
Throughout 2014, progress within the District was both individual and collective, setting the stage while setting national standards. Advanced manufacturing training for those entering the workforce is helping chart a path forward, as established creative economy enterprises like PorterHouse Media continue to show that Holyoke innovation is trending.

The MGHPCC continues to anchor the District, driven by the research of leading educational institutions while hosting community-focused events such as Holyoke Codes, a program introducing youth to computer sciences.
The artisinal and handmade aesthetic driving many business trends has plenty of local traction. More and more maker spaces are opening in the District, representing significant private investment. A Working Cities Challenge prize awarded by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston established SPARK Holyoke, an entrepreneurship program, affirming the spirit of renewal and possibility.

Investment on many fronts is changing the face of the District. A $19M renovation of the buildings that will become the Chestnut Park Apartments has broken ground. Prominent District-based tech employer Veritech IT expanded operations, helping make 2014 a prosperous year.

2014 saw the $3.5M Phase II of the Canal Walk project break ground. This progress, along with the approval and implementation of the Commonwealth’s largest Urban Renewal Plan, is helping Holyoke to put its best foot forward.

Gateway City Arts hosted Hack for Western Mass, a collaboration undertaken as part of National Day of Civic Hacking, which unites technical proficiency with community activism (for example, developing an app to simplify inventory for a local food bank).
Holyoke innovation is as big as it ever was: the dam that defined its Industrial Revolution origins now represents green power central to the MGHPCC as well as providing stability for all types of District enterprises. Procuring grants to explore the expansion of carbon-free energy sources proves innovation is not slowing down.

Energy isn’t just megawatts — it’s what individuals and institutions within the District make happen every day. Initiatives like Girls Inc.’s participation in Google’s Made With Code project fuel positive change. Newly secured liquor licenses will help aspiring restauranteurs establish an exciting and accessible foothold in the Valley’s dining scene. The District’s energy runs deep.

Holyoke Community College is investing five million dollars to establish a culinary and hospitality learning center to be located within the District.

Girls Inc. continued its partnership with the College of Natural Sciences at UMass Amherst as one of twelve Eureka! programs nationwide.
AMBITIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Holyoke Innovation District 2014 Annual Report

MANUFACTURING

2014 Achievements
HCC/STCC launch a 250 credit hour advanced manufacturing training program at Chicopee Technical High School in Holyoke. The program trained 14 individuals and utilized the resources available at Chicopee Technical High School after school hours.

107 incumbent employees of advanced manufacturing companies in the region successfully completed a series of six 20-30 hour industry specific skills upgrading courses taught at Chicopee Technical High School.

Career awareness brochure featuring graduates from the Machine Tool Technology program at Chicopee Technical High School produced and distributed to middle school counselors and parents of 8th grade students.

“Made in Holyoke” videos begin production in partnership between Boys and Girls Club and Holyoke Chamber. Began a calendar of monthly manufacturing plant tours, completing four plant tours in late 2014. These tours will carry into 2015 and provide insight into challenges facing manufacturers in Holyoke and opportunities available.

2015 Ambitious
Align Mayor’s Industrial Development Advisory Committee with regional and state-wide strategic planning for growth of advanced manufacturing.

Recruit Holyoke residents into the manufacturing training programs offered in Holyoke and the region.

Align the “maker space” movement with the larger ambitions for manufacturing in Holyoke and the region, recognizing that the invention stage is a critical part of the industry continuum that spans “maker” to “major employer.”

2014 Highlights

Haas Paper awarded with seven awards at annual international trade organization event (Association of International Metallizers, Coaters and Laminators)

2014 By The Numbers
65 active manufacturing operations in Holyoke.

CLEAN ENERGY

2014 Accomplishments

Finalized the expedited Federal Energy Regulatory Commission permitting process; permitted and conducted a hydrokinetic demonstration at the Holyoke Canal with Pioneer Valley Renewables.

Executed a joint project agreement with Sparkplug Power and the contracts for two grants from MassCEC and American Public Power Association (combined totaling $259,000) for a residential energy storage demonstration project in 2015-2016 time frame.

Developed process for securing and privatizing data; coordinated with UMass Amherst for Big Data project on both residential thermal heat analysis and solar predictive tool development, funded through a $200,000 DOE grant.

2015 Ambitions

Complete battery procurement, testing and installation, and begin data collection for the residential energy storage demonstration project.

Develop a Smart Grid Integration Platform: Roadmap that will include installation of an Outage Management System; Meter Data Management System; and Advanced Metering Infrastructure for large commercial/industrial customers.

Complete a feasibility study for a new hydro generator on the First Level Canal System.

Complete a study on operational optimization of existing hydro resources based on physical characteristics and market pricing conditions.

Purchase power from two new solar projects in Holyoke: a 650 kW ground mounted installation and a 1 MW roof mounted installation.

2014 By The Numbers

50 Megawatts of installed hydropower capacity in Holyoke.

5.3 Megawatts of installed solar capacity by Holyoke Gas & Electric (HG&E).

18,500 Advanced Electric Meters installed in Holyoke.

13,500 Advanced Gas Meters that monitor real time energy usage installed in Holyoke.

94% of HG&E’s retail sales were carbon free.

68% of HG&E’s retail sales were from renewable resources.

INFRASTRUCTURE

2014 Accomplishments

19 million renovation/conversion begins at former Holyoke Catholic school, to become Chestnut Park Apartments located on Veteran’s Park.

Canalwalk Phase II breaks ground.

Environmental cleanup completed on two former mills sites, 193 and 216 Appleton Streets.

$250,000 in private funding secured for environmental assessment and partial cleanup of the former Parsons Paper mill site.

Holyoke selected as one of ten Gateway Cities by MassDevelopment as a ‘Transformative Development District’ community, affords special access to MassDevelopment resources.

Compiled four market and architectural assessment studies with MassDevelopment on properties located within the The District.

Secured 13 new liquor licenses for use at new restaurant establishments prepared to locate in the The District.

Gateway City Arts opens STEAM as a new 72,000 square foot mill space on Race Street ready to accept tenants.
2015 Ambitions
Complete Canawick Phase II and program the new space.
Specify and resource a TDI project with MassDevelopment and the Community Resource Team.
Open new food establishments based on the availability of new liquor licenses.
Open the Helyke Media Center in the District and connect its services to SPARK and the creative economy entrepreneurs.
Complete the first development agreements in the The District through the Helyke Redevelopment Authority.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP / LOCAL ECONOMY

2014 Accomplishments
Hired an Executive Director and established a community based Governance Committee for SPARK and began design of the program for launch in 2015.

Pioneer Valley Innovation Nights launched in Helyke and successfully hosted two events for over twenty small businesses.
Mares Marreno presented at the 2014 Illinois Innovation Conference, hosted by Breakings Institute, on innovation and entrepreneurship with a national panel.

2015 Ambitions
Roll out SPARK and offer community classes, partnerships, and a formal accelerator program to a first cohort of entrepreneurs.
Establish a storefront presence for SPARK that welcomes entrepreneurs.

DIGITAL/TECH ECONOMY

2014 Accomplishments
Cisco Academy was offered to students at Helyke Community College and launched at Dean Technical High School; 37 students enrolled with 7 completing certification.
Vertitech expanded its operations in Helyke and secured a large contract with Baystate Health Systems.
Hack for Western Mass was hosted by Gateway City Arts, nearly 200 participants focused on five community-based problems.

2015 Ambitions
Formalize a partnership between MGHPCO and the STCC/HCC TWO partnership to focus on increasing the availability and quality of IT training programs in our region.
Establish goals for Government 2.0 open data for municipal operations at Helyke City Hall.
Facilitate a shared behavioral health technology program with Sisters of Providence, Baystate Health, Behavioral Health Network and TechSpring in order to apply innovation to behavioral health monitoring and treatment.

CREATIVE ECONOMY

2014 Accomplishments
Began partnership with UMass Arts Extension to create opportunities for arts and entrepreneurship.
Completed an Innovation Design Week with Conway School of Design.
Permaculture festival successfully graduated another class of students, strengthening Helyke as a regional learning hub for permaculture.
Next Step: Helyke offered vendors and entertainment in Helyke, celebrating the forthcoming rail platform and the creative economy connecters it will facilitate.
Helyke Arts Barcarole series launched through the Helyke Creative Arts Center, allowing local creative entrepreneurs to sell their work in multiple forums, events, and retail settings.

2015 Ambitions
Reestablish Celebrate Helyke in the The District as a music, arts and culture in Helyke.
Support the establishment of the Gateway City Arts maker space for local inventors and entrepreneurs.
Reopen Helyke Creative Arts Center with an expanded selection of classes that cover all aspects of arts and entrepreneurship, partnered with SPARK.

Integrates Hampton County Sheriffs Department York Street Industries Program with the larger creative economy movement in Helyke by connecting them with opportunities for learning, collaborative workshops and retail opportunities.

2014 By The Numbers
- 3.5 million of public investment for Canawick project
- $6 million bond for parking deck construction and improvements
- $650,000 invested in broadband assessment and cleanup in the The District
- $19 million investment in the Chestnut Park Apartment revitalization project
- $5 million planned future investment by Helyke Community College in the new Culinary and Hospitality school

EDUCATION / TALENT DEVELOPMENT

2014 Accomplishments
Helyke Public Schools received 2014 Gateway Cities Innovation Award presented by Mass Inc. for innovation in Early Childhood Literacy programs.
Helyke Codex, a partnership between Girls Inc Helyke, MG-POC, CAITE, and NERVIS, completed a week of coding: 134 youth ages 5-18 participated, 70% of them were girls. The week of coding was part of the national ‘Hour of Code’ campaign.

2015 Ambitions
Formalize a plan with Helyke Public Schools to develop a STEM Magnet Middle School (Science Technology Engineering Math) utilizing District partnerships.

Support Girls Inc’s ‘Phase 2’ of ‘Googles Made with Code’ project, which will train 50 girls to be Made with Code Ambassadors.

Determine the location for the HCC Culinary Program and begin buildout and program design, with classes to begin in the Fall 2016 semester.

2014 By The Numbers
- The 2014 graduation rate for students completing high school in four years increased by 6.4% over 2013. The second highest graduation rate increase among Gateway Cities in Massachusetts.

PASSENGER RAIL

2014 Accomplishments
Construction began on the rail platform, with $4.2 million in secured construction funding.
Inaugural Amtrak trip stepped in Helyke and picked up passengers for the first time in 25 years.

2015 Ambitions
Complete construction of the passenger rail platform and activate its use.
Connect Helyke passenger rail stop with a regional network of stops to promote tourism and business rail travel.

By The Numbers
- $250,000 Working Cities prize awarded by Federal Reserve Bank of Boston to fund SPARK.
- 1,000,000+ square feet of available mill space within the The District.

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MASSTECH & THE HOLYOKE INNOVATION DISTRICT

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative launched the Holyoke Innovation District in November 2012 to pilot a "local-regional-state" collaborative effort to leverage economic growth from the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center (MGHPCC). Working on behalf of the Commonwealth to advance economic development, the Innovation Institute at MassTech has provided the staffing and financial backbone for HID, in close cooperation with the Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Commission and the City of Holyoke. At the core of this effort is a "Kitchen Cabinet" leadership team which builds and supports initiatives in entrepreneurship, workforce development, site readiness, STEM, clean energy technology, and many other areas.

MassTech’s commitment to the economic vitality of Holyoke can also be seen in several efforts over the past year, including a $3 million dollar grant to support the Mass Open Cloud project at MGHPCC, a university-industry collaboration designed to create a new public cloud computing infrastructure to spur innovation in ‘big data’. These efforts extend into regional initiatives – Valley Venture Mentors and Tech Foundry – where leaders up and down the Pioneer Valley are building consensus between public and private sector efforts.

Through the work of MassTech and our other partners at the state and regional level, the HID Kitchen Cabinet has become an energized forum which strives to spot new ideas, build consensus on the personnel that are best suited to lead each effort, and point to how things will be different if we can be successful in each case. Many of the successful efforts outlined in this report exemplify what HID has come to represent. In the coming year, we look forward to expanding our interactions with these stakeholders, in particular the Baker-Polito Administration, to help drive the continued revitalization of Holyoke and the rest of Massachusetts’ Gateway Cities over the coming year.