

# By The Canal HISTORIC WALKING TOUR

# BLACKSTONE Canal District



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**DIRECTIONS TO THE BLACKSTONE CANAL DISTRICT**

FROM THE EAST OR WEST: Take the Massachusetts Turnpike to either Exit 10 (Auburn) or Exit 10A (Rt. 146) and travel north to Rte. 290.

FROM THE NORTH: Take Rte. 190 south to Rte. 290.

FROM THE SOUTH: Take Rte. 146 or Rte. 395 north to Rte. 1290.

ONCE ON RTE. 290: Take either Exit 13 (Kelley Square, Rte. 122A) or Exit 14 (Grafton Street, Rte. 122) and proceed one block west to the Canal District.



The Blackstone Canal, which opened for business in 1828, provided a commercial link between the City of Worcester and the sea, at Providence. Although it was abandoned as a commercial enterprise 20 years later, it stimulated significant economic growth and left its imprint on the city's street network – as well as hastening the advent of the railroads and introducing an influx of Irish immigrants, who had been hired to dig the canal. Arched over and forgotten in the 1890s, it still flows beneath current-day Harding Street.

The Canal District subsequently became the locus of myriad waves of immigration to the city, providing a first-stop home to numerous ethnic groups who later prospered and relocated – to the three-deckered hills to the east, and to the city's growing west side. While no current-day buildings date from the actual Blackstone Canal era, the District is home to numerous properties that figured prominently in its aftermath – an age of vigorous commercial/industrial growth and multi-ethnic settlement.

The Walking Tour below – accessible through an easily downloadable iPhone application – paints the history of the District through the investigation of 11 of its historic properties. It was produced by Preservation Worcester (www.preservationworcester.org) with grants from both the Canal District Alliance (www.canaldistrictalliance.com) and the John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission (www.nps.gov/blac).



A bronze statue at the north end of Harding Street will honor canal builders Tobias Boland and Benjamin Wright.



Download the free Tag Reader app by visiting <http://gettag.mobi>. Access the Tag Reader app. Position your phone's camera over the tag to line up with the Tag Reader's viewfinder. The Tag Reader will instantly scan the tag for property narrative and further historical information.



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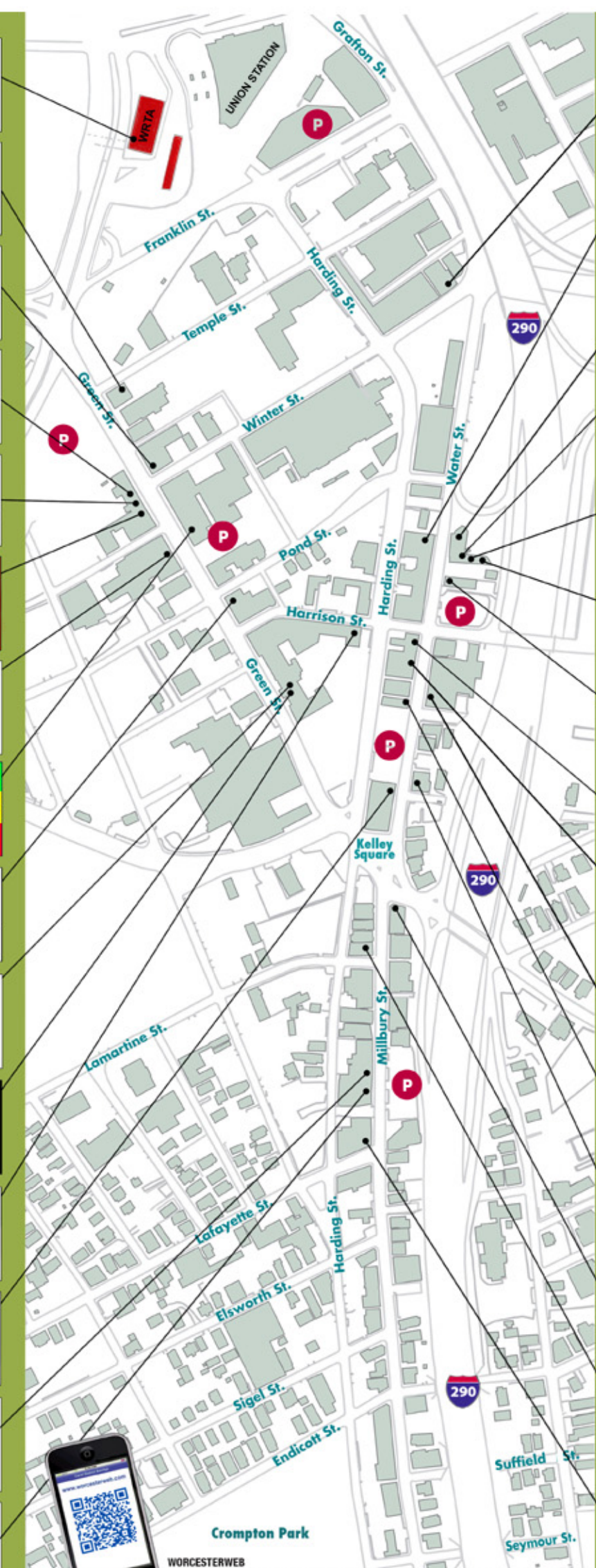
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