

THE MOVING MASSACHUSETTS UPSTREAM INVESTMENT PROGRAM

SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO ADDRESS SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

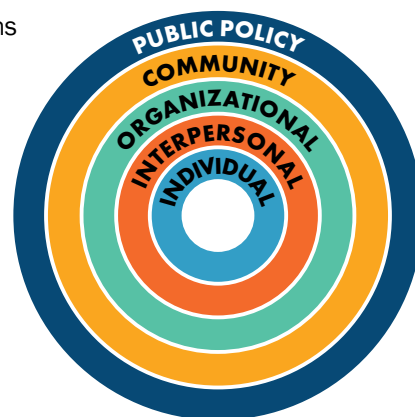
JULY 2026

“It’s about shifting power so that our youth and most vulnerable residents who are actually impacted by food insecurity, poverty, and other social determinants of health are the ones at the table with the organizations and government officials to design solutions in partnership. We have seen firsthand that this power shift is increasing access to food, changing narratives about poverty and hunger, and increasing resident participation in leadership.”

– HEAL WINCHENDON COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

In 2020, the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission (HPC) launched the Moving Massachusetts Upstream (MassUP) Investment Program. This three-year, \$2.5 million investment program supported four partnerships between hospitals and community-based organizations (CBOs) that worked together to address a social determinant of health (SDOH) affecting the health of their communities. The SDOH are the community-wide social, economic, and physical conditions that we experience where we are born, work, live, play, and age, which are shaped by a wider set of forces, including power, policies, institutions, resources, and systems beyond an individual’s control.¹ Funded by the HPC and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), MassUP was designed to contribute to a foundation of cross-sector collaborations that could make long-term improvements in health for residents of the Commonwealth. To enable lasting and systemic improvements, the partnerships implemented strategies corresponding to different levels of the socio-ecological model (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1:
SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL MODEL



KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- » MassUP partnerships made an impact in their communities by enabling greater coordination and alignment across community organizations, increasing civic participation of residents, and developing new community institutions to bring both short- and longer-term change.
- » Hospitals were effective partners in MassUP, playing a variety of roles and providing tangible support to the partnerships and their work.
- » When effectively engaged, residents added important and unique perspectives and input to the partnerships and contributed significantly to the work overall.

Additional information about the [MassUP Investment Program](#) and the full MassUP Investment Program [evaluation report](#) can be accessed on the HPC website.

MASSUP PARTNERSHIPS



ECONOMIC STABILITY AND MOBILITY

- Cross-City Coalition
- HEAL Winchendon



FOOD SYSTEMS AND SECURITY

- Hampshire County Food Policy Council
- Springfield EATS

1 Massachusetts Department of Public Health. ‘Social Determinants of Health’, Mass.gov, Accessed May 4, 2026. Available at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/social-determinants-of-health>

CROSS-CITY COALITION

MOVING MASSACHUSETTS UPSTREAM INVESTMENT PROGRAM (MASSUP)

AWARDEE: Massachusetts General Hospital

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS: The Neighborhood Developers (TND), CONNECT, La Colaborativa, City of Revere, City of Chelsea, MassHire Metro North, and Women Encouraging Empowerment

AREA OF FOCUS: Economic Stability and Mobility

LOCATION: Chelsea and Revere

AWARD AMOUNT: \$694,498

GOAL: Align workforce development efforts in Chelsea and Revere to increase full-time benefited employment for residents of both cities through work readiness and job training programs.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- » **Coalition Building and Partnerships.** Established a working group to research and create a written framework defining a “good job,” with specific attributes that promote economic stability and mobility.
- » **Workforce Development Resources, Local Hiring, and Small Business Growth.** Used the “good job” framework to identify areas of need for workforce education and training and engaged local employers in discussions about creating growth-oriented job opportunities.
- » **Economic Empowerment.** Helped convene and organize a community of practice for Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers in Revere to share resources and materials, highlight common challenges in establishing and running these businesses, and advocate at the city and state level.
- » **Advocacy and Policy Change.** Engaged with more than 40 ECE providers and teachers to develop a proposed new City of Revere ordinance aimed at facilitating the stability and growth of ECE businesses.

PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES:



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“I like that through my work for the Cross-City Coalition and MassUP, I can express what the needs are for myself and my community members.”

– CROSS-CITY COALITION COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL (HCFPC)

MOVING MASSACHUSETTS UPSTREAM INVESTMENT PROGRAM (MASSUP)

AWARDEE: Cooley Dickinson Health Care

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS: Collaborative for Educational Services, Hilltown Community Development Corporation, and Hilltown Community Health Center

AREA OF FOCUS: Food Systems and Security

LOCATION: Hampshire County

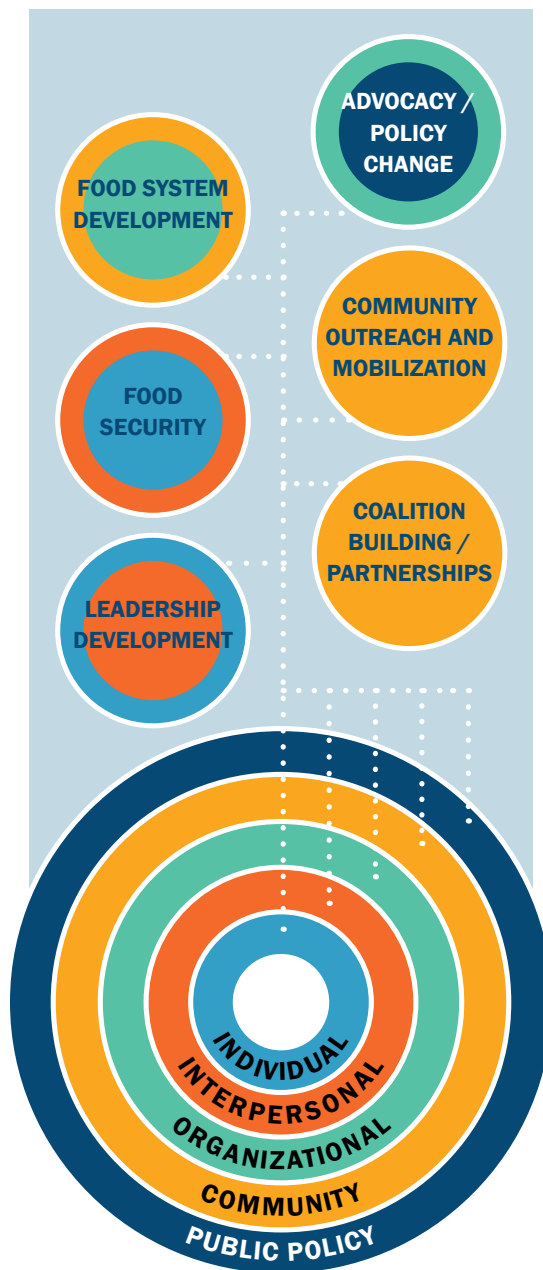
AWARD AMOUNT: \$555,555

GOAL: Establish a resident-led food policy council and amplify the power of community voices to make food policies more equitable, honor diverse cultures, and help local food economies to flourish.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- » **Coalition Building and Partnerships, Advocacy, and Policy Change.** Supported an initial group of residents to develop the vision for, and recruit additional residents and professionals to form, the Hampshire County Food Policy Council.
- » **Leadership Development, and Community Outreach and Mobilization.** Developed operating principles and an organizational structure that created a working group within the HCFPC called “Circles” with specific areas of focus such as Food Action, Food Policy, Capacity-Building, and Vision. By the end of MassUP, almost half of the Circle decision-making roles were held by residents, and two-thirds of those positions were occupied by people who were people of color, rural, and/or low-income residents, or who had experienced food insecurity.
- » **Food Security and Food System Development.** Funded resident-designed programs to improve the food system in Hampshire County by establishing a discretionary fund to support local projects. The HCFPC awarded \$130,000 over two grant cycles to local community-based organizations using upstream strategies to address food insecurity and shift power toward community members.

PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES:



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“[The MassUP program] gave our partnership the chance to engage in deep community engagement, intensive community leadership development, and the ability to meaningfully explore power sharing between those who traditionally hold power and those who are systematically excluded from power.”

– HCFPC STAFF

HOPE, EMPOWER, ACCESS, LIVE (HEAL) WINCHENDON

MOVING MASSACHUSETTS UPSTREAM INVESTMENT PROGRAM (MASSUP)

AWARDEE: Heywood Hospital

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS: CHealth Equity Partnership (formerly CHNA9), Growing Places, The Winchendon School, Three Pyramids, Town of Winchendon, Winchendon Public Schools, and Winchendon Community Action Committee (CAC)

AREA OF FOCUS: Economic Stability and Mobility

LOCATION: Winchendon

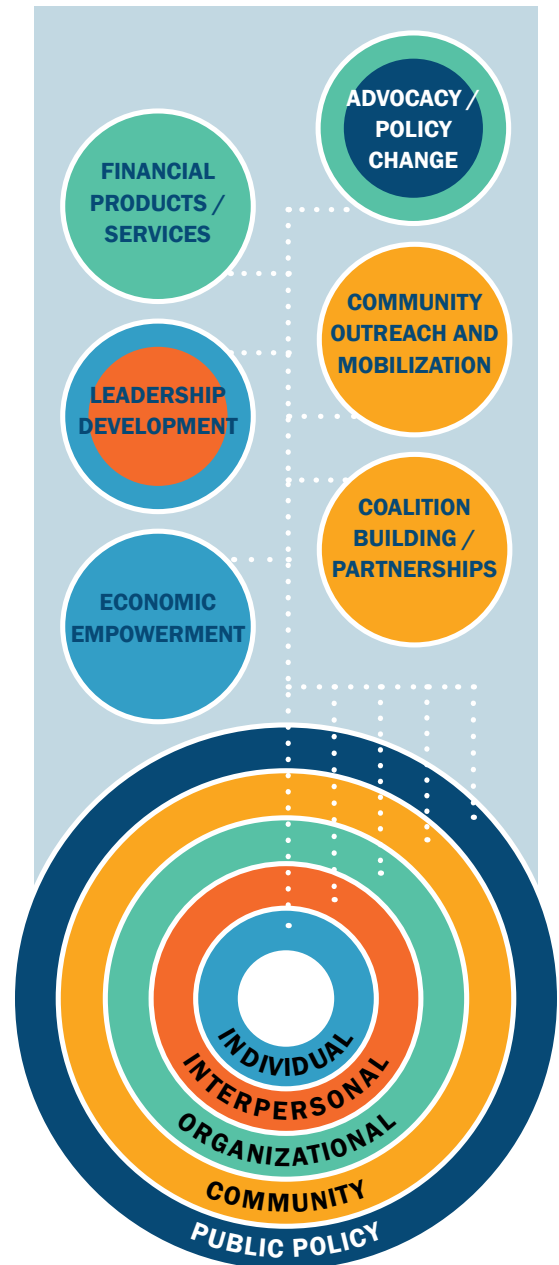
AWARD AMOUNT: \$649,546

GOAL: Empower the residents of Winchendon to promote economic stability through financial coaching, diversify community leadership by encouraging residents to deepen civic engagement, and create a robust local food system by supporting community gardening, food pantry access, and locally-owned businesses.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- » **Economic Empowerment.** Created a financial coaching program for Winchendon residents, with two coaches advising more than 475 families in 13 months.
- » **Coalition Building and Partnerships.** Collaborated with the Winchendon CAC to purchase a building that became the “Winchendon Works Community Hub,” a site for an expanded set of social and financial services provided by the CAC, a youth-led business called the Sunshine Café, a “makerspace” to provide access to tools and resources for local makers, and a “Makers Alley” craft market where their products could be sold.
- » **Community Outreach and Mobilization.** Hosted “skill share” events among local business leaders and residents, a “Taste of Winchendon” food festival, and community conversations about the drivers of poverty.
- » **Leadership Development, Advocacy, and Policy Change.** Encouraged residents to deepen their civic engagement by participating in town governing bodies. In three years, six of HEAL’s resident leaders joined town and regional boards including the Agricultural Commission, the Winchendon Cultural Council, and the Town Master Plan Committee.

PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES:



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“MassUP has truly been a catalyst for our community to realize and begin to reach its full potential and envision possibilities for ourselves that we didn’t have the space, confidence or power to consider, let alone lead.”

– HEAL WINCHENDON STAFF

SPRINGFIELD EATS

(EQUITY, ADVOCACY, TRANSFORMATIONS, AND SYSTEMS)

MOVING MASSACHUSETTS UPSTREAM INVESTMENT PROGRAM (MASSUP)

AWARDEE: Mercy Medical Center

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS: Fertile Ground, Gardening the Community, Open Pantry, Springfield Food Policy Council, and Square One

AREA OF FOCUS: Food Systems and Security

LOCATION: Springfield

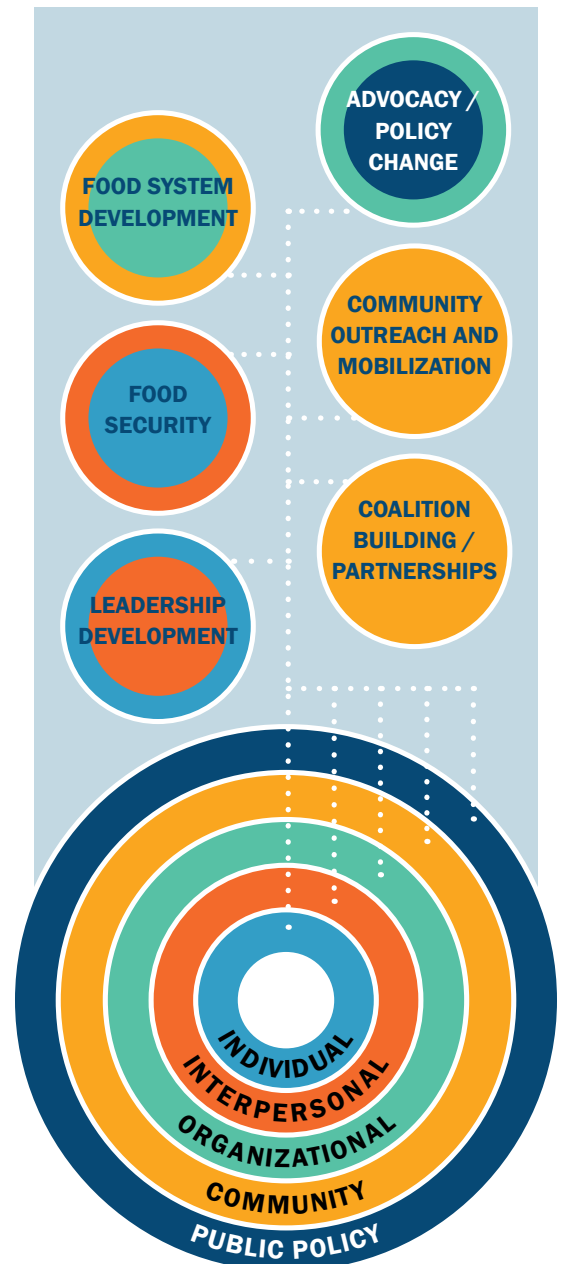
AWARD AMOUNT: \$650,000

GOAL: Create a more effective food system to help residents lead healthier lives.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- » **Food Security, Coalition Building, and Partnerships.** Coordinated implementation of strategies across partner organizations to simplify enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Health Incentives Program (HIP), educated staff to identify and register eligible individuals, and provided greater access to locations where clients could both enroll in and use those benefits.
- » **Food System Development.** Coordinated multiple initiatives to expand access to fresh foods, including the establishment of new backyard garden plots, mobile farm markets, and distribution of community-supported agriculture shares to SNAP and HIP users.
- » **Advocacy and Policy Change.** Worked intentionally to promote racial justice within the local food system through federal and state policy advocacy.
- » **Leadership Development, and Community Outreach and Mobilization.** Provided career and leadership mentorship opportunities for Black and other youth of color and engaged neighborhood residents in leadership development activities in food justice, racial equity, and health equity.

PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES:



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“[Springfield EATS] works towards providing Springfield residents with tools to get healthy quality fresh food, to cook for their families, to grow in backyard and community gardens, and to tell the story of the changes they are making with their communities. Our partner institutions are embedding practices that empower residents to take action into their own hands, while also influencing structural and policy change at organizational and state levels.”

– SPRINGFIELD EATS STAFF

HEAL WINCHENDON

HPC AWARD: \$649,546



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Heywood Hospital*
- Community Health Network for North Central Massachusetts
- Growing Places
- The Winchendon School
- Three Pyramids
- Town of Winchendon
- Winchendon Community Action Council
- Winchendon Public Schools

**Holds award contract with the HPC*

CROSS-CITY COALITION

HPC AWARD: \$649,498



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Massachusetts General Hospital*
- The Neighborhood Developers
- CONNECT
- La Colaborativa
- City of Revere
- City of Chelsea
- MassHire Metro North Workforce Board
- Women Encouraging Empowerment

**Holds award contract with the HPC*

MASSUP INVESTMENT PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

HPC AWARD: \$555,555



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Cooley Dickinson Health Care*
- Collaborative for Educational Services
- Hilltown Community Health Center
- Hilltown Community Development

**Holds award contract with the HPC*

SPRINGFIELD EATS

HPC AWARD: \$650,000



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Mercy Medical Center*
- Springfield Food Policy Council
- Open Pantry Community Services
- Fertile Ground
- Gardening the Community
- Square One

**Holds award contract with the HPC*

ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION

The Massachusetts Health Policy Commission (HPC) is an independent state agency charged with monitoring health care cost trends and making policy recommendations to improve the affordability of health care for all residents of the Commonwealth. Through data-driven analysis, actionable policy insights, public accountability, and innovative investments, the HPC seeks to improve health care delivery, lower costs, and reduce health disparities.



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MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION