

# Economic Profile 2024<sup>©</sup>

From Challenges to Opportunities:  
Innovative Housing Solutions  
for Economic Prosperity  
**IN GREATER METROWEST**



MetroWest Economic  
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FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY

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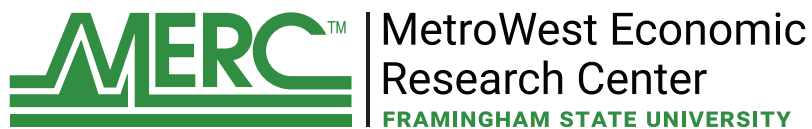


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# GREATER METROWEST Economic Profile 2024<sup>©</sup>

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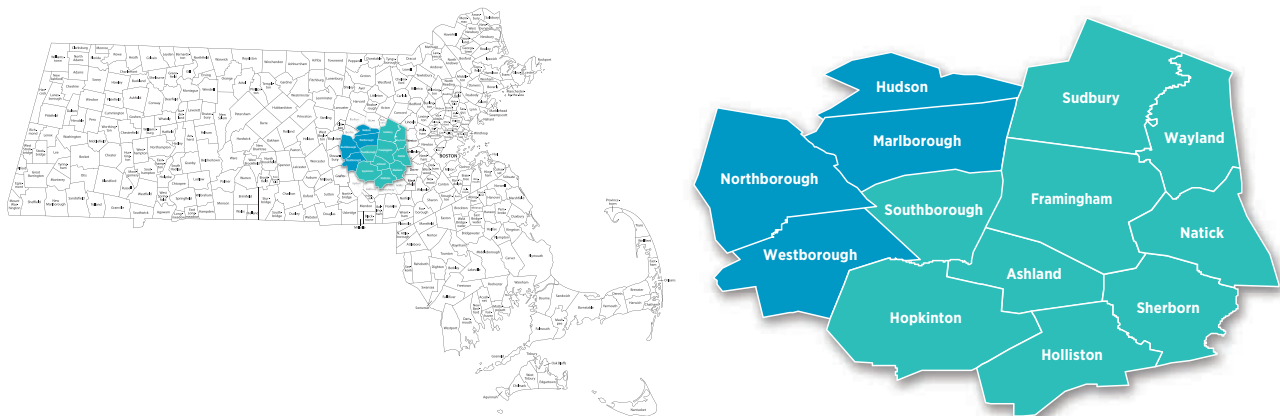




# Introduction

**G**reater MetroWest (GMW) includes 13 communities located between Boston and Worcester: the nine towns of the MetroWest Cohesive Commercial Statistical Area (CCSA), and the four communities of the Greater Marlborough Region. With a population of just under 307,000, the region hosts a well-educated and highly-skilled labor force of more than 165,000 individuals who reside in households with high incomes when compared to the state and the nation. Strategically located between Boston and Worcester, GMW benefits from four major highways serving the region's residents and businesses: Interstate 495, Interstate 90 (Massachusetts Turnpike), and U.S. routes 9 and 20.

Greater MetroWest establishments generated more than 182,000 jobs and a payroll of nearly \$17.1B in 2022. The region provided 4.5% of the Massachusetts labor force, 5.1% of Massachusetts employment, and 5.3% of Massachusetts payroll. Home to thousands of small and medium sized businesses as well as large national firms such as Bose, Boston Scientific, Cumberland Farms, Dell/EMC, GE Healthcare Life Sciences, Intel, Kidde-Fenwal, Mathworks, Quest Diagnostics, Raytheon, Sanofi Genzyme, Staples, TJX, and the internationally-known U.S. Army Natick Laboratories, GMW is a recognized center of research and development, wholesale and retail trade, and corporate headquarters.



The 2024 Greater MetroWest Economic Profile includes the most recent economic data for the region and its individual communities, and trends over several years, as well as comparisons with the state and the nation. This comprehensive publication provides economic data and analyses of labor force and unemployment, employment (including payroll, wages, and establishments), existing home sales, cost of living, municipal revenue, municipal taxes, and K-12 public school enrollment.

MetroWest Economic Research Center (MERC) at Framingham State University creates and maintains economic databases on a number of regional economies in the state. For more information on the data and analyses in this report, please contact MERC.



# Unemployment

Each month, MetroWest Economic Research Center (MERC) at Framingham State University calculates a composite unemployment rate for the Greater MetroWest region, which includes MetroWest and the Greater Marlborough Region. The unemployment rate is household-based and reflects the labor market status of the residents of the regions. The information for the rate is obtained from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (MA EOLWD) which provides monthly estimates of the size of the local labor force, the number of employed and unemployed residents, and the unemployment rates for all Massachusetts cities and towns.

The unemployment rate is a measure of the amount of unutilized labor in the economy. The rate represents the proportion of unemployed individuals in the labor force. The labor force is defined as all civilian non-institutionalized persons age 16 and over who are either employed or unemployed. The employed are those individuals who work as paid employees, are self-employed, or who work 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family-operated enterprise. Also included as employed are people who did not work, but who had a job from which they temporarily were absent due to vacation, illness, childcare problems, or other personal obligations, whether or not they were paid during their absence. The unemployed are those who did not hold a job during the survey period but were actively seeking employment.

For example, the February 2024 unemployment rate in Framingham of 2.9% was based on the following information: the size of the labor force was estimated at

41,109 workers, the sum of 39,897 residents who were employed and 1,212 who were unemployed. The rate, expressed as a percentage, was obtained by dividing the unemployed (1,212) by the labor force (41,109) and multiplying by 100 to get the unemployment rate of 2.9%.

Not everyone in the working age population is included in the labor force. Individuals who were in the working age population, but who could not be classified as employed or unemployed (a full-time homemaker, for example) would not be counted in the labor force.

The local area unemployment rates for the cities and towns are not seasonally adjusted and are subject to periodic revision and re-benchmarking. For purposes of comparison, the state and national unemployment rates shown in this report are likewise not seasonally adjusted.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The definition of terms such as labor force, employed, and unemployed are based on those in The BLS Handbook of Methods, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015.



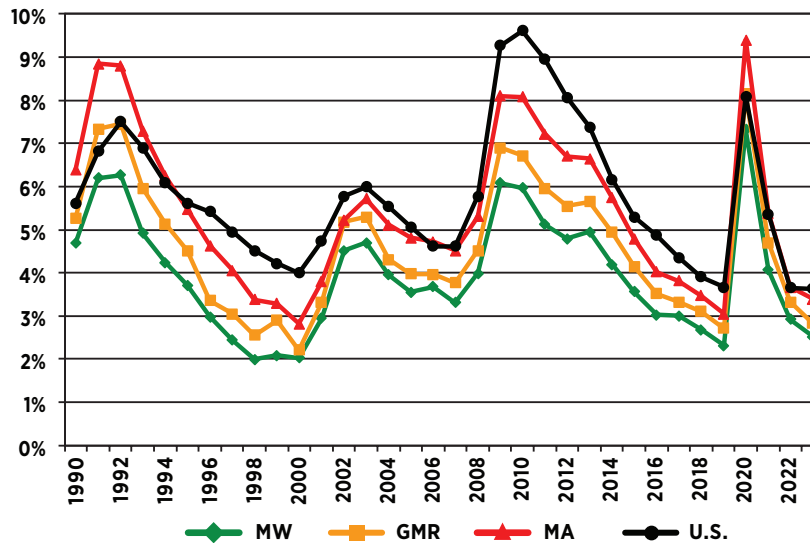


In February 2024, all the communities in Greater MetroWest (GMW) posted unemployment rates lower than the state's rate of 3.7% and the nation's rate of 4.2%, except for Hudson and Marlborough. Both Hudson and Marlborough posted the highest unemployment rate in the region at 3.7%.



# Unemployment

## 1990 - 2023 ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES MW, GMR, MA, and U.S.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

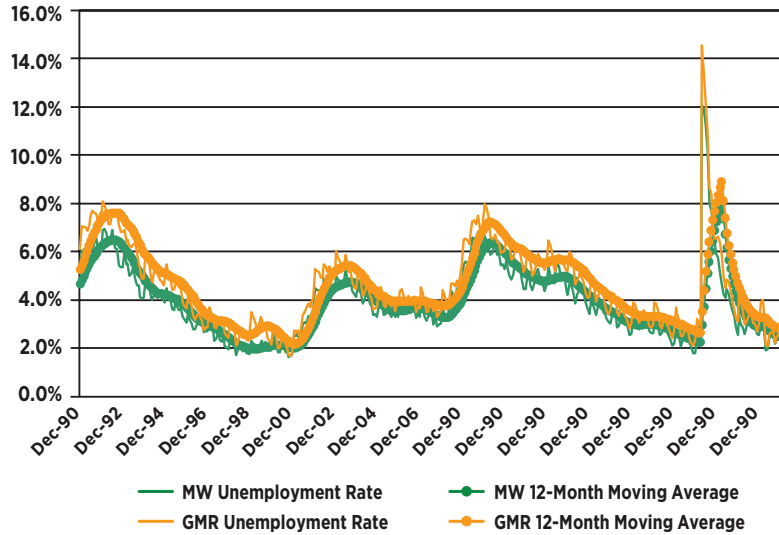
- The annual unemployment rates from 1990 through 2023 for MetroWest (MW), the Greater Marlborough Region (GMR), Massachusetts (MA) and the United States (U.S.) are calculated by averaging the monthly unemployment rates for each year.
- In 2023, MW posted an annual unemployment rate of 2.5% while GMR posted an unemployment rate of 2.8%. MW and GMR had lower unemployment rates than the state's and the nation's rate of 3.4% and 3.6%, respectively. All regions posted lower unemployment rates in 2023 than in 2022.
- The sharpest increases in unemployment rates in all regions occurred from 2019 to 2020. Massachusetts experienced the largest increase from 3.0% to 9.4%, followed by GMR which posted an increase from 2.7% to 8.1%.
- MW and GMR have consistently had lower unemployment rates than the rates in both Massachusetts and the United States, except in 1991 when GMR posted higher unemployment rate than the U.S.



# Unemployment

## DECEMBER 1990 - FEBRUARY 2024 GMW MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

- This graph examines the monthly unemployment rates and the 12-month moving average rates for MetroWest (MW) and the Greater Marlborough Region (GMR) from December 1990 through February 2024. The 12-month moving average looks at the average unemployment rates from the most recent 12-month period in order to smooth the month-to-month variation of the data.
- In February 2024, the unemployment rate in MW was 2.9%, an increase of 0.1 percentage points from the previous month's rate of 2.8%. During the same period, the unemployment rate in GMR was 3.5%, an increase of 0.1 percentage points from the previous month's rate of 3.4%.

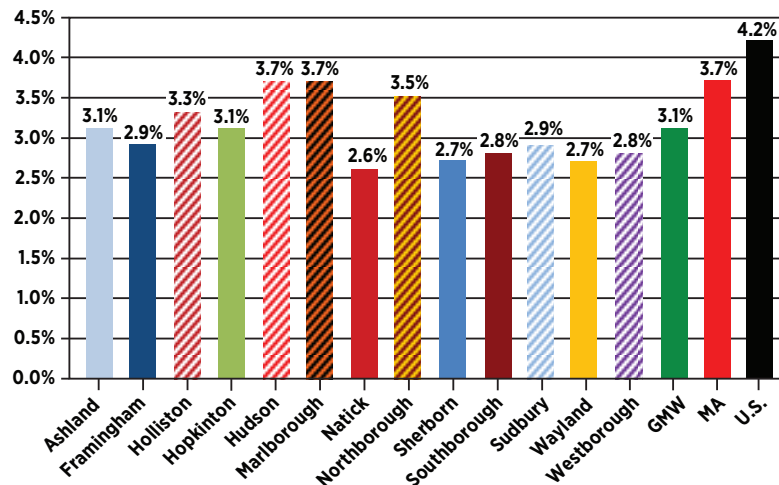


Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's economic impact, MW and GMR both reported their highest unemployment rates of 12.1% and 14.5%, respectively, in April 2020. Historically, MW and GMR unemployment rates reached their lowest at 1.6% and 1.7%, respectively, in October 2000.
- Both MW and GMR monthly unemployment rates followed a similar trend with their 12-month moving average rates from December 1990 through February 2024. However, GMR rates tend to be slightly higher than MW rates throughout the years.

## FEBRUARY 2024 GMW UNEMPLOYMENT RATES By Community

- In February 2024, all the communities in Greater MetroWest (GMW) posted unemployment rates lower than the nation's rate of 4.2%. Except for Hudson and Marlborough, all the communities in GMW posted lower unemployment rates than the state's rate of 3.7%.
- Hudson and Marlborough posted the highest unemployment rate in the region at 3.7%, followed by Northborough at 3.5%, Holliston at 3.3%, and Ashland and Hopkinton at 3.1%. The rest of the communities in the region experienced unemployment rates lower than GMW's rate of 3.1%.

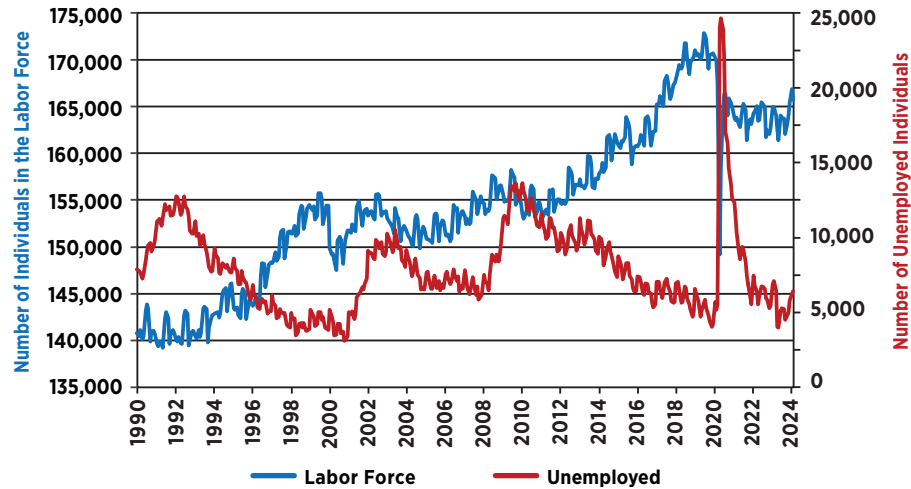


Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- The lowest unemployment rate in GMW was reported by Natick at 2.6%, followed by Sherborn and Wayland at 2.7%.

# Unemployment

## JANUARY 1990 - FEBRUARY 2024 GMW LABOR FORCE VS. UNEMPLOYED



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- This graph uses two different scales to compare the labor force (left scale), to the number of unemployed individuals (right scale), in Greater MetroWest (GMW) from January 1990 to February 2024. The labor force includes individuals aged 16 years and older who were either employed or unemployed. An individual is unemployed if he or she did not have a job but was actively seeking employment.
- In February 2024, GMW reported 5,131 unemployed individuals. The region registered its lowest number of unemployed individuals in October 2000 with 2,498 individuals. The COVID-19 pandemic caused the number of unemployed in GMW to reach its peak in May 2020 at 19,690 individuals.
- GMW totaled 165,734 individuals in the labor force in February 2024. The highest recorded number of individuals in the labor force in the region was in June 2019 with 172,825 individuals, while the lowest recorded number was in May 1991 with 139,225 individuals.





# Unemployment

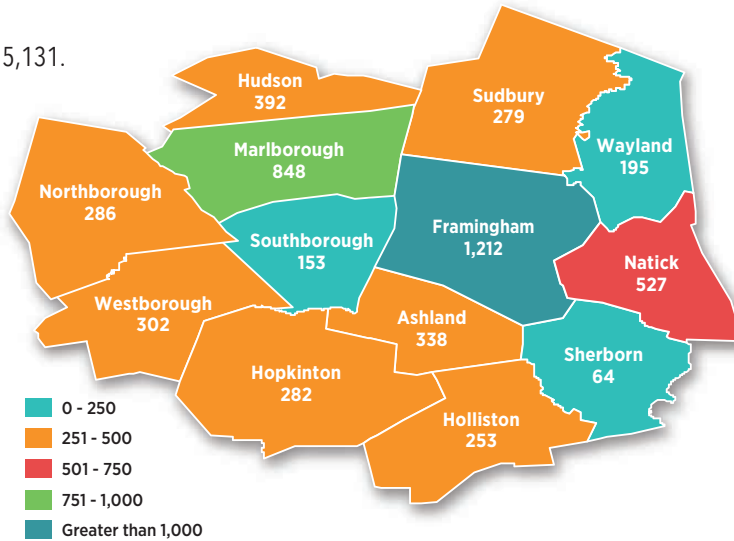
## FEBRUARY 2024 GMW NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED

Total 5,131

- The total number of unemployed individuals in Greater MetroWest (GMW) in February 2024 was 5,131.

- Among the 13 communities in the region, Framingham reported the largest number of unemployed individuals with 1,212, followed by Marlborough with 848 individuals. Together, these two communities accounted for about 40% of the total number of individuals unemployed within GMW, implying that 4 out of 10 individuals who did not have a job in the region either resided in Framingham or Marlborough.

- Sherborn reported the lowest number of unemployed individuals in the region with 64 individuals, followed by Southborough with 153 individuals and Wayland with 195 individuals. Together, these three communities accounted for just about 8% of the total unemployed individuals in the region.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

## FEBRUARY 2024 GMW TOTAL LABOR FORCE

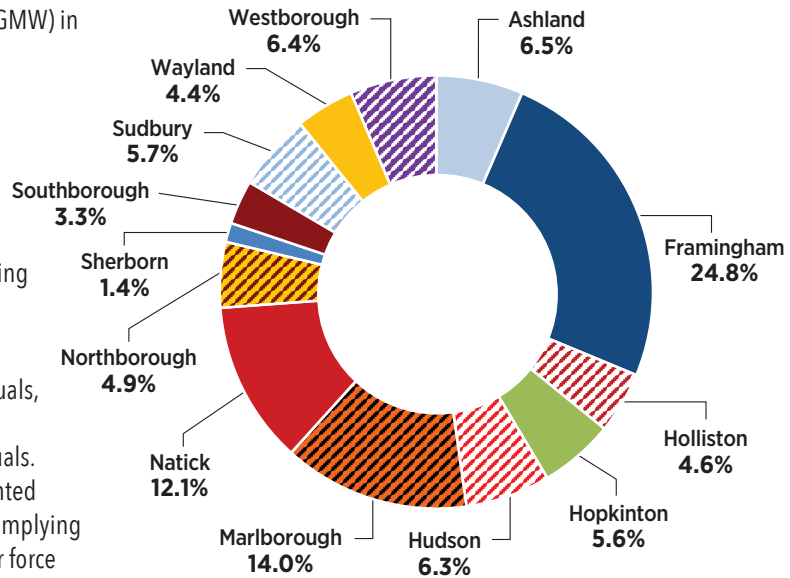
Total 165,734

- The total labor force in Greater MetroWest (GMW) in February 2024 was 165,734 individuals.

- The nine communities of MetroWest (MW) represented about 68% of the GMW labor force with a total of 113,280 individuals. The remaining four communities making up the Greater Marlborough Region (GMR) accounted for 52,454 individuals representing about 32% of the GMW labor force.

- The largest contributor to the GMW labor force was Framingham with 41,109 individuals, followed by Marlborough with 23,147 individuals and Natick with 20,071 individuals. Together, these three communities represented about 50% of the total labor force in GMW, implying that 1 out of 2 individuals in the GMW labor force resided in one of these three communities.

- Sherborn had the smallest contribution to the labor force in the region with 2,369 individuals, representing only 1.4% of the total labor force, followed by Southborough with 5,432 individuals, representing 3.3%, and Wayland with 7,234 individuals, representing 4.4% of the total labor force.

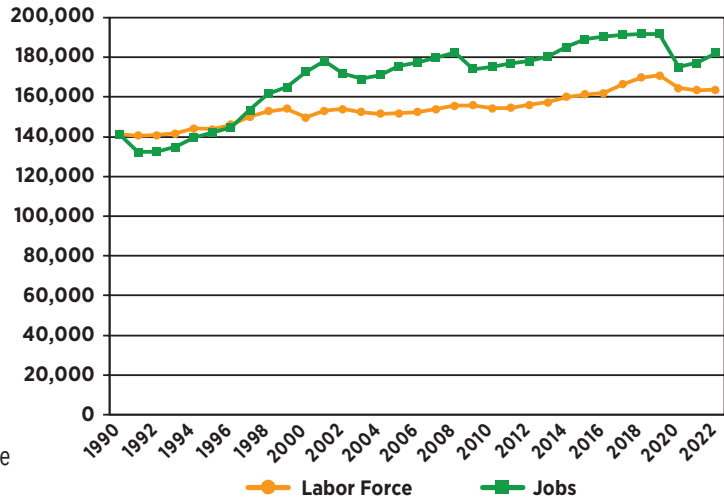


Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

# Unemployment

## GMW ANNUAL JOBS VS. LABOR FORCE 1990 - 2022

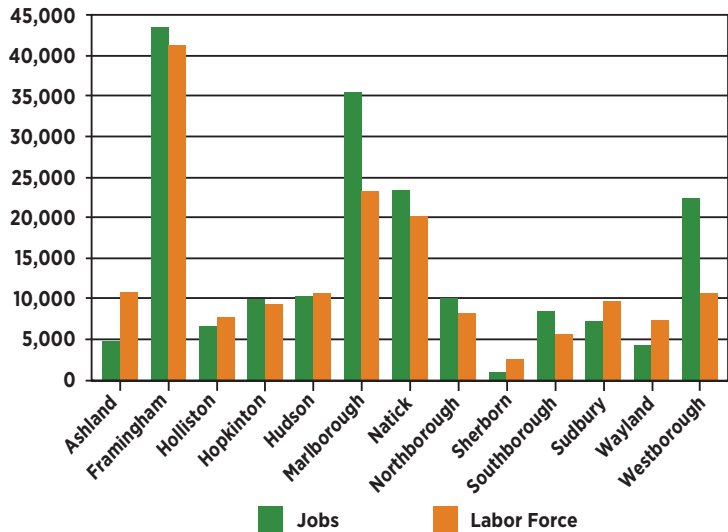
- The total number of jobs refers to the total number of jobs in establishments located in Greater MetroWest (GMW). The total number of individuals in the labor force consists of residents in GMW that are currently employed or unemployed.
- During the last three decades, the total number of jobs in GMW reached its peak in 2019 with 191,879 jobs, and the region recorded its greatest number of individuals in the labor force in the same year with 170,914 individuals.
- GMW was a net exporter of labor between 1990 and 1996, when the number of individuals in the labor force was more than the number of jobs in the region. However, between 1997 and 2022, the number of jobs in the region was more than the number of individuals in the labor force, indicating that the region was a net importer of labor.
- In 2022, the total number of jobs in GMW was 182,005, and the total number of individuals in the labor force was 163,788. During this year, there were 18,438 more jobs than individuals in the labor force.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

## JUNE 2023 GMW JOBS VS. LABOR FORCE BY COMMUNITY

- This figure compares the total number of jobs to the total number of individuals in the labor force for each community in Greater MetroWest (GMW) in June 2023. Jobs refer to the number of jobs in the establishments that are located in each community, while the labor force consists of all residents in each community who are either employed or unemployed.
- The total number of jobs available in GMW in June 2023 was 186,718 jobs. Among the communities in the region, Framingham had the highest number of jobs with 43,507 jobs, followed by Marlborough with 35,500 jobs, Natick with 23,377 jobs, and Westborough with 22,233 jobs. Together, these four communities made up two-thirds of the total available jobs in GMW.
- Sherborn had the smallest number of jobs available and individuals in the labor force in the region, with 787 jobs and 2,369 individuals.
- Framingham, Hopkinton, Marlborough, Natick, Northborough, Southborough, and Westborough had more jobs available than individuals in the labor force, indicating these seven communities were net importers of labor. The remaining six communities, however, had more individuals in the labor force than number of jobs available, implying that the six communities were net exporters of labor.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

# Unemployment







# Employment

**M**etroWest Economic Research Center (MERC) at Framingham State University maintains an employment database for the MetroWest CCSA™, the Greater Marlborough Region, the South Shore CCSA™, the 495/MetroWest Region, the Blackstone Valley Region, and other substate economies. MERC has documented major changes in regional employment, industrial structure and wages since 1980. For this publication, MERC has developed data for the Greater MetroWest (GMW) region.

MERC research relies on the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (MA EOLWD) ES-202 series to develop time series data for employment, payroll, wages, and establishments in the Greater MetroWest Region and Massachusetts.<sup>1</sup> ES-202 data are derived from quarterly census reports filed by all employers subject to unemployment laws, both state and federal, and cover 98% of all U.S. jobs. Nearly 300,000 Massachusetts (MA) establishments subject to unemployment compensation laws participate in the quarterly census. In addition, MERC research relies on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Work for national employment, payroll, wages, and establishment data. This publication will include the latest annual employment data for 2022, as that is the most recent complete year for which data is available.

In 2001, the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) permanently replaced the Standard

Industrial Classification (SIC) system which was in use for the previous 70 years. NAICS groups together establishments that use the same processes to produce goods and services. For a more detailed description of NAICS categories as used in this publication, please see the Appendix.

In the ES-202 series, employment refers to the count of all persons on the payroll of establishments subject to the law, who worked full-time or part-time within the 13 communities of Greater MetroWest. Annual payroll includes all wages and salaries paid to covered employees including commissions, bonuses, stock options, overtime and sick pay. The average annual wage is derived by dividing the gross annual payroll by the average annual employment. Establishment or place of work refers to an economic unit that produces goods or services at a single location and is engaged in one type of economic activity. A firm, therefore, may have one or more establishments where work is produced. More complete definitions are included in the Appendix of this report.

Please note that all data and analysis included in this section refer to business establishments, not residents, located within the 13 communities. Please also note that totals may not always add due to rounding.

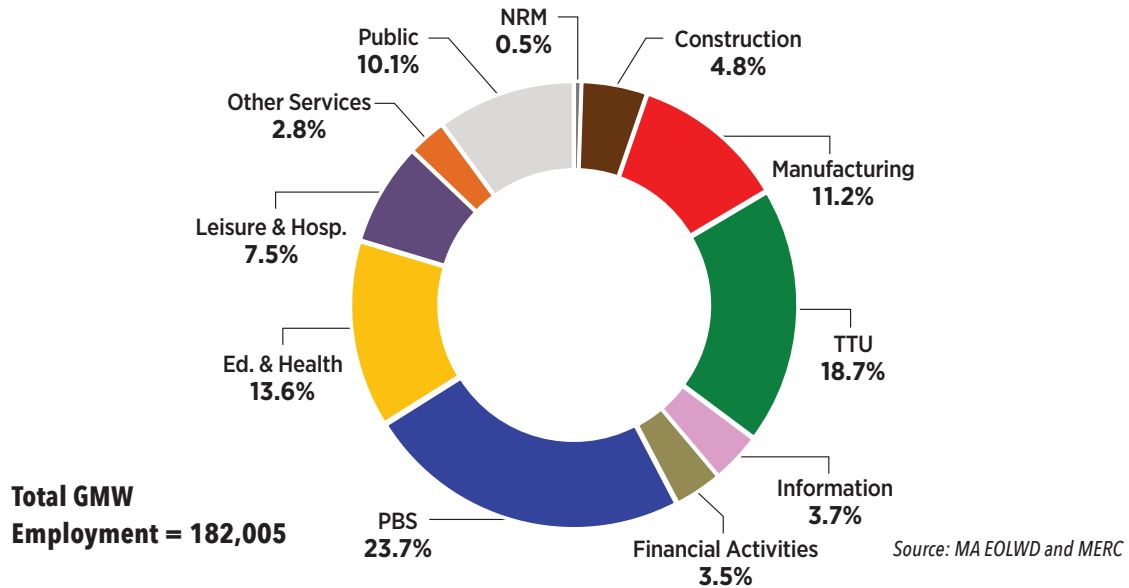
<sup>1</sup> The definitions of terms are based on those in the *Handbook of U.S. Labor Statistics (1998)*, *Employment and Wages in Massachusetts and the Major Metropolitan Statistical Areas Annual Averages 1993-1996*, *the North American Industry Classification System – United States, 2002*, [www.bls.gov/cew](http://www.bls.gov/cew), and MA EOLWD, *Employment and Wages by Industry and Area (ES202)*.



Employment in Greater MetroWest (GMW) continued its growth trajectory in 2022, reaching over 182,000 jobs. However, this value is still 5.1% below its pre-pandemic levels. Rising employment levels were largely driven by supersectors like Leisure and Hospitality, which had been significantly affected by the pandemic. Wage growth in GMW in 2022 moderated relative to the prior two years. Still, GMW average annual wage reached an all-time high of nearly \$94,000 in 2022—an increase of 2.6% relative to 2021.

# Employment

## 2022 GMW EMPLOYMENT BY SUPERSECTOR PBS, TTU, Ed. & Health, Manufacturing Led



- The number of jobs in GMW continued its upward trend in 2022, reaching over 182,000 jobs. This represented an increase of just under 5,000 jobs from the previous year.
- Professional and Business Services (PBS), Trade Transportation and Utilities (TTU), and Education and Health had the largest employment shares in Greater MetroWest (GMW). Combined, they contributed 56% of all employment in GMW. PBS alone accounts for almost a quarter of total employment in the region.
- Three supersectors, Manufacturing (11.2%), Public (10.1%), and Leisure and Hospitality (7.5%), combined, generated nearly 29% of total GMW employment in 2022.
- The smallest supersectors in terms of employment in 2022 were Natural Resources and Mining (NRM), Other Services, Financial Activities, and Information. Each of these supersectors represented less than 4% of overall employment in GMW. Combined, these four supersectors accounted for 10.5% of employment in GMW.

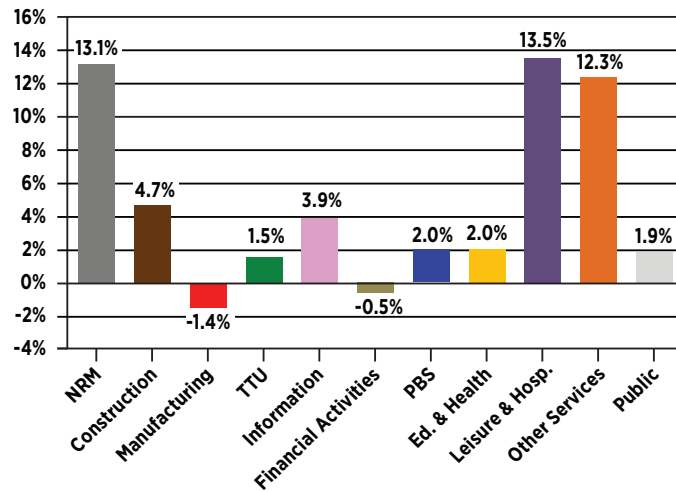




# Employment

## 2021-2022 GMW EMPLOYMENT % CHANGE BY SUPERSECTOR

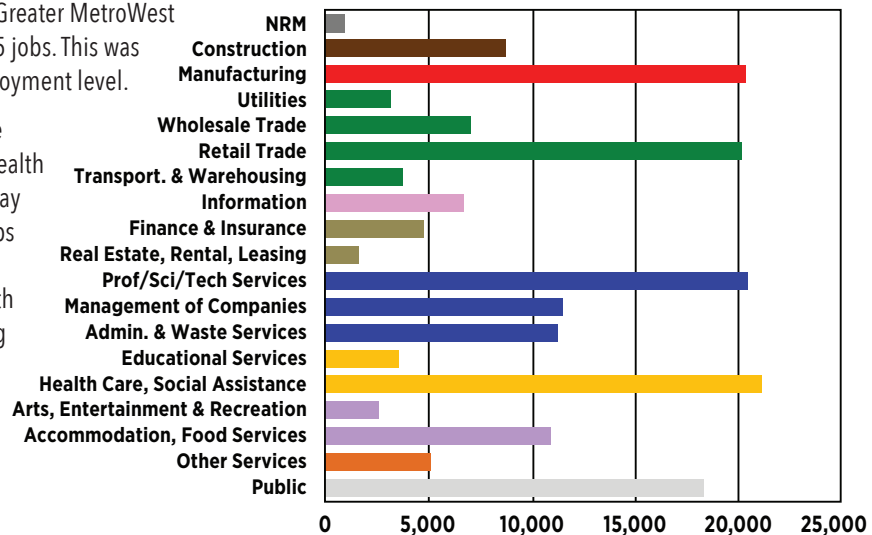
- Overall employment in Greater MetroWest (GMW) increased by about 2.7% between 2021 and 2022—an annual increase of nearly 5,000 jobs. However, employment change varied among the different supersectors that make up the GMW economy.
- Three supersectors experienced particularly significant growth in 2022: Leisure and Hospitality (13.5%), Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) (13.1%), and Other Services (12.3%). Employment growth in these three supersectors accounted for nearly 2,300 new jobs in 2022, with Leisure and Hospitality contributing the majority of those (1,614). It is important to note that the NRM supersector had the smallest total employment of all supersectors.
- Only two supersectors had declining employment levels in 2022: Manufacturing (-1.4%) and Financial Services (-0.5%). Together, these two supersectors lost just under 350 jobs. It is important to note that 2022 is the eighth year in a row in which Manufacturing employment declined in GMW.
- Employment in Construction and Information experienced significant growth in 2022. Construction employment continued its recovery following the pandemic by adding nearly 400 new jobs in 2022. The number of jobs in Information increased by 251 in 2022, following a drop in the prior year.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

## 2022 GMW EMPLOYMENT BY NAICS SECTOR

- In 2022, establishments located in Greater MetroWest (GMW) generated a total of 182,005 jobs. This was 2.7% above the region's 2021 employment level.
- Five NAICS sectors accounted for the majority of jobs in GMW in 2022. Health Care and Social Assistance led the way with 21,172 jobs, or 11.6% of all jobs in GMW. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (Prof/Sci/Tech) with 20,471 jobs (11.2%), Manufacturing (20,397 jobs or 11.2%), and Retail Trade (20,171 jobs or 11.1%) followed closely behind. The fifth largest sector, Public, accounted for 18,347 jobs, which represented 10.1% of regional employment.



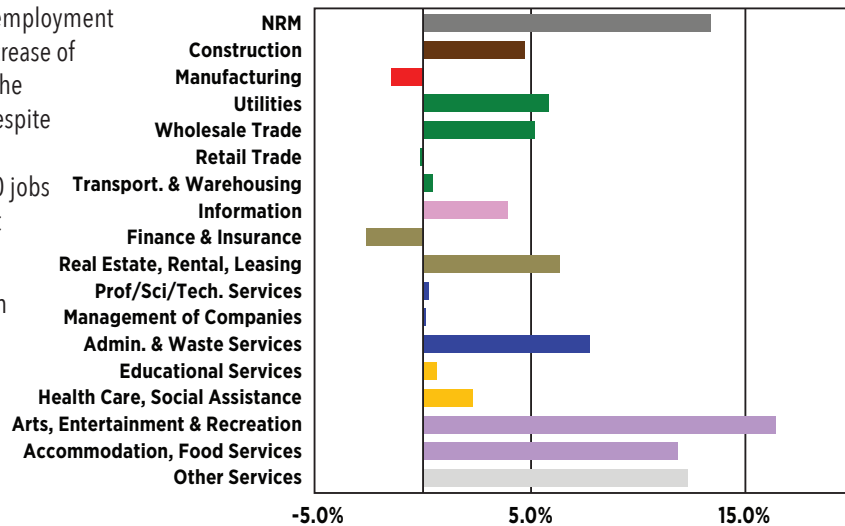
Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- Seven of the remaining 14 sectors generated more than 5,000 jobs: Management of Companies (11,480 or 6.3%), Administrative and Waste Services (11,257 or 6.2%), Accommodation and Food Services (10,987 or 6%), Construction (8,679 or 4.8%), Wholesale Trade (7,020 or 3.9%), Information (6,667 or 3.7%), and Other Services (5,090 or 2.8%).
- The smallest seven sectors each produced less than 3% of GMW jobs.

# Employment

## 2021-2022 GMW EMPLOYMENT % CHANGE BY NAICS SECTOR

- Total Greater MetroWest (GMW) employment in 2022 was 182,005 jobs, an increase of nearly 5,000 jobs (+2.7%) from the region's employment in 2021. Despite this increase, GMW employment remained 5.1%, or almost 10,000 jobs below its pre-COVID employment peak of 191,889 jobs in 2018.
- The largest percentage increase in total jobs among NAICS sectors occurred in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (17.3%), a sector which continued to recover from the significant job losses associated with the pandemic.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

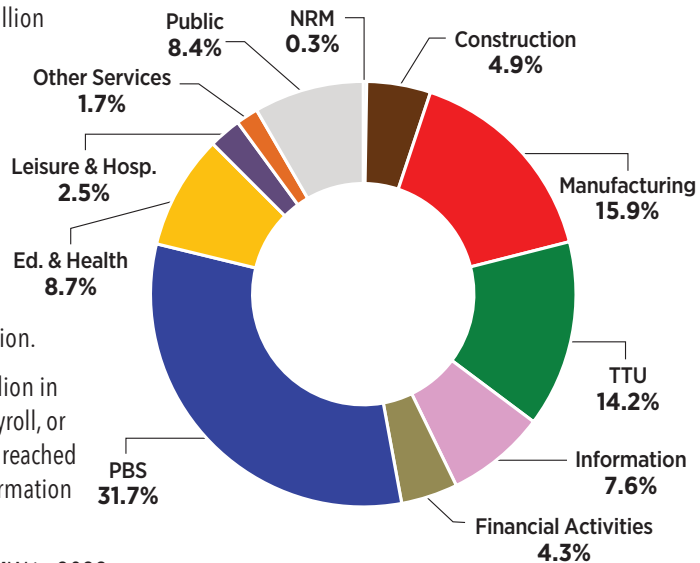
- Natural Resources and Mining (NRM), the smallest NAICS sector in GMW (0.5% of regional employment), experienced the second largest percentage increase in total jobs, 13.1%. The number of jobs in two other sectors also rose by more than 10%. Those sectors are Other Services (12.3%), and Accommodation and Food Services (12.6%).
- The number of jobs in four other sectors increased by more than 5%. Administrative and Waste Services employment rose by 7.7%, followed by Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing (6.3%), Utilities (5.8%), and Wholesale Trade (5.2%).
- In 2022, three NAICS sectors produced fewer jobs than they had one year earlier. The number of jobs in the Finance and Insurance sector fell by 2.6%, followed by Manufacturing (-1.4%), and Retail Trade (-0.1%).



# Employment

## 2022 GMW PAYROLL BY SUPERSECTOR

- Greater MetroWest payroll totaled nearly about \$17.1 billion in 2022, which is an increase of 5.4% or over \$871 million from its value in 2021.
- The Professional and Business Services (PBS), Manufacturing, and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (TTU) supersectors, combined, accounted for over half of GMW payroll in 2022. Payroll in these three supersectors totaled \$10.5 billion, or 61.8% of the region's payroll. PBS alone generated nearly one-third of the total payroll in GMW in 2022, or roughly \$5.4 billion.
- Three other supersectors had payrolls in excess of \$1 billion in 2022. Education and Health generated \$1.5 billion in payroll, or 8.7% of the total payroll. Payroll in the Public supersector reached \$1.4 billion, or 8.4% of the region's payroll. Jobs in Information paid out \$1.3 billion, or 7.6% of GMW's overall payroll.
- The three smallest supersectors in terms of payroll in GMW in 2022 were Leisure and Hospitality (2.5%), Other Services (1.7%), and Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) (0.3%). Payroll in these three supersectors totaled just over \$750 million, or about 4.5% of the region's overall payroll in 2022.

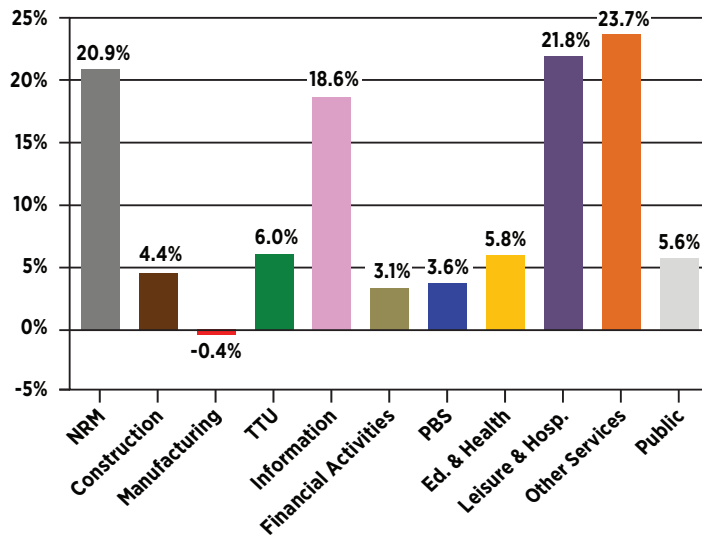


**Total GMW Payroll = \$17.1 Billion**

Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

## 2021-2022 GMW PAYROLL PERCENT CHANGE BY SUPERSECTOR

- Greater MetroWest (GMW) payroll increased by 5.4%, or over \$870 million, between 2021 and 2022. By contrast, the number of jobs in the region increased by only half that rate (2.7%) during the same period.
- All supersectors, with the exception of Manufacturing, experienced gains in payroll in 2022. Manufacturing's payroll decreased by 0.4%, or \$9.8 million. It is important to note that during this period the number of Manufacturing jobs decreased by 1.4%.
- Four supersectors experienced significant payroll growth in 2022, with rates nearing or exceeding 20%. Other Services had the largest percentage increase in payroll with a 23.7% increase. It was followed by Leisure and Hospitality (21.8%), Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) (20.9%), and Information (18.6%). Combined, payroll increases in these four supersectors amounted to nearly \$341 million.
- Out of the ten supersectors that experienced an increase in payroll, six of them grew at rates of 6% or below: Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (TTU), Education and Health, Public, Construction, Professional and Business Services (PBS), and Financial Activities.



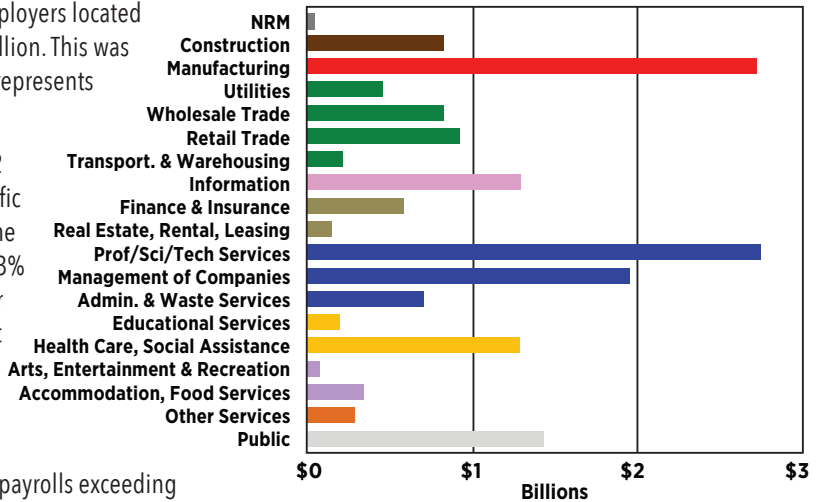
Source: MA EOLWD and MERC



# Employment

## 2022 GMW PAYROLL BY NAICS SECTOR

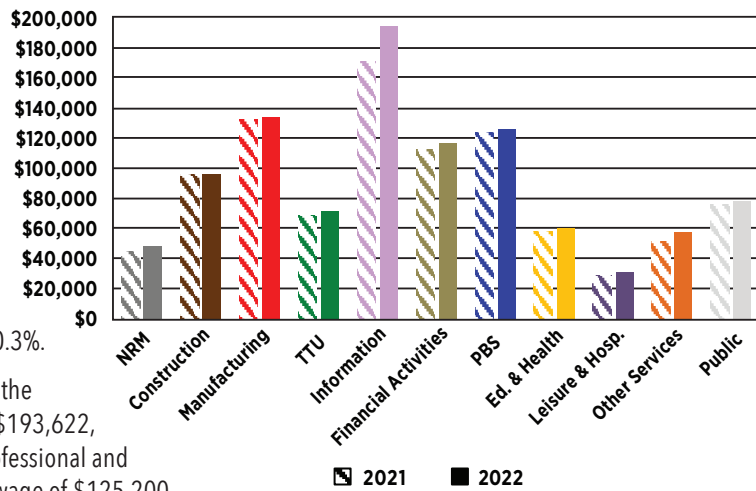
- In 2022, the total payroll generated by employers located in Greater MetroWest (GMW) was \$17.1 billion. This was a 5.4% increase from one year earlier and represents a new high for payroll in the region.
- Two NAICS sectors generated more than \$2 billion in total payroll. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (Prof/Sci/Tech) led the way with a total payroll of \$2.75 billion, 0.3% lower than 2021. The Manufacturing sector followed closely at \$2.72 billion, down just 0.4% from one year earlier. These payroll figures represent 16.1% and 15.9%, respectively, of total GMW payroll.
- The next four largest NAICS sectors all had payrolls exceeding \$1 billion: Management of Companies (\$1.96 billion), Public (\$1.43 billion), Health Care and Social Assistance (\$1.29 billion), and Information (\$1.29 billion). The only other sector to generate more than 5% of the region's payroll was Retail Trade at \$922 million. Firms in these seven largest payroll sectors paid out over \$12 billion or over 72% of total GMW payroll.
- Firms in four of the remaining NAICS sectors generated payrolls of more than \$500 million. They were Wholesale Trade (\$829 million), Construction (\$829 million), Administrative and Waste Services (\$707 million), and Finance and Insurance (\$582 million).
- The smallest payroll sector (\$44.8 million) was Natural Resources and Mining (NRM), which produced just 0.3% of total GMW payroll.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

## GMW AVERAGE WAGE BY SUPERSECTOR 2021 VS. 2022

- In 2022, the average annual wage for Greater MetroWest (GMW) reached an all-time high of \$93,758. This represented an annual increase of 2.6%, or nearly \$2,400 since 2021.
- The average annual wage rose in 10 of the 11 GMW supersectors during the 2021-2022 period. Construction was the only sector to experience a—albeit small—decrease in its average wage relative to the prior year. Average wage in this sector decreased by about \$267, or 0.3%.
- Among all supersectors, Information generated the region's highest average 2022 annual wage of \$193,622, followed by Manufacturing (\$133,143), and Professional and Business Services (PBS), which had an average wage of \$125,200.
- Leisure and Hospitality and Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) offered the lowest average annual wages among all supersectors, with 2022 average wages of \$30,886 and \$47,620, respectively.
- Information also experienced the highest absolute increase in terms of annual average wage during the 2021-2022 period, with the supersector's average wage increasing by over \$24,000 in just one year. By contrast, average wages for jobs in the Public supersector increased by just under \$2,800.

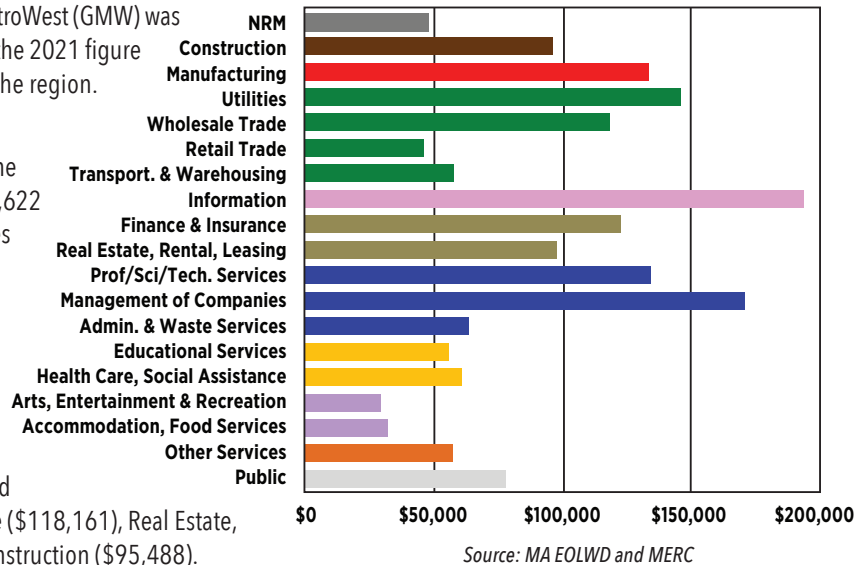


Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

# Employment

## 2022 GMW AVERAGE WAGE BY NAICS SECTOR

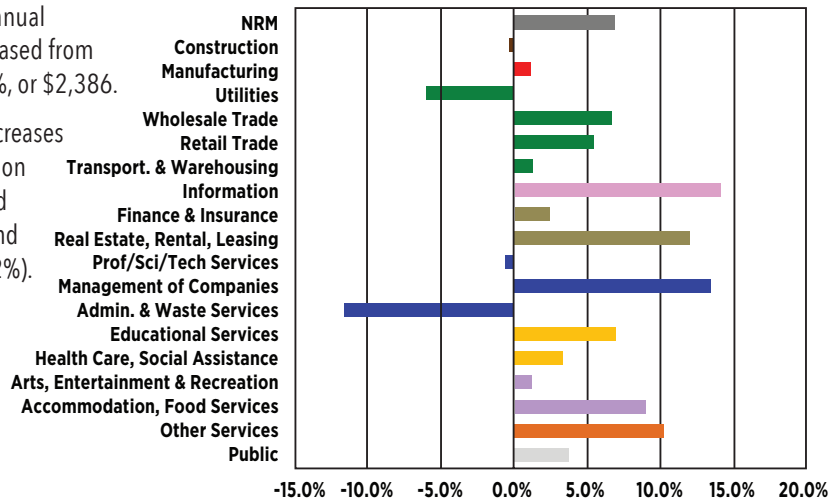
- The average annual wage in Greater MetroWest (GMW) was \$93,758 in 2022. This was 2.6% above the 2021 figure and represents a new historic high for the region.
- Two NAICS sectors paid average annual wages exceeding \$150,000 in 2022. The Information sector led the way at \$193,622 followed by Management of Companies with an average wage of \$170,446.
- Wages in seven other NAICS sectors were also above the regional average. They were Utilities at \$145,444, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (Prof/Sci/Tech) at \$134,162, Manufacturing (\$133,143), Finance and Insurance (\$122,433), Wholesale Trade (\$118,161), Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing (\$96,937), and Construction (\$95,488).



- These nine high-wage sectors together produced a total of 84,199 jobs in 2022 or 46.3% of total GMW employment.
- The lowest average wages in the region were found in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (\$28,557) and Accommodation and Food Services (\$31,180). Also paying less than \$50,000 per year were Retail Trade at \$45,695 and Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) (\$47,620). These four NAICS sectors collectively provided 34,704 jobs in 2022, or 19.1% of GMW employment.

## 2021-2022 % CHANGE IN GMW AVERAGE WAGE BY NAICS SECTOR

- Between 2021 and 2022, the average annual wage in Greater MetroWest (GMW) increased from \$91,372 to \$93,758; an increase of 2.6%, or \$2,386.
- Four NAICS sectors experienced wage increases of greater than 10%. They were Information (14.1%), Management of Companies and Enterprises (13.4%), Real Estate Rental, and Leasing (12.0%), and Other Services (10.2%).
- The largest absolute increases in the average wage were found in three of these four sectors: Information (\$24,001), Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$20,167) and Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing (\$10,404).

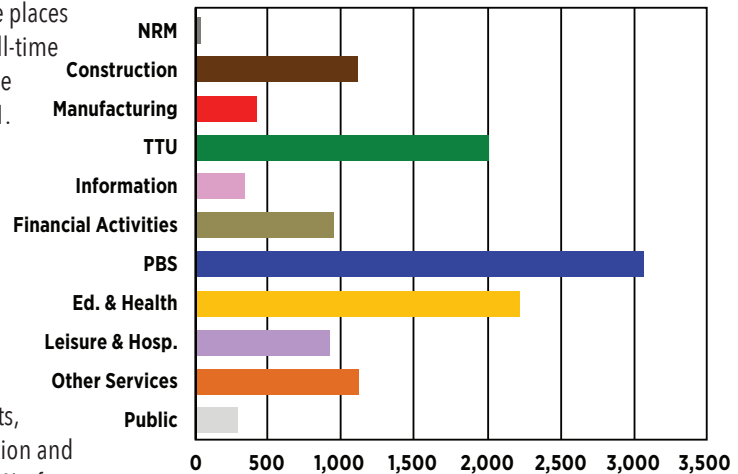


- Average annual wages rose by more than 5% in five other sectors. Accommodation and Food Services rose by 8.1% followed by Educational Services (7.0%), Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) (6.9%), Wholesale Trade (6.6%), and Retail Trade (5.3%).
- Average wages decreased in four of the remaining ten sectors. Between 2021 and 2022, the average wage fell by \$8,168 in Admin. and Waste Services (-11.5%), by \$9,273 in Utilities (-6.0%), by \$719 in Prof/Sci/Tech. Services (-0.5%), and by \$267 in Construction (-0.3%).

# Employment

## 2022 GMW ESTABLISHMENTS BY SUPERSECTOR

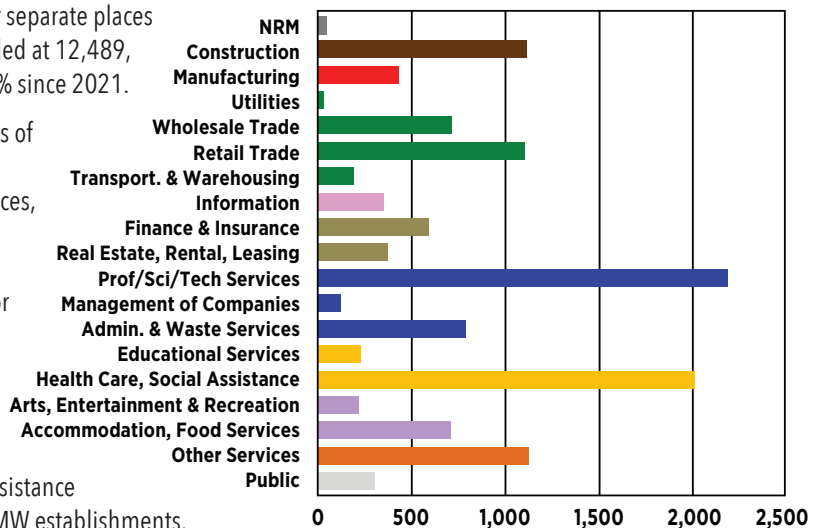
- In 2022, the number of establishments or separate places of work in Greater MetroWest (GMW) reached an all-time high of nearly 12,500. This represented an increase of around 200 establishments, or 1.7% since 2021.
- Three supersectors dominated the region in terms of the number of establishments in 2022: Professional and Business Services (PBS), Education and Health Services, and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (TTU). Combined, these three supersectors accounted for 58.5% of all GMW establishments.
- PBS led with the highest number of establishments, 3,070, or nearly 25% of all establishments. Education and Health Services ranked second with 2,221, or 17.8% of GMW establishments. It was followed by TTU with 2,010, or 16.1% of establishments in GMW.
- Four supersectors in GMW had fewer than 500 establishments in 2022: Manufacturing (422 or 3.4% of establishments), Information (341 or 2.7% of establishments), Public Services (291 or about 2.3% of establishments), and Natural Resources and Mining (42 or 0.3% of all establishments) in GMW.
- Between 2021 and 2022, the Education and Health Services supersector added the most establishments, 77—most of them in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector. Conversely, Public lost the most establishments, with about two fewer establishments.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

## 2022 GMW ESTABLISHMENTS BY NAICS SECTOR

- In 2022, the number of establishments or separate places of work in Greater MetroWest (GMW) totaled at 12,489, an increase of 203 establishments, or 1.7% since 2021.
- Five sectors dominated the region in terms of the number of establishments in 2022: Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Other Services, Construction, and Retail Trade. Combined, these five sectors accounted for over 60% of all GMW establishments.
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services led with the highest number of establishments, 2,179, or 17.4% of all establishments. Health Care and Social Assistance ranked second with 2,004, or 16.0% of GMW establishments.
- Two sectors in GMW had fewer than 100 establishments in 2022: Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) had 42, or 0.3% of establishments, and Utilities had 19, or 0.2% of establishments.
- Between 2021 and 2022, Healthcare and Social Assistance added the most establishments, 68, while Retail Trade lost the most establishments, with 26 fewer establishments.



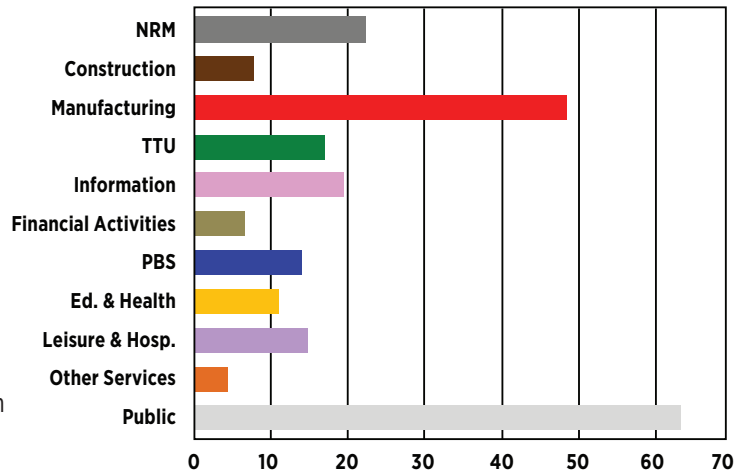
Source: MA EOLWD and MERC



# Employment

## 2022 GMW JOBS PER ESTABLISHMENT BY SUPERSECTOR

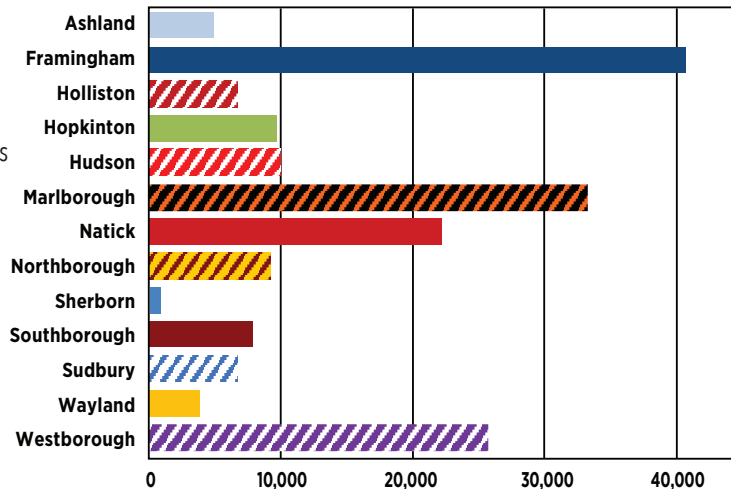
- In 2022, Greater MetroWest (GMW) had 12,489 establishments, or separate places of work; providing a total of 182,005 jobs. As a result, there were 14.6 jobs per establishment in 2022, slightly above the 14.4 figure one year earlier.
- Eight of the eleven NAICS Supersectors had fewer than 20 jobs per establishment. The Supersectors with the fewest jobs per establishment were Other Services with 4.5 jobs per establishment and Financial Activities with 6.7. Construction had 7.8 jobs per establishment, followed by Education and Health with 11.1.
- The largest number of jobs per establishment were found in Public with 63 jobs per establishment, followed by Manufacturing (48.3), and Natural Resources and Mining (NRM) (22.4). The number of jobs per establishment in the remaining eight supersectors was less than 20.
- Between 2021 and 2022, the number of jobs per establishment was relatively unchanged for all supersectors in GMW. The largest decrease was -1.1 jobs per establishment in Manufacturing, while the largest increase was 1.6 jobs in Natural Resources and Mining (NRM), Leisure and Hospitality, and Public.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

## 2022 EMPLOYMENT BY COMMUNITY

- In 2022, firms located in Greater MetroWest (GMW) generated a total of 182,005 jobs, 2.7% higher than the region's 2021 employment level of 177,230 jobs. Over the same period by comparison, total employment in Massachusetts rose by 4.0% and the national gain was 4.3%.
- More than two-thirds of the jobs in 2022 were located in four of the 13 communities. Framingham led the way with 41,823 jobs, or 23.0%, of regional employment. The next three largest were Marlborough with 33,292 jobs (18.3%), Westborough with 25,678 jobs (14.1%), and Natick with 22,127 jobs (12.2%). Natick, in fact, had more than twice as many jobs as the next largest community.
- Southborough was the only GMW community to lose jobs between 2021 and 2022. It lost 165 jobs, or 2.1%, of the town's 2021 employment level.
- The two largest employment gains were in Framingham with an increase of 1,302 jobs, and Marlborough with 1,113 more jobs. In percentage terms, these were equivalent to 3.2% and 3.5% gains, respectively. The largest relative employment increases occurred in Sudbury (7.7%), Sherborn (5.2%), and Wayland (4.0%). The smallest absolute and percentage increases both occurred in Hopkinton where employment increased by 13 jobs, a 0.1% rise over 2021.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

# Employment

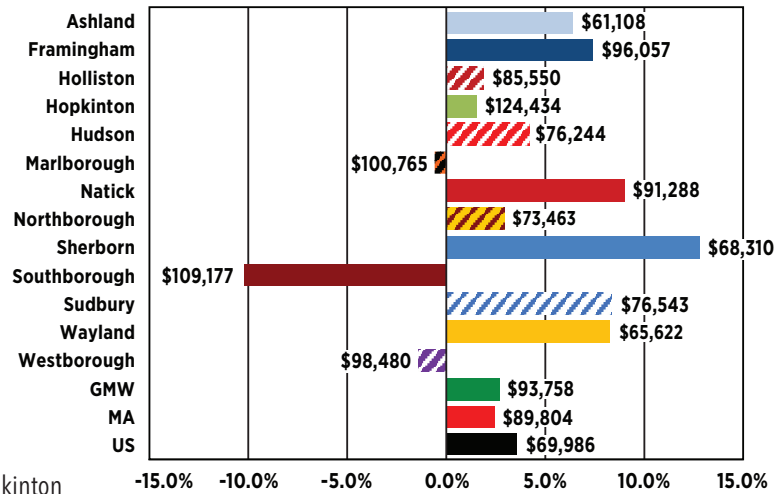
## 2021-2022 % CHANGE IN AVERAGE WAGE BY COMMUNITY

- The numbers in this graph show the 2022 average annual wage in each of the 13 Greater MetroWest (GMW) communities, the entire GMW region, the state, and the nation. The bars in the graph represent the annual percent change in average wage in 2022.

- In 2022, the average annual wage in Greater MetroWest (GMW) was \$93,758, up by 2.6% from 2021. This compares to the state average wage of \$89,804 (up by 2.4%) and the U.S. average of \$69,986 (up by 3.5%).

- Among the 13 GMW communities, Hopkinton employers offered the highest average wage of \$124,434, followed by Southborough (\$109,177), Marlborough (\$100,765), Westborough (\$98,480), and Framingham (\$96,057). These were the only communities with wages above the GMW figure. The lowest wages occurred in Ashland (\$61,108), Wayland (\$65,622), and Sherborn (\$68,310).

- Sherborn and Natick saw the largest growth in the average wage, 12.8% and 9.0%, respectively. The next highest figure was 8.4% in Sudbury and Wayland. Southborough (-10.2%), Westborough (-1.4%), and Marlborough (-0.5%) were the only communities that had a negative change in average wage. Hudson experienced the largest absolute wage increase: \$7,777.



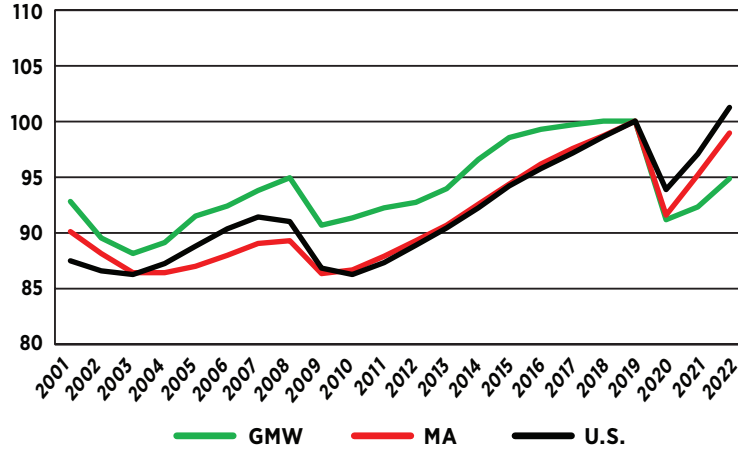
Source: MA EOLWD and MERC



# Employment

## 2001-2022 EMPLOYMENT INDEX (2019=100) GMW, MA, & U.S.

- Employment in Greater MetroWest (GMW) tends to mostly mirror patterns associated with the business cycle at the state and national levels. This graph shows employment levels in GMW, Massachusetts (MA), and the nation indexed to their respective employment levels in 2019—the last year before the COVID-19 pandemic. Values of less than 100 represent years in which the number of jobs was less than that of 2019. Values above 100 represent years in which employment exceeded the number of jobs in 2019.

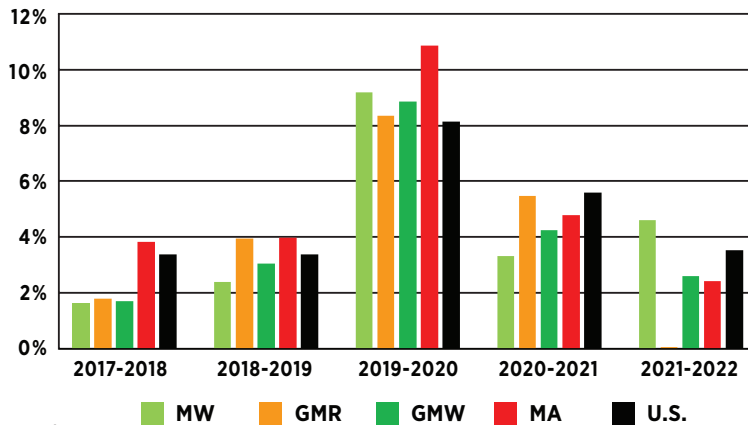


Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- Between 2001 and the onset of the pandemic, GMW employment was at its lowest level during 2003 when it was 88.2% of its 2019 value—compared to 86.5% and 86.3% in the case of MA and the U.S., respectively.
- Immediately following the onset of the pandemic, GMW, MA, and the U.S. suffered from significant setbacks in terms of employment levels. During 2020, GMW and MA lost 8.8% and 8.3%, respectively, of their jobs. That same year the U.S. experienced an employment loss of 6.1%.
- Starting in 2021, employment in all three regions started to recover. However, as of 2022, only U.S. employment was above pre-pandemic levels—1.3% higher than in 2019. Employment in MA and GMW remained 1% and 5.1% lower, respectively.

## 2017-2022 ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE IN AVERAGE WAGE Slowing Wage Growth

- Average wages increased considerably between 2017 and 2022 in MetroWest (MW), the Greater Marlborough Region (GMR), Greater MetroWest (GMW), Massachusetts (MA), and the United States (U.S). All communities in MW and GMR make up GMW. During this period, average wages, in nominal terms, rose by 20.0% (\$15,637) in GMW, 23.7% (\$17,200) in the state, and 22.2% (\$12,720) nationally.



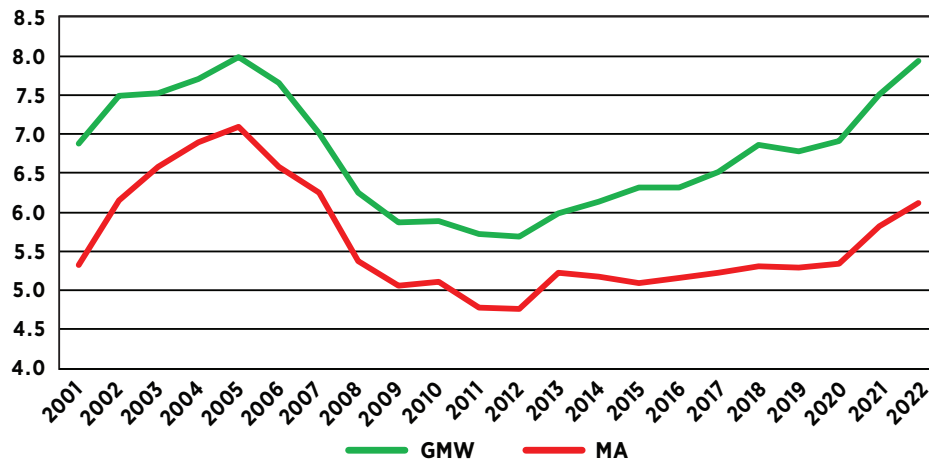
Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- Over the past five years, annual wage growth rates have averaged 4.1% in GMW, 5.2% in Massachusetts, and 4.8% nationally. However, most of this growth took place during 2020. That year, annual wage growth rates were much higher than the average, with GMW wages growing at 8.9%, Massachusetts at 10.9%, and the U.S. at 8.1%.
- Wage growth has attenuated since 2020. In 2022, average wages grew by 3.5% nationally, 2.4% in Massachusetts, and 2.6% in GMW. It is important to note that within GMW, most of the wage growth came from MetroWest, where wages grew 4.6% in 2022, compared to just 0.1% in GMR.



# Employment

## 2001-2022 MEDIAN SINGLE-FAMILY HOME SALE PRICE TO AVERAGE WAGE RATIO



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- Nominal average wages in Greater MetroWest (GMW) and Massachusetts nearly doubled between 2001 and 2022—increasing from \$51,988 to \$93,758 in GMW, and \$44,976 to \$89,804 in Massachusetts. Housing prices also increased significantly during the 2001-2022 period. The median sale price of a single-family home in GMW more than doubled, going from \$357,803 to \$744,426 (a 108.1% increase). The price increase was even more pronounced in Massachusetts where the median sale price of a single-family home increased by 129.8%, from \$239,325 to \$550,000.
- One way—albeit an imperfect one—to assess the extent of real wage growth, and by extension housing affordability in the region, is by comparing average wages to the median sale price of single-family homes. This graph shows the ratio of the sale price of single-family homes to the average wage for GMW and the state. A higher ratio suggests that purchasing a single-family home absorbs a larger share of local wages.
- During the 2001-2022 period, GMW had consistently higher ratios than the state. The gap between the two regions has been widening since 2013. By 2022, the average sale price of a single-family home in GMW was 7.9 times its average wage, while in Massachusetts, it was 6.1 times.
- Both GMW's and the state's ratio reached its peak in 2005 during the housing bubble that preceded the Great Recession. Since 2020, both GMW and the state have seen their ratios rapidly accelerate. In fact, by 2022, GMW's ratio nearly matched the 2005 peak.



# Employment

## 2022 EMPLOYMENT COMPARISON GREATER METROWEST REGION BY COMMUNITY

Community/Region	Number of Jobs	Average Wage	Total Payroll* (millions)	Number of Establishments	Largest Supersector (Employment)
<b>Ashland</b>	4,928	\$61,108	\$301	543	TTU**
<b>Framingham</b>	41,823	\$96,057	\$4,017	2,692	PBS***
<b>Holliston</b>	6,589	\$85,550	\$564	528	Construction
<b>Hopkinton</b>	9,645	\$124,434	\$1,200	649	Manufacturing
<b>Hudson</b>	9,882	\$76,244	\$753	743	TTU**
<b>Marlborough</b>	33,292	\$100,765	\$3,355	1,824	PBS***
<b>Natick</b>	22,127	\$91,288	\$2,020	1,643	TTU**
<b>Northborough</b>	9,125	\$73,463	\$670	671	TTU**
<b>Sherborn</b>	703	\$68,310	\$48	187	Public
<b>Southborough</b>	7,784	\$109,177	\$850	501	PBS***
<b>Sudbury</b>	6,653	\$76,543	\$509	749	Public
<b>Wayland</b>	3,776	\$65,622	\$248	551	Public
<b>Westborough</b>	25,678	\$98,480	\$2,529	1,208	PBS***
<b>MetroWest</b>	104,028	\$93,794	\$9,757	8,043	PBS***
<b>Greater Marlborough Region</b>	77,977	\$93,710	\$7,307	4,446	PBS***
<b>Greater MetroWest</b>	182,005	\$93,758	\$17,064	12,489	PBS***
<b>Massachusetts</b>	3,596,149	\$89,804	\$322,949	290,223	Education and Health Services
<b>United States</b>	150,025,655	\$69,986	\$10,499,737	11,519,312	TTU**

\*Rounded

\*\*Trade, Transportation and Utilities (TTU)

\*\*\*Professional and Business Services (PBS)

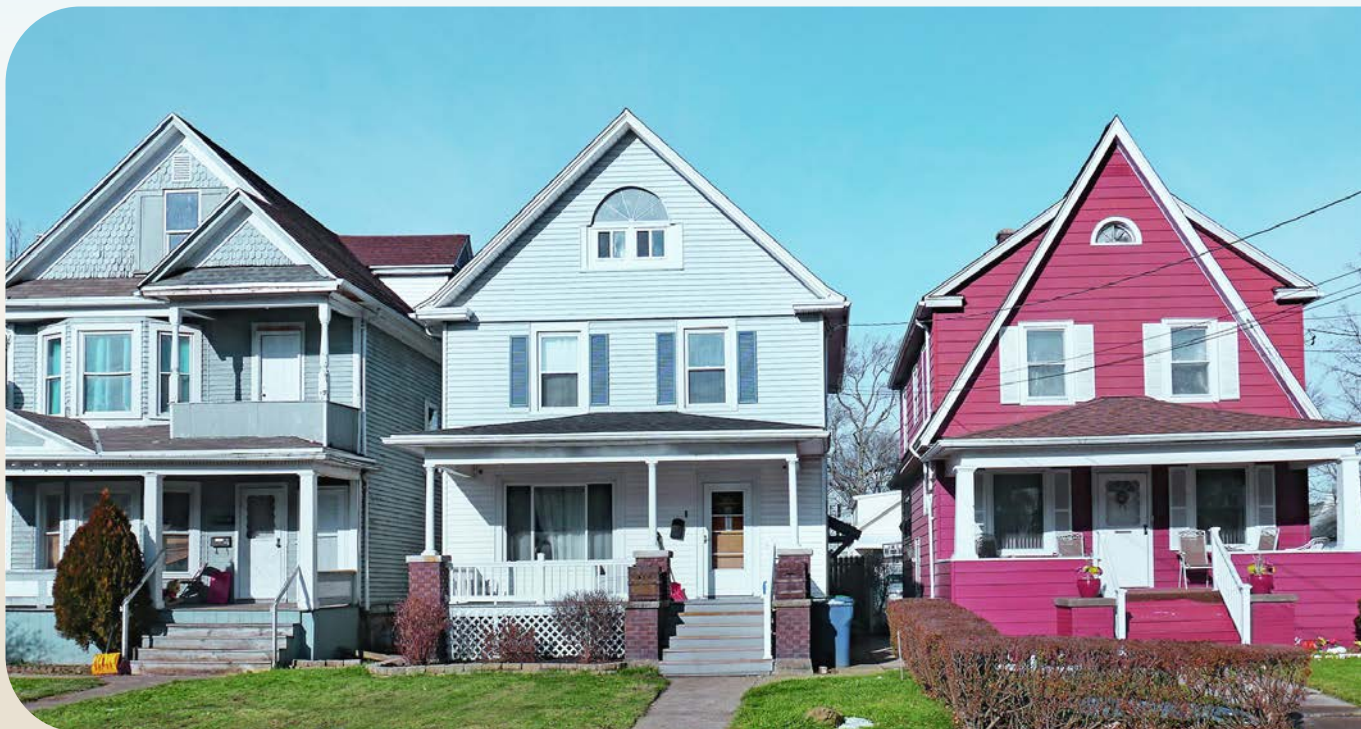
Source: MA EOLWD, U.S. BLS, and MERC



# Housing

**M**etroWest Economic Research Center (MERC) at Framingham State University collects and analyzes data on existing home sales for Greater MetroWest (GMW), the aggregated MetroWest CCSATM and Greater Marlborough Region (GMR). The MetroWest (MW) CCSATM includes Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Natick, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, and Wayland. The Greater Marlborough Region includes Hudson, Marlborough, Northborough, and Westborough. MERC gathers housing data for these 13 communities from several sources. Information on existing home sales is based on data published by The Warren Group for Banker & Tradesman. Most of these data are available from

1987 forward, and were significantly revised in the spring of 2008. Hence, some of the housing figures in this report are not directly comparable to the values reported in previous MERC publications. Data is collected on single and multi-family residences sold in the thirteen communities. Median house price is measured at the 50th percentile in each town; that is, half the homes sold for more than the median price and half sold for less than the median price. Median prices for the regions are estimated. It is important to remember that a change in median price does not reflect appreciation or depreciation in the value of individual homes. Rather, there is a different mix of homes sold each year.



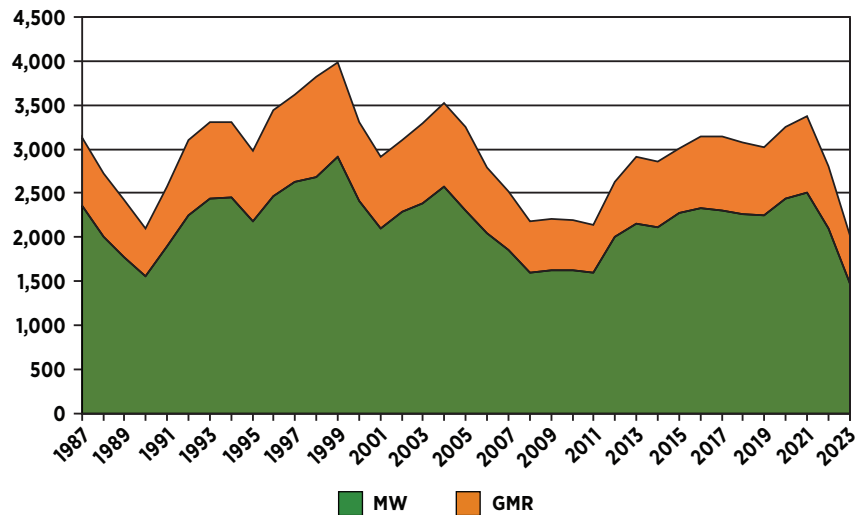




In GMW, although median sale prices have continued their upward trend, the rate of increase has slowed compared to the preceding three years. Over the past year, median home sale prices rose by 4.9%. Conversely, the number of sales in GMW has declined by 28.2% during the same period. Notably, single-family home sales have hit a historic low, at 2,012 homes sold in GMW in 2023.

# Housing

## 1987-2023 GMW SINGLE-FAMILY HOME SALES



Source: The Warren Group and MERC

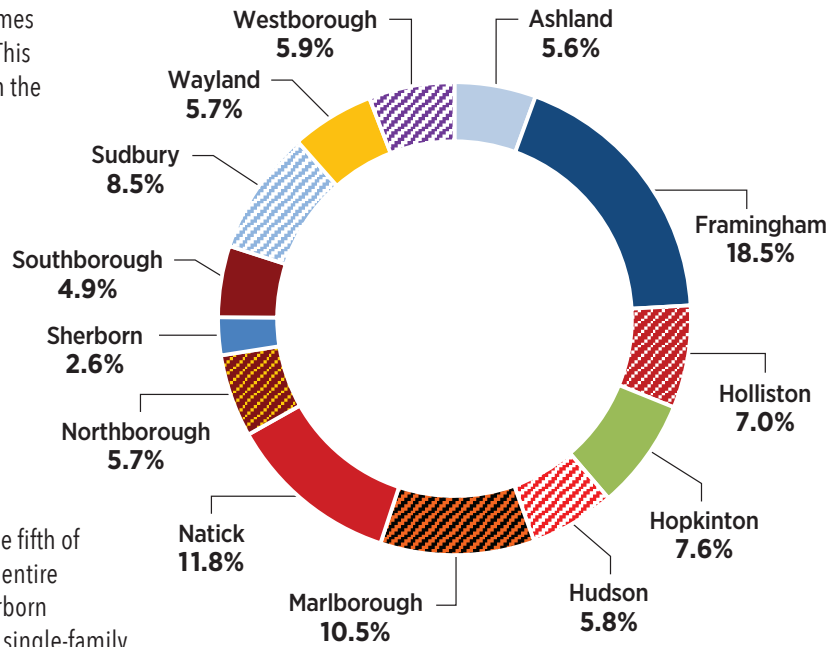
- Sales of existing single-family homes are shown for Greater MetroWest (GMW) by the height of the graph depicted here. The data is shown for a 37-year period from 1987 to 2023. These sales consist of a different mix of homes sold each year, and do not represent a change in value of the homes. The green area shows the sales of existing homes in the nine communities of MetroWest (MW) while the orange area refers to the four communities of the Greater Marlborough Region (GMR).
- The largest annual percentage decrease in single-family home sales occurred from 2022 to 2023 with a 28.2% decrease. The largest annual percentage increase occurred between 1990 and 1991, representing a 23.0% increase in single-family home sales in GMW.
- The fewest homes sold in GMW occurred in 2023 at 2,012 units sold, while the peak occurred in 1999 at 3,986 units sold. This is the fewest number of homes sold in the region since 1990.



# Housing

## 2023 GMW SINGLE-FAMILY HOME SALES

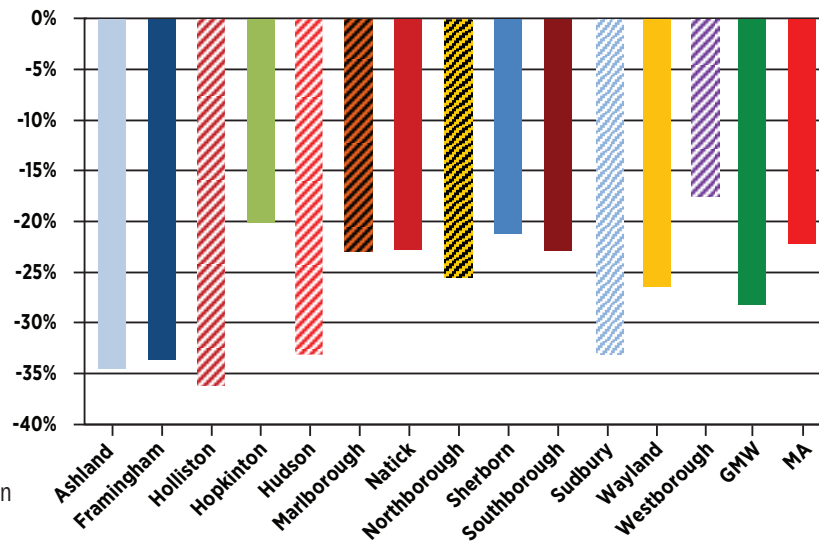
- In 2023, 2,012 existing single-family homes were sold in Greater MetroWest (GMW). This represents a decrease of 790 homes from the previous year.
- Framingham, Natick, and Marlborough were the only three communities to have over 200 single-family home sales in 2023, and these communities combined for 40.9% of all single-family home sales in GMW.
- Southborough and Sherborn were the only communities to contribute less than 5% each to total sales. Sherborn had the fewest sales at 52 single-family homes.
- Framingham accounted for just under one fifth of all single-family home sales made in the entire GMW in 2023, at 18.5% of the total. Sherborn accounted for the smallest percentage of single-family home sales in GMW at only 2.6%.



Source: The Warren Group and MERC

## 2022-2023 GMW EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES SOLD

- This graph shows the percent change in existing single-family home sales from 2022 to 2023 in Greater MetroWest (GMW) and in each of its 13 communities, as well as Massachusetts (MA).
- In 2023, there were 790 fewer units sold in GMW than in 2022, a 28.2% decrease. In 2023, Massachusetts reported an 11,609-unit decrease from 2022, down 22.1%.
- Holliston and Ashland reported the greatest percent decreases in units sold between 2022 and 2023. Holliston reported 80 fewer units sold than the year before, equivalent to a 36.2% decrease, and Ashland reported 59 less units sold, at a decrease of 34.5%.
- Westborough reported the smallest percent decrease in units sold between 2022 and 2023. In 2023, Westborough saw a 17.5% decrease in units sold from 2022.



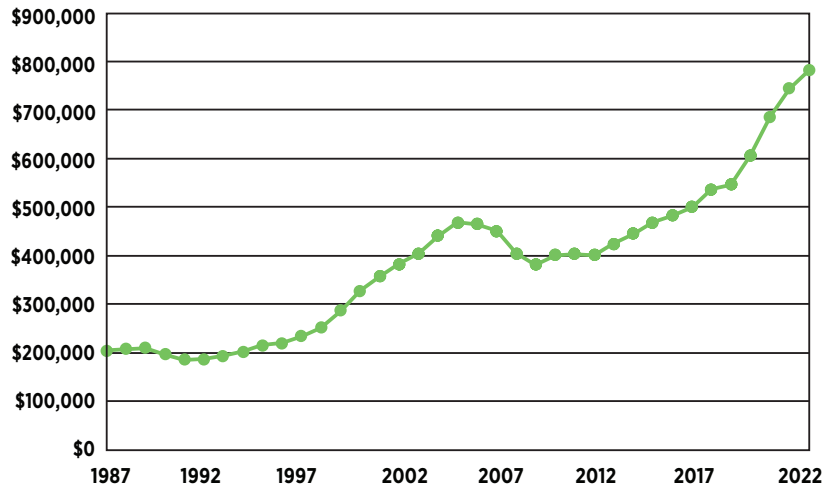
Source: The Warren Group and MERC



# Housing

## 1987-2023 GMW SINGLE-FAMILY MEDIAN SALE PRICE

- This graph shows the estimated median sale price of existing single-family homes in Greater MetroWest (GMW) during the 37-year period from 1987 to 2023. Please note that these sales represent a different mix of homes sold each year and, therefore, do not reflect the changes in the value of individual homes.
- The data series reached a new peak in 2023 with an estimated median sale price of \$780,777, representing a 4.9% percentage increase from the year before.
- The biggest one-year increase since 2012 occurred between 2020 and 2021, when prices were \$605,000 and \$685,000, respectively. This increase of over \$80,000 represented a 13.2% gain.
- The most recent low point for estimated median sales price in this region occurred in 2009 at \$381,181. There was a 105% increase from 2009 to 2023, during which the estimated median sale price increased by nearly \$400,000.



Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

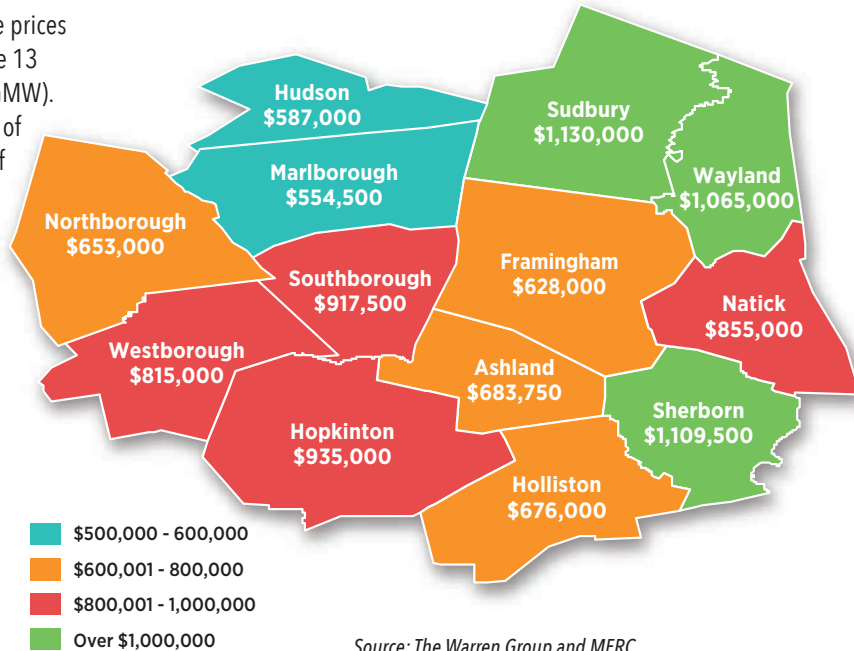




# Housing

## GMW 2023 SINGLE-FAMILY HOME PRICES

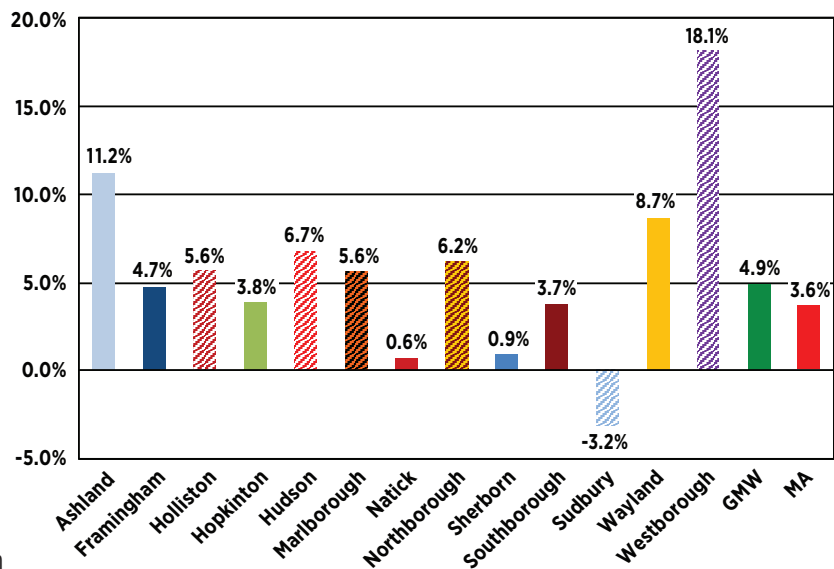
- This map shows the 2023 median sale prices for existing single-family homes in the 13 communities of Greater MetroWest (GMW). Median sale prices ranged from a low of \$554,500 in Marlborough to a high of \$1,130,000 in Sudbury.
- Six of the 13 communities had median sale prices under \$800,000. Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, and Northborough registered under \$800,000 but over \$600,000. Only Hudson and Marlborough posted median sale prices below \$600,000.
- Seven communities had median sale prices above \$800,000: Hopkinton at \$935,000, Natick at \$855,000, Southborough at \$917,500, and Westborough at \$815,000. Sherborn, Sudbury, and Wayland all recorded median sale prices at more than \$1,000,000.



Source: The Warren Group and MERC

## EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY MEDIAN SALE PRICE GMW % Change 2022 to 2023

- Twelve of the 13 communities experienced increases in median sale price between 2022 and 2023. Only Sudbury recorded a decrease in median sale price of 3.2% from \$1,167,000 in 2022 to \$1,130,000 in 2023.
- Westborough recorded the largest percentage increase in median sale price at 18.1% from \$690,000 in 2022 to \$815,000 in 2023. The only other community with a double-digit relative price increase was Ashland with an 11.2% increase.
- From 2022 to 2023, Massachusetts experienced an increase of 3.6%, which was a lower percentage increase than the 4.9% annual increase recorded in GMW.

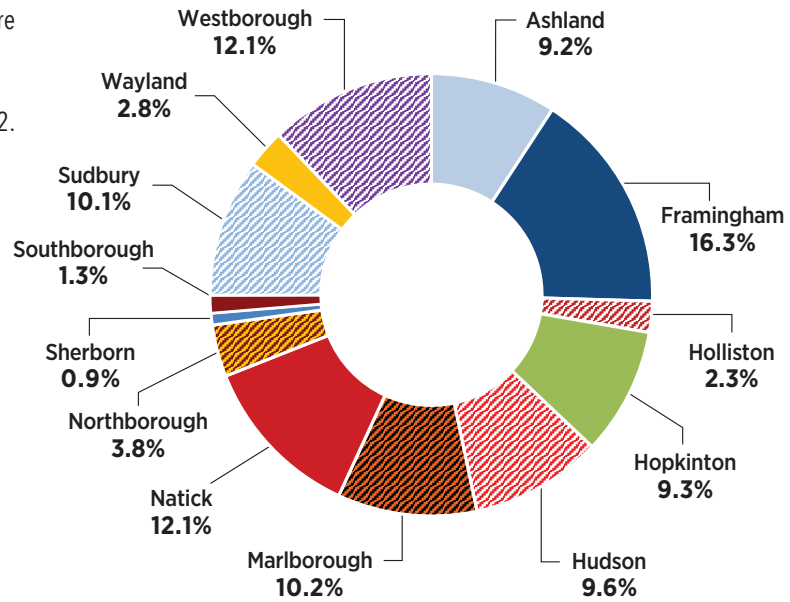


Source: The Warren Group and MERC

# Housing

## 2023 GMW CONDO SALES

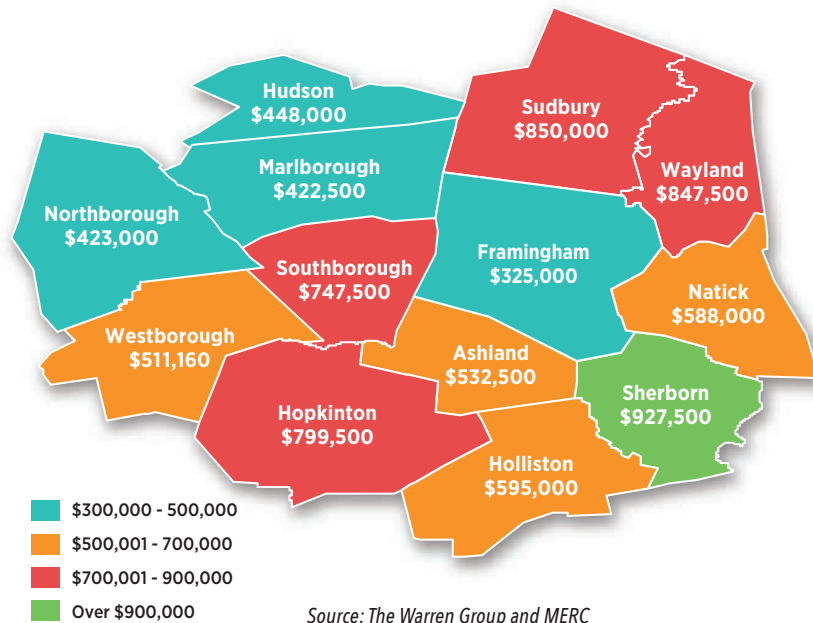
- In 2023, 923 condominiums were sold in the 13 communities of Greater MetroWest (GMW); this was 211 units fewer than in 2022.
- Framingham contributed the largest share at 16.3% of the region's sales.
- Holliston, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, and Wayland, each contributed 5% or less of total sales. Sherborn contributed the smallest number of sales with only eight condominiums sold, which was about 0.9% of total condominium sales.



Source: The Warren Group and MERC

## 2023 EXISTING CONDO PRICES

- In 2023, the estimated median price for condominium sales in Greater MetroWest (GMW) was about \$552,803, an 11.5% increase from 2022.
- Only four communities, Hudson, Framingham, Marlborough, and Northborough, had a median condominium price under \$500,000. Framingham had the lowest median price in the region at \$325,000.
- Only one community had a median condominium sale price of over \$900,000. Sherborn recorded the highest median sale price at \$927,500, followed by Sudbury at \$850,000 and Wayland at \$847,500.



Source: The Warren Group and MERC

# Housing







# MetroWest Cost of Living

**M**etroWest Economic Research Center (MERC) tracks the cost of living in the MetroWest<sup>1</sup> CCSA area by calculating the average cost of a “market basket” of 61 items that are representative of the items typically purchased by professional and executive households. The items in this “market basket” were selected by The Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER - formerly ACCRA) based on a survey of consumer spending patterns done by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The 61 items are grouped into six categories: grocery items, housing, utilities, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods and services.

During each survey period, MERC gathers data on the prices of these items from over 100 businesses in the MetroWest (MW) area and calculates the average price of each item. These average prices are then used to calculate an index for each of the six categories mentioned above and, from them, the overall Cost of Living Index for the area. When calculating each sub-Index, every item is assigned a weight that reflects the relative importance of the item in that category of goods and services.

The Overall Cost of Living Index is then a weighted average of the six sub-Indexes, with the weights here reflecting the relative importance of each of the six sub-groups in the overall cost of living. The weights, like the items in the “market basket”, are also determined by C2ER based on the information obtained in the Bureau of Labor Statistics survey mentioned previously.

In addition to using this data to track the cost of living in MetroWest over time, MERC also sends its survey results to C2ER to be included in that group’s survey of living

costs across the nation. The data from MetroWest are combined with the same data from approximately 300 other U.S. communities to calculate the overall average cost of the “market basket” of goods and services. C2ER calls this the “national average” and then calculates a cost of living Index (still called the ACCRA Index) for each community as a percentage of this national average.

The overall Index for each city or town is also broken down into the same six sub-Indexes described above and is calculated using the same weighting process. These results make it possible to compare living costs in different areas across the country.

Because these Indexes are calculated from the prices of a relatively small sample of the many goods and services which middle-management households actually purchase, they are only estimates of the true cost of living in any given area. As with any figure calculated from sample data, there is a margin of error in the estimate. Since the items in the market basket were not randomly chosen, however, it is not possible to calculate exactly what that margin of error is. In its literature, C2ER suggests that small differences in these Indexes (up to 3 or 4 percentage points) do not necessarily mean that differences in the true cost of living actually exist.

Complications due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in MERC being unable to conduct the survey in October 2020. For continuity purposes, the growth between October 2019 to October 2021 was averaged to estimate October 2020.

<sup>1</sup> MetroWest CCSA includes the communities of Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Natick, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, and Wayland.





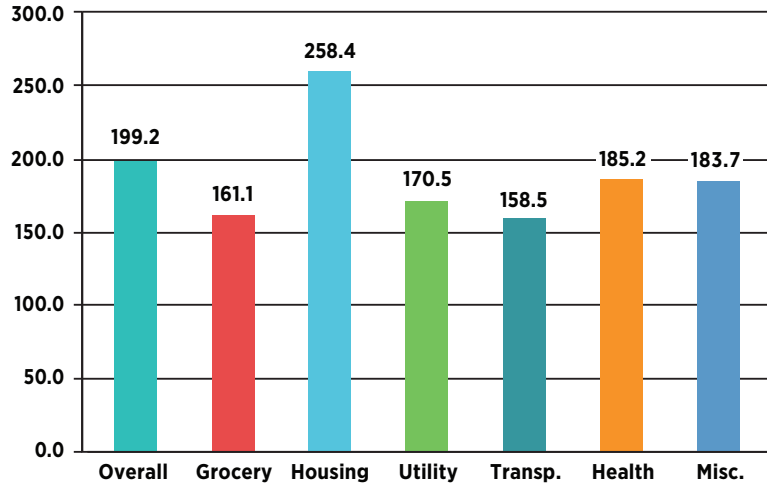
The Overall Cost of Living Index increased roughly 10% over the last year. The driving force behind this increase was the increase in the Housing Index, which increased 23% since October 2023. The increase in the Housing Index was due to increases in home prices, but also rising interest rates.

# MetroWest Cost of Living

## MERC METROWEST COST OF LIVING INDEXES

October 2023, April 2009 = 100.0

- The MERC Overall Cost of Living Index for MetroWest (MW) was 199.2 in October 2023. This indicated that the Cost of Living in MetroWest was nearly twice as high in October 2023 as it was in April 2009. This is a 10.6% increase from the previous year, October 2022.
- The Housing Index had a significantly higher value than the other Indexes. It was recorded at 258.4, in October 2023. This implies that in October 2023, housing costs were more than 158% higher than they were in April 2009. The Index increased 23.5% from its value in October 2022. This increase was primarily attributed to significant increases in mortgage rates.



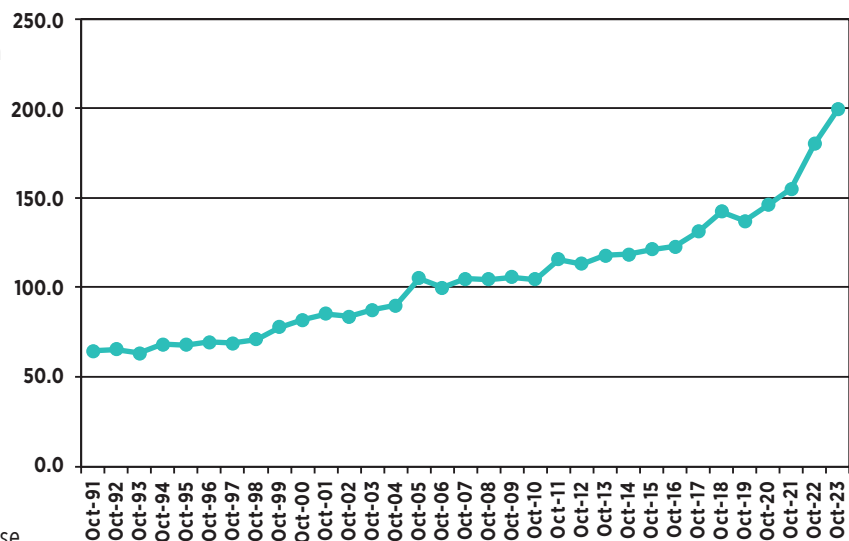
Source: MERC

- The Index with the lowest value was the Transportation Index, which recorded a value of 158.5, over 58% higher than in April 2009.

## MERC METROWEST COST OF LIVING INDEX

April 2009 = 100.0

- This graph shows the values of the MERC Overall Cost of Living Index from October 1991 to October 2023. April 2009 is the base year for the Index, thus the Index value in April 2009 is normalized to a value of 100.0.
- From October 2022 to October 2023, the MERC MetroWest Cost of Living Index increased 10.5% to a value of 180.2 from 179.8 in October 2022.
- The Overall Index had an average annual increase of roughly 3.5% from October 1991 to October 2023.
- Despite a significant increase over the past year, the largest 12-month increase was a 17% rise in the Index between October 2004 and October 2005.
- Since 1991, the MERC Cost of Living Index has increased from a value of 64.6 to 199.2. This is more than three times higher in 2023 than it was in 1991. More specifically, it is a 209% increase over the 33-year span.



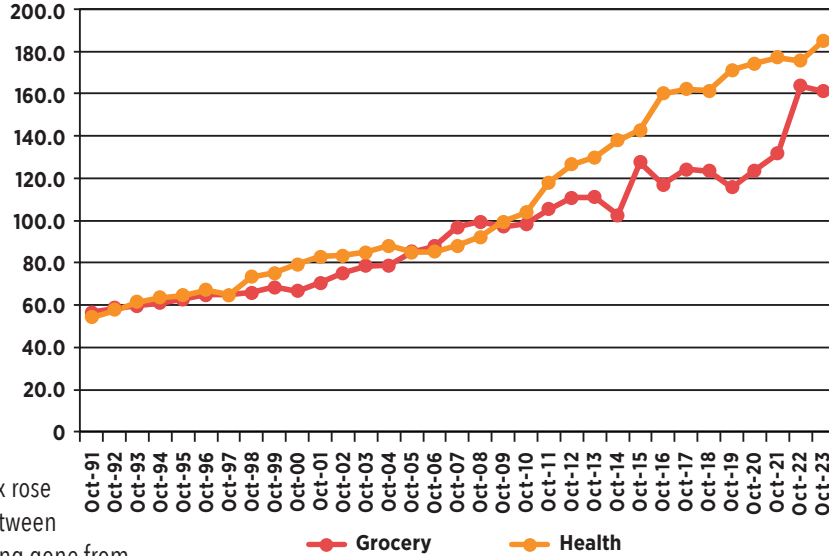
Source: MERC

# MetroWest Cost of Living

## MW GROCERY, HEALTH CARE INDEXES

April 2009 = 100.0

- Over the 30 years between October 1991 and October 2023, the Health Care Index rose at a steady rate and had less volatility than almost all of the other Indexes.
- The Grocery Items Index recorded a small decrease between October 2022 and October 2023, having gone from a value of 163.8 to 161.06, a 1.7% decline. This was the only sub-index to record a decrease over the last year.
- Before experiencing a decrease from 2022 to 2023, the Grocery Items Index rose dramatically. It increased by 24.4% between October 2021 and October 2022, having gone from a value of 131.7 to 163.8. This was the largest single year increase in the history of the Index.
- Since 1991, the Grocery Items Index has increased 184%, while the Health Care Index has increased 241% over the 33-year period.

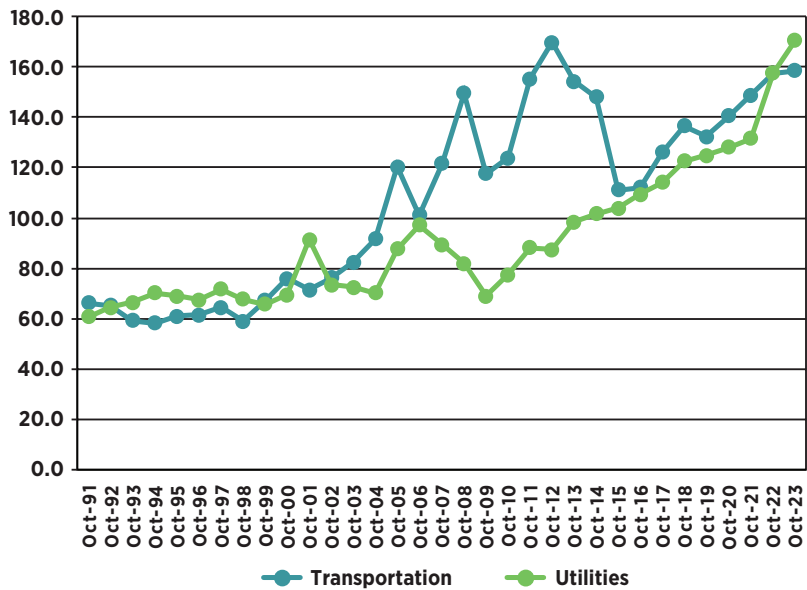


Source: MERC

## MW TRANSPORTATION, UTILITIES INDEXES

April 2009 = 100.0

- The Utilities Index recorded a value of 170.5 while the Transportation Index recorded a value of 158.5 in October 2023.
- The Transportation Index has historically been the most volatile of all the Indexes, particularly from October 2004 through October 2016.
- Since the all-time high of 169.6 in April 2012, the Transportation Index fell to a value of only 112.0 in October 2016; a decrease of approximately 34% in four years. As of October 2023, the Transportation Index had a value of 158.5.
- The Utilities Index increased to 170.5, an 8.2% increase from October 2022.
- Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Transportation Index has increased nearly 20%, from 132.4 in October 2019 to 158.5 in October 2023.



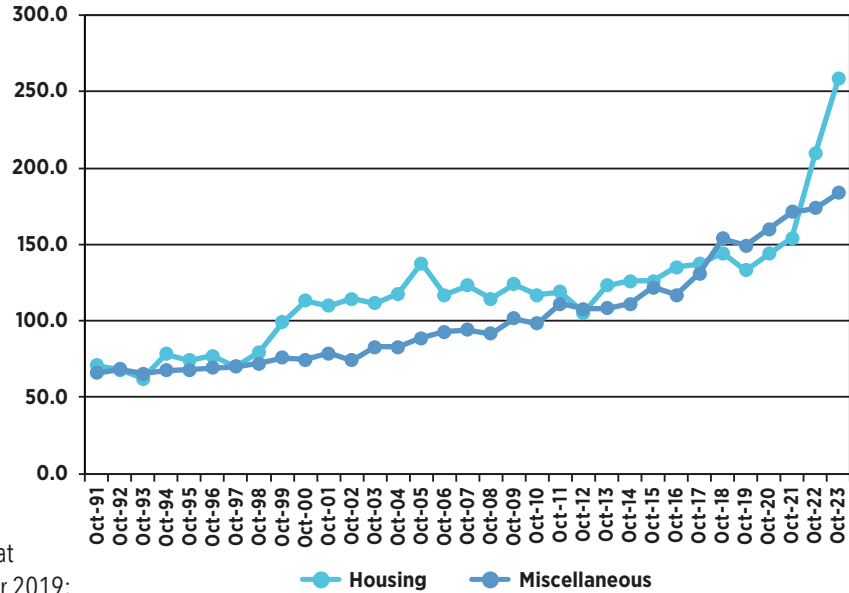
Source: MERC

# MetroWest Cost of Living

## MW HOUSING, MISCELLANEOUS INDEXES

April 2009 = 100.0

- The Housing Index had a value of 258.4 in October 2023. This is a record high for housing in the MetroWest Region. The changes in the Housing Index are due to rising real estate pricing and changes in mortgage rates.
- Between October 2022 and October 2023, the Housing Index increased 23.5%. The driver of this increase is rising mortgage rates.
- Both the Housing Index and Miscellaneous Goods and Services (Misc.) Index have dramatically increased since pre-COVID-19 in October 2019. The Housing Index at 258.4 was 94% larger than October 2019; and the Miscellaneous Goods and Services Index at 183.7 was a 23.2% increase from October 2019.



Source: MERC



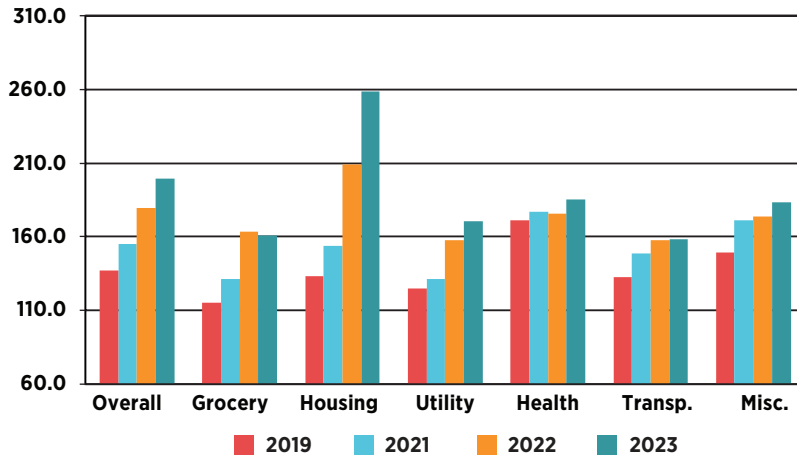


# MetroWest Cost of Living

## MERC COL INDEXES

### October Surveys 2019 & 2021-2023; April 2009 = 100.0

- This graph shows the Indexes from the October surveys of each year, from 2019 to 2023. The MERC Cost of Living Survey was suspended in October 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The base period for all the Indexes is April 2009, at which time each Index had a value of 100.0.
- The only Index to decrease over the last year was the Grocery Items Index, falling 1.7% from 163.8 to 161.1.
- The Overall Cost of Living Index has risen from 136.9, pre-COVID-19 in October 2019, to 199.2 in October 2023. This is a 45.5% increase since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Index with the largest increases from pre-COVID-19 in October 2019 to October 2023 was the Housing Index, increasing from 133.2 to 258.4, or a 94% increase. The second largest increase was in the Grocery Items Index, increasing from 115.6 to 161.1, or a 39.4% increase.

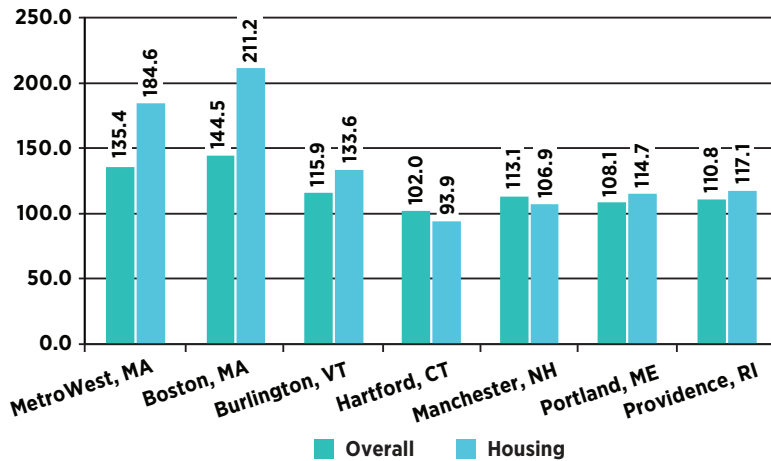


Source: MERC

## C2ER OVERALL, HOUSING INDEXES

### New England, April 2023

- This graph shows the Overall Cost of Living Indexes and the Housing Indexes for MetroWest, Boston, and five other New England communities that participated in the April 2023 C2ER survey. The national average is normalized to a value of 100.0.
- Among the seven communities depicted, Boston, MA had the highest Overall Index and the highest Housing Index in April 2023. The Overall Index had a value of 144.5 signifying that living in Boston, MA was nearly 45% more expensive than the national average. Boston's Housing Index had a value of 211.2; housing costs in Boston were more than two times the national average.
- The lowest Overall Index value for the selected New England communities belonged to Hartford, CT. However, even having the lowest value of the seven areas, it still recorded a value 2% greater than the national average.
- In all of the New England communities surveyed, aside from Hartford, CT, both the Overall and Housing Indexes were higher than the national average. In five of the seven communities, the Housing Index was higher than the Overall Index, suggesting that the cost of housing is a significant contributor to the high cost of living in the region.

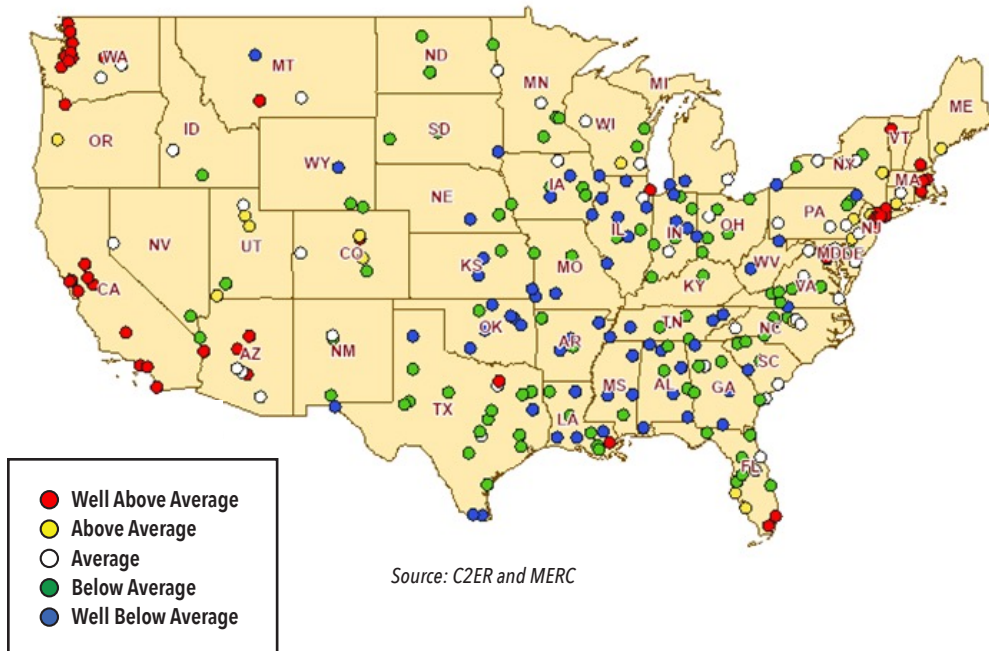


Source: C2ER and MERC

# MetroWest Cost of Living

## NATION-WIDE C2ER OVERALL COST OF LIVING

April 2023



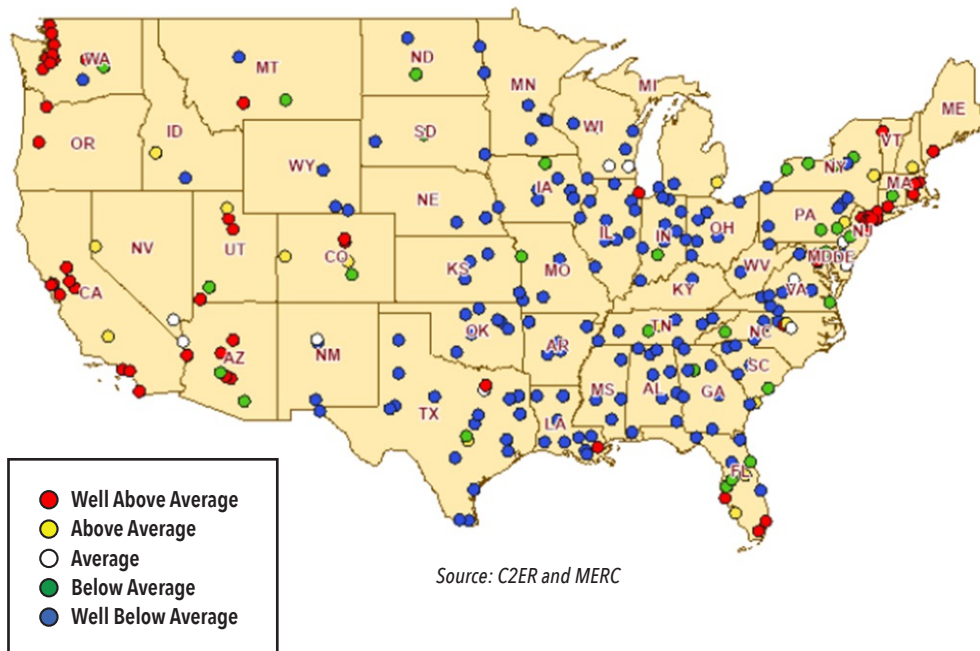
**Note:** Average means that the index was between 97.0 and 103.0; Above Average is an index between 103.1 and 110.0; Well Above Average is an index higher than 110.0. A community with an index below 90.0 is classified as Well Below Average, while Below Average is an index between 90.0 and 96.9.

- In April of 2023, the participating communities with the highest living costs (red dots) were mostly located in the Northeast and the West Coast. Manhattan, NY (226.0) had the highest Overall Index, nearly 2.3 times the national average. It was followed by Honolulu, HI (181.5) (not pictured here), and San Jose, CA (175.4). Boston ranked 9th at 148.3 and MetroWest ranked 15th at 137.9.
- Harlingen, TX had the lowest Overall Index in April 2023 with a value of 77.4, implying that the overall cost of living in Harlingen was approximately 23% below the national average. The next two lowest Overall Indexes were observed in Decatur, IL, and Muskogee, OK, recording an Overall Index value of 78.6 and 80.2, respectively.
- Seventy-six of the 301 communities (25.2%) had Overall Indexes below 90.0, well below average (blue dots). Fifty-five of 301 communities (18.3%) had Overall Indexes greater than 110.0, well above average (red dots).

# MetroWest Cost of Living

## NATION-WIDE C2ER HOUSING INDEX

April 2023



**Note:** Average means that the index was between 97.0 and 103.0; Above Average is an index between 103.1 and 110.0; Well Above Average is an index higher than 110.0. A community with an index below 90.0 is classified as Well Below Average, while Below Average is an index between 90.0 and 96.9.

- The Housing Indexes from the April 2023 survey exhibited a similar pattern to that seen in the Overall Indexes. The highest housing costs are mostly located in the Northeast and on the West Coast.
- The highest Housing Index was 489.4 in Manhattan, NY, implying that housing costs in Manhattan are almost five times the national average. The next highest indexes were San Jose, CA (330.8) and Honolulu, HI (314.1) (not pictured here). Boston ranked 9th at 219.9, and MetroWest ranked 18th at 184.7.
- The lowest Housing Index was found in Decatur, IL (54.7), over 45% lower than the national average. The next two lowest Housing Indexes were Kalamazoo, MI (55.0) and Ashland, OH (55.3).
- Sixty-seven of 301 communities (22.3%) had indexes greater than 110.0; well above the national average (red dots). The majority of the communities in the survey had indexes well below the national average (blue dots): 171 of 301 communities (56.8%) had Housing Indexes below 90.0.



# Municipal Revenue

**M**unicipalities report budgeted revenue, actual revenue, and actual expenditures to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), Division of Local Services (DLS) on form Schedule A which includes a tax recapitulation report. The DLS of the DOR prepares several analyses from these reports. MetroWest Economic Research Center (MERC) at Framingham State University uses the underlying information, as well as DLS reports to prepare analyses for the local region.

Unless otherwise stated, revenue presented in this report represents budgeted revenue reported to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services by the respective municipalities. It consists of the Total Tax Levy, State Aid, Local Receipts, and an All Other category. The Tax Levy consists of assessments on Personal Property, Industrial, Commercial, Open Space, and Residential Real Estate. Personal Property includes furnishings of second homes and some inventories and equipment of unincorporated businesses. On-site vehicles of utility companies are generally included in this category as well. State Aid is earmarked as State Aid for Education and State Aid for General Government. Local Receipts include motor vehicle excise taxes, licenses and charges for services. The All Other category includes free cash and other available funds. Budgeted revenue and actual revenue differ very little.

Tax levies are subject to limitations imposed by related legislation. In any given year, the Tax Levy cannot exceed 2½ percent of the total assessed value of the property of the community. In addition, the Tax Levy cannot increase by more than 2½ percent of the prior year

Tax Levy limit plus new growth without voter approval of an operating budget override or a debt exclusion override. An operating budget override constitutes a permanent adjustment to the Tax Levy base that is used for subsequent year calculation limits while a debt exclusion override is in effect only for the life of the bond for which it was approved. It does not become a permanent adjustment to the Tax Levy base. Individual communities are also able to determine the extent to which property taxes will be borne by residential taxpayers or commercial and industrial (C&I) taxpayers. Some communities choose to tax residential, commercial, and industrial property at the same rate while others use split rates. Personal Property is generally taxed at C&I rates imposed by the respective community.

With the residential exemption, the tax burden shifts within the residential class from owner-occupied, and relatively lower valued properties, to relatively higher valued ones and to those not eligible for the exemption, such as vacant land, rental properties, and seasonal homes. The small commercial exemption is a similar shift within the class in that it excludes a percentage of the assessed value of each eligible parcel. It covers commercial real property valued at less than \$1 million that is occupied by certified small business (ten or fewer employees).

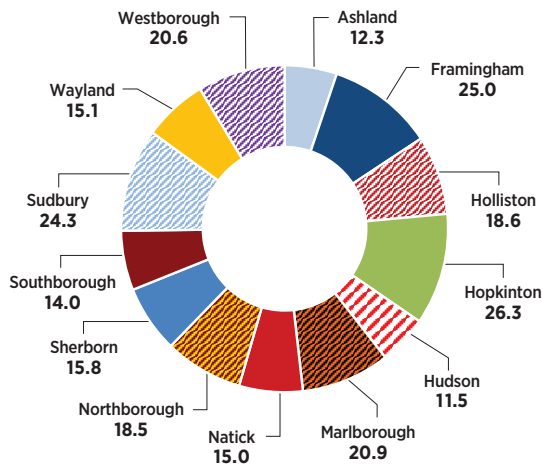






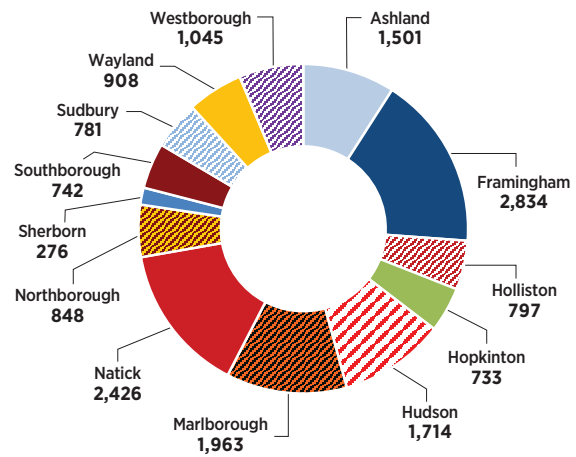
Residential parcels in GMW are comprised of Single-Family, Condominiums, Miscellaneous Residential, Two Family, Three Family and Apartment parcels. Total residential parcels in GMW increased 12.5% over the latest 22-year period, from 81,673 in FY2003 to 91,853 in FY2024. Single Family parcels increased only 4.6% over this 22-year period from 65,221 in FY2003 to 68,239 in FY2024, constituting shares of 79.9% and 74.3% for FY2003 and FY2024, respectively.

# Municipal Revenue



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

## GMW LAND AREA IN SQUARE MILES By Community



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

## FY2022 GMW POPULATION PER SQUARE MILE By Community

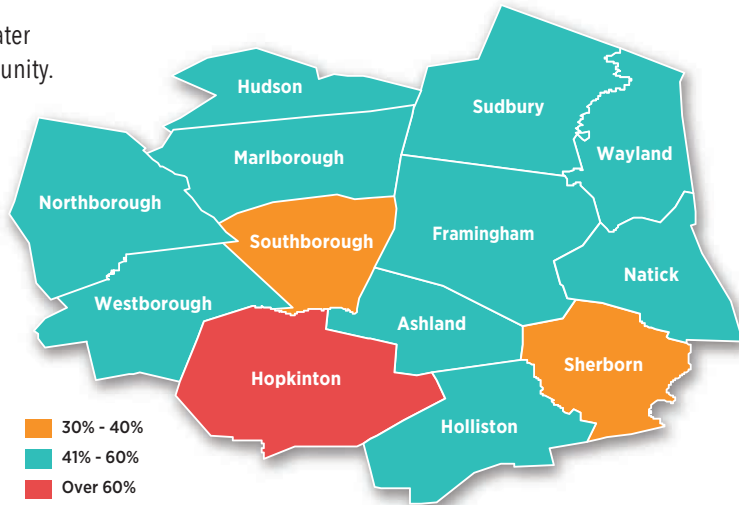
- The graph on the left reflects the size of each community in the Greater MetroWest (GMW) region in square miles. The GMW communities comprise an area of about 237.8 square miles. Hopkinton is the largest community in GMW in square miles and accounts for 26.3 square miles, followed by Framingham (25.0) and Sudbury (24.3). The size of the remaining nine communities fell between 11.5 square miles in Hudson and 20.9 in Marlborough.
- The graph on the right represents the density (population per square mile) for each community. The densest communities are Framingham (2,834), Natick (2,426) and Marlborough (1,963), followed closely by Hudson (1,714) and Ashland (1,501). The least dense communities are Sherborn (276) followed by Hopkinton (733). The remaining communities in GMW fell between 742 individuals per square mile in Southborough and 1,045 in Westborough. The average density for GMW is 1,283 individuals per square mile and 895 for MA.
- As shown on the right graph, the population density varies considerably across the 13 communities. Although a community may have a large land area, such as Hopkinton at 26.3 square miles, the population density is only 733 individuals per square mile.



# Municipal Revenue

## FY2014 - FY2024 GMW GROWTH IN MUNICIPAL REVENUE

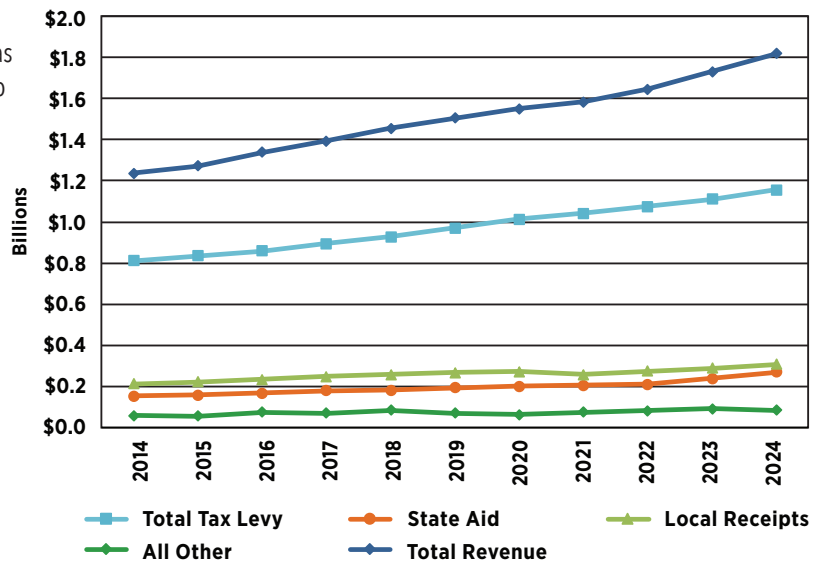
- This map shows municipal revenue growth in Greater MetroWest (GMW) in FY2014 to FY2024 by community.
- In FY2014, total revenue for GMW was \$1.24 billion and has since increased by \$582.6 million in FY2024 to a total of about \$1.82 billion. This is an increase of about 47% in ten years. Ten communities; Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick, Northborough, Sudbury, Wayland, and Westborough, showed growth rates of 41% - 60%. Two other communities, Sherborn and Southborough, fell in the 30% - 40% growth interval.
- For FY2014 - FY2024, growth in municipal revenue in Hopkinton was 72.2%, making it the only community with a growth rate of over 60%. The next two highest growth rates were Holliston at 59.6% and Westborough at 53.0%.



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

## FY2014 - FY2024 GMW TOTAL REVENUE

- For the recent 11-year period, total revenue for Greater MetroWest (GMW) has increased from \$1.24 billion in FY2014 to \$1.82 billion in FY2024. This is a 47.1% increase from FY2014.
- Total Tax Levy, by far the greatest component of total revenue, continued to increase from FY2014 through FY2024; starting with a total of \$810.8 million and reaching \$1.16 billion, an overall increase of about 43%.
- State Aid had steady increases over this period. Overall, it increased from \$154.3 million in FY2014 to \$269.7 million in FY2024, an increase of 74.8%.
- Local Receipts showed an increase of about 44.2% from \$213.1 million in FY2014 to a total of \$307.3 million in FY2024. Local Receipts were the second biggest revenue contributor to the GMW region.
- The last category, All Other, is the smallest contributor of revenue to the GMW region. It increased from \$58.0 million in FY2014 to \$86.1 million in FY2024, a 48.5% increase, but never surpassed the \$100 million mark during this period.

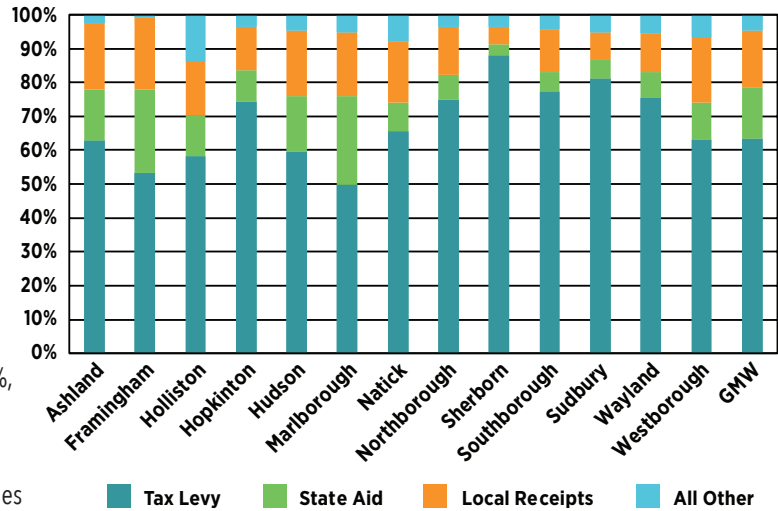


Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

# Municipal Revenue

## FY2024 GMW MUNICIPAL REVENUE By Source

- In FY2024, the total municipal revenue for Greater MetroWest (GMW) totaled \$1.82 billion from four different sources. The sources that make up municipal revenue are as follows: Tax Levy, State Aid, Local Receipts, and All Other.
- Tax Levy is the main source of revenue for each of the 13 communities that make up GMW. Marlborough had the smallest percentage of revenue coming from Tax Levy at 49.9%, followed by Framingham with 53.4%, while Sherborn had the highest at 88.0%. The average Tax Levy for the region was 63.5%.

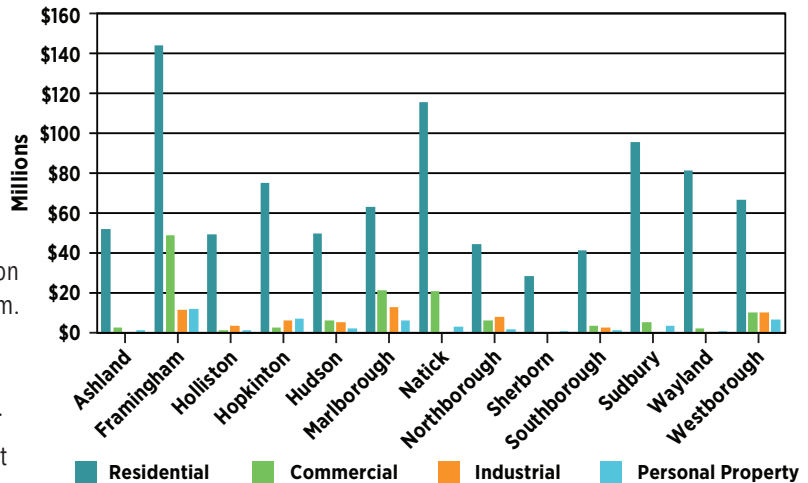


Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- State Aid and Local Receipts recorded averages of 14.8% and 16.9% for the region. State Aid ranged from 26.0% in Marlborough to 3.3% in Sherborn. Local Receipts' highest percentage came from Framingham at 21.2% and the lowest percentage came from Sherborn at 5.1%. Of the four different revenue sources, All Other contributed the smallest amount with the average for the region at 4.7%.

## FY2024 GMW TAX LEVIES BY CATEGORY By Community

- Total Tax Levy consists of four components, as follows: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Personal Property.
- In FY2024, the Residential tax category accounted for the largest portion of the Total Tax Levy for all the communities that make up Greater MetroWest (GMW). The Residential Tax Levy ranged from \$28.6 million in Sherborn to \$143.7 million in Framingham. The Total Residential Tax Levy for GMW accounted for \$909.9 million, or 78.5% of the total GMW Tax Levy of over \$1.16 billion.



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- The Commercial Tax Levy was the next largest contributor to the Total Tax Levy, ranging from \$444,624 in Sherborn to \$49.0 million in Framingham. Marlborough held the second largest Commercial Tax Levy at \$21.5 million.
- For the industrial component of the Total Tax Levy, the highest value in all 13 communities in GMW came from Marlborough at \$13.0 million, while the lowest was recorded in Sherborn at \$49,638, followed by Wayland at \$79,445.
- Among all four categories measured, the Personal Property Tax was the smallest contributor to GMW's Total Tax Levy. The range in GMW went from \$1.0 million in Sherborn to \$12.2 million in Framingham.

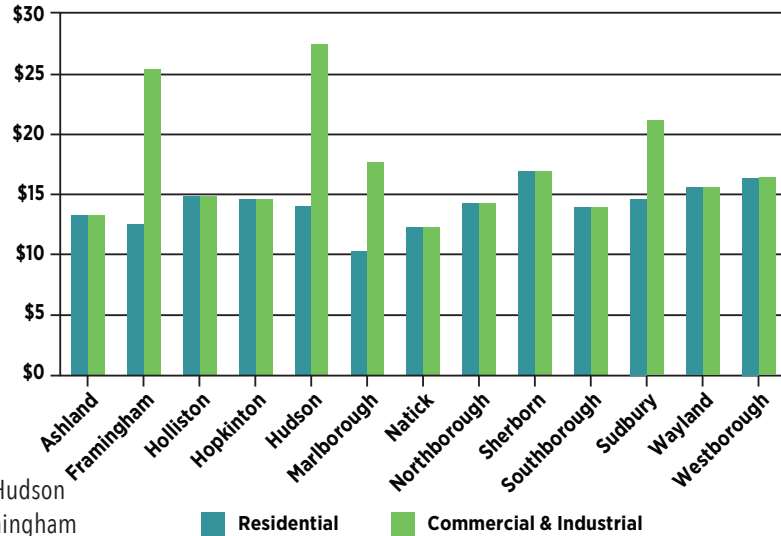


# Municipal Revenue

## FY2024 GMW TAX RATE BY COMMUNITY

### Four with Split Rates

- This graph depicts the FY2024 Residential and Commercial & Industrial (C&I) tax rates per \$1,000 of assessed value for the 13 communities that comprise Greater MetroWest (GMW). Of the 13 communities, Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton, Natick, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Wayland, and Westborough, all had one set rate for both residential and C&I rates.
- Framingham, Hudson, Marlborough, and Sudbury had split residential and C&I rates. The C&I rates were higher than the residential rates in all four communities.
- Of those four communities with split rates, Hudson had the largest C&I rate at \$27.50 with Framingham just behind at \$25.41. Sudbury and Marlborough posted C&I tax rates at \$21.16 and \$17.66, respectively.
- Marlborough's residential rate was \$10.24, making it the smallest rate of all the communities, with split rates followed by Framingham (\$12.46), Hudson (\$14.00), and Sudbury (\$14.61). Natick recorded the lowest rate for C&I property at \$12.26. Overall, residential rates in FY2024 fell between \$10.24 in Marlborough and \$16.95 in Sherborn.

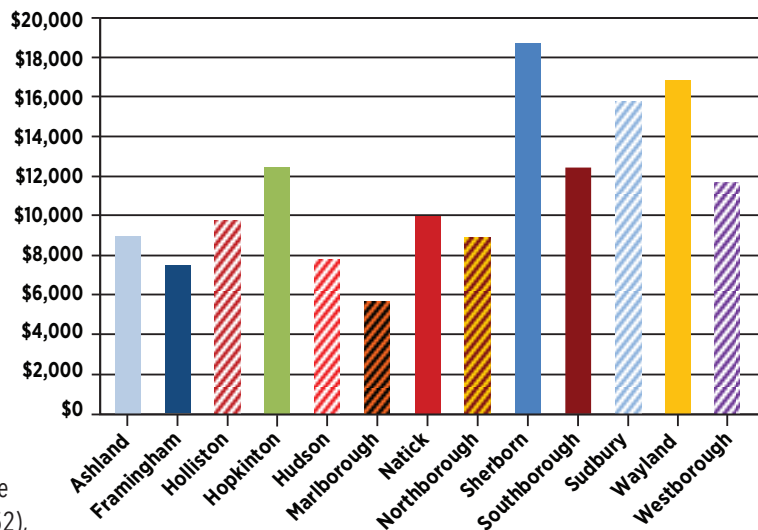


Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

## FY2024 GMW AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILL

### By Community

- The average single-family tax bills for the 13 Greater MetroWest (GMW) communities, designated by columns with the school colors, are displayed in this graph. This average for a given community is determined by applying the respective residential tax rate to the average single-family assessed value.
- In GMW in FY2024, the highest single-family tax bill of all 13 communities came from Sherborn at \$18,705. Marlborough had the lowest single-family tax bill at \$5,667, more than three times smaller than that of Sherborn.
- In GMW, 7 out of 13 communities had a single-family tax bill larger than \$10,000. These include: Sherborn (\$18,705), Wayland (\$16,852), Sudbury (\$15,808), Hopkinton (\$12,454), Southborough (\$12,427), Westborough (\$11,680), and Natick (\$10,021).



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- The average single-family tax bill for the remaining six communities in Greater MetroWest ranged between \$5,670 and \$9,800.

# Municipal Revenue

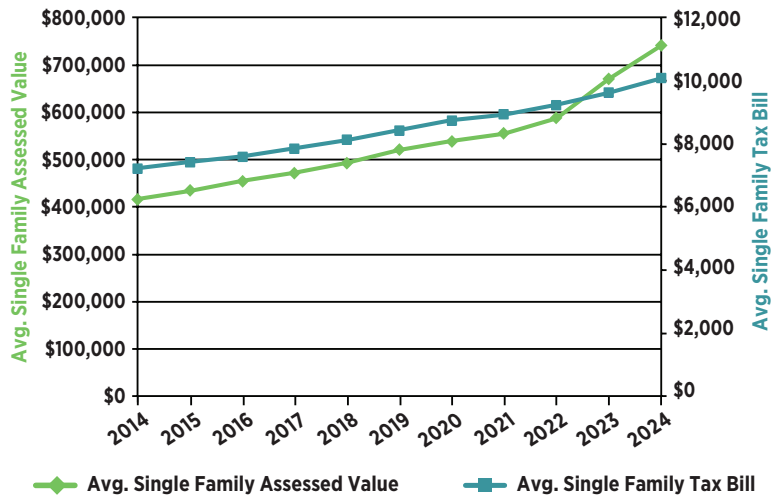
## FY2014 - FY2024 GMW AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILL & ASSESSED VALUE

- The average single-family tax bill for Greater MetroWest (GMW) is shown in blue on the right vertical axis while the average single-family assessed value is shown in green on the left vertical axis.

- The average single-family tax bill increased from a low of \$7,219 in FY2014 to a high of \$10,087 in FY2024, an increase of just under 40% during the period. The average single-family tax bill increased each year. On average, the single-family tax bill increased nearly 5% from FY2023 to FY2024.

- From FY2014 to FY2024, the average single-family assessed value increased from a low of \$416,285 in FY2014 to \$588,165 in FY2022 and then jumped to \$741,505 in FY2024 for an overall increase of 78.1%. The average single-family assessed value increased nearly 10.7% from FY2023 to FY2024.

- The average single-family tax bill for the region is determined by calculating a residential tax rate for the region and applying this to the average single-family assessed value.



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

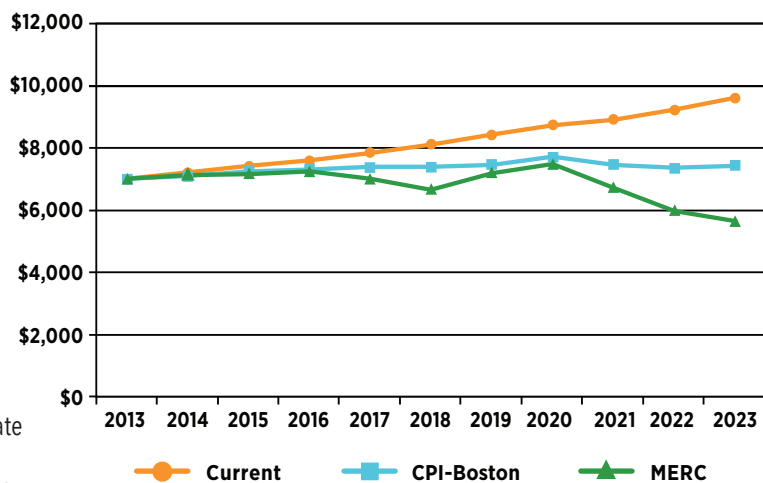
## AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILL GMW: Inflation Adjusted

- This graph depicts the average single-family tax bill in Greater MetroWest (GMW), for FY2013 to FY2023, with FY2013 as the base year. The values are measured in nominal or current dollars and also adjusted for inflation.

- The actual (nominal) single-family tax bill, shown in orange, increased every year during this time period from \$7,019 in FY2013 to \$9,624 in FY2023, an increase of \$2,605, or 37.1%.

- Two different price indexes are used to calculate the inflation-adjusted real dollar value of the average single-family tax bill: MERC's MetroWest Cost of Living Index and the Boston Consumer Price Index (CPI). Estimates for MERC's MetroWest Cost of living for FY2020 were used as actual amounts were unavailable.

- During FY2013 through FY2023, the Boston CPI produced a \$426 increase in the tax bill from \$7,019 to \$7,445; while the MERC index produced a \$1,328 decrease in the tax bill from \$7,019, to \$5,691.

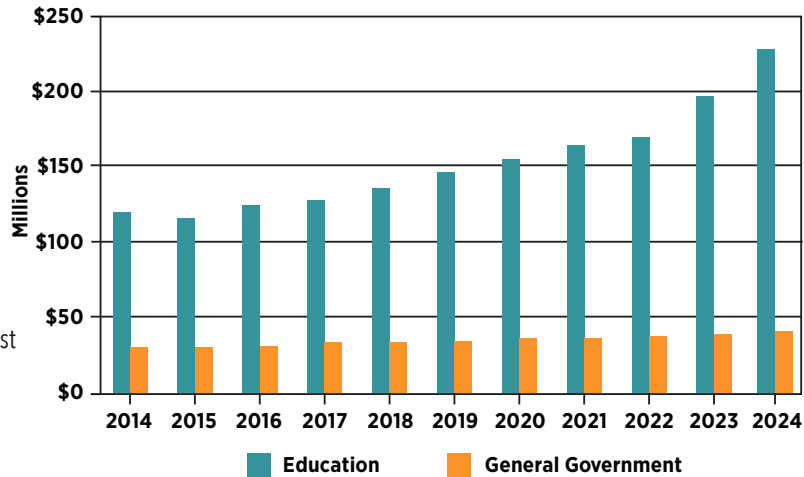


Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

# Municipal Revenue

## FY2014 - FY2024 GMW STATE AID CATEGORIES

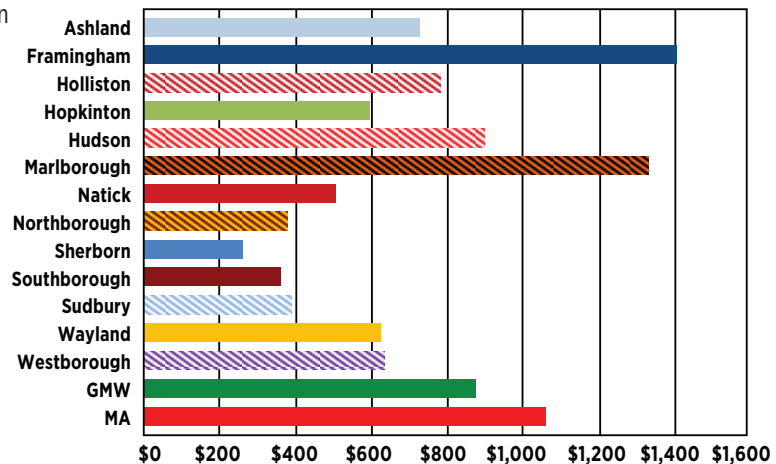
- State Aid for Education in Greater MetroWest (GMW) has nearly doubled its overall amount during this period, starting at \$119.7 million in FY2014 and increasing to \$226.3 million in FY2024.
- During the period displayed and measured in this graph, State Aid for Education increased every year except for FY2014 to FY2015, when it decreased by about \$4.2 billion, or -3.5%. The biggest total increase for State Aid for Education came between FY2023 and FY2024, increasing about \$30.2 million or 15.4%.
- State Aid for General Government in GMW has had consistently lower totals during this same period. In FY2014, it totaled \$29.5 million and increased 38.3 percent to \$40.8 million in FY2024.
- During the period being measured, State Aid for General Government averaged a \$1.1 million increase each year. This included one minor decrease of \$120,000 in FY2017 to FY2018.



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

## FY2024 GMW STATE AID PER CAPITA By Community

- This graph displays the per capita State Aid given to each of the 13 communities that make up Greater MetroWest (GMW) in FY2024. Per capita State Aid is calculated by dividing the sum of the aid given to a community by the population of that community.
- The amount of per capita State Aid given to the GMW communities ranged from a high of \$1,404 in Framingham, followed by Marlborough with \$1,330, and Hudson, not far behind with \$896, to a low of \$261 in Sherborn. This compares to the MA state average of \$1,059 and GMW average of \$876.



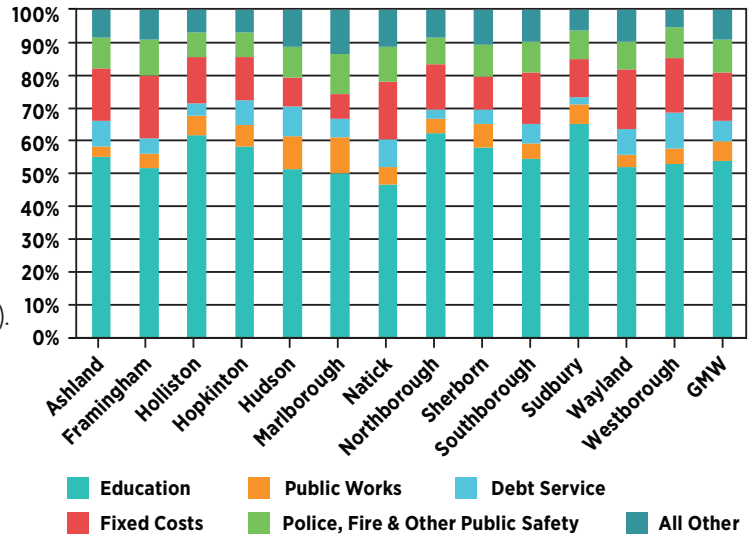
Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- This graph consists of both State Aid for Education and State Aid for General Government combined and given directly to each respective community. The total amount of State Aid given to GMW is \$235,625,892.
- It is important to note that communities such as Northborough, Southborough, Sudbury, and Sherborn all belong to regional school districts. The State Aid that is given to those districts is not included in the above calculations.
- Six of the GMW communities received between \$200-\$600 State Aid per capita and also fall below the regional and state average per capita value: Sherborn (\$261), Southborough (\$362), Northborough (\$379), Sudbury (\$390), Natick (\$505), and Hopkinton (\$598).

# Municipal Revenue

## FY2022 GMW MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION By Community

- There are six main categories of municipal expenditures: Education, Public Works, Debt Service, Fixed Costs, Police, Fire & Other Public Safety, and All Other. The respective expenditures are shown as percentages of total expenditures in this graph. Fixed Costs also include fixed employee benefits for all municipal employees. In FY2022, these general fund expenditures reached over \$1.4 billion dollars in Greater MetroWest (GMW).



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- Education expenditure was the largest expenditure in each GMW community. Natick, at 46.6%, was the only community within GMW to have had less than 50% of municipal expenditure go to education, with Sudbury having the largest share at 65.2%. The average Education expenditure for GMW was around 53.9%.

- The highs and lows of the remaining categories varied by community. Debt Service had a relatively low percentage of total expenditures with Westborough having the highest at 10.9%, while Sudbury posted the smallest at 2.2%, and the average for GMW was 6.3%. The Police, Fire & Other Public Safety average for GMW was about 9.8%, with Marlborough having the highest expenditure at 12.4%. Public Works was the lowest average expenditure throughout the region coming in at 5.9%, with Fixed Costs at 14.9% and All Other at 9.3%.

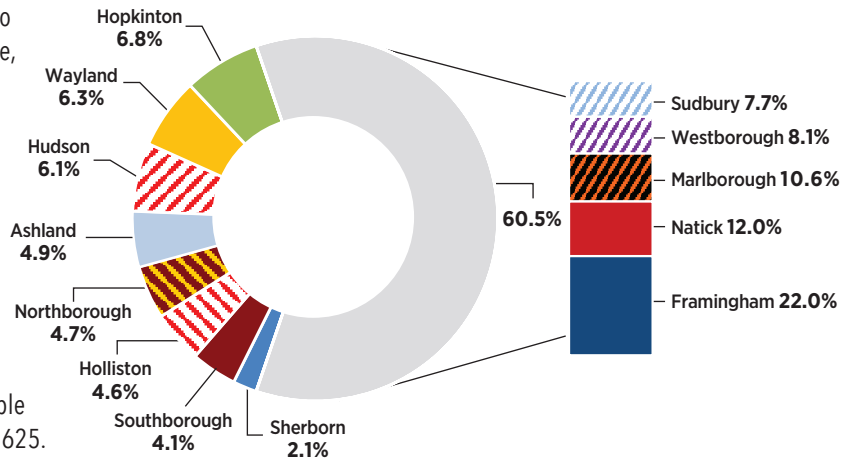




# Municipal Revenue

## MUNICIPAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE FY2022 GMW = \$1.4B

- Municipal expenditures are categorized into six main categories: Education, Debt Service, Police, Fire & Other Public Safety, Public Works, Fixed Costs, and All Other. This pie graph shows the combined total of these categories for the Greater MetroWest region by community.



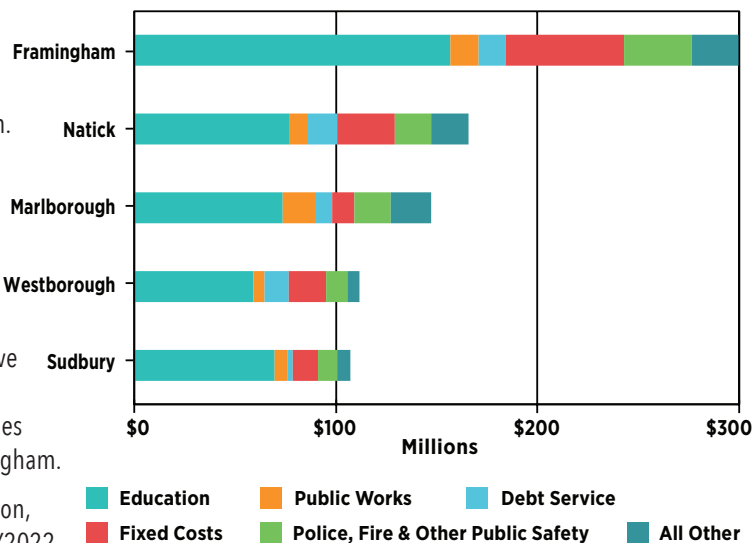
- In FY2022, these general fund expenditures reached over \$1.38 billion dollars in Greater MetroWest. Combined, the communities of Framingham, Natick, Marlborough, Westborough, and Sudbury, were responsible for 60.5% of that expenditure at \$835,993,625.

Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- Hudson and Wayland, 6.1% and 6.3%, respectively, each represented similar percentages, of the total GMW expenditure, collectively totaling about \$170.9 million. Hopkinton, alone, accounted for \$93.4 million or 6.8%.
- Sherborn and Southborough were the two communities with the smallest expenditure at 2.1% and 4.1%, respectively. Together, they represented 6.2% of GMW's total expenditure; totaling about \$85.3 million.

## FY2022 FIVE LARGEST COMMUNITIES BY EXPENDITURE Greater MetroWest

- This chart shows the five largest communities by expenditure in the Greater MetroWest region which includes the following: Framingham, Marlborough, Natick, Sudbury, and Westborough.



- Framingham had the largest amount of spending of all the communities, spending a total of \$304 million on Education, Public Works, Debt Service, Fixed Costs, Police, Fire & Other Public Safety, and All Other in FY2022.
- Westborough and Sudbury had a similar collective expenditure total of \$111.8 million and \$107.1 million, respectively, in FY2022. Both communities spent less than half the total spending of Framingham.

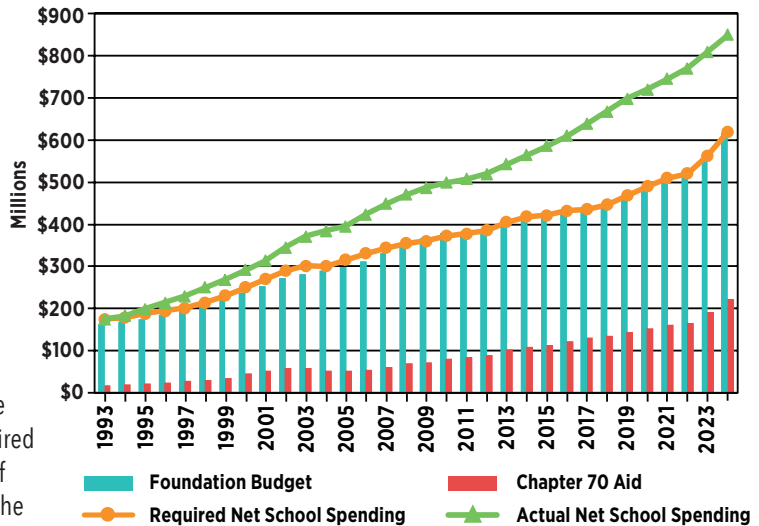
Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- Natick had a collective expenditure of \$166 million, followed by Marlborough at \$147.1 million in FY2022.
- Each of these communities spent about half of their total expenditure on Education except Sudbury which spent 65% on Education, making it the largest category for spending in FY2022. The second largest category for spending was in Fixed Costs for Framingham, Natick, Sudbury, and Westborough. The All Other category was the second largest for Marlborough.

# Municipal Revenue

## FY1993 - FY2024 GMW COMMUNITIES TOTAL SCHOOL SPENDING

- This chart displays the total school spending over a 31-year period for the 13 communities that make up Greater MetroWest (GMW). The four components within the graph are as follows: Foundation Budget, Chapter 70 Aid, Required Net School Spending, and Actual Net School Spending.



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS, DESE and MERC

- The Foundation Budget is determined by the Massachusetts (MA) Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) under Chapter 70 MA law and education reform requirements. It is a measure of the amount needed to provide the students with an adequate education. Required Net School Spending is comprised of the sum of Chapter 70 Aid given to each municipality and the required local contribution component that comes from local taxpayers. It reached an estimated \$614 million in FY2024 in GMW and approximately matched Foundation Budget levels.

- Chapter 70 Aid is the educational assistance given to a community and in FY2024, it totaled \$220 million for GMW. Local contributions for GMW in FY2024 were \$394.1 million, and this number is the difference between the Foundation Budget and Chapter 70 Aid as determined by DESE.

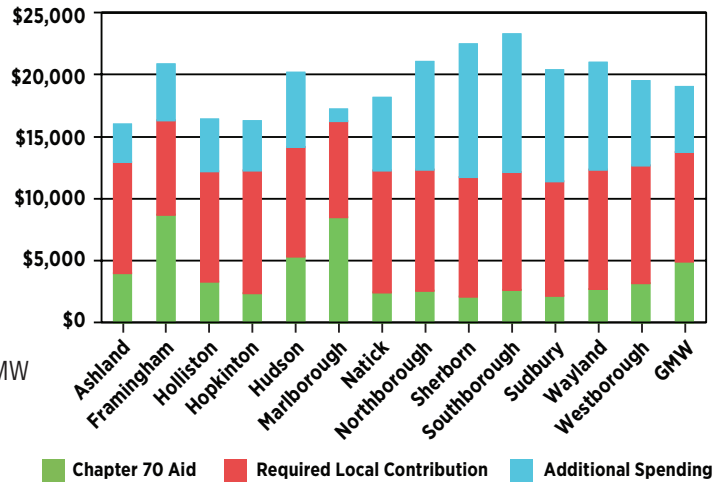
- The Actual Net School Spending in the GMW region for FY2024 totaled an estimated \$849.2 million. This category is made up of required local contributions, Chapter 70 Aid, and additional amounts that communities chose to spend on education. FY2023 budgeted figures are used for FY2024 for Hudson and Natick as both communities are under review.



# Municipal Revenue

## FY2024 GMW PER PUPIL EDUCATION EXPENDITURE By Community

- This graph represents the per pupil education budgeted expenditures for the communities that make up Greater MetroWest (GMW) for FY2024 as reported by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The DESE values are classified in the following three categories: Chapter 70 Aid, Required Local Contribution, and Additional Spending which consists of added amounts municipalities chose to spend over education reform requirements.

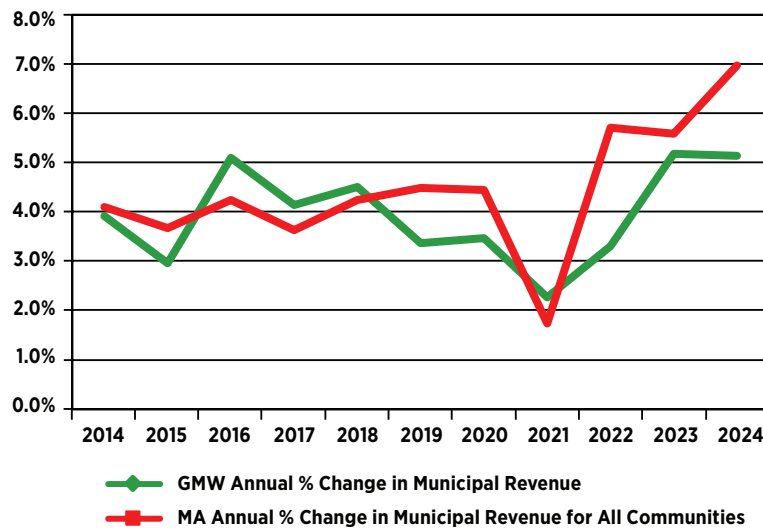


Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS, DESE and MERC

- Total per pupil budgeted education spending in GMW ranged from a high of \$23,283 in Southborough, followed by Sherborn (\$22,473), Northborough (\$21,039), and Wayland (\$20,983), to a low of \$15,987 in Ashland. Westborough reported per pupil education spending of \$19,489 and the GMW average was \$19,000. FY2023 budget figures are used for Hudson and Natick as both communities are under review.
- The Department of Revenue income and property values by municipality are used when calculating aid. Framingham (\$8,710) and Marlborough (\$8,540) received the most per pupil aid.
- The communities with the largest Additional Spending were Southborough (\$11,134), Sherborn (\$10,721), and Sudbury (\$8,973).

## FY 2014 - FY2024 GMW AND MA MUNICIPAL REVENUE AVERAGE CHANGE

- This graph depicts the annual municipal revenue percent change from FY2014 - FY2024 for GMW and for all the cities and towns in Massachusetts, combined.
- Over the decade, the annual percentage change for GMW ranged between 2.3% and 5.2%. The low of 2.3% occurred in FY2021 over FY2020, and the high of 5.2% occurred in FY2023 over FY2022.
- Over the same period, the annual percentage change for Massachusetts was somewhat similar, ranging between the low of 1.7% reached in FY2021 over FY2020, and the high of 7.0% registered in FY2024 over FY2023.

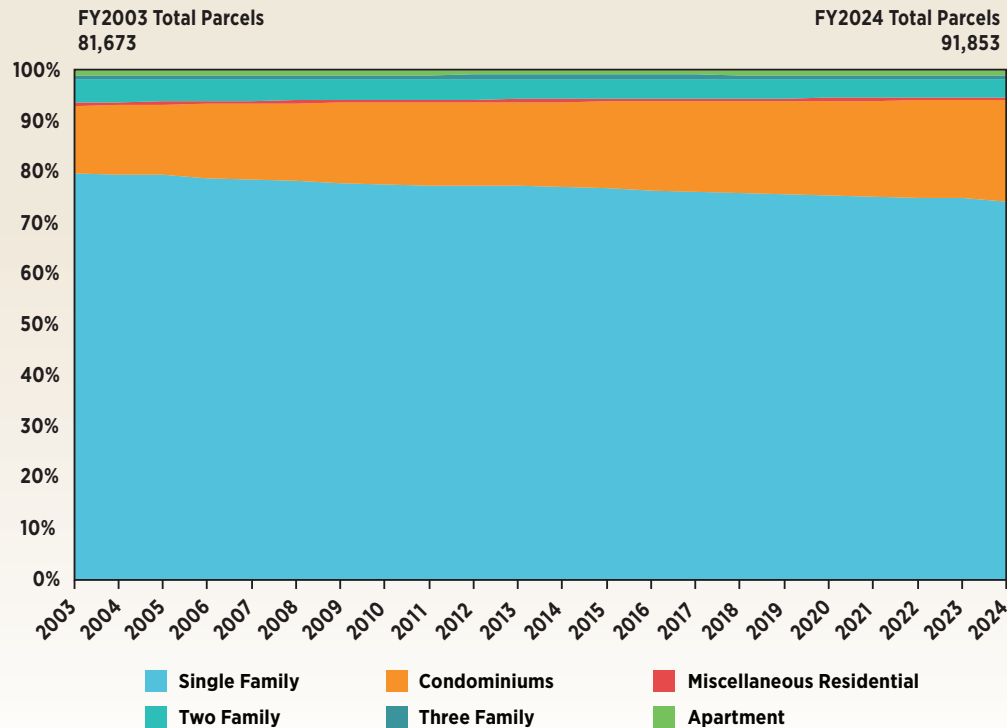


Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- Notably, the low point for both regions occurred during the pandemic and both regions rebounded strongly over the next few years. For FY2024 over FY2023, GMW and MA registered growth rates of 5.1% and 7.0%, respectively.

# Municipal Revenue

## FY2003-FY2024 GMW PARCEL COUNTS BY TYPE



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS, and MERC

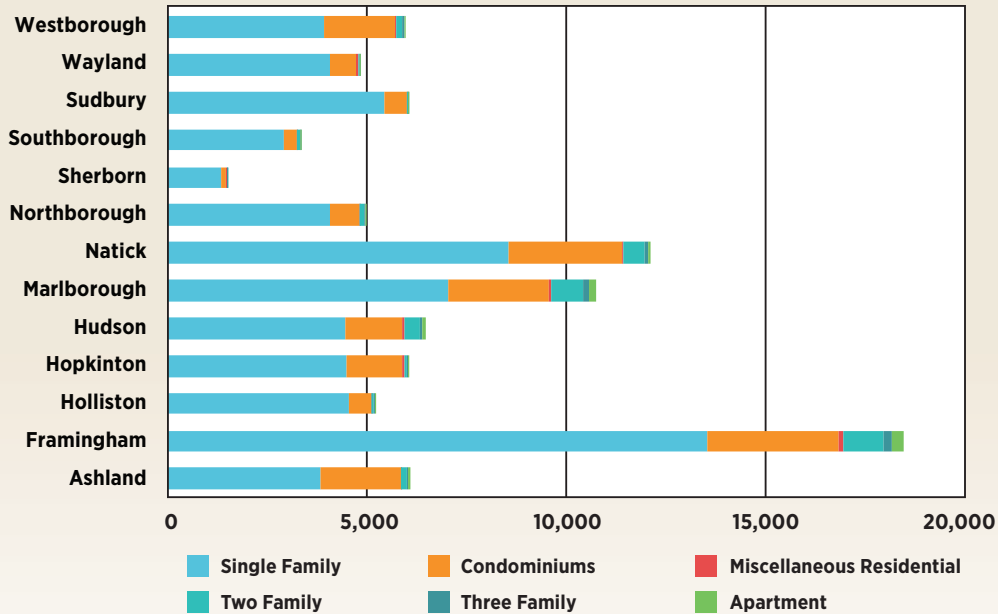
- This chart displays Single-Family, Condominiums, Miscellaneous Residential, Two-Family, Three-Family, and Apartment parcels over the latest 22-year period for the combined 13 communities in Greater MetroWest (GMW). Total parcels in GMW increased 12.5% from 81,673 in FY2003 to 91,853 in FY2024.
- Single-Family parcels increased only 4.6% over this 22-year period from 65,221 parcels in FY2003 to 68,239 in FY2024. Single-Family parcels constituted 79.9% of all parcels in FY2003 and 74.3% in FY2024.
- Condominiums increased 69.2% over this 22-year period, from 10,816 parcels in FY2003 to 18,296 parcels in FY2024. Condominium parcels constituted 13.2% of all parcels in FY2003 and 19.9% in FY2024.
- Apartment parcels increased 8.2% from 731 in FY2003 to 791 in FY2024, but the share of all parcels remained relatively constant at about 0.9% in both years. Miscellaneous Residential increased 8.6% from 475 parcels in FY2003 to 516 parcels in FY2024, but shares remained relatively constant at almost 0.6% for both years.
- Two-Family parcels decreased from 3,730 to 3,340 or -10.5%, and Three-Family parcels decreased from 700 to 671 or -4.1%, during the 22-year period. The Two-Family share of total parcels fell from 4.6% to 3.6% during this period, while the Three-Family share fell from 0.9% to 0.7%.



# Municipal Revenue

## FY2024 RESIDENTIAL PARCELS BY TYPE

Total: 91,853



Source: MA Department of Revenue, DLS and MERC

- This graph shows all residential parcels in the Greater MetroWest (GMW) communities for FY2024. It includes, Single-Family, Condominiums, Miscellaneous Residential, Two-Family, Three-Family, and Apartments.
- In FY2024, GMW Single-Family parcels ranged between 13,537 in Framingham and 1,331 in Sherborn and totaled 68,239 units. This represents about 74% of all 91,853 Residential parcels in GMW for FY2024. Total Condominium parcels ranged between 3,322 in Framingham to a low of 120 Condominium parcels in Sherborn. The total for all Condominium parcels in GMW was 18,296 for FY2024. The combined total for both Single-Family and Condominium parcels for all GMW communities was 86,535, or 94% of all Residential units in GMW in FY2024.
- Miscellaneous Residential parcels ranged between 11 in Ashland and 109 in Framingham for FY2024. The total for all Miscellaneous Residential parcels in GMW communities was 516.
- Framingham (1,001), Marlborough (799), and Natick (522) had the greatest number of Two-family parcels in 2024 in GMW. On the other hand, Sherborn (12) and Sudbury (16) had the least. The total for all Two-Family parcels in GMW communities was 3,340.
- When it comes to Three-Family parcels, Framingham (210) and Marlborough (161) led in FY2024 in GMW. Sherborn (2) and Sudbury (2) had the least. The total for all Three-Family parcels in GMW communities was 671.
- Most Apartment parcels in FY2024 in GMW were located in Framingham (293) and Marlborough (164). The communities with the least Apartment parcels were Sherborn (0), Southborough (6), Sudbury (8), and Wayland (8).



# K-12 Public School Enrollment

**M**etroWest Economic Research Center (MERC) at Framingham State University annually collects data on K-12 public school enrollment for several substate regions. Greater MetroWest public school enrollment is calculated for kindergarten through Grade 12 using the annual state student census conducted in October of each year. Included in the data are all public-school students in regular education, special education, ELL (English Language Learners), regional charter schools, and the regional vocational high schools. MERC contacts the region's charter schools, McAuliffe Regional Charter School and the Advanced Math and Science Academy, to obtain their enrollment figures. For Greater MetroWest, enrollment increased 3.6% from Kindergarten to

the first grade on average. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) implemented a student enrollment database, the Student Information Management System (SIMS) in 2000. The MERC K-12 data presented in this report are obtained from both the October SIMS student census and data provided directly to MERC by the local school districts. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), students with disabilities include those with any of the following: autism, communication impairment, developmental delay, emotional impairment, health impairment, intellectual impairment, neurological impairment, physical impairment, and sensory impairment.



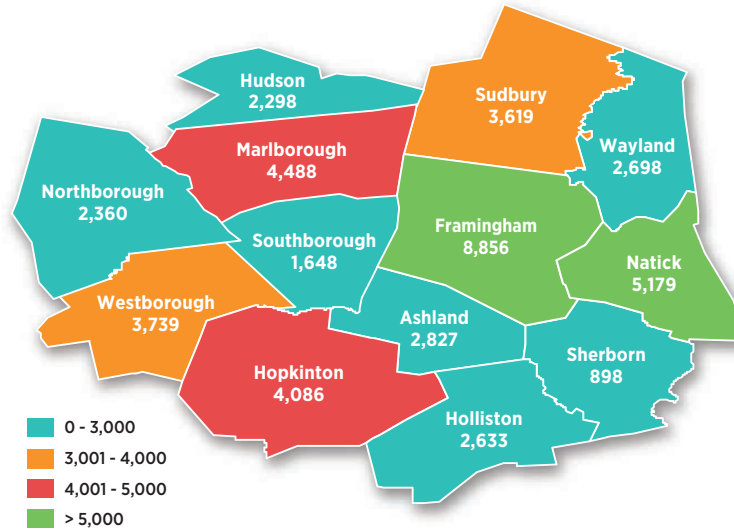


In the past academic year, K-12 public school enrollment in Greater MetroWest (GMW) totaled 45,329 students. The top three communities – Framingham, Natick, and Marlborough – had 40.9% of the total public school enrollment in GMW.



# K-12 Public School Enrollment

## GMW 2023 PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT By Community



Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and MERC

- K-12 public school enrollment in Greater MetroWest (GMW) totaled 45,329 students in 2023. This figure does not include students enrolled in charter or vocational schools.
- The community reporting the highest enrollment was Framingham with a student enrollment of 8,856 students, followed by Natick and Marlborough which had enrollments of 5,179 and 4,488 students respectively.
- Ashland, Hudson, Northborough, Holliston, and Wayland had enrollments between 2,000 and 3,000 students. Sherborn reported the smallest enrollment at 898 students.
- The top three communities – Framingham, Natick, and Marlborough – had 40.9% of the total public school enrollment in GMW.



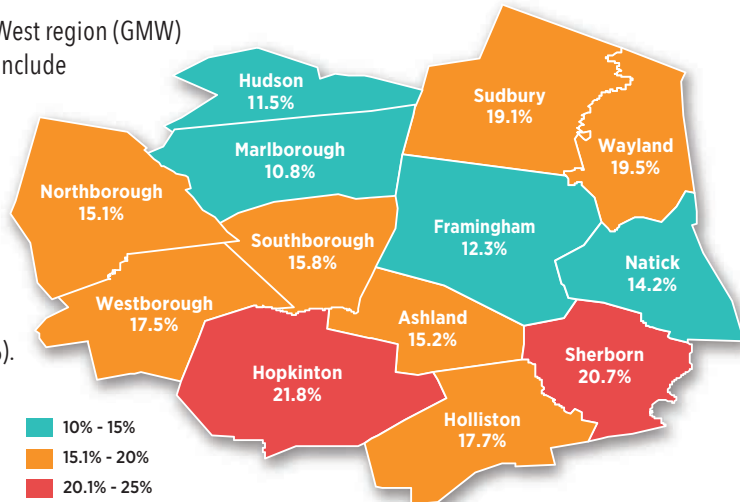


# K-12 Public School Enrollment

## GMW 2023 K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT As Percentage of Population

- K-12 public school enrollment in the Greater MetroWest region (GMW) for 2023 was 45,329 students. This figure does not include students enrolled in vocational or charter schools.

- This map measures the proportion of each community's population enrolled in public school. Public school enrollment in 2023 is given as a percentage of the 2022 estimated population, the most recent census data available. The highest enrollment as percentage of population occurred in Hopkinton (21.8%), followed by Sherborn (20.7%). In these communities, slightly more than 1 in 5 residents were enrolled in public schools.

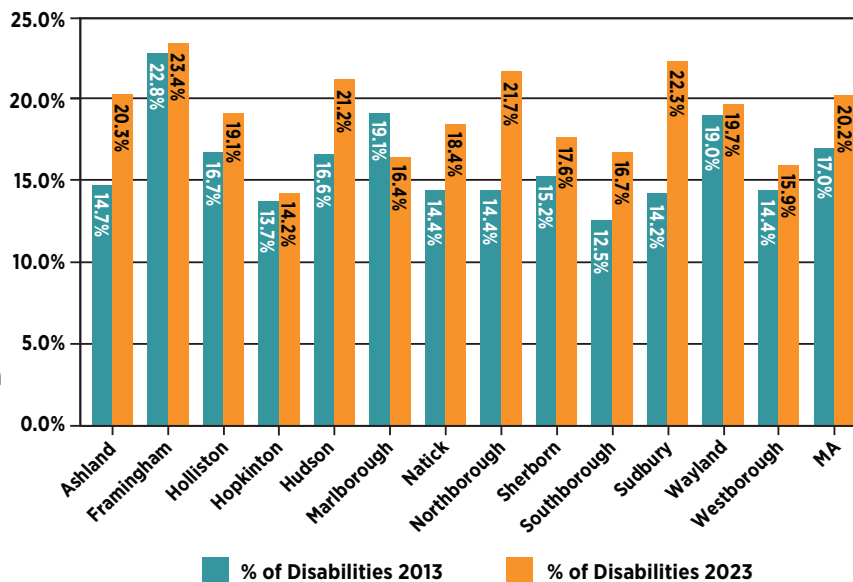


Source: U.S. Census and MERC

- A little less than 20% of the population in the communities of Sudbury and Wayland attended K-12 public schools in 2023. Comparatively, the communities of Marlborough, Hudson, Framingham, and Natick, had public school enrollments of less than 15% of the total population. Marlborough had public school enrollment just under 11% of the population.
- Framingham and Marlborough were two of the communities with the largest populations and public school enrollments. They also reported some of the smallest percentages of the population enrolled in public schools.

## GMW 2013 AND 2023 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- This graph shows the percentage of students with disabilities by community. The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of students with disabilities by the number of students enrolled in public schools in the community.



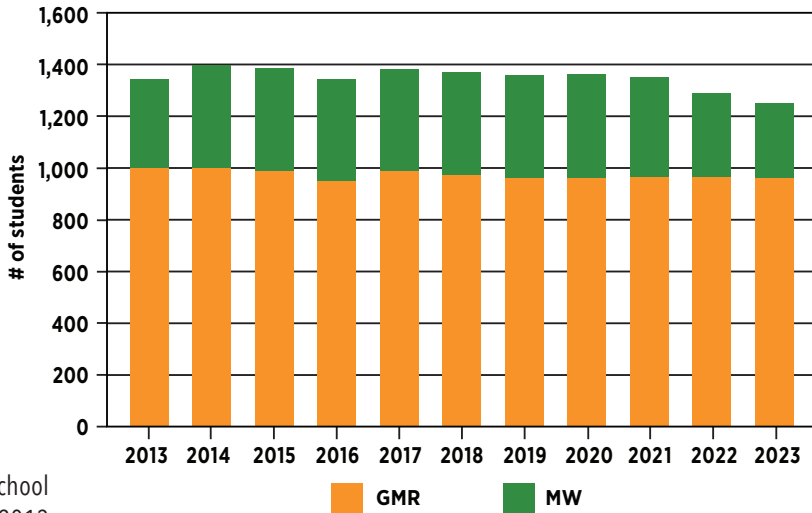
Source: MA EOLWD and MERC

- Framingham remained with the highest percentage of students with disabilities in their community for both 2013 and 2023. Southborough reported the lowest percentage in 2013 with 12.5% and Hopkinton reported the lowest percentage in 2023 with 14.2%.
- From 2013 to 2023, Northborough, Ashland, and Sudbury had the largest increase in the proportion of students with disabilities.
- From 2013 to 2023, Framingham, Wayland, and Hopkinton had the smallest increase in the proportion of students with disabilities, all below one percentage point.

# K-12 Public School Enrollment

## GMW 2013 TO 2023 CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

- Charter School enrollment for Greater MetroWest (GMW) was 1,344 students in 2013. This number was 1,254 in 2023, representing a 6.7% decrease.
- During the 11-year period from 2013 to 2023, the charter school enrollment in the Greater MetroWest region stayed relatively stable with a slight down curve and an average enrollment number of 1,352. The highest enrollment number was 1,402 in 2014 and the lowest enrollment number was 1,254 in 2023.



- The MetroWest (MW) region's charter school enrollment went from 347 students in 2013 to 288 students in 2023, showing a decrease of 17%.

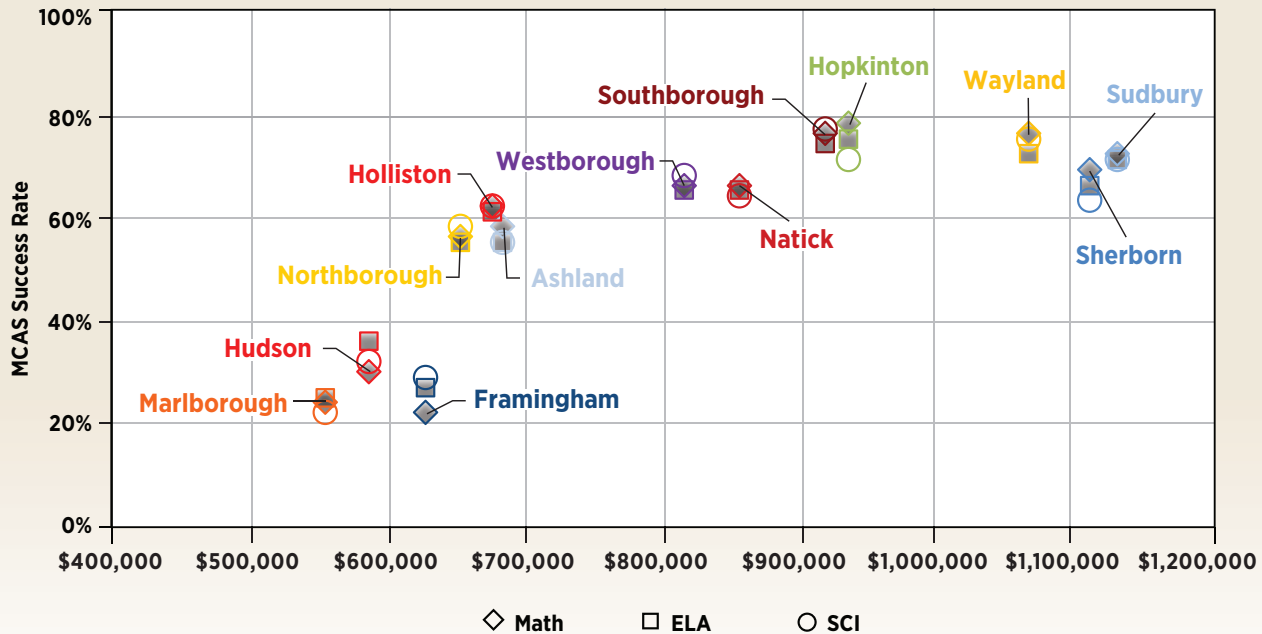
Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and MERC

- Charter school enrollment in the Greater Marlborough Region (GMR) was 997 students in 2013 and 966 in 2023, a decrease of 3.1%. However, the charter school enrollment peaked in 2014 with 999 students enrolled. Since 2014, enrollment has declined.



# K-12 Public School Enrollment

## 2023 SINGLE-FAMILY HOME MEDIAN SALE PRICE AND MCAS SUCCESS RATE



Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, The Warren Group, and MERC

- This scatter chart shows the median single-family home sale price and Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) success rates of year 2023. In this graph, we use the MCAS success rate, more specifically, the percentage number of students who “meet or exceed” expectations in the Mathematics (Math), English Language Arts (ELA), and Science (SCI) assessment tests, as a proxy for students’ performance.
- We find a concave relationship between single-family home median sale price and MCAS success rate: at lower price levels, the more expensive single-family home median sale price, the better students’ performance in all three subjects. But, when the median housing price exceeds one million dollars, there appears to be a slight decrease of MCAS success rates.
- There are reasons to infer that housing prices could affect a community’s municipal revenue, which might further affect the resources available for that community’s public schools, and ultimately influence students’ test performance. However, once the median single-family home sale price exceeds a certain level, the role it plays in MCAS performance seems to be weakened.

Without further statistical analysis and more solid evidence, we cannot draw a firm conclusion with the above findings. Instead, they serve as thought-provoking preliminary results.

# Appendix

## **NORTH AMERICAN INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (NAICS)**

In 2001, the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) permanently replaced the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system in use for seventy years. NAICS is an industrial classification system that groups establishments into industries based on the activities in which they are primarily engaged. It is a comprehensive system covering the entire field of economic activities, both producing and non-producing. NAICS has twenty separate industrial sectors that are described in this appendix. These twenty sectors are grouped into eleven supersectors. NAICS data used in this publication are presented by supersectors and by sectors.

### **NAICS SUPERSECTORS**

#### **GOODS-PRODUCING DOMAIN (GPD)**

##### **Natural Resources and Mining Supersector (NRM)**

11 Agriculture, Forest, Fishing and Hunting  
21 Mining

##### **Construction Supersector**

23 Construction

##### **Manufacturing Supersector**

31-33 Manufacturing

#### **SERVICE PRODUCING DOMAIN (SPD)**

##### **Trade, Transportation and Utilities Supersector (TTU)**

22 Utilities  
42 Wholesale Trade  
44-45 Retail Trade  
48-49 Transportation and Warehousing

##### **Information Supersector**

51 Information

##### **Financial Activities Supersector**

52 Finance and Insurance  
53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing

##### **Professional and Business Services Supersector\* (PBS)**

54 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services  
55 Management of Companies and Enterprises  
56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

##### **Education and Health Services Supersector**

61 Educational Services  
62 Health Care and Social Assistance

##### **Leisure and Hospitality Supersector**

71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation  
72 Accommodation and Food Services

##### **Other Services Supersector**

81 Other Services (except Public Administration)

**Public Supersector** as used in this publication, includes the Public Administration NAICS sector defined below, plus all other jobs in federal, state and local government.

### **NAICS SECTORS**

##### **Natural Resources and Mining Supersector**

###### **11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting**

comprises establishments primarily engaged in crop growing, animal raising, and timber and fish harvesting.

**21 Mining** comprises establishments that extract naturally occurring mineral solids, liquid minerals, and gases.

##### **Construction Supersector**

**23 Construction** comprises establishments primarily engaged in the construction of buildings or engineering projects.

##### **Manufacturing Supersector**

**31-33 Manufacturing** comprises establishments engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products.

##### **Trade, Transportation and Utilities Supersector**

**22 Utilities** comprises establishments engaged in the provision of the following utility services: electric power, natural gas, steam supply, water supply and sewage removal, through a permanent infrastructure of lines, mains, and pipes.

**42 Wholesale Trade** comprises establishments engaged in wholesaling merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise, including the outputs of agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and certain information industries, such as publishing. The wholesaling process is an intermediate step in the distribution of merchandise.



# Appendix

**44-45 Retail Trade** comprises establishments engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise. The retailing process is the final step in the distribution of merchandise; retailers are, therefore, organized to sell merchandise in small quantities to the general public. This sector comprises two main types of retailers: store and non-store retailers.

**48-49 Transportation and Warehousing** comprises industries providing transportation of passengers and cargo, warehousing and storage for goods, scenic and sightseeing transportation, and support activities related to modes of transportation (air, rail, water, road, and pipeline).

## Information Supersector

**51 Information** comprises establishments engaged in producing and distributing information and cultural products, providing the means to transmit these products, and processing data.

## Financial Activities Supersector

**52 Finance and Insurance** comprises establishments primarily engaged in financial transactions (transactions involving the creation, liquidation, or change in ownership financial assets) and/or in facilitating financial transactions.

**53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing** comprises establishments primarily engaged in renting, leasing, or otherwise allowing the use of tangible or intangible assets.

## Professional and Business Services Supersector\*

**54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services** comprises the performing of professional, scientific, and technical activities for others. These activities require a high degree of expertise and training. Some activities performed include: legal advice and representation, accounting, engineering services, computer services, research services, advertising services, and veterinary services.

**55 Management of Companies and Enterprises** comprises establishments that either hold the securities of companies for the purpose of owning a controlling interest or influencing management decisions, or establishments that administer, oversee, and manage establishments of the company and that normally undertake the organizational planning and decision making role of the company.

**56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services** include establishments performing routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations. Activities performed

include: office administration, hiring and placing of personnel, document preparation and similar clerical services, solicitation, collection, security and surveillance services, cleaning, and waste disposal services.

## Education and Health Services Supersector

**61 Educational Services** comprises establishments that provide instruction and training to a wide variety of subjects. This instruction and training provided by specialized establishments, such as schools, colleges, universities, and training centers.

**NOTE:** Educational Services includes only private educational services. Public K-12 and public higher education are included in the Public Supersector.

**62 Health Care and Social Assistance** comprises establishments that provide health care and social assistance for individuals.

## Leisure and Hospitality Supersector

**71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation** comprises a wide range of establishments that operate facilities or provide services to meet varied cultural, entertainment, and recreational interests of their patrons.

**72 Accommodation and Food Services** comprises establishments providing customers with lodging and/or preparing meals, snacks, and beverages for immediate consumption.

## Other Services Supersector

**81 Other Services** (except Public Administration) comprises establishments engaged in providing services not specifically provided for elsewhere in the classification system. Establishments in this sector are primarily engaged in activities, such as equipment repairing, administering religious activities, grantmaking, advocacy, and providing laundry services, personal care services, death care services, pet care services, photofinishing services, temporary parking services, and dating services.

**Public Supersector** as used in this publication, includes the Public Administration NAICS sector defined below, plus all other jobs in federal, state and local government.

**Public Administration** The Public Administration sector consists of establishments of federal, state, and local government agencies that administer, oversee, and manage public programs and have executive, legislative, or judicial authority over other institutions within a given area.

# Sources & Acknowledgements

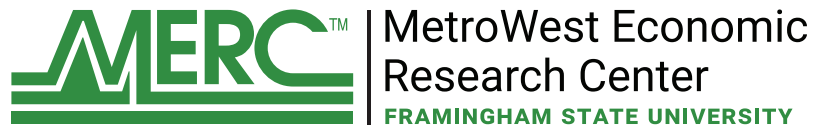
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- *Banker & Tradesman*; The Warren Group
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- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
- Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services (DLS)
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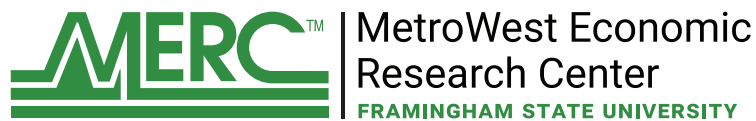
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