



The Research Bureau

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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CHAIR OF THE BOARD AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Thank you to all who have made the work of the Worcester Regional Research Bureau possible over the last year. With your support, we've made an indelible impact with our objective research reports and data visualizations.

Making an impact is a crucial part of the Bureau's mission, to inform the public and policymakers of critical opportunities and challenges facing Greater Worcester. Our research is always conducted objectively and apolitically, but with the purpose of real-world relevancy. So as result, the Bureau's work reflects changing circumstances and emerging needs in the community that warrant thoughtful examination. All of our research reports and innovative data visualizations are intended to inform sound policy decisions, and ensure that Greater Worcester has a prosperous and successful future.

By that measurement of impact, the Bureau has had a tremendously successful year over 2024. As this annual report details, our work has covered a wide range of topics and issues, and has informed proceedings in Worcester and beyond. Just a few highlights include...

In education, the Bureau's comprehensive examination of the need for investment in school facilities was mirrored by the priorities in the Worcester Public School's Strategic Plan, and the Bureau's Executive chaired the related Advisory Task Force of community members. Our report has led MassINC to partner with the Bureau in conducting an expanded examination of urban school facility needs across the Commonwealth, to provide additional evidence of the need for updated state funding of such projects.

In broadband access, the Bureau built on our prior two reports to release an online data dashboard illustrating needs in Worcester and surrounding communities. These resources have informed the city's digital equity plan and statewide discussions, and led to the Bureau's appointment to the state's Broadband Access and Digital Equity Working Group. The most recent data dashboard, which included enrollment in the formerly available federal broadband subsidy program, has helped inform the development of the city's digital equity plan. Such tools are tremendously helpful in guiding government and community responses, especially as stakeholders are considering how to best secure federal funding to address these needs.

In commercial real estate, the Bureau's report and accompanying dashboard illustrated the importance of commercial properties, with both direct and indirect economic impacts. This was particularly timely, as a report by the Boston Policy Institute spotlighted Boston's tremendous dependency on commercial real estate during a precarious period.

In fact, those researchers highlighted the Bureau's work on Worcester as a means of providing context to Boston's vulnerability and need to institute significant reforms and budget limitations.

In transportation, the Bureau's work on fare free transit has again been utilized by community stakeholders and the Worcester Regional Transit Authority in deciding to continue to suspend fare collections. Their innovative recognition of the need to grow ridership has been seen as a model across the Commonwealth and by comparable systems outside Massachusetts.

In infrastructure, the Bureau's analysis on the safety of pedestrians and vulnerable road users came amidst a surge of tragedies and the city's ongoing responses, such as their focus on Vision Zero to eliminate related fatalities and serious injuries. The Bureau's comprehensive and data-driven analysis of accident data provided an outside and objective resource as the City Manager and Mayor declared a "road safety and traffic violence crisis".

In partnership with the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the Bureau was able to establish a new data dashboard, Worcester County Indicators. This platform provides the public, policymakers, and community organizations with tools and key data insights on community life, demographics and diversity, economic mobility, employment and workforce, health and wellbeing, and youth and education.

The Bureau's impact has not been solely confined to our research and visualizations, since our work has informed and influenced proceedings in the region and on the state level. Our Board of Directors met with the Massachusetts Secretary of Economic Development Yvonne Hao to provide input on the implementation of the new statewide economic development plan, on the eve of the Governor filing related legislation. Our Board also met with the Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation, Monica Tibbits-Nutt, to discuss such regional priorities as commuter rail, the Airport, the WRTA, and other key regional infrastructure improvements.

Since our Annual Meeting keynote speaker is President Susan Collins of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, we should also note our work with the Fed. The Bureau has been invited to participate in their Inclusive Economies initiative, and brought Fed representatives to meet with the City Manager and key community stakeholders on their Massachusetts Economic Conditions and Household Opportunity Survey, which will assess household wealth across the state.

The impact and quality of the Bureau's work has been recognized outside of Worcester, with

attention and awards on the regional and national level. Our report on residential rents, Static Income, won first place in the Excellence in Newsroom Collaboration and Partnerships category from the New England Newspaper & Press Association, due to our collaboration with the Worcester Business Journal that highlighted the work. Our national peers in the Governmental Research Association recognized our work with four awards this year- Most Distinguished Research on a Local Government Issue, Most Effective Education on a Local Government Issue; Best Short Form Writing, and a Certificate of Merit in Best Digital Communication. The Bureau also played a leadership role in the development of a national research anthology that will feature our research on broadband access.

None of the Bureau's accomplishments and impact would have been possible without the support and help of so many in Greater Worcester, such as our Executive Committee and Board of Directors, contributors from business and philanthropy, in kind supporters such as PENTA Communications and Greenberg, Rosenblatt, Kull, and Bitsoli PC, and collaborators from government, higher education, the media, and community organizations. All of the individuals and organizations listed in this annual report deserve the community's thanks, since the Bureau's objective and impactful research wouldn't be possible without their participation.

With the continued support of so many regional leaders, employers, and institutions, the Bureau will continue to serve the long term needs of Greater Worcester into our fortieth year, and ensure that our region succeeds and prospers.



PAUL KELLY

Chair of the Board



PAUL F. MATTHEWS

Executive Director & CEO

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Research Bureau's long-time focus on public administration and municipal operations continues to be a priority. In 2024, the Bureau brought back the **State of the City Address**. In collaboration with the City of Worcester, WRRB co-hosted City Manager Eric Batista at the Jean McDonough Arts Center (JMAC) in downtown Worcester for his first State of the City Address. His remarks covered his priorities for the future of the City including housing production and affordability, school capital projects, public safety, traffic violence, Worcester Now | Next, and more.



Over the last year, many of these priorities of the City Manager have also been examined by The Research Bureau. One such initiative is the Worcester Now | Next Master Plan. Between 2022 and 2024, the City of Worcester developed and subsequently adopted Worcester Now | Next, its first citywide long-range plan in nearly 40 years. In February, a nearly-finished draft was released and in response The Research Bureau released **Questions to Consider about Worcester's Now | Next**

Master Plan. This brief summarizes the main goals of the City's plan and follows with several questions to consider going forward. These three questions were as follows: how will the City prioritize spending to hire and retain new staff? How will the City approach community feedback, while still executing a zoning code update that fulfills the goals of Now | Next? How will the City work with its neighbor to implement the transit goals of Now | Next?

In order to fund many of these priorities, the City must budget effectively. The Bureau provides its insights on government finance in its annual report **Breaking Down the Budget: City of Worcester for Fiscal Year 2025**. Municipal budgets are a direct reflection of a city's priorities and values, offering insight into the community's vision and the decisions of its leadership. They go beyond mere financial statements to reveal how resources are allocated to address immediate needs and pursue long-term goals. The Worcester Regional Research Bureau provides an independent review of the budget to enhance transparency and provide residents with a resource for accountability. This approach aims to provide a clear understanding of the budget changes from the prior fiscal year and can assess how well it aligns with their diverse wants and needs.

In its ongoing commitment to analyzing public administration, WRRB examined the state's civil service system and its impact on Worcester's police leadership in **Mass. Exodus from Civil Service**.

Worcester FY25 Budget: Expenditures	Amount	Percent of Total	Percent Change from FY24
Education	\$533,000,000	59.7%	+5.3%
City Services	\$195,000,000	21.8%	+4.4%
Fixed Costs	\$165,000,000	18.5%	-5.4%
TOTAL	\$893,000,000	100.0%	+3.0%

Worcester FY25 Budget: Revenues	Amount	Percent of Total	Percent Change from FY24
Property Taxes	\$396,000,000	44.4%	+4.9%
State Aid (Education)	\$387,000,000	43.4%	+5.4%
Local Receipts (Taxes and Fees)	\$57,000,000	6.3%	+7.3%
State Aid (General)	\$53,000,000	5.9%	+2.9%
Other Available Funds	\$180,000	<1.0%	0.0%
TOTAL	\$893,000,000	100.0%	+3.0%

SCAN FOR MORE:

State of the City Address



Mass. Exodus from Civil Service



Questions to Consider about Worcester's Now | Next Master Plan



Check it Out: the Worcester Public Library in Space and Time



Breaking Down the Budget: City of Worcester for Fiscal Year 2025





Originally designed to ensure merit-based hiring and protect against politically motivated decisions, civil service laws are increasingly being challenged in Massachusetts, with many municipal police and fire departments seeking exemptions. The Bureau analyzed this trend in light of the Worcester City Council's March 19, 2024, vote to support the City Manager's request for exemptions for the chief of police and deputy chief positions. The City argues that these changes will enhance administrative efficiency and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in WPD leadership. Additionally, the Bureau analyzed the diversity gap among WPD's sworn officers and reviewed a history of discrimination cases related to civil service. The report also addresses ongoing developments as of September 5, 2024, including the dispute between the City and three deputies of the WPD regarding whether the City has violated the law by failing to appoint a permanent chief of police through civil service. The report concludes with three recommendations: First, the City should establish a clear and transparent process for appointing chiefs and deputy chiefs if exempted from civil service. Second, hiring and promotions within the WPD should follow a civil service rule that ensures merit-based standards and promotes diversity. Finally, the Bureau recommends that the City publish a report on the benefits and drawbacks of exempting all WPD positions from civil service, based on discussions with police unions.

In addition to public administration, WRRB covers a wide range of other issues of concern to local governments and the community. One such example is food security. In 2022, the Worcester Regional Research Bureau published **Is Worcester Food Insecure? It Depends on Where**, a regional analysis on food insecurity, particularly focused on the Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) gap. This analysis was used in the **Worcester Community Food Assessment: Learning from the Lived Experience of Worcester Residents** as one of its key Foundational Research projects alongside the 2023 Greater Worcester Community Health Assessment and Tufts University's Catalyzing Communities Research with the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester. The Worcester Community Food Assessment was published by the Center for Food Equity, Worcester County Food Bank, Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Prevention Research Center at UMass Chan Medical School, and the City of Worcester's Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Public Health. The Worcester Regional Research Bureau and the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester were featured at the Boston Area Research Initiative's Annual Insight-to-Impact Summit in its Infusing Equity into Institutions: Shifting Practice Session to discuss the collaborative effort that produced the Community Food Assessment through a people-centered approach to research.

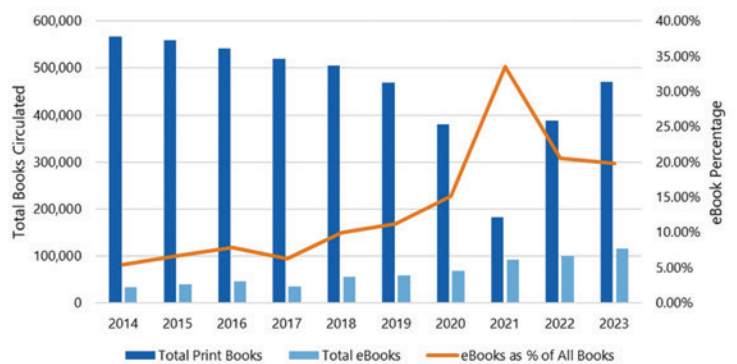
Another example of local government work is, the Bureau's ArcGIS StoryMap about the Worcester Public Library, **Check it Out: the Worcester Public Library in Space and Time**. This comprehensive dashboard included information about the Library's circulation, holdings, revenues, and the like, documenting sweeping change from before the COVID pandemic to fiscal year 2023, the last year for which data was available. In addition, the StoryMap included interactive elements, such

as maps of library locations transposed onto demographic and income data, and allowed users to explore distances between libraries and schools, as well as libraries and geographical "population centers" of each Census Block Group.

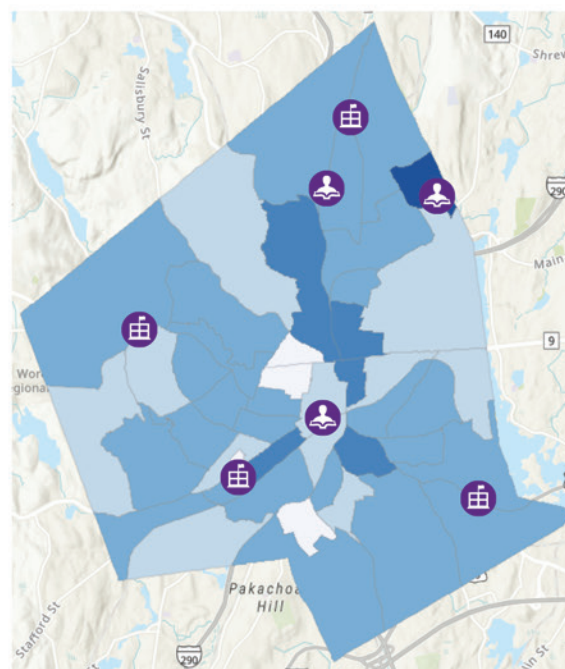


Questions to Consider about Worcester Now | Next Master Plan was recognized by the Governmental Research Association with its **2024 Award for Best Short Form Writing**.

WORCESTER TOTAL BOOK CIRCULATION



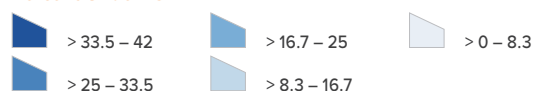
MAP OF WORCESTER LIBRARIES BY PERCENT UNDER 18



Library Points

- Burncoat Branch
- Frances Perkins Branch
- Goddard Branch
- Great Brook Valley Branch
- Main Library
- Roosevelt Branch
- Tatnuck Magnet Branch

Percent Under 18



EDUCATION

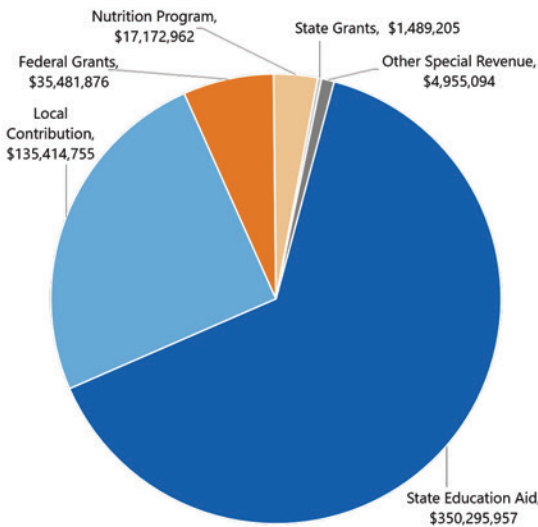
This year the Bureau continued to release its updated analysis of the Worcester Public Schools’ budget, **Paying for a Public Education: An Examination of the FY25 Worcester Public Schools’ Budget**. This report sought to concisely explain the more than \$544 million budget of the schools, explaining to the lay reader the ins and outs of how, exactly, public education is paid for. Just like the City, the Schools must have a budget in place by July 1 each year. In some sense, the budget is “fixed” – the Commonwealth determines how much money *must*, at a minimum, be spent by the Schools on its students – though cost centers and sizes may differ slightly from year to year. Most of the Schools’ budget in Worcester comes from state aid, which this year made up 72.1% of its general revenue budget, or 64.3% of its total budget when including grant revenues. This year, the Schools faced a revenue deficit, thanks in part to the impacts of inflation on expenses and the Commonwealth’s aid calculations. Last year’s edition of **Paying for a Public Education**, was featured in an online FY25 Budget Forum focused on the Worcester Public Schools hosted by the Worcester Education Collaborative and the Worcester Education Equity Roundtable. The Forum began with a presentation on the Bureau’s report from September 2023, and

was followed by an overview by the Worcester Public Schools, and subsequent discussion, on the then-ongoing FY25 budget proposals.

In January 2024, The Research Bureau released **Understanding Your Neighborhood Schools**, a never before seen tool in the City. The Bureau, using publicly available spreadsheets, was able to map the “catch zones” of each school in the City. These zones show the geographic areas that are serviced by each school in the City. What makes this unprecedented, however, was that creating these maps allowed for demographic and income comparisons of different school neighborhoods for the first time: when layered onto Census data, the demographic compositions of each can be estimated, allowing interested users to see how different school neighborhoods compare to each other and to their local schools.

Continuing its focus on education policy, the Bureau published **Building the Future: Investing in Worcester Public Schools Facilities**. This report highlights the urgent need for strategic investment in Worcester Public Schools (WPS) facilities and provides insights into the role of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) in Worcester and across the Commonwealth. Supported by the Worcester Education Collaborative, the report examines local contributions to these projects and includes an original analysis of the district’s 2017 Facilities Master Plan to inform current planning efforts. The report concludes with key recommendations for local leaders: developing a data-driven priority list for critical needs, ensuring a transparent and equitable process for selecting construction and repair projects, and analyzing the relationship between school quality and student demographics. The Bureau also recommends considering the consolidation of pre-WWII schools and advocating for increased state investment in school

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS, SOURCES OF REVENUE, FY25



Worcester Public Schools Expenditure Centers	
Total Employees*	\$462,306,585
Total Supplies and Services	\$81,572,493
Total Capital Equipment	\$930,771
Total Expenditures FY25	\$544,809,849

Source: Worcester Public Schools, FY25 Budget. (*Employees includes salaries, overtime, and fringe benefits)

SCAN FOR MORE:



Paying for a Public Education: An Examination of the FY25 Worcester Public Schools’ Budget



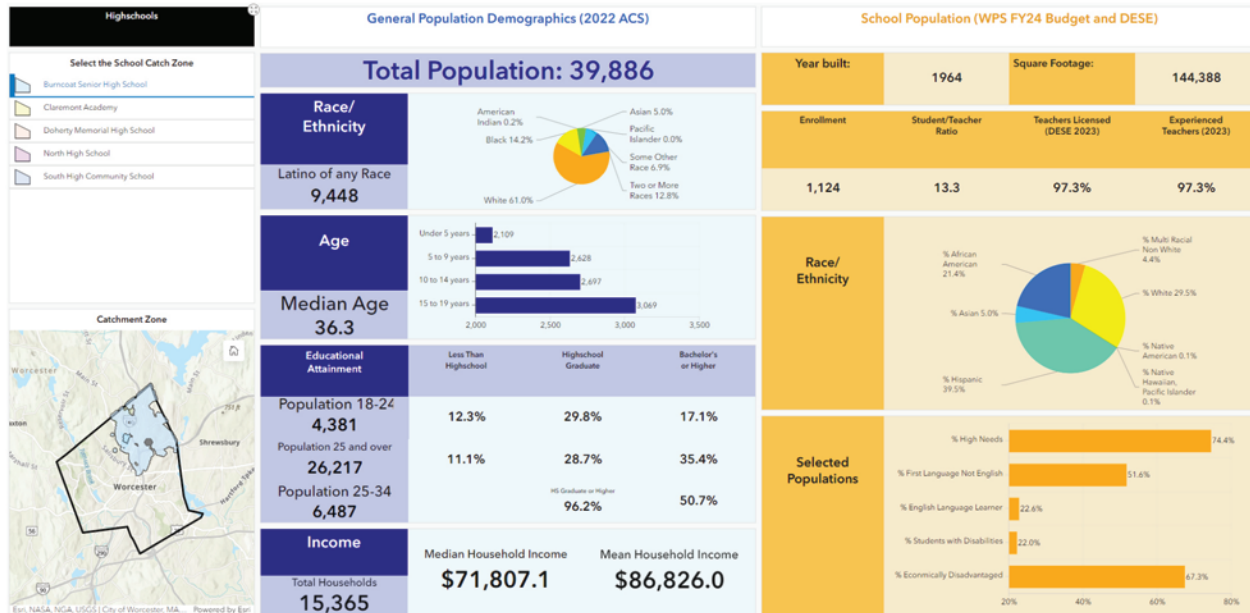
Understanding Your Neighborhood Schools



Building the Future: Investing in Worcester Public Schools Facilities



UNDERSTANDING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS, SAMPLE DASHBOARD (BURNCOAT HIGH SCHOOL)



facilities to address inflation, ADA compliance, and land acquisition costs. Following the release of Building the Future, the Bureau has briefed numerous stakeholders such as Worcester NAACP's Education Committee, MassINC, Worcester Education Equity Roundtable, and Standing Committees of both the Worcester City Council and School Committee. The Bureau was a featured presenter at a Worcester Education Collaborative forum, Building Our Future, alongside Worcester Public Schools' Superintendent Rachel Monárrez and State Representative Mary Keefe. The Bureau's report and participation helped bridge the gap between local findings and state-level policy discussions, underscoring the report's key recommendations and fostering a collaborative dialogue aimed at advancing the City's educational infrastructure.



Building the Future: Investing in Worcester Public School Facilities was recognized by the Governmental Research Association with its **2024 Award for Most Effective Education: Local Government Issue**.



Understanding Your Neighborhood Schools was recognized by the Governmental Research Association with its **2024 Certificate of Merit for Best Digital Communication**.

Table 1: Comparing Worcester's MSBA Projects to Peer Cities (2011-2022)

Peer Cities	Accelerated Repairs	Core Projects
Boston	38	2
Worcester	31	3
Springfield	28	5
Lowell	15	1
Brockton	13	1
New Bedford	11	1
Lynn	8	1
Lawrence	3	2

INSIGHTS INSIDER – WORCESTER COUNTY INSIGHTS

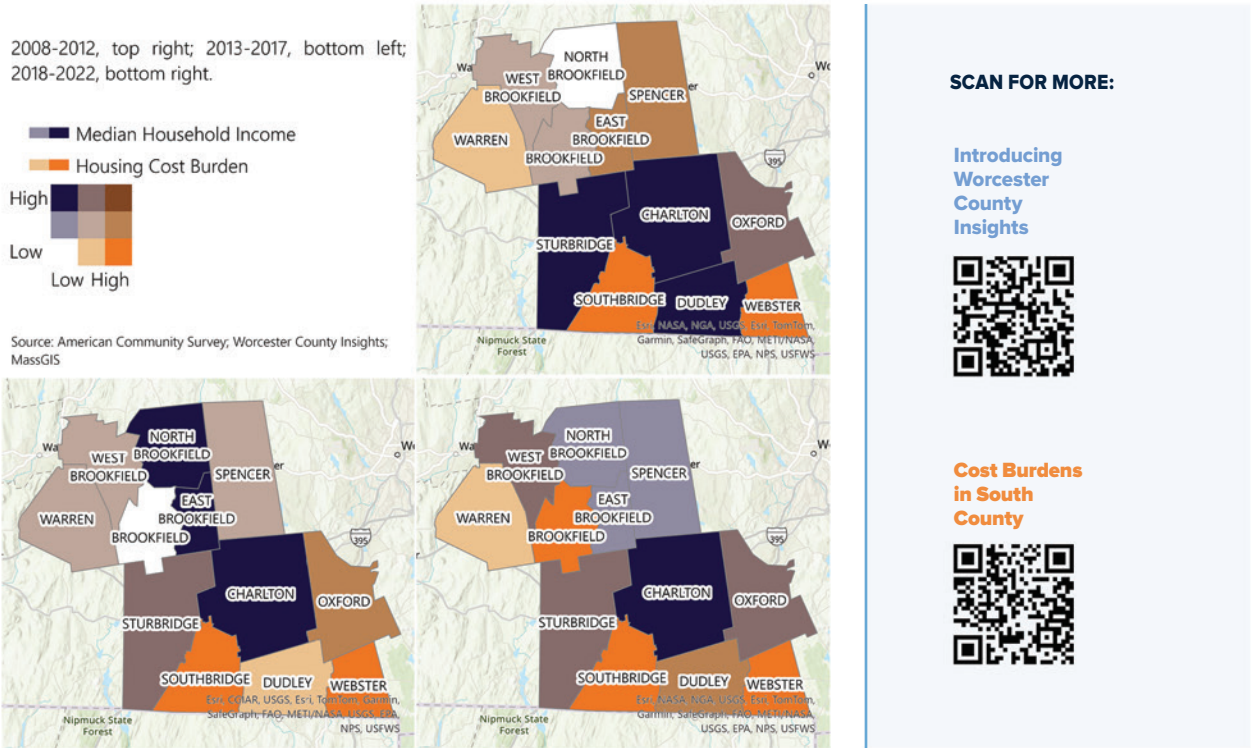
Worcester County Insights is a collaborative effort led by Greater Worcester Community Foundation and Worcester Regional Research Bureau to provide essential data through a county-wide community indicators platform. The resource was launched on April 30th at Mechanics Hall with a stakeholder tutorial and a reception celebrating its launch. This resource offers local information across 60 indicators covering community life, demographics and diversity, economic mobility, employment and workforce, health and wellbeing, youth and education, and racial equity. As part of the endeavor, Worcester Regional Research Bureau is producing the series *Insights Insider* using data directly from Worcester County Insights. **Introducing Worcester County Insights** is the first edition of the series, providing an overview and insights into the platform. As the *Insider* explores, all types of organizations can find value in the data from addressing areas of need to strategic planning, grant applications to targeted interventions. The platform also offers practical features for users including customized visualizations, mapping, downloadable tables and charts, and more.

Following this initial introductory edition, **Cost Burdens in South County**, the second entry in the *Insights Insider* series, covers the interaction between median household income and housing cost

burden in the 12 communities that make up southwestern Worcester County. Released in September 2024, the *Insider* covers three five-year periods between 2008 and 2022 and finds that, when compared to their neighbors, Southbridge and Webster had consistently low household incomes and high housing cost burdens, while Charlton fared the opposite. The interaction between these variables is important to understand, as while the threshold for housing cost burden—30% of income spent on housing costs—is the same no matter one’s household income, the amount of money spent on housing costs and left for other household necessities can differ drastically depending on one’s base income level.

On September 13, 2024, the Bureau participated in an event with the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester focused on best practices for health equity and the Community Health Improvement Plan. Specifically, along with the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the Bureau presented on the Worcester County Insights Dashboard. This presentation included information on how to use it, why disaggregated data is critical for advancing public health, and provided examples on how the data can be further refined for use by interested groups and individuals in the community.

MAP 1: INTERACTION BETWEEN MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND HOUSING COST BURDEN, SOUTHWESTERN WORCESTER COUNTY, 2008-2022





TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This year, the Bureau released a number of reports on transportation and infrastructure in the City, covering a wide range of topics. From commercial real estate to broadband to parking, the Bureau left no stone unturned. The first report in this series was the **Spring 2024 Broadband Update**, which was an online dashboard using American Community Survey data to provide detailed, Census Tract level, information about internet access in Worcester and each of its neighbors. Building on the Bureau's past broadband work, it provides maps of households with and without internet access or computers, classifies households by type of broadband, and contains an update of subscribers to the now-defunct Affordable Connectivity Program.

The Bureau followed this dashboard in April 2024 with **Appreciating the Value of Commercial Properties: The Significance of Commercial Real Estate**. Commercial real estate is a key economic engine in municipalities, providing space for jobs, manufactured inputs and outputs, and often serve as an important source of tax revenue for City government. In Worcester, the commercial property tax levy constituted 36.5% of the total tax levy in 2023, but was only 21% of citywide assessed property values. Compare this to Boston, where nearly 60% of the tax levy was from commercial and industrial properties. The report also found that Worcester residents are largely employed in management, business, science, and arts occupations; and the major industries that residents work in are educational services, and health care and social assistance. The report includes an interactive dashboard where readers can explore all of the City's commercial property parcels and see their fiscal year 2023 assessed values and uses.

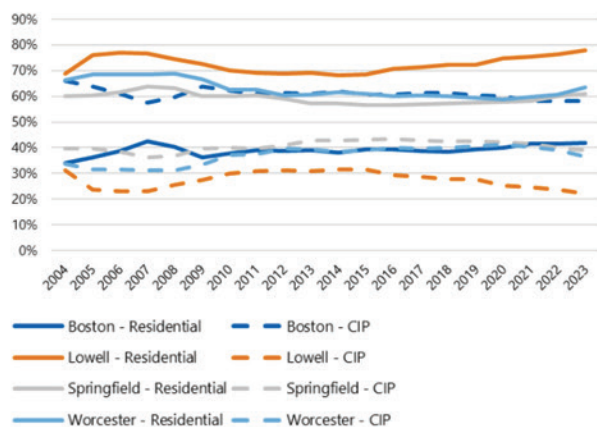
Soon after the release of the Bureau's commercial property report, it had the opportunity to present and participate in the EcoTarium's **Community Forum on Environmental Justice in Worcester** on April 11. At the forum, located in the EcoTarium's Alden Planetarium, the

Bureau presented at length on its report **Environmental (In)Justice: An Evaluation of Climate Impacts on Worcester Neighborhoods**, which was originally released in November 2023, and was a 2024 Government Research Association award winner for "Most Distinguished Research." Afterwards, the Bureau participated on a panel with other members of the community to take questions from the audience.

In July, the Bureau released two reports on parking in Worcester, as part of a multi-year effort on transportation with support from the Barr Foundation. The two parts are meant to be read together. The first, **Feeding the Meter: Public Parking Usage in Worcester** utilized extensive data provided by the City's Department of Transportation and Mobility regarding on-street and public off-street parking usage. Using data going back to 2021, the report was able to demonstrate the increasing usage of the City's Passport Parking app and subsequent increases in usage of the City's public lots through both kiosk and app usage in that time period. **Feeding the Meter** also reported on garage use in the City. Worcester has five public garages downtown, and the surface lot next to the library which uses the same payment system. The report found that Major Taylor Garage was by far the most-used garage, whether by monthly pass holders or transient users. Federal Plaza Garage was a close second. Surprisingly, McGrath Lot has more monthly pass users than either Union Station or Worcester Common Garage, and had more monthly transient users than either Pearl Elm or Union Station for at least 36 months in a row.

The Bureau followed **Feeding the Meter** with **Public Par(king): Worcester's Past, Present, and Future of Parking**. This report began with an extensive history of parking in Worcester, going back to the 1924 City Plan, demonstrating that attitudes towards parking have often swung back and forth on a pendulum of too much to too little, especially downtown. The clamor for parking has often led to strict and semi-strict parking minimums, or requirements to build a certain number of parking

CHART 2: PERCENTAGE OF TAX LEVY PAID BY RESIDENTIAL AND CIP PROPERTY TAXES, 2004–2023



Source: Massachusetts Division of Local Services

SCAN FOR MORE:



**Spring
2024
Broadband
Update**



**Feeding
the Meter:
Public
Parking
Usage in
Worcester**



**Appreciating
the Value of
Commercial
Properties**



**Public
Par(king):
Worcester's
Past,
Present, and
Future of
Parking**

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE CONTINUED

spaces depending on the development. The report’s main focus, however, was on the cost of those parking minimums. Building new parking can be enormously expensive—sometimes tens of thousands of dollars per space—and holding developers to a common parking standard can often increase costs, decrease the size of what is being built, and pass those costs onto the final consumers. This report ends with questions to consider, including what might happen if Worcester eliminated parking minimums citywide and how it could better promote municipal garage usage.

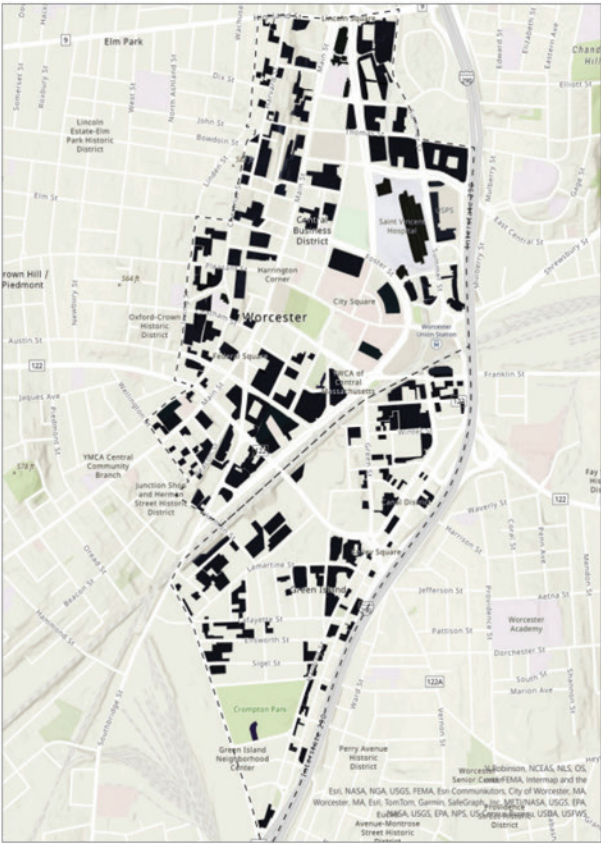
Finally, in August 2024, the Bureau released **Toward Safer Streets – Identifying Risk Factors for Non-Motorists in Worcester**, as the next edition in the transportation series with support from the Barr Foundation. This report used extensive statistical analysis to examine street risk factors and crashes involving vulnerable road users – pedestrians, bicyclists, and others not inside of vehicles themselves – between 2012 and 2019. **Toward Safer Streets** found that during this time period, pedestrians accounted for 61.5% of all VRU crashes, and 91.4% of casualties. Crashes involving residents over 65 were often fatal, although crashes with victims under 19 happened with more frequency.

Arterial roads, which make up only 20.9% of the City’s road network, accounted for 81.8% of all VRU fatalities or serious injuries. Areas of the City that were historically redlined were found to be four times likelier to contain a severe crash than those areas classified as “best.” Ultimately, the report explains the significant cost of pedestrian crashes, including the likelihood that any increases in danger may make vulnerable road users less likely to walk and bike to their destinations; moreover, the report lays out the immense lifetime economic costs of these crashes. In 2019 alone, it was estimated that Worcester’s VRU crashes could have a lifetime cost of \$493,644,552 in 2024 dollars.

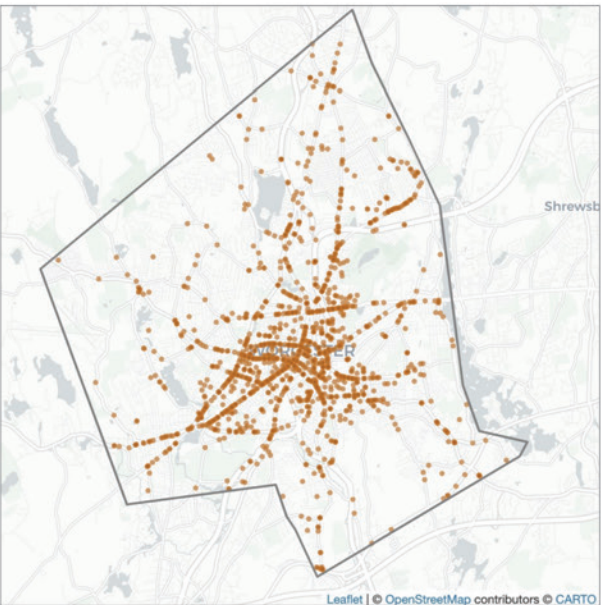


Environmental (In)Justice: An Evaluation of Climate Impacts on Worcester Neighborhoods was recognized by the Governmental Research Association with its **2024 Award for Most Distinguished Research: Local Government Issue**.

MAP 3: ALL GARAGES AND LOTS DOWNTOWN AND IN CANAL DISTRICT



MAP 5: PEDESTRIAN CRASH LOCATIONS IN WORCESTER (2012–2019)



Source: MassDOT Person Level Crash Details, 2012–2019

SCAN FOR MORE:



Toward Safer Streets – Identifying Risk Factors for Non-Motorists in Worcester

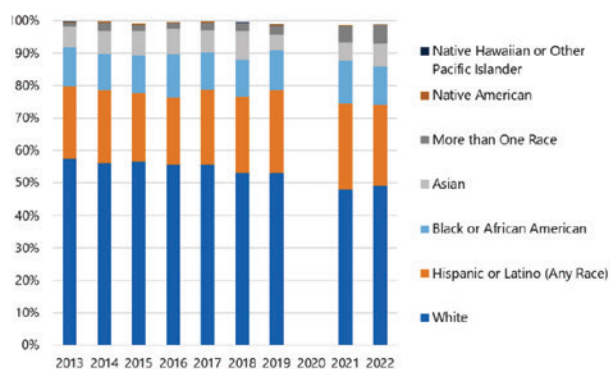


THE WORCESTER ALMANAC

In 2024, the Worcester Almanac released the 10th edition of **The Worcester Almanac**, our compendium of information on all things Greater Worcester. The Bureau undertakes the Worcester Almanac each year to provide government officials, residents, businesses, and institutions with an easily accessible, user-friendly source of current and trending data on various civic concerns. The Worcester Almanac would not be possible without the generous support of UniBank which has served as the sponsor of the Almanac for the last five years.

As the 10th edition of this annual compendium of data, The Research Bureau compiled an appendix on trends over the past 10 years. This appendix includes information on demographics, voter participation, household cost burden, WPS enrollment, and much more. Beyond this extension, the Worcester Almanac continues to feature data on government, demographics & the economy, health, education, public safety, transportation, sports, weather, and an appendix on children.

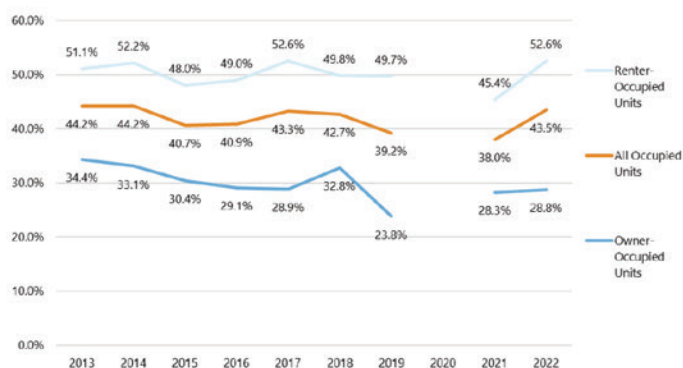
WORCESTER: POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2013-2022



*Data is not available for 2020

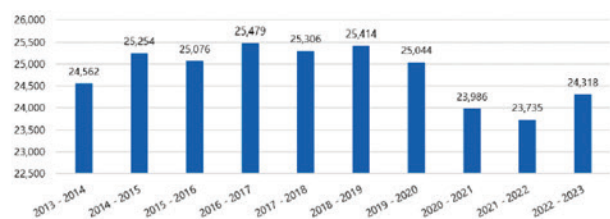
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 1-Year American Community Survey Estimates

WORCESTER: PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING 30% OR MORE OF INCOME ON HOUSING, 2013-2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 1-Year American Community Survey Estimates

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS: ENROLLMENT, 2014 - 2023



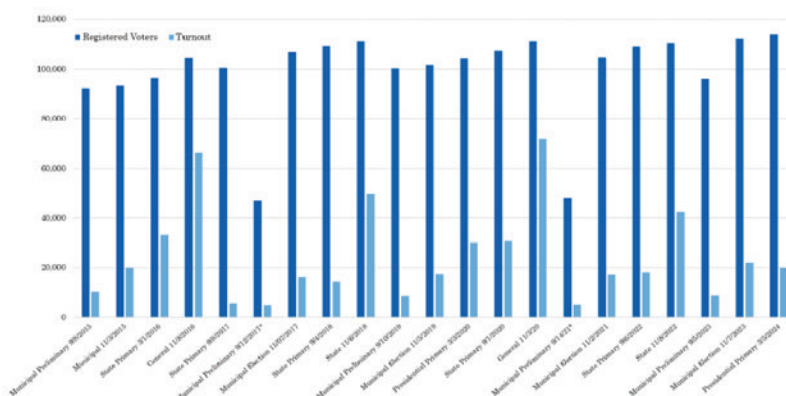
Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

SCAN FOR MORE:



The Worcester Almanac 2024

WORCESTER: REGISTERED VOTERS & BALLOTS CAST, 2015-2024



Source: Worcester City Clerk, Worcester Elections Commission

ISAIAH THOMAS AWARD

FOR DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY SERVICE

IN EVERY COMMUNITY THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO UNSELFISHLY DEVOTE THEIR TIME AND ENERGIES TO THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS. They do this without expecting reward or acknowledgment, only hoping that their efforts may help to build a better community and greater opportunities for all residents. Isaiah Thomas was a man of many firsts, he established Worcester's first newspaper and its first bank, he was Worcester's

first postmaster and first honorary judge. Isaiah Thomas dedicated much of his life to improving his city and his country as Worcester's "first great citizen."

Such personal sacrifices and accomplishments merit sincere recognition. The Isaiah Thomas Award provides an opportunity for our community to express appreciation for "distinguished community service."



2024 RECIPIENT

J. CHRISTOPHER COLLINS

Chris is dedicated to Worcester, contributing countless hours to his community service, guiding non-profits, and Worcester, toward a brighter future. His profound impact can be felt by thousands of individuals throughout the Central Massachusetts community.

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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 2024 THOMAS S. GREEN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS were honored at Mechanics Hall on May 30, 2024.



Susan Christensen

FITCHBURG HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

“Sue Christensen is out there every day in Fitchburg, physically embedded in our streets, serving as not only the eyes and ears of the city with our most vulnerable residents, but sometimes as the first response and last hope for our residents who are most in need.”



Katelyn Duncan

WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

“Katelyn stands out for her unwavering dedication to providing and connecting New Americans to the services they need to not only survive but thrive in our community.”



George Kalivas

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“His dedication to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment sets a shining example for educators everywhere.”



Victoria Killeen

NORTHBOROUGH SENIOR
CENTER

“Vickie Killeen is an inspiring example of what it means to care for and improve our community and the lives of all of us who live and work here. Vickie is a treasured gift to the Senior Center, the town of Northborough, and all who meet her.”

THE 2024 THOMAS S. GREEN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS



Michelle Smith

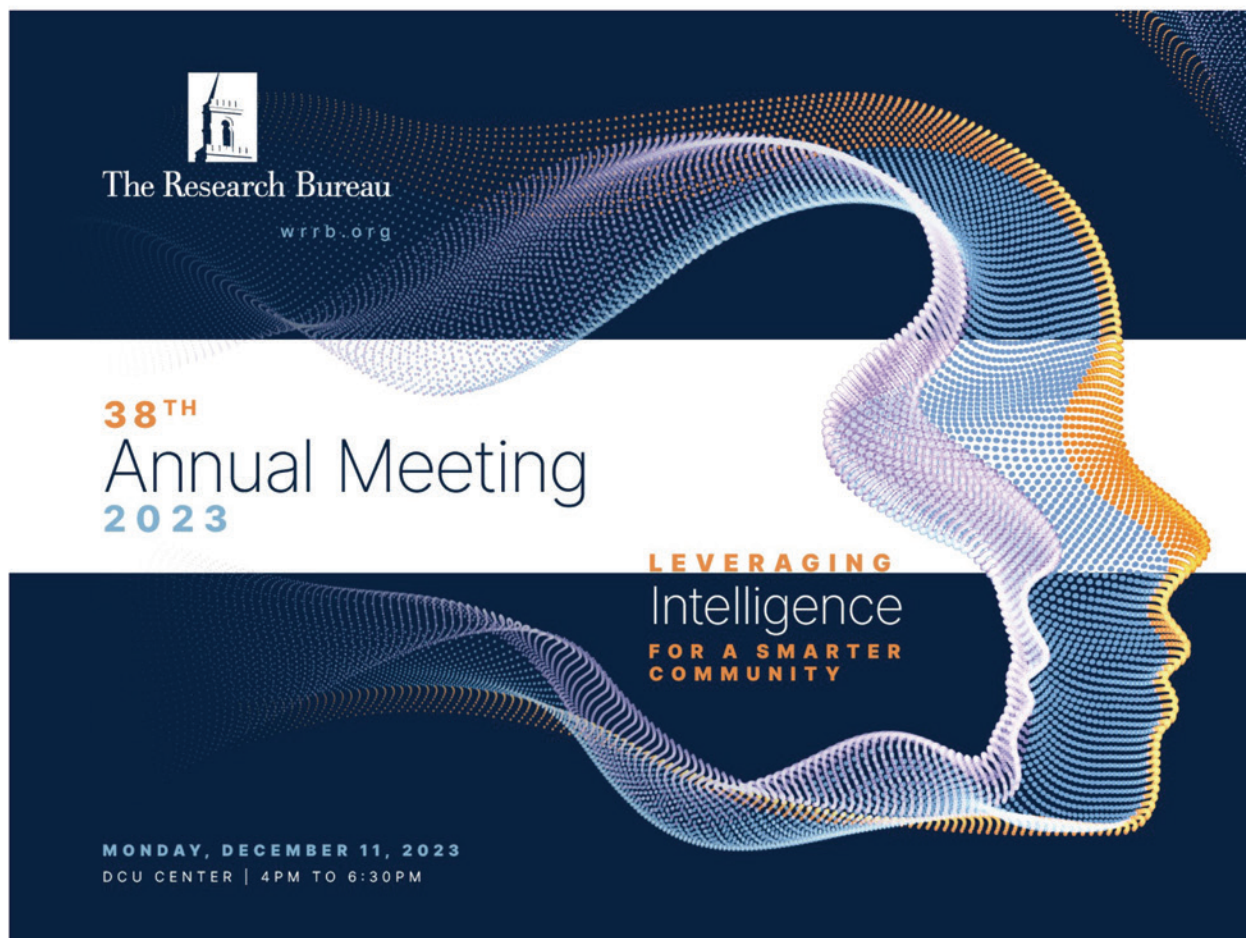
WORCESTER EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT


“I hope you will recognize not only Michelle’s tremendous professional accomplishments, but her impact on the field of public service as a role model for other women in local government. Michelle inspired me to continue on my own path into local government and that is a gift.”

SCAN FOR MORE:



2024
Thomas S. Green
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Awards




The Research Bureau
wrrb.org

38TH
Annual Meeting
2023

LEVERAGING
Intelligence
FOR A SMARTER
COMMUNITY

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2023
DCU CENTER | 4PM TO 6:30PM

FEATURED SPEAKER

Professor Renée Cummings

Professor of Practice in Data Science
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

SCAN FOR MORE:

WRRB's 38th
Annual Meeting



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS



FEBRUARY 27, 2024

Board Meeting AT SAINT-GOBAIN'S NORTON HALL

Featured Speaker: Yvonne Hao

Secretary of the Executive Office of Economic Development



JUNE 10, 2024

Board Meeting AT MASSDOT'S CENTRAL MA TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Featured Speaker: Monica Tibbits-Nutt

Secretary of Transportation & CEO of Massachusetts Department of Transportation

FAIRMAN C. COWAN MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

IN TRIBUTE TO THE TRAILBLAZERS converging on the intersection of progress in public service, **Harriette Chandler & Karyn Polito**. Your separate journeys have woven a tapestry of positive change for our Central Massachusetts community.

A dual nod to your impactful solo performances, joining together on issues significant to our region from infrastructure to healthcare, economic development to public transit, Central Massachusetts has been the beneficiary of your advocacy from both sides of the political aisle.



Presented to
**HARRIETTE CHANDLER &
KARYN POLITO**



ANNUAL MEETING **SPEAKERS**

- 2024 SUSAN M. COLLINS**, President & CEO,
Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
- 2023 RENÉE CUMMINGS**, Professor of Practice
in Data Science and first Data Activist-in-Residence
University of Virginia
- 2022 KENNETH L. TURNER**, President & CEO,
Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
- RITA L. SMITH**, Regional Director of Business HR –
Americas Pharma, AbbVie
- BRIAN COHEN**, Senior Vice President
CBRE/New England Consulting Group
- 2021 DR. LAURIE LESHIN**, President,
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
- 2020 DR. ROSABETH MOSS KANTER**,
Ernest L. Arbuckle Professor of Business Administration,
Harvard Business School
- 2019 DR. FRANCIS COLLINS**, Director,
National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- 2018 DR. KERRY HEALEY**, President,
Babson College, and
former Lieutenant Governor
- 2017 JAMES A. PEYSER**, Secretary of Education,
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- 2016 JOHN H. SUNUNU**, Former Governor,
State of New Hampshire, and
White House Chief of Staff
- 2015 JONATHAN KRAFT**, President,
The Kraft Group
- 2014 JAY ASH**, City Manager of Chelsea
- BERNARD F. LYNCH**, Founder,
Community Paradigm Associates, LLC
- MICHAEL V. O'BRIEN**, Executive Vice President,
Winn Development
- 2013 EDWARD GLAESER**, Fred and Eleanor Glimp
Professor of Economics, Harvard University
- 2012 ERIC S. ROSENGREN**, President & CEO,
Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
- 2011 SENATOR SCOTT BROWN**
- 2010 LISA A. MANCINI**, Senior Vice President,
CSX Corporation
- 2009 AMITY SHLAES**, Bloomberg News Columnist,
Political Economist
- 2008 JOHN W. ROWE**, Chairman, President & CEO,
Exelon Corporation
- 2007 DR. THOMAS PAYZANT**, former Superintendent
of the Boston Public Schools and senior lecturer
at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- 2006 DR. DAVID DRISCOLL**, Commissioner of Education,
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- 2005 TAMAR JACOBY**, Author and Senior Fellow
at the Manhattan Institute
- 2004 JOHN GANNON**, Staff Director,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Select Committee on Homeland Security
- 2003 GOVERNOR MITT ROMNEY**,
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The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art,
New York City, and Senior Fellow
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- 1996 GLENN C. LOURY**, Professor of Economics,
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- 1995 PETER HARKNESS**, Editor and Publisher of Governing
- 1994 JAMES Q. WILSON**, Author and Professor of Political
Science, UCLA
- 1993 ROBERT POOLE**, President, Reason Foundation
- 1992 WILLIAM HUDNUT**, former Mayor of Indianapolis
- 1991 DAVID P. FORSBERG**, Secretary,
Executive Office of Health and Human Services,
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- 1990 BRUCE CARNES**, Director of Budget Planning,
Office of National Drug Control Policy
- 1989 EDWARD J. LOGUE**, CEO,
Logue Boston, former Director of the Boston
Redevelopment Authority
- 1988 RAYMOND FLYNN**, Mayor of Boston
- 1987 WILLIAM BULGER**, Senate President,
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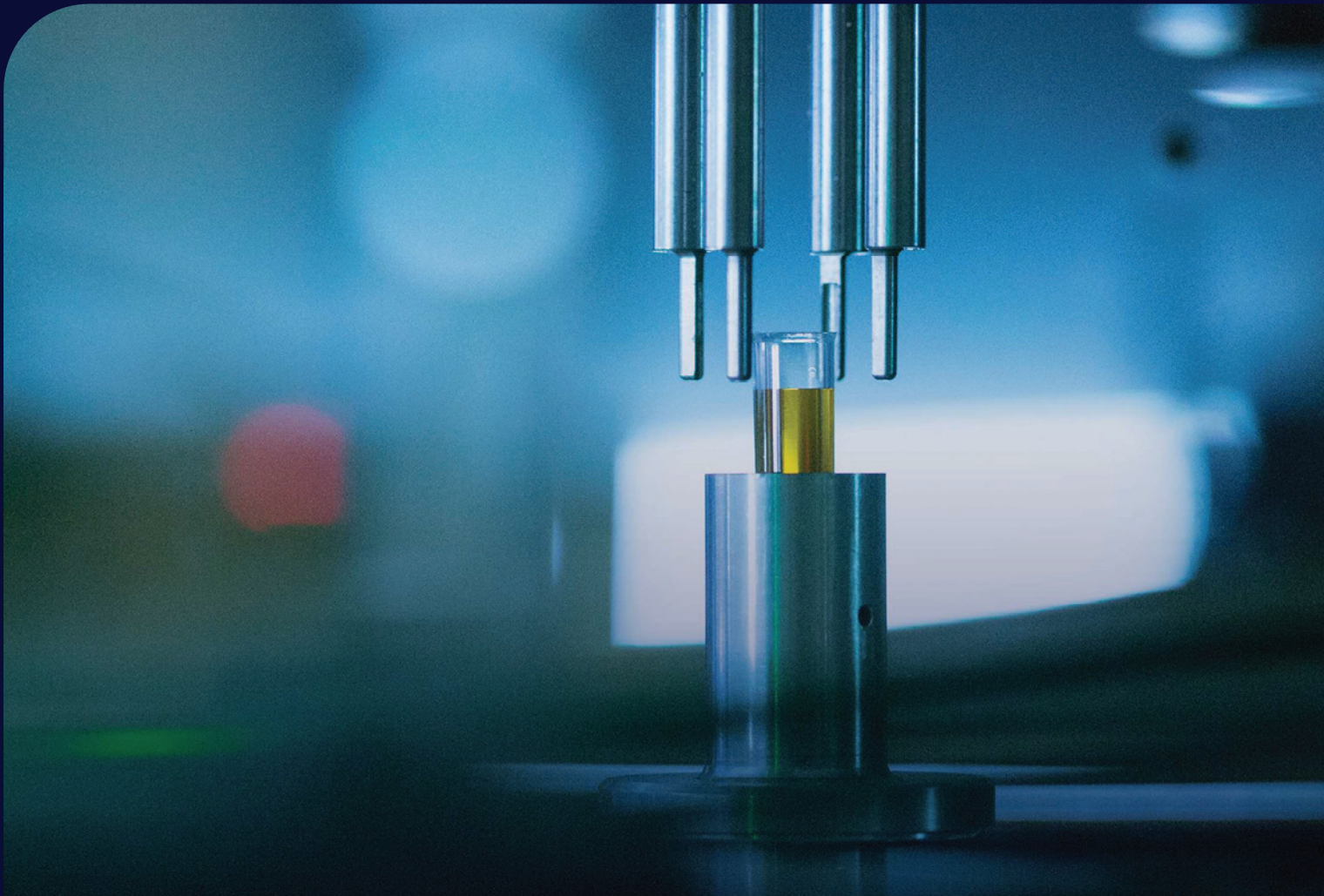



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