

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### Town of Greenfield

### FY2012 Mini-Entitlement Application

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This community development strategy was prepared by the Town of Greenfield, Department of Planning and Development, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for submitting its FY 2012 Mini-Entitlement CDBG application.

A community development strategy is not a plan in itself, but rather a summary of existing planning documents and initiatives, that serves to identify common issues, themes and action strategies, and provide a unifying vision.

#### ***Greenfield in Regional Context***

Greenfield is a town of approximately 18,100 people and is the largest community in Franklin County, the most rural county in Massachusetts. It is situated in the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts. Settled in 1686 and incorporated as a town in 1753, Greenfield's strategic location at the junction of the Connecticut and Green Rivers and at the head of navigation of the Connecticut River made it a natural crossroads. With the upcoming Multi-Modal Transit Center all bus services; local, regional and national; will be available from one central location. Four rail lines run north-south and east-west out of Greenfield and a general aviation facility is only 7 miles away in neighboring Montague. High speed communications access is available in town.

Greenfield has always been the economic and employment center of Franklin County, as well as the seat of county government (celebrating 200 years as County Seat in 2011). Early access to water power and transportation influenced the development of the machine tool and cutlery industries for which the town is famous. Today, the medical and knowledge sectors are the prime economic activities in the town. At the same time, it retains thousands of acres of prime agricultural land still in active use and is the gateway to vacation areas in the Berkshires and to Vermont and New Hampshire to the north. Greenfield is the lead community in numerous county wide initiatives that promote housing choice, economic expansion and natural resource protection. Its high quality of life and low real estate values, together with a skilled labor force, make it attractive to new residents and businesses seeking to expand.

#### ***Planning in Greenfield***

In 2002 the Town of Greenfield adopted a new charter establishing a city form of government with an elected mayor and council of 13 members.<sup>1</sup> The charter established the Department of Planning and Development as the city's chief planning agency, responsible for assessing community needs, preparing and implementing planning actions. The Department also provides staff support to the planning, zoning and conservation regulatory boards.

The purpose of planning is to assess alternative courses of action, gather relevant information, and identify options and their implications, in order to guide municipal actions. Following is a brief summary of key planning documents.

#### ***Key Planning Documents***

The Town of Greenfield is committed to an ongoing comprehensive public planning process that assesses community needs and guides community development. Five major planning documents form the basis for the town's development projects. They are: the Community Development Plan (2004); Greenfield Master Plan (1974, updated 2001); Bank Row Urban Renewal Plan (2006); Land Use/Growth Study (2000); and Open Space and Recreation Plan (2006).

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<sup>1</sup> Although Greenfield uses a city form of government, the voters prefer to call their community a town. Hence, Greenfield is officially known as "The City known as the Town of Greenfield."

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**Community Development Plan (2004).** The Town of Greenfield received funding pursuant to Executive Order 418 from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to research and prepare a Community Development Plan. The purpose of Executive Order 418 was to help communities plan to meet their housing, economic development, open space protection and transportation needs. Greenfield used this funding to research and formulate a Housing Plan, an Economic Development component, and a targeted transportation study of the Federal Street area just north of downtown Greenfield with the assistance of the consulting firm McGregor & Associates, P.C.

**Greenfield Master Plan (1974, policy standards updated in 2001).** This plan seeks to create a “vibrant and diversified” economic base that provides quality employment, offers a wide range of goods and services, creates a strong tax base, and fits within Greenfield’s desired use pattern. With the loss of much of the town’s manufacturing base over the last 35 years and the associated loss of employment, there is a renewed effort to retain and nurture existing local businesses as well as new businesses. The Master Plan sets as a priority the task of supporting general education and technical training leading to employment and retraining for people who have been displaced by plant closures. As this plan is over 35 years old and its current update is now 10 years old, the Town needs to create a new Master Plan. (This project will be included within the FY2012 Community Development Mini-Entitlement Grant Application).

**Bank Row Urban Renewal Plan (2006).** The Greenfield Redevelopment Authority contracted with Hayes Associates to prepare this urban renewal plan under MGL 121B for the purpose of developing a strategic action plan for the re-use of abandoned and distressed properties along Bank Row in the center of downtown. The plan evaluated the re-use of an auto dealership for a regional transit center, proposed the acquisition and renovation of 6 buildings and the construction of a new parking facility on municipal property. The total cost for these tasks is projected to be in excess of \$14.2 million, with the transit center costing an additional \$12.8 million. Under this plan, three of the buildings along Bank Row have been purchased and renovated by a private developer. These buildings now hold small businesses on the street level and market-rate apartments on the upper floors. The regional transit center began construction in the fall of 2010 and is estimated to be completed by December 2011. An initial report regarding the planned parking facility was received by the Town in July of 2010. The latest preliminary layout of the proposed parking facility was presented at a public meeting in August of 2011.

**Land Use/Growth Study (2000).** This brief study was prepared by LandUse Inc. It examines historic land use patterns in Greenfield and explores a cost/benefit analysis of various likely build-out scenarios for the town.

**Open Space and Recreation Plan (2006).** This plan guides the town’s decisions about how we use and invest in our parks, playgrounds, recreation and conservation areas. Equally as important, a current plan is required to apply for grant funds to maintain, upgrade and enhance our facilities. Without the plan, the town cannot apply for the grant funds. The most important part of the OSRP is the survey of the public. It is here that the residents and users tell the town what is important to them, what they value about Greenfield’s recreation facilities, where the town needs to invest funds, and how the town can make the public’s recreation experiences better. The Open Space Committee and the Recreation Committee have been meeting on a monthly basis to update this plan.

The town has also completed two “targeted neighborhood” planning initiatives:

**The Deerfield Street Corridor Neighborhood Planning Initiative (1995-2007).** The first neighborhood planning effort was targeted to the Deerfield Street Corridor, a largely residential area south of downtown that includes Deerfield, Washington, Meridian and Mill Streets, Carpenter Lane,

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Power Court and Power Square. A series of public meetings led to the development of an action plan for improvements and investment. In subsequent years, the town targeted CDBG funds, municipal revenues, highway improvements funds, EPA Brownfield clean up grants and loans to the neighborhood. Perhaps the most prominent project was the demolition and environmental clean-up of the former Greenfield Tap & Die (GTD) factory site. Late in 2005, the town entered into an agreement with a developer to construct a 75-bed assisted living facility on the site; the project (The Arbors) was completed in June 2007. Also, in 2005, the Town received an EPA Clean-up grant to deal with environmental issues at a site (former Food & Fuel) located on Deerfield Street. The site has been cleaned, monitored and is now a “green” space within this densely populated area.

**The Hillside Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (2007 – current).** In October 2007, using CDBG funds, Dodson Associates was selected to complete a “Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy” for the Hillside Neighborhood. This neighborhood is approximately 64 city blocks located adjacent to “Downtown” Greenfield and is home to approximately 6,155 residents living in late nineteenth and early twentieth century single and multifamily homes. This area also has some of the oldest water, sewer and drainage infrastructure within the Town. Over the past 4 years, this area has been the recipient of additional funding through the Town’s Community Development Block Grant Mini-Entitlement Program. With the use of CDBG funding, the Town refurbished the Hillside Park, located within this neighborhood, giving the park a new basketball court, updated playground equipment, renovated soft-ball field, additional trees, picnic tables and benches. During the current grant year, the Town plans to use CDBG funding to assist the Town’s DPW in replacing the sewer system located within this neighborhood. Housing Rehabilitation has also been a major project within this area for several years; and will continue for several more years.

**Downtown Master Plan (2002).** This comprehensive downtown redevelopment plan was prepared by a consortium of private firms under the general direction of the town’s Department of Planning and Development and Goody Clancy Consultants. The plan products include an in depth analysis of key redevelopment issues including: the potential regional economic market and how Greenfield downtown might capitalize on retail leakage; the potential for redeveloping vacant or partially vacant buildings, especially upper story space, including brief case studies of 8 sites; a detailed parking and transportation analysis with projections of need; and an evaluation of the physical infrastructure of downtown, with recommendations for improvements. The plan included a detailed, albeit unranked, list of action items, such as; the use of Geo-thermal, high-tech energy efficiency in Historical preservation, creating a Performing Arts Center, increasing residential density funding which should add new jobs locally.

The town also actively contributes to and participates in regional planning efforts. Chief among these is the **Greater Franklin County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2010**. The CEDS Program is a fundamental component of the greater Franklin County region’s economic development planning efforts. The CEDS Program examines the current economic situation and identifies important economic development goals and projects in the region. The CEDS Region encompasses the twenty-six towns of Franklin County, plus Amherst in Hampshire County, and Athol and Phillipston in Worcester County. The process is guided by the CEDS Committee and the Economic Development District (EDD) Governing Board. Seven goals have been identified to guide the work of the CEDS Program. These goals reflect the themes outlined in the CEDS Program vision statement and the promise of the existing and emerging clusters operating in the region. These goals address many important issues as they relate to the CEDS Program and to creating greater economic opportunity for the region. Infrastructure improvements, Brownfield redevelopment, economic initiatives to promote natural resources and enhancing public services are some of the topics addressed. To guide the activities and evaluation of the CEDS Program, an Action Plan has been created. Individual action items are evaluated on an annual basis. The entity

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responsible for completing the action item and the evaluation criteria are specifically identified for each action item. It is important to note that many of the tasks are multi-year in nature.

### *Common Themes*

With such diverse planning documents, it is important to identify common themes and elements that run through and provide a unifying framework for an overall plan of action. Some common themes we have identified are:

- Quality of life is a key to both the heritage and the future of Greenfield. Affordable housing opportunities, economic competitiveness for businesses (both locally-owned and nationally-based), strong educational opportunities, transportation improvements and cultural and recreational attractions are the strengths upon which Greenfield's future quality of life will depend.
- Concentrate development in the established neighborhoods and the business core to make better use of existing infrastructure and preserve undeveloped open space, farmlands and historic assets for future generations. Concentrating development capitalizes on the town's prior investment in its roads, sidewalks, and utility lines and controls costs for expansion and maintenance of new facilities. It conserves land, integrates uses and helps foster a sense of Greenfield as a "special" place.
- Maintain and enhance Greenfield's traditional position as the economic, employment and transportation center of Franklin County. Greenfield has a traditional and historic town center that provides local employment, educational, cultural, religious and recreational opportunities and has continued to have immense potential to be a vibrant hub of economic and cultural activity for Franklin County and beyond. Local businesses and in-town shopping areas must be supported. New growth in appropriate areas must be promoted. Preservation of the pedestrian-friendly urban fabric and the many diverse residential neighborhoods is important as is the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of existing roadways and infrastructure systems.
- Enhance Greenfield's position in Franklin County as the leader for sustainable design/clean and renewable energy. As the economic center and largest town of Franklin County, Greenfield has taken a prominent role in promoting sustainable design and renewable energy throughout the region that includes promoting "green buildings." Greenfield actively pursued and was awarded the designation as a "Green Community." Greenfield has entered into a purchase power agreement with AXIO Greenfield, LLC for development of a solar array on the Town's capped landfill. This is a 30 year agreement.
- Plan and implement in a regional context. Greenfield is part of a larger county-wide community. Greenfield is home to the County Jail, County Court House and several Federal, State and County offices. As the largest town and the economic engine of Franklin County, Greenfield should take a prominent role in devising regional solutions to common problems.

### *Guiding principles*

Greenfield has identified principles to guide its community development strategy based on these planning studies and within the framework of these common themes. They are:

- Practice infill development. Preserve valuable agricultural lands, forests and recreation areas, and historic assets by supporting development in targeted areas of town where the existing transportation and utility infrastructure can serve development, rather than develop in un-serviced areas.
- Reuse and invest in existing facilities and buildings for new purposes.

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- Incorporate environmentally-friendly techniques and materials wherever possible to lessen energy costs and dependency and preserve natural resources
- Use municipal funds, tax incentives and regulatory efforts to leverage grant funds and private investment.
- Support investment that enhances the tax base and hence tax revenues and retains or creates jobs especially in the medical and knowledge sectors as well as the “green” building and renewable energy sectors.
- Target municipal community development efforts to the neediest neighborhoods to achieve greater lasting impact and the most noticeable physical change.
- Support transportation alternatives such as biking, walking, rail, vans and busses.
- Promote “green” buildings, sustainable design and clean/renewable energy throughout town and throughout Franklin County.
- Develop Public-Private Partnerships.

### *The “Neighborhood First” Initiative*

Beginning in 2005, the Town launched a new initiative called “Neighborhoods First,” by which the town targets its public investment to strengthen its established neighborhoods. The town does this by investing in the existing infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, water, sewer and drainage utilities); neighborhood facilities (parks and playgrounds); and by using public funds, regulatory relief and incentives to leverage private investment in residential and commercial property (housing rehab, commercial façade improvements and upper story conversions). This initiative is Greenfield’s effort to encourage development and investment in existing neighborhoods, and complements the Sustainable Development Principles “Redevelop First,” and “Concentrate Development.”

### **In the past several years Greenfield has undertaken the following tasks or projects:**

- Obtained funding for 9 Façade Improvement Projects in the Downtown Area.
- Secured funding for 12 loans/grants for the “First-time Homebuyer Acquisition Program”
- Received funding to assist in the rehabilitation of 40 Private Housing Units.
- Continue to assist in the funding of Social Service Activities including (but not limited to):
  - Various Literacy Programs through The Literacy Project
  - Emergency Food Program through Community Action of the Franklin, Hampshire and Quabbin Regions
  - Dual Enrollment Program with Greenfield Community College and Greenfield High School for students having difficulty with traditional high school environments.
  - Emergency Housing Program through ServiceNet, Inc. Greenfield Family Inn which assists homeless families to secure and maintain permanent housing and employment.
  - Working with the Center for New Americans by providing education and support services for immigrants, refugees and migrants.
  - Through the Recovery Project, the Town helps to assist returning and current veterans and others with “lived experience”.
- Obtained DOER Technical Assistant Grant to facilitate Green Communities Act designation.
- Secured a funding path through the Massachusetts School Building Authority for renovations at the High School.
- Funded capital investment in other local school buildings.
- Hired a consultant to prepare a feasibility study for a new Municipal Office Complex.
- Secured funding for a feasibility study, design plan and construction of a Parking Garage located within the Bank Row Urban Renewal District.
- Obtained grant funding for a feasibility study for Municipal Electric Load Aggregation.

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- Used Town Capital funding to replace guardrails on Parkway, Barton Road, South Shelburne Road, James Street, Colrain Street and Country Club Road.
- Using Chapter 90 funding, the Town paved Abbott St., Brookside St., Carol Lane, Eliza St., Garfield St., Greenfield Rd., Holland Ave., Linden Ave., Water St. and sections of Federal St., Forgey Way, Log Plain Rd., Main St., Mill St., Shelburne Rd. and Thayer St.
- Chapter 90 funding and State Highway funds also allowed the Town to design and complete improvements to 8 signalized intersections.
- With funds from a DOER Energy Grant, the Town installed heat pumps in the Green River Pumping Station and the Oak Hill Filter Plant. This work will allow these buildings to be heated almost completely by extracting heat from the water in the system.
- Also using funds from the DOER Energy Grant, the Town has made modifications to the piping and plumbing at the Transfer Station and the Town Year. These modifications will allow us to minimally heat the Transfer Station.
- New boilers, hot water tank, controls and zone valves have been installed at the Water Pollution Control Plant as part of the work funded through the DOER Energy Grant.
- The Town completed the work need to stabilize a section of the Green River bank near the Green River Pump Station to prevent damage to clearwell for the pump station.
- With the assistance of the Vietnam Veterans of Massachusetts, Inc. the Town has created a Veterans Resource and Referral Center
- Using CDBG funding, the Town has hired the firm of Tighe & Bond to design the replacement of sewer lines along Columbus Avenue and Elm Street in the Hillside Neighborhood portion of Town.
- The Town's sewer line on Adams Road has been extended to a vacant lot in the Industrial Park which will enable the Greenfield Redevelopment Authority to market this lot.
- Using funds from the Town's "Water Enterprise Fund", the Town re-sanded the filter beds at the Water Filter Plant
- With the help of CDBG funds, the Town has hired Pennoni Associates, Inc. to provide Bid Ready Design Plans, Specifications and Cost Estimate for Replacement Sidewalks located with the Hillside Neighborhood.

A project list with potential funding sources is shown in the table beginning on the following pages.

Presented to the public at Public Hearings held on \_\_\_\_\_.

Greenfield Community Development Strategy  
List of Current Community Projects

<i>Category</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Anticipated Funding Sources</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
<u>Economic Development</u>					
ED	1	Town Owned Properties	Provide funding to clean up, market, and/or develop existing commercial, residential and industrial properties that are under-utilized	Town Funds, Proceeds from sales	Ongoing
ED	2	Economic Development Plan	Provide funding for a consultant to facilitate the development of a comprehensive Economic Development Plan	To Be Decided	2011
ED	3	Parking Garage	Provide funding for a design plan and construction of a Parking Garage on Olive Street to stimulate private redevelopment within the Bank Row Renewal Area. The Feasibility Study has been completed using 43D funding.	Design - CEDS/EDA; Construction EDA/USDA/Bonding	2009-2013
ED	4	Bank Row Urban Renewal District	Relocate infrastructure within the Bank Row Urban Renewal District	Town Funds	2012
ED	5	Greenfield Eco-Industrial Park	Develop former + 18 acre Bendix site as light industrial/flex space garden industrial park	Town Funds, MOBD, USDA, Mass Development, PWED & CDAG	2012
ED	6	Chapman Street Urban Renewal Plan	Create Chapman Street Urban Renewal District	To Be Decided	2012
ED	7	I-91 Industrial Park	Expand the Park to provide 'shovel ready', serviced, industrial zoned land for firms expanding or locating in Franklin County	CDAG, PWED, Mass Development, USDA	2011-2012
ED	8	Free Trade Zone/Greenfield Export Center	Provide funding for feasibility study	MOITI	2011

Public Works

PW	1	Solar Farm #1	Development of 2.0 MW photovoltaic facility on town's capped landfill. Will supply 45% of town facility electrical usage.	Private	Ongoing
PW	1	Solar Farm #2	Development of 2.0 MW photovoltaic facility on town's well fields.	Private	Ongoing
PW	2	Sewer Inflow/Infiltration	I/I Removal Program	Town Funds	Ongoing
PW	3	Davis St Tennis Courts	Reconstruction of courts to Tennis Assoc standards	Town Funds	Ongoing
PW	4	Vector Dumping Station	Construction of vector dumping station at WPC	Sewer Fund	late 2011

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<i>Category</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<u>Project</u> <u>Infrastructure</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Anticipated Funding</u> <u>Sources</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
INF	1	Columbus Avenue Sewer	Provide funding to replace sewer line in the Columbus Avenue Area	CDBG/Town Funds	2011-2012
INF	2	Broadband Infrastructure	Assist FCCOG and Western Mass Connect in establishing the "last mile" broadband connection to the I-91 "backbone"	MBI, Private Vendors	2010-2012
INF	3	Sidewalk Replacement	Replace sidewalks in various locations through out Town	Town Funds/CDBG	Ongoing
INF	4	Eunice Williams Covered Bridge	Design and Construction of new bridge due to Hurricane Irene	Town Funds/ FEMA/Chapter 90	2012-2013
<u>Town Wide</u>					
TW	1	Master Plan	Provide funding to procure the services of a consultant to prepare a new sustainable master plan that incorporates all recent planning elements	HUD/CDBG	2011-2012
TW	2	Multi-modal Transit Center	Assist in the construction of a multi-modal transit center in downtown Greenfield	Stimulus Funds	2010-2011
TW	3	Municipal Office Building	Convert existing Town Hall Annex Building into a 2 to 3 story Municipal Office Building	A & E - Town Funds USDA/Rural Development	2012-2013
TW	4	Municipal Power Company	Provide funding for a study to creat a Municipal Power Company to provide energy to not only municipal but also private buildings	Mass Technology Collaberative/Green Communities Grant	2011-2012
TW	5	Weatherization and Energy Efficiency	Provide information and resources to property owners to rehabilitate their buildings to become more energy efficient	HUD/CDBG/Federal Stimulus/Private Funds	Ongoing
TW	6	Housing Rehabilitation	Assist with the correction of code violations in existing housing by providing resources to low and moderate income residents	CDBG, Community Action!, Rural Development (USDA)	Ongoing
TW	7	Condemned Buildings	Provide funding for the demolition of Town owned buildings that have been condemned by the Board of Health	HUD/CDBG/Federal Stimulus/Private Funds	Ongoing
TW	8	Bike Trail	Continue development of the bike trail by lining the current section to downtown and other communities in Franklin County	Planning/Recreation Departments	Ongoing
TW	9	Passenger Rail Service	Seek restoration of Passenger Rail Service to Greenfield to increase transportation options for Franklin County	Transportation Bond Bill	2009-2016
TW	10	Zoning Code	Comprehensive re-write of the Town's Zoning Code - Will be done as the Implementation Section of the new Sustainable Master Plan	Planning Department	2012-2013

Greenfield Community Development Strategy  
List of Current Community Projects

<i>Category</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Anticipated Funding Sources</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
<u>Parks and Recreation</u>					
Rec	1	Beacon Field	Provide resources to renovate Beacon Field by installing playground equipment and walkways that are ADA compliant	CDBG Program Income/Town Funds/Resident Fund Raising	2011-2012
Rec/ED	2	Greenfield Geology park	Creation of a quarry walk through the Jurassic period & fossil museum	Private Funds/PARK grant/Tourism Funds	2011-Forward

Categories:

ED	Economic Development	TW	General - Townwide
PW	Public Works	Rec	Recreation/Open Space
INF	Infrastructure		