



*City of Lawrence*  
*Community Development Department*  
*147 Haverhill Street*  
*Lawrence, Massachusetts 01840*

MICHAEL J. SULLIVAN  
MAYOR

JAMES BARNES  
DIRECTOR

TEL: (978) 620-3510  
FAX: (978) 683-4894  
[www.cityoflawrence.com](http://www.cityoflawrence.com)

**City of Lawrence, Massachusetts**  
**Substantial Amendment to Consolidated Plan 2008 Action Plan**  
**May 20, 2009**

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is providing the City of Lawrence with \$464,372 in supplemental Community Development Block Grant funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This funding is known as CDBG-R. HUD has determined that providing this funding through an amendment to an existing annual action plan will expedite the distribution of the funds.

This document is the City of Lawrence's proposed substantial amendment to the Year 4 (2008-2009) Action Plan. It has been prepared pursuant to the HUD Guidance published May 4, 2009. In order to expedite the distribution of grant funds under CDBG-R and to provide for expedited citizen participation HUD is providing an alternative citizen participation requirement. The alternative requirement provides for the posting of the city's plan for the use of these funds on the city web site with a 7-day citizen comment period. Copies of this amendment will also be available at the Public Library, the City Clerk's Office, and the Community Development Office. Citizens are invited to send their comments to James Barnes, Community Development Director, 147 Haverhill Street, Lawrence, MA or by email [jbarnes@cityoflawrence.com](mailto:jbarnes@cityoflawrence.com). The city will consider all comments received prior to May 30, 2009.

The Lawrence Community Development Department, in coordination with the Mayor's office, has identified the following projects for funding provided by CDBG-R under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

- Demolition of Truell Building - \$200,000
- Construction of off street parking on Essex Street - \$117,935
- Completion of Senior Center - \$100,000
- Ten Percent Administrative Cap - \$46,437

Each of these three hard development cost improvement projects is consistent with the Five-Year Consolidated Plan for the city fiscal years 2006-2010. Each addresses one or more purposes of the Recovery Act.

A summary of each of the three proposed projects follows.

**Truell Building Demolition** - The City of Lawrence intends to cause the demolition of the building located at 372-386 Essex Street, commonly known as the Truell Building. The building has been abandoned for many years and has been condemned as an unsafe structure. As such the building constitutes an impediment to the continued revitalization of the downtown area and a hazard to the health and welfare of the residents of the city, and particularly the adjacent property owners. The demolition is part of phase II of the Essex Street Redevelopment and will create new space for the continued expansion of new and existing business in this vital area. Phase One of the Essex Street Redevelopment began with the Year 3 Action Plan, and was substantially completed in Year 4. The demolition is expected to result in the creation of 6-10 temporary and construction related jobs and up to 30 permanent jobs resulting from the expected economic expansion. This site is particularly important to the redevelopment of this area because of its proximity to ongoing expansions occurring at Northern Essex Community College and other businesses in the area. It will also significantly improve the infrastructure of the city center and thereby promote increased economic efficiency.

The existing building is also an environmental hazard including asbestos constituting a threat to the residents of the City in general and particularly to abutting property owners and their employees and customers. The elimination of this hazard will prevent the potential release of asbestos and other contaminants. The City will be undertaking this project in partnership with the Lawrence Redevelopment Authority which will provide a portion of the funds for demolition. Further the City of Lawrence has applied to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for a grant to assist with the asbestos elimination.

**Essex Street Parking Expansion** - The City of Lawrence intends to construct new parking areas on city owned vacant lots located at 122-124 Essex Street and 158-160 Essex Street. The construction will include the grading and resurfacing of the lots with asphalt and appropriate planting of trees and shrubbery. With the opening of new service businesses relating to the anticipated opening of the new citizenship and immigration facility in this area accompanied by a significant increase in pedestrian and vehicular traffic there will be greatly increased congestion and a shortage of parking capacity. By construction of these new parking areas this congestion will be reduced thereby improving the economic infrastructure of the city and increasing economic efficiency. This expansion is in furtherance of the smart growth policies adopted by the city and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The use of these vacant lots for this vital service also eliminates blight in the area and improves the general appearance and efficiency of the retail district. It is expected that approximately 5 temporary and construction related jobs and up to 15 permanent jobs in the retail and service sector will be created as businesses in this Essex Street area continue to expand.

**Senior Center Expansion** - The City of Lawrence intends to continue the expansion of the Lawrence Senior Center located on Haverhill Street by constructing computer and job training rooms, and exercise and health maintenance facilities. The construction will

occur in vacant and unfinished space on the second floor of the Senior Center. The new facilities will provide opportunity for vital job training to seniors who have been particularly adversely impacted by the economic downturn. The health maintenance and exercise facilities will assist seniors in maintaining good health practices and help to replace services that have been reduced as a result of current economic conditions. With the new addition, the senior center will become more efficient and be better able to service an underserved segment of the population, seniors on fixed income. This project received a very high recommendation in the Community Development Advisory Board's reviews of Program Year Five funding, but there were not sufficient funds to undertake the project with the regular CDBG allocation. Plans and specifications have already been developed, and it is ready to go out for bid.

All three project sites are owned by the city, and planning is underway; therefore we expect to be able to meet the accelerated timing requirements for commitment of funds with these three projects.