

WORCESTER VISION ZERO



2026 Annual Report



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Figure 1: Safer roadway design of Stafford Street.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS*

City of Worcester Divisions and Departments

Economic Development (EOED)
Fire Department (FD)
Office of the City Manager
Planning & Regulatory Services (Planning)
Police Department (WPD)
Public Health (DPH)
Public Schools (WPS)
Public Works (DPW)
Senior Center (SC)
Sustainability & Resilience (DSR)
Transportation & Mobility (DTM)
Worcester City Council

Partners

Central Massachusetts Regional
Planning Commission (CMRPC)
District Attorney's Office
Massachusetts Department of
Transportation (MassDOT)
Massachusetts Safe Routes to School
Worcester Regional Transit Authority

Community Partners

Main South CDC
Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition
Pleasant Street TDI
Regional Environmental Council
Walk Bike Worcester
YMCA

**Not a complete listing – our thanks extend to every partner and supporter of safe streets.*

Setting Course for Zero

On June 13, 2025, City Manager Eric D. Batista issued an Executive Order adopting the Vision Zero Safety Action Plan,

“The Municipality recognizes that death and serious injuries from crashes on our roadways are unacceptable and preventable. Between 2019-2023, 45 people died and 461 were seriously injured in traffic crashes on Worcester roadways causing untold harm to families and our community. This order adopts the Vision Zero Safety Action Plan and establishes the policy to implement the Action Plan with a goal of eliminating all roadway fatalities and serious injury crashes by the year 2035.”

To achieve this, the City has adopted a Vision Zero approach that views traffic deaths and serious injuries as both unacceptable and preventable. The strategy focuses on a Safe System approach to managing the transportation network in ways that reduce the potential for severe harm (Figure 2). It also calls for a coordinated effort across municipal departments, community partners, and the public to create a safer roadway system for everyone.

This report summarizes the progress made from January 1 to December 30, 2025. [Learn more about Vision Zero.](#)



Figure 2: Safe System Approach

Safe People Encourages safe, responsible behavior and conditions that prioritizes the ability of everyone to reach their destination unharmed.

Safe Vehicles Expands the availability of vehicle systems and features to prevent crashes for those in and outside of the vehicle.

Safe Speeds Promotes safer speeds through appropriate speed limit setting, roadway design, public engagement, and enforcement.

Safe Roads Implements roadway designs to mitigate human mistakes, prevent crashes, encourage safer behavior, and facilitate safe travel for everyone.

Post-crash Care Enhances survivability of crashes through expedient access to emergency services and prevention of secondary crashes.

Data & Strategies

The Safe System Approach focuses primarily on eliminating the worst outcomes of crashes – fatalities and serious injuries. The Vision Zero Safety Action Plan (completed in 2025) identified a *Vision Zero Priority Injury Network* (VZPIN) comprised of only about 7% of Worcester's street mileage, but where 56% of serious injury and fatal crashes occur (Figure 3). This helps the City focus its efforts to have the greatest impact.

The VZPIN was created based on three factors: Location of serious injury and

fatal crashes between 2019-2023, Locations that have characteristics that present a higher risk of crashes, and finally public input on locations with perceived safety issues.

Most roads identified in the VZPIN are arterial roadways, which typically carry a higher volume of traffic operating at higher travel speeds. These streets are often wider and may include multiple travel lanes. Examples include Belmont St, Park Ave, Lincoln St and Chandler St. A few local streets are included as well, such as Barclay St and Mendon St. in the Union Hill neighborhood.

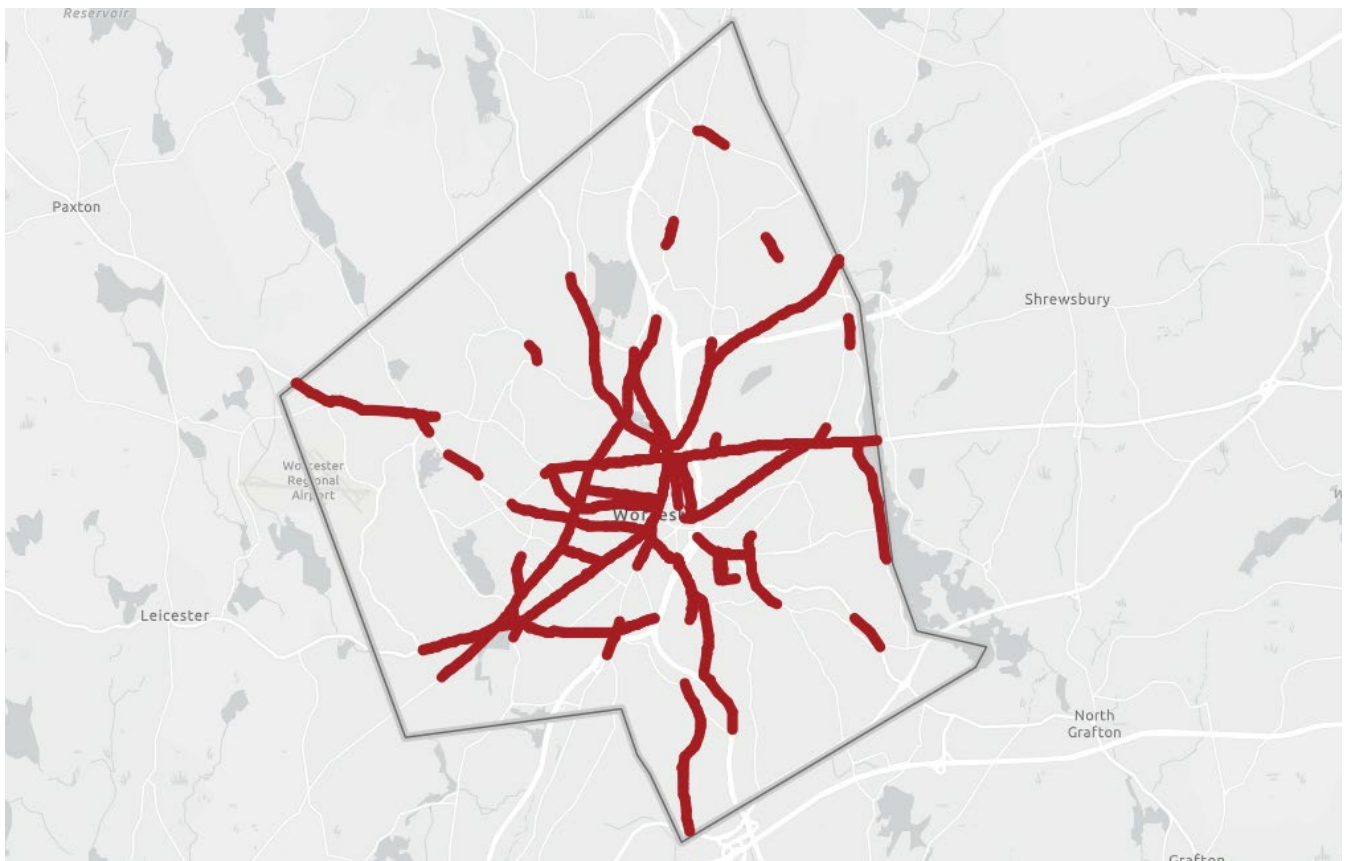


Figure 3: Worcester's Vision Zero Priority Injury Network

Evaluating Effectiveness

As the Vision Zero initiative advances, the Annual Report will document both the actions taken and the measurable outcomes that follow. Because the program is only in its first year, the scope of implemented changes remains relatively limited and the timeframe for monitoring their impacts is too short to draw definitive conclusions. At this early stage, data such as crash history and vehicle speeds instead serve primarily to establish baseline conditions and offer preliminary indicators of effectiveness.

Crash History

Crash data from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Crash Impact Portal provides a basis for evaluating the longer-term trends over the past decade as well as current data covering the most recent three-year period from 2023-2025.

As shown in Figure 4, the total number of reported crashes citywide before the COVID-19 pandemic averaged around 5,700 per year. After a moderate decline in 2019, crashes dropped sharply in 2020 as driving activity decreased during the pandemic. In the years that followed, crash totals gradually returned to near pre-pandemic levels before declining moderately to about 5,300 in 2025.

A different pattern emerges when looking specifically at fatal and serious injury crashes. Pre-pandemic totals ranged between 67 and 99 fatal and serious injury crashes annually. While fatal and serious injuries also initially dropped in 2020 at the start of the pandemic, they rebounded dramatically in 2021 to the highest recorded level (127 fatal and serious injury crashes), even though the total number of crashes was still down significantly at that point. Since then, the number of fatal and serious injury crashes has held steady between 109 and 114 crashes annually.

The net result is that crashes are more commonly resulting in fatal or serious injury outcomes than previously. Prior to 2019, fatal and serious injury crashes typically accounted for 1.2% to 1.6% of all crashes. More recently, the share has increased to 1.9% to 2.3%.

A closer examination by travel mode shows vulnerable road users – defined under Massachusetts law to include pedestrians and bicyclists – as well as motorcyclists, fully account for the increasing rate of fatal and serious injury crashes in Worcester. Over the past decade, the share of crashes that have resulted in fatal or serious injuries has increased by 27% for pedestrians, 40% for bicyclists, and 14% for motorcyclists.

Figure 4: Ten-Year Crash History – All Crashes and Fatal + Serious Injury Crashes

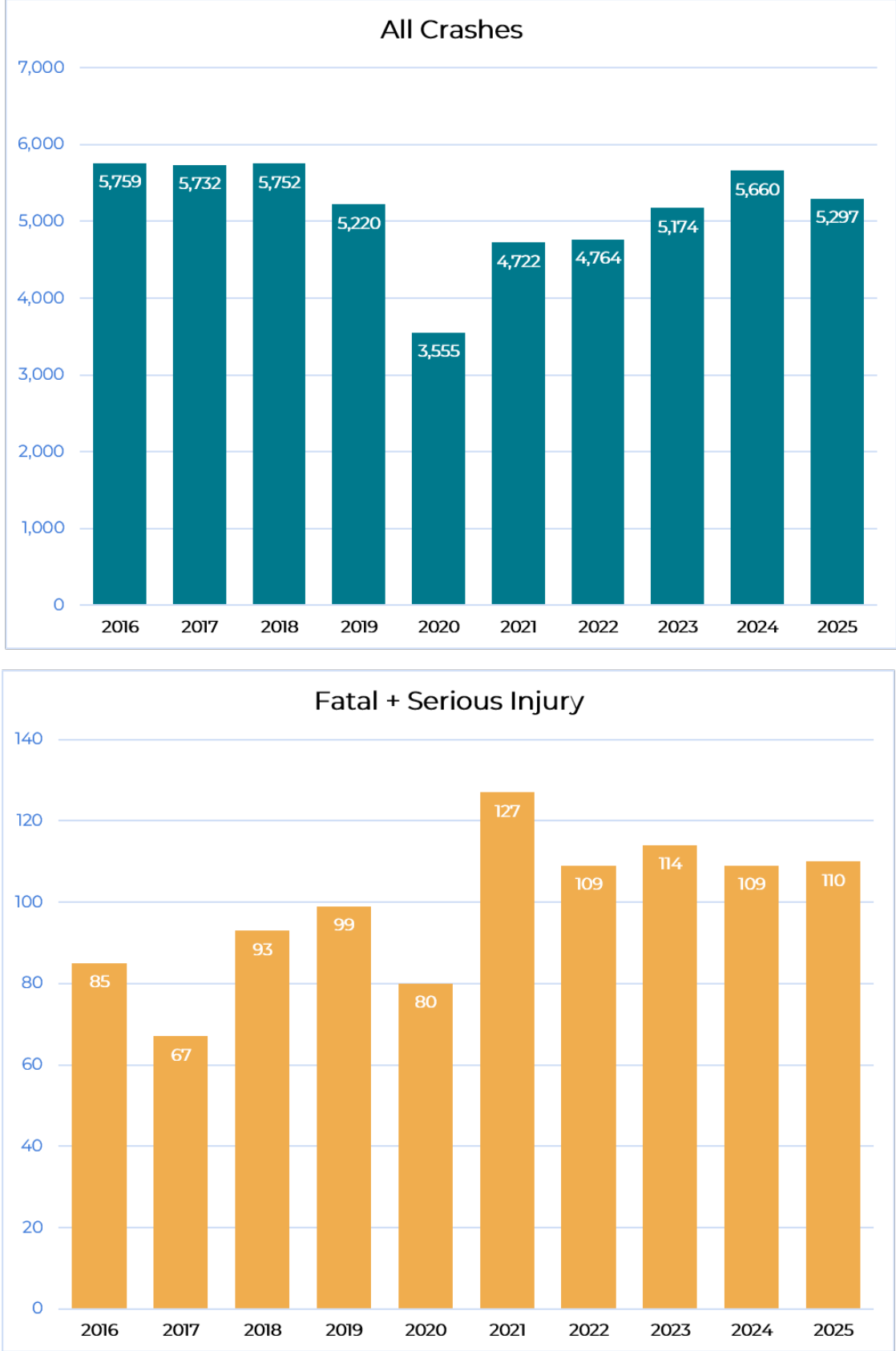
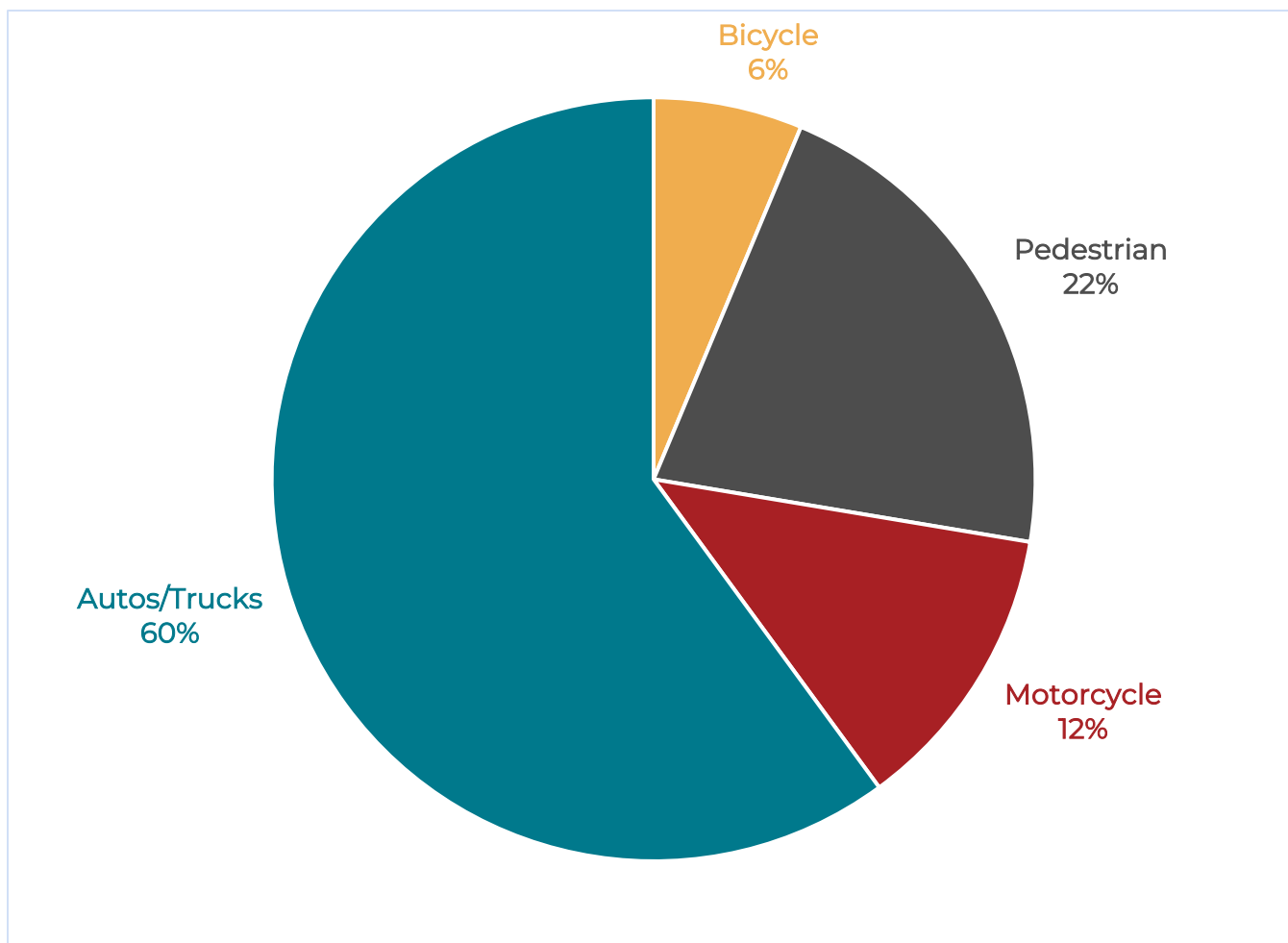


Figure 5: Share of Fatal + Serious Injuries by Travel Mode (2023-25)



The share of crashes resulting in fatal or serious injuries to motor vehicle occupants has decreased by 3% over the same time period.

Looking at the most recent three-year period, non-auto modes now collectively account for 40 percent of serious injuries and fatalities (Figure 5), despite comprising only 4 percent of total crashes. In 2025, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists each experienced more serious or fatal injuries than at any point over the past decade. In contrast, motor vehicle occupants experienced

fewer fatal or serious injuries in 2025 than any time since 2018, and are down 45% from the 2021 peak. This widening divergence suggests that while safety for vehicle occupants has improved in recent years, those traveling outside enclosed vehicles are facing rising levels of risk. These trends highlight the need for focused attention and targeted safety measures for these modes.

Implementing Strategies to Achieve Greater Safety

Though system-wide conclusions cannot be drawn over such a short timeframe, examination of individual projects does offer the opportunity to begin to understand their effectiveness.

In 2024/25, DTM and DPW implemented four corridor level complete streets projects on portions of Burncoat Street, Grove Street, Mill Street, and Stafford Street. Crash data shows evidence of safer operating outcomes, consistent with regional and national experience for similar projects.

Comparison of 2025 crash data (post-project completion) with the 3-year average prior to construction found reductions in the number of reported crashes on the reconstructed portions of Burncoat Street (14 after vs 16 before), Mill Street (17 after vs. 26 before) and Stafford Street (47 after vs 55 before). Crash rates, which also account for any changes in roadway volume, decreased as well: 15% on Burncoat Street, 26% on Mill Street and 19% on Stafford Street.

The short segment of Grove Street between Forest Street and Holden Street experienced 3 crashes in 2025, slightly higher than the average annual rate of 2.3 crashes prior to the reconfiguration.

It is important to note that 3 to 5 years of post-implementation data is needed to determine with confidence the effectiveness of safety measures, but these early snapshots provide an indication that these projects are collectively functioning as intended from a safety perspective.



Figure 6: Improved lane definition, bike lanes and improved pedestrian crossings on Grove Street.

Speeding

Speeding is one of the most significant factors influencing the severity of crashes, particularly for vulnerable road users. Even small reductions in speed greatly improve the likelihood of avoiding severe injury.

The statutory 25 mph citywide speed limit, approved in late 2024 and implemented in 2025, applies to Burncoat Street, Grove Street and Mill Street. Stafford Street operates under regulatory speed limits ranging from 25 mph to 35 mph.

Preliminary data for the 2024–25 complete streets projects shows progress in reduced speeding. On

Burncoat Street and Stafford Street—where changes were limited to lane markings and selective roadside modifications—average and 85th-percentile speeds have decreased by 1-2 mph (approximately 3% to 4%), depending on the location and time of day.

Grove Street and Mill Street incorporated more substantial changes, including lane reductions that reallocated underutilized roadway space for bicycle lanes and parking. On Grove Street, average and 85th-percentile speeds have decreased by 2 to 3 mph (5%), with an even greater reduction for vehicles turning right onto Holden Street. Mill Street has experienced the sharpest decline, with speeds 4 to 6 mph (12% to 13%) lower. Further, travel delay data shows that congestion was essentially unaffected by the changes, including the road diets on Mill Street and Grove Street.

While trending in the right direction, average speeds on these streets remain above target levels, ranging from 29 mph on Burncoat Street to 32 mph on Mill Street during daytime hours. This underscores that additional work is needed and highlights the importance of a multifaceted approach that combines roadway design, public education, and targeted traffic enforcement to achieve meaningful and sustained speed reduction.

Worcester's speed hump program is also focused on managing vehicle speeds.



Figure 7: Bicyclist riding in crossbike on Stafford Street.



Figure 8: Permanent speed humps were installed on Beacon Street in 2025.

Originally trialed in 2021, the program was expanded in 2023 to include installation of permanent speed humps at locations where temporary installations proved effective at managing vehicle speeds. The advantages of permanent speed humps are that they are in-place year-round, are most cost-effective, have better visibility due to application of additional pavement markings, and allow the program to expand beyond

an upper limit of 35 or so temporary speed humps.

In 2025, the program installed 77 speeds humps across 41 streets. Permanent speed humps accounted for 41 of these, while 36 were temporary seasonal installations. In addition, the program expanded to include the installation of 2 seasonal speed tables on Holden Street. Speed tables are elongated, flat-topped traffic calming devices with a more measured traffic calming effect that is appropriate for use on busier streets such as collectors and minor arterial roadways. Unlike speed humps, they feature a gentler, raised table-top large enough to fit an entire car wheelbase.

The primary objective of speed humps and speed tables is to manage travel

speeds. While the applicable speed limit on these streets is 25 mph, appropriate and safe target speeds for local streets in residential neighborhoods is generally 15 mph to 20 mph. Table 1 compares Average and 85th percentile speeds with and without speed humps for streets treated with temporary seasonal speed humps in 2025. In most cases, street segments treated with speed humps saw average travel speeds reduced to target ranges. Many streets experienced significant reductions of 20% or more. Evaluation of speed hump effectiveness in previous years has similarly demonstrated excellent effectiveness at managing speeds.

Table 1: 85th Percentile Speed Change Before/After Installation of 2025 Temporary Speedhumps

Street	Speed Without	Speed With	Change mph	Change %
Apricot St	35	24	-11	-31%
Benefit St	24	16	-8	-33%
Boston Ave	26	20	-6	-23%
Clover St (east)	32	22	-10	-31%
Clover St (west)	24	20	-4	-17%
Eureka St	No Data	No Data		
Fairmont Ave	23	18	-5	-22%
Flagg St (School)	35	26	-9	-26%
Fourth St	24	19	-5	-21%
Freeland St	26	18	-8	-31%
Harrington Way	34	27	-7	-21%
Holden St	38	30	-8	-21%
Hooper St	27	19	-8	-30%
Indiana St	32	16	-16	-50%
North Pkwy	31	26	-5	-16%
Northboro St	No Data	No Data		
Richmond Ave	36	27	-9	-25%
Ridgewood Rd	30	24	-6	-20%
Russell St (Elm Park)	34	21	-13	-38%
Russell St (south)	24	15	-9	-38%
St Nicholas Ave (School)	30	21	-9	-30%
St Nicholas Ave (north)	38	29	-9	-24%
Valley Hill Dr	30	24	-6	-20%

2025 Progress

Over the past year, the Vision Zero team has advanced many initiatives aimed at improving safety by reducing crashes and decreasing the incidence of fatal or serious injuries. The following activities highlight the collaborative efforts and progress made across the program during the last 12 months.



Figure 9: New Rectangular Reflective Flashing Beacon (RRFB) lights installed at the North Lake Ave roundabout

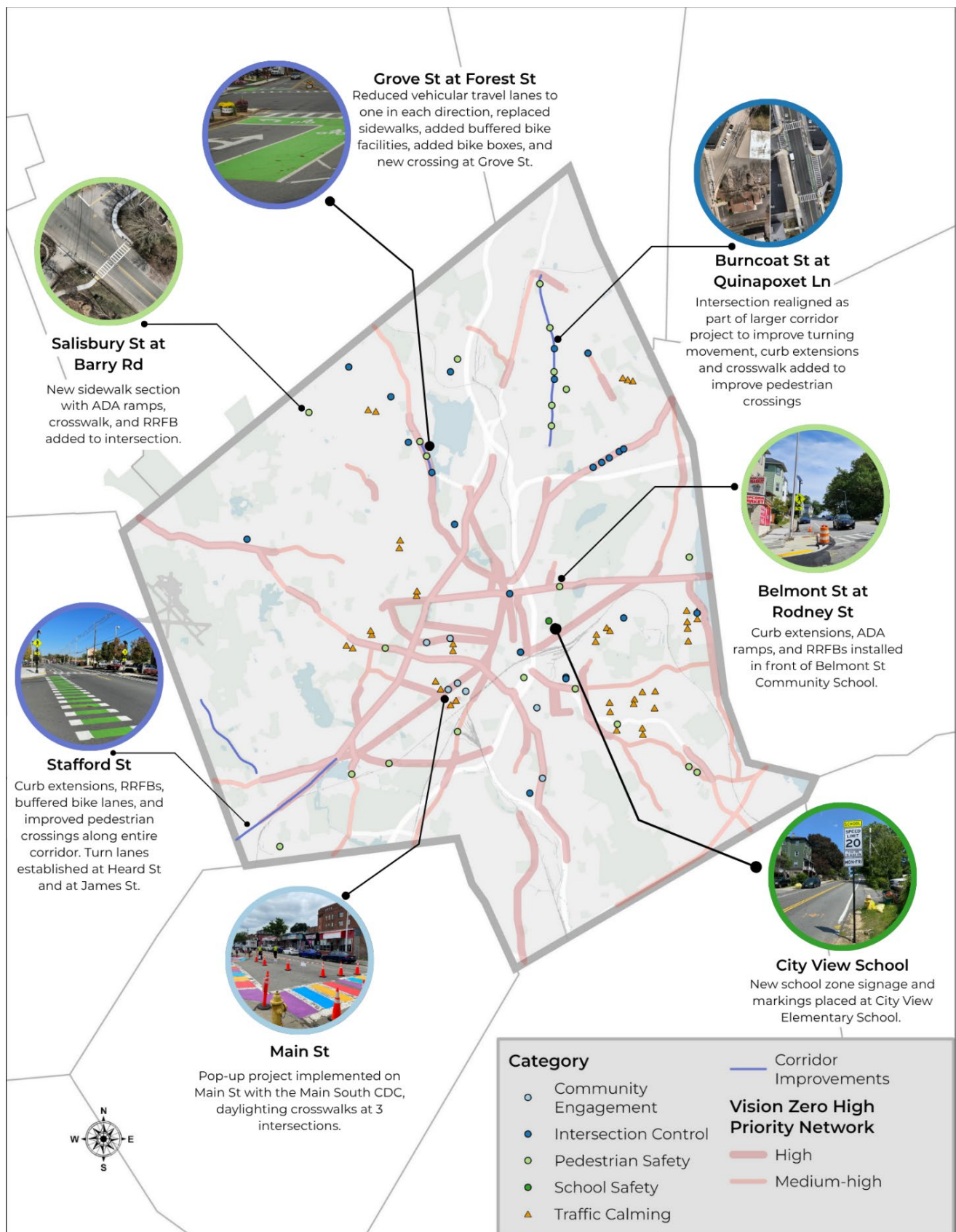


Figure 10: Map of 2025 Vision Zero projects.

Safe People

- WPS held a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) **safe walking curriculum** training program for physical education teachers that will be taught to elementary students.
- The Senior Center hosted an **AARP safe driver** program and a MassBike **safe bicycling** event.
- The municipal Communications Team emphasized Vision Zero in the **2025 public engagement** campaign. This included educational information about speed humps, speed limits, and new crossbikes (crosswalk markings for bicycle lanes).
- The Worcester County District Attorney's office and WPD posted monthly **distracted driving** messages on social media.



Figure 11: Distracted driving social media post.

- WPD issued 99 warnings and **86 citations** for Failing to Yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk, 160 warnings and **174 citations** for Distracted Driving, and **66 citations** for Operating Under the Influence.
- DTM Parking Enforcement Officers underwent a **defensive driving course**.
- DTM launched a quarterly e-**newsletter** that features Vision Zero initiatives and educational content.



Figure 12: Sample quiz question.

- DTM and the Communications Team engaged the public in a **safety quiz** that asked questions about speed limits, stopping at crosswalks, distracted driving/walking, crossing the street safely, safe bicycling habits, and more.

- DTM issued **1,930 safety related parking citations** for parking too close to crosswalks and intersections.
 - WPD conducted **car seat** safety check sessions.
 - UMass Memorial Injury Prevention and Safety Education Program included:
 - Four sessions of the Teen Reality Intensive Driver's Education (RIDE) with 49 participants.
 - Through the Child Passenger Safety Program (education on car seats, booster seats and seat belts), addressed 300 child car seat issues with education and checked/installed 60 personal car seats.
- 1,099 5th grade students from 20 Worcester elementary schools participated in Safety Quest mobile van activities to teach them how to detect, avoid, and safely navigate hazards in and around neighborhood streets.

Safe Vehicles

- WPD Initiated a six-month pilot use of **solid blue lights on cruisers** during routine patrols to increase visibility, reduce crime and traffic violations, and boost public awareness.



Figure 13: WPD vehicles with constant blue lights, a strategy to promote safety.

Safe Speeds

- WPD conducted 1,492 **targeted speed enforcement** activities on 34 VZPIN corridors, issuing 1,121 warnings, 371 citations, and 1 criminal summons for speeding.
- DTM installed 32 pilot and 38 permanent **speed humps** and **speed tables** on 36 streets to slow traffic on local and collector roads as part of the city's pilot to permanent speed hump program.
- WPD deployed **radar speed feedback display boards** on 42 streets in 2025.
- DTM installed 48 25 mph Statutory Speed Limit **signs** at jurisdictional borders.

Safe Roads

- DTM installed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) lights at 17 crosswalks.
- DTM implemented pavement markings and signage safety improvements at the **City View Elementary School** funded through the MassDOT SRTS Signs and Lines Grant.
- WPS and DPW constructed transportation improvements at the **Roosevelt Elementary School**, including new sidewalks, crosswalks, and RRFBs on Sunderland Road.
- DPW and DTM constructed safety improvements on **Burncoat Street** including new sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, and four RRFBs.

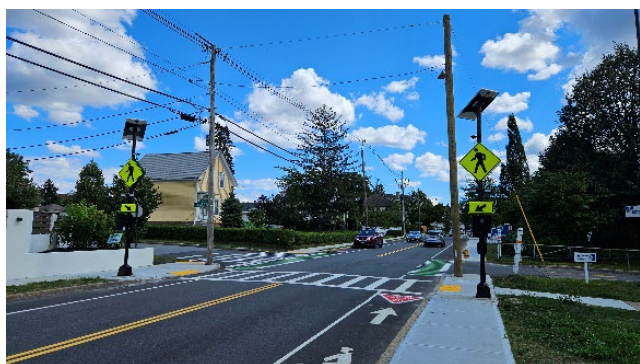


Figure 14: New bike lane and RRFBs at a crosswalk on Burncoat Street.

- Four **walk audits** were conducted in 2025 — two at schools with SRTS, one on Beacon Street with CMRPC, and one on Pleasant Street with Economic Development. A Road

Safety Audit was conducted on Lincoln Street by MassDOT.



Figure 15: Walk audit along Beacon Street to identify safety needs concerns.

- Two **bike audits** on Main Street and Millbury Street were organized by the CMRPC.
- DTM and CMRPC initiated the **Beacon Street Demonstration Project** with public outreach about roadway safety concerns. This project is funded through a federal Safe Streets for All grant in collaboration with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.



Figure 16: Residents helped paint curb extensions and crosswalks along South Main Street.

- Economic Development and DTM supported two **pop-up safety projects** involving crosswalk and painted curb extensions by the Main Street Community Development Corporation and the Pleasant Street Transformative Development Initiative
- DTM initiated design for VZPIN identified priority projects at the intersections of **Cambridge Street and Richards Street** and **Cambridge Street and Canterbury Street**.
- DTM added **parking, buffered bike lanes, and a new crosswalk** on Grove Street in the vicinity of O'Connell Field.
- DPW & DTM initiated a Complete Streets redesign for the **Massasoit Road** pavement management

project. This includes a safer crossing at the Rice Square Elementary School.

- **New crosswalks , curb extensions, and RRFBs** were installed by DTM on Southbridge Street and Southgate Street and on Cambridge Street at Exeter Street – both VZPIN corridors.

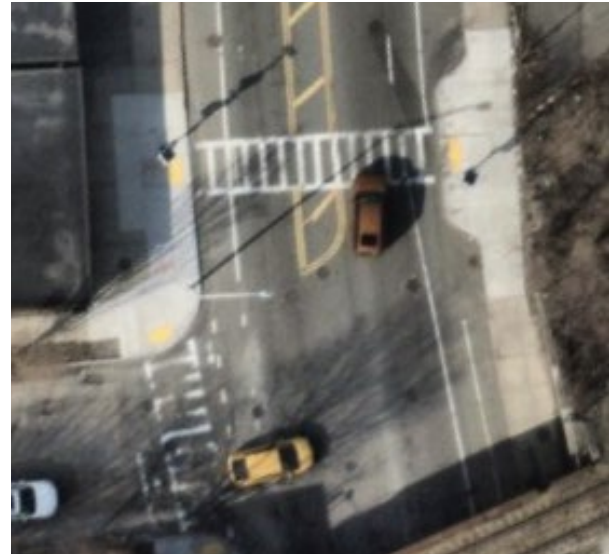


Figure 17: New curb extension at the intersection of Southbridge Street and Southgate Street (Nearmap).

- DTM installed **new crosswalks and ADA ramps** on Holden Street at both Dogwood Road and Tuxedo Road, Salisbury Street at Barry Road (with an RRFB), Grafton Street near Lamar Ave (with median pedestrian refuge and RRFB) and Chandler Street at Coolidge Road (with RRBF and curb extension)
- DTM adjusted traffic signal timing at nine intersections to reduce congestion, **improve safety** and provide additional **crossing time for pedestrians**.

Post Crash Care

- DTM restored **emergency preemption** for all approaches at the traffic signals in Lincoln Square (Main St, Belmont St, Highland St, Major Taylor Blvd).
- DTM Implemented a third timing plan for the 2-4 pm hospital peak period to alleviate congestion on Plantation Street and improve access to the **UMass Chan Medical Level 1 Trauma Center emergency entrance**.
- **WFD** purchased medically equipped smaller vehicles for more flexible emergency response in all weather conditions.
- DTM and WPD piloted a **Rapid Response** program to immediately audit sites following serious injury crashes to identify and quickly implement safety Improvements. Improvements that were rapidly implemented following this approach included:
 - Installation of RRFBs and improved signage at the North Lake Ave roundabout near UMass University campus.
 - installation of pedestrian crossing signage, in-street pedestrian crossing stanchions, pavement markings to daylight crosswalk, yield lines and advance yield signs. Later in

2025 RRFBs were installed at the crosswalk.

- Daylighting crosswalks and advanced yield lines for all crosswalks on Shrewsbury Street.



Figure 18: Intersection at Clover St and Ludlow St before improvements (Source: Google Maps 2023).



Figure 19: Improvements made in 2024 and 2025 to the intersection of Clover St at Ludlow St. includes new crosswalks with daylighting and new RRFBs.

2026 Preview

The following information is not an exhaustive list but rather provides a snapshot of what the City expects to work on throughout 2026 with the understanding that additional opportunities may arise as funding becomes available.

Safe People

- Public Engagement activities.
- Educational programs/training.
- Pop-up project guidance.
- Defensive driving training for city staff.

Safe Vehicles

- WPD anticipates continuing the steady blue light pilot program.

Safe Speeds

- Installation of permanent and seasonal speed humps and speed tables.
- Installation of raised crosswalks.
- Installation of supplemental statutory 25 mph speed limit signage on priority corridors.
- Traffic Calming Guidelines



Figure 20: 2026 construction of raised crosswalks on Country Club Boulevard.

Safe Roads

- Completion of Country Club Boulevard Complete Streets project.
- Implementation of Beacon Street demonstration project.
- College Street Complete Streets design finalized.
- Installation of protected left turn phases at several intersections.
- Start of construction for Chandler Street & May Street Intersection TIP project
- Design Public Hearing anticipated for Chandler Street (Main to Park) corridor TIP project.
- Design initiated for Main Street Complete Streets project.
- Design initiated for Hope Avenue pavement management/complete streets improvements.
- Design initiated for federally funded phase 2 design on Mill Street.

- Design initiated for federally funded safety and operational improvements at Lake Avenue at Bigelow Davis Parkway (Hamilton Street).
- Design initiated for safety improvements on Belmont Street.
- Construction of Phase 1 of the Massasoit Road Complete Streets project.
- Construction of 15 City Council approved pedestrian safety improvement projects.
- MassDOT Vulnerable Road User Bus Stop safety project locations constructed.
- All Way Stop Sign control installed at six locations approved by City Council.

Post-Crash Care

- Memorandum between DTM and Fire Department regarding street design and traffic calming programs.
- Continued upgrades to restore and expand emergency preemption at signalized intersections.
- WPD and DTM will formalize Rapid Response Program to quickly evaluate and implement near-term actions in response to fatal and serious injury crash investigations.