgage products to support ownership and restoration
- ◆ Respond to foreclosed properties (often cited was eligibility for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered by DHCD, MassHousing and MHP.)
- ◆ Demolish structures considered too damaged for rehabilitation
- ◆ Add more market-rate housing options to establish mixed-income neighborhoods



Fitchburg: Retain and Improve Neighborhood's Diverse Housing Supply

Fitchburg's Elm Street Neighborhood Revitalization Plan includes recommendations that address neighborhood housing concerns, including foreclosure, abandonment and blight. The Plan identifies four housing goals:

- ◆ Increase home ownership
- ◆ Improve or eliminate blighted and unsafe properties
- ◆ Improve government responsiveness to problems
- ◆ Improve landlord & tenant capacity, communication and accountability

The planning team evaluated more than 65 properties (30% of neighborhood's residential properties) and grouped properties of interest into three different categories for their redevelopment potential: single and two-family properties for homeownership; three-family or larger properties for rental; and properties in the worst physical condition for demolition or placement in receivership.

Infrastructure Improvements: Create “Livable” Neighborhoods

The plans reveal residents’ ongoing concerns with the appearance and condition of their neighborhoods, emphasizing to a significant degree the need for basic physical improvements to make these areas safer and more attractive. Among the most commonly cited improvements needed are:

- ◆ Sidewalks — repair, widening, building, improving features for the disabled
- ◆ Streetscapes — trees and plantings
- ◆ Signage
- ◆ Street lights
- ◆ Parking
- ◆ Traffic management/circulation
- ◆ Pedestrian circulation, including intersections and crosswalks



Leominster: Infrastructure Improvements Key to Neighborhood Revitalization

Leominster’s Comb & Carriage/French Hill Gateway Plus Action Plan recommends infrastructure improvements to stimulate neighborhood revitalization, including:

- ◆ Repair, replace or install sidewalks, curbs and crosswalks throughout the neighborhood
- ◆ Create pocket parks, landscaped areas and reconfigured intersections to enhance the gateway to the neighborhood from downtown
- ◆ Implement a Monoosnoc Brook Greenway Acton Plan to install new pathways, including pedestrian bridges, enhanced entrances and new signage

Parks/Open Space: Benefits Of Beautification and Public Space

The need for trees, parks and other open spaces are among the recommendations to restore neighborhoods, draw in new residents and visitors, and establish more “civic pride.” Recommendations for improvements include:

- ◆ Expand/redesign/renovate existing parks
- ◆ Build new parks
- ◆ Create public plazas or “gathering spaces”
- ◆ Start community gardens
- ◆ Plant trees and do landscaping

Commercial Activity: More Stable, Attractive, Cohesive Commercial Areas

Most of the target neighborhoods have commercial activities that the residents seek to maintain; most contained small businesses, some in need of storefront façade improvements and/or beautification. Many of the downtowns also serve as regional arts and entertainment venues. Those cities focusing on their downtowns recognize the need to attract “niche” businesses, respond to daily users of downtown, including businesses and residents, and “brand” downtown to draw residents from the region. Another recommendation is to develop strategic marketing plans for commercial districts to encourage more business patronage and attract new commercial development.

Some cities note the need to relocate certain businesses from commercial/residential areas, mostly warehouse or industrial uses, to support more compatible development/redevelopment in target neighborhoods.

Job Creation/Retention: Recognizing The Needs Of Low-Income Populations

Current economic conditions greatly inhibit the potential for job growth in these Gateway Plus Cities. However, the need for job training, including Adult Basic Education and English language training, and entrepreneurial training is a particular need among the newcomer/immigrant populations in many of these cities. Several cities place a high priority on creating satellite campuses of public colleges downtown to provide the rungs of “the opportunity ladder” for their lower-income and newcomer/immigrant populations.



Zoning/Land Use: Denser Development, Well Planned To Complement Neighborhood

Some of the plans recommend changes to zoning and land use as an initial step in attracting desired development/redevelopment. Recommendations include:

- ◆ Adoption of design guidelines
- ◆ Creation of 40R districts
- ◆ Revision of zoning to concentrate commercial development along specific corridors/areas
- ◆ Allowing in-fill and mixed-use development

Adopting zoning responsive to neighborhood vision is one step that cities may take to attract the development/redevelopment that would add to the vibrancy of the area, while maintaining those neighborhood characteristics seen as most beneficial.

Holyoke: “Purpose” Nodes in Downtown Planning and Revitalization

The Holyoke Downtown Revitalization Plan examines development/redevelopment options for four nodes that would make specific contributions to a revitalized urban center:

- ◆ **Municipal Node** — anchored by City Hall and planned expansion of an adjacent park, could serve as the civic space of the City and a venue for cultural events
- ◆ **Learning Node** — location of the City’s library, a public school and planned park
- ◆ **TOD Node** — potential for mixed-use development in area of anticipated passenger rail; allow for higher density housing use and connection to downtown via Dwight Street
- ◆ **Cabot and Main Street Node** — “activate the street” with mixed-use development compatible with the neighborhood; enhance the connections of this area to the South Holyoke neighborhood

Service Needs: Plan Can Guide City’s Response To Neighborhood Service Needs

As noted in the above discussion on job creation/retention, service needs in these areas are high, often due to lower incomes and presence of newcomer/immigrant populations. Accessing needed services may be difficult for those with limited English-speaking ability. They may also lack information about the types of services available.

Recommendations include:

- ◆ Creation/expansion of programs and activities serving youth
- ◆ Increased police presence
- ◆ Improved communication on the roles and responsibilities of landlords and tenants
- ◆ Improve city’s understanding of neighborhood needs
- ◆ Improved dissemination of information about, and access to, city services

There is a role for nonprofits serving these areas to expand their presence, perhaps beyond the neighborhoods or cities where they currently work. In addition, those city departments and agencies offering services need to be made aware of the needs of residents in these areas. These cities are strapped in terms of staff and resources to devote to such efforts, and may need to reach out to area employers and institutions to coordinate responses to such service demands.

Resource Use: Cities Can Use The Plans’ Guidance To Allocate Grant Resources

Many of the Gateway Plus Cities already have access to resources that could be devoted to some of the priorities for improvement described in their plans. Among the resources are:

- ◆ Community Development Block Grant Funds (federal): housing rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, park development, brownfields remediation, social services
- ◆ Neighborhood Stabilization Program (federal): response to abandonment, disrepair caused by foreclosure
- ◆ Low Income Tax Credits and HOME (federal): competitive grants for federal housing subsidy funds to support redevelopment/reuse of properties for affordable housing
- ◆ MassHousing (state): construction financing, first-time homebuyer mortgage products, and loans for deleading.
- ◆ Massachusetts Housing Partnership (state): financing packages to encourage affordable rental development

Some Gateway Plus Cities recently received state funding from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) for park and trail development from the Gateway City Parks Program. Other eligible cities should

consider applying for funds in future grant rounds, since most of the cities identify improved open space as a vital element of their neighborhood improvement efforts.

Haverhill: Useful Insights for Determining Resource Allocation

Planning for Haverhill's Lower Acre Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy began with the formation of a steering committee comprised of neighborhood stakeholders, including organizations serving the neighborhood, e.g., the YMCA, social service providers and faith-based organizations. One member, the Haverhill Community Violence Prevention Coalition (HCVPC), used the services of a group of their students (living in the neighborhood) from a summer youth work program to collect "on the ground" observations of area conditions, engaging residents in discussions about the neighborhood and providing information about the Gateway Plus planning process. Students produced a "Housing Conditions Survey" and "Parks Condition Survey" that provide useful data for the City to use when determining what resources can be brought to the neighborhood to respond to the needs identified.

Build/Expand Partnerships With State Entities: Coordination And Complementary Actions Can Bring New Vitality To These Cities

Several cities are already working with various state agencies/authorities on projects that could be major lynchpins to revitalization in or near their target neighborhoods. Others are seeking new or stronger state agency/authority partners to move forward on other actions identified as high priorities in their plans. Examples include:

- ◆ Chelsea — Everett Avenue Urban Renewal Plan (DHCD)
- ◆ Holyoke — historic tax credits (Massachusetts Historical Commission)
- ◆ New Bedford — campus for Bristol Community College (in college's capital plan)
- ◆ Springfield — South End Urban Renewal Plan (DHCD)
- ◆ Taunton — campuses for Bristol Community College and Bridgewater State College
- ◆ Taunton — historic tax credits (Massachusetts Historical Commission)

Salem: Connecting Bridge Street Plan To Other Projects and Plans

Salem has a unique opportunity to link its new Bridge Street Revitalization Plan to projects being undertaken by the MA Department of Transportation (MassDOT). DOT will build a waterfront park in the area to complement an existing bike trail, as well as examine road and sidewalk conditions and road design/traffic management issues. By sharing this plan with MassDOT, Salem can bring neighborhood preferences and priorities to the forefront of the state's own planning effort. Another possible link to MassDOT will be the City's examination of the potential for a 40R housing district on Bridge Street. Given that a busy commuter rail station is at the southern end of the street, the project could attract residents in need of nearby reliable transportation, while enjoying the access to recreation and the waterfront that the new park will provide. A possible spin-off benefit would be the creation of an established customer base for Bridge Street commercial businesses, allowing them to grow by providing neighborhood-oriented services.

Civic Engagement: Meaningful Engagement Of Stakeholders In The Planning Process

Making civic engagement a requirement of the grant, providing funds for outreach and organizing activities, overseeing implementation of civic engagement efforts (e.g., DHCD staff approval of consultant work plans and staff attendance at community meetings), and espousing it as a value resulted in participation of new populations/stakeholders, new venues for participation (e.g., picnics, tours and site visits), and new channels for communication between the cities and their neighborhood stakeholders. The final plans emerged from a variety of neighborhood engagement efforts.

A wide range of outreach techniques to inform stakeholders of the planning process and to solicit their input were used. A few of the cities also engaged public school students, groups of at-risk youth and university/college students to do outreach, provide translation services and collect data. Other outreach techniques included:

- ◆ Advisory committees
- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Web-sites and blogs
- ◆ One-to-one stakeholder interviews
- ◆ Stakeholder focus groups
- ◆ Visioning and design workshops
- ◆ Public meetings at different times of the day and on weekends
- ◆ Coordination with churches, social service agencies, local organizations/clubs
- ◆ Media coverage

Neighborhood meetings facilitated communication between cities and stakeholders. Staffs from the cities were very surprised to learn from residents and other stakeholders that the cities' knowledge of target neighborhoods was frequently incomplete and their assumptions about needs and appropriate city actions were sometimes incorrect. The meetings provided an opportunity for the cities to explain their actions and proposals. Stakeholders were surprised to learn from city staffs about the availability of existing resources to address some of their concerns (e.g., CDBG funding for housing rehabilitation and commercial sign and façade improvements). With stakeholder input providing valuable assessments of conditions, needs and preferences, the final plans were more responsive to the neighborhoods' perspectives.



Newcomer/Immigrant Populations

Newcomer/immigrant populations live and work in these Gateway Plus City neighborhoods. They bring an entrepreneurial spirit to these cities, starting small businesses and providing jobs for neighborhood residents. Many arrive with advanced degrees and professional experience. Their efforts, as well as their enthusiasm, ideas and perspectives, create a new foundation for economic and community development and contribute to neighborhood vitality. (See MA Office of Refugees and Immigrants report, *New Americans Agenda*, for additional information.)

In many cities newcomer/immigrant populations became actively involved in Gateway Plus Action Grant planning activities. These populations were often more engaged than longer-term residents who appeared to suffer from "planning fatigue." However, some cities appeared less equipped than others to engage newcomer/immigrant populations in the planning process due to linguistic and cultural barriers, as well as the lack of existing connections/relationships.

Chicopee: A Partnership Emerges From Civic Engagement Process

Chicopee's focused on downtown as its target neighborhood. The President of the Chicopee Savings Bank, located in downtown, served as chairman of the grant's planning group and hosted monthly meetings to facilitate the creation of the Downtown Revitalization Plan. The planning group included city officials, business owners, educational and nonprofit representatives, and residents. As the findings began to point to the need for rehabilitation of housing units in the downtown area, the bank stepped forward to provide a "jump start" to the revitalization process with a mortgage/rehabilitation product for area residents. To realize the ongoing value of the civic engagement effort, the President agreed to host monthly meetings at the bank with stakeholders to monitor the implementation of the downtown plan.

Community development corporations (CDC) and other community-based organizations played significant roles in outreach to stakeholder populations in cities/neighborhoods where they are already active. They were also partners in the planning process. It appeared more difficult to foster and/or sustain stakeholder participation in those neighborhoods without active CDCs or other community-based organizations.

Some cities did not fully engage potential institutional partners beyond individual stakeholder interviews. Consequently, these potential partners did not participate in neighborhood meetings or in discussions with residents or other neighborhood stakeholders. Cities that more actively engaged these partners may find more opportunities to leverage additional resources to assist with plan implementation.

Recommendations to foster/strengthen civic engagement include:

- ◆ Encourage creation of neighborhood organizations where they currently don't exist or are not currently active (NOTE: Establishing neighborhood organizations to both advocate for area needs and encourage protection/enhancement of neighborhood assets, was an almost universal recommendation.)
- ◆ Continue to expand outreach efforts of existing CDCs and other community-based organizations
- ◆ Invite successful CDCs and other community-based organizations from nearby cities to work in the target neighborhoods on efforts where they may have expertise (e.g., subsidized housing development)
- ◆ Support establishment of business owner associations
- ◆ Coordinate with the MA Office of Refugees and Immigrants, Voluntary Agencies and/or Mutual Assistance Associations to assist with outreach to newcomer/immigrant populations.

HỌP MẶT KHU VỰC BEACON/ FEDERAL

Thời gian và địa điểm:

Ngày: Thứ Hai, Ngày 18 Tháng 5, 2009

Giờ: 5:00 – 7:00 Chiều

Địa điểm:
Radley Apartments
667 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01610
Parking in Rear

Để biết thêm chi tiết xin liên hệ:
Rebecca Dezan
City of Worcester
Division of Neighborhoods and Housing
44 Front Street, Suite 520
Worcester, MA 01603
(508) 799-1400 x 253
dezan@ci.worcester.ma.us
www.ci.worcester.ma.us

Kính thưa quý vị,

Khu phố của quý vị quan trọng như thế nào với quý vị? Có điều gì quý vị muốn thay đổi? – hoặc hi vọng không bao giờ thay đổi? Kính mời quý vị tới dự buổi họp ngày 20 tháng 5 để:

- Tìm hiểu xem chúng tôi biết gì về khu vực của cộng đồng, và để
- Cho chúng tôi biết nên làm gì

Chương trình nghiên cứu về khu phố Beacon/ Federal được điều hành bởi Chi nhánh Khu Phố và Gia cư xem xét các nhà ở, cơ sở hạ tầng và các phương thức để khuyến khích đầu tư tư nhân. Chương trình được tài trợ bởi Bộ Gia Cư và Phát Triển Cộng Đồng.



Map legend:
■ All-Aptown Plaza
■ Beacon
■ Federal
■ Radley

Taunton: Plan Spotlights New Potential For Downtown Buildings

The Downtown Taunton Redevelopment Study looks at ways to bring new life and energy into the City's core and includes a downtown property database, a housing needs analysis, and a parking and pedestrian analysis. In addition, three historic landmark sites on Main Street were studied for their redevelopment potential as mixed-use spaces, including the Union Block, an example of early Victorian Italianate architecture and one of the most impressive commercial buildings along Main Street. During the study process, two owners of adjacent properties comprising the Union Block decided to work together in collaboration with the Neighborhood Corporation, a CDC, and the Heart of Taunton, a downtown business organization, to form a Union Block Project Development Team for the redevelopment of this property. Reuse of the upper floors and the integration of previously separated sections of the structure could provide options for mixed-income housing with commercial space on the lower floor.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN THE EFFORT

Completion of the Gateway Plus Action Grant planning process provided the 18 participating cities with new strategies to revitalize and rebuild target neighborhoods. Vibrant neighborhoods are characterized by decent and affordable housing; sound infrastructure; safe walkable streets; green/recreation spaces; viable commercial activity; and a shared sense of place. DHCD recognizes that well-conceived revitalization goals require sustained efforts by cities to realize their visions and to move from planning to implementation.

The collage features several posters and flyers related to urban planning and community visioning:

- Lower Acre Community Meeting:** A flyer for a meeting on August 11 at 6:00 pm at the Haverhill YMCA, 81 Winter Street. It lists topics like "Planning Conditions and Permitting Facilitation" and "Reducing Heating Costs".
- City Seal "Creating a Vision for Holyoke's Urban Core":** A poster with a city seal and a map of Holyoke, discussing a comprehensive planning study for the city's urban core.
- SOUTH END REVITALIZATION COALITION MEETING:** A flyer for a meeting on August 13, 2009, at the South End Community Center, 100 South Street, Taunton.
- COMMUNITY VISIONING MEETING #2:** A flyer for a meeting on June 25, 2009, at the Holyoke Community Center, 100 South Street, Holyoke.
- REUNIÓN DE VECINOS:** A flyer for a meeting on August 27, 2009, at the Lawrence Senior Center, 155 Haverhill Street, Taunton.
- BE THINKING DOWNTOWN WESTFIELD:** A flyer for a vision opening event on April 16, 2009, at the Westfield Community Center, 110 Elm Street, Westfield.
- Downtown Taunton Development Study:** A flyer for a study presentation on Thursday, August 13, 2009, at the 44 Taunton Green, Taunton.
- Mt. Carmel Area Planning:** A flyer for a community meeting on June 18, 2009, at the Santa Center, 77 Lowell Street, Westover, MA.
- explore develop:** A flyer for a community planning event on April 21, 2009, at the 110 Elm Street, Westfield.

For Gateway Plus Cities

- ◆ Showcase plan recommendations to maintain public awareness/support and funder interest
- ◆ Use plan recommendations to reprioritize and reprogram funds to implement projects
- ◆ Improve disseminate of information about available resources and services to address immediate concerns
- ◆ Support creation of neighborhood associations and area business organizations
- ◆ Foster/strengthen partnerships to leverage additional resources

For DHCD

- ◆ Prioritize Gateway Plus Action Grant projects for implementation funding
- ◆ Coordinate state/quasi resources and funding
- ◆ Work with nongovernment partners to leverage additional resources and funding
- ◆ Develop incentives to support housing development in Gateway Plus Cities, including market rate housing
- ◆ Track city efforts to implement their revitalization plans

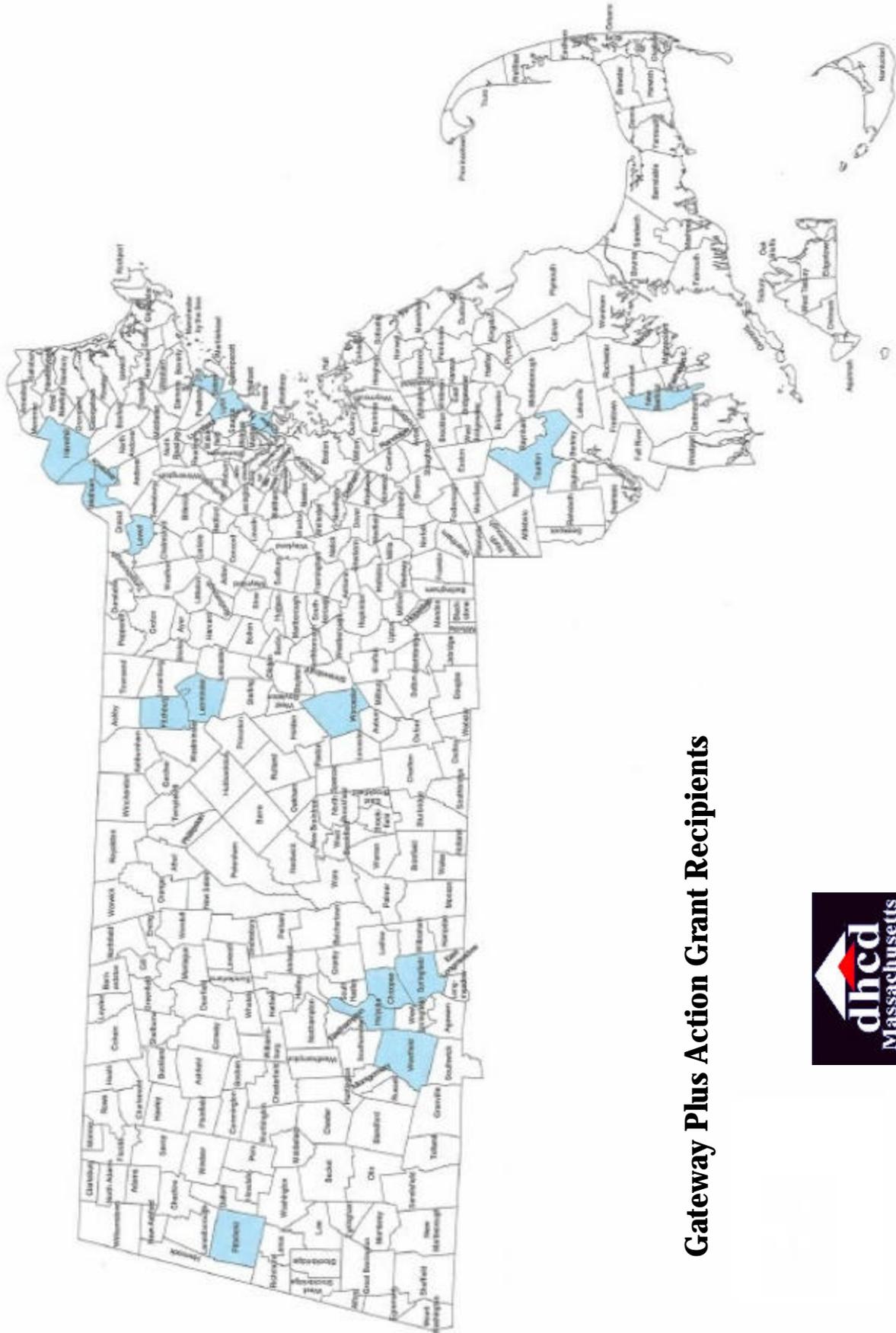
For Community Assistance Unit

- ◆ Provide ongoing technical assistance to implement plans and recommendations
- ◆ Coordinate government and nongovernment partners to make additional resources available
- ◆ Provide information and referral to cities and partners
- ◆ Share information about best practices



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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 Department of Housing and Community Development
 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
 (617) 573-1353
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Gateway Plus Action Grant Recipients

