

BUSINESS  
ANALYSIS  
REPORT



DORCHESTER AVENUE



CITY OF BOSTON  
Thomas M. Menino  
*Mayor*



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CITY OF BOSTON  
Thomas M. Menino  
*Mayor*



Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority

2006  
*A Collaborative Effort of*

Dorchester Avenue Area Businesses  
Boston Main Streets  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston Transportation Department  
Department of Neighborhood Development

[www.dotavenueproject.com](http://www.dotavenueproject.com)





## The Dorchester Avenue Project

Initiated in March 2005 by Mayor Thomas M. Menino, the Dorchester Avenue Project ("the Project") brings together the City's resources to ensure that city departments and residents are working together to improve the quality of life and the economic well-being of Dorchester Avenue ("the Avenue"). The focus of the project is to recommend improvements regarding transportation, neighborhood businesses, neighborhood housing, and streetscapes.

The Project addresses approximately four miles of the Avenue, between Lower Mills and the intersection of Dorchester Avenue and Interstate 93. (A separate initiative, the South Boston/Dorchester Avenue Improvement Study, addresses Andrew Square to the Broadway MBTA station.)

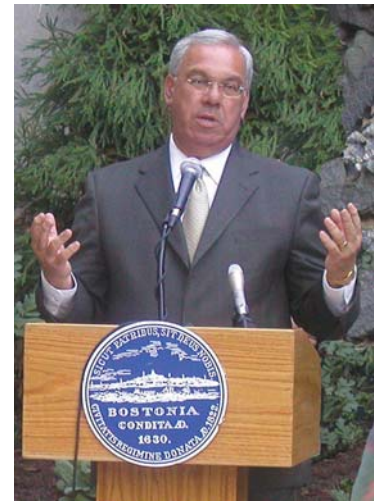
As part of the Project, a 14-member Task Force composed of community leaders, residents, business people and area youth has been appointed. An Inter-Agency Team (IAT), made up of representatives of various city departments, was also formed.

One of the main goals of the Project is the creation of the Dorchester Avenue Transportation and Streetscape Action Plan. The Action Plan will provide the template for allocating \$5 million from the City's capital budget for infrastructure investment to bring about improvements along the Avenue.

### The Dorchester Avenue Business Analysis Report

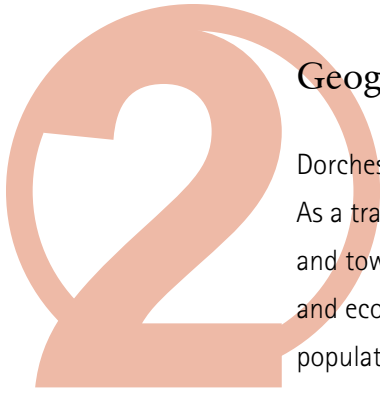
The Dorchester Avenue Business Analysis Report is a key component of Mayor Thomas M. Menino's Dorchester Avenue Project. The report represents collaboration between the City of Boston and the Dorchester Avenue community and is designed to capture the current business climate of Dorchester Avenue.

The intent of the report is to provide baseline information to those interested in business and economic development along Dorchester Avenue. In addition to providing current data that can be shared and coordinated among interested parties, the report can be updated yearly with the assistance of Boston's Main Streets program to provide ongoing, up-to-date information and insight to many aspects of the Dorchester Avenue business climate.



THE DORCHESTER AVENUE PROJECT





## Geographic Profile

Dorchester Avenue is one of Boston's most important "Main Streets." As a transportation corridor that connects downtown Boston to cities and towns to the south of the city, Dorchester Avenue also forms the social and economic spine of Boston's largest neighborhood, both in terms of population and geography.

For the purposes of this report, the Dorchester Avenue Corridor is defined as the 42 census block groups that lie along or adjoining Dorchester Avenue. The Dorchester Neighborhood is defined as being made up of the Boston Redevelopment Authority's North and South Dorchester Neighborhood Planning Districts.

In terms of land area, the Dorchester Avenue Corridor is comprised of 2.4 square miles, 40% of the 6.0 square miles of the Dorchester Neighborhood and 13% of the 48.4 square miles that make up the entire City of Boston.

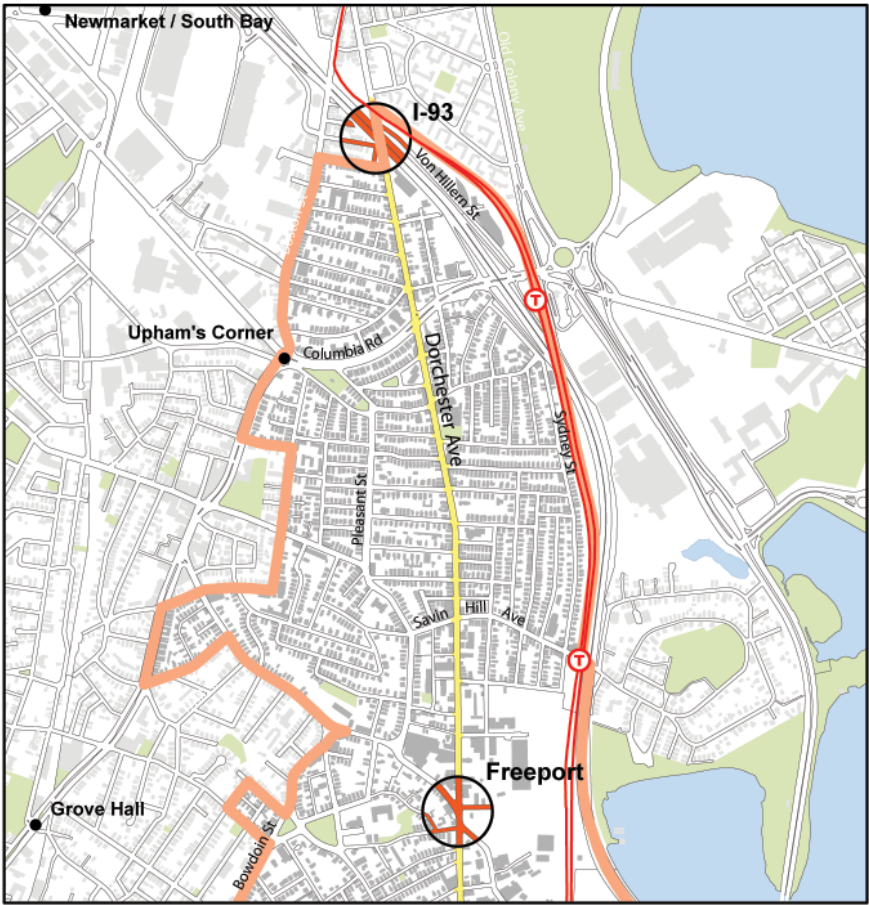


## Project Area Segments

The Dorchester Avenue Corridor runs through a number of sub-neighborhoods. For the purposes of the Dorchester Avenue Project and for this study, the Corridor has been divided into four segments: Columbia Road - Savin Hill, Fields Corner - Melville Avenue; St. Mark's - Peabody Square; and Lower Mills. Each of these segments has its own particular set of residential, commercial, social and economic characteristics.

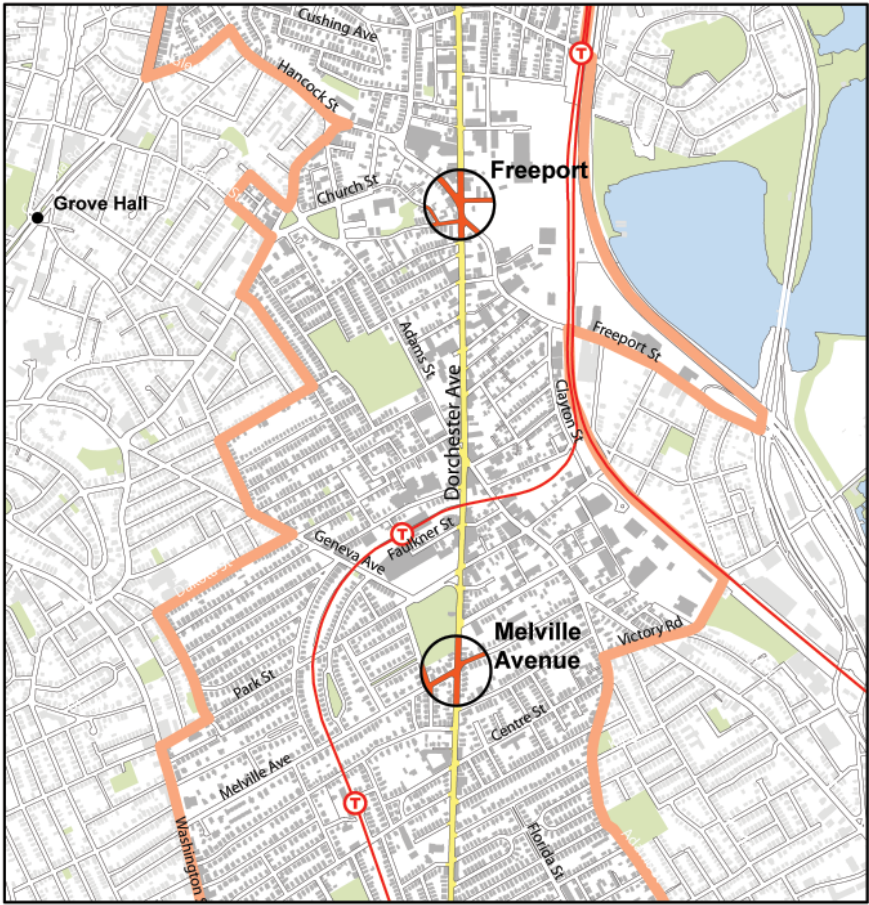
SEGMENT  
1

Columbia Road/Savin Hill

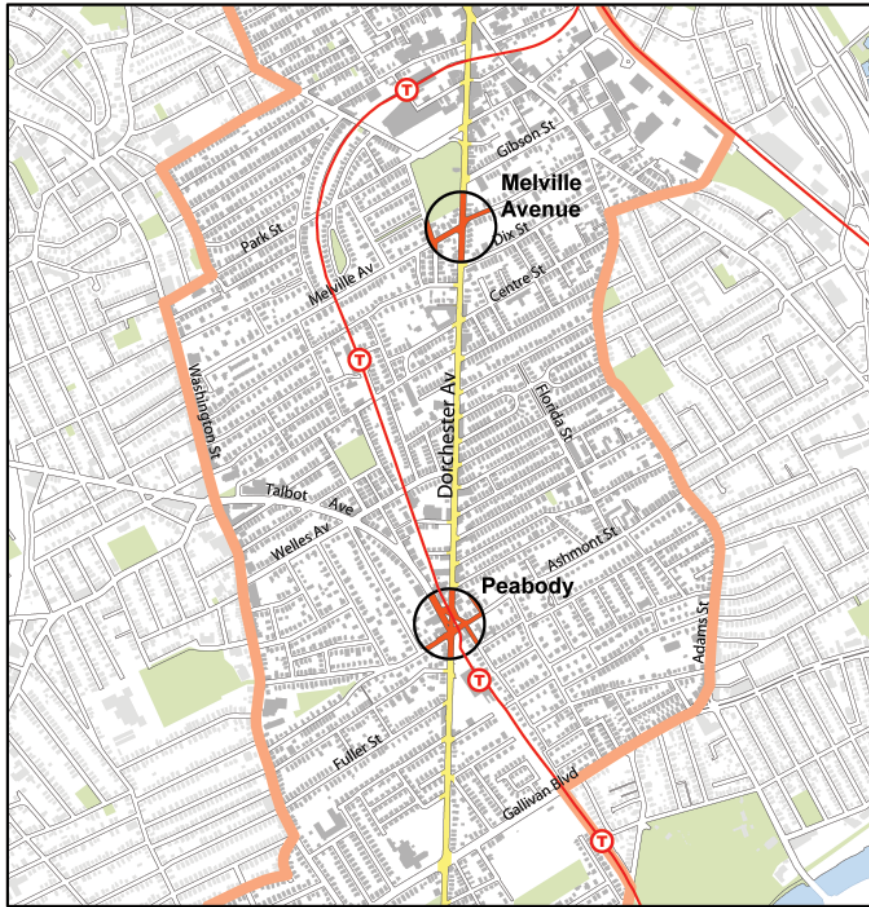


SEGMENT  
2

Fields Corner/Melville Avenue

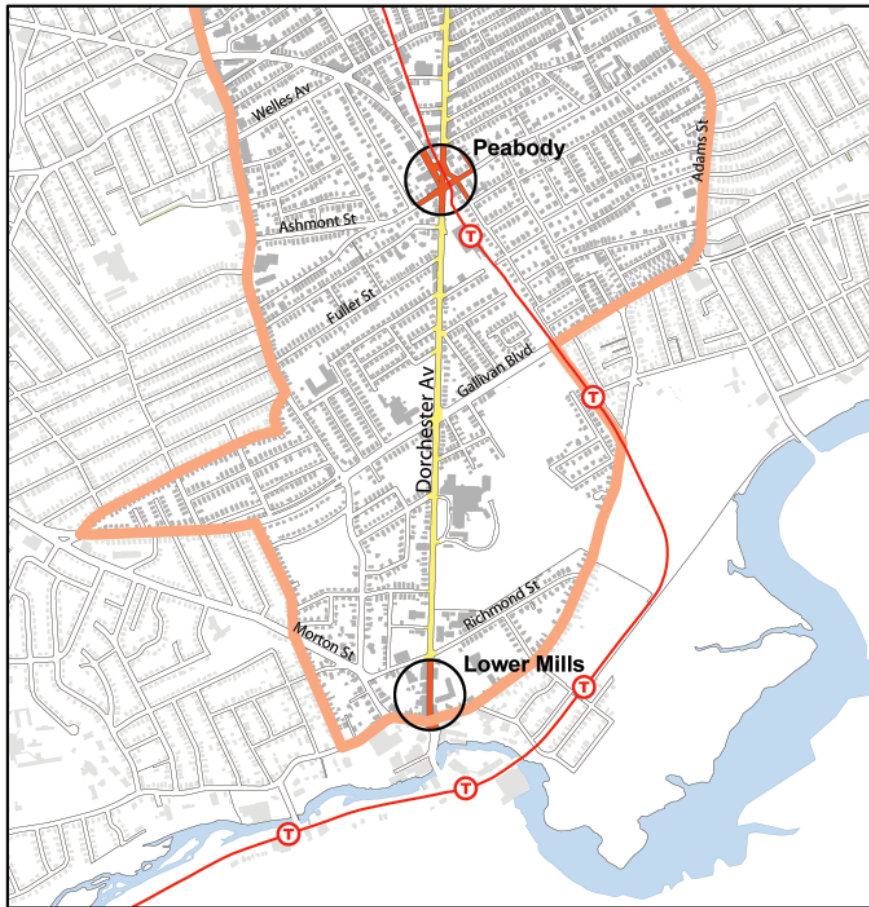






SEGMENT  
3

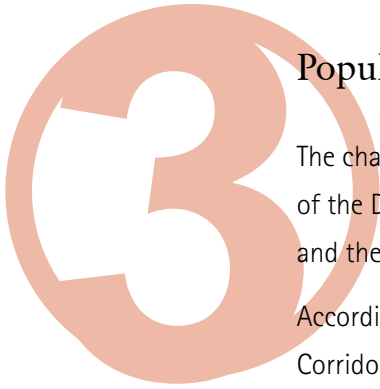
St. Mark's/Peabody



SEGMENT  
4

Lower Mills



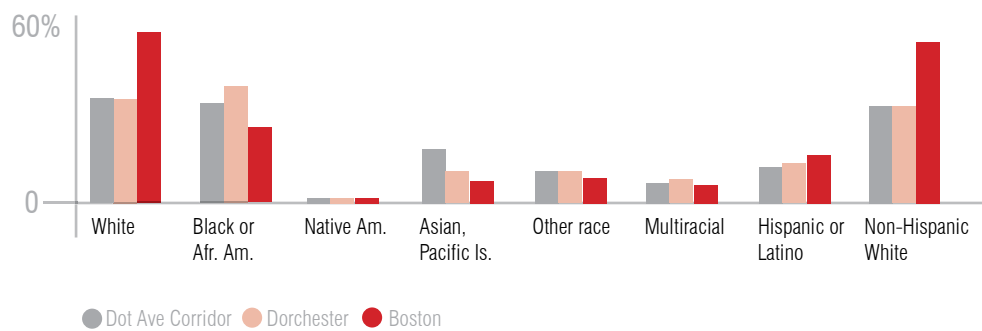


## Population and Racial and Ethnic Diversity

The chart below compares the population and racial and ethnic diversity of the Dorchester Avenue Corridor, the entire Dorchester neighborhood, and the entire City of Boston.

According to US Census 2000 data, the population of the Dorchester Avenue Corridor was 49,542. This figure represents more than half (53.4%) of the total population of Dorchester (92,862), which is Boston's most populous neighborhood, and 8.4% of the city's total population (589,141).

### Population & Racial Composition

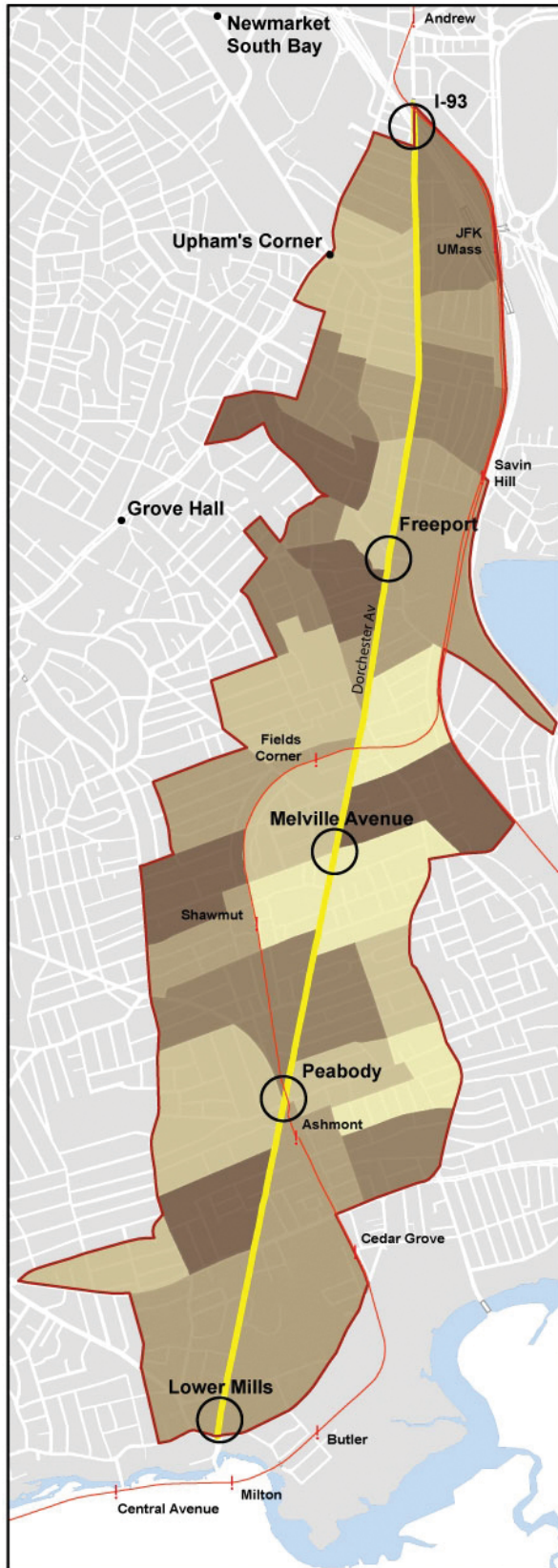
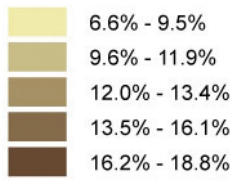


The population of the Dorchester Avenue Corridor was 48.5% male and 51.5% female. Thirty-one and one-half percent (31.5%) of the population was made up of Non-Hispanic Whites; 32.6% was African-American; 10.6% was Hispanic or Latino; and 16.9% was Asian or Pacific Islander. This compares with the city-wide percentages of 49.5% Non-Hispanic Whites; 24.9% African-American; 14.5% Hispanic or Latino; and 7.6% Asian or Pacific Islander.

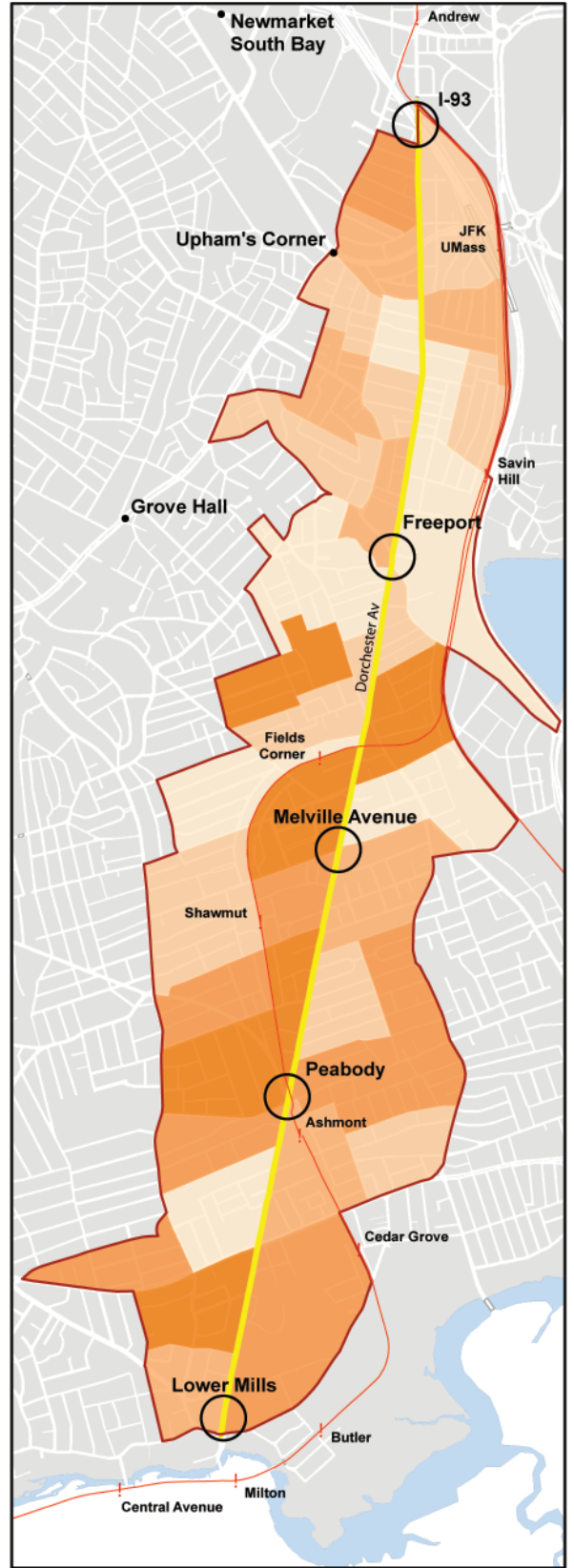
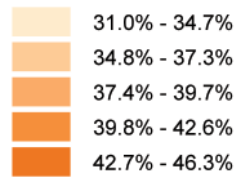
According to Claritas data (a recognized world leader in marketing research information), it is estimated that the population of the Dorchester Avenue Corridor in 2005 was 47,686, a decrease of 3.7% from the 2000 Census.

Likewise, according to Claritas data, the percentage of Non-Hispanic White residents in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor is estimated to have decreased by almost 5% as of 2005; the percentages of African-American and Hispanic or Latino residents to have remained almost the same; and the percentages of Asian or Pacific Islander residents to have increased by almost 4%.

**Percent 15 to 24 years old**



**Percent 35 to 64 years old**



## Age Distribution and Median Age

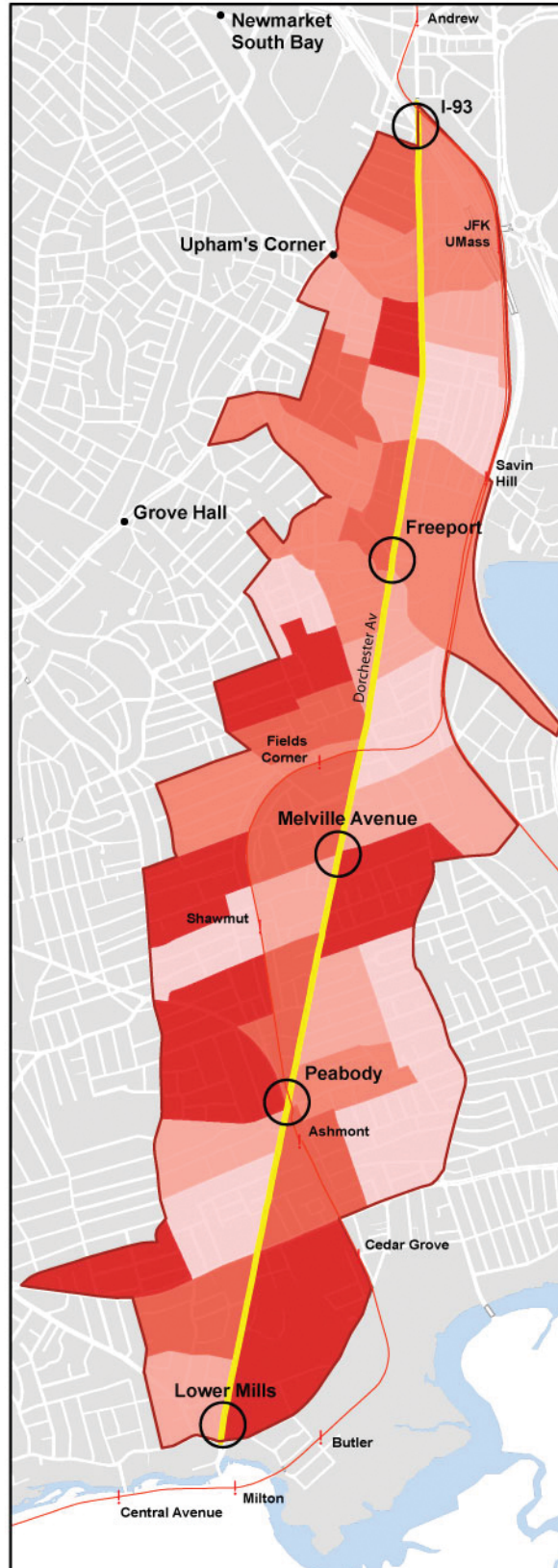
According to US Census 2000 data, 7.1% of Dorchester's population was under the age of 5; 20.4% between 5 and 17; 29.0% between 18 and 34; 34.6% between 35 and 64; and 8.9% 65 and over. The percentages of the various age groups were similar to those in the entire Dorchester neighborhood. However, the Dorchester Avenue Corridor had a much larger percentage of young people between the ages of 5 and 17 and a much lower percentage of adults 18-34 than the city-wide percentages.

According to US Census 2000 data, the median age of those living in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor was 31.5 years, compared to 31.1 for all those living in Dorchester and 31.4 for all those living in Boston.

According to Claritas data, it is estimated that in 2005 there was a modest increase in the percentage of those under 5, between 35 and 64, and over 65 in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor, and a modest decrease of those 5-17 and 18-34. The median age of those living in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor in 2005 was estimated to have increased to 33.3 years.



**Median Household Income  
Dollar**

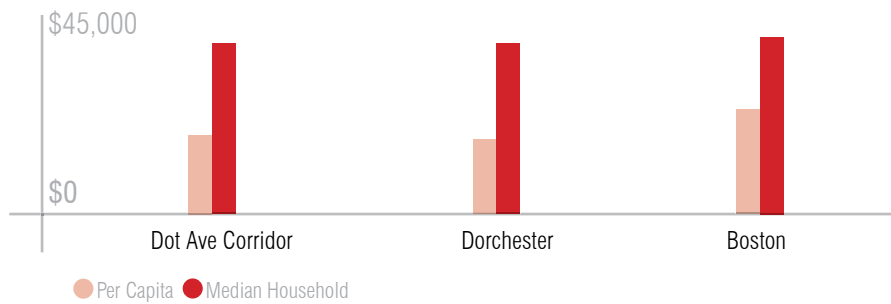


## Per Capita and Household Income

According to US Census 2000 data, the Average Per Capita Income in 1999 for those living in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor was \$17,849; for those living in Dorchester \$16,846; and for those living in Boston \$23,353.

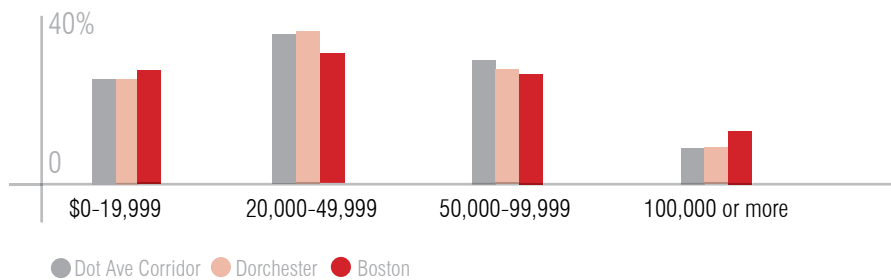
The Median Household Income for those living in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor was \$38,779; for those living in Dorchester \$38,590; and for those living in Boston \$39,629.

### Median Household Income & Per Capita Income



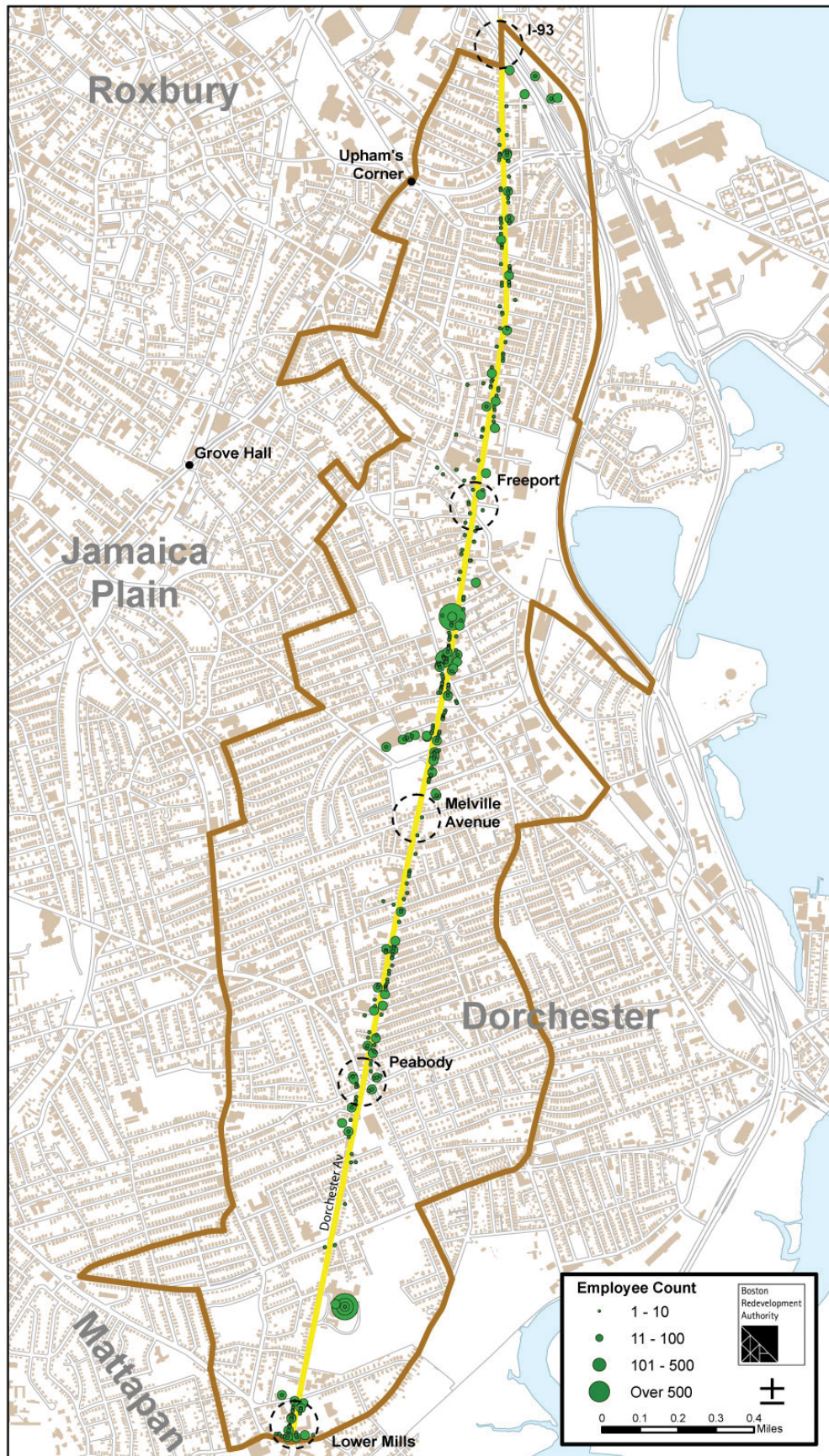
According to US Census 2000 data, 25.7% of the total households in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor had incomes of less than \$20,000; 36.8% between \$20-50,000; 29.5% between \$50-100,000; and 8.1% over \$100,000.

### Household Income



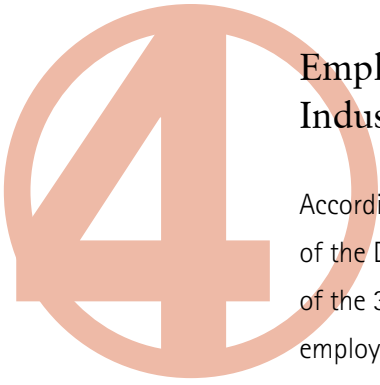
It is estimated that Per Capita income for those living in the Dorchester Avenue Corridor rose by 14.3% to \$45,484 in 2005.

According to Claritas data, it is estimated that in 2005 the percentage of those households with incomes of less than \$25,000 decreased by 17.6%; between \$25-50,000 decreased by 10.5%; and between \$50-100,000 increased marginally by 2.7%. The most dramatic change occurred in the percentage of households with incomes over \$100,000, which increased by 65.7%.



Sources: American Business Index 2004, BRA Research Division Analysis, BRA Office of Digital Cartography & GIS





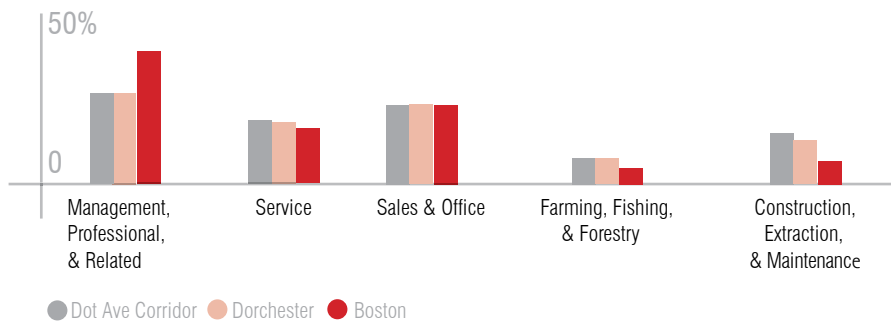
## Employment, Occupation, Industry and Business Profile

According to US Census 2000 data, there were 20,391 employed residents of the Dorchester Avenue Corridor age 16 or over. This represents 53.5% of the 38,141 employed residents of Dorchester, and 7.1% of the 285,859 employed residents of the city of Boston.

The largest percentage of Dorchester Avenue Corridor residents (29.7%) were employed in the Management, Professional and Related Occupations sector, which included jobs in the financial and business fields. Other large percentages of residents were employed in Professional and Related Occupations (25.3%), which included jobs in the education, health and social services fields; Service Occupations (20.7%), which included the health care support and protective service areas; and Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (16.3%).

Based on Claritas data, the percentages of residents of the Dorchester Avenue Corridor employed in those occupational sectors were virtually the same in 2005.

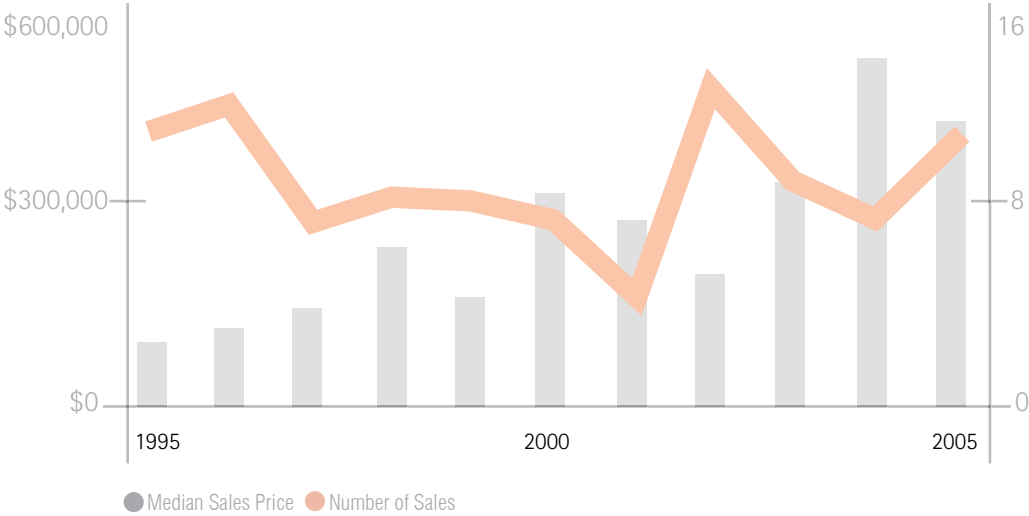
### Occupations for the Employed

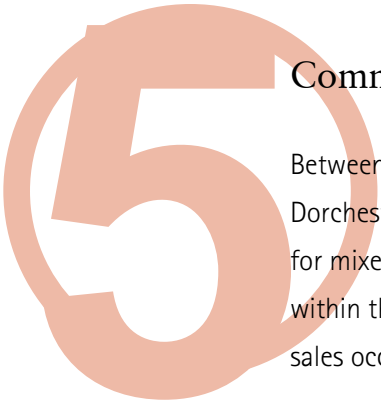


# Commercial Sales 1995-2005

YEAR	NUMBER OF SALES	MEDIAN SALES PRICE
2005	11	\$450,000
2004	7	\$550,000
2003	9	\$350,000
2002	14	\$215,000
2001	3	\$295,000
2000	7	\$340,000
1999	8	\$175,000
1998	8	\$252,500
1997	7	\$155,000
1996	13	\$130,000
1995	12	\$ 98,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99</b>	

Data source: Warren Group





## Commercial Property

Between 1995 and 2005 there were 99 commercial property sales on Dorchester Avenue. Almost a third of the total sales (31 properties) were for mixed-used buildings or commercial land. Most of the sales activity was within the Fields Corner Main Street District with only 2% of all commercial sales occurring south of Gallivan Boulevard.

The following is a summary of those transactions:

- The years with the highest number of commercial sales were 2002 and 1996, with 14 and 13 sales respectively.
- In 2001, there were only 3 commercial sales, the lowest level of activity over the 10-year period.
- Over 10 years, commercial land sales accounted for 17% of all sales.
- Within the St. Mark's Area and Fields Corner Main Street Districts, 41 properties sold. This represents 41% of all commercial sales along the Avenue.
- Of the 99 commercial sales, 16 of those properties sold multiple times, 15 properties sold twice and one property sold three times.
- Property re-sales represented 16% of all commercial sales activity.
- St. Mark's had the most commercial resale activity with 4 properties selling more than once in the District.

### Commercial Property Sales 1995-2005

#### BY TOP FIVE PROPERTY TYPES

Mixed Use	16
Commercial Land	15
Retail Store	13
General Office/Office Condo	9
Restaurant/Bar	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>

## Retail Market Profile

RETAIL SALES BY STORE	SUPPLY OF RETAIL BY SALES (\$)	DEMAND (\$)
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	30,645,000	87,939,000
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	7,635,000	11,915,000
Electronics and Appliances Stores	7,774,000	12,662,000
Building Material and Garden Equipment Stores	6,975,000	38,701,000
Food and Beverage Stores	81,495,000	79,378,000
Health and Personal Care Stores	20,196,000	25,852,000
Gasoline Stations	36,929,000	47,157,000
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	21,330,000	29,617,000
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores	897,000	10,055,000
General Merchandise Stores	37,554,000	72,002,000
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	5,513,000	13,610,000
Non-Store Retailers	8,077,000	41,862,000
Foodservice and Drinking Places	46,957,000	61,793,000
<b>TOTAL RETAIL SALES</b> <i>Including Eating and Drinking Places</i>	<b>311,906,000</b>	<b>532,272,000</b>
<b>GAFO</b> <i>General merchandise, Apparel, Furniture and Other</i>	<b>77,131,000</b>	<b>141,908,000</b>

Data Source: Claritas Retail Market Data-2005 By Retail Store Types By Major NAICS Categories

## Business Categories

According to American Business Index (ABI) data, there are 1,474 business establishments in the Dorchester neighborhood. Based on a November 2005 business inventory along Dorchester Avenue by members of the IAT, approximately one-third of these business establishments are located along Dorchester Avenue. Of the 449 businesses inventoried along the Avenue, 108 establishments (24%) are Business and Professional Services-related. This category is closely followed by Food & Drink with 89 establishments and Health, Fitness & Beauty with 88 (each representing 20% of the total inventory). These three categories mentioned above represent two-thirds of the Avenue's business activity. Retail corresponds to 14%, with 63 establishments.

In the Home & Auto category (10% of all establishments along the Avenue), 85% of businesses in this category are either automotive-related establishments or gasoline stations.

The locations of contracting and manufacturing establishments are also significant. Contracting makes up 5% of the Avenue's inventory, with the majority of the larger establishments located within the St. Mark's Area Main Street District. Automotive establishments are located along the entire Avenue, with a concentration in the Columbia/Interstate 93 area and the Freeport Street area.



In addition, the Health Care and Social Assistance cluster is located south of Gallivan Boulevard and north of Lower Mills. Caritas Carney Hospital and supportive medical offices anchor that section of the Avenue, providing the majority of the jobs.

## Local Retail Sales and Consumer Expenditures

Almost \$312 million in retail sales were generated by businesses in the Dorchester Corridor in 2005. The highest level of sales - more than \$81 million a year - occurred in the area of Food and Beverages. Next highest was Food Service and Drinking Places (almost \$47 million), followed by General Merchandise Stores (\$37.5 million), Gasoline Stations (almost \$37 million) and Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers (\$30.6 million). Convenience Stores make up more than \$10 million of that total.

Residents of Dorchester Corridor spent more than \$532 million in consumer expenditures in 2005. The highest area of sales occurred in the area of Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers (understandable given that the purchase of an automobile is such a "big ticket" item). The next highest areas of expenditures were in Food and Beverage Stores (\$79 million), General Merchandise Stores (\$72 million), and Food Service and Drinking Places (nearly \$47 million).

## Closing

With the information contained in the Dorchester Business Analysis Report and summary booklet, the city's IAT will continue to work with the Dorchester Avenue Task Force and community to reshape the physical and economic dynamics of the Avenue as pieces of the five-year Dorchester Avenue Project are implemented.

## Glossary

### American Business Index (ABI)

ABI is a comprehensive business listing and data resource for businesses located in the United States.

### Dorchester Avenue Corridor

For the purposes of this report, the Dorchester Avenue Corridor Area is defined as being composed of the following Block Groups of Massachusetts Suffolk County of US Census 2000:

907.001	912.001	921.003	1005.001	1009.001
907.002	912.002	921.004	1005.002	1009.002
907.003	915.001	921.005	1005.003	
910.003	915.003	922.001	1006.017	
910.004	916.001	922.002	1006.018	
911.001	916.002	922.003	1008.001	
911.002	916.003	922.004	1008.002	
911.003	917.001	1004.001	1008.003	
911.004	920.001	1004.002	1008.005	
911.005	920.002	1004.003	1008.006	

### Census Block Group

A subdivision of a census tract, a block group is the smallest geographic unit for which the Census Bureau tabulates sample data. A block group consists of all the blocks within a census tract with the same beginning number.

### Claritas Data

Claritas is a division of VNU, a Dutch company that is a world leader in marketing research, demographic, and market segmentation research information.

### Household

A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. (The number of households equals the number of occupied housing units.)

### Family Household

A family household is defined as one that includes a householder and one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. All people in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. A family household may contain people not related to the householder, but those people are not included as part of the householder's family in census tabulations. Thus, the number of family households is equal to the number of families, but family households may include more members than do families. A household can contain only one family for purposes of census tabulations. Not all households contain families since a household may comprise a group of unrelated people or one person living alone.

### Median (as a characteristic used in Family or Household income)

The median represents the middle value - not the average - among a range of values. One-half of all values fall below the median and one-half exceed it.

### The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

NAICS is a six-digit system for classifying business establishments. NAICS provides for comparability between the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

### Non-Hispanic Whites

Those who are categorized as Hispanic by the US Census are people - regardless of their race - who identify their origin as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. Non-Hispanic whites are those who remain in the white racial category after those who have identified themselves as Hispanic are removed.

