



VISION 2037 - THE WOONSOCKET RECOVERY PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vision 2037 is a long-term governing blueprint for rebuilding the City of Woonsocket and creating a stronger, more financially sustainable, economically competitive, and desirable community by 2037.

The plan begins from the premise that Woonsocket's challenges cannot be solved through isolated projects, short-term political decisions, or simply spending more money. The City needs a coordinated strategy that establishes priorities, measures results, strengthens municipal operations, encourages private investment, improves neighborhoods, and restores confidence in city government.

The goal can be summarized simply:

Rebuilding the City people are proud to call home.

THE FOUR PILLARS

Vision 2037 is organized around four principles that provide a framework for both policy and implementation:



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RESTORE



- Confidence and trust in city government
- Fiscal discipline
- Neighborhood stability
- Public spaces
- Infrastructure
- Pride in Woonsocket

REBUILD



- The City's economic
- foundation Housing stock
- Infrastructure
- Municipal operations
- Commercial districts
- Neighborhoods
- Ability to attract investment



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REDISCOVER



- Woonsocket's identity
- History
- Architecture
- Natural resources in the Blackstone River
- Neighborhoods
- Cultural assets
- The potential as a place to live, work, invest, visit, and raise a family.

MEASURE



Establish measurable goals and publicly track results so residents can determine whether Vision 2037 is actually working. Policies should be judged by outcomes rather than announcements or intentions.



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WHERE WOONSOCKET STANDS

The plan establishes a factual baseline before proposing solutions. **Woonsocket at a Glance** examines population, income, poverty, housing, homeownership, education, employment, commuting and other indicators.

This baseline is important because Vision 2037 is intended to be measurable. The City should be able to compare future conditions with where Woonsocket stood when the plan began.

Housing is particularly important. Our research identified a relatively low homeownership rate and a housing market dominated by rental occupancy. That connects directly to future discussions about neighborhood stability, property conditions, tax policy, homeownership and redevelopment.

WOONSOCKET'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Vision 2037 does not view Woonsocket solely through the problems it faces. The plan also identifies assets that can become the foundation of recovery.

One of those is Woonsocket's geographic position within what we have called the **Economic Triangle** connecting the city to Providence, Worcester and Boston.

Woonsocket also possesses significant physical assets: historic mill buildings, established neighborhoods, municipal infrastructure, parks, the Blackstone River, architectural heritage, developable and underutilized property, and a compact urban form.

The strategy is to turn those assets into competitive advantages rather than continually defining Woonsocket by its disadvantages.



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A DIFFERENT STANDARD FOR CITY GOVERNMENT

An important part of Vision 2037 is **The Woonsocket Standard** - the principles against which city decisions should be evaluated.

Those principles include honesty, putting people first, measurable results, fiscal discipline, accountability, professional government, long-term thinking, fairness and consistency, collaboration, and pride in Woonsocket.

The underlying philosophy is that city government exists to serve residents and should operate professionally, transparently and consistently.

1 Honesty

2 People First

3 Results Matter

4 Fiscal Discipline

5 Accountability

6 Professional Government

7 Long-Term Thinking

8 Fairness & Consistency

9 Collaboration

10 Pride in Woonsocket



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FROM RECOVERY TO GROWTH

Vision 2037 is intended to move Woonsocket through several stages.

1

STABILIZATION

The first stage is stabilization: improve finances, municipal operations, neighborhoods, infrastructure and basic city conditions.

2

REBUILDING

The second is rebuilding: address properties and infrastructure, strengthen the tax base, encourage homeownership and investment, improve the business environment and create conditions for economic growth.

3

REDISCOVERY & GROWTH

The third is rediscovery and growth: reposition Woonsocket as a community with a distinctive identity and competitive advantages - a city where people choose to live, businesses choose to invest and visitors have reasons to come.

Throughout all three stages, **Measure** provides accountability. Goals should have benchmarks, timelines and publicly reported results.



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THE 2037 OBJECTIVE

Vision 2037 is therefore more than a collection of projects.

It is intended to answer three fundamental questions:

1. Where is Woonsocket today?

2. Where do we want Woonsocket to be in 2037?

3. What specific actions will get us there - and how will we know whether they worked?

The ultimate objective is a Woonsocket with a stronger tax base, stable neighborhoods, responsible finances, improved infrastructure, increased economic opportunity, effective municipal government, greater private investment, stronger community pride and a clear direction for its future.

RESTORE | REBUILD | REDISCOVER | MEASURE

That is the central idea behind Vision 2037