



# **Worcester UniverCity Partnership: “We’re All in This Thing Together.....Most of the Time”**

**Presented By**

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**Worcester, Massachusetts**

**[www.UniverCityPartnership.org](http://www.UniverCityPartnership.org)**

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# Background – City of Worcester, MA

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- **City of Worcester, Massachusetts: Pre -1960's**

- Population of 175,000
- History of Heavy Industry
- Prosperous Downtown Business District

- **City of Worcester, Massachusetts: Post -1960's**

- Industry leaves/closes
  - Banks Bought Out or Consolidated
  - Blighted Downtown
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# Background – City of Worcester, MA



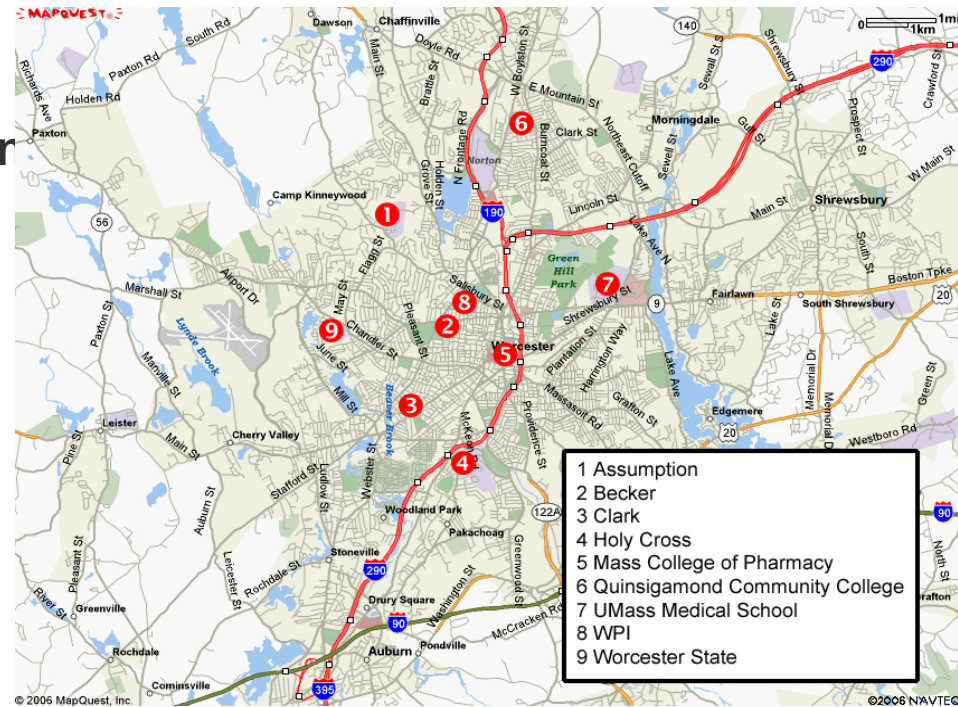
- Stable Population – Tax Burden on Homeowners

- Nine Colleges – “Anchor Institution”

- PILOTS

- 2004 – Mayor’s Task Force

- Leary Report
- Recommended Establishing the Worcester UniverCity Partnership



# Background – Worcester UniverCity Partnership

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- **13 Member (9 in city) Colleges of Worcester Consortium**
  - **City of Worcester, MA (Including Non-Profit Community)**
  - **Business Community**
    - Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
    - Worcester Business Development Corporation
  - **\$100K Operating Budget, Each Partner Contributes Cash or In-Kind**
  - **Advisory Board made up of 4 Representatives from each Segment of the Partnership**
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# Enabling Factors

## Informed Leadership and Partnerships

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- **Visionary City Government Leadership**
    - Mayor (Elected)
    - City Manager (Appointed)
  - **CEO of the Colleges of Worcester Consortium**
  - **Presidents of Chamber of Commerce and Business Development Corp.**
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# Enabling Factors

## More Hands-On Leadership

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- **Executive Level Involved Leadership**
    - Assistant City Manager
    - Activist College Presidents
    - Local Neighborhood Business Associations
    - Campus Liaisons
    - Students – Worcester Intercollegiate Government
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# Enabling Factors

## Shared Vision and Entrepreneurial Approach

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- **Shared Vision**

- Mutual Agreement
- Economic Development Agreed Upon Theme

- **Entrepreneurial Approach**

- Go Beyond the Traditional Roles of Colleges
  - Risk Taking
  - Construct of Partnership Itself
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- **Enlightened Self-Interest – Colleges and Community**
  
  - **Coordinated Efforts Among Other Colleges Could Increase Benefits to Community**
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# Enabling Factors

## Accessible and Available Resources

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- **Colleges Have Ready Access to Community**
  - **College Assets Readily Accessible by Community**
  - **Worcester UniverCity Partnership Mandate is City-Wide**
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- **Potential Partners Differ In Terms Of:**
    - Size
    - Maturity
    - Purpose
    - Resources
    - Leadership
  - **Distinctions Negotiated Through a Mutual Desire to Problem-Solve**
  - **Parties Must Perceive Mutual Benefit**
  - **In Worcester, The City and The Business Community Look to Colleges to Expand Economic Impact**
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## Indicators

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- **Economic Indicators (Michael Porter) – Colleges As:**

- Purchaser
- Employer
- Real Property Developer
- Provider of Intellectual Capital

- **Colleges' Response**

- \$48.4 million in local purchasing
  - Partnership between Holy Cross and SWINC to target neighborhood hiring
  - WPI Gateway Park; Clark Main South Revitalization; Faculty Housing; MCPHS campus; Hanover Theater
  - EITC; Choose Worcester; Housing Authority video; Biodiesel project
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# Early Progress/Lessons Learned

## Indicators

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### •Caution on Part of Colleges

- Colleges are not:
    - Social Service Agencies
    - Commercial Ventures
    - Supplies of Free Labor
  
  - Not always evident to city or greater community
  - Defensive reaction to calls for PILOT payments
  - Pushback on local hiring initiatives
  - Education benefit must be obvious
  - “It’s Never Enough”
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## •Potential Barriers to Success

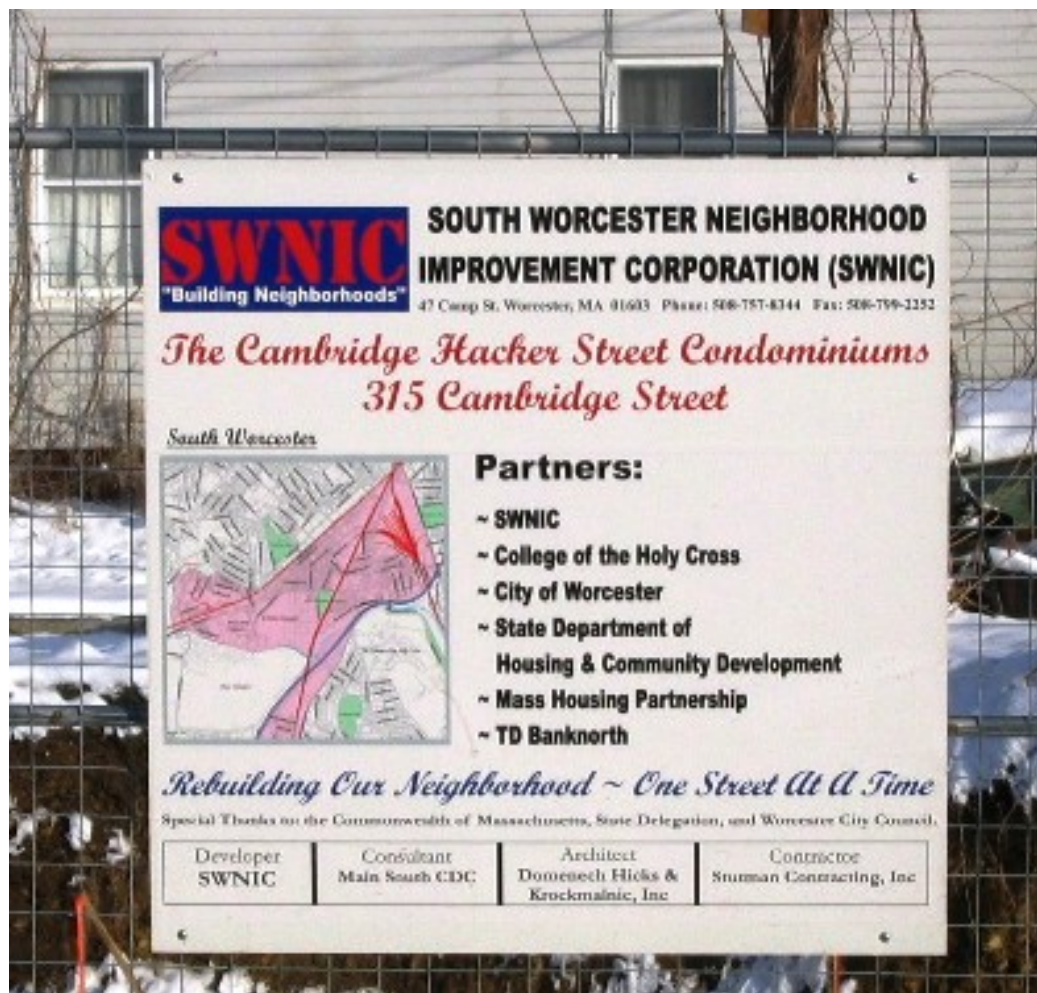
- Limited funding
  - Absence of research focus on campuses
  - Specter of PILOT – Large city budget deficit
  - Coordinating time/talent of faculty and students on nine campuses
  - Role of Business Community (Chamber of Commerce)
    - In some ways mission and goals of WUP antithetical to mission of Regional Chamber of Commerce
  - Campus-Community Adversarial Relationship
  - Absence of positive experience of cross-institutional collaboration
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## Early Progress/Lessons Learned Future

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- Additional Funding
  - Broader acceptance of critical roles colleges play in the community
  - Identifying new partners
  - Raise the profile of the engaged campus (e.g. Carnegie Classification)
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**SWNIC**  
"Building Neighborhoods"

**SOUTH WORCESTER NEIGHBORHOOD  
IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION (SWNIC)**  
47 Camp St, Worcester, MA 01603 Phone: 508-757-8344 Fax: 508-759-2252

*The Cambridge Hacker Street Condominiums  
315 Cambridge Street*

*South Worcester*



**Partners:**

- ~ SWNIC
- ~ College of the Holy Cross
- ~ City of Worcester
- ~ State Department of  
Housing & Community Development
- ~ Mass Housing Partnership
- ~ TD Banknorth

*Rebuilding Our Neighborhood ~ One Street At A Time*

Special Thanks to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, State Delegation, and Worcester City Council.

Developer <b>SWNIC</b>	Consultant Main South CDC	Architect Domenech Hicks & Krockmalnic, Inc	Contractor Sturman Contracting, Inc
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