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# Worcester's Changing Media Landscape and Political Participation

Claire M. Robbins  
CIRobbins@clarku.edu

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CHALLENGE CONVENTION.  
CHANGE OUR WORLD.

*Clare Robbins*

*Worcester's Changing Media Landscape and Political  
Participation*

*May 5, 2023*

## **Acknowledgements**

This Capstone was made possible with the assistance and guidance of my advisor, Mary Piecewicz. I want to recognize my colleagues at the Worcester City Clerk's Office and the Worcester Board of Election Commissioners for inspiring this project and providing the data. Special thanks for my friends, family, and my super supportive fiancé, who listens to every thought I have, all while completing law school.

### **Abstract:**

After most municipal elections, local and elected officials often question why voter turnout was so low. Historically, voter turnout has been considerably lower than voter turnout in federal or statewide elections. Similarly, media coverage of federal and statewide elections have also been far more substantial, while local coverage for elections has been minimal. Local newspapers and journalism are scarce in 2023. Generally, interest, engagement, and coverage of local politics and elections are all very low.

This correlation brings up the question, "Is voter turnout affected by local news coverage?" By analyzing the coverage of local elections and how journalists engage with consumers, it may point to options to increase voter turnout. The overarching question leads to several sub-questions, including the following:

- Are local politics not "newsworthy" enough for journalists to cover?
- Are there not enough local journalists to cover elections?
- Are local elected leaders and officials engaging with residents and making information about local politics accessible?
- As a community, and as a City, how can we ensure accurate media coverage of local government to inform voters?

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## Section 1: Introduction & Methods of Analysis

Research discussed in the Literature Review identifies the influence media has on political participation, voter turnout, and the history of the decline of print media. This capstone will focus on if the decline of media coverage and press in Worcester, MA has affected voter turnout and political participation in recent years.

Throughout this capstone, “**the City**” refers to the City of Worcester, MA. Worcester, MA is centrally located in Massachusetts. Worcester was first established as a town in 1722 and later as a city in 1848 (*Worcester History - Worcester Historical Museum*, 2019). Worcester is the second-largest City in New England with a population of approximately 206,518 people (Census 2020) (*Quick Facts*, n.d.). The municipal government is a Council-Manager form of government, or “**Plan E**” government. Plan E form of government, according to Massachusetts General Law, is:

“a city government and legislative body, to be known as the city council, composed of seven or nine members, one of whom shall be elected as mayor by and from such members and shall be the official head of the city, and an administrative officer, called the city manager; the members of the city council and the elective members of the school committee to be elected at large by proportional representation” (The General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, n.d.).

The City Council serves as the legislative body of the City. There are eleven total members of the City Council. The Council is made up of five district Councilors and six at-large Councilors, with the highest vote-getter being elected Mayor and the Chair of the Council. Similarly, the Worcester School Committee is made up of six district Members and two at-large Members. The Mayor also serves as a third at-large Member and as the Chair (City of Worcester, *City Council*, n.d.). Every two years, the Worcester Board of Election Commissioners administers the Municipal Election, electing the City Council and School Committee Members. The City

Council dictates policy decisions and the City Manager implements them through the day-to-day operations of the City. Those who work under the City Manager are known as the “**City Administration.**”

Several phrases and words need to be defined to best understand the Capstone. The phrase “**political participation**” is widely debated in the study of politics. For this discussion, the definition derived from Verba and Nie is best understood. In their writing, Verba and Nie define political participation by explaining it as four different categories: “voting, campaign activity, citizen-initiated contacts, and cooperative activities” (Verba & Nie, 1987). More specifically, when discussion political participation in this paper, we are mainly referring to voting.

“**Local media**” refers to the news coverage of a particular area, mostly by smaller, locally owned, media outlets.

A case study was chosen as the most suitable form of analysis because it provides data points and background information focused on Worcester elections and media. A case study is also the best format to showcase possible solutions to encouraging journalism to cover Worcester City Hall, in an effort to better inform voters.

### ***Limitations***

Several limitations must be mentioned to best understand the case study. First, as an employee of Worcester City Clerk's Office, I refrained from any sort of survey or obtaining public opinion as data points. Although that would have been helpful for research, I cannot give the appearance of asking survey questions related to public opinion or voting due to my position. I also want to acknowledge my perspective and privilege as a White cis-gender woman working within municipal government. My experience working in municipal government, political

participation, and in Worcester's government is not the same as BIPOC or LGBTQIA+ residents and municipal employees.

## **Section 2: Literature Review**

While thinking about these questions, it's important to understand some of the background and trends seen in voter turnout and election coverage throughout the twenty-first century in the United States. The purpose of this literature review is to provide context and background on local election coverage and voter turnout, as well as voter turnout and coverage for federal elections. By looking at academic journals and publications from the past several elections, it's my assumption that research will show that voter turnout in local elections is low in most municipalities and that coverage of elections is even lower. I'd like to specifically look at the City of Worcester.

### ***Literature Review Components & Types of Published Documentation – Academic and Commercial***

While researching the topic, I started off by utilizing some of the resources offered by Clark University, such as the Clark University Libraries Journal Locator, which pointed me to several useful databases. These databases, such as JSTOR and EBSCO, led me to articles in reputable academic journals, like *Journal of Urban Affairs* and *Journal of Media Economics*. Rather than looking at commercial publications, I opted to go with more academic publications that included data. By looking at these journals and publications specific to Worcester from the Clark Digital Commons, I was able to gather information from several sources that helped contribute to the research.

***Investigation: Theories, Models and Research Studies***

To best understand this concept, I started by reviewing the article, “Big City, Big Turnout? Electoral Participation in American Cities” by Neal Caren. Caren analyzed voter turnout in 332 mayoral elections in 38 cities from 1978 to 2003. According to Caren, voter turnout declined by more than 20% in municipal elections from 1978 to 2003 (Caren, 42). Caren also found compelling evidence that different types of municipal government influenced voter turnout. For instance, non-partisan elections and City Manager systems have significantly lower voter turnout. Cities that hold municipal elections on different dates from other elections also have lower voter turnout, according to Caren. Caren’s research points to trends that are helpful in looking at how the decline in voter turnout differs from city to city and has changed voter the years.

In Molly Kazin’s “Why Doesn’t Worcester Vote?” Kazin looks specifically at Worcester as a case study for low voter turnout. Kazin’s research was inconclusive when it came to reasons why voter turnout was so low in Worcester. Kazin, however, concluded that Worcester and other Gateway Cities could benefit from Get Out the Vote Campaigns, which would provide transportation and education to voters. Kazin concluded that voter turnout in Worcester could be attributed to the Plan E, weak Mayor, strong Manager, method of government, just like Caren did. Kazin’s research is helpful in looking at gateway cities and cities with a Plan E form of government.

The third article, “Social Pressure, Descriptive Norms, and Voter Mobilization” analyzes some of the reasons why social pressure impacts voter turnout. Although this publication does not specifically look at municipal elections, it is helpful to understand factors of voter turnout as a whole. As the research points out, voting is unique in that it is not influenced by social pressure



in the way that something like recycling is, for example. This makes me wonder how impactful campaigns like Get Out the Vote are and if they are worth the resources for municipalities to invest in.

In “Voter Turnout: A Social Theory of Political Participation” by Meredith Rolfe, Rolfe also looks at the social pressure of political participation and contributing social factors. Rolfe’s understanding of voter turnout is based on social pressure and social standing, which differs from the findings of the publication previously mentioned. Rolfe finds that socio-economic standing and social circles play the largest role in participating in politics. Rather than crediting college education for an individual’s desire to vote, Rolfe credits college education with providing a strong social circle and institutional ties, which impact desire to vote. Rolfe’s analysis is interesting and provides some context into why groups of people are influenced to vote.

As I alluded to earlier, there has been a decline in local journalism across the country. Rubado and Jennings’s publication, “Political Consequences of the Endangered Local Watchdog: Newspaper Decline and Mayoral Elections in the United States” discusses how lack of local journalism has led to a decline in quality of city politics and residents being informed about local issues and elections. Their research found that local newspapers who recently cut staff also had a decline in competition in their Mayoral races. Their research found a similar correlation between local newspaper staffing cuts and lower voter turnout. Newsrooms with less staff, according to the research, must dedicate their resources to other topics rather than election coverage. This article is particularly relevant to the research topic because it looks at local media coverage and its impact on political engagement, but it is specific to California. I am curious if this sentiment is true for other cities.

Schulhofer-Wohl & Garrido's research in "Do Newspapers Matter? Short-Run and Long-Run Evidence From the Closure of *The Cincinnati Post*" looks at how the closing of *The Post* impacted local elections in Kentucky suburbs. After shutting down production in 2007, the 2008 local elections saw a decline in both voter turnout and candidates running for electoral office. This article analyzed the closure of *The Cincinnati Post* as a case study for how local journalism impacts local politics. The findings in this research does point to a correlation between local media coverage and a decline in voter engagement, which is similar to the findings in Rubado and Jennings's publication.

### ***Conclusions from the Literature Review***

After reviewing the research described throughout the literature review, I found that coverage of local politics and voter turnout/engagement does have a correlation in cities through California and the Kentucky suburbs. By researching different cities and background of voter engagement, I have been able to understand how voter turnout has declined over the years and how local journalism has also declined. So far, I have been able to conclude that local journalism, or lack thereof, does contribute to voter engagement and participation. Further research may show similar findings in the City of Worcester.

### ***Methods for Investigating My Research Topic***

I started my research by searching through Clark University's databases, as mentioned earlier in the literature review. It was helpful to look at key words such as "media and local elections," "voting patterns," "local journalism and municipal elections" and "voter turnout in Worcester." These key words and initial topics led me to many of my findings. I also utilized background research to best figure out what sources would have the most information related to the topic.

### ***Lessons Learned from the Literature Review***

Throughout the process of drafting a literature review and conducting research, I learned where to best find the information related to voting, voting patterns, and media consumption. I also learned how to read through academic research for the relevant keywords and topics. Prioritizing which articles to read through was important, as they pointed to other articles with helpful information. Besides learning new research skills, I was also able to learn more about the topic and decide on next steps- like trying to find information specific to New England Cities or the City of Worcester.

### **Section 3: Background Information**

The media landscape in Worcester, MA has changed drastically over the past several years. This case study will look in depth at the media landscape in Worcester, MA and the effect it has on political participation amongst residents. As such, the case study aims to provide residents in Worcester, MA with an analysis of how the lack of media, or the structure of the media, affects modes of political participation, such as voting. Older residents are familiar with the traditional forms of print media, such as the local newspaper *Telegram & Gazette*. Younger residents, however, often rely on local blogs and Twitter users that closely follow Worcester politics.

Political and government stakeholders may also find this Capstone to be helpful. By analyzing how or why residents are influenced to engage in politics by consuming local media, elected officials may change their campaign strategy or their policy objectives. Lastly, election officials and administrators will find this Capstone to be helpful and informative. As they plan their Election processes, they need to be informed on why Worcester residents vote and if they are engaged with local elections and local government. Voter turnout is often contributed to the

efforts of Election officials, but this Capstone will analyze how local media may also contribute to voter turnout.

### Section 4: City of Worcester’s Media Landscape

Worcester’s media landscape has historically been print media. Figure 1.1 explains the different types of media in Worcester, along with the year the media source began covering Worcester.

Media Outlet	Type	Year Worcester Coverage Began
Telegram & Gazette	Print Media	1888 ( <i>Worcester Telegram 1888-1989, n.d.</i> )
MassLive	Digital Newspaper	2013 (Kubosiak, 2019)
Worcester Business Journal	Print Media & Digital Newspaper	1982
Worcester Magazine	Print Media	1976
Spectrum News 1	Television News	2020
Vocero Hispano	Newspaper, now Digital Newspaper	1990
Worcester Patch	Digital Newspaper	Unclear

Figure 1.1

This chart, however, does not include social media and blogs. In recent years, Twitter feeds have closely reported on local news, using the hashtag “#worcpoli.” Local journalist Bill

Shaner also started an alternative newspaper online called “Worcester Sucks and I Love It.”

Shaner was previously a journalist at *Worcester Magazine* but quit once the magazine was acquired by *Telegram & Gazette* (2022 *Power 50: Bill Shaner*, 2022). Shaner’s online blog is more critical of City policy and is sustained by reader donations.

## **Section 5: The Challenge**

Despite having multiple media outlets, there are very few resources dedicated to these companies and very few staff journalists. In 2014, Gatehouse Media, a national media conglomerate, bought out the *Telegram & Gazette*, leading to major business changes and layoffs. Gatehouse also bought out *Worcester Magazine*, laying off most of the staff (Luttrell, 2019). These buy-outs and changes to the media landscape has caused concern amongst the general public, local journalists, and municipal leaders. Mayor Joe Petty said, “There is no more real newspaper in the city of Worcester” (Luttrell, 2019). *Boston Magazine* featured Worcester as an example of suburban media decline, writing:

“Just look at Worcester, New England’s second-most-populous city. As the area embarks on expensive renovations of iconic structures, welcomes a minor-league baseball team, and becomes a booming center for the recreational cannabis industry, there’s more cash—and temptation for graft—than ever. Unfortunately, the city is left without a watchdog. The regional paper of record, the *Telegram & Gazette*, was bought by John Henry from the *New York Times*. Henry then sold it to Halifax Media Group, which sold the paper to Gatehouse” (Faraone, 2019).

Without “watchdog” media, where do residents turn to gather information about local news and politics?

Worcester’s political climate has also changed drastically in recent years, with more progressive candidates being elected. In 2021, residents elected progressive members Thu Nguyen and Etel Haxhiaj to the Council. Councilors Nguyen and Haxhiaj have joined a more

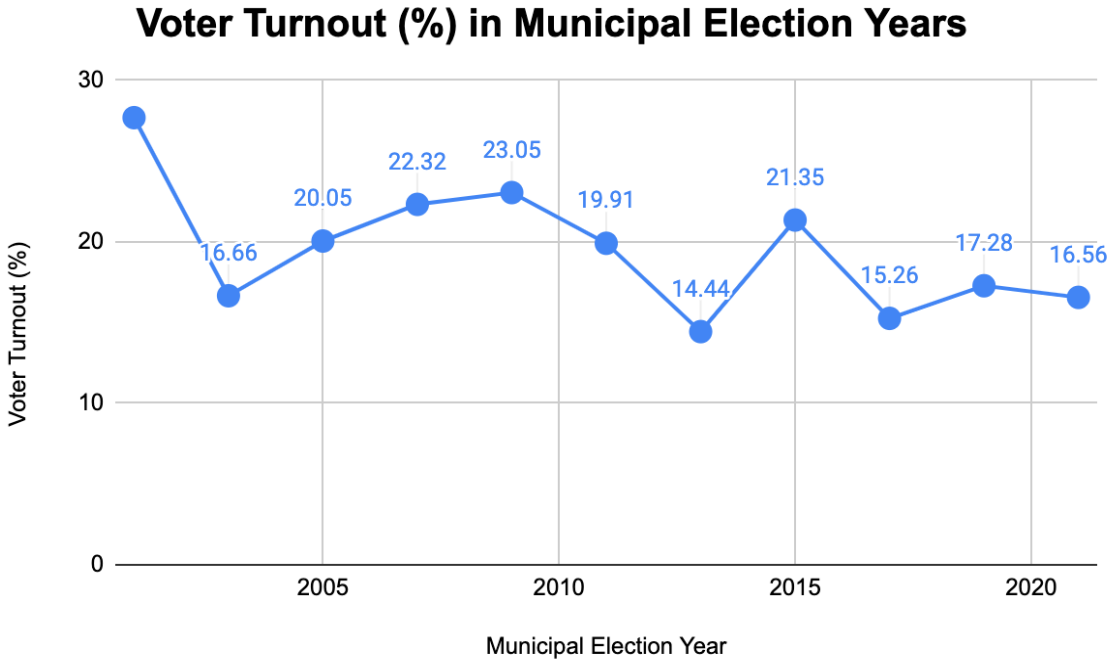
liberal faction of the Council, focusing mostly on inclusionary zoning, homelessness, and diversity and inclusion.

Figure 1.2 below shows the percentage of voter turnout for the November election in each municipal election over the past twenty years, from 2001 to 2021.

**Figure 1.2: Municipal Election Voter Turnout by Year**

*(Data obtained from Worcester Election Commission)*

<b>Municipal Election Year</b>	<b>Voter Turnout (%)</b>
2021	16.56
2019	17.28
2017	15.26
2015	21.35
2013	14.44
2011	19.91
2009	23.05
2007	22.32
2005	20.05
2003	16.66
2001	27.69



Figure

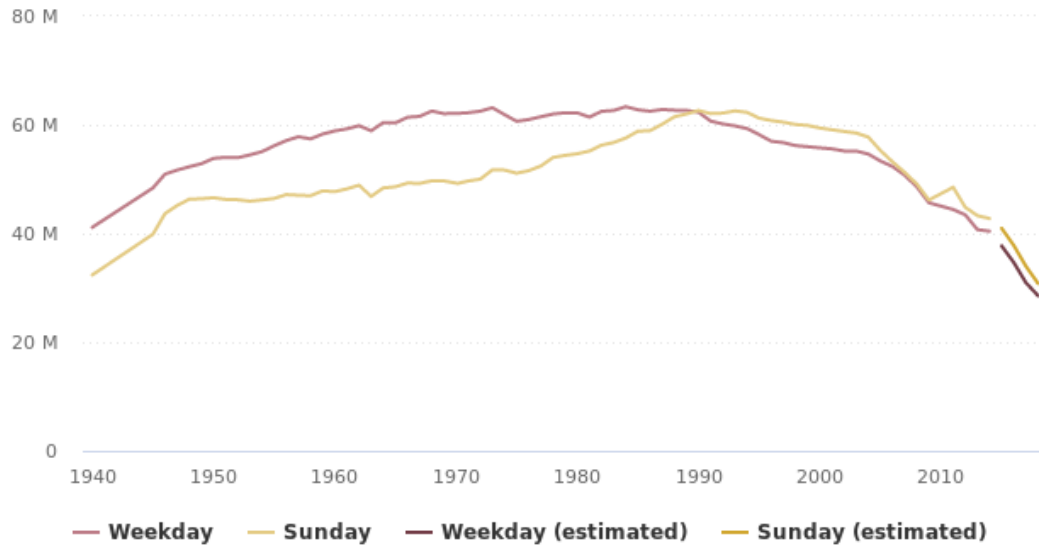
1.3- Data obtained from Worcester Election Commission

Over the past twenty years, voter turnout in Worcester’s Municipal Elections have been on a decline, as seen in Figure 1.3. In the early 2000s, voter turnout was over 20 percent for several years, making a sharp decline from 2010 to today. Comparing these numbers to the years where print media started to decline, there are some noteworthy similarities. Figure 1.4, obtained from the Pew Research Center shows the decline of print media in recent years. Figure 1.5 shows the decline specifically from the early 2000s to 2021.

# Worcester's Changing Media Landscape and Political Participation

Total estimated circulation of U.S. daily newspapers

## Total circulation of U.S. daily newspapers



Note: To determine totals for 2015 onward, researchers analyzed the year-over-year change in total weekday and Sunday circulation using AAM data and applied these percent changes to the previous year's total. Only those daily U.S. newspapers that report to AAM are included. Affiliated publications are not included in the analysis. Weekday circulation only includes those publications reporting a Monday-Friday average. For each year, the comparison is for all newspapers meeting these criteria for the three-month period ending Dec. 31 of the given year. Comparisons are between the three-month averages for the period ending Dec. 31 of the given year and the same period of the previous year. Source: Editor & Publisher (through 2014); estimate based on Pew Research Center analysis of Alliance for Audited Media data (2015-2018).

Figure 1.4- Source: Pew Research Center, "Newspapers Fact Sheet," 2023

## Newspaper Circulation in the U.S. Since 2001

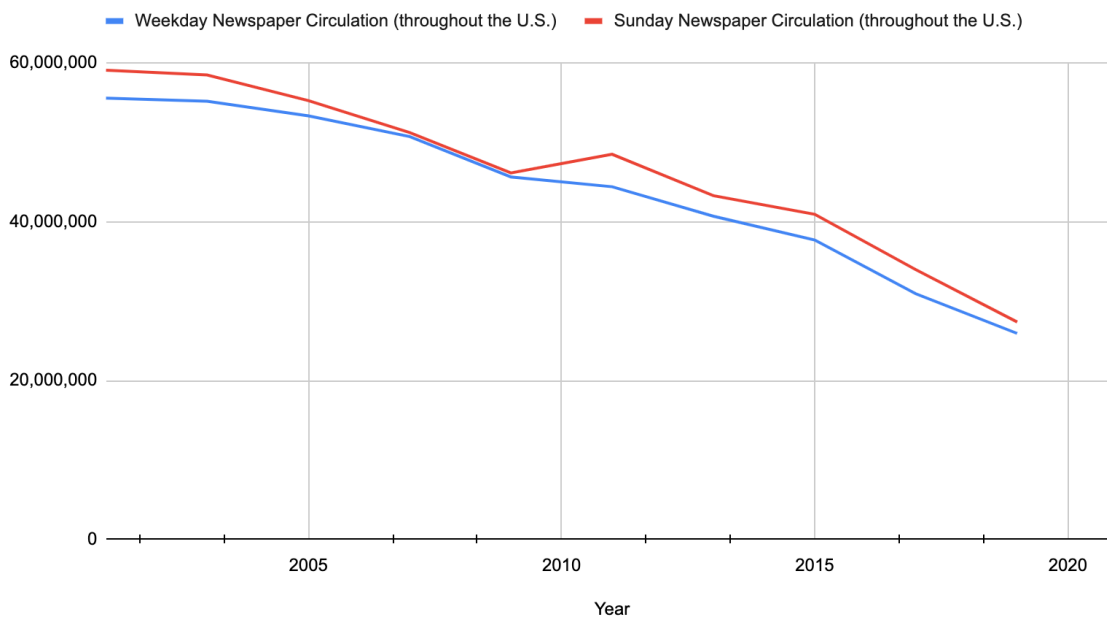


Figure 1.5- Data from: Pew Research Center, "Newspapers Fact Sheet," 2023



From 2001 to 2021, both the voter turnout for Worcester's municipal elections and the circulation of print media have been on a decline. Although there is not enough data to suggest there is a correlation, there is no question that City residents are consuming less local journalism and are less interested in voting.

## **Section 6: The Solution**

In speaking with City residents, most will tell you they no longer receive the *Telegram & Gazette*, and rarely visit online news sites due to paywalls. The lack of interest or awareness in local government is not because of ignorance. Instead, they lack the resources necessary to gain the information.

I approached this situation several ways. The first way was by observing what I see every day at City Hall. Working in the Clerk's Office, I answer basic questions about local government from residents every day. Sometimes these questions are about how to petition the City Council, who their Councilor is, or how to register to vote. My observations led me to see that the average resident does not know much about local government. I also quickly observed that we did not have "watchdog" journalism at City Hall. The City Council discusses major issues for residents almost every Tuesday night, yet the next day, there is almost no local news coverage.

These observations led me to ask others if they followed the local news. My peers, coworkers, and friends often responded that they did not read the local paper or local printed publications. Instead, they followed Twitter threads using the hashtag "#worcpoli" or read local blogs, like "Worcester Sucks and I Love It," written by former Worcester Magazine journalist Bill Shaner. The *Telegram* is dated, expensive, and oftentimes inaccurate.

After observing the people around me and the knowledge they had about local politics and local news, I decided to look at how this phenomenon occurred in other cities, and what it meant for local government. This led me to the information found in my literature review and background info. After completing the literature review, it was clear I needed to look at data points. Rather than finding causation or correlation, I looked at trends in local media coverage, voting, and observations made in my own experience in Worcester politics.

There is no one solution to this issue. Instead, there are several recommendations I propose for different groups. The first solution can be implemented by the City Administration. I recommend the Administration utilize their Communications and Media departments to brief members of the media on City happenings and issues. They can also utilize social media to engage with residents. Although this is an existing tactic the City uses, social media can be part of a bigger communications roll-out that directly reaches residents. My second solution applies to Elected Officials. Similarly, I suggest elected officials utilize social media as well to engage residents. If local news outlets are not going to cover the elected officials, it's their responsibility to inform residents of the happenings of City government, their stances, and the solutions they propose to ongoing City issues. Although many Councilors and School Committee Members know their neighbors, there is a lack of direct communication on policy issues with residents.

My third solution is for residents. Residents need to do several things to better participate in local politics and consume local media. First, they need to hold elected officials and City officials accountable and demand transparency. Second, they need to be willing to support local journalism. This means paying for subscriptions to local publications. Although this may be an issue of accessibility and cost, paying subscriptions for local media shows editors and executives that the news is important to residents. My last solution is for local journalists. Local journalists

need to closely follow City politics and City government, even if that means pushing their Editors to better understand that local politics matter. By closely following and covering the City, they give residents the ability to be more informed and more interested.

Solutions to the Challenge			
<p><b>Journalists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-increased coverage of local and City government</li> </ul>	<p><b>Residents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-demand accountability</li> <li>-support local journalism</li> </ul>	<p><b>City:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increased communication</li> <li>- use of social media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Elected Officials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-direct communication with residents</li> <li>-use of social media</li> <li>-transparency</li> </ul>

Figure 2.1

There is no perfect solution to this issue. It will take years of time and money to initiate a shift in culture for more media to cover Worcester politics and for more residents to participate in electoral politics. It is possible, however, if residents, elected officials, City administration, and journalists, all focus on communication and information-sharing to better inform voters.

**Section 7: The Conclusion**

The City of Worcester is undergoing a serious change. The gentrification of the City, new business development, more residents, and a changing City Council have all contributed to the changes residents have notices in the past ten years. Despite this, there is no real media or local journalism. There is also very little political participation and voter engagement. This is a potentially dangerous combination for democracy in Worcester. Residents, elected officials, City officials, and journalists should all be concerned about this gap in local media coverage and low voter turnout. Representation in government is more important than ever because the City is

undergoing such drastic changes. Without media to cover these changes, however, are residents paying attention? And as a result, are residents voting?

This Capstone has analyzed the trends in voter turnout and media coverage over the past twenty years in Worcester. My recommendation for fixing these gaps include a combination of solutions- engaging with residents through social media, and residents promoting transparent journalism. In the future, additional data will be helpful to analyze the lack of voter participation and lack of local media. My professional role presented some limitations in data collection, but I hope that others can continue my efforts through surveys. By surveying residents, elected officials, and journalists, researchers will be able to better analyze the reasons why the City has reached this point and how to move forward. There is no immediate solution for this issue and unfortunately, it will take years and possibly a new generation of voters and journalists. In the meantime, this Capstone at least gives space to acknowledge and discuss possible solutions for this major issue in Worcester's culture.

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## **Appendix A: Project Charter**

### **Introduction**

This project explores the relationship between local media coverage and voter turnout or political participation in municipalities. This project will specifically look at the City of Worcester. The goal of the project is to determine if there is a correlation between how local government is covered in media and how Worcester residents engage in local elections.

### **Major Stakeholders**

- Key Stakeholders:
  - MPA student Clare Robbins
  - Capstone Advisor Mary Piecewicz
- Community Stakeholders:
  - Local media
  - Board of Election Commissioners
  - Local Election officials
  - Local elected officials

### **Project Goal and Scope**

#### **Project Goal**

The project goal is to determine if the amount of local media coverage affects political participation, specifically voter turnout, in the City of Worcester.

### **Project Scope**

#### **In Scope:**

- Analysis of local media coverage and data on local media sources.
- Collecting voter turnout over the years.
- Determining how voters consume local media through a poll, survey, or interviews.

#### **Out of Scope:**

- Creating more local media.
- Increasing voter turnout.
- Data collection for all cities throughout the United States.

### **Assumptions**

- I assume that people will be willing to complete the survey.



- I assume there will be sufficient data.
- I assume I will have sufficient time to complete the project.
- I assume this project will help determine if there is a correlation between local media coverage and political participation.
- I assume this project’s conclusions will help guide election officials and explain voter turnout patterns in the City of Worcester.

**Constraints**

- Project must be completed on time.
- Project must be completed with publicly available information.
- Project is limited to scope.
  - Research will be compiled utilizing survey or records requests, which may result in a financial cost.

**Risks**

In any project, there is the potential of risk. For this project, one possible risk is the difficulty in obtaining data. I am concerned about the willingness of participants to engage in a survey. Another risk is the risk that there will not be enough data to reach a conclusion. I intend to look at both survey data and voter data, but there is a risk that there will be little correlation to help reach a conclusion.

Another risk is that time management may be difficult as I balance both work and completing the project.

**Measures of Success**

<b>Project Outcomes</b>	<b>Measure of Success</b>
<b>Problem Statement</b>	Statement submitted and approved
<b>Project Charter</b>	Charter submitted and approved
<b>Literature Review</b>	Literature Review Submitted and approved. Also provide sufficient background information for research.
<b>Research and Analysis</b>	Successful research that provides data points.

<b>Determining a Correlation Between Media and Voter turnout</b>	Sufficient Data Points
<b>Final Product</b>	Project Completed, submitted, and received an A for a grade.

**Stakeholder Sign-off**

This project charter has been signed off by the client, capstone advisor and project team members.

Clare M. Robbins	MPA SLP Student	11-27-2022
_____ Name	_____ Title	_____ Date
Project Advisor		
_____ Name	_____ Title	_____ Date

## Appendix B: Status Reports

### Status Report#1

Date: 2/6/2023

#### Accomplished to date:

1. Background Research
2. Survey Questions
3. Literature Review
4. Project Charter

#### Issues/Concerns:

I'm concerned my methodology of conducting a survey will not help me obtain results or notice a significant pattern in local media consumption and voting patterns. Would it be too late to adjust this to a case study, rather than a survey?

#### Plans for next 30 days:

1. Formulate an outline for the final paper.
2. Meet with Mary to discuss project.

### Status Report #2

Date: 3/19/23

#### Accomplished to date:

1. Background Research
2. Survey Questions
3. Literature Review
4. Project Charter
5. Additional Research
6. Outline
7. Work on Draft

#### Issues/Concerns:

Right now, I am mostly concerned with putting pen to paper. I feel like I have good ideas, good research, etc., but I can't figure out how to articulate it. Rather than focusing on formatting, I am currently just writing out a "brain dump" as a draft and going back section by section and fine tuning it. The middle sections of my writing feel decent, but I need improvement with starting the paper off and eventually, I can tell I am going to struggle with wrapping up the paper. I am working on a draft, but I don't feel like I'm close to a final product, nor am I feeling motivated by the quality of work I'm producing. I feel a little "stuck in a rut" right now with my paper.

#### Plans for next 30 days:

1. Complete draft and send to Mary for revisions.
2. Meet with Mary
3. Formatting- work on consistent formatting and organization (this takes a surprisingly long time!).

**Status Report #3**

**Date:** 4/17/23

**Accomplished to date:**

1. Background Research
2. Survey Questions
3. Literature Review
4. Project Charter
5. Additional Research
6. Outline
7. Draft completed and received feedback from Mary

**Issues/Concerns:**

This morning I met with Mary and discussed my most recent draft. At this point, I need to format my sections to make more sense. I also need to finish up the concluding sections to “wrap up” my thoughts. I feel like I am in a good spot. I really need to focus on editing and organization.

**Plans for next 30 days:**

1. Formatting
2. Concluding Sections
3. Submit additional draft
4. Work on Presentation