

THE TOUR



Worcester Common has played an active role in community life for almost 300 years. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, its meeting house was the seat of both town government and religion, while its green space served as a military training field and burying ground. Cattle shows on the Common were magnets for crowds in the 1800s. Today, *Out to Lunch* festivities, public events, and ice skating on the Oval make the Common a lively place.

Buildings and monuments on and around Worcester Common tell the story of the city's history from its establishment as a town in 1722 to the present. Follow the route of this tour and learn about Worcester and its people, its past and its present, and how government, religion, commerce, and community have shaped the heart of the city over time.

TOUR INSTRUCTIONS:

Around the Common is a self-guided tour. See the map in this brochure for the tour route. Sites along the route are listed on the map in numerical order – indicating the suggested tour route. To take an on-site tour, there are two tour options, a “smartphone” tour or a “device-free” tour.

Smartphone

For smartphone access to the audio version of the *Around the Common Tour*, download a free QR Code Reader App from the internet to your phone. Then, scan the QR tag on each historical marker and listen to the audio tour. Smartphone tours can also be taken by scanning the QR tags on the map on this brochure.

Device-Free

For a “device-free” tour, download the printable tour script and map from Preservation Worcester’s website:

www.preservationworcester.org (Click on the “Tours” tab, and go to “Around the Common Tour.” Download and print the map and tour script, which will serve as your guide.) The locations of tour sites shown on the downloadable/printable map (as on the map in this brochure) correspond to historical markers posted along the tour route. Printed tour scripts, maps, and brochures are also available at Preservation Worcester, 10 Cedar Street.

Audio or Device-Free

(from the Preservation Worcester Website)

To take an “off-site” audio tour from a computer, go to Preservation Worcester’s website: **www.preservationworcester.org**, click on the “Tours” tab, and go to “Around the Common Tour,” follow instructions, and begin your tour.

PRESERVATION WORCESTER

Preservation Worcester is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to maintain for future generations the sites and structures that are significant to the culture, history, and architecture of the city, and encourage excellence in future design. Through advocacy, education, and action, the organization promotes the reuse of valuable architectural resources, encourages stewardship of our built environment, and instills community pride.

This program is administered by the Worcester Arts Council, for the Local Cultural Council – an agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



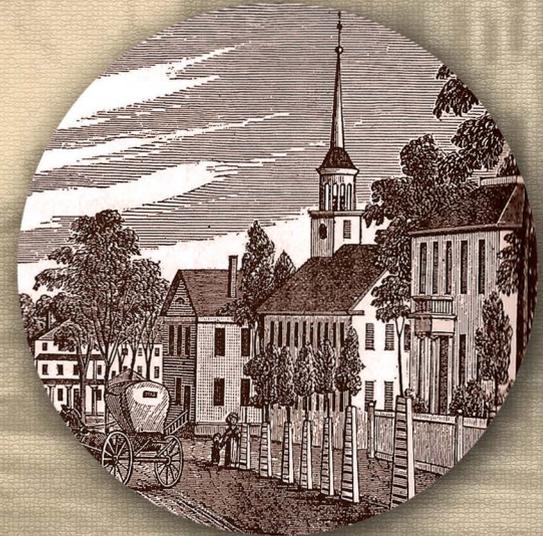
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AROUND THE COMMON

A Downtown Walking Tour



It is recommended that you begin your tour at the historical marker to the right of the gates to Worcester Common at the corner of Franklin and Church streets



5. City Hall

The grand architecture of City Hall expresses Worcester's wealth and industrial success at the turn of the 20th century.

Learn More: *Isaiah Thomas*

Learn More: *Sen. George F. Hoar Statue*



6. Main Street

Main Street was home to successful shops and large department stores from the late-19th century through the mid-20th century.

Learn More: *Denholm's Department Store*

Learn More: *Park Building*



4. Front Street

This section of Front Street has played an active role in Worcester's business life since the 18th century.

Learn More: *Street Clock*

Learn More: *Irish Monument*



7. Franklin Street

Early-20th-century development transformed this section of Franklin Street from "unremarkable" to "distinguished."



3. World War II Memorial

Honoring the military service of Worcester citizens who served in World War II, this monument is one of many war memorials on the Common.

Learn More: *Meeting House and Railroad*



8. Bancroft Hotel

This grand Beaux Arts style former hotel is an important part of downtown and the Common.

Learn More: *"Atmospheric" Capitol Theatre*



2. Old Burying Ground

Among the tombstones of early citizens found here is that of Worcester's first permanent settler, Jonas Rice.

Learn More: *Bigelow Monument*



9. Soldier's Monument

This Civil War monument is the work of noted American sculptor Randolph Rogers, who also designed the Soldiers' Monument at Gettysburg.

Learn More: *Urban Renewal: Rebuilding Downtown*



Start Here

1. Worcester Common

The site of Worcester's 18th century meeting house and burying ground, the Common has served many other public uses over time.

Learn More: *Cattle Shows*



START HERE

11 Salem Square



11. Worcester Public Library

Established in 1859, the Worcester Public Library was one of the nation's earliest public libraries; yet, its services and its 1998 façade are decidedly modern.



10. Notre Dame des Canadiens

Built for a French Canadian Roman Catholic parish, this is the only religious building to survive among the many that once encircled the Common.

Learn More: *Burnside Fountain*



AROUND THE COMMON: A DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

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