

VISION ZERO SAFETY ACTION PLAN

As the heart of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Worcester has long stood as a center for industry, innovation, and culture. However, the city has recently faced a tragic surge in traffic fatalities and severe injuries that have rocked its community. Mayor Joseph Petty and City Manager Eric Batista responded by declaring a Road Safety and Traffic Violence Crisis in August 2024. Between 2019 and 2023, 45 people died on Worcester’s streets from traffic crashes, and hundreds more suffered life-changing severe injuries.

In the wake of such devastating impacts, the City retained Speck Dempsey and Stantec Urban Places to draft a Vision Zero Safety Action Plan aimed at achieving Vision Zero, or eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries in Worcester by 2035.

The resulting Action Plan charts dozens of short-, medium-, and long-term design, infrastructure, policy, and engagement strategies for a safer Worcester, ranging from daylighting intersections to formalizing the Public Schools’ commitment to Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School to deploying annual tactical urbanism events.

Traffic fatalities and severe injuries in Worcester are not inevitable. By implementing targeted interventions and encouraging a concerted all-of-city effort across municipal government and the community at large, Worcester can build a safer and more livable city for people walking, biking, and driving.

CLIENT
City of Worcester

COLLABORATORS
Stantec Urban Places

TIMELINE
2024-2025

CATEGORY
Streets & Networks

BUDGET
N/A

SCALE
38.44 square miles,
population of 200,000+

STATUS
Completed

REFERENCE
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Worcester, Massachusetts

A community-driven approach leverages design, infrastructure, policy, and engagement strategies to curb traffic violence in the “Heart of Massachusetts.”



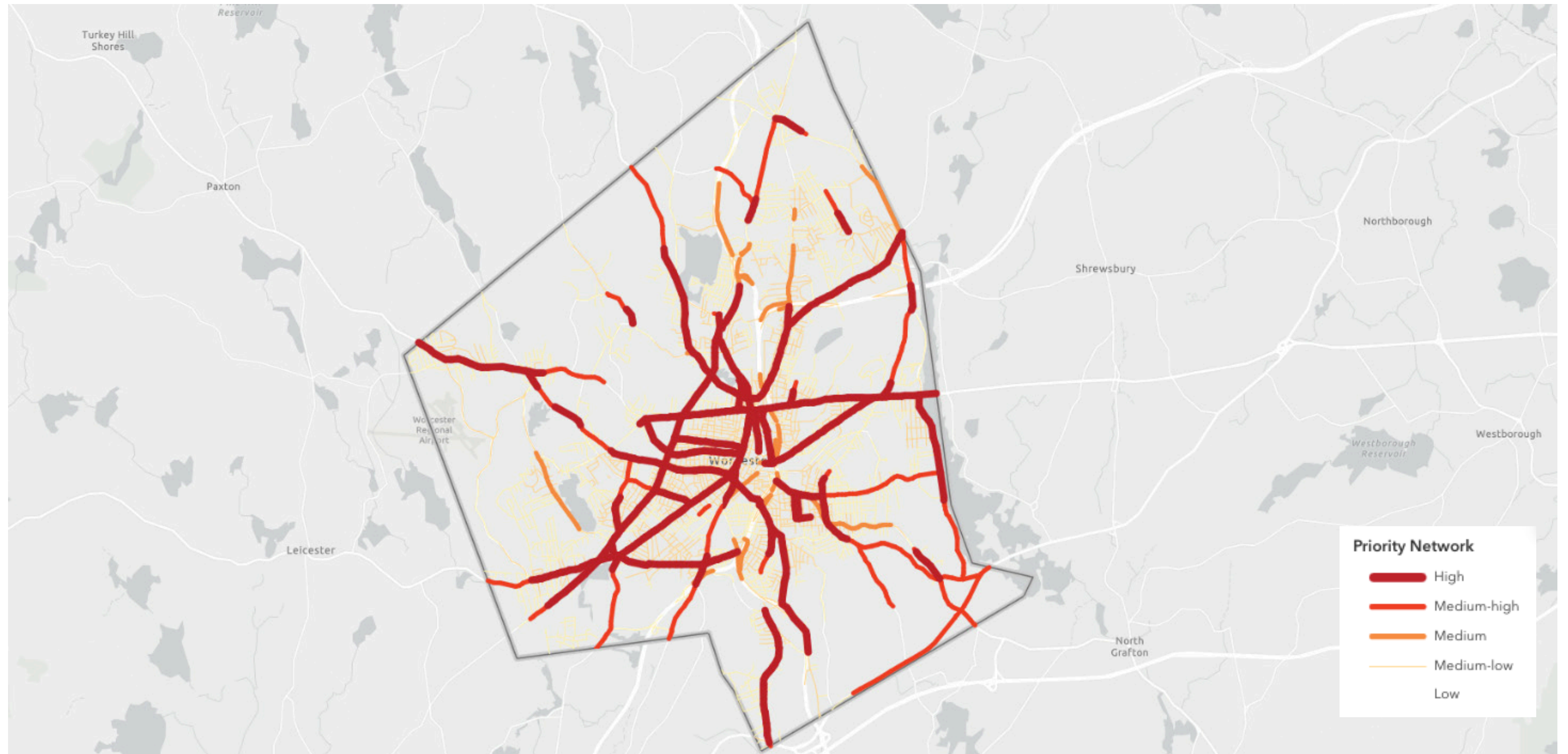
Students at the Vernon Hill School participated in a tactical urbanism demonstration event and calmed an intersection with paint and cones.



Dozens of community members toured corridors with high crash frequencies and discussed potential design solutions during a series of walk audits.



Events like the State of Our Streets forum and staff workshops helped encourage an all-of-city effort across municipal government and community members.



The Plan's Priority Network combines crash, demographic, and survey data to highlight corridors where improvements will be the most effective at reducing crashes and injuries.