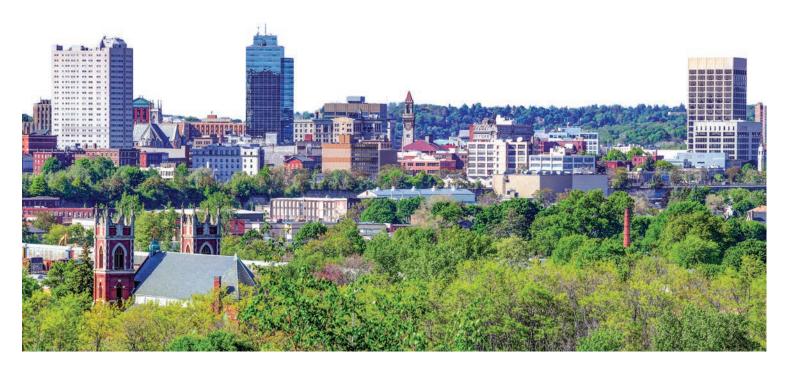
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THE RESEARCH BUREAU



Commerce Bank proudly supports The Research Bureau's outstanding work.



The Research Bureau has long been celebrated as a leading source of information for government, business and society in Central Massachusetts, and Commerce Bank is proud to be this year's Presenting Sponsor of the 31st Annual Meeting.

Like the Research Bureau, Commerce Bank is committed to supporting the growth and vitality of our communities. Since our founding, Commerce Bank has become one of the largest independent banks in the region, offering innovative products, services and solutions our customers need and deserve.

Moving forward, we stand in parallel with The Research Bureau, ready to serve our communities and build a strong, successful region. Our investment as a major sponsor of the Annual Meeting emphasizes this commitment and supports The Research Bureau's dedication to outstanding work and collaboration.

Brian W. Thompson

President and Chief Executive Officer Commerce Bank



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DEAR FRIENDS OF THE RESEARCH

BUREAU, Worcester, like our nation, is working to find its place in a modern, pluralistic society. It is working to engage a diverse, informed electorate. It is working to encourage economic opportunity, including jobs and affordable housing. It is working to provide quality education for our young people. It is working to promote public safety and ensure quality of life in our neighborhoods. It is working to build infrastructure that supports a vibrant urban center.

Yet, Worcester is not working in a vacuum. The City and its neighboring towns are dependent on one another's success. Greater Worcester is an ecosystem that relies on all of its varied components to live, work, and thrive. Together, these communities offer a plethora of jobs and services, diverse housing options, and a broad spectrum of urban, suburban, and rural experiences. We also share challenges - overextended local governments, a stressed transportation network, restricted water and sewer capacity, tested educational systems, busy public safety and public health systems, and growing public and private costs in labor, health care, and other critical needs.

How we manage our municipalities and govern in areas of public education, economic development, public safety, inclusion, and homelessness, among many other areas, matters.

Our region is not an island. As Massachusetts competes more fully on the national and world stage, attention is shifting to areas outside of the traditional hub. Our population continues to grow, unemployment is down, and the percentage of residents in higher income households is increasing due in no small part to economic spin-off from Greater Boston. Every two years we elect representatives to our state legislature and every four years we elect our governor and lieutenant governor. In casting our ballots, we look for those who appreciate the lessons we have learned and who will apply those lessons effectively to the Commonwealth. However, Massachusetts

is also only one state among fifty that come together regularly to elect national leaders – from Members of Congress to the President. These leaders, too, are empowered to represent our interests – on a local and national scale.

As you will see in our Annual Report, each of the four prominent parties offering national platforms and fielding national candidates reflect - to varying degrees, positively and negatively - the needs of the localities. While the election is coast-to-coast, the politics are provincial. The reason that national politicians discussing education, housing, infrastructure, immigration, jobs, the environment, public health, and criminal justice is because cities and towns across the country are discussing these same issues. As we go to the polls, we are voting on approaches to challenges that are both far away and near to home.

The Research Bureau works hard to inform voters about those local issues that demand municipal attention. While our focus is on local decision-making and implementation, the issues we touch cross all levels of government. We cannot lose sight of the national implications of our local actions. How we educate children, build vibrant downtowns, provide quality housing, welcome new residents, ensure safe streets, and promote healthy communities matters in both Worcester and in Washington.

Thank you to those who serve as the intellectual and financial foundation for our efforts. Your contributions are essential to our work and reflect your commitment to civic vibrancy. Thank you to our dedicated Executive Committee, our eminent Board of Directors, and our stalwart followers who ensure that we put forward timely and insightful information that lays a groundwork for our region's future. We highlight the incredible contributions of Greenberg, Rosenblatt, Kull & Bitsoli, P.C. and PENTA Communications, Inc. who offer significant time, energy, and enthusiasm every week on our behalf as strong partners in our efforts to manage our organization and highlight our findings. We are deeply grateful to the corporate and foundation communities, and our individual supporters, who provide invaluable resources that allow us to advocate for and support informed public policy in Greater Worcester. All of their contributions are acknowledged, but not nearly enough, at the end of this report. We also give thanks to Worcester's media outlets, especially our media sponsor the Worcester Telegram & Gazette, who assist us in engaging wide audiences across Central Massachusetts. Finally, we thank The Research Bureau staff - past and present - for their many contributions to this organization and this region over the years.

On behalf of The Research Bureau, we embrace another year of engaging with Greater Worcester to highlight successes and offer guidance on challenges. We look forward to your partnership and support in our joint efforts to succeed at every level.



JOHN J. SPILLANE, ESQ. CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



TIMOTHY J. McGourthy
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Gear in Review

2016

Over the past year, The Research Bureau has delved deeply into a broad array of issues impacting Greater Worcester. Our region has entered a period of significant change – change that brings great opportunity but also intense challenge. While municipal budgets remain constrained, cities and towns are called upon to do more to address the needs of education, public safety, economic development, and public infrastructure.

We have spent our year building a base of information and insights to assist our local communities in their efforts. Our 2016 Worcester Almanac offered an expansive view of the changes underway in our area as we incorporated trend data into key information points. We captured changes in the tax base, highlighted the growth in post-employment obligations, identified the increase in the number of higher-income households, laid out the shifts in commercial vacancy rates, and tracked the improvements in drop-out rates. The Almanac continues to serve as an invaluable resource for public and private interests engaging with Greater Worcester.

The *Almanac* is illustrative of the steps The Research Bureau is taking to position itself as **the** source for relevant, credible information to serve as a foundation for discussion about the future of our region. We continue to connect and collaborate with local civic, business, and governmental leadership in order to develop informed recommendations for pending policy decisions. We are cognizant of the impact that national policy decisions have on municipalities. Yet, we also recognize the ability of district and state-level policies to have national influence. As the Worcester Regional Research Bureau, we proudly continue our mission to conduct independent, non-partisan research and analysis to promote informed public debate and decision-making in the expectation that Greater Worcester, and its efforts to engage in and overcome its challenges, will serve as a model for national policymakers.

Of course, in addition to the *Almanac*, we have continued to look in-depth at key topics and offer our analysis and insights to the public debate.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Transition is always an opportune time for reevaluation. With the departure of Worcester's prior Superintendent of Schools, The Research Bureau, in cooperation with the Worcester Education Collaborative (WEC), offered an analysis of the state of the Worcester Public Schools (WPS), highlighted promising programs, and put forward recommendations for the new School Committee and Superintendent as they proceed with efforts to improve educational outcomes. The Urgency of Excellence: Considerations for the School Committee and New Superintendent of Schools in Worcester has led to the drive for a strategic plan for the WPS – an effort the new Superintendent has embraced. Our companion forum engaged experts from across the Commonwealth to explore how public school systems have worked to reposition themselves. The Research Bureau and WEC also jointly held a forum on education funding, reviewing how the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Massachusetts Chapter 70 Reform could potentially impact local operations. The Research Bureau hosted an additional forum looking at the International Baccalaureate Program, an educational initiative proposed by the prior WPS Administration to support high achieving students. The Research Bureau also went on record through an opinion piece in the Worcester Telegram & Gazette in strong support of efforts to reform health plans at the WPS.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MUNICIPAL FINANCE

In the fall of 2015, The Research Bureau partnered with the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce and Mechanics Hall to host a series of debates for City of Worcester candidates for School Committee, Mayor, and City Council. In all, hundreds of residents turned out to hear candidates speak on issues of management, finance, education, economic development, and public safety. We have agreed with our partners to continue this series with every municipal election – a commitment that illustrates our mission to ensure an informed electorate. Transparency is a fundamental aspect of a representative democracy. In honor of Sunshine Week and the birthday of James Madison, author of the Bill of Rights, The Research Bureau released its Bureau Brief, Open Government in Massachusetts, which laid out the requirements for open meetings and the availability of public information in Massachusetts. We continued our report series Breaking Down the Budget: Questions to Consider, City of Worcester & Worcester Public Schools FY2017, condensing the City's fiscal year 2017 budget into an easy-to-understand document, analyzing the results, and highlighting our fiscal recommendations on post-employment benefits and health care.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Worcester's economic development has been a core focus for The Research Bureau for decades. 2016 was no exception. We released briefs on such diverse topics as Worcester Regional Airport and Chapter 40B – the Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Act. We highlighted the continued potential of Worcester Regional Airport to host new flights and passengers (and corrected *The Boston Globe's* analysis through a Letter to the Editor) and we critiqued the failures of Chapter 40B to address disparities in the percentage of affordable housing units by community across the Commonwealth. With the cooperation of each of Greater Worcester's colleges and universities, we analyzed the dispersion of graduates over the last decade. Interestingly, we found that recent graduates are more likely to live in the City of Worcester than their older counterparts, perhaps indicating the city's growing appeal to young professionals. In response to the collapse of the Flint, Michigan water supply, we hosted a forum at Worcester City Hall with representatives from the City, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and federal Environmental Protection Agency to learn about the quality of Worcester's water supply and the state of its delivery system. More recently, we released an in-depth report on Worcester's public parking system – *Parking in Worcester: Left by the Curb* – and offered recommendations on management, finance, and logistics to enhance the program's operations and improve profitability. Parking, as ever, proved a popular topic to spark public debate with the report stimulating media coverage across a broad spectrum of outlets.

In a landmark event, The Research Bureau co-hosted a state-wide forum this past spring with Boston-based MassINC and the City of Worcester entitled "Housing Opportunity in the Gateway Cities." In the half-day series of speakers and panel discussions, experts covered innovations and best practices for promoting a healthy mix of housing alternatives in Massachusetts' urban centers. Nearly 200 attendees participated in a conversation about the unique role the Gateway Cities play as regional hubs in the state's economy, especially as centers for jobs and housing.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

In honor of last year's 30th Anniversary, The Research Bureau held The Fairman Cowan Collegiate Lecture Series with the cooperation of twelve Greater Worcester institutions of higher education. This series was an effort to celebrate the Bureau's anniversary while highlighting the intellectual capital of the region. The general public was invited to join the university community at these events. Since the Bureau's last annual meeting, the University of Massachusetts Medical School hosted a talk on successful efforts to eradicate pediatric HIV infection, Worcester Polytechnic Institute hosted a discussion of the science of ergonomics and its potential to improve medical efforts to combat infectious disease, and Worcester State University hosted a presentation on the national and local impact of global migrations resulting from societal distress. The Research Bureau also continues as a sponsor of Leadership Worcester, working with the Greater Worcester Community Foundation and Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce to engage talented professionals with Greater Worcester's leadership structure. In addition to serving on the Founding Council, The Research Bureau assisted with the initial retreat and coordinated daylong sessions on government and economic development. The Bureau also hosted a forum on leadership in Greater Worcester, working with business and civic leaders to cull recommendations on ways to promote new voices within the community. Finally, The Research Bureau joined with the John J. Binienda Center for Civic Engagement at Worcester State University to look at the role higher education – faculty, students, and the institutions themselves – should play in civic matters.

The Research Bureau is committed in its efforts to improve government in Greater Worcester. Only by understanding and addressing our weaknesses, capitalizing on our strengths, and dedicating ourselves to excellence in the public and private spheres will our region succeed. In the coming weeks, our nation will join together to set priorities and a path for the next four years. The Research Bureau will continue to work hard to ensure that local leadership is well prepared to move this region forward with the best contemporary thinking the nation has to offer.



Reports and Briefs

SINCE OUR LAST ANNUAL REPORT, THE RESEARCH BUREAU PREPARED THE FOLLOWING REPORTS AND BRIEFS:

BUREAU BRIEF: PARK CONSERVANCIES

Bureau Brief: Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Act—Chapter 40B

The Urgency of Excellence: Considerations for the School Committee and New Superintendent of Schools in Worcester – With Worcester Education Collaborative

BUREAU BRIEF: WORCESTER REGIONAL AIRPORT (OHR)

Bureau Brief: Open Government in Massachusetts

BUREAU BRIEF: TALENT RETENTION 2016

Worcester Almanac: 2016

Bureau Brief: The Massachusetts Foundation Budget – With Worcester Education Collaborative

Bureau Brief: The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – With Worcester Education Collaborative

Breaking Down the Budget: Questions to Consider, City of Worcester & Worcester Public Schools FY 2017

PARKING IN WORCESTER: LEFT BY THE CURB

"The American Dream'is not a stale slogan. It is the lived reality that expresses the aspirations of all our people. It means a decent place to live, a safe place to raise kids, a welcoming place to retire."

Roepublican Party Platform 2016

"We must revitalize hard-hit manufacturing communities: create thriving hubs of manufacturing and innovation throughout the country; and claw back tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, using the proceeds to reinvest in communities and workers at home instead."

Democratic Party Platform 2016



SINCE OUR LAST ANNUAL REPORT, THE RESEARCH BUREAU ORGANIZED THE FOLLOWING FORUMS AND EVENTS:

- City of Worcester Municipal Debates 2015 Co-Sponsored with the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce in Partnership with Mechanics Hall
 - ➤ School Committee Candidate Debate
 - ➤ Mayoral Candidate Debate
 - ➤ CITY COUNCIL AT-LARGE CANDIDATE DEBATE
 - ➤ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT CANDIDATE DEBATE
 - 30TH ANNUAL MEETING FEATURING JONATHAN KRAFT, President of the Kraft Group
 - Advances and Challenges in Eradicating Pediatric HIV Infection Co-Sponsored with University of Massachusetts Medical School*
 - The International Baccalaureate Program: A Plan for Educating Worcester's High Achieving Students
- The Global Ergonomics of Ebola and Other Infectious Diseases: Combating Fear Through Innovation Co-Sponsored with Worcester Polytechnic Institute*
 - Leading Worcester: Cultivating Talent in Business & the Community
 - Global Migrations and the Worcester Community Co-Sponsored with Worcester State University*
 - The Urgency of Excellence: Considerations for the School Committee and New Superintendent of Schools in Worcester Co-Sponsored with Worcester Education Collaborative
 - What's On Tap? Ensuring Safe Drinking Water in Worcester and Beyond
- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) & Chapter 70 Reform: Implications for Massachusetts Education
 - 2016 Thomas S. Green Awards
 - Housing Opportunity in the Gateway Cities Co-Sponsored with MassINC and the City of Worcester
 - Rebuilding Renewal Co-Sponsored with Worcester Business Development Corporation
- The Academy and the Polis: Embracing Civic Engagement in Higher Education Co-Sponsored with the John J. Binienda Center for Civic Engagement at Worcester State University

* Fairman C. Cowan Collegiate Lecture Series

"The Green vision includes building communities that nurture families, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; creating cities and towns that educate children, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources; building local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime; and motivating citizens to participate in making decisions."

Green Parly Platform 2016

Forums and Events (continued)



LEADING WORCESTER: CULTIVATING
TALENT IN BUSINESS & THE
COMMUNITY, NOVEMBER 2015



HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GATEWAY CITIES, MAY 2016



THE URGENCY OF EXCELLENCE:
CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE NEXT
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, JANUARY 2016



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR KARYN POLITO, HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GATEWAY CITIES, MAY 2016



WHAT'S ON TAP? ENSURING SAFE DRINKING WATER IN WORCESTER AND BEYOND, MARCH 2016



Undersecretary Chrystal Kornegay, Housing Opportunities in the Gateway Cities, May 2016



Worcester City Council At-Large Debate, October 2015



Board of Directors Meeting, June 2016, Special Guest Commissioner Matilde Castiel



EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT & CHAPTER 70 REFORM: IMPLICATIONS FOR MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATION, APRIL 2016

Thomas S. Green Public Service Awards

Each year, The Research Bureau recognizes the "unsung heroes" in municipal government who are committed to making Worcester and nearby communities better places to live and work. The 2016 Thomas S. Green Public Service Award recipients, honored at a ceremony and reception at Assumption College on April 14, 2016, were as follows:



JAMES BEAUREGARD
AUBURN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



CATHY FLINK-HARRISON WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS



PATRICIA HAINSWORTH WORCESTER SENIOR CENTER



BRIAN HICKEY
HOLDEN MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT



SERGEANT MIGUEL LOPEZ
WORCESTER POLICE DEPARTMENT

"We propose new partnerships between those who manage federal programs and those who are on the front lines of fighting poverty on the ground. We must encourage their efforts to reclaim their communities from the culture of poverty. To advance this process, we urge greater state and local responsibility for, and control over, public assistance programs."

Poepublican Party Platform 2016

"The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected."

Libertarian Party Platform 2016

30th Annual Meeting

OF THE RESEARCH BUREAU

Thursday, October 8, 2015 | DCU Center | Worcester, MA





























Board of Directors Meetings

JANUARY 20TH BOARD MEETING AT MCPHS UNIVERSITY

$\label{eq:Marchioth} March\ \text{10th}$ Board Reception at Assumption College

May 2ND

BOARD RECEPTION FOR SUPERINTENDENT MAUREEN BINIENDA AT JEPPSON HOUSE AT WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

June 9th Board Meeting at Worcester State University



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, JUNE 2016, SPECIAL GUEST COMMISSIONER MATILDE CASTIEL



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, JANUARY 2016, SPECIAL GUESTS MARK BORENSTEIN AND JULIE OROZKO



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, JANUARY 2016, LEADERSHIP WORCESTER PRESENTATION

"We will dramatically increase federal infrastructure funding for our cities – making significant new investments in roads and bridges, public transit, drinking and wastewater systems, broadband, schools, and more."

Democratic Party Platform 2016



Board of Directors Meeting, January 2016



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, JANUARY 2016, SPECIAL GUEST SECRETARY STEPHANIE POLLACK



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, JUNE 2016, SPECIAL GUEST COMMISSIONER MATILDE CASTIEL

Annual Meeting Speakers

2016	John H. Sununu, Former Governor,	2001	Heather MacDonald, Senior Fellow, The Manhattan Institute
	State of New Hampshire, and White House Chief of Staff	2000	Rev. Dr. Floyd H. Flake, Senior Pastor, Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church and former U.S. Representative to Congress
2015	Jonathan Kraft, President, The Kraft Group		
2014	Jay Ash, City Manager of Chelsea	1000	
	Bernard F. Lynch, Founder, Community Paradigm Associates, LLC	1999	Howard Husock, Director of Case Studies in Public Policy and Management, Kennedy School, Harvard University
	Michael V. O'Brien, Executive Vice President, Winn Development	1998	Myron Magnet, Editor, City Journal
2013	Edward Glaeser, Fred and Eleanor Glimp Professor of Economics,	1997	Thomas Birmingham, Senate President, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
0040	Harvard University	1996	Glenn C. Loury, Professor of Economics, Boston University
2012	Eric S. Rosengren, President & CEO, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston	1995	Peter Harkness, Editor and Publisher of Governing
2011	Senator Scott Brown	1994	James Q. Wilson, Author and
2010	Lisa A. Mancini, Senior Vice President, CSX Corporation	1337	Professor of Political Science, UCLA
2009	Amity Shlaes, Bloomberg News Columnist, Political Economist	1993	Robert Poole, President, Reason Foundation
2008	John W. Rowe, Chairman, President & CEO, Exelon Corporation	1992	William Hudnut, former Mayor of Indianapolis
2007	Dr. Thomas Payzant, former Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools and senior lecturer at the Harvard	1991	David P. Forsberg, Secretary, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
	Graduate School of Education	1990	Bruce Carnes, Director of Planning and Budget, Office of National Drug Control
2006	Dr. David Driscoll, Commissioner of Education, Commonwealth of		Policy
	Massachusetts	1989	Edward J. Logue, CEO, Logue Boston,
2005	Tamar Jacoby, Author and Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute		former Director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority
2004	John Gannon, Staff Director,	1988	Raymond Flynn, Mayor of Boston
2007	U.S. House of Representatives, Select Committee on Homeland Security	1987	William Bulger, Senate President, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
2003	Governor Mitt Romney, Commonwealth of Massachusetts	1986	Ira Jackson, Commissioner, Department of Revenue, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
	Fred Siegel, Professor of History, The Cooper Union for the Advancement		

of Science and Art, New York City, and Senior Fellow, Progressive Policy Institute

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[&]quot;...Instead we will build an economy based on large-scale green public works, municipalization, and workplace and community democracy."



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Worcester Bravehearts

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Worcester Credit Union

Worcester Cultural Coalition

Worcester District Registry of Deeds

Worcester Historical Museum

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Worcester Telegram & Gazette

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"Education is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality, accountability and efficiency with more diversity of choice."

Libertarian Party Platform 2016



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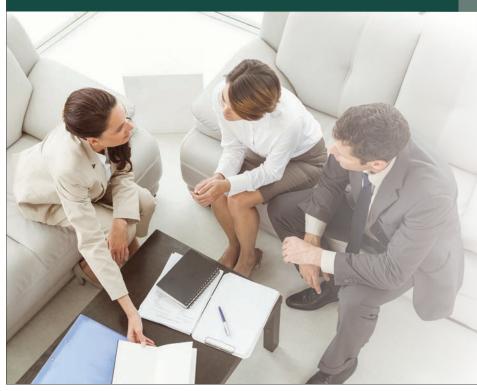




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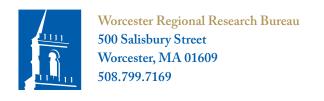
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