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WORCESTER COMMON GROUND
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WORCESTER COMMON GROUND ANNUAL REPORT 2025



116 Piedmont Street

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

The year 2025 has been a pivotal one for Worcester Common Ground, Inc. (WCG), a year marked by progress, perseverance, and partnership. Our highest priority was completing the refinancing and rehabilitation of the WCG Homes Project, encompassing 73 housing units that serve WCG families and individuals. We are proud to share that this project successfully closed in July 2025, ensuring the long-term sustainability and affordability of these homes for our community.

This milestone was achieved through the collective efforts and support of our many partners, including the City of Worcester, the Executive Office of Livable Communities, MassDevelopment, the MassHousing Partnership, Eastern Bank, the MassHousing Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Climate Ready Housing, the Department of Energy Resources, the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation, and our investor, the Royal Bank of Canada. We extend our deepest appreciation to each of these partners for their collaboration and shared commitment to equitable housing and community preservation.

We also wish to recognize and thank our residents for their extraordinary patience and resilience throughout this process. We understand that relocation and temporary disruptions created challenges for many families, from postal service difficulties to changes in schools and neighborhoods. Your continued trust and partnership made it possible for WCG to complete this important work, and we are confident that these newly renovated, energy-efficient homes will provide lasting stability and comfort for years to come.

Guided by our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan and Community Investment Plan, WCG remains steadfast in its mission to advance housing equity, promote environmental sustainability, and strengthen community resilience. As part of this commitment, we are developing a Resiliency Center in collaboration with graduate students from Clark University and our Board Chair. This initiative led by our Residential Services Coordinator and Community Organizer, will engage residents in defining what resilience means for their families and neighborhoods, and how we can collectively address the challenges that impact their well-being.

We are also pleased to report progress at 124 Piedmont Street, affectionately known as “The Cage,” which WCG acquired from the City of Worcester in 2024. Through the efforts of our Community Organizer, funding was secured from the Community Development Block Grant, Community Preservation Funds, and the Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) through MassDevelopment. This fall, beginning on October 30, WCG will launch a community planning process in partnership with TLK Sports to engage youth and residents in shaping the vision for this important neighborhood asset.

In addition, construction continues at 116 Piedmont Street, where three new condominiums are underway and expected to be available for first-time homebuyers in spring 2026. These homes represent another important step in expanding access to affordable homeownership opportunities within the neighborhood.

As we close 2025, we do so with deep gratitude to our residents, funders, partners, and community advocates, for your continued belief in WCG’s mission and work. Together, we are building not only homes but also pathways to equity, stability, and opportunity for Worcester’s Central and Piedmont neighborhoods.

With appreciation,



Yvette Dyson
Executive Director



Ramón Borges-Méndez
Board Chair



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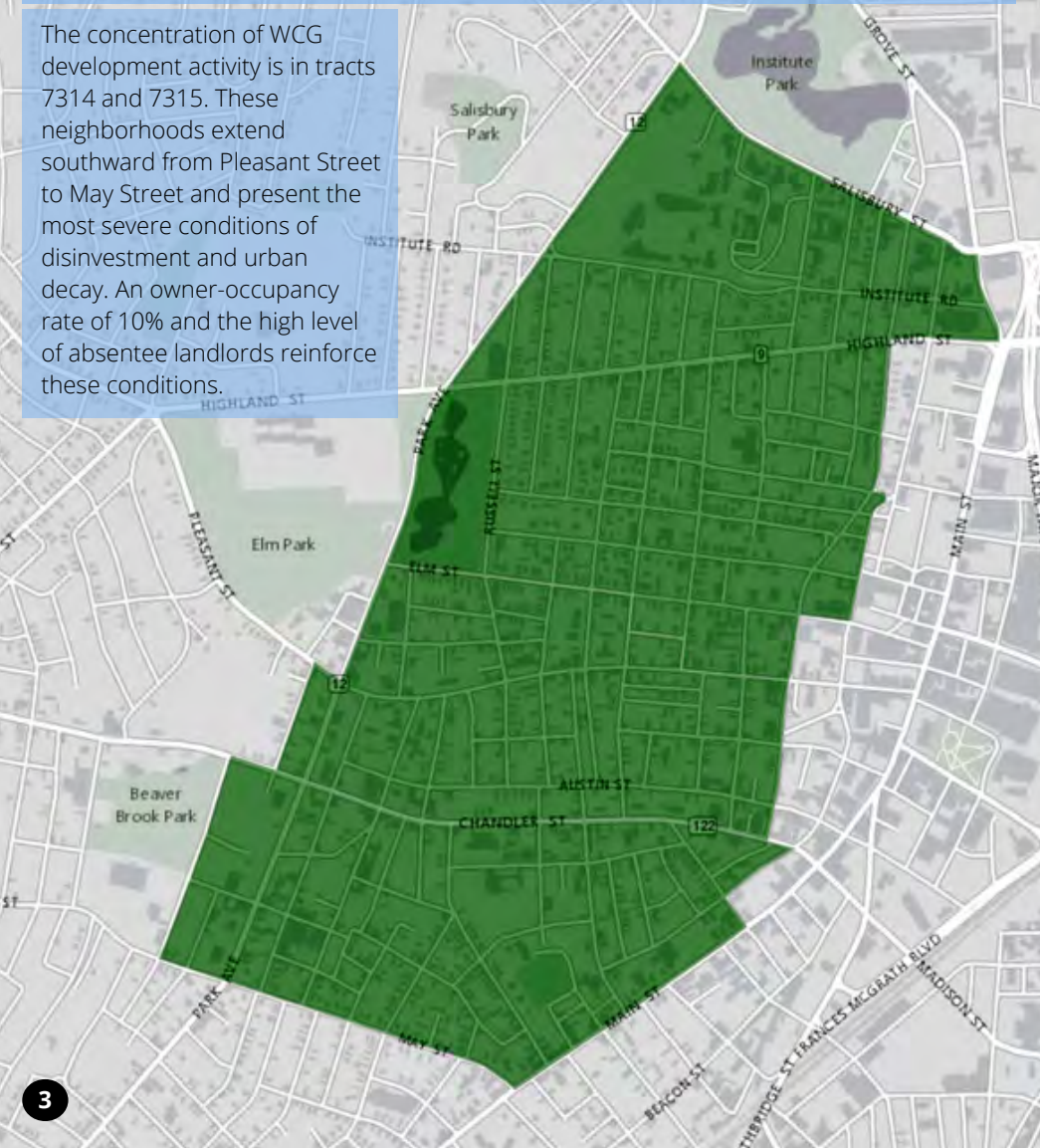
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TARGET AREA

Our target area, which we refer to as the Greater Piedmont Area, encompasses three census tracts, 7314, 7315 and 7316, within the City of Worcester. These tracts are generally bound by Salisbury Street on the north, Main Street on the east, May Street on the south and Park Avenue on the west. The Greater Piedmont neighborhoods consist of several neighborhoods with distinct identities that abut and, at times, overlap each other. The most organized neighborhoods are Piedmont, Castle Street, Crown Hill, and Elm Park.

The concentration of WCG development activity is in tracts 7314 and 7315. These neighborhoods extend southward from Pleasant Street to May Street and present the most severe conditions of disinvestment and urban decay. An owner-occupancy rate of 10% and the high level of absentee landlords reinforce these conditions.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board, comprised of 70% neighborhood residents, promotes grassroots community action through leadership opportunities and capacity building.



Ramon Borges-Mendez
Resident & Board
Chair



Jono O'Sullivan
Resident & Clerk



Eddie Jimenez
Business
Owner



Amie Cox
Homeowner



Mallory Shelly
Treasurer
Homeowner



Sam Smith
Community
Member

Growing our Board

Being a part of the Worcester Common Ground Board is a way to meaningfully engage in thoughtful dialogue and action on our community development practices.

If you are interested in exploring an opportunity with our Board of Directors, please contact Yvette Dyson at 508-754-0908 or dyson@wgc-cdc.com.

What is a CDC?

Community Development Corporations are 501(c)(3) registered non-profit organizations. These organizations work to revitalize neighborhoods, address complex and systemic issues, and strengthen the community through access to affordable housing, community programming, and opportunities for economic development. Worcester Common Ground focuses on the impact that affordable housing can make on rebuilding a community, from traditional rental units to retail spaces, as well as first-time home ownerships. In addition to housing, we preserve and maintain greenspaces for both resident and public use to bring neighbors together, produce healthy food for the community and provide opportunities for agricultural education and business.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**



CDC's main focus is affordable housing, but many typically address other concerns that have a strong impact on residents. Initiatives may involve job training, building community facilities, activism, programming, and urban agriculture programs like WCG.

Affordable housing and the emergence of land trust housing.

In the early 1960s, the United States embarked on, at the time, an ambitious "war on poverty." One part of that "war" was the creation of privately developed, publicly subsidized affordable housing, mostly within the rental market. Private developers were given tax credits for their development of large rental properties that had a certain percentage of affordable housing units for households that met certain income restrictions. Those affordable units were required to meet affordability restrictions for a specified amount of time, often 20 years, at which point those affordable units would re-enter the open market allowing developers to charge whatever rent the market would sustain.

To this day, cities have relied primarily on this form of affordable housing development, referred to as "expiring use affordable housing", to provide some level of affordable housing in their communities. Predictably, when the 1980s came, a large percentage of affordable housing disappeared from the market and the country was hit with a major affordable housing crisis.

In response to this crisis, and with the support of the Institute for Community Economics (ICE), Worcester Common Ground was founded to embark on a new model of affordable housing called community land trust housing. This model was also employed in other parts of the country, including Boston at the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Burlington, Vermont, and numerous other areas around the country.

In short, the land trust movement separates the land from the building with a municipality or community organization maintaining ownership of the land. The land-owner attaches resale and use restrictions to the land, and therefore ensures that the use of the buildings meets community needs for as long as the organization species.

Because of the land lease deed restrictions, Worcester Common Ground's homeownership properties will remain owner-occupied by first-time homeowners and affordable to households at 30-80% of median income for 198 years. This allows the organization, and the City, which funds many of our projects, to expand and build on the stock of affordable housing, instead of continually struggling to replace expiring-use affordable housing.

As is the case with any new attempt to address an age-old problem, there comes a time when it is important to look at what the new solution is really accomplishing. As Worcester Common Ground approaches the end of our fourth decade, we are currently evaluating our land trust housing model to see what it is accomplishing, and what problems have surfaced over time. Stay tuned for the results of that process...



Annessia Jimenez
Community
Organizer

Annessia joined us in January 2022. She is responsible for conducting outreach and creating strong relationships with WCG tenants and homeowners as well as residents and the local businesses within the Greater Piedmont area. Her work will also focus on collaborating with residents to generate and implement ideas to improve the neighborhood and identify any challenges to work toward solutions. She has previously volunteered at other nonprofits that similarly focus on helping underserved populations and communities. Her past work also involves advocating for labor rights and safety. Annessia has a B.A. in English from Suffolk University.



Walter Torres
Facilities Manager

Walter joined us in June 2023. He is responsible for the maintenance of WCG apartment units, buildings, and greenspaces to ensure they are operating at their best. He also manages all inspections, as well as move ins, and move outs. Walter has lived in Worcester his whole life and currently resides in Main South. He is bilingual in English and Spanish, making it easier to connect with both residents and vendors. His work experience includes maintenance, HVAC, plumbing, and electrical, with a specialization in horticultural cultivation through maintaining growing systems and climates for plants.



Darleen Gomez
Property Manager

Darleen joined us as a Property Manager as of November 2024. In this role, she will oversee the management and rehabilitation of our properties, ensuring that all units operate at their best. With a passion for community engagement, Darleen is dedicated to creating supportive living environments for residents. Her background in case management equips her with the skills to foster positive relationships with tenants and address their needs effectively. Fluent in both English and Spanish, she connects with a diverse community and advocates for their well-being. Darleen is excited to bring her expertise and commitment to our team as we work together to enhance our properties and support our residents.

MEET OUR TEAM



Yvette Dyson
Executive Director

Yvette joined us in April of 2001; her work here has been described by our funders as among the best in the state. She handles construction management, project development and everything involved in getting our projects from conception to completion. After graduation from Simmons College, she continued her training as an architect at the Boston Architectural Center and as a licensed construction manager. Her attention to detail and broad understanding of construction and financing has resulted in the outstanding projects we have completed and are planning. Yvette was the Director of Development until becoming Worcester Common Ground's Interim Executive Director in 2012. She was formally appointed Executive Director in July 2013.



Jeshenia Luyando
Resident Services
Coordinator (RSC)

Jeshenia joined us in Spring 2006 and served as our property manager for 16 years. In Fall 2022, she transitioned into the newly developed position of Resident Services Coordinator (RSC). This position will serve as a liaison between our residents and our property management team. She will meet with residents to create service plans that effectively meet their needs as well as developing educational and service programming in tandem with our community organizer. Jeshenia has experience working in social services and as a legal secretary, before becoming an integral part of WCG. Over her 16 years with WCG she has developed strong relationships with each of our tenants making her the perfect person for this newly established position.



Tim Gilbert
Project Manager

Tim has been with WCG since August 2020. As the project manager, he is responsible for a variety of real estate development projects, from smaller projects, such as the construction of a single-family home at 24 Merrick Street, to larger mixed-use, multi-unit developments, such as 126 Chandler Street. Tim comes to WCG with a background in urban planning, community development, and affordable housing, having previously worked for the City of Worcester's Planning Division, as well as served two terms as an AmeriCorps volunteer with NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley. Tim has an M.A. in Community Development & Planning and an M.B.A. from Clark University, in addition to a B.S. in Sociology from Worcester State University.

WCG DEI POLICY



At WCG, our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is grounded in a thoughtful, intentional approach that has been evolving over the past five years and will continue to develop in the future. We recognize that DEI is not just a policy, but a continuous journey toward creating a more just and equitable environment for everyone we serve.

Commitment to Accountability

Our team is dedicated to holding ourselves and each other accountable for equitable decision-making. This involves actively acknowledging and addressing our biases in every decision we make, ensuring that our actions are fair, inclusive, and reflective of the diverse needs of our community.

Focus Areas

We are committed to focusing on specific areas that directly impact our community:

- **Inclusive Representation:** We will strive to ensure that our team, leadership, and community programs reflect the diversity of the population we serve. We believe that diverse perspectives lead to better outcomes and stronger, more resilient communities.
- **Equitable Access to Services:** We will work tirelessly to provide the services our community needs, with a focus on removing barriers that may prevent equitable access. Our goal is to create pathways to success for all residents, recognizing that success may look different for each individual.
- **Ongoing Education and Training:** We understand that the journey toward equity and inclusion is ongoing. We will invest in continuous education and training for our team to enhance our understanding of DEI principles and to stay informed about best practices in the field.

Empowerment and Community Engagement

We are committed to being present and responsive to the needs and concerns of our residents. We will create safe spaces for our community members to express their thoughts, share their experiences, and voice their concerns. By empowering our residents, we aim to inspire and support meaningful change within the community.

Measuring Success

To ensure that our DEI efforts are effective, we will establish clear metrics and regularly assess our progress. We will use feedback from our community and team members to guide our ongoing efforts, making adjustments as necessary to better serve our community's needs.

A Commitment to Continuous Improvement

DEI is not a destination but a continuous process of growth and improvement. We are committed to learning from our experiences, embracing challenges, and remaining open to new ideas and perspectives. Our ultimate goal is to build a community where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to achieve their fullest potential.

WCG HOMES - Refinancing our Properties

Having begun construction in June 2025, the WCG Homes refinance renovation project covering WCG's self-managed portfolio of 16 buildings across 10 sites (73 units) is well underway, with construction expected to finish in early 2027. A groundbreaking ceremony was held in October to celebrate the commencement of the project.

While WCG has worked hard to maintain the buildings in good condition, both while inhabited and at turnover, many of the units require more substantial renovations to remain habitable and comfortable for our residents. At a minimum, units will undergo renovations to kitchens and bathrooms. Several buildings will receive what is called a "deep energy retrofit," which includes new siding with added insulation and air sealing, along with the conversion of gas mechanical systems to electric. We also plan to install solar panels at these buildings.

This refinance and renovation effort will have an immensely beneficial impact on the community, helping to preserve affordable housing within the city while supporting social, economic, health, and environmental stability. Such work is particularly important at a time when the cost of living, including housing, has risen so sharply.



From dollars to development: mission-driven fundraising

Worcester Common Ground's **Community Investment Plan** includes these 3 crucial elements as to how the organization will meet its strategic goals.

- ★ **Increase and Improve Community Driven Property Development and Preservation Activities**
- ★ **Increase and Improve Community Leadership Capacity**
- ★ **Improve Economic Health of Catchment Area Residents and Businesses**

Community Investment Tax Credit (CITC)

One of the primary financial tools used to implement our Community Investment Plan, is the Community Investment Tax Credit (CITC). Created in 2012, the Community Investment Tax Credit is designed to support high-impact, community-led economic development initiatives through a strategic, market-based approach that leverages private contributions and builds strong local partnerships.

Fundraising through the Community Investment Tax Credit Program is critical to Worcester Common Ground's financial success.

In 2024, WCG received an allocation of \$100,000 in CITCs.

CITCs are a *mission-driven, mutually beneficial* way to support community development work.

YOUR contribution of \$1,000 or more will provide you with a 50% credit on your state tax returns.

WE receive the total donation and have more autonomy over how those dollars are invested into our neighborhood.

As outlined above in the Community Investment Plan, your CITC contributions support structural improvements in neighborhood housing stability, personal financial health, wealth generation, and quality of life.

2024 DONORS & FUNDERS

Individual Gifts & Memberships

- Wyatt & Erika Wade
- Jonathan Wilson
- Jaclyn Pacejo
- Cheryl Studley-Straut
- Allison Curseen

Corporate Contributions

- Clark University
- Country Bank
- Worcester Community Action Council
- Fallon Health

Community Investment Tax Credits

- United Way
- Blue Hill Capital
- Berkshire Bank
- Eastern Bank
- Rockland Trust
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation
- Curtis Construction Company
- Warren Leijssius & Kirstin Griffiths
- Sandra Rose
- House Warmers
- Charlesbank Homes
- Santander

Grants

- American Online Giving Foundation
- District Attorney's Office Worcester
- Plourde Family Charitable Foundation

Expanding Homeownership

116 Piedmont Street

Our most recent project, located at 116 Piedmont Street, will create three affordable condominium units for first-time homebuyers, including a fully accessible unit on the first floor. The first-floor unit will consist of two bedrooms and one and a half bathrooms, and the other two units will have three bedrooms and one and a half bathrooms. These homes will be all-electric and energy efficient.

Construction is underway and expected to finish in early 2026. We want to thank our funders, UMASS Memorial Anchor Mission, MassHousing, the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts, and the City of Worcester, for making this project possible. We also thank the project architect, Jeanne Allen of JMA Architects, our contractor, Landmark Associates, and YouthBuild Worcester. Their investment in first-time homeownership is essential to the success of these projects.



Building a Pipeline

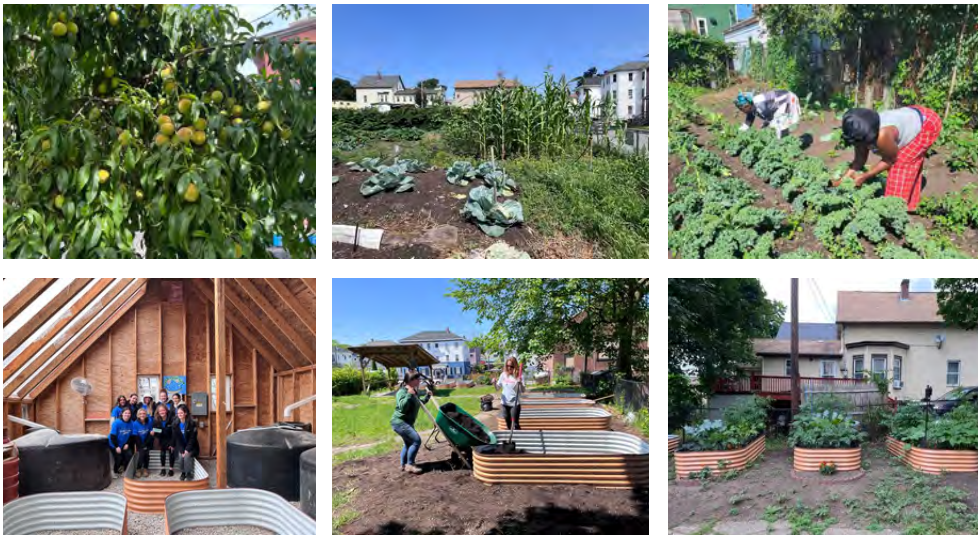
The refinance and renovation of our property at 9 May Street is likely our next big endeavor. As 15 years have passed since its last renovation in 2009, we are planning to update and improve much of the building, including an updated security and intercom system, a refresh of common areas, and new mechanical equipment.



In Summer 2024, we acquired The "Fatty Jenkins" Cage Basketball Court located at 124 Piedmont Street. We have big plans to renovate the court as it has experienced neglect in the past years. The court needs to be repaved, new fencing, and hoops. In addition, there will be a mural painted on the court in tribute to Fatty Jenkins and his support of the court. Learn more about this on page 16.

GREENSPACES

Our Community Gardens continue to thrive and improve year after year. WCG maintains seven greenspaces, including tilled and no-till plots as well as raised beds, for growing a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. This year, gardeners grew cabbage, lettuce, collard greens, cucumbers, basil, tomatoes, kale, peppers, herbs, and much more. In partnership with the Regional Environmental Council, they donate free seedlings in the spring to support gardeners as they get started for the growing season. At the beginning of the season, we also had our fruit trees trimmed; this year they were trimmed by the MA Master Gardeners, resulting in an abundance of peaches and apples!



This spring, we replaced the garden beds at our 22 Newbury garden. With the help of the Assumption University hockey team, we built nine new metal beds to replace the old ones. YouthBuild Worcester dismantled the existing beds, and volunteers from the Mass Realty Group and the teen group at the Central YMCA filled the new beds with compost so they were ready for the gardeners to use. Not only did we replace the existing beds, but we were also able to add five more and welcome new gardeners to our community gardens. This was a large project, and we are thankful to every volunteer group that contributed to making it happen.

Another exciting project that took place this spring was the addition of insulation to the Bioshelter located at our 7 Jaques Ave garden. This improvement allows for temperature regulation and year-round growing. It was made possible through grant funding from the MA Department of Agricultural Resources.

WORCESTER COMMON GROUND, INC.

CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

Changes in net assets without donor restrictions:

Revenues, Supports & Gains:

<i>Rental income</i>	690,497
<i>Program service fees</i>	45,106
<i>Grants & contributions</i>	255,705
<i>Interest & miscellaneous</i>	479,041
<i>Developer & overhead fees</i>	150,000
<i>Net Assets Released from Restrictions</i>	00,000
<i>Total revenues, support & gains without donor restrictions</i>	\$ 1,620,349

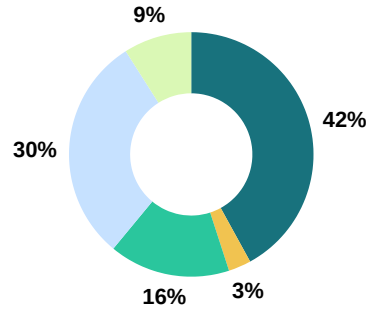
Expenses:

<i>Salary & Wages</i>	466,393
<i>Other Personnel & Related Costs</i>	196,487
<i>Depreciation & Amortization</i>	185,720
<i>Repairs, Maintenance, Rent & Insurance</i>	299,639
<i>Other Occupancy Costs</i>	213,127
<i>Liability Insurance</i>	63,116
<i>Other Office Costs</i>	105,128
<i>Total</i>	\$ 1,529,610

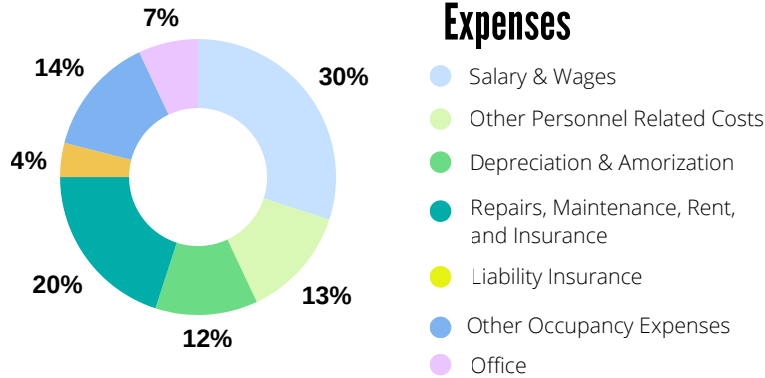
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Income

- Rental Income
- Program Service Fees
- Grants and Contributions
- Interest and Miscellaneous
- Developer & Overhead Fees



Expenses



UNDERSTANDING THE NUMBERS

There are a couple key points to keep in mind when looking at financial statements from non-profit organizations such as Worcester Common Ground.

First, our rental properties have long term contingent liabilities attached to them. However, as a non-profit, much of that debt is forgiven in the future as long as Worcester Common Ground continues to meet these loans' requirements. When these contingent liabilities pass the affordability period, they are then booked as income to our financial statement.

Second, as a provider of housing to low income families who often need subsidies from various agencies to meet their rent obligations, WCG is subject to rental rates set by HUD. Furthermore, WCG is monitored by federal agencies to confirm that our families meet particular income qualifications. While we strive to minimize operating costs, maintaining quality properties while subject to rental rate caps sometimes means accepting losses.

SUSTAINABILITY

Rooftop Greenhouse | 126 Chandler

Atop our 31-unit affordable housing complex at 126 Chandler Street is a rooftop greenhouse. It features a hydroponic growing system that uses water and added nutrients, rather than soil, as the growing medium. This method can be a healthier way of growing food, as it avoids the use of industrial pesticides and promotes food production that is 100 percent organic. In another successful year of growing in the greenhouse, we used the semi-hydroponic Beto Bucket system, which combines the use of soil substrate with automated irrigation. This year, we grew cucumbers, tomatoes, basil, eggplant, and more. We were able to harvest every few weeks, supplying residents in the building with fresh vegetables. The greenhouse is maintained by WCG staff and a resident volunteer.



Community Engagement

Worcester Railers Game

WCG purchased 150 tickets to a Worcester Railers game at the DCU Center. Many of our residents had never attended a hockey game before and were excited to experience it for the first time. Families had a wonderful time!



Earth Day Clean-Up

In April, WCG partnered with the Pleasant Street Neighborhood Network Center to hold an Earth Day cleanup as part of the Regional Environmental Council citywide cleanup. This year, we did not let the rain stop us and cleaned up Pleasant Street and the surrounding side streets.



Paint Nights

In May and September, we held paint nights for residents, where a talented teacher guided us through creating a painting. We enjoyed snacks, desserts, and raffles, and everyone went home with their own masterpiece!



The Cage & TLK Sports

Last year, WCG acquired ownership of the "Fatty Jenkins Cage" Basketball Court.

We are very excited to own this property and aim to create a strong, community-driven vision for the space. WCG has secured grant funding from the City of Worcester through both the Community Preservation Act and the Community Development Block Grant. These funds will be used to fully renovate the court and potentially add a roof structure.



As soon as the weather warms in March, neighborhood children are out playing basketball. The court also hosts formal programming through two local organizations: TLK Sports, which provides free sports programs for youth ages 5–21, and the Pleasant Street Neighborhood Network Center (PSNNC), a neighborhood hub that also offers youth programming. TLK Sports runs summer programs to teach the basics of basketball and provides bike safety training. In the spring and fall, PSNNC held an afterschool program twice a week centered on playing basketball at the court, with a coach leading the children in clinics and games.

Community Spotlight: El Buen Samaritano

Our community spotlight this year is on El Buen Samaritano (EBS), which in English translates to "The Good Samaritan." This is a generational organization, as Mari Gonzalez, the Executive Director, continues the work that her family started before her. EBS makes a powerful impact by providing food, clothing, and essential resources to families in need. Their dedication to serving the community with compassion and dignity has made them a trusted partner and vital support system for many residents. They are our neighbors on Piedmont Street, and we see the tremendous impact they have not only in our neighborhood but across Worcester. We are grateful for their work and contributions to the community.



Resident Services Coordinator

Jeshenia Luyando, our Resident Services Coordinator (RSC), transitioned into this role in 2022 after serving as the Property Manager at WCG for 26 years. During COVID, WCG recognized the need for the RSC role to provide additional support for tenants. This role acts as a liaison between tenants and the property management team. Jeshenia meets with residents one-on-one to determine their needs and then connects them to appropriate resources.

For example, residents experiencing food insecurity are connected to food pantries such as El Buen Samaritano and The Mustard Seed, and Jeshenia also assists them in applying for SNAP benefits. For tenants who need support with rent and utilities, she helps them complete RAFT applications. She also works with the Worcester Community Action Council, which offers several services for residents, including a financial budgeting pilot program to help residents learn to manage their funds, as well as a fuel assistance program.

Jeshenia has also connected residents to Quinsigamond Community College, where a program is offered for SNAP recipients to participate in the Personal Care Assistant (PCA) program. She supports residents in applying and gaining acceptance into this program



Jeshenia also works in tandem with Annessia Jimenez, the Community Organizer. Together, they plan events and activities and attend community events to engage residents. For example, the City of Worcester hosts a weekly “Out to Lunch” series on the Worcester Common during the summer, where Jeshenia and Annessia tabled during several weeks. They also tabled at a Worcester Railers game in the spring, at the TDI Food Truck Event, and at several other community events.

Building Captains

This year, we began establishing a program to help residents become stronger leaders in their buildings and community. WCG hopes to have a volunteer resident “captain” for each building or group of buildings. Captains will act as a link between tenants and WCG staff. Their responsibilities include fostering communication, supporting community building, coordinating events, and helping to identify and address concerns within their building. Captains and WCG staff meet monthly to check in about programming and any concerns.

Worcester Red Sox Game

WCG purchased a group of tickets for residents to attend Family Fun Day at Polar Park. Food was provided, and residents were able to participate in all the activities. The event offered a wonderful opportunity for families to connect, have fun, while visiting the ballpark.



Bingo

This fall, we brought neighbors together for an afternoon of fun and connection with our community bingo game! Residents gathered to enjoy light refreshments, laughter, and a little friendly competition, with a few lucky winners taking home prizes!



PACT

In collaboration with the Pleasant Street Neighborhood Network Center, we continue to hold our monthly community meetings as the Pleasant Area Community Team (PACT). These meetings provide neighborhood residents with direct contact with City staff, an opportunity to discuss concerns, and a way to stay informed about community engagement opportunities and trends in crime. The meetings facilitate important discussions in an accessible community space, allowing residents to feel heard, express their goals and solutions for the neighborhood, and connect with appropriate and helpful resources.

Trinity Basketball

Every Spring we hold our yearly Trinity Basketball League. This year we had students from Woodland Academy, the Pleasant Street Neighborhood Network Center, Tatnuck Magnet School and we welcomed two new teams to the league, Nativity School of Worcester, and Vernon Hill Elementary. Whether students have never played basketball or play regularly, we welcome all skill levels, and the kids are excited to have the opportunity to play basketball and participate in a team spot. Each season, we end with a coaches vs. players game which is so much fun and a banquet with all the teams and their families to celebrate the season.

This league is a partnership with Trinity Lutheran Church and we are so grateful to them for providing us space to play each year and providing breakfast for the players and families! We are also so thankful to the teachers who dedicate their time to coach and all of the volunteers who help make the season possible.



Transformative Development Initiative

The Pleasant Street area was chosen by Mass Development for a Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) grant in 2022. This is a three-year long process that activated the area through economic development, community initiatives, and small business support. This year was the third and final year of the program as it came to a close in September. During this final year, we supported two businesses working on facade improvements. In the Spring, there was an unveiling of a beautiful sculpture representing peace at Winslow Peace Park. In partnership with CC Lowell, we held our fourth Art Market at Winslow Peace Park, a now yearly tradition that will continue past TDI. Throughout the year, there were several different marketing initiatives that took place, one of the largest being Pleasant Street pole banners from Main Street to Park Avenue. Our adjunct fellow, Noah Schurr, who was hired to support the work of TDI, applied to an AARP grant in which we were awarded to perform crosswalk painting and asphalt art throughout the Pleasant Street district to improve pedestrian safety. In the fall, we held our Food Truck and Vendor Series for the second year in a row, and it was quite a success being able to activate space and build community in the neighborhood! To commemorate Ivette Olmeda's hard work, our TDI Fellow for the past three years, we held a small celebration ceremony to thank her for everything she has done for the district. Thank you Ivette!

