

Lawrence

population	gross area	population density	housing units	median age	settled/ incorporated
72,043	7.4 sq.mi.	10,351.4 ppsm	25,601	30	1655/1847

Information from 2000 U.S. Census data

history

Founded in 1845, Lawrence was among the first planned industrial communities in the United States. The city was the vision of the Essex Company, investors who created the largest dam in the world in order to harness the power of the Merrimack River for industry. The city was assembled from farmland belonging to Methuen (North Lawrence) and Andover (South Lawrence), and was named for **Abbott Lawrence**, ambassador to England and a member of the Essex Company.

Lawrence became second only to Boston for the output of textiles and manufactured goods, and the great wealth that was created left its legacy in the magnificent civic buildings, sprawling parks, and private mansions throughout the city. Lawrence's iconic **Ayer Clock Tower** is the second-largest of its kind in the world, second only to London's Big Ben.

today

Lawrence is being rediscovered as a riverside Victorian city, a compact, walkable city with distinctive architecture, neighborhood parks, and a burgeoning cultural base. A number of new restaurants, clubs and boutiques are opening along Essex Street, the city's historic downtown. Several mills have been converted into high-profile residential projects, including **Washington Mills** and **Monarch Lofts**. The city is also planning a pedestrian Riverwalk.

There is considerable shopping nearby, from Methuen's **Loop**, Salem's **Rockingham Mall**, and Andover's **Whole Foods** and boutique stores. Nearby movie theaters include the Showcase Cinemas in Lawrence, the AMC Loews at the Loop, and Chunky's Cinema Pub in Haverhill.

location

Lawrence is located along the Merrimack River in Essex County, about 28 miles north of Boston. It is bordered by Methuen to the north, Andover to the southwest, and North Andover to the southeast.

housing stock

The city is known for its distinctive colonial, Greek Revival, and Victorian buildings built during its boom years of the 19th century. The **Mt. Vernon**, **Prospect Hill**, and **Tower Hill** neighborhoods are among the most desirable in the city. The **Loring Park** neighborhood faces the South Common, and was built by industrialist William Wood for workers and managers of his Wood Mill, now Monarch Lofts. There are a number of farmhouses and early homes from before the town's incorporation in 1847. Lawrence's skyline is defined by the riverfront mills which are being converted into lofts and apartments.

famous residents

Leonard Bernstein • Susie Castillo (Miss USA 2003 and MTV VJ) • Ferdinand W. Demara, *The Great Imposter* • William E. Donovan (Major League Baseball player and manager) • Sully Erna (lead singer, Godsmack) • Robert Frost • Robert Goulet • Robbie Merrill (bassist, Godsmack) • Endicott Peabody, former Governor of Massachusetts (1963-1965) • Joe Perry (guitarist, Aerosmith) • Thelma Todd (actress, worked with Marx Brothers)

movies & books

As one of the original mill towns, the city has been the subject of much historical, economic, and social writing. Lawrence is featured in a number of books from William Cahn's *1912: The Bread and Roses Strike* to Jay Atkinson's *City in Amber*.

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transportation

Lawrence is circled by expressways: I-495 and I-93, as well as Routes 28 and 110. The city is also served by MBTA Commuter Rail service to Boston's North Station (Haverhill/Reading line), and MVRTA local bus options. The city of Lawrence owns the Lawrence Municipal Airport, located at the city's edge in North Andover, MA.

culture & amenities

Essex Art Center • Lawrence History Center • Lawrence Cultural Alliance

parks & recreation

Lawrence Heritage State Park • Den Rock Park (120 acres)

local news sources

The Eagle-Tribune (daily) • *Rumbo* (weekly, Spanish and English) • *Siglo 21* (weekly, Spanish) • *The Valley Patriot* (monthly)

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