

Peoples United Bank

CITY OF WORCESTER HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN
COMMUNITY FORUM #2



Welcome!



MA Office of Travel & Tourism.



PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

- **James Brooks**, Director of Housing Development and Healthy Homes, *City of Worcester*
- **Michelle Smith**, Assistant Chief Development Officer – Planning and Regulatory Services, *City of Worcester*
- **Penn Ruderman, AIA, LEED AP**, Owner/Director, *OPRCH*
- **Leah Bradley**, Executive Director, *Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance*
- **Stephen Teasdale**, Executive Director, *Main South Community Development Corporation*
- **Yvette Dyson**, Executive Director, *Worcester Common Ground*
- **Debbie Maruca Hoak**, Executive Director, *Habitat For Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester*
- **Alex Corrales**, Chief Executive Officer, *Worcester Housing Authority*
- **Peter Proulx**, Chief Operating Officer, *Worcester Housing Authority*
- **Andrew Howarth**, Director of Development and Financing, *Worcester Community Housing Resources*

PROJECT TEAM



Jeanette Tozer, AICP

- Affordable Housing Trust Fund Manager
- Project Manager



**Jennifer Goldson, AICP
(she/hers)**

- JM Goldson, Project Director



**Noah Harper, AICP
(he/him)**

- JM Goldson, Project Manager

With support from RKG Associates

AGENDA

- Kick-off Questions
- Background
- Draft Housing Goals
- Draft Housing Strategies
- Q&A
- Next Steps





KICK-OFF QUESTIONS

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Are you a Worcester resident?

Did you take the community survey or attend the first forum?

What is at the heart of the matter for housing in Worcester for you?

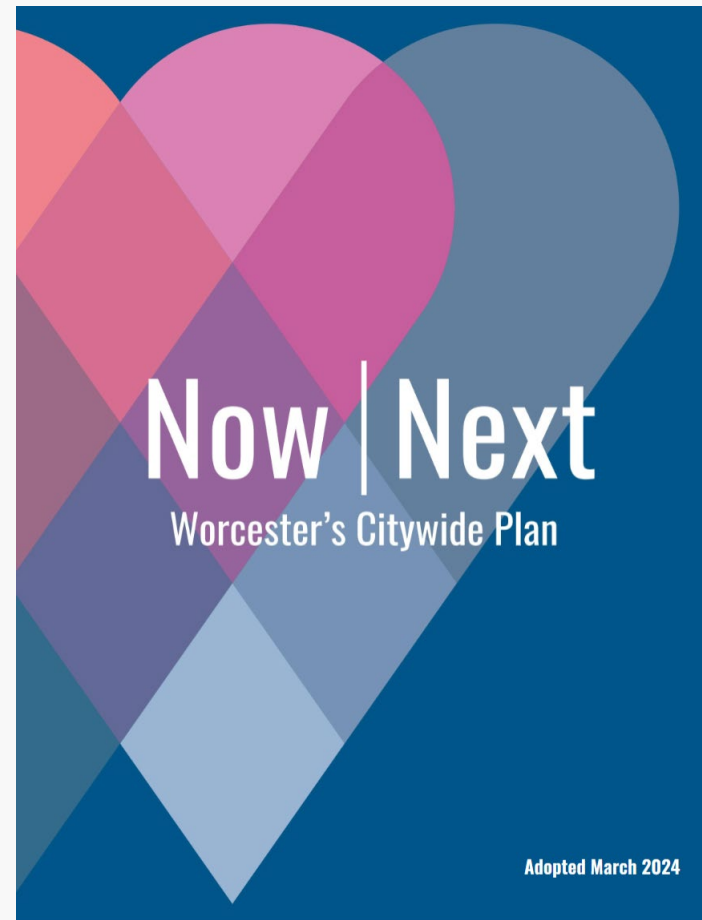
WHAT IS A HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN?

- Housing Needs
- Development Constraints
- Implementation Capacity
- **Goals and Strategies**



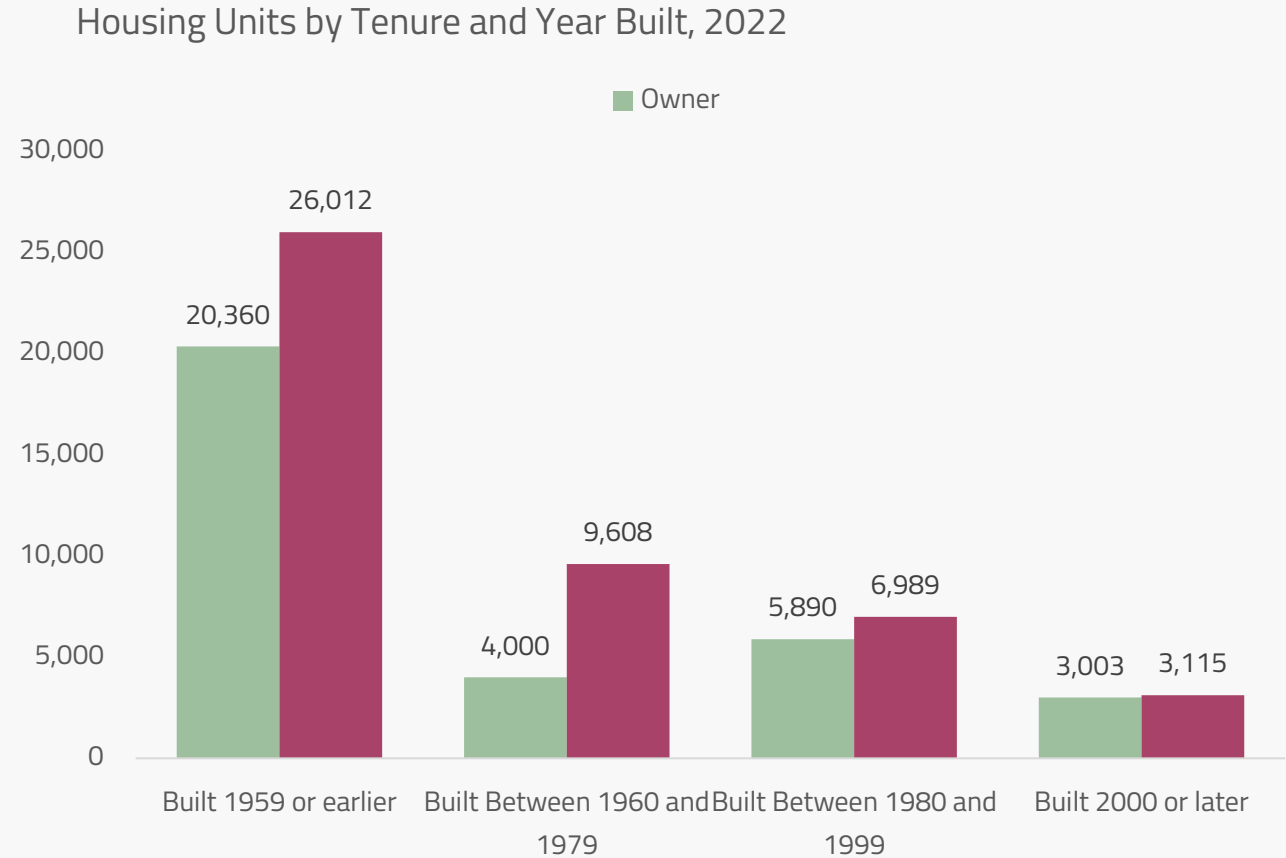
WORCESTER NOW | NEXT CITYWIDE PLAN

- Citywide plan adopted March 2024
- Housing Plan an Implementation Priority.
- *A values-centered framework for growth that benefits all Worcester community members.*



WORCESTER'S HOUSING NEEDS

- **Aging Housing Stock:**
The majority of homes in Worcester were built before 1960.

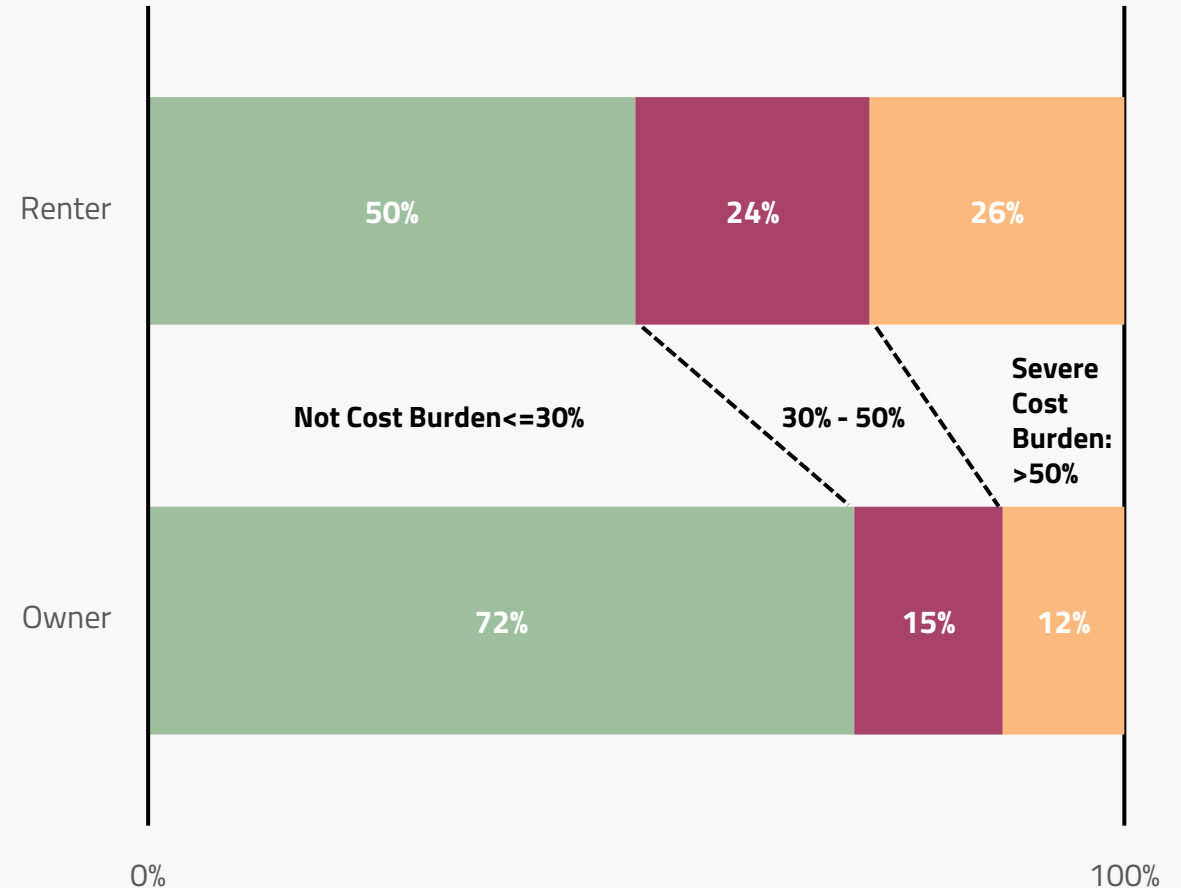


Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

WORCESTER'S HOUSING NEEDS

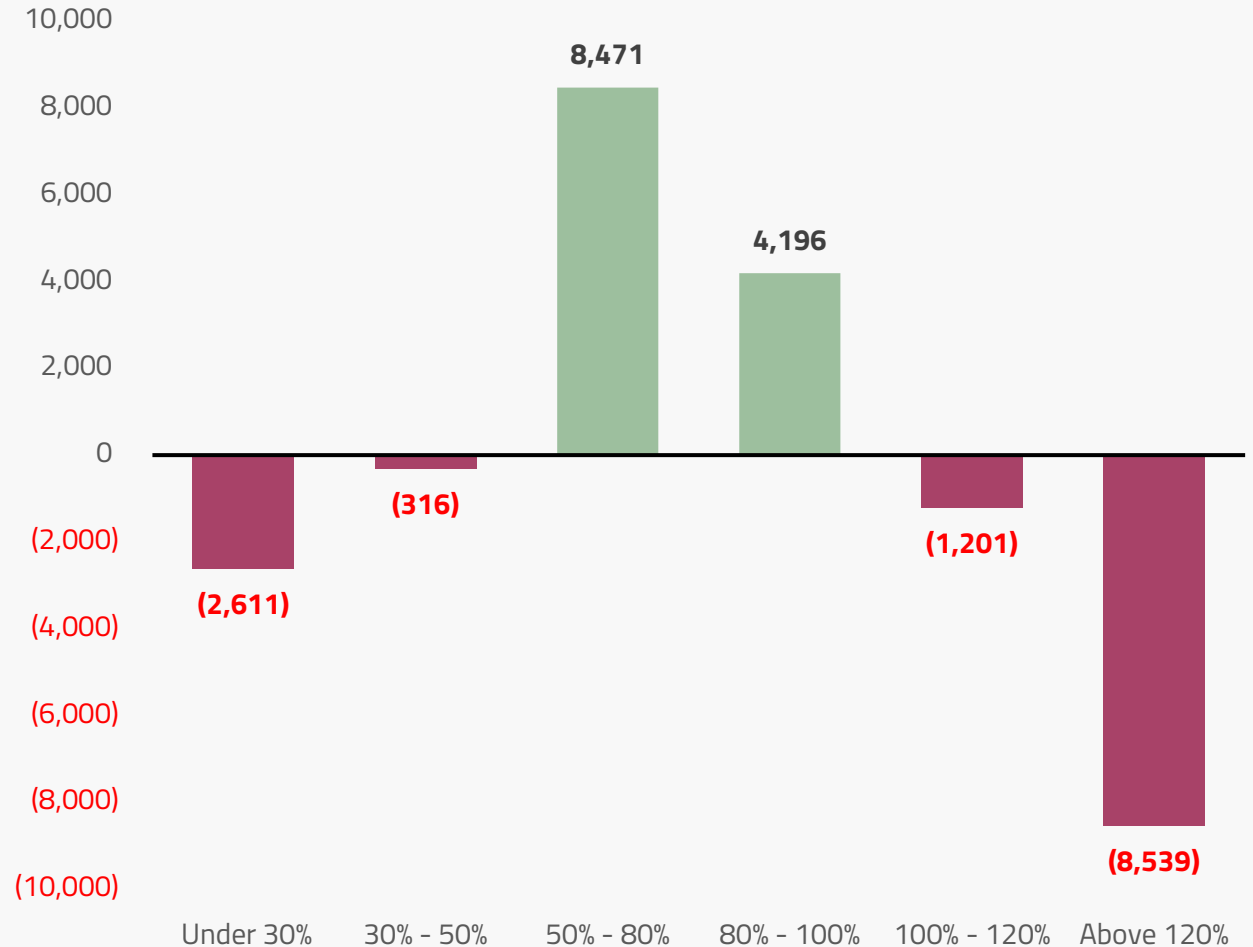
- **High Cost-Burden:** 50% of renters in Worcester pay more than 1/3 of their income towards rent.

Cost Burdened Owner vs. Renter Households 2020



WORCESTER'S HOUSING NEEDS

- **Housing Needs:** Lack of homeownership options for low-income and high-income households.



Source: HUD Income Limits, US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year 2022 Estimates, RKG Calculations

w: JMGOLDSON.COM



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community Survey
- Community Forum #1
- Resident Interviews
- Professional Interviews



Sean, Flickr.

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

- Affordability Crisis
- Aging Housing Stock
- Need for Affordable and Supportive Housing
- Potential for Housing on Underutilized Land
- Regulatory Barriers



Destination Worcester.

SURVEY

"More affordable housing must be built/ made available in Worcester. Too many people are struggling with housing here."

"I love living with the community in Worcester and want it to be affordable and accessible to young people as well as families! Why does everyone leave after they graduate college?"

"How to support owners of 3 unit or less buildings in modernizing and adding more space without eliminating units - grants for the small guy."

INTERVIEWS

"Some people can't live on what they earn or receive. Also, families with many children face difficulties. Prices for everything are going up."

"I think the city could make it easier to apply for housing."

"There should be more programs for older people seeking resources and for people without families to help them. If you don't have someone to help you and you must do it alone, it's very difficult."

DRAFT HOUSING GOALS & STRATEGIES

1

**ENHANCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PRODUCTION AND DEEPEN
AFFORDABILITY**

ENHANCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION AND DEEPEN AFFORDABILITY

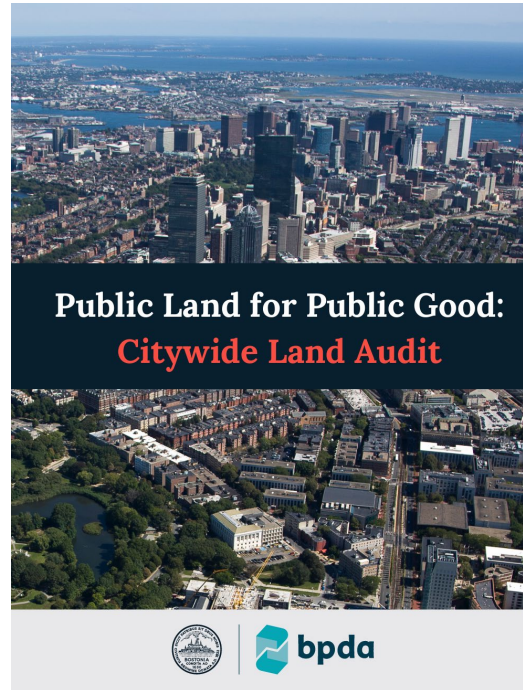
Key Strategies:

- Prioritize the production of affordable, deed-restricted housing units on surplus municipal land with local organizations that build deeply-affordable and supportive housing.
- Optimize Worcester's inclusionary zoning ordinance to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- Adopt an Affordable Housing Overlay citywide that provides density bonuses and streamlined permitting for developers of 100 percent affordable housing.

ENHANCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION AND DEEPEN AFFORDABILITY



52 New Street – All Affordable Construction Through Cambridge’s Affordable Housing Overlay



Public Land For Public Good – Maximizing underutilized land in Boston

2

RENEW WORCESTER'S AGING HOUSING STOCK

RENEW WORCESTER'S AGING HOUSING STOCK

Key Strategies:

- Building on the City's annual Landlord Summit, consider incorporating emerging developers and existing property owners.
- Create educational materials that explain and help to guide landlords, property owners, and emerging developers through the development process.

RENEW WORCESTER'S AGING HOUSING STOCK



Build South Bend –
Promoting Local
Development

Educational Materials:
Pro Forma Exercises
Demystifying Zoning
Securing Financing

Build South Bend

Build South Bend

Fall In Love With Becoming A Developer In South Bend

With its strong entrepreneurial spirit, affordable real estate, and a robust support network, South Bend provides an ideal environment for professional growth and innovation.

3

**INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY BY
REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS**

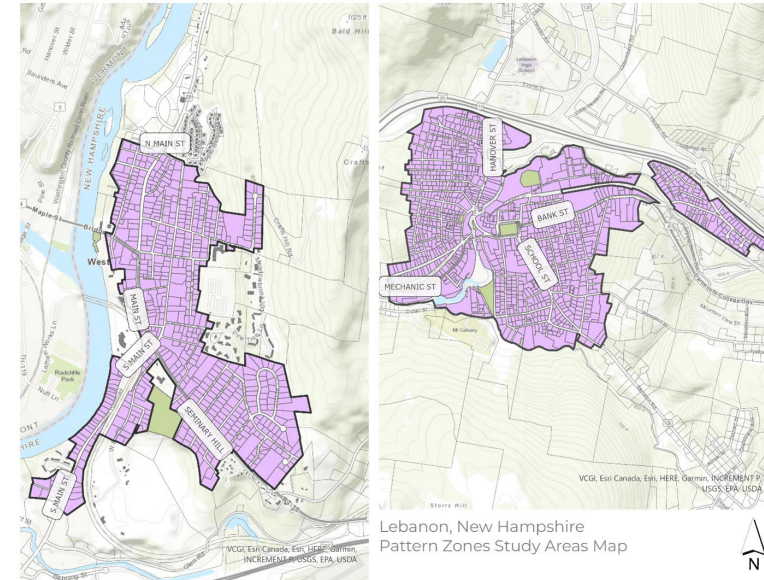
INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY BY REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS

Key Strategies:

- Audit the City's development permitting processes (at various scales of development) to determine how Worcester can accelerate housing approvals for modern housing stock. At a minimum, this will include zoning, building, fire, and sanitary codes.
- Create a menu of pre-approved housing types that are economically feasible and can be built with minimal permitting approvals.

INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY BY REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS

South Bend Neighborhood Infill | Pre-Approved Building Types



Pre-approved buildings –
A free catalogue of pre-
permitted structures



ADVANCE EQUITY AND ADDRESS HISTORIC DISPARITIES

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Key Strategies:

- Create an Office of Housing Stability to advocate for “Just Cause” evictions at the state level, a City-wide “Right of Return” policy, as well as studying the potential for rent stabilization.

ADVANCE EQUITY AND ADDRESS HISTORIC DISPARITIES

OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY

Boston Office of
Housing Stability—
Created in 2016



Utility Assistance



Find Shelter
Tonight



Fire Emergency



Search for
Affordable
Housing



Housing Search
Guide



Tips for Renters



Renters Insurance

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**PROMOTE HOUSING STABILITY AND
PRODUCTION WITH KEY COMMUNITY
PARTNERS**

PROMOTE HOUSING STABILITY AND PRODUCTION WITH KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Key Strategies:

- Support similar initiatives to the Worcester Housing Authority's Lakeside and Curtis Redevelopment Projects, working with local organizations with deeply-affordable housing units to renew affordable homes, add accessibility, and increase Worcester's affordable and market-rate housing stock.
- Create a quarterly 'Housing Roundtable' consisting of representatives from City boards, committees, and other housing-related organizations in Worcester to build consensus and further address housing affordability in the City. This should include local community-based organizations to ensure community alignment.

PROMOTE HOUSING STABILITY AND PRODUCTION WITH KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Concord's Housing Roundtable – Continuing Conversation and Aligning Efforts

WHA Lakeside and Curtis Redevelopments - Affordable Housing Upgrade and Expansion

PROPOSED PLAN

Buildings/Height	8 buildings/2-6 stories
Units <small>(subject to change)</small>	328 Rental units 28 Homeownership units 356 Total Units
Parking	Approx. 300 Spaces (incl Lakeside Ave)
Amenities	- Approx. 5.7 acres open space - Linear park along Lakeside Ave - Approx. 11,000 s.f. management/amenity space
Accessibility	Elevators in all rental buildings Approx. 10% of units will be HC accessible
Sustainability	Passive House design All-electric systems; roof-top solar



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**EXPAND TRANSPORTATION AND
MOBILITY OPTIONS TO EQUITABLY
SUPPORT HOUSING GROWTH**

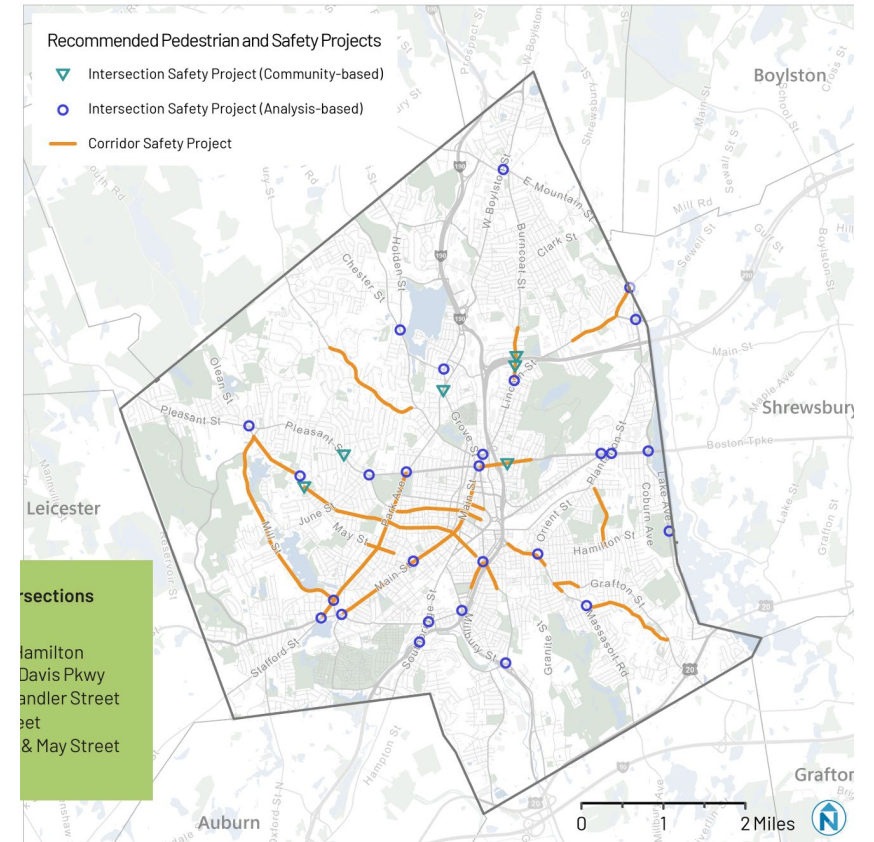
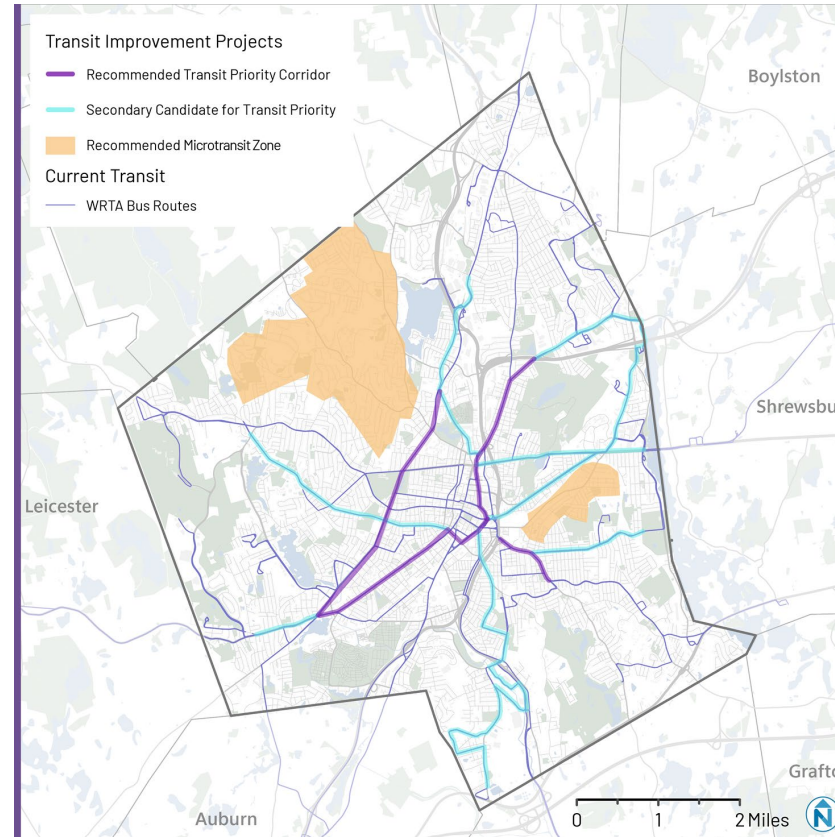
EXPAND TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY OPTIONS TO EQUITABLY SUPPORT HOUSING GROWTH

Key Strategies:

- Invest in planning and operational funding for public transit to promote access to jobs and destinations in Worcester, particularly along the growth corridors identified in the City's 2024 comprehensive plan, and transit priority corridors identified in the 2024 Mobility Action Plan (MAP).
- In addition to transit, support active transportation modes such as cycling, walking, and rolling, implementing the proposed Bike and Micromobility Network identified in the MAP, as well as the recommended Pedestrian and Safety Projects.

EXPAND TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY OPTIONS TO EQUITABLY SUPPORT HOUSING GROWTH

Worcester's 2024 *Mobility Action Plan* – Transit Priority, Pedestrian Safety, and Bicycle Network Recommendations



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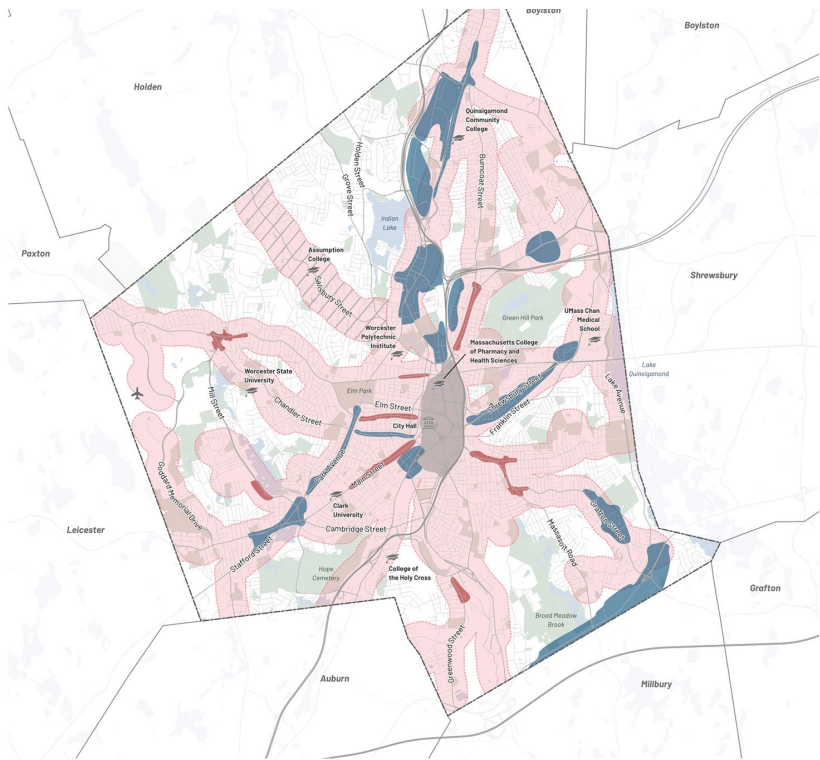
**GROW STRATEGICALLY ACCORDING TO
THE GROWTH FRAMEWORK AND FUTURE
LAND USE VISION IN *WORCESTER NOW /
NEXT***

GROW STRATEGICALLY ACCORDING TO THE GROWTH FRAMEWORK AND FUTURE LAND USE VISION IN *WORCESTER NOW / NEXT*

Key Strategies

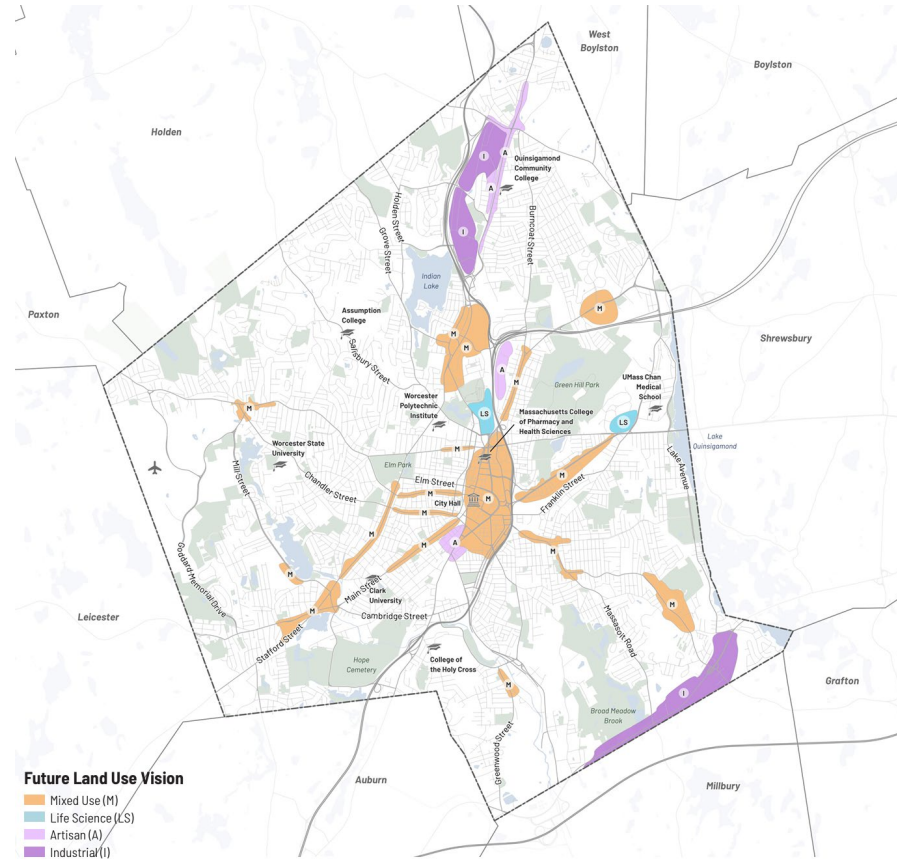
- Pursue a targeted rezoning of the growth corridors (managed, infill, and transformative) as identified in *Worcester Now / Next*.
- Identify underutilized property in these corridors that could be used for mixed-use or residential housing development with deep affordability.

GROW STRATEGICALLY ACCORDING TO THE GROWTH FRAMEWORK AND FUTURE LAND USE VISION IN *WORCESTER NOW / NEXT*



The **Growth Framework** will be the foundation for future citywide rezoning as well as focused area planning efforts, starting in the Transformative Growth Areas.

- Downtown / Canal District
- Transformative Growth Area
- Infill Growth Area
- Managed Growth Area—Existing Transit Corridor
- Managed Growth Area—Potential Future Transit Corridor



Future Land Use Vision

- Mixed Use (M)
- Life Science (LS)
- Artisan (A)
- Industrial (I)

Worcester Now / Next – Guiding the City’s Comprehensive Zoning Overhaul





WORK TO MAKE HOMELESSNESS IN WORCESTER BRIEF AND NON-RECURRING

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Key Strategies

- Continue to support Worcester's population of people struggling with homelessness and substance abuse, including with integrated supportive housing models, as well as pathways to long-term housing stability and homeownership.

WORK TO MAKE HOMELESSNESS IN WORCESTER BRIEF AND NON-RECURRING

Father Bill's & MainSpring Quincy – Shelter, Services, and Transitional Housing



DRAFT HOUSING GOALS

1. ENHANCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION AND DEEPEN AFFORDABILITY
2. RENEW WORCESTER'S AGING HOUSING STOCK
3. INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY BY REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS
4. PROMOTE EQUITY AND ADDRESS HISTORICAL DISPARITIES
5. PROMOTE HOUSING STABILITY AND PRODUCTION WITH KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS
6. EXPAND TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY OPTIONS EQUITABLY TO SUPPORT HOUSING GROWTH
7. GROW STRATEGICALLY ACCORDING TO THE GROWTH FRAMEWORK AND FUTURE LAND USE VISION IN WORCESTER NOW | NEXT
8. WORK TO MAKE HOMELESSNESS IN WORCESTER BRIEF AND NON-RECURRING

INTERACTIVE

How do you feel about the draft housing goals for Worcester overall?

What would you add or change?

STRATEGIES Q&A

INTERACTIVE

How do you feel about the draft housing strategies for Worcester?

What would you add or change?

NEXT STEPS

- **Revise Goals and Strategies** – Dec '24
- **Revise Plan** – Dec '24 /Jan '25
- **Finalize & Adopt Plan** – Feb '25
- **Questions?**
 - Email development@worcesterma.gov

THANK YOU!

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