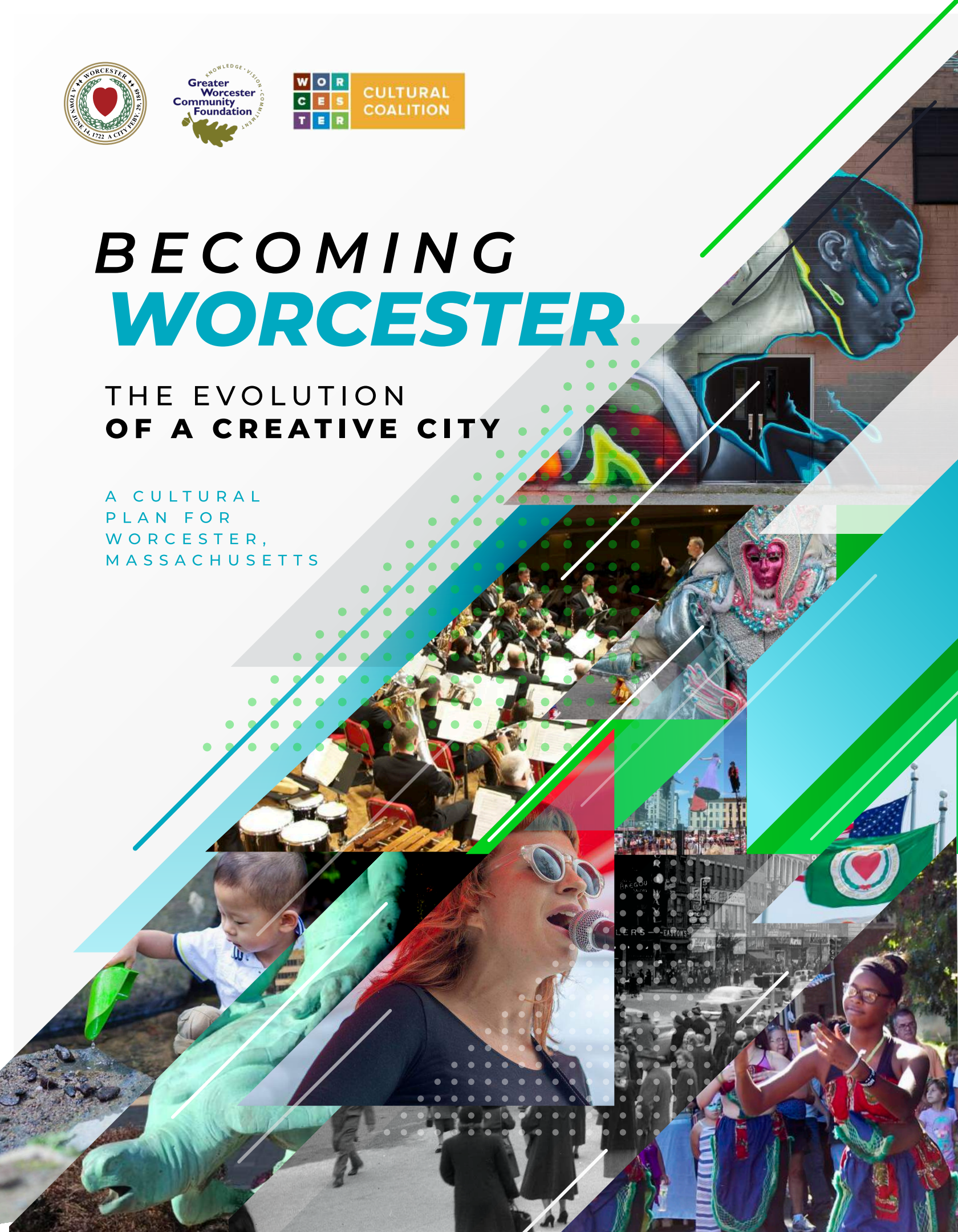
Greater Worcester Community Foundation

WORCESTER CULTURAL COALITION

BECOMING WORCESTER

THE EVOLUTION OF A CREATIVE CITY

A CULTURAL PLAN FOR WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS



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May 2019

Dear Worcester:

This letter is a call to action. Worcester is embarking on a new 10-year Cultural Plan which fosters an open and interactive relationship with the community and its government to ensure a better quality of life for everyone. In 2018, the City Administration partnered with the Worcester Cultural Coalition and the Greater Worcester Community Foundation to craft a Worcester Cultural Plan that is inclusive, and embraces arts for all.

Arts, culture, and creativity play a critical role in Worcester's evolution as a great city. Just as we are the Heart of the Commonwealth, so is our cultural heritage the heart of our community. Worcester's museums, libraries, parks, and educational institutions date back hundreds of years. Worcester is the home of poets, musicians, painters and dancers of world renown. We are a proud city of neighborhoods, makers, artists, and immigrants with traditions that make us a city of creative community engagement. Arts and culture brings our city to life, helps us vision and experience the world in new ways, provides healing and gives voice to all. That is why the time is right for a new Cultural Plan which embraces the arts as not just nice, but necessary for Worcester to thrive and evolve into a truly creative city.

The Worcester Cultural Plan is unique in that it is embedded in the City's Masterplan. Arts and Culture are catalysts for creative economic development, embedding art into our streetscapes and design, lifting up our rich immigrant experiences and shining a spotlight on all we offer, knowing that great cities embrace arts and culture. Over the past year, hundreds of individuals have participated in forums, discussions and surveys to develop this plan. An advisory team has worked tirelessly to bring this work to fruition.

The Cultural Plan embeds creativity in the design of our streets, youth engagement, and education, support of our neighborhoods through celebration and creative entrepreneurship, and support for cultural organizations, artists and neighborhood cultural centers.

The Cultural Plan is laid out with goals, strategies and partnerships throughout the next decade. This is not a plan for the meek: it is a call to action. With this new plan we have a roadmap to bring our city to life through arts and creativity.

We extend our sincere thanks to Creative Community Builders for facilitating the process and the hundreds who have participated. We are committed to lifting up our creative community, working with and challenging the creative arts and cultural sectors along with private developers, entrepreneurs, citizens and philanthropists to take us to new heights as Worcester, the truly creative city.

Edward M. Augustus
City of Worcester

Erin I. Williams
Worcester Cultural Coalition

Ann Lisi
Greater Worcester Community Foundation

BECOMING WORCESTER:

OUR VISION

WORCESTER IS:

- A city with strong physical and social cohesion that enables ease of movement for people of all ages, abilities, and means;
- A city that supports innovation and entrepreneurship, learning, and cultural opportunities for all;
- A city that reflects its heritage, its diverse cultures, and new ideas in its public spaces, downtown, natural and built environments, and in its neighborhoods;
- A city where daily life is supported by local commerce, services, and activities related to the diverse traditions, creative expressions, and collective celebrations of all its people.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WORCESTER

Officially founded on June 13, 1722, Worcester's story is one of innovation, creativity, diversity and enterprise, of people inspiring the continuous reinvention of this wonderful community.

For centuries the area was home to people whose ancestors had migrated from Asia. In 1674 English colonists pushed west, purchasing eight square miles (Worcester, Holden and part of Auburn) from the native Nipmuc inhabitants. In 1713, after two failed settlement attempts, Jonas Rice and his family moved onto what is now Union Hill, setting in motion the Worcester of today.

In 1731, as the county was being organized, Worcester, not the largest of the area's towns, but centrally located, was designated the county seat. Court meetings brought crowds to Main Street every few months, and Worcester continued to grow, prosper and evolve.

The American Revolution and subsequent years saw new people claiming social, economic and political prominence in Worcester, sparking its 19th century evolution from an agricultural town to what by the end of the century would be a major industrial city. Completion of the Blackstone Canal in 1828 energized all of central Massachusetts to look to the new "port of Worcester." However, it was the arrival of steam soon thereafter that truly changed Worcester and confirmed its self-proclaimed role as the "Heart of the Commonwealth."

By mid-century, steam power had launched a new era in Worcester's industrial history, powering its growing number of actories as well as the railroads that connected the town and its products to the world. People flocked to Worcester to populate the jobs. In a short time, Worcester grew from a town of nearly 4,000 to almost 17,000. On February 29, 1848, the community was officially reorganized as a city.

Industry flourished as Worcester supplied the world with an amazing and ever-growing diversity of products - wire, looms, monkey wrenches, steam calliopes, grinding wheels, and so many more. People came in ever increasing numbers from points near and far to take up new residency, many for their first time in the United States. These arrivals brought with them new traditions, languages and religions, often established new neighborhoods, and continued to inform the social, cultural and economic evolution of the City.

Worcester's growing 19th century industrial and social prowess was evidenced in the dedication of the new City Hall in 1898. Built by master local builders, the Norcross Brothers, the imposing European-inspired granite building replaced the 18th century Old South Church and the 1820s city hall. Rising some 200 feet above a busy Main Street and thriving downtown, it stood as a bold reminder to all that Worcester, was indeed, the "City of Prosperity."

Worcester continued to boom well into the 20th century. Downtown was filled with stores and shoppers, and local industries supplied the needs of the country in both war and peace. In 1949 Worcester received its first All-America City Award, presented to communities for effectively addressing their most critical challenges. Worcester's vision for its future began to turn to downtown redevelopment - replacing aging buildings, establishing new industrial parks on the edge of the City, and redesigning the commercial/pedestrian city core. Powered by the automobile, Worcester's population moved farther out, creating new neighborhoods, shopping centers, and alternatives to "downtown."

But, more change was afoot, prompting the City to again evolve and reinvent itself. With the reduction in manufacturing and industry, local leaders fought to have the University of Massachusetts Medical School open in Worcester in 1962. Combined with the many colleges and universities already here, it led to a shift in emphasis from the "mechanical" arts to education and medicine. New collaborations between civic leadership, community institutions, and local investors emerged, as did new opportunities for employment and creative endeavors.

When Route 290 bisected the City in 1970, it enhanced Worcester's role as a transportation hub, but divided the City more than just physically, amplifying the local impact of the social challenges that were sweeping the nation. Again, local leaders sought new strategies for building social and communal cohesion while also keeping the City moving forward.

Worcester has always been a city of vision and passion, informed by its history. At the dawn of the 21st century, Worcester remains the "Heart of the Commonwealth" with expanding business opportunities, exciting neighborhoods, a vibrant cultural life, global leadership status in medical science and biotechnology, renewed rail service, a new economic model for a redefined downtown, and an ever-expanding diversity of people, ideas and dreams.

VALUES GUIDING THE PLAN

The Worcester Community Believes In and Practices:

Working together and in partnership and transparency across the range of community priorities and perspectives among residents and nonprofits, civic, educational, and business sectors to achieve mutual goals.

Imagining possibilities and supporting individual and collective aspirations of Worcester residents to create, innovate, and include all people in opportunities.

Including the diversity of people and ideas in every arena; welcoming, listening to and including stories and visions whether familiar, different, or entirely new.

Grounding community work in the City's rich and complex history, unique qualities, assets and advantageous geographic location.

Sharing spaces in the public arena, in daily life, and in special celebrations and through collaboration in development and/or management of civic and cultural resources.

GOALS

I. Old and New Worcester - The City's Unique Identity

Craft, foster, and project a healthy and vibrant image that is meaningful to everyone who lives, works or visits; an identity that recognizes the city's history and 300th anniversary.

II. Public Space Design and Activation

Infuse the city with attractive, active, accessible, and connected public spaces that incorporate and support multiple and diverse forms of mobility, ways of life, and cultural and creative expressions.

III. Cultural Equity, Access, and Inclusion

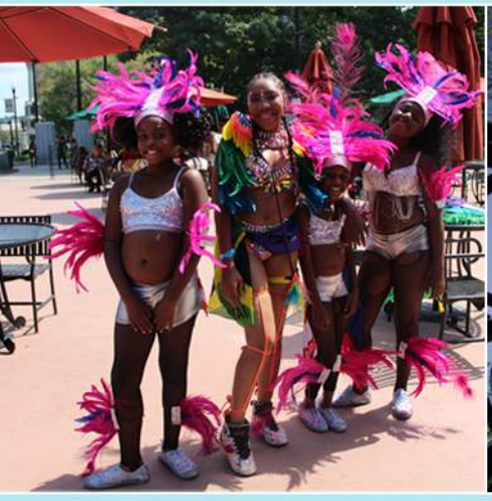
Embrace and foster cultural and creative expression, ways of life, and cultural activity and organizations meaningful to all residents (present and future) while providing equitable opportunities and access to resources.

IV. Youth, Education, and Family Engagement

Prepare and embolden future generations of leaders and active participants in cultural, civic, and entrepreneurial dimensions of the city while fostering greater involvement of families in cultural and civic activities.

V. Creativity and Innovation

Recognize and support artists, creatives, and creative businesses as key to the City's economic, intellectual, and cultural development. providing resources and an environment supportive of their creative explorations, and incorporating arts and creative thinking across sectors and professional areas.



GOALS & OUTCOMES

I. Old and New Worcester - The City's Unique Identity

OUTCOME I.1: A YOUTHFUL, DIVERSE AND CREATIVE CITY

The City's rejuvenated image as a rewarding place to live, work and visit is shared by the people who make up the community and reflects a creative and open city rich in higher education institutions and cultural activity.

OUTCOME I.2: THE WORCESTER STORY

The City's history of innovation, industry and immigration, as well as intellectual development, set it apart; its story as told by its residents and physical landscape lifts its spirits as well as its fortunes.

OUTCOME I.3: CIVIC LEADERSHIP AND NEIGHBORLINESS

Worcester is a city in which people, institutions and businesses express pride and care about their neighbors, and where they are willing to engage and work together to make everyone's lives better.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

II. Public Space Design and Activation

OUTCOME II.1: DESIGN FOR CONNECTIVITY
The physical and social connectivity of the City is enhanced through thoughtful design standards and initiatives.

OUTCOME II.2: PLACEMAKING FOR COMMUNITY COHESION
Distinctive neighborhoods and a vibrant downtown provide increasingly active and attractive areas for daily life, gathering, conducting business, learning, shopping, and cultural celebration.

OUTCOME II.3: FOSTERING NEIGHBORHOOD STEWARDSHIP
Social activity and public investment in neighborhoods and downtown increase the sense of ownership and responsibility among residents, local business, cultural, and civic organizations.

OUTCOME II.4: CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC SPACES
Worcester's year-round calendar of cultural activities in public spaces grows in meaning for all residents and visitors and in diversity of participation.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

III. Cultural Equity, Access, and Inclusion

OUTCOME III.1: EQUITY IN MOBILITY AND ACCESS
Equitable opportunities for mobility across the City begin with young people in school and people with mobility challenges, including the elderly.

OUTCOME III.2: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
Leaders from communities of color hold key positions in existing institutions, civic organizations, and the political arena as the social and cultural entrepreneurs critical to the community's success.

OUTCOME III.3: A CITY OF WELCOMING AND BELONGING
Worcester is a welcoming and inclusive community with a sense of connection, pride, and stewardship among people of all backgrounds, that encourages positive associations that honor and maintain cultural identity.

OUTCOME III.4: INCLUSIVITY IN ARTS & CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS
All cultural institutions in the City have established and strive for ambitious diversity, equity, inclusions, and accessibility goals (DEIA), and have become leaders in advancing widely these shared community priorities.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

IV. Youth, Education, and Family Engagement

OUTCOME IV.1: YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Early exposure to arts and culture in pre-school and pre-K adds to young children's development, sets them on a path to aesthetic appreciation and cultural understanding, and gives them wonderful memories to share with their families.

OUTCOME IV.2: SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Working together, schools and the cultural and creative sector have closed funding gaps and provided arts education as a core to school curriculum.

OUTCOME IV.3: YOUNG VOICES/YOUNG LEADERS

Worcester is rejuvenated by motivated and capable young people; their meaningful engagement and leadership begun through community cultural efforts.

OUTCOME IV.4: COLLEGE STUDENTS

Across the nine colleges in the City, young adults find enrichment and new connections through cultural engagement that enriches their time in college and deepens their relationship to the City.

OUTCOME IV.5: ADVOCATING FOR YOUTH

Greater coordination and interconnection between the cultural community and services, institutions, and programs serving and advocating for the needs of young people lead to a stronger network of services for all youth.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

V. Creativity and Innovation

OUTCOME V.1: CONNECTING ARTISTS AND CREATIVES
Artists and creative entrepreneurs find critical ideas, inspiration, and resources from high levels of interactivity and close proximity with other artists, with entrepreneurs, and communities in which they live, learn, work, and play.

OUTCOME V.2: CONNECTING CREATIVES ACROSS SECTORS
Creative thinking is infused into many professions and areas across the City for the benefit of business, higher education, the public sector, and neighborhoods - enabling more artists to earn a good living.

OUTCOME V.3: A CREATIVE CITY
Artists find that Worcester is supportive of their work and Worcester sees more ways that artists support a stronger and more successful city.

OUTCOME V.4: CREATIVE SPACES AND PLACES
Artists and cultural organizations find ample and affordable spaces to live, work, and engage with communities across all Worcester neighborhoods.

TOP 20 PRIORITIES

1. **Shape and tell the "Worcester Story" through a cohesive image and brand that reflects and highlights the City's many strengths.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City of Worcester
   NOTATION: Goal I; Outcome I.1: Strategic Activities I.1.A., I.1.B., I.1.C.

2. **Install branding and wayfinding that welcomes people to Worcester at key entrances to the City and to distinctive neighborhoods.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division; Cultural Development Office; Department of Public Works & Parks
   NOTATION: Goal I; Outcome I.2: Strategic Activity I.2.C.

3. **Promote neighborhoods based on their unique assets - like cultural spaces, history, college campuses, events, parks, architecture, food, restaurants and shopping.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central Mass; Worcester Cultural Coalition
   NOTATION: Goal I; Outcome I.2: Strategic Activity I.2.A.

4. **Identify existing neighborhood nodes that are gathering places for our wide range of geographically and ethnically based communities.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development
   NOTATION: Goal II; Outcome II.2: Strategic Activity II.2.A.

5. **Work with City agencies and civic groups to enhance connections and communications with our colleges & universities, the airport, hotels, and the cultural sector.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central Mass; City Manager's Office
   NOTATION: Goal I; Outcome I.3: Strategic Activity I.3.B.

6. **Expand implementation of the complete streets policy, and continue streetscape updating throughout the City, prioritizing areas adjacent to schools and public gathering places.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division; Cultural Development Office; Department of Public Works & Parks
   NOTATION: Goal II; Outcome II.1: Strategic Activities II.1.A., II.1.B.

7. **Work collaboratively to deliver improvements to the City's public transportation system to help people efficiently get to all areas of the City**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Regional Transit Authority
   NOTATION: Goal III; Outcome III.1: Strategic Activities III.1.A., III.1.B.

8. **Engage with business and property owners to activate empty storefronts as creative spaces and provide opportunities for collaboration between artists, residents, businesses, and community organizations.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development, Division of Business & Community Development, Cultural Development Division
   NOTATION: Goal II; Outcome II.2: Strategic Activity II.2.E.

9. **Engage "9-to-5ers" downtown by encouraging business as well as civic and cultural groups to offer incentives to participate in activities and organizations after work.**
   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
   NOTATION: Goal II; Outcome II.3: Strategic Activity II.3.C.

10. **Expand municipal Public Art program to include a "Percent for Art" requirement for state and municipal capital construction projects.**
    PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
    NOTATION: Goal II; Outcome II.4: Strategic Activity II.4.C.

TOP 20 PRIORITIES

11 **Improve City regulations to make public spaces more user-friendly for organized events, and encourage an expanded mix and range of public space programming.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division, Department of Public Works & Parks
NOTATION: Goal II; Outcome II.4: Strategic Activities II.4.F., II.4.G.

12 **Incorporate universal design standards in exhibition, performance, and event planning.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Human Rights; Cultural Development Division
NOTATION: Goal III; Outcome III.1: Strategic Activity III.1.E.

13 **Advocate for affordable housing across the City, and support development of a "creative village" with artist live-work spaces.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Economic Development Department; Cultural Development Division
NOTATION: Goal V; Outcome V.4: Strategic Activities V.4.A., V.4.B.

14 **Actively promote the value and importance of diversity that is fully representative of the City on municipal and community-wide boards, committees, and other decision-making bodies.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office; Human Resources Department; Diversity Officer
NOTATION: Goal III; Outcome III.2: Strategic Activity III.2.A.

15 **Actively promote the value and importance of diversity that is fully representative of the community on local non-profit boards, community coalitions, and other communal organizations.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Greater Worcester Community Foundation; Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
NOTATION: Goal III; Outcome III.2: Strategic Activity III.2.B.

16 **Partner with the college & university admissions offices to promote Worcester as a desirable destination for prospective students.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Higher Education Consortium of Central Mass
NOTATION: Goal III; Outcome III.3: Strategic Activity III.3.C.

17 **Strengthen partnerships to establish clear guidelines and create more pathways for artists and cultural organizations to enrich the lives of students and their families both during and after school.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Public Schools, Worcester Cultural Coalition
NOTATION: Goal IV; Outcome III.2: Strategic Activities IV.2.A., IV.2.B.

18 **Provide development services and investment funds for new creative enterprises.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Business Development Division
NOTATION: Goal V; Outcome V.1: Strategic Activity V.1.E.

19 **Design and launch an artist-in-residence program in such environments as municipal government, business and neighborhoods to incorporate creative design on the front-end of projects.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
NOTATION: Goal V.; Outcome V.2; Strategic Activity V.2.B.

20 **Advocate for an allocation in the City budget to support public art, artist residencies and special events which support creative placemaking.**
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition
NOTATION: Goal V; Outcome V.3: Strategic Activity V.3.E.

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

I. Old and New Worcester – The City's Unique Identity

OUTCOME I.1: A YOUTHFUL, DIVERSE AND CREATIVE CITY:

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.1.A: Set a clear mission for the City's communications strategy incorporating diverse voices to form, guide, and brand the image and strategy
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.1.B: Shape and tell the "Worcester Story" through a cohesive image and brand that reflects the City's strengths: [i] Rich, diverse cultural activities and heritage; [ii] Many opportunities to be involved with cultural and civic organizations and activities; [iii] Strong presence of artists and creative entrepreneurs; [iv] Culturally diverse and welcoming place; [v] Safe, affordable, and caring community; [vi] Inclusive and supportive of youth, families, and new ideas; [vii] Strategic central location in New England; [viii] Many great colleges and universities in the city, all offering a range of opportunities and cultural activities; [ix] Growing economy, new companies starting and moving in; [x] Energetic and revitalized downtown and vibrant neighborhoods
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.1.C: Confront and reverse residual realities and negative images of Worcester; Some have included: [i] Post-WWII/post-industrial economic decline; [ii] Lack of self-confidence as a city that can turn itself around; [iii] Image of drugs, crime, homelessness; [iv] Downtown vacancies and abandoned industrial space; [v] Less than welcoming to newcomers; [vi] Leadership that says no to new ideas; [vii] Little interaction between colleges, students, and community
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.1.D: Gain support of print, TV, radio, social media, ad agencies, to embrace and project the brand – to prospective visitors, and to city residents
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central Mass (visitors); City of Worcester Communications Office (residents)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.1.E: Gain support of cultural institutions to embrace and project the brand
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition; Cultural Development Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.1.F: Gain support of artists, youth, entrepreneurs, business, and residents to embrace and project the brand
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office; Economic Development Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.1.G: Highlight, market, and promote cultural and historic districts
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division; Cultural Development Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

I. Old and New Worcester – The City's Unique Identity

OUTCOME I.2: THE WORCESTER STORY

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.2.A: Promote neighborhoods based on their unique assets including cultural spaces, history, campuses, events, parks, architecture, foods, restaurants, and shopping by: [i] Promoting cultural tours of city neighborhoods and meaningful historic and cultural destinations; [ii] Engaging community volunteers to become ambassadors to lead tours and to welcome students, visitors, and newcomers
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central Mass, Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.2.B: Utilize schools and colleges for marketing internships
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Career Services Departments at Colleges/Universities
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years,

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.2.C: Implement branding that welcomes people to Worcester at key entrances to city and to distinctive neighborhoods using the City's major languages
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division; Cultural Development Office; Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

OUTCOME I.3: CIVIC LEADERSHIP AND NEIGHBORLINESS

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.3.A: Devise and implement a "good neighbor" campaign
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY I.3.B: Work with city agencies and civic groups to enhance connections and communications with airport, colleges, hotels, and the cultural sector
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central Mass; City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

II. Public Space Design and Activation

OUTCOME II.1: DESIGN FOR CONNECTIVITY

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.1.A: Expand implementation of the City's Complete Streets policy to facilitate more multi-modal movement and accessibility
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division, Transportation Advisory Group (TAG), Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P
TIMEFRAME: Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.1.B: Continue streetscape updating throughout the City, prioritizing areas adjacent to schools and other public gathering places including parks and cultural organizations. Streetscaping includes: [i] Well-designed green spaces; [ii] Integration of a healthy mix of trees throughout the City; [iii] Public art integrated with street and green space design; [iv] Attractive lighting to enhance safety; [v] Enhancement of railroad underpasses with public art and lighting; [vi] Attractive and functional trash and recycling collection; [vii] Creative street furniture to accommodate people of all ages and abilities; [viii] Pedestrian and bicycle access and safety especially around schools
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division, Cultural Development Office, Department of Public Work & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 14-6 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.1.C: Enhance the existing network of walking and biking trails through increased partnerships with civic organizations
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division, Transportation Advisory Group (TAG), Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.1.D: Devise and implement a plan for free WIFI in public spaces
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Technical Services
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.1.E: Advocate for improvements to the City's public transportation system to help people efficiently get to all areas of the City including the colleges, neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other key public and commercial nodes
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

II. Public Space Design and Activation

OUTCOME II.2: PLACEMAKING FOR COMMUNITY COHESION

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.2.A: Identify existing neighborhood nodes that are gathering places for a wide range of geographically and ethnically based communities
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.2.B: Employ proactive design guidelines and public engagement processes to identify and accentuate the historical and cultural meaning of places and their contemporary relevance to residents therein
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years, Ongoing

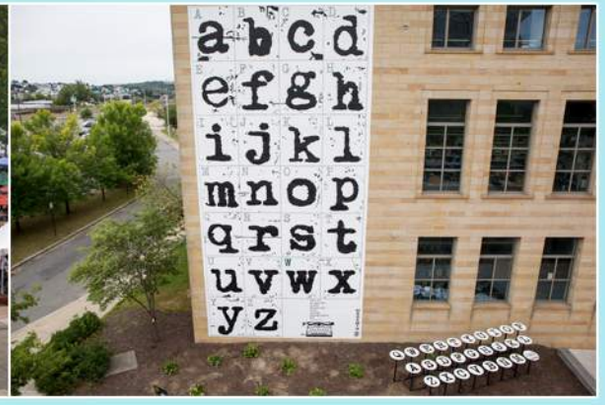
STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.2.C: Provide incentives for owners and developers to retain and re-purpose historically and/or culturally important structures
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.2.D: Incorporate creative wayfinding, lighting, and public art that directly relates to Worcester's diverse residents, heritages, and stories
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development, Cultural Planning Division, Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.2.E: Engage with business and property owners where appropriate to activate empty storefronts as creative spaces and provide opportunities for collaboration between artists, residents, business, and community organizations
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development, Division of Business & Community Development, Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.2.F: Expand efforts to develop historic and cultural districts as key nodes through resident, institutional, business, and City collaboration: [i] Clearly signify districts through creative streetscaping and signage; [ii] Expand tours and other public programs to increase awareness and participation including historical and mural tours, restaurant and brewery tours, walking and biking tours, etc.; [iii] Consider special districts and revenue generation strategies to support local placemaking efforts
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.2.G: Facilitate neighborhood organizing and event coordination, including the identification of accessible meeting places in neighborhoods
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing



Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

II. Public Space Design and Activation

OUTCOME II.3: FOSTERING NEIGHBORHOOD STEWARDSHIP

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.3.A: Build on the City's efforts to recognize and support neighborhood and district associations, and gradually expand to encompass all areas of the City: [i] Strengthen partnerships between City and neighborhood groups to developer greater confidence and stewardship of community events: [ii] Engage appropriate departments on projects that enhance physical conditions and cultural activities; [iii] Assist with neighborhood and district branding [iv] Include artists in neighborhood-based work when possible
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.3.B: Involve colleges and other institutions in neighborhood meetings, activities, and governance when appropriate
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.3.C: Engage "9-to-5ers" downtown by encouraging businesses as well as civic and cultural groups to offer incentives to get involved in activities and organizations after work
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

OUTCOME II.4: CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC SPACES

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.A: Improve signage in public spaces that is welcoming, informational/instructional in a positive way, and in both English and the appropriate language(s)
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.B: Make existing public spaces more inviting and welcoming through enhanced cleaning and maintenance support, more community cleanup days, and more trash receptacles
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.C: Expand municipal public art program to include a "Percent for Art" requirement for state and municipal capital construction projects
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division, Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.D: Incentivize public art in private development
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Economic Development Department, Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

II. Public Space Design and Activation

OUTCOME II.4: CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC SPACES

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.E: Continue and nurture the array of events, festivals, and other cultural activities to capitalize on existing activity, talent, and organizational capacities
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.F: Assess the existing mix and range of public space programming to identify areas of enhancement to be sure activities represent the cultural make-up of the City including: [i] Distribution of activities across the City to reach all neighborhoods; [ii] Forms of cultural expression that reflect the diversity of residents; [iii] A range of arts and cultural interests such as environmental, literary arts, historical, traditional, experimental, visual, performance, and media-based work; [iv] Pathways for community groups to gain support for new cultural and community initiatives
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.G: Review City regulations to make public spaces more user-friendly for organized events and for public art: [i] Simplify process and rules for use of parks and other public spaces; [ii] Update and simplify public space scheduling process; [iii] Work to remove barriers from successful implementation of public art initiatives such as the sign ordinance and fees; [iv] Encourage busking in high pedestrian traffic areas; [v] Facilitate street vending with simplified permitting
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division, Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.H: Enhance public spaces to better accommodate performing arts including theater, dance, and music (e.g. power supply, toilets, built-in performance space)
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division, Department of Public Works & Parks
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.I: Work with colleges to explore greater collaborations to enhance public space programming across the City
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Higher Education Consortium of Central MA (HECCMA)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY II.4.J: Secure and/or leverage additional resources for programming, accessibility for all, and to support staffing and service needs
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Greater Worcester Community Foundation (GWCF), Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC), Worcester Arts Council (WAC)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

III. Cultural Equity, Access and Inclusion

OUTCOME III.1: EQUITY IN MOBILITY AND ACCESS

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.1.A: Advocate for improvements to public transportation and more funding to: [i] Continue practice of providing youth bus passes; [ii] Increase frequency and reach of transit service; [iii] Develop a transportation service that creates ease of access between the City's key cultural amenities, especially in and around downtown
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.1.B: Develop a transportation service that creates ease of access between the City's key cultural amenities, especially in and around downtown
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.1.C: Ensure our seniors have access to cultural programs and activities
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Elder Services of Worcester Area
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.1.D: Learn from youth what makes them feel safe outside of their homes, and then launch and/or initiate programs that create an even better sense of safety for youth moving across the City
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City of Worcester Youth Council, City of Worcester Advisory Committee on Youth
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.1.E: Incorporate universal design standards in exhibition, performance, and event planning for better access
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Human Rights: Cultural Development Division, DPW&P
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

OUTCOME III.2: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.2.A: Actively promote the value and importance of having meaningful, cross-communal representation on municipal and community-wide boards, committees, and other decision-making bodies, and train current (and future) leaders how to make that happen in a meaningful, inclusive, authentic way
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office; City's HR Department; City Diversity Officer
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.2.B: Actively promote the value and importance of having meaningful, cross-communal representation on local non-profit boards, community coalitions, and other local communal organizations, and train current (and future) leaders to make that happen in a meaningful, inclusive, authentic way: [i] Look to arts & culture organizations to take the lead and be an example for the rest of the community
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Greater Worcester Community Foundation (GWCF), Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

III. Cultural Equity, Access and Inclusion

OUTCOME III.3: A CITY OF WELCOMING AND BELONGING

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.3.A: Emphasize and celebrate the qualities that make Worcester attractive, both for those already here and for prospective visitors and new residents
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central Mass (DCM)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.3.B: Engage the business community to be inclusive and supportive of more diverse businesses especially immigrant start-ups and non-profits
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.3.C: Partner with college admissions/recruitment officers to more actively promote Worcester as a desirable destination for prospective students of all backgrounds, especially students of color: [i] Seek to recruit and admit more local students; [ii] Continue that promotional work throughout the academic year towards the goal of having more graduates remain in town
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Higher Education Consortium of Central MA (HECCMA)
TIMEFRAME: 7-10 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.3.D: Maximize existing and build new systems and technologies to spread awareness of cultural resources throughout the City.
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central Mass (DCM), Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.3.E: Maximizing existing and develop new ways to help the local media market more frequently and meaningfully promote the City's rich cultural resources: [i] Strive for more diverse voices in community media; [ii] advocate for a "Community Compact on Responsible Media"
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City of Worcester Cable Services Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

OUTCOME III.4: INCLUSIVITY IN ARTS & CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.4.A: Develop capacity-building and technical assistance activities to assist organizations in developing and achieving DEIA goals
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Greater Worcester Community Foundation (GWCF), Racism & Discrimination Working Group of the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.4.B: As cultural institutions seek to engage more and more with the local community, support special interest and neighborhood groups in their efforts to advocate for community members - especially youth, people of color, gender orientation, cultural representation, differently-abled, and neighborhood representation
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years, Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.4.C: Foster, promote and celebrate cultural institutions that are striving to meet DEIA goals and objectives, and provide and promote opportunities for them to partner and collaborate with other organizations to do more
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY III.4.D: Help open doors for different types of expression by supporting cultural initiatives as they emerge, and creative programs, events, opportunities, etc., that come from unique communities
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition, Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

IV. Youth Education and Family Engagement

OUTCOME IV.1: YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.1.A: Provide training and support to early education teachers to ensure aesthetic and cultural education is an important part of early childhood programs
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Together for Kids Coalition
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.1.B: Create more opportunities for artists to be part of early childhood classroom enrichment
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Together for Kids Coalition
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.1.C: Encourage opportunities for more family-friendly enrichment experiences, including in nontraditional spaces
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.1.D: Provide more public events that are family-friendly in both programming and available amenities
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

OUTCOME IV.2: SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.2.A: Maintain the strong commitment to and continued expansion of programs that expose school-age children to the City's rich cultural and heritage resources
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Public Schools (WPS), Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.2.B: Build on partnerships with Worcester Public Schools to create new/additional pathways for artists to contribute to in-school learning through assemblies, special events, and the classroom; work with cultural organizations to provide more diverse programming in the arts that reaches a wider number of young people
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Public Schools (WPS), Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.2.C: Increase availability of funding for in-school and supplemental school cultural programming
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Public Schools (WPS), Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.2.D: Develop guidelines for cultural organizations to deliver after-school programming, and find organizational partners to meet those standards and support students through their work; promote outside-of-school programs that engage students and their families
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition Educational Working Group
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

IV. Youth Education and Family Engagement

OUTCOME IV.3: YOUNG VOICES/YOUNG LEADERS

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.3.A: Amplify youth voices and develop their sense of agency, their interest in leadership, and their passion for arts & culture: [i] Create a youth arts sub-committee under the umbrella of the Youth Council; [ii] Activate and appreciate the important role of youth as leaders in bridge-building between cultures; [iii] Continue and expand successful programs that empower youth to express themselves and their cultures creatively
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Youth Opportunities Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.3.B: Review policies, planning, and management of parks and public spaces to assure they are youth-friendly
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.3.C: Advance policies and coordinated efforts to enable young people to access community resources through: [i] Bike-friendly streets and secure bike parking; [ii] Improved public transportation; [iii] A program of transportation ambassadors: individuals in businesses and in arts and cultural organizations who provide multi-modal transportation guidance and maps in the community's seven primary languages
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Planning Division, Youth Opportunities Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.3.D: Provide appropriate and safe spaces to accommodate cultural practices popular with youth such as outdoor mural painting and skateboarding
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Youth Opportunities Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

OUTCOME IV.4: COLLEGE STUDENTS

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.4.A: Survey college students periodically to learn more about their evolving cultural and creative interests
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Chamber of Commerce, Worcester Student Government Association
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.4.B: Foster greater cooperation between cultural organizations in the City and cultural planning personnel at the colleges to: [i] Better plan with academic calendars and "flow of the year"; [ii] Ensure that events of interest to college students are scheduled at friendly times and events of interest to the community do the same
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC), Higher Education Consortium of Central MA (HECCMA)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.4.C: Investigate ways to encourage college students to use available and potential transportation options to take advantage of cultural activities - both in general, and for special events in particular
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Higher Education Consortium of Central MA (HECCMA)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

IV. Youth Education and Family Engagement

OUTCOME IV.5: ADVOCATING FOR YOUTH

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.5.A: Activate networks of organizations serving youth within the cultural sector and connect them with networks in other youth-serving areas to strengthen and diversify all youth programs
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Youth Opportunities Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY IV.5.B: Work through the network to demonstrate and advocate for funding for youth programs
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Youth Opportunities Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

V. Creativity and Innovation

OUTCOME V.1: CONNECTING ARTISTS AND CREATIVES

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.1.A: Maintain an inventory of creative spaces and resources so artists can learn about each other, connect and collaborate
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: Ongoing

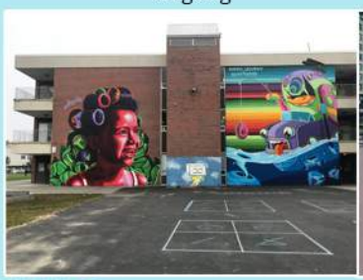
STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.1.B: Support creative gatherings for artists to share ideas and needs, creative collaborations, including emerging artists, artists of color, and artists of all abilities
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.1.C: Support and expand artist/creative entrepreneur networks among colleges and universities that link students, teachers, and artists in the community to expand opportunities and resources
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Higher Education Consortium of Central MA (HECCMA)
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.1.D: Develop a strategy to foster and attract a creative work force
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Business Development Division, Cultural Development Office, Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.1.E: Provide development services and investment funds for new creative enterprises
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Business Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.1.F: Encourage local philanthropists and funders to see art as necessary for a healthy, vibrant communities and to fund accordingly
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Greater Worcester Community Foundation
TIMEFRAME: Ongoing



Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

V. Creativity and Innovation

OUTCOME V.2: CONNECTING CREATIVES ACROSS SECTORS

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.2.A: Build partnerships with city divisions and departments to encourage creative thinking across City initiatives
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.2.B: Design and launch an artist-in-residence program to place artists in environments such as municipal government, businesses, and neighborhoods to incorporate creative design and action on the front-end of projects rather than embellishment at the end; support existing artist-in-residence programs, especially in education
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: City Manager's Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.2.C: Expand the support of health insurance coverage for artists, and consider their general well-being as important to the City's wellbeing
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.2.D: Identify both paid and volunteer roles for artists and facilitate their placement in neighborhood organizing and activities through public art projects, teaching/mentoring and building collaborations
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

OUTCOME V.3: A CREATIVE CITY

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.3.A: Elevate the visibility of artists and the creative sector in Worcester, emphasizing: [i] Creativity and innovation as historical assets long present; [ii] The number, range, and impact of artists and traditional cultural practitioners; [iii] The hidden gems in arts and culture past and present; [iv] Presence of active higher educational institutions; [v] Easy access to other New England cities, markets, and to natural spaces and outdoor recreation
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central MA; Cultural Development Office
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.3.B: Expand open houses and tours between arts and cultural venues and creative spaces as well as neighborhood cultural hotspots
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.3.C: Build on efforts to promote artists and creative and cultural resources and events through a comprehensive informational calendar including the use of apps and a virtual visitor guide
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Discover Central MA
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

Goals, Outcomes and Strategic Activities

V. Creativity and Innovation

OUTCOME V.3: A CREATIVE CITY

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.3.D: Provide appropriate leverage, financing, and technical assistance to support maintenance and development of cultural and creative facilities across the City
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Economic Development
TIMEFRAME: Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.3.E: Advocate for an allocation in the City budget to support public art, artist residencies and special events which support creative placemaking
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.3.F: Identify options for resource sharing, including equipment, staffing, and back of house services among cultural and other nonprofits
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Worcester Cultural Coalition
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

OUTCOME V.4: A CREATIVE CITY

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.4.A: Advocate for affordable housing across the City in collaboration with other advocacy groups, include an allocation of artist appropriate live-work and activity spaces in housing developments
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Economic Development Department, Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.4.B: Support development of a creative village as a concentration of artist live/work and co-living spaces including transitional housing for college graduates
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Economic Development Department, Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.4.C: Provide intentional environments for innovation that foster collaboration and exchange among artists: [i] Support creative work spaces and co-working spaces; [ii] Connect developers and property owners with creative tenants; [iii] Partner with City Office of Business Development, private developers, and neighborhood associations to develop creative live-work and retail space which support creative for-profit and nonprofit businesses; [iv] Expand upon learning and support for business skills for artists
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Economic Development Department
TIMEFRAME: Ongoing

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY V.4.D: Execute an "Arts & Culture Economic Prosperity Study" to evaluate change/growth/movement since the 2017 study.
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: Cultural Development Division
TIMEFRAME: 4-6 Years

IMPLEMENTATION

Success of the plan requires ongoing efforts to involve a wide mix of organizations and leaders across the community.

With the adoption of this framework plan by the three partners that commissioned it - the City of Worcester, Greater Worcester Community Foundation and the Worcester Cultural Coalition - we turn to all those community organizations and institutions with responsibility for the plan to move it forward. The following city-wide steps will also be taken:

1. The Cultural Plan Oversight Committee will:
    - **a.** Monitor and evaluate ongoing plan implementation work;
    - **b.** Suggest revisions based on evolving communal circumstances;
    - **c.** Advocate for renewed or special attention to plan implementation work over time.

2. Every spring, an open Cultural Plan review meeting will be convened to provide community members an opportunity to hear from the Cultural Plan Oversight Committee and others about the progress and potential evolution of the plan.

3. We will announce and celebrate important accomplishments as they are achieved.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

City/city - When capitalized, the word City refers to Worcester's municipal government as in, and short for, the City of Worcester versus the word city when not capitalized refers to the people and places within the geographic area that is known as Worcester.

Civic Organizations - The range of formal (as in nonprofit organizations) and informal groups that apply their efforts to the improvement of the community as a whole or in relation to specific dimensions of community life and wellbeing. Wide-ranging interests include business development, philanthropy, environmental or historic preservation and/or education, activism related to violence, youth development, or neighborhood interests, among many others.

Complete Streets - A term referring to the design and construction of fully accessible street and sidewalk networks that accommodate a wide range of transportation modes including walking and the use of bikes, scooters, wheelchairs, automobiles, etc., as well as festivals, parades, protests, and other appropriate activities in public spaces.

Creative Expression (or practices) - The multitude of art-making activities that can be both individual and collective. An individual may paint, make craft items, write, or take photographs; a group of people in a community may practice dance, music, or make and share traditional foods together. The possible types and variety of activities are virtually limitless.

Creatives/Creative Workers - An inclusive term for artists, entrepreneurs, and those working in creative fields and enterprises. In addition to art forms of all disciplines, these typically include architecture, design, fashion, gaming, media, publishing, software development, writing, among other areas.

Districts - Defined geographic areas within a city with clear boundaries, purpose, and identity. The term may refer to an officially designated district or an informal area that is commonly known to contain a cluster of retail, commercial, or industrial activity. Cities can assign special zoning, taxation, or other restrictions or benefits to properties within a district, or a district can be in name only.

Diversity/Diverse Communities - Diversity generally refers to people who embody demographic characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, cultural practices, religion, and national origin as distinguished from the perceived dominant white, born-in-the-United States population. In some cases it also includes age, accessibility, income, and ideologies. Diverse communities generally refer to groups of people who identify with an ethnic or religious group or collective National origin.

Entrepreneurship - The act of forming and starting a new enterprise such as a business, a nonprofit or social action group. Entrepreneurs are the individuals who form and launch the enterprises. (Also see Creatives)

Equity (or social equity) - A concept that applies concerns of justice and fairness to social policy and has been used since the 1960s in institutional contexts, including education and public administration. Equity represents a value in which everyone has what they need to survive and to thrive relative to their unique condition. It is distinct from "equality" in which everyone is treated the same.

Multi-modal (transportation) - Refers to a mix of transportation modes employed for movement of people and goods. Typically the term refers to an accessible mix of three or more modes such as trains, busses, automobiles, trucks, bicycles, scooters, walking, and other vehicles.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Neighborhoods - Geographic clusters that typically include homes, and often include parks, businesses, schools, and other institutions. They may be officially defined or self-defined by those within the cluster and usually have a name or identity to which people feel connected.

Nodes - A hub or center of neighborhood activity that typically includes a mix of retail, recreation and/or social, cultural, or educational facilities. A node is often as small as the corner of four contiguous blocks and rarely larger than a cluster of two or three block corners that might then be considered a commercial district. A linear commercial area of three blocks or longer would be considered a corridor.

Placemaking - A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and wellbeing. While public spaces are generally the focus, a key value of placemaking includes connections between private residential and commercial spaces and the public realm.

Public art - Artwork in any media that has been planned and executed in the physical public domain, usually outside and accessible to all. Public art is significant within the art world as it signifies a working practice of site specificity, community involvement, and collaboration. Public art may include any art exhibited or performed in a public space including publicly accessible buildings. The relationship between the content and audience, what the art is saying and to whom, can be just as important if not more important than its physical location.

Public space - A physical place that is owned and controlled by any level of government and generally open and accessible to people. Roads (including pavement and sidewalks), public squares, parks, and beaches are typically considered public space. To a limited extent, government buildings open to the public, such as public libraries are public spaces, although they tend to have restricted areas and limits upon use. Although not considered public space, privately owned buildings or property visible from sidewalks and public thoroughfares may affect the public visual landscape, for example, by outdoor advertising.

Stewardship - Generally recognized as the acceptance or assignment of responsibility to safeguard and shepherd things of value on behalf of a broader community of neighbors, citizens, or colleagues. Typically things of value include the natural environment, upkeep of public spaces such as parks, sidewalks, monuments, or public buildings, or the wellbeing of a community resource such as a school, cultural space or tradition, or nonprofit organization.

Streetscaping - The physical and visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, sidewalks, street furniture, trees, and open spaces, etc., that combine to form the street's character and functionality.

Wayfinding - A thoughtfully designed set of symbolic and informational signs, placards, works of art, and storytelling that help people orient to their location and to navigate from place to place. Wayfinding systems may be as simple as a set of directional street signs or more a more complicated mix of designs in the built environment and informational systems, including web-based systems that contain historical or other data as to the meaning of the place and its relationship to nearby or related places.

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The City of WORCESTER

WORCESTER CULTURAL COALITION

Greater Worcester Community Foundation

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