

CITY OF LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Lawrence is located in Essex County and is 26 miles north of Boston. It is bordered on the north by the Town of Methuen, on the west and southwest by the Town of Andover, and on the east by the Town of North Andover. It is also 5 miles south of the State of New Hampshire. Incorporated as a city in 1853, Lawrence has a population of approximately 70,207 (1990 US Bureau of the Census) and occupies a land area of approximately 6.75 square miles. The cities of Lawrence and Haverhill are the population centers of a Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA) of approximately 230,000 persons. The city is governed by a mayor and nine-member City Council. The Mayor and all Council members are elected on a non-partisan basis. City Councilors are elected for two-year terms and the Mayor is elected for a four-year term. All executive officers are appointed.

HISTORY

In 1845, a group of Boston entrepreneurs led by Abbott Lawrence formed the Essex Company to harness the power of Bodwell's Falls on the Merrimack River in order to run their commercial concerns. The pace of development rapidly transformed Lawrence from a rural farming community into a major industrial center. Within three years, the Essex Company completed a dam, constructed two canals and a reservoir, organized gas works, erected fifty brick buildings, a boarding house, a machine shop for building locomotives and plants which housed the Atlantic Cotton, Pemberton, Upper Pacific and Duck Mills. In 1847, the Boston and Maine Railroad introduced passenger train service and in 1853, Lawrence was incorporated as a city. Lawrence quickly achieved prominence as one of the major centers of woolen textile development in the United States and some of the original mills remain evidencing the City's continued importance as a textile manufacturing center. In recent years, the City Council has sought to diversify its economic base by attracting industries which manufacture other commodities.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The City provides general governmental services for the territory within its limits, including police, fire protection, solid waste collection and disposal, public education, street maintenance, park and recreation facilities, elder services, veterans' services, water services and a library.

Wastewater treatment is provided by the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District, which serves the City, Andover, North Andover, Methuen and Salem, New Hampshire.

The principal services provided by Essex County are jails and houses of correction, registries of deeds and an agricultural school.

The City's public school facilities include three early childhood centers, eleven elementary/middle schools and three high school sites which have combined total capacity of approximately 13,000 students.

The City is a member of the Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical School District which also serves the towns of Andover, Methuen and North Andover. At this time there are 1,750 students enrolled in the school district, 1,480 of whom were residents of Lawrence. The capacity of the school is approximately 1600.

TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

The City is serviced by Interstate 495 and 93 that provide convenient access to all points in Massachusetts and northern New England. Commuter service to Boston is provided by both bus and commuter rail. Bus service within the City is provided by the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA.)

The airport is located in North Andover and is wholly owned and operated by the City of Lawrence. The airport has two runways: one is 3900 feet in length and the other is 5000 feet in length.