

WORCESTER, MA

Commissioner of Inspectional Services

Position Statement



Summary

The City of Worcester, MA, seeks a dynamic and experienced professional to fill the position of Commissioner of Inspectional Services. The Commissioner leads the [Inspectional Services](#) department, working under the administrative direction of the City Manager. This department includes the [Building & Zoning](#) division and the [Housing & Health Inspection](#) division.

The Inspectional Services department is tasked with improving the quality of life for all who come to live, work, and play in the City of Worcester by protecting the health, safety, and environmental stability of Worcester's business and residential community. The department is responsible for all building, wiring, and plumbing inspections as well as all housing and health inspections. The Commissioner supervises 63 full-time employees within two divisions – Building & Zoning and Housing & Health Inspection.

The Community

Worcester is a City of approximately 185,000 residents located in the center of Massachusetts, between Boston and Springfield. Worcester, known as the “Heart of the Commonwealth,” was incorporated as a town in 1722 and as a city in 1848. It is the second most populous city in New England following Boston. [Worcester](#) is approximately 40 west of Boston, 50 miles east of Springfield, and 40 miles north of Providence, R.I. The City has a total area of 38.6 square miles. It is bordered by the communities of Auburn, Grafton, Holden, Leicester, Millbury, Paxton, Shrewsbury, and West Boylston.



Worcester is a vibrant, bustling, and growing community. It has successfully emerged as a leader in advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, information technology, education, financial services, health care, and medical research. UMass Medical School as well as UMass Memorial Health Care and Saint Vincent Hospital are located in Worcester. The City is also home to numerous colleges, including College of the Holy Cross, Clark University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester State University, Assumption College, Becker College, and a campus of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. In the late 1990s, a convention center was built in downtown Worcester and, in 2000, Union Station was reopened following a \$32 million renovation.

During the turn of the 19th century, Worcester’s economy first moved into manufacturing. Factories were built along the Blackstone River producing textiles, clothing, and shoes. When the Blackstone Canal was built in 1828, followed by the Worcester and Boston Railroad in 1835, the manufacturing industry began to thrive. Immigrants seeking a more prosperous life were attracted to the City due to the numerous job opportunities. Worcester also became a manufacturer of machinery, wire products, and power looms. In the 20th century, manufacturing began to move overseas sparking an economic downturn. In the late 20th century, the local economy began to recover as the City expanded into the biotechnology and healthcare fields.



Today, there is more than \$2.6 billion in private and public investment underway in Worcester. The \$565 million, multi-phased [CitySquare](#) project, located in the heart of Worcester, includes 365 housing units, 168 hotel rooms, and 550 parking spaces. New office buildings, a hospital expansion, retail, and restaurants are also part of the overall project.

Construction is underway for a state-of-the-art [ballpark](#) to host the Worcester Red Sox; additional [Green Island and Canal District](#) development will include retail and restaurant space as well as a 500-space municipal parking garage; and Kelley Square will be redesigned to make it safer for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Additionally, two major [high school projects](#) are in the works with other school projects recently completed; an \$11 million reconstruction of [Main Street](#) is beginning; and a [two-phase project](#) replacing an existing 1930's steel water main that transfers water between the Quinapoxet Reservoir and the Kendall Reservoir in the Town of Holden is edging toward completion.

Worcester offers the best of both large and small cities with its diverse neighborhoods, quality public schools, renowned colleges and universities, access to a vibrant and diverse arts and culture scene, sports, concert halls, restaurants and entertainment, reliable local and regional transportation, and a proud tradition of innovation and enterprise.

Worcester At A Glance

- Population: 185,877 (est.)
- Households: 71,145
- Total Annual Budget FY21: \$721.8 million
- Land Area: 37.37 square miles
- Road Miles: 523.37
- Median Home Value: \$233,400
- Median Household Income: \$46,407 (est.)
- Government Type: Council-Manager

Sources: U.S. Census and City of Worcester



City Government

The City of Worcester continues to further its reputation as a well-run, financially sound municipal organization. Worcester is governed by a Council-Manager, or Plan E, form of government with a popularly elected Mayor, 11 City Council members, and a City Manager. The Commissioner of Inspectional Services position works under the administrative direction of the City Manager.

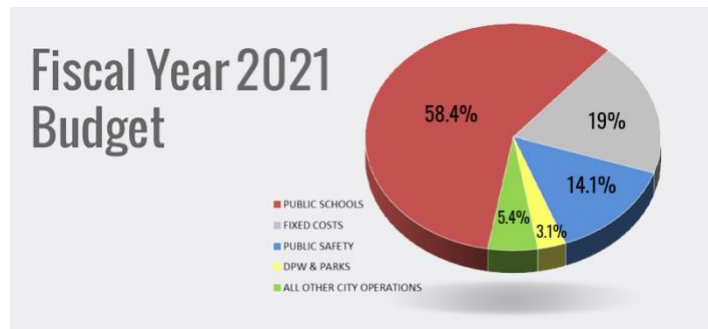


Worcester is a diverse governmental body, consisting of numerous departments, divisions, and sections all working together to serve the residents of Worcester. The main goal of each department, division, and section is simple: to provide the best services possible each day in order to

produce a comfortable environment in which to live, work, and visit.

City Finances

Worcester's [FY21 budget](#) is \$721.8 million, which reflects an increase from the previous year of 4.5%, the majority of which was committed to education and fixed costs. The City has a Standard & Poor's rating of AA- and a Moody's rating of Aa3, both with stable outlooks. Worcester has a sizeable tax base, anchored by multiple health and higher education institutions along with strong redevelopment potential and considerable redevelopment that is currently occurring. Moody's recently noted that the City has stable financial operations with satisfactory reserves supported by formally adopted fiscal policies and conservative budgeting.



In FY21, Worcester's revenues are:

Fiscal Year 2021 Revenue by Source		
Revenue Source	Amount	% of Total
Tax Levy	325,229,687	45.06
State Aid	345,522,190	47.87
Local Receipts	45,633,147	6.32
Other Available	5,436,147	0.75
Total	721,821,171	100.00

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services

Worcester’s Budget and Capital improvement Plan are constructed to align with the City’s four strategic goals:

- Promote strong neighborhoods
- Create vibrancy
- Provide opportunities for all
- Maintain fiscal responsibility

The budget focuses on key initiatives designed to support those priorities. The investments made serve to elevate the quality of life for all. Key initiatives include public safety, parks and youth development, Office of Urban Innovation, ESCo and green initiatives, and succession planning. Information that delves into the specifics of the City’s prioritized investments are detailed within the [FY21 budget](#).

The five-year [Capital Improvement Plan](#) for FY21 takes into account the collective priorities of the community, City Council, and City Manager’s administration following the vision of the Strategic Plan – “To be the country’s most vibrant and livable mid-size city.” A total capital spending budget of \$168.3 million was recommended for FY21.

FY21 Capital Spending Financed

Funding Source	Remaining Prior Year Authorization	FY21 New Authorization	FY21 Borrowing	Other Funding (Grants, etc.)
Tax Levy	18,464,290	42,594,543	39,965,034	4,150,000
Off-Street Parking	3,432,780	3,755,000	7,187,780	-
Water Enterprise	4,215,000	15,645,000	19,610,000	-
Sewer Enterprise	3,670,000	12,270,000	15,940,000	-
ESCo	15,000,000	-	15,000,000	-
Pilot	775,000	2,000,000	6,775,000	4,000,000
Ball Park	63,803,000	-	63,803,000	-
Solar	61,900	-	61,900	-
Grand Total	109,421,970	76,264,543	168,342,714	8,150,000

Source: City of Worcester

The average single-family tax bill in Worcester is \$4,228 and the City has 25,369 single-family parcels with an average assessed value of \$248,697, according to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue’s Division of Local Services.

Worcester has approved budget and finance policies, including the City’s [Financial Integrity Plan](#) which was intended to improve its long-term financial stability. The Financial Integrity Plan, adopted in 2007, included short- and long-term goals and procedures to be followed during budget preparation as well as on-going monitoring. A sample of Plan actions include: established a dedicated reserve building funding source, established an annual borrowing cap, established a reserve policy, and required that 30% of net free cash be deposited into the City’s OPEB liability trust fund.

Position of Commissioner of Inspectional Services

Worcester seeks an experienced and skilled Commissioner excited by the opportunity to work collaboratively with skilled professionals in a vibrant and forward-thinking City. This leadership position requires excellent management and communication skills as well as strong knowledge of construction technology and the laws regarding inspectional services, health codes for public safety, and zoning enforcement. The Commissioner should be confident and comfortable with speaking before groups of all sizes both inside and outside of the organization.

The Commissioner of Inspectional Services oversees divisions responsible for the enforcement of



all laws and related City ordinances which pertain to the Massachusetts State Building code and certain articles of the State Sanitary Code. The responsibilities encompass the administration of the State Building, Plumbing and Gas, Electrical, and Mechanical Codes, Massachusetts Access Board Regulations, weights and measures, and the provisions of the State Sanitary Code that address the inspection of food handling establishments, housing, lead paint and asbestos testing and removal, day care, and swimming pools. Interdepartmental Review Team meetings are offered

to assist developers and landowners in the pre-development stages of projects.

[Inspectional Services](#) has a budget of approximately \$4.1 million. The Commissioner is responsible for the preparation and administration of the department's annual operating and capital budgets. An organizational chart for the department can be located in the [FY21 budget](#) on page 77.

Major accomplishments of Inspectional Services in FY20 include:

- Issued over 16,200 permits and licenses and conducted over 49,000 inspections which reflects an 8% overall increase from FY19.
- Increased 780 CMR 110.7 inspections by 55%.
- Responded to approximately 12,000 work orders for building, housing, and health permits received through the Customer Service Response System which is an increase of 30% from FY19, and over 18,000 inspections, representing an increase of 20% from FY19.
- Over 10,275 violations of Federal, State Code and local ordinances were ordered to be corrected by building, health, and housing inspectors. As has been the historical trend, 85% were corrected within 30 days, 95% within 60 days, and 99% within 90 days.
- In instances where appropriate corrective action leading to compliance was not achieved, the Department sought relief with the assistance of the Law Department for adjudication within the Worcester Housing Court. Approximately 700 cases were brought before the court and over 99% were adjudicated in the City's favor.
- Digitized building permit rolled plans back to 2011 eliminating the need to store paper plans.





New and continued initiatives for the department include:

- Increase of permits overall by 15% due to additional staffing.
- Increase of 780 CMR 110.7 Certificate of Use and Occupancy inspections by 25% due to additional staff and by expanding the program to incorporate the inspection of three-family dwellings every five years.
- Continue scanning building permit rolled plans to electronic files to eliminate paper storage files; complete years 2007, 2008, and 2009.
- Review regulations and ordinances and their effectiveness to ensure that the work of the department is the most effective.
- Create a social media presence for the department providing Twitter updates of seasonal information such as food safety tips relating to barbecues and the loss of electricity and regarding required installation for pellet stoves or pools, heating requirements, no heat reporting, and permitting.
- Collaborate with Fire Prevention in the most challenging cases that are presented to both departments to ensure the safety of our housing stock.
- Coordinate with Technical Services to transition to cloud-based system to enable all units to complete inspections in the field with current technology and make them available on the City's website.

The Commissioner of Inspectional Services should be a leader who is confident in his/her own abilities, is skilled at hiring talented individuals, and is an experienced manager of people and projects. Preferred candidates will be highly motivated and enthused by the opportunity to join a dynamic and engaged municipal team.

Compensation

Annual Salary: \$125K+/-, commensurate with qualifications. An attractive benefits package, including health and retirement plans, is part of the compensation package.

Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent to a Master Craftsman knowledge level in a professional field or trade.
- Intensive knowledge of a specialized field, such as public health, engineering, public administration, or a specific trade as well as general knowledge of related fields, or broad-based knowledge of major municipal function activities, or any combination of education, training, and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.
- Thorough knowledge of construction technology, laws regarding inspectional services, health codes for public safety, and knowledge of zoning enforcement.
- Knowledge and ability to execute permits; knowledge of State Procurement Laws; knowledge of municipal operating and budgeting practices.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.
- Ability to administer an operating budget.
- Proficient customer service skills.
- Effective supervisory skills.

Special Requirements

- MA Class D Motor Vehicle Operator's License.
- Construction Supervisors License.

Preferred

- Certification as a Building Commissioner.

How To Apply

Interested applicants should send a cover letter and résumé, in confidence, via email to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

Subject: Worcester
Inspectional Services Commissioner

Submit a single PDF containing both cover letter and résumé.

Position is Open Until Filled with a first round of résumé reviews on August 24, 2020. Résumés will be reviewed according to the outlined qualifications. Applicants chosen to interview for the position will be contacted by Community Paradigm Associates. Finalists will be asked to submit references and for approval of background reviews before their name is advanced to the City Manager.

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal
Community Paradigm Associates
BLynch@communityparadigm.com
978-621-6733

The City of Worcester, Mass., is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.