EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IN WORCESTER'S RAPIDLY EVOLVING URBAN LANDSCAPE, SAFEGUARDING THE CITY'S MOST VULNERABLE ROAD USERS — pedestrians, cyclists, and others outside of vehicles — has emerged as a pivotal concern. This report, coinciding with the ongoing actions under the Worcester Now|Next plan, the Mobility Action Plan (MAP), and the Vision Zero initiative, delves into the intricate web of risk factors contributing to the perilous conditions these users face daily. By scrutinizing the physical attributes of Worcester's roadways, traffic patterns, and the socio-economic and demographic profiles of affected communities, this analysis uncovers the underlying causes of VRU crashes. Through comprehensive data analysis and strategic insights, the report aims to guide Worcester's policymakers in crafting targeted interventions that will transform the city's streets into safer, more equitable spaces for all.

This report is divided into three sections that explore these aspects.

PAGES 3-5 | DISCUSSES GENERAL RISKS AND ONGOING ACTIONS ADDRESSING ROAD SAFETY

- Between 2012 and 2019, an average of **184 crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists occurred per year** in Worcester.
- According to a 2022 report, **Worcester had a pedestrian fatality rate of 3.4 per 100,000 residents** — almost double that of Boston.
- The upcoming Mobility Action Plan identifies that **just 62% of the City's sidewalk network is in "good" condition and that bike lanes only cover 7.2 miles of Worcester streets.**

PAGES 5-11 | ANALYZES DEMOGRAPHIC AND SPATIAL DATA TO UNCOVER TRENDS IN PEDESTRIAN CRASHES

- Residents over 65 constituted only 5.8% of all crashes and 13.3% of total City population but 32.4% of fatal crashes. 2.5 times more males were victims of fatal crashes than females.
- **81.8% of arterial road segments were found to contain a severe vulnerable road user crash.** Similarly, greater traffic level, lane count, and lane width were found to increase severe crash rates. Greater shoulder width and the presence of a median decreased crash rates.
- 9.6% of pedestrian and cyclist crashes occurred downtown. Further, **areas which were found to be historically redlined were found to be over four times likelier to contain a severe crash.** Similarly, **city blocks designated for highest environmental justice concern were over seven times likelier to contain a severe crash than not.**
- **71.4% of Worcester's fatal or severe pedestrian and cyclist crashes occurred within 300 feet of a bus stop**. In comparison, 50% of Boston's crashes occurred in the same range.

PAGES 11-12 | ADDRESSES THE ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND FINANCIAL COSTS OF CRASHES

- High crash rates reduce residents' willingness to walk and bike. **According to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, 60% percent of respondents reported that they would consider biking if they thought their trips would be safer and more comfortable**.
- In peer cities, **implementing Complete Streets redevelopment plans has created new jobs, raised private investment, and increased property development** — in some cities by up to 111%.
- The Bureau estimates that, in terms of damages, medical costs, reduced productivity, and lost-wages, **Worcester's 2019 pedestrian and cyclist crashes costed $493,644,552.**

PAGE 12 | PRESENTS QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER GOING FORWARD

- **What sensitive areas can be identified for speed limit reductions?**
- **How can the City continue to consider community feedback while implementing safety projects?**
- **What plans can be adopted to ensure that sidewalk maintenance and clearing is timely and adequate?**
- **How will the City prioritize high crash bus stops for improvements to prevent future crashes?**