



## Office of the Mayor

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Town of GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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### CITY REPORT FOR THE TOWN OF GREENFIELD

WILLIAM MARTIN  
MAYOR

JANUARY 2011

Mr. President and Councilors, I thank you for the opportunity to present this report for the City known as the Town of Greenfield. It is with great pride that I can provide this information about the past year not only to this legislative body but to our residents and taxpayers. Before I elaborate on the Town's initiatives for stability and our efforts for progress, let me preface my comments with an observation that I feel is a critical element for our continued success. That crucial element is teamwork.

We appreciate the many examples of cooperation between the Town Council and the Town hall. Without this sharing of governance, our ability to confront the myriad of obstacles before us would be overwhelming as we attempt to deliver the services promised within the restricted revenue stream and mandates that exist. This idea of working together to reach our goals also goes beyond the Council and the Town Hall; it spreads to all internal departments, their leaders and to all of the municipal employees. It has been difficult, to be sure, but the necessary adjustments and modifications are being implemented.

Our initiatives for stability began more than 15 months ago. The guiding principles for decision-making are to create new revenue sources, monitor departmental spending, search for operational efficiencies, seek departmental missions, improve management of our assets, retain our business base and accommodate and facilitate economic development. We have had some success and we have some failures but we are determined. We aggressively pursue opportunities with the Federal and State for grants and programs and we are recognized for our efforts, innovation and resolve.

During last year's budget meetings, I used the term "new cash". I explained that the concept behind "new cash" was to advance our community goals by converting existing, underutilized assets and by redesigning liabilities to create new revenue for redistribution within the budget. The primary reason to develop new revenue sources is to replace the lost revenues from State aid without raising property taxes beyond the 2 ½ % levy limit. If we were successful, I had initially estimated **\$600,000** might be available for the 2012 budget.



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Let me offer some examples of this “new cash”.

- The **APR** voted by the Town Council for town-owned land will further our goals of community farming, sharing local produce, offer an agrarian educational opportunity and provide **\$198,000** to the Town. This team was led by Eric Twarog, Director of Planning & Development.
- The **Solar Farm**, one of the largest in New England, a contract approved by the Town Council with Axio Greenfield LLC, signed and witnessed by Governor Patrick, assured Greenfield a place in all “green” discussions. This project serves to advance our energy conservation and consumption goals. This team was led by Sandra Shields, Director of Public Works. Awaiting its final approval (due January 20) before seeking a local building permit, these 30 year agreements will save Greenfield more than **\$300,000** annually...funds that can be redistributed throughout the budget.
- Designation as a “**Green**” community, and the first in the State to apply and be so labeled, gave a public view to the early efforts of Greening Greenfield and the opportunity to stay ahead of the curve in community energy conservation efforts. Greenfield served as the state location for Secretary Bowles to announce the first group of qualified communities. The “green team” was led by Eric Twarog, Director of Planning & Development. Greenfield received **\$207,000** for its part in the Green Communities Act.
- Approval by the Town Council for the **Sale of Town-Owned Property** was scanned and reviewed for details, and after several attempts, sale contracts were negotiated. Currently, there is **\$194,000** sold or in the process of sale. Bob Pyers, our Economic Development Director, leads this asset-conversion team.
- Approval by The Town Council for updating **Parking** lots with digital kiosks will assist in decreasing office time for ticket follow-up and increase parking revenue by upwards of **\$200,000**. This revenue will allow us to maintain and improve vehicle lots and spaces without borrowing for paving and other improvements. This team is led by Bob Pyers and Larry Petrin, Senior Engineer, DPW.
- Approval by the Town Council for High School renovations, and now the **Green Repair Program**, has accelerated our conservation and municipal building repair. These multiple applications, coordinated with the School Department and School Committee, have the potential to save millions in borrowing and spending. This endeavor is led by several teams with Lane Kelly, our Finance Director, leading all major communications with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Both programs will encompass spending in the vicinity of \$40,000,000 with Greenfield qualifying for approximated **79%** reimbursement.

This plan for “new cash” will continue through 2012. We will always search for ways to manage more efficiently, spend more wisely and protect the jobs and homes of the community. But these decisions, always made in the best interests of the community, are many times controversial.

There is, and will be, a dichotomy of thought. Many decisions impact our employees and our neighborhoods. Oftentimes the dialogue of opposing ideas becomes harsh, even uncivil. I believe that all ideas on a subject need to be placed for public comment or departmental discussion and all speakers respected. As Mayor, however, there are restrictions placed on my involvement based in General Law and



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collective bargaining law. I need to adhere to these restrictions as we implement our ideas and initiatives but I also need to facilitate our community goals.

Some examples of the initiatives we have started to aid us in reaching our community and policy goals are as follows:

- The annex was closed to improve the work environment, reduce costs and decrease the governmental footprint
- The Bendix property was introduced to EPA and accepted for clean-up and this will prepare the parcel for development
- The Central Core Safety Task Force was formed to assist residents of the railway encampment for assistance to identify social service and housing options with remarkable cooperation between the Police Department, Pan Am Railways, social service agencies and the Greenfield Housing Authority
- The Mayor's Memo was produced with GCTV to provide information on Town actions for residents and respond to the need for an open and transparent government
- The Lunt property was optioned to explore the potential for development favorable to the needs of Greenfield
- The Community Development Block Grant was reconfigured to better focus on our community goals
- The gift of the Dakin property, with your approval, was solicited to increase the Town's holdings in that important geological area to over 60 acres
- The Inspections, Health and Licensing departments have been consolidated in the Town Hall to compliment the Customer Service area
- Legislation was approved to modify the lease at 14 Sanderson Street to allow all municipal uses
- Legislation was approved to allow the Mayor to hire Special Reserve Police Officers to assist the Department
- Central Maintenance was created, with your approval, to comply with the charter and better monitor energy consumption, decrease repair and maintenance costs, develop a comprehensive program to improve efficiency and extend the economic life of our buildings and equipment
- A Director of Finance was established, with your approval, to comply with the Charter
- Large capital investments in our schools, with your approval and the leadership of Superintendent Susan Hollins coupled with the guidance of our designated Procurement Officer Lane Kelly, led to an increase in enrollment and a decrease in students choosing another district
- Creation of a Veterans Resource & Referral Center to offer improved access and service to our Veterans and their families and also to research the potential to establish a County regional Veterans office
- Formation of the Greenfield Education Foundation to provide funds for an innovative and expanded curriculum. This team led by Robert Cohn exemplifies the community spirit and leadership dedicated to our educational goals. The community group of GHS graduates and leaders provided over \$50,000 in the first year to the Public School system.



The Town of Greenfield has been recognized by outside observers this past year for our actions and accomplishments. Our community and our government can be proud of these awards. Along with the “green” designation by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, we have been selected as a “Leading by Example” community, one of only four communities so recognized in the state. We have also been selected by the Barr Foundation for two-years of technical assistance by Serrafix, LLC, at no cost to us, for implementing municipal energy upgrades and conservation programs.

Lastly, let me say that we are fortunate to have so many skilled and experienced municipal employees to fulfill the wishes of the residents and the Council. We will continue to do our best to set a standard for community innovation, responsible budgets and to maintain our open and transparent Town government. We have several projects to complete and several new initiatives to pursue. I will keep the Council informed of the progress as the year passes.

I thank you for listening and I thank you for giving of your time for our community.



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