

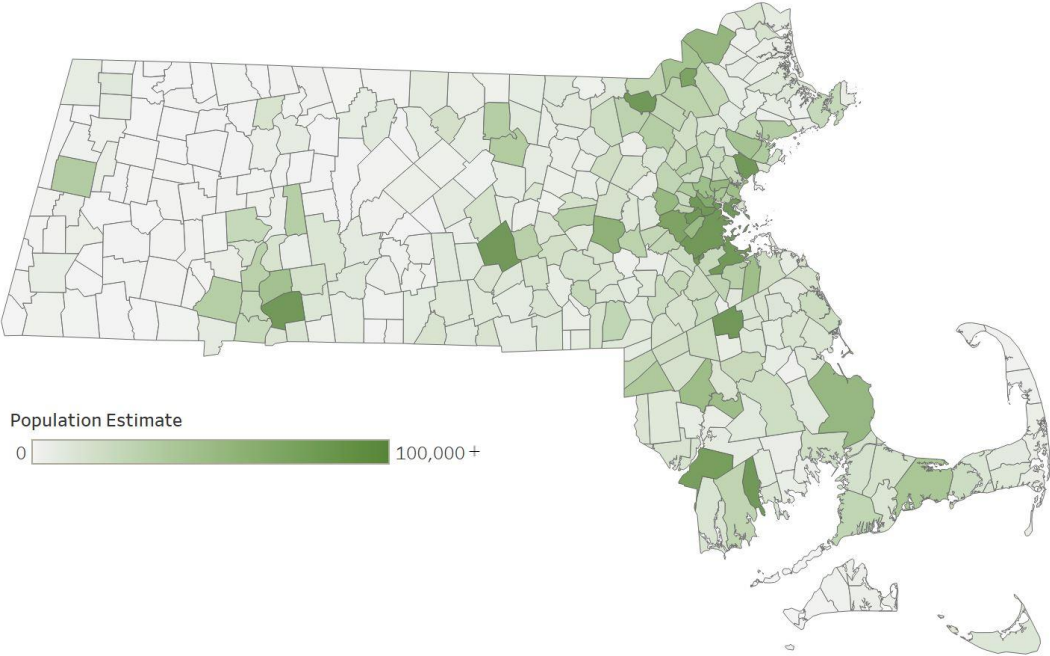
Summary of U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 Population Estimates for Massachusetts Cities and Towns

Prepared by:

UMass Donahue Institute
Economic and Public Policy Research
Population Estimates Program

For Release May 16, 2024

Figure 1. Massachusetts Sub-County Population Estimates, July 1, 2023



UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25). U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. May 16, 2024

Background

On May 16, 2024, the U.S. Census Bureau released updated population estimates for Massachusetts cities and towns (also called “minor civil divisions” or “MCDs”) for July 1, 2023. This new vintage of estimates is derived from the allocation of the Census Bureau’s 2023 county-level population estimates, released on March 14, 2024, to individual municipalities. While county-level estimates are produced by accounting for “components of change,” including births, deaths, and migration, sub-county estimates are produced by distributing the county-level household population to each city and town based on a housing unit formula and then adding the town’s “group quarters” population. The Bureau’s housing unit formula considers each town’s share of the county housing unit totals along with its specific persons-per-occupied-unit rate from the most recent census count. The Vintage 2023 estimates are developed from a 2020 “base” population that incorporates a combination of the 2020 Census count results, Vintage 2020 estimates, and 2020 Demographic Analysis estimates from the

Population Division of the U.S. Census Bureau.¹ This updated methodology was utilized by the U.S. Census Bureau to account for various challenges of the 2020 Census. These challenges include the limitations of the new disclosure avoidance system applied to 2020 Census counts, the scheduling delays of census operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ongoing evaluation of 2020 Census data as a suitable base population for the annual estimates.

For more information on state and county estimates for Massachusetts, please see our detailed reports at: <https://donahue.umass.edu/business-groups/economic-public-policy-research/massachusetts-population-estimates-program/population-estimates-by-massachusetts-geography>

County-Level Migration Trends

Many of the town-level trends observed in the V2023 population estimates relate directly to changes in county-level migration and immigration patterns in Massachusetts during and in the years just following the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Census 2020 count showed unanticipated, accelerated population growth in the seasonal and rural areas of the state, with Nantucket, Dukes, and Barnstable showing the greatest percentage gains in the state between 2019 and 2020. Domestic migration into the seasonal counties of Barnstable, Dukes, Nantucket, and Berkshire – and even the adjacent Plymouth and Franklin Counties - remained very strong in the 2020-2021 estimates year, according to Census Bureau estimates. At the same time, the more urban and most population-dense Massachusetts counties -- especially Suffolk, Middlesex, and, to a lesser extent, Norfolk -- experienced greater levels of net domestic out-migration to other U.S. counties in the 2020-2021 year. This urban out-migration included both movement to other Massachusetts counties, which comprised the majority of net movement, and increasing migration to other New England states such as New Hampshire, Maine, and Rhode Island.² While positive immigration historically offsets domestic out-migration in the more urban counties of Massachusetts, in 2020 and 2021, immigration was also greatly reduced, compounding population loss in those counties.

The 2022 estimates saw the pandemic-period trends start to turn around, and the [V2023 Census county estimates](#) indicate that the migration and immigration trends observed in 2020 and 2021 have continued to revert back to pre-pandemic patterns.. International immigration has rebounded strongly, alleviating the recent population loss in Suffolk County and the city of Boston. While all Massachusetts regions benefit from increased international immigration to the state, Suffolk, Middlesex, Dukes, Essex and Norfolk counties benefit the most, having the highest rates of international migrants as a percentage of their populations in 2023. In terms of domestic migration, the 2023 estimates show a 31% decrease in year-to-year domestic out-migration for the state. Finally, as the state population continues to age and with overall decreasing fertility rates, six of Massachusetts counties experienced more deaths than births in the 2022-2023 estimates year, which also contributed to population loss in five of those counties.

The Vintage 2023 population estimates for cities and towns reflect the broader trends observed in the county-level estimates released in March 2024. Each town in Barnstable County, aside from the town of Barnstable itself, saw a loss in population during the year – compared to growth in all towns during 2020 and 2021. Towns in the other seasonal counties of Nantucket, Dukes, and Berkshire started to lose some of the population they had gained at the height of the pandemic through a reversal of domestic migration, with Dukes losing population in all towns, and Berkshire in 29 of its 32 towns (91%). Towns in the denser, more urban counties

¹ “Methodology for the United States Population Estimates: Vintage 2023.” Census.gov, US Census Bureau, Dec. 2023. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical-documentation/methodology.html>

² According to UMDI’s analysis of IRS tax return data for years 2019, 2020, and 2021.



such as Middlesex and Suffolk still show population loss in the 2022-2023 year, but to a lesser extent than in the previous year. And Middlesex, Plymouth, Worcester, Norfolk, Bristol, and Essex counties – most of which are highly influenced by rebounding immigration – are well represented among the state’s top 25 fastest growers this year.

Annual Population Change 2022-2023

Large Places: Cities and Towns with Populations >50,000

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 Sub-County Population Estimates, 21 out of Massachusetts’ 26 cities or towns with populations of 50,000 or more in 2020 increased in population from July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2023. Worcester led the group in terms of total population gained with an estimated 1,945 person increase over the year. Weymouth was the fastest-growing large place in terms of percentage growth, with a 2.9% population increase. In terms of annual percentage change among places with populations over 50,000 in Massachusetts, Boston ranked 19th this year with a 0.1% population increase or a gain in population of 590 people. Boston reversed its decrease in population that was seen from the Census 2020 estimates base through the July 1, 2022 estimate due to the record international migration levels seen in Massachusetts in the V2023 estimates. However, net domestic out-migration, while slowing for Suffolk and Middlesex counties, has still not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, leading to a small population decrease in Suffolk County and only a small population increase in Boston. Domestic outmigration has slowed over last year in the rest of the state, contributing to population increase in most of the largest places in Massachusetts. Table 1 shows the estimated numerical change and percent change from July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2023 for cities and towns in Massachusetts with populations over 50,000 in 2020.

Table 1: Estimated Population and Population Change July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2023 for Massachusetts Cities and Towns > 50,000				
Geography	July 1 Population Estimate		Change 2022 to 2023	
	2022	2023	Number	Percent
Worcester	205,676	207,621	1,945	0.9%
Weymouth	57,459	59,114	1,655	2.9%
Plymouth	64,273	65,405	1,132	1.8%
Cambridge	117,420	118,214	794	0.7%
Boston	653,243	653,833	590	0.1%
Newton	87,852	88,415	563	0.6%
Taunton	59,883	60,412	529	0.9%
Brookline	62,551	62,962	411	0.7%
Lynn	100,879	101,241	362	0.4%
Haverhill	67,149	67,415	266	0.4%
Somerville	80,178	80,407	229	0.3%
Lawrence	87,946	88,172	226	0.3%
Methuen	53,235	53,455	220	0.4%
Fall River	93,636	93,840	204	0.2%
Peabody	53,893	54,056	163	0.3%
Framingham	71,756	71,875	119	0.2%
Lowell	114,191	114,296	105	0.1%
Waltham	64,373	64,477	104	0.2%
Malden	65,069	65,133	64	0.1%
New Bedford	100,633	100,695	62	0.1%
Medford	58,691	58,744	53	0.1%
Brockton	104,891	104,890	-1	0.0%
Chicopee	54,939	54,838	-101	-0.2%



Quincy	101,814	101,597	-217	-0.2%
Springfield	154,007	153,672	-335	-0.2%
Revere	58,476	57,954	-522	-0.9%
UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Release Date: May 2024				

All Cities and Towns: *Single-Year Change*

Among the 351 individual cities and towns in Massachusetts, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 202 municipalities, or 58%, increased in population between July 1, 2022 and July 1, 2023. This percentage is higher than the Vintage 2020 estimates released by the Bureau in May of 2020 that showed 139 municipalities, or 40% of all, as increasing. Again, here we see the effects of an increasing international migration component in the county-level estimates to which the municipal estimates are controlled. The largest population gains from 2022 to 2023 were estimated in Worcester (1,945), Weymouth (1,655), Plymouth (1,132), and Cambridge (794), representing a balanced increase in population to both larger cities as well as smaller, mid-size, and larger towns. The table below describes the top 25 cities and towns in Massachusetts by numeric population change from 2022 to 2023.

Table 2: Top 25 Massachusetts Cities and Towns by Population Change 2022 to 2023					
City or Town	County	July 1 Estimate		Change 2022-2023	Percent change 2022-2023
		2022	2023		
Worcester	Worcester	205,676	207,621	1,945	0.9%
Weymouth	Norfolk	57,459	59,114	1,655	2.9%
Plymouth	Plymouth	64,273	65,405	1,132	1.8%
Cambridge	Middlesex	117,420	118,214	794	0.7%
Everett	Middlesex	49,600	50,318	718	1.4%
Wakefield	Middlesex	27,211	27,810	599	2.2%
Boston	Suffolk	653,243	653,833	590	0.1%
Newton	Middlesex	87,852	88,415	563	0.6%
Taunton	Bristol	59,883	60,412	529	0.9%
Burlington	Middlesex	26,045	26,527	482	1.9%
Westborough	Worcester	21,557	22,012	455	2.1%
North Reading	Middlesex	15,631	16,054	423	2.7%
Brookline	Norfolk	62,551	62,962	411	0.7%
Lancaster	Worcester	8,409	8,802	393	4.7%
Lynn	Essex	100,879	101,241	362	0.4%
Arlington	Middlesex	45,764	46,111	347	0.8%
Sudbury	Middlesex	19,057	19,394	337	1.8%
North Andover	Essex	31,288	31,615	327	1.0%
Rehoboth	Bristol	13,022	13,313	291	2.2%
Shrewsbury	Worcester	38,603	38,889	286	0.7%
Haverhill	Essex	67,149	67,415	266	0.4%
Tewksbury	Middlesex	30,998	31,243	245	0.8%
Salem	Essex	44,504	44,744	240	0.5%
Raynham	Bristol	15,418	15,649	231	1.5%
Somerville	Middlesex	80,178	80,407	229	0.3%
UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Release Date: May 2024					



Percentage-wise, the fastest growers of the year were mostly small- to mid-sized towns and cities, including many in Worcester, Middlesex, Norfolk, and Essex Counties. The table below shows the top 25 fastest growing municipalities in the state in terms of percentage change from 2022 to 2023.

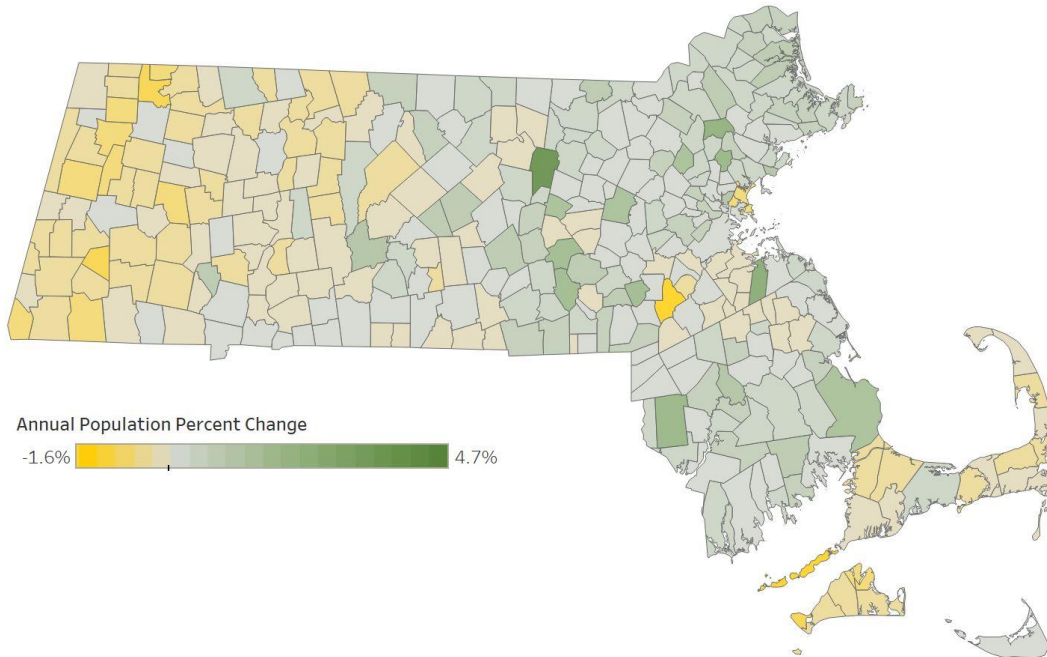
Table 3: Top 25 Massachusetts Cities and Towns by Percent Population Change 2022 to 2023					
City or Town	County	July 1 Estimate		Change	Percent change 2022-2023
		2022	2023		
Lancaster	Worcester	8,409	8,802	393	4.7%
Weymouth	Norfolk	57,459	59,114	1655	2.9%
North Reading	Middlesex	15,631	16,054	423	2.7%
Rehoboth	Bristol	13,022	13,313	291	2.2%
Wakefield	Middlesex	27,211	27,810	599	2.2%
Westborough	Worcester	21,557	22,012	455	2.1%
Millis	Norfolk	8,838	9,018	180	2.0%
Upton	Worcester	8,148	8,311	163	2.0%
Burlington	Middlesex	26,045	26,527	482	1.9%
Sudbury	Middlesex	19,057	19,394	337	1.8%
Plymouth	Plymouth	64,273	65,405	1132	1.8%
Berlin	Worcester	3,370	3,425	55	1.6%
Raynham	Bristol	15,418	15,649	231	1.5%
Everett	Middlesex	49,600	50,318	718	1.4%
Ware	Hampshire	9,928	10,067	139	1.4%
Swampscott	Essex	15,279	15,487	208	1.4%
Rowley	Essex	6,280	6,358	78	1.2%
Medway	Norfolk	13,399	13,560	161	1.2%
Oakham	Worcester	1,864	1,886	22	1.2%
Rutland	Worcester	9,320	9,422	102	1.1%
North Andover	Essex	31,288	31,615	327	1.0%
Newbury	Essex	6,697	6,766	69	1.0%
Hopkinton	Middlesex	19,347	19,540	193	1.0%
Rochester	Plymouth	5,814	5,871	57	1.0%
Montgomery	Hampden	817	825	8	1.0%

UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25)
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Release Date: May 2024

The map below displays the cities and towns in Massachusetts by annual percent population change between 2022 and 2023. The town of Lancaster stands out as the municipality with the largest percent change with an estimated 4.7% increase in population. In contrast, two of the four municipalities which comprise Suffolk County – Revere and Winthrop, as well as several towns in Dukes County – Gosnold, Aquinnah, Tisbury and Oak Bluffs– and several smaller towns in Berkshire County demonstrated the largest percent decreases in the state ranging from -0.7% to -1.5%. In addition, Walpole, in Norfolk County, stands out, having lost 1.3% of its population from July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2023. The municipalities showing the largest *numeric* population decrease during the year were Revere (-522), Walpole (-336), Springfield (-335), and Pittsfield (-305).



Figure 2. Estimated Annual Percent Change in Population by Massachusetts Municipality, July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2023



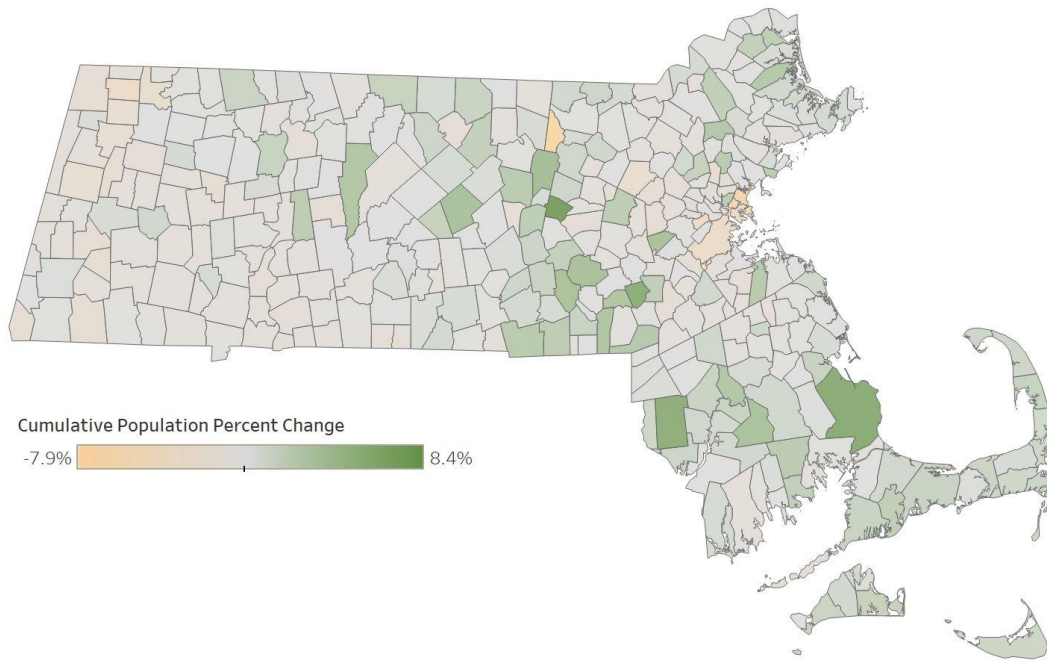
UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25). U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. May 16, 2024

Cumulative Change Since 2020

Since the 2020 Census, the largest cumulative population gains at the county level occurred in Worcester, Plymouth, and Barnstable Counties and the largest cumulative percentage gains were seen in Nantucket, Barnstable, and Dukes Counties. At the city and town-level, however, the fastest growers since the 2020 Census are found mostly in Middlesex and Norfolk Counties. The municipalities with the largest cumulative population gains since the 2020 Census include Plymouth (4,189), Weymouth (1,672), Everett (1,243), Wellesley (1,181), and Worcester (1,102). By percent change, the largest gains from 2020 to 2023 were estimated in Berlin (8.4%), Plymouth (6.8%), Millis (6.6%), Rehoboth (6.5%), and Lancaster (4.3%).

The map below shows the estimated cumulative percent change in population from Census 2020 to July 1, 2023. Shirley, in Middlesex County, stands out as the town with the highest percentage of population lost since Census 2020 at -7.9%. However, after Shirley, the next four cities and towns with the highest levels of population outflow since Census 2020 are the four municipalities in Suffolk County, which are Revere at -6.8%, Chelsea at -6.0%, Winthrop at -5.2%, and Boston at -3.7%.

Figure 3. Estimated Cumulative Percent Change in Population, April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 by Massachusetts Municipality



UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25). U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. May 16, 2024

Table 4, below, lists the 25 fastest growing municipalities in Massachusetts since April 1, 2020 by population growth, followed by a table of the 25 fastest growing municipalities by percentage growth (Table 5).

Table 4: Massachusetts 25 Fastest Growing Cities and Towns by Cumulative Population Change April 1, 2020 Base to July 1, 2023					
City or Town	County	April 1, 2020 Base	July 1, 2023	Cumulative Population Change	Rank Cumulative Change
Plymouth	Plymouth	61,216	65,405	4,189	1
Weymouth	Norfolk	57,442	59,114	1,672	2
Everett	Middlesex	49,075	50,318	1,243	3
Wellesley	Norfolk	29,552	30,733	1,181	4
Worcester	Worcester	206,519	207,621	1,102	5
Taunton	Bristol	59,392	60,412	1,020	6
Amherst	Hampshire	39,263	40,277	1,014	7
Rehoboth	Bristol	12,506	13,313	807	8
Barnstable	Barnstable	48,914	49,709	795	9
Hopkinton	Middlesex	18,763	19,540	777	10
Woburn	Middlesex	40,884	41,647	763	11
Wakefield	Middlesex	27,082	27,810	728	12
North Andover	Essex	30,915	31,615	700	13
Bellingham	Norfolk	16,948	17,556	608	14
Shrewsbury	Worcester	38,320	38,889	569	15
Millis	Norfolk	8,459	9,018	559	16
Falmouth	Barnstable	32,526	33,069	543	17

Raynham	Bristol	15,140	15,649	509	18
North Reading	Middlesex	15,559	16,054	495	19
Sudbury	Middlesex	18,928	19,394	466	20
Medway	Norfolk	13,111	13,560	449	21
Lakeville	Plymouth	11,522	11,968	446	22
Westborough	Worcester	21,570	22,012	442	23
Newburyport	Essex	18,291	18,731	440	24
Methuen	Essex	53,041	53,455	414	25

UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Release Date: May 2024

Table 5: Massachusetts 25 Fastest Growing Cities and Towns by Cumulative Percent Population Change						
April 1, 2020 Base to July 1, 2023						
City or Town	County	April 1, 2010 Base	July 1, 2023	Population Change	Percent Change	Rank Percent Change
Berlin	Worcester	3,159	3,425	266	8.4%	1
Plymouth	Plymouth	61,216	65,405	4,189	6.8%	2
Millis	Norfolk	8,459	9,018	559	6.6%	3
Rehoboth	Bristol	12,506	13,313	807	6.5%	4
Lancaster	Worcester	8,437	8,802	365	4.3%	5
Hopkinton	Middlesex	18,763	19,540	777	4.1%	6
Rutland	Worcester	9,056	9,422	366	4.0%	7
Wellesley	Norfolk	29,552	30,733	1,181	4.0%	8
Upton	Worcester	8,000	8,311	311	3.9%	9
Lakeville	Plymouth	11,522	11,968	446	3.9%	10
Bellingham	Norfolk	16,948	17,556	608	3.6%	11
Medway	Norfolk	13,111	13,560	449	3.4%	12
New Salem	Franklin	981	1,014	33	3.4%	13
Raynham	Bristol	15,140	15,649	509	3.4%	14
North Reading	Middlesex	15,559	16,054	495	3.2%	15
Rowley	Essex	6,163	6,358	195	3.2%	16
Wrentham	Norfolk	12,174	12,543	369	3.0%	17
Weymouth	Norfolk	57,442	59,114	1,672	2.9%	18
Douglas	Worcester	8,984	9,241	257	2.9%	19
Sterling	Worcester	7,985	8,204	219	2.7%	20
Wakefield	Middlesex	27,082	27,810	728	2.7%	21
Rochester	Plymouth	5,718	5,871	153	2.7%	22
Amherst	Hampshire	39,263	40,277	1,014	2.6%	23
Uxbridge	Worcester	14,165	14,526	361	2.5%	24
Everett	Middlesex	49,075	50,318	1,243	2.5%	25

UMass Donahue Institute. Source data: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Massachusetts: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (SUB-MCD-EST2023-POP-25) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Release Date: May 2024

For additional detailed tables and maps related to this summary report refer to the appendices of the UMDI May 16, 2024 release at:

<https://donahue.umass.edu/business-groups/economic-public-policy-research/massachusetts-population-estimates-program/population-estimates-by-massachusetts-geography/by-city-and-town>

For more information on the U.S. Census Bureau's Vintage 2023 Population Estimates Release and to see data for the rest of the U.S., visit the U.S. Census Bureau's estimates page at:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/data/data-sets.html>

Summary prepared by:

Denis McAuliffe, Research Analyst II

Christopher Diaz, Research Analyst II

Matthew Schlaikjer, Research Analyst II

Susan Strate, Population Estimates Program Senior Manager

