



working cities
challenge

www.BostonFed.org/WorkingCities

Working Cities Challenge Background

- Intensive engagement in Springfield, MA national research to answer two questions: is resurgence possible after years of postindustrial decline, and if so, what does it take?
 - 10 of 25 cities deemed “resurgent”
 - Industry mix, demographic composition, & geographic position are NOT determining factors
 - Most important? Leadership & collaboration.
- Is it possible to support economic growth in these cities by supporting collaborative leadership?
- Working with cross-sector partnership of our own, and using Living Cities’ Integration Initiative as a guide, the Boston Fed developed the Working Cities Challenge

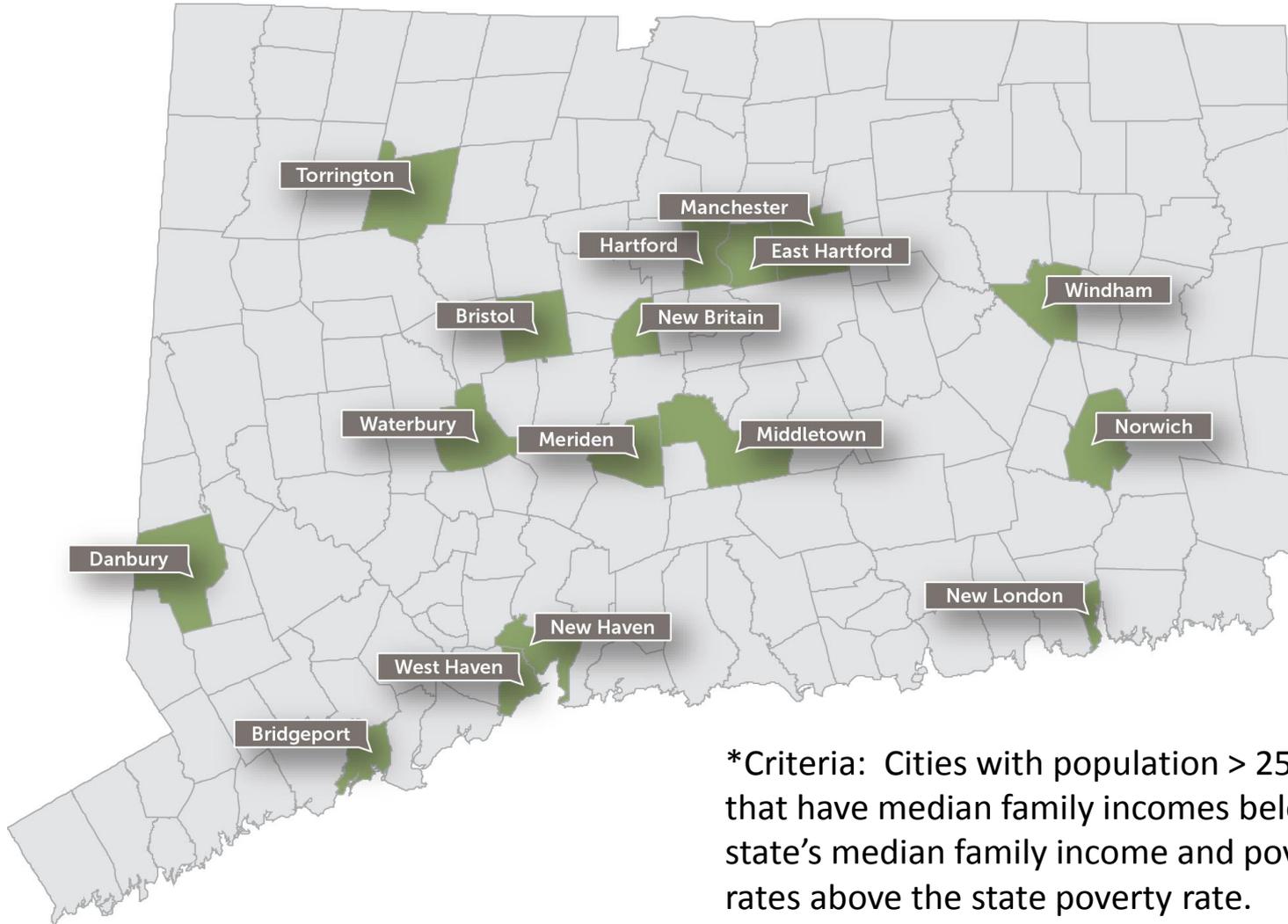
What is the Working Cities Challenge?



- A competition designed to help cities **build cross-sector collaboration and leadership to address a local economic growth challenge with the involvement of and benefit for low-income residents and communities of color**
- **Core elements:** leading collaboratively across sectors; engaging diverse community members; changing systems through changes to policies, procedures, resource flows, and decision-making; and using data for learning and to track progress toward a shared ten year goal
- **Led and staffed by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston** and supported by a Steering Committee of cross-sector leaders from Connecticut
- Funding partners represent the public, private, and philanthropic sectors. Funds do not come from the Boston Fed.
- Winners chosen by **independent, expert selection committee** based on public criteria. Fed not on selection committee

What does WCC look like for Connecticut? Application Process & Criteria; Eligible Cities

July 2016



*Criteria: Cities with population > 25,000 that have median family incomes below the state's median family income and poverty rates above the state poverty rate.

What does WCC look like for Connecticut?

Application Process & Criteria

- **Sixteen (16) eligible cities** based on size, income, poverty
- To apply, local leaders in a Working City must **put together a team of high level public, private and nonprofit and resident leaders representing the diversity of your community**
- **A lead applicant (or co-applicant) must be identified;** any entity or organization can lead. Need not be a municipality or local govt
- *Only **one** application per city will be accepted.*

What does this look like for Connecticut?

Application Process & Criteria

- Teams **select their own vision** and related 10-year result.
- Must focus on economic growth strategies for the benefit of low income residents and diverse residents
- Emphasis on **systems change**, rather than creating individual programs.
- **Two phases:**
 - (1) **Design grants** for 10-12 cities up to \$15k, six month planning period, including 3-4 convenings to learn more about model and four core elements of WCC. Design RFP released November 1, 2016; letters of intent by December 1, 2016; full design grants due January 31, 2017.
 - (2) Three year **implementation grants (4-6)** of \$300-\$500k with ongoing support. Applications fall 2017, selections in January 2018. Teams must win design grant to apply for multi-year grant.

Application Process & Criteria for CT

Winners are selected by an independent jury according to public selection criteria, including:

- **Collaborative leadership representative of your community**, including a broadly shared vision and a clear understanding of partner roles/responsibilities
- **Direct benefit to low-income people**, and diverse residents; potential for population-level impact in 5-10 years
- Authentic, inclusive **engagement of diverse community members as part of team**
- **Strong 'backbone' / lead organization with capacity to manage their team in the design phase**

Application Process & Criteria for CT

Winners are selected by an independent jury according to public selection criteria, including:

- **Use of data for learning**, to define problem, long-term goal, and measure progress
- Likelihood that team members will **participate fully, actively, and thoughtfully in the design phase**
- Possible to maximize available scoring to **multi-town applications; thoughtful community engagement and attention to racial equity; building on existing partnerships**

What does WCC look like for Connecticut?

Application Process & Criteria

Multi-town? Teams may partner with another eligible city or an entity (or entities) outside of their community to submit one application.

Option	Description
a. One eligible city team working with a partner(s) in nearby town	If a town's challenge is regional in nature, could work with an employer, college or other key entity in neighboring town for the benefit of residents in the <u>eligible</u> city. No additional cash award.
a. Two eligible city teams working together, both with cross-sector teams	One proposal for the benefit of low-income residents in two eligible cities (or more; need not be contiguous), involving public, private and non-profit sectors from both towns. Additional \$200,000 award.

Massachusetts Winning Cities – Round 1



1

Lawrence

10 year result

Increase parent income by **15 percent** in the Lawrence Public School system **over a 10 year period;**

Partners: Lawrence CommunityWorks, Lawrence Public Schools, City of Lawrence, Lawrence Partnership, Greater Lawrence Family Health, Merrimack Valley Career Center, Northern Essex Community College & more



2

Fitchburg

10 year result

Transform the **North of Main neighborhood** into a place where residents choose to live, work, and invest over the next 10 years.

Partners: Montachusettts Opportunity Council, City of Fitchburg, Fitchburg State University, NuVue Communities, Enterprise Bank, Fitchburg Public Schools & more

Massachusetts Winning Cities – Round 1



Holyoke

10 year result

Raise percentage of **Latino-owned businesses** from its current 9 percent to **25 percent in 10 years**;

Partners: Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce, City of Holyoke, Holyoke Innovation District, Nuestras Raices, Holyoke Community College and more



Chelsea

10 year result

Reduce crime and increase resident perceptions of community safety by 30% over 10 years in District 4.

Partners: The Neighborhood Developers, City of Chelsea, ROCA, Chelsea Police Department, Chelsea Schools, Chelsea Collaborative, Mass General Hospital and more

Review Lessons Learned from the First Round in MA, and Overview of the Four Core Elements of Working Cities

What We Learned About The Process

- Requirement of one application per city can be challenging, but can lead to new partnerships and spark creative ideas
- Successful teams had:
 - Positive, forward-thinking vision shared by cross-sector team, including input and involvement of residents
 - Long-term goals that were ambitious enough that no partner could achieve alone
 - A clear focus on low-income residents and communities of color
 - Entrepreneurial spirit and enthusiasm for learning
- Early wins important to catalyzing the work
- Hiring ‘initiative director’ key to guide the work – *required!*
- Leverage of WCC funding has helped teams start thinking about sustainability
- Design Phase allows time for teams to understand and implement Working Cities four core elements: collaborative leadership, community engagement, systems change, and measuring progress

Core element 1:

Using data for learning and decision-making

- Selection of the right 10 year goal is key. WCC staff will revisit this goal with teams frequently, so it should be selected carefully.
- Long-term goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound
- Familiarity with Results-based accountability (RBA) approach is helpful
- Evidence of progress can come from both quantitative and qualitative data
- Teams are encouraged to embrace data for learning, and to use data to revisit and revise strategies throughout the design process
- Engaging partners with expertise in data and measurement can help with progress-tracking and team's overall capacity
- Examples: Chelsea and Fitchburg, MA, dashboards, Lawrence network survey

Core element 2: Systems change

- Definition: enduring changes to policies, procedures, resource flows, and decision-making
- Shifting focus away from running programs and toward changing systems is challenging, but smaller cities have key advantages
- Working collaboratively across sectors is a systems change by itself for many cities
- This looks different in every city and initiative:
 - Holyoke: streamlining process for permitting a new business
 - Chelsea: heightening investment in safety, based on findings of WCC partnership
 - Fitchburg: engaging Fitchburg State as a high-level partner, new loan fund
 - Lawrence: schools adopting parent engagement model throughout district, CEO group committed to major employment effort

Core element 3: Cross-sector collaboration

- As teams go through the design process, new stakeholders and residents become involved
- Partnerships normally include a core leadership group supported by a broader partnership
- Defining roles for **Mayor/City Managers** is key. Possible roles include:
 - Be part of core leadership team
 - Help engage partners, convene discussions
 - Align effort with city priorities, policies, etc.
 - Engage city departments/systems

Core element 3: Cross-sector collaboration

- **Private sector** involvement important. Can strengthen strategies, data, accountability, networks
- As teams' initiatives evolve, they are increasingly able to articulate the role the private sector can play and work towards bringing more businesses to the table
- Potential Roles for private sector:
 - Part of core leadership team: help guide selection of focus, key decisions
 - Provide issue area expertise to team strategy once selected (such as workforce development, small business lending expansion, support for entrepreneurs, etc.)

Relationship of Working Cities to Existing Collaborative Efforts in a Community

- WCC is not meant to replace or compete with an existing collaborative effort in town, but rather to deepen and broaden this work (where it exists)
- A community that builds on existing community / resident engagement and collaborative work may lead to a stronger application and increase the likelihood of success for the overall initiative
- If there is another collaborative in town, the selection jury may ask how and why the team is partnering with them (or not)
- Note that not all collaborative efforts in your town may have involvement of residents, public, private and nonprofit sectors

Core element 4: Community Engagement

- Cities are encouraged to assess their current approach to engaging residents in a meaningful and sustained way, and consider what more needs to be done.
 - Having a partner on your team with experience and capacity to do sustained community engagement can be very helpful
- Design phase provides tools for helping understand and integrate community engagement in the design & implementation of initiatives.
- Consider how a team's process to define a local economic growth challenge benefits lower-income residents and diverse communities, including communities of color, and how residents are involved in implementing the solution

Core element 4: Community Engagement

Racial Equity

- It is important that city teams carefully consider racial equity as part of a broader public participation strategy and overall effort – MORE than engagement:
 - how and who is involved in selecting and defining the community's challenge to address
 - how to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower residents and diverse constituencies in a sustained, meaningful way over time
 - consider the impact (including unintended consequences) that a team's proposed solution has on diverse populations, communities of color and relevant systems
- It's understood that communities have different structures, capacity and readiness to address racial equity. The selection jury will be looking for commitment and plans for real engagement from a diverse group of residents and stakeholders.
- Note that the economic growth initiatives that communities take up need not be a challenge that is directly focused on improving racial equity.

What is the Design Phase?

Design Phase Overview

PURPOSE of DESIGN PHASE WORK SESSIONS:

- 3-4 work sessions over 4-6 months designed to provide teams with support for developing viable and competitive initiatives
- All session work will tie directly to Implementation Grant application requirements
- Allow time for teams to work independently on their initiatives at each session, under the guidance of team facilitator
- Support teams in developing a better understanding of **CORE ELEMENTS** of WCC and how to integrate all elements into team initiatives

Design Phase Overview

PURPOSE of DESIGN PHASE WORK SESSIONS:

- Provide guidance to understanding importance of race, equity and inclusion in all parts of the WCC agenda
- Present learning opportunities including content experts and practitioners from CT and beyond
- Note that the Boston Fed does not provide direct consulting or guidance to teams

Planning for Success

- Leaders are encouraged to review the Working Cities website
- Key starter questions to consider as you begin:
 - How will you identify and involve other public, private and nonprofit partners in your community interested in applying?
 - What is your plan for ensuring ongoing public participation that reflects the diversity of your town, including communities of color?
 - What process will you use for deciding your city's approach?
 - What economic growth goal makes the most sense for your community and its diverse residents, and how will you know?

How WCC Process May Add Value to Your City

- Lead new ways of ‘moving the needle’ on a local challenge and system change for the benefit of low-income residents
 - Dedicated staffing capacity on a high priority community issue
 - Coordination of efforts across multiple partners and sectors to address the issue
- Change how a city addresses a problem and who’s at the table
 - Boost meaningful grassroots engagement
- Access to best / promising practices in CT and beyond
- Introduce your community to national philanthropy and other capital
- Align local efforts with state policy, budget, programs
- Interact with the Federal Reserve

Connecticut WCC Timeline

- Cities learn about WCC [Sept/Oct 2016](#)
- Public launch event [October 4](#)
- Release Design Grant RFP [November 1](#)
- Letters of interest from community due by [December 1](#)
- Design Grant RFPs due – one per city - [January 31, 2017](#)
- Design awards announced [late March 2017](#) (10-12 communities, \$10-15,000)
- Design phase: 3-4 work and learning and planning sessions for community teams, [April - September, 2017](#)
- A final Implementation Grant RFP due [October 2017](#)
- Final winners (4-6) selected by [January 2018](#)

Questions?



CT Working Cities Launch Event, October 4, 2016