



TAUNTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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WHAT IS A REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY?

Most of the Redevelopment Authorities operating in Massachusetts were originally created to take advantage of the federal Urban Renewal Program, serving as vehicles for carrying out the federal mandate to eliminate blight from inner cities. Although the federal program no longer exists, Redevelopment Authorities continue to play a role in the Commonwealth's revitalization under C.121B.

M.G.L. Chapter 121B allows municipalities, through their Redevelopment Authorities acting as urban renewal agencies, to eliminate and redevelop substandard, decadent or blighted open areas for industrial, commercial, business, residential, recreational, educational, hospital or other purposes. With the goals of revitalizing such land uses and encouraging new growth, Redevelopment Authorities have the power to:

- Establish rehabilitation and design standards;
- Assemble and dispose of land, including the taking of real estate through eminent domain;
- Relocate businesses and residents occupying urban renewal sites;
- Demolish and/or rehabilitate substandard structures;
- Participate in real estate development and commercial revitalization;
- Issue bonds, borrow money and invest funds;
- Receive grants and loans;
- Accept gifts or requests.

Redevelopment Authorities are particularly effective in large scale and complex redevelopment projects and in land assembly. Redevelopment Authorities are exempt from M.G.L. Chapter 30(b), the Uniform Procurement Act, when they are engaged in the development and disposition of real property in accordance with an urban renewal plan. This exemption, coupled with the ability to use eminent domain powers, makes Redevelopment Authorities powerful tools for commercial revitalization, industrial park development, infrastructure improvements, facilities renovation and brownfield site remediation. The development and approval of an urban renewal plan is necessary for a Redevelopment Authority to undertake specific projects.

A Redevelopment Authority, as an independent body politic and corporate, is not an agency of a municipality and therefore, does not answer directly to the chief executive. This affords the Redevelopment Authority more autonomy in planning and implementing redevelopment and revitalization projects. A housing authority may undertake urban renewal projects if there is no Redevelopment Authority in the city or town.