Lawrence History Timeline

1800-1840 → Boston merchants involved in international trade evolved into manufacturers through development of textile communities powered largely by water.

1830's ← *Daniel Saunders begins to purchase strips of land on either side of the Merrimack River from Dracut to what is now Lawrence in order to gain control of water power rights.*

1844 → Early Map of Lawrence Area

-Essex Company formed by Boston merchants
-Company Charter calls for building a dam and canals for manufacturing purposes.-
Abbot Lawrence invests most money to project. Company Hires , Charles Storrow as agent and chief engineer. ← **1845**

1845 → -Irish begin large influx to "new town on the Merrimack"
-First schools opened
-Population reaches 104

*-Lawrence incorporated as Town,. (Took 3 ½ sq. miles from Methuen and 2 ½ sq. miles from Andover.)
-Named after one or all members of the Lawrence family.* ← **1847**

1848 → Great Stone Dam completed

1849 → *High School begins.
-North Canal completed.
-First mills on-line.*

Population reaches 8,358 ← **1850**

1853 → *Lawrence chartered as City*

Small riot between Irish and native born. Part of the larger statewide sweep by the anti-immigrant "Know-nothing" party in 1855. ← **1854**

1857 → *National Financial Crash. Particularly bad in Lawrence because of embezzlement by Samuel Lawrence. Bay State Mills, Pemberton Mill, Lawrence Machine Shop all went bankrupt.*

Collapse and fire of Pemberton Mill,
-Kills 88, maiming hundreds, and depriving hundreds of families of income. International attention.
-Enflames debate between North and South on comparative working conditions of southern slaves and northern factory workers.
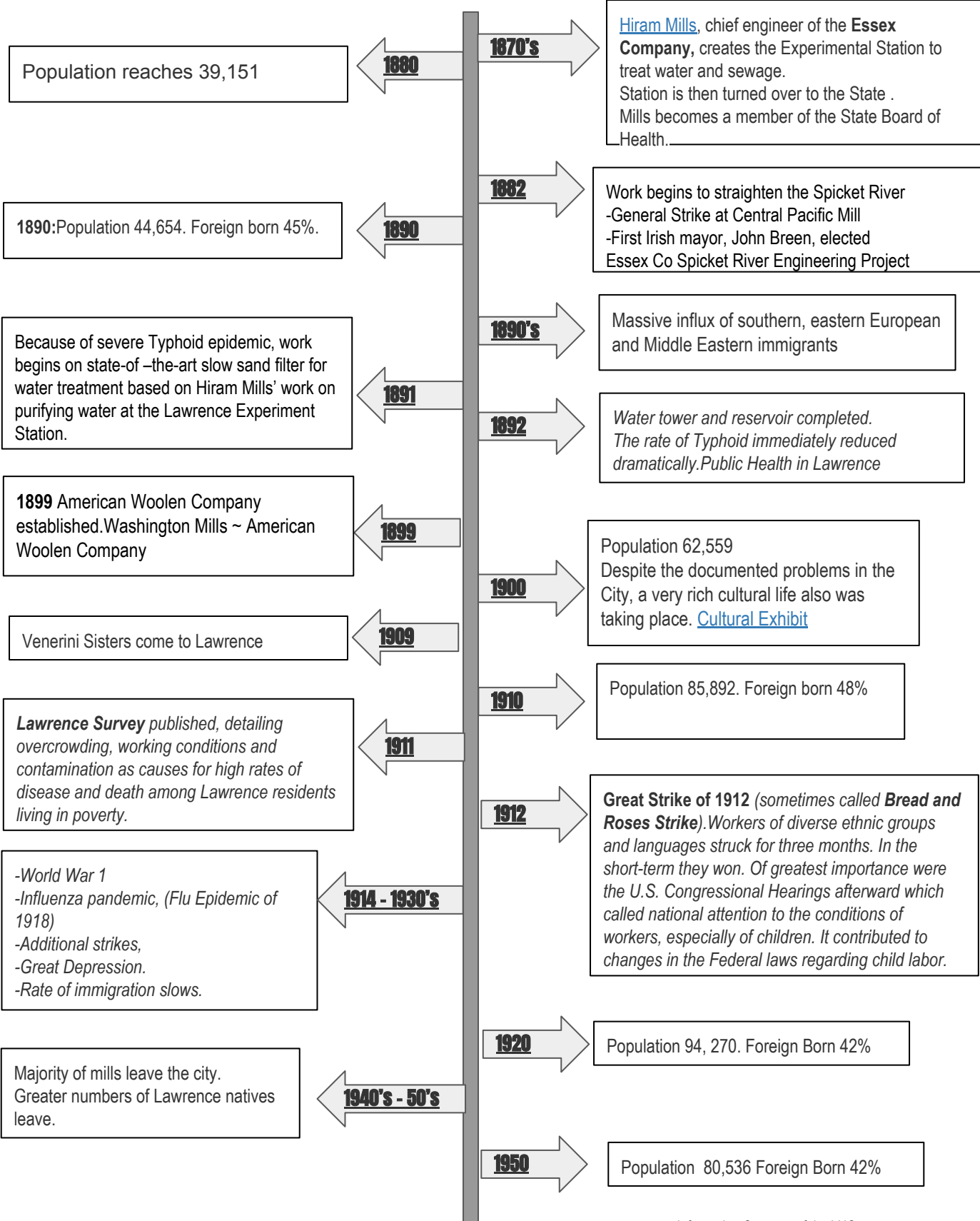-Population 17,639. Foreign born 42% ← **1860**

1861 → **1861-64:** *Civil War*
**Lawrence manages to get by.
-Lowell closed most of its factories to retrofit during War, putting 11,000 out of work.
-Lawrence manufacturers had stockpiled cotton.
-Also featured mills that processed woolen textiles.*

1860s: *German and French-Canadian populations grow* ← **1860's**

1870's → Population 28,921

← **1860**

- Lawrence History Timeline -

1870's → Hiram Mills, chief engineer of the **Essex Company,** creates the Experimental Station to treat water and sewage.
Station is then turned over to the State .
Mills becomes a member of the State Board of Health.

1880 ← Population reaches 39,151

1882 → Work begins to straighten the Spicket River
-General Strike at Central Pacific Mill
-First Irish mayor, John Breen, elected
Essex Co Spicket River Engineering Project

1890 ← 1890:Population 44,654. Foreign born 45%.

1890's → Massive influx of southern, eastern European and Middle Eastern immigrants

1891 ← Because of severe Typhoid epidemic, work begins on state-of –the-art slow sand filter for water treatment based on Hiram Mills' work on purifying water at the Lawrence Experiment Station.

1892 → *Water tower and reservoir completed.*
The rate of Typhoid immediately reduced dramatically.Public Health in Lawrence

1899 ← **1899** American Woolen Company established.Washington Mills ~ American Woolen Company

1900 → Population 62,559
Despite the documented problems in the City, a very rich cultural life also was taking place. Cultural Exhibit

1909 ← Venerini Sisters come to Lawrence

1910 → Population 85,892. Foreign born 48%

1911 ← *Lawrence Survey published, detailing overcrowding, working conditions and contamination as causes for high rates of disease and death among Lawrence residents living in poverty.*

1912 → **Great Strike of 1912** *(sometimes called **Bread and Roses Strike**).Workers of diverse ethnic groups and languages struck for three months. In the short-term they won. Of greatest importance were the U.S. Congressional Hearings afterward which called national attention to the conditions of workers, especially of children. It contributed to changes in the Federal laws regarding child labor.*

1914 - 1930's ← *-World War 1*
-Influenza pandemic, (Flu Epidemic of 1918)
-Additional strikes,
-Great Depression.
-Rate of immigration slows.

1920 → Population 94, 270. Foreign Born 42%

1940's - 50's ← Majority of mills leave the city.
Greater numbers of Lawrence natives leave.

1950 → Population 80,536 Foreign Born 42%

Information Courtesy of the LHC

- Lawrence History Timeline -

1950's

Latino Immigration begins.
After several decades of slower immigration, a new ethnic group (Latinos) began to arrive. **Puerto Ricans** first migrated to Lawrence, some to work in the farms and orchards in the region.

1960 Population 71,865

1950's- 1970's

Urban Renewal
Urban Renewal of this period results in demolition of whole neighborhoods. Results in more native families leaving.

1960's

Cuban *refugees come and* ***Dominican*** *immigrants begin to arrive.*

1970 Population 66,216

1970's

Refugees from **Southeast Asia** *and immigrants from* **Central America** *arrive*

1978

Immigrant City Archives is established under the leadership of German immigrant, **Eartha Dengler.**The Archives later changes the name to *Lawrence History Center~Immigrant City Archives.*

1980

1980 Population 63,175,-Lowest population since 1890s.*Reflects large number of earlier Lawrence families who leave.*

Lawrence Heritage State Park opens

1990 Population 85,892. Foreign born 48%

1990's

Neighborhood Associations increase and become more active, cleaning public areas, making efforts to beautify neighborhoods and setting up neighborhood watches to combat crime.Community development partnerships bring together residents of diverse backgrounds to undertake common projects.

2000 Population 72,043. Minority 61%.

2000's

Recent newcomer families increasingly buy Lawrence property and rehabilitate it for businesses and homes.
Expanded State Park area revitalizes Riverfront
Housing Styles in Lawrence
A zoning overlay permits multiple uses of mills to accommodate retail, artist studios, residences.
Increasingly, entrepreneurs buy and invest in mills in a variety of creative ways.

2008 The Lawrence History Center ~Immigrant City Archives celebrates its 30th Anniversary.

2009 Lawrence elects State Representative, William "Willy" Lantigua First Hispanic Mayor in City and in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Information Courtesy of the LHC