

# Chicopee Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

February 27, 2020

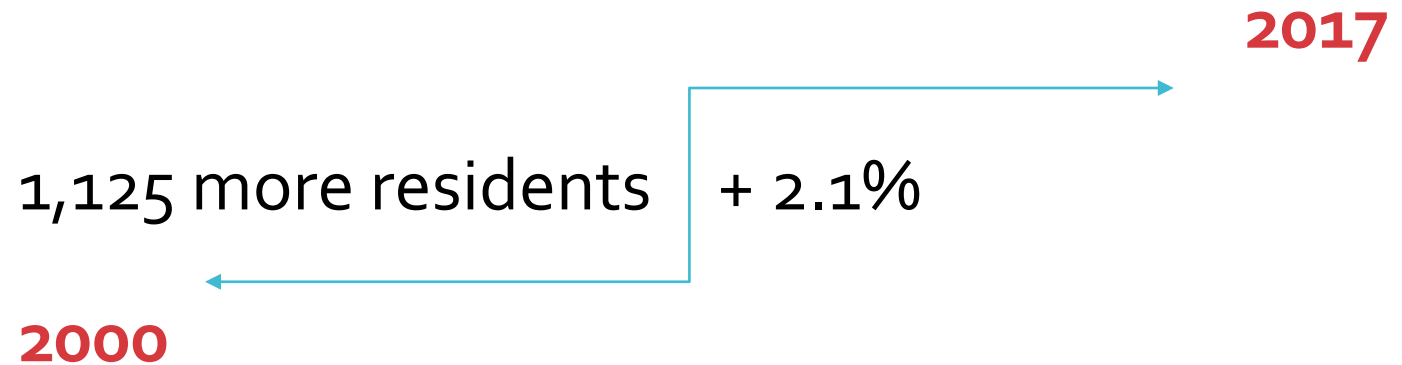


## Today's Goals!

- **Review Findings from the Baseline Report**
- **Early Engagement Efforts**
- **First Public Workshop: April 15!**

# Population Growth

Slow but steady . . .



Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways  
Demographics

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Demographics



## Age

Chicopee is getting a little *younger*, while Massachusetts is getting *older*!

**2010**

40.1 years



39.6 years

**2017**



20-34  
years

Young adults are a *growing* share of the population

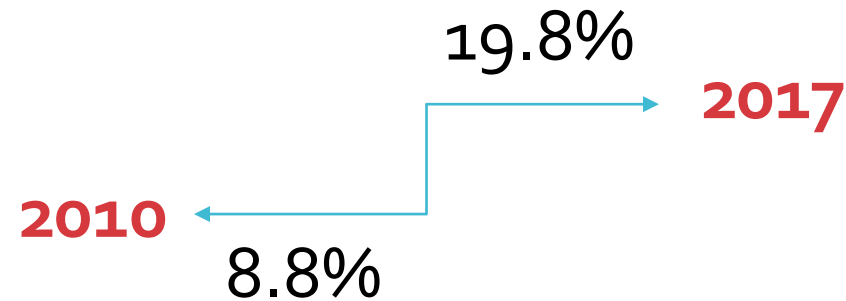
# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Demographics



## Race/Ethnicity

Chicopee is getting more diverse!



*Percent of population Hispanic/Latino*

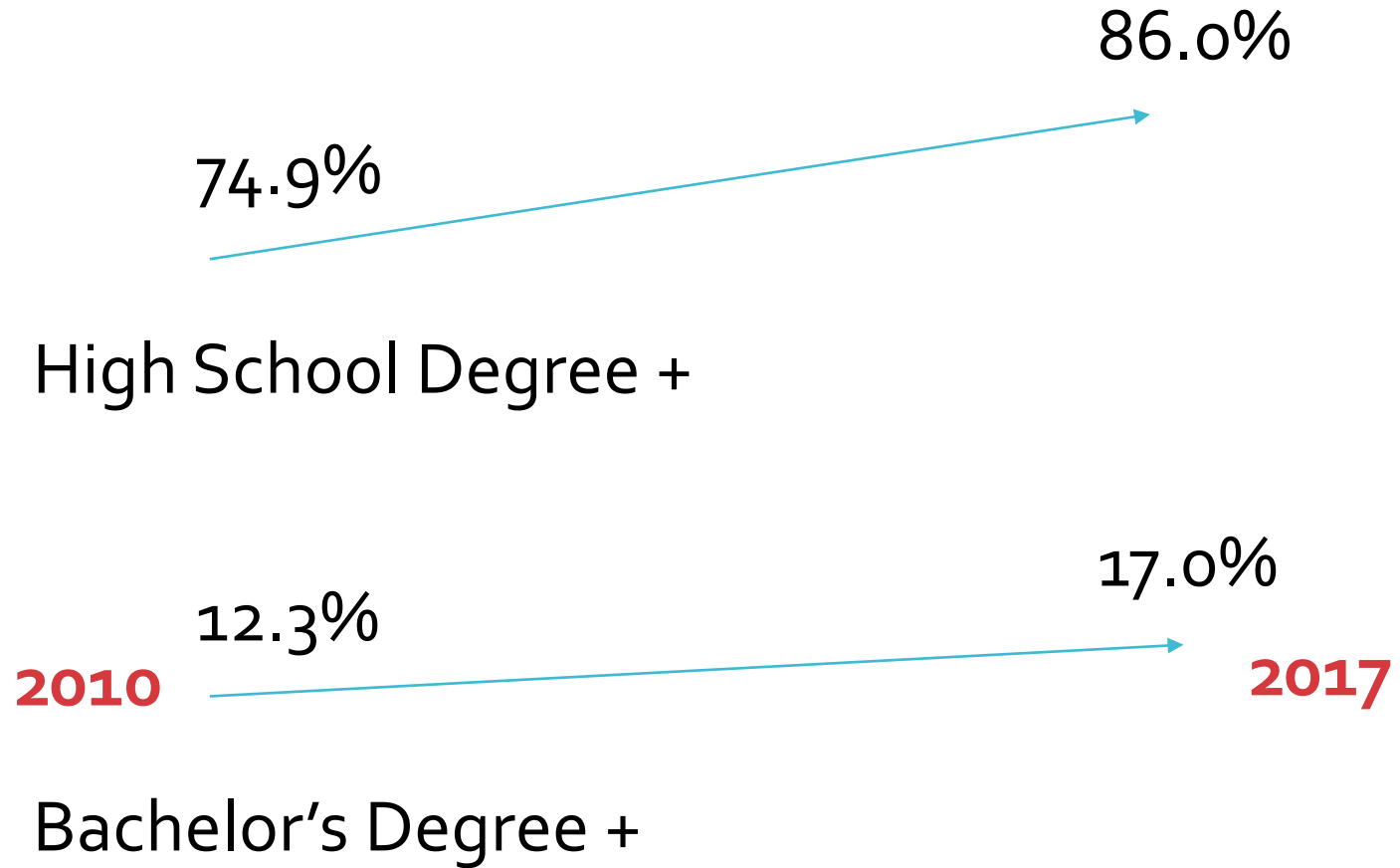
Polish, French-Canadian, Portuguese, Irish, and other more long-standing groups continue to thrive

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Demographics



### Education



*Low but rising steadily . . .*

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways

Demographics

# Households

2000

2010

28.8%

27.4%

Children in Households

16.2%

12.8%

Married Couple with children at home

*"Traditional" families and households with children declining*

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways

Demographics

# Income & Poverty

Relative Income

Chicopee

Massachusetts

2000

2017



- 6.3%

+ 6.0%

2017

2000

1/5

*Over 1/5 of Chicopee children live in poverty*

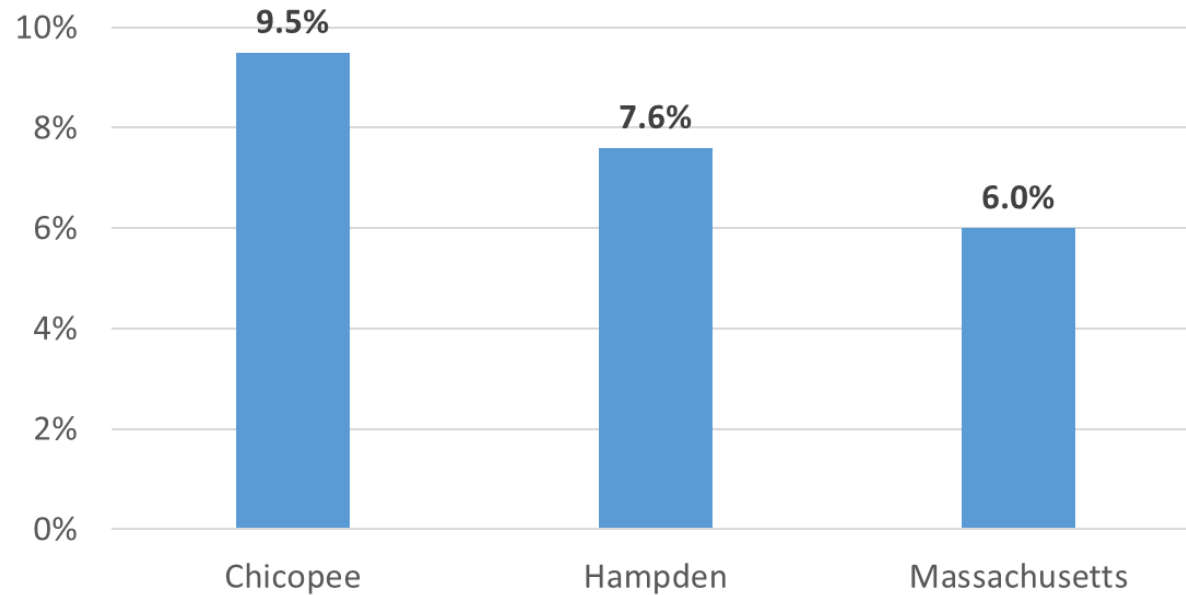


# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Demographics



## Veterans



30%

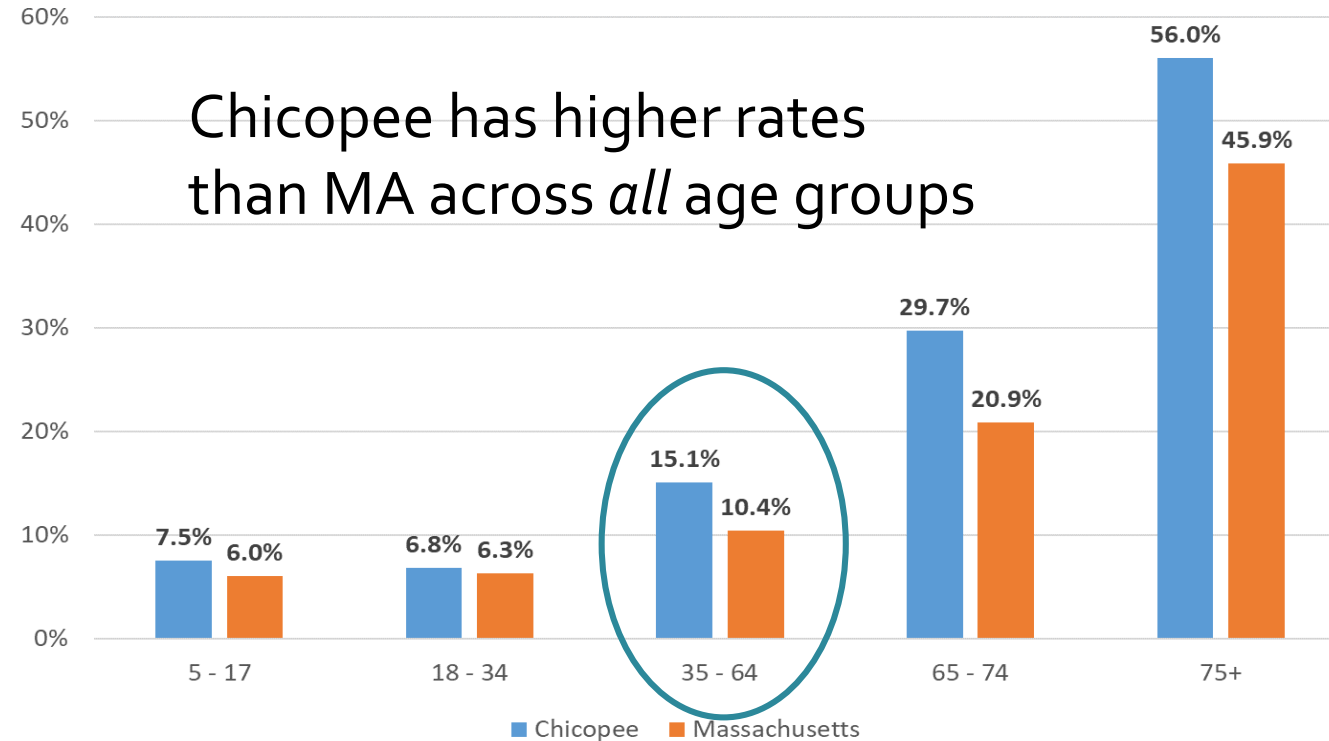
17%

Of Chicopee veterans report a disability

Of Chicopee *non-veterans* report a disability

Baseline  
Report:  
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Demographics

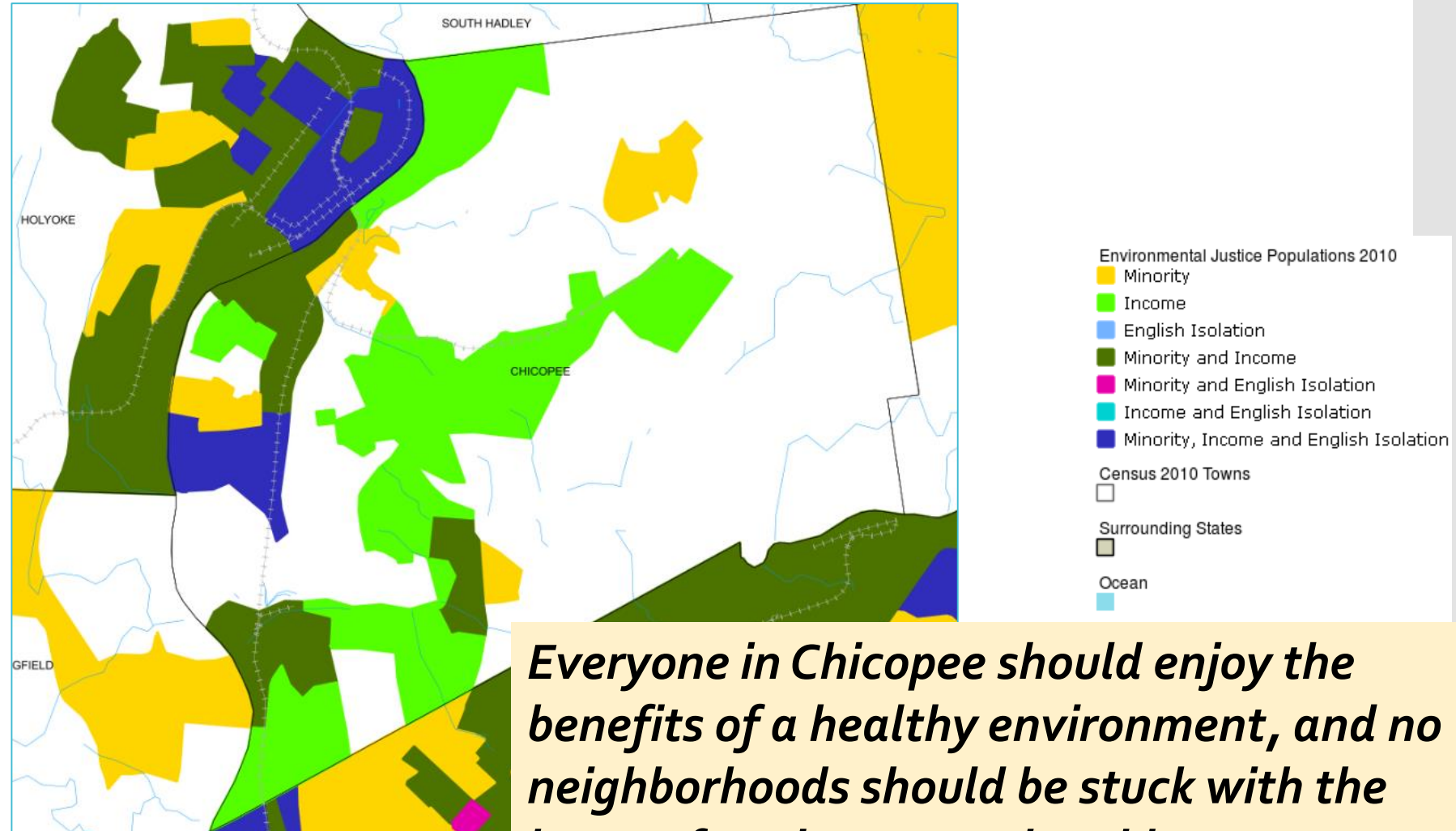
# People with Disabilities



Most notably among working age adults  
*People with disabilities in Chicopee are 25% less likely to be employed than in MA overall*

# Environmental Justice

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways  
  
Demographics



***Everyone in Chicopee should enjoy the benefits of a healthy environment, and no neighborhoods should be stuck with the brunt of environmental problems.***

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Land Use



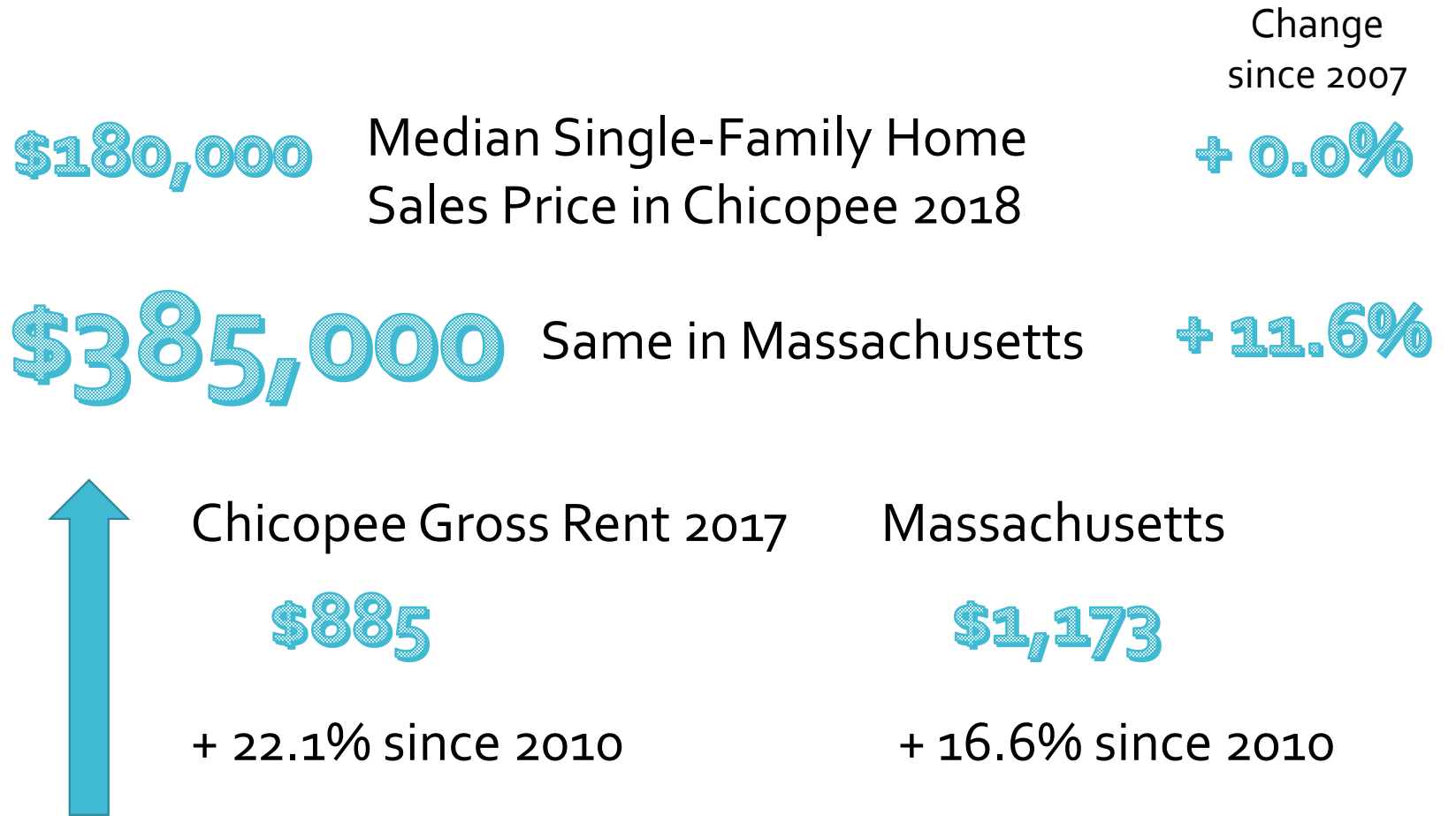
- Chicopee is largely built out. Future Land Use decisions will be about . . .
  - Reusing and repurposing existing buildings or areas of town that have already been developed
  - Expanding and connecting open space and recreation resources throughout the city
- Decisions about future land use are a result of all the other topics combined. Having goals for transportation, economic development, the environment, and more will drive how land is used in the future.

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways

Housing



# Housing Affordability



*Prices reflect local incomes, but steep increase in rents suggests strong demand for rentals*

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways

Housing



# Housing Affordability

Housing Cost Burden

*30%+ of income spent on Housing*

**Chicopee**

**Massachusetts**

Home with  
Mortgage

+ 37.9%

+ 31.5%

Rent

+ 49.4%

+ 50.1%

*Cost burden is particularly high for Chicopee homeowners with mortgages*

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways

Housing



# Housing Affordability

Massachusetts Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)

**Chicopee**      **10.47%**      as of 2019

**819**      SHI units set to  
expire by 2030

*To maintain its 10% goal, Chicopee must focus on renewing affordability for expiring units*

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways

Housing

## Homelessness

98%

of homeless in Hampden Co. are sheltered as of 2019

21

Homeless individuals in Chicopee

0

Homeless shelters in Chicopee

*But!* Based on demographic data, Chicopee has a significant population that tends to be at risk of homelessness, including those with very low-incomes and certain disabilities, including mental illness and drug addiction.



# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Economic Development



# Labor Force



22,231  
JOBS



62.5%  
LABOR FORCE  
PARTICIPATION



55,201  
RESIDENTS



50.7%  
SOME  
COLLEGE  
EDUCATION



4.5%  
UNEMPLOYMENT



84.8%  
COMMUTE  
OUT

2.5 residents for every job in Chicopee.

Job growth is slower than the state/nation

Unemployment rate is higher than the state/nation but average relative to neighboring towns

Most residents commute out of the city for work, and most of the city's workers live outside of Chicopee.

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Economic Development



# Employment



32%  
OF JOBS IN  
GOVERNMENT &  
HEALTH CARE



7  
SECTORS LOST JOBS  
IN LAST 5-YEARS



2%  
5-YEAR JOB  
GROWTH



161  
PROJECTED  
MANUFACTURING  
JOB LOSSES



580  
JOBS ADDED IN  
HEALTH CARE



8  
EMPLOYERS WITH  
250+ EMPLOYEES

Retail Trade and  
Manufacturing  
are other top  
sectors

2% job growth  
from 2013-2018.  
3% growth is  
expected from  
2018-2023.

Health Care has  
added/is adding  
the most jobs to  
the City's  
economy

Despite losses,  
manufacturing is  
still strong  
compared with  
region, state,  
nation

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Economic Development

# Commercial Vacancies



1.4%  
RETAIL

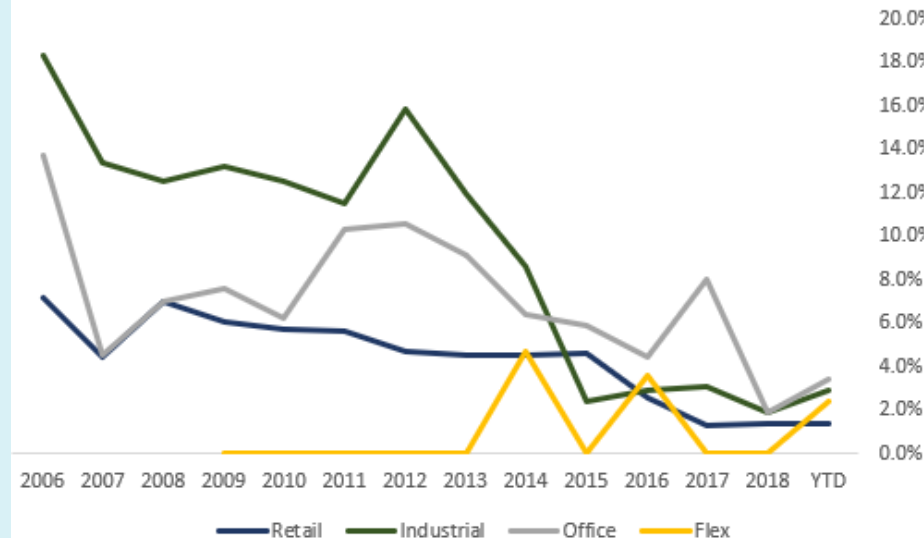


1.9%  
INDUSTRIAL



1.9%  
OFFICE

Commercial Vacancy Rates, Chicopee



Chicopee's commercial vacancy rates are at their *lowest levels since 2006*. Vacancy rates are lower than in the larger Springfield MSA.



# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Economic Development



# Leakage Analysis



CLOTHING  
STORES



SPORTING/HOBBY/BOOK  
STORES



FURNITURE  
STORES



GASOLINE  
STATIONS



NONSTORE  
RETAILERS



ELECTRONICS  
STORES

Chicopee's positive retail gap in these six industries represents *economic activity being lost* to businesses outside of the City.

## Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Transportation & Mobility



# Transportation Modes

90% of Chicopee residents drive alone to work

2%

walk

0%

bike

30%

of Chicopee residents are 55+

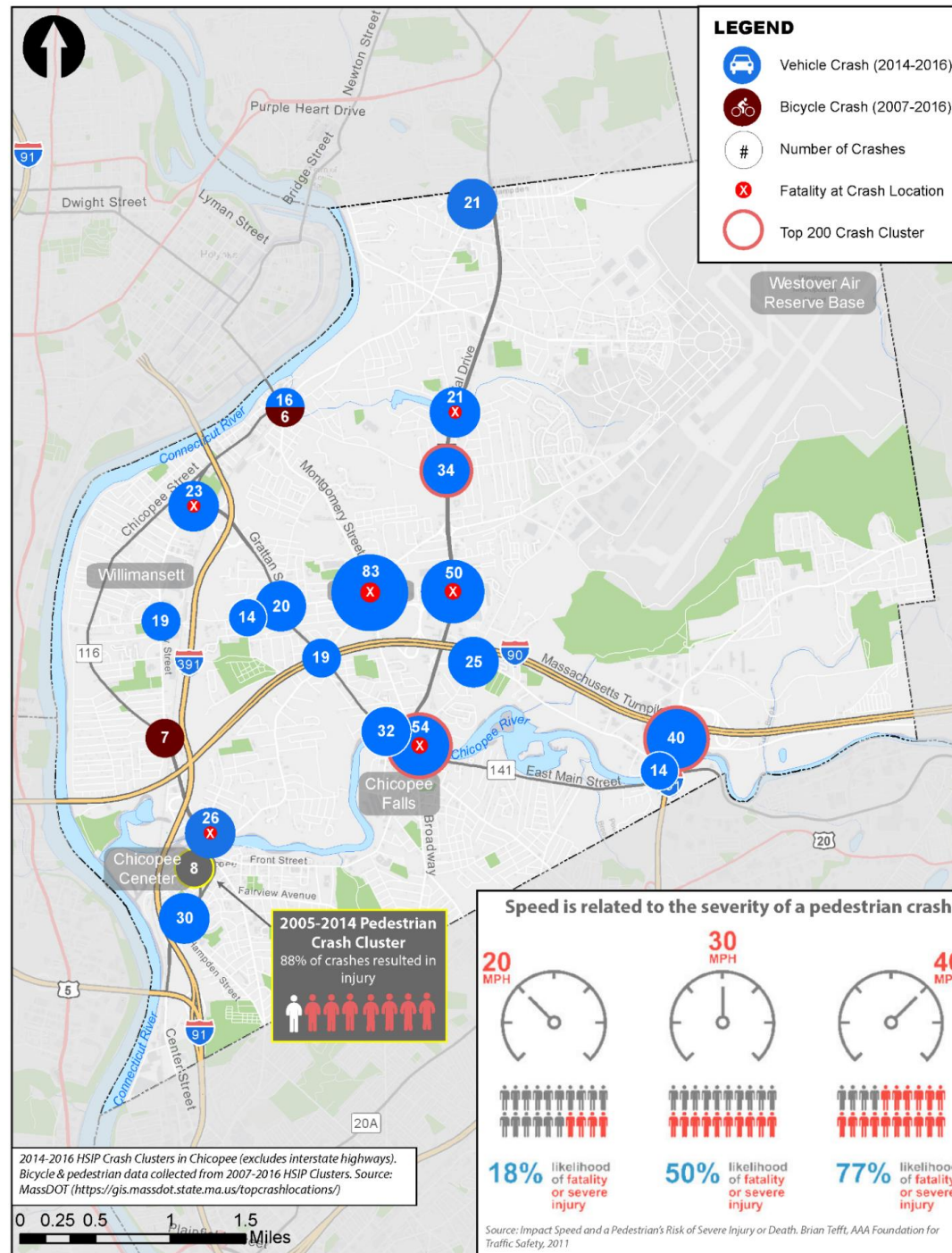
How can the City . . .

*Increase the number of people who walk or bike to work?*

*Improve transportation choices for transit, shared rides, walking, biking and other modes for the elderly and children?*

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

# Transportation & Mobility

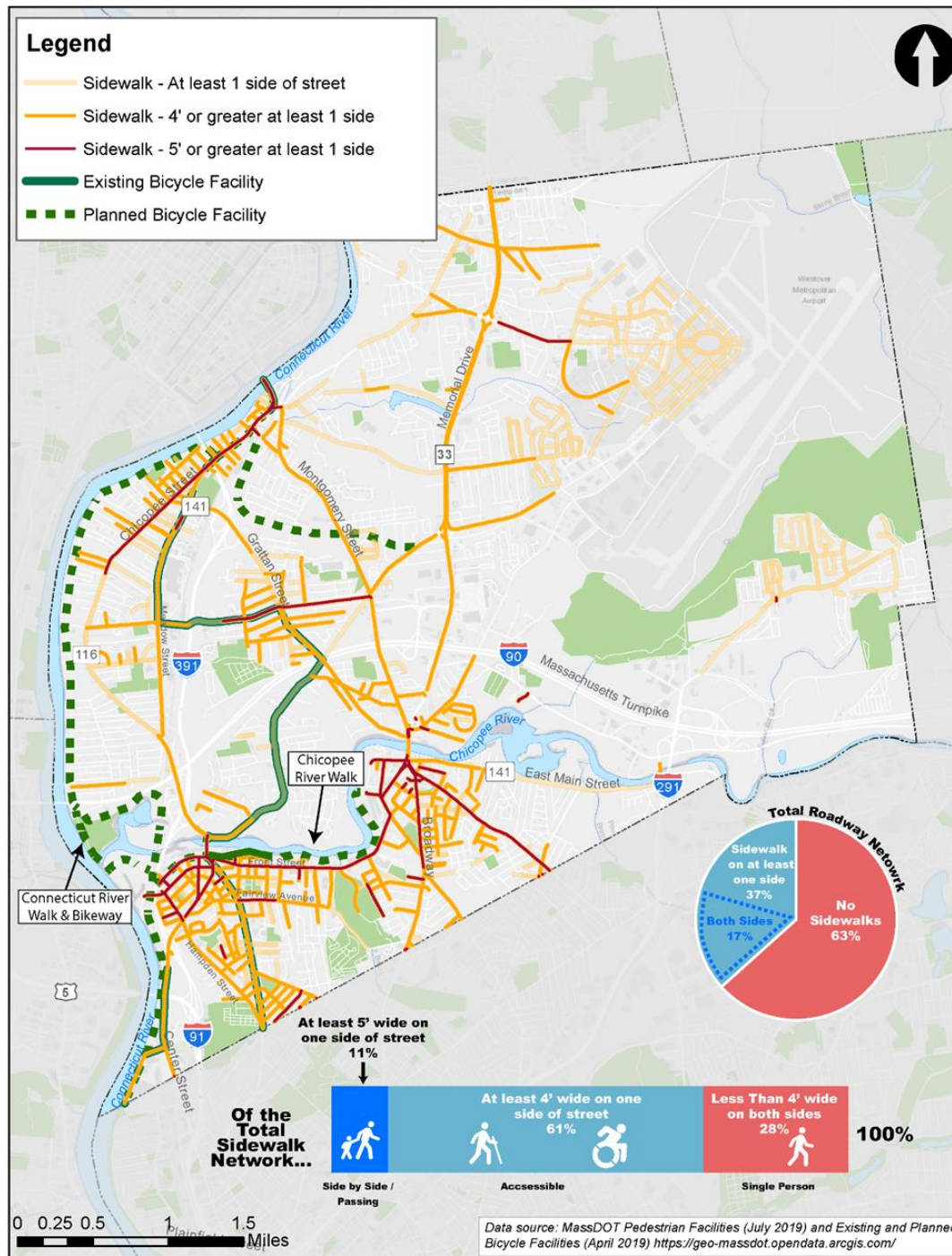
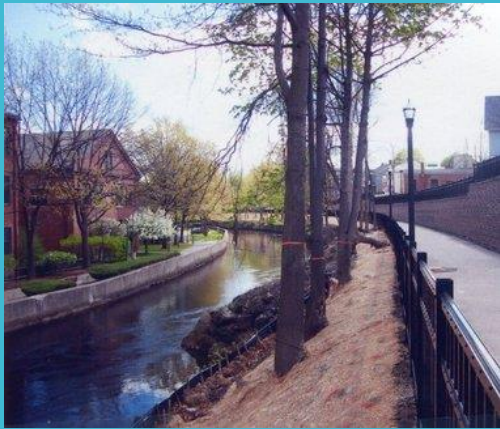


## Problem Areas

- # of crashes city-wide shows need for improved safety for all modes
- The City knows where these problem spots are, and has identified improvements through things like WalkBoston Walk Audit

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Transportation & Mobility



## Bike/Ped Network

- 17% of roads have sidewalks on both sides. 63% have no sidewalks at all.
- Chicopee and Connecticut River Walks will be very important links

## Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Transportation & Mobility



## Parking

- 2009 parking utilization study in Chicopee Center found that *many parking areas fail to reach 50% utilization* over the course of a typical day
- Parking management can improve environment, economy, and safety

## Transit

1%

Of Chicopee commuters use transit

Huge potential to increase bus ridership and expand rail service between Hartford, CT – Burlington, VT and Boston - Pittsfield



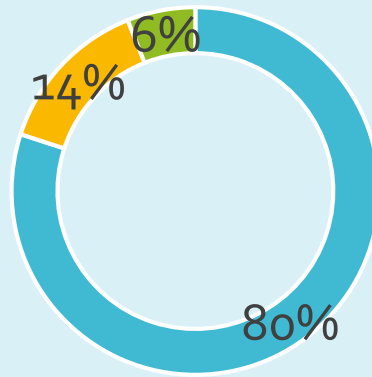
# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Natural Resources



1,261

Acres of conservation  
lands



- Permanently Protected
- Limited Protection
- No Protection (Privately Owned)

### Other Important Issues

#### Soil

- Terrace escarpment soils continue to be important areas to protect

#### Water

- Protect rivers and ponds
- Restore as much natural floodplain as possible

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Open Space & Recreation



3,362

Acres of open space (including conservation lands)

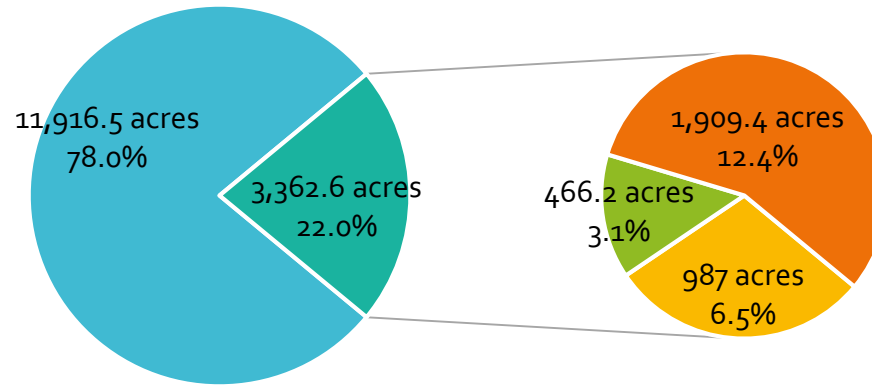
22%

Which is 22% of the City's land area

< 10%

Of the City's land area has some level of protection

Open Space Land and Level of Protection



■ Developed Land

■ Open Space: Permanent Protection

■ Open Space: Limited Protection

■ Open Space: No Protection

29.4%

Of the City's open space is permanently protected

## Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

### Historic & Cultural Resources



4

Historic Districts in Chicopee

9

Structures on the National  
Register of Historic Places

Historic Preservation in Chicopee could benefit from better coordination and more resources

Many City committees/commissions and local non-profits are doing great work with limited resources

## Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

# Climate Change & Sustainability



# Expected Climate Hazards



Riverine and Urban Flooding due to increased rain and more intense storms



High Temperatures and High Winds

***What to do about it??? Making better use of our . . .***



Urban Forests



Parks & Open Space

*They cool the air and retain runoff and floodwaters*

Baseline Report:  
Key Takeaways

Climate Change  
& Sustainability



# Vulnerabilities

*Hazard Mitigation Plan and MVP report are planning for . . .*



Vulnerable Populations: *homeless, homebound, people with disabilities, etc.*



Transportation Infrastructure: *Emergency and Evacuation access*



Utility Infrastructure: *Protection and Redundancy*



Historic and Cultural Resources

# Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Food Access



# Food Insecurity

15 – 20+%

Chicopee Center

Chicopee Falls Willimansett

In parts of these neighborhoods, over 1/5 of residents are food insecure

## Food Alternatives and Assistance

Chicopee Farmers Market

Chicopee Community Garden

Summer Lunch Program

Chicopee WIC

ChicopeeFRESH

Baseline  
Report:  
Key Takeaways

Energy



# Energy Reduction Efforts

*Goal: Reduce City energy use by 20% in 5 years*

**2015**

Almost there! And getting better each year



- 19%

**2018**

## *2014 Municipal Energy Audit*

Audit identified ways to cut City energy spending by 25% annually which would have benefits equivalent to . . .



**10.5**  
Acres of forest preserved from deforestation



**7.8**  
Railcars of coal not consumed



**274.8**  
Cars off the road for a year

## Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Public Health & Social Services



# Chronic Health Conditions

20%

**Obesity** rate among Chicopee children

1

**Cardiovascular Disease** is highest cause of death in Hampden County

6x

**Diabetes** rate for Latinos and Black people compared to the State. *4x higher than Whites.*

↑

**Opioid Use** fatalities are higher in Hampden County than the State and rising

+ 70%

**Asthma** emergency visits in Chicopee compared with the State



## Baseline Report: Key Takeaways

## Public Services & Facilities



# Major Considerations

- Are Departments being funded at an adequate level?
- Are Department funds being spent equitably?
- Are Departments using sound data and protocol to determine what projects get time and attention?
- Are Departments making full use of technology to maximize efficiency and effectiveness?
- Are Departments effectively communicating and collaborating with each other?
- Are Departments transparently and consistently reporting on progress and decision making with the public?

Early  
Engagement  
Efforts  
Ready to go!

# Materials

- **Press Release**
- **Letter of Introduction** (for organization contacts)
- **Outreach Text** (for e-blasts, newsletters, etc.)
- **Flyer** (can also be blown up to poster size)
- **Online Survey** (up and ready!)

***New project web address!***

[www.EnvisionOurChicopee2040.com](http://www.EnvisionOurChicopee2040.com)

Early  
Engagement  
Efforts  
Ready to go!

# Next Steps

- **Mayor's Press Announcement**
- **Distribute Press Release** (Mayor's Office)
- **Distribute Letters of Introduction and Outreach Text** (Steering Committee, Staff, Horsley Witten)
- **Distribute Flyers and Posters**

*Who can YOU reach out to?*

*Where can YOU distribute flyers/posters?*

Early  
Engagement  
Efforts  
Ready to go!

# HW Outreach Blitz

**March 10 & 11**

- State Elected Officials
- City Council Members
- School Superintendent
- Housing Authority
- Boys & Girls Club

*Anything else we should  
prioritize for those days?  
People to meet?  
Places/Events to visit?*

**Economic Development  
Consultant is interviewing . . .**

- Westover Metropolitan Development Corporation/Westover Airport
- Westmass Area Development Corporation
- Chicopee TDI District/MassDevelopment
- Western Mass Economic Development Council
- Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce
- Hampden County Workforce Board
- Westover Air Reserve Base

First Public  
Workshop  
Save the Date!  
April 15

## Time and Location TBD

### Open House

- Info boards – demographics, etc.
- Topic boards – one for each topic
- *What is your top issue for each topic?*
- Fun, interactive questions

### Presentation

- Importance/role of the Comprehensive Plan
- Brief overview of demographics/trends
- Instructions for small group discussions

First Public  
Workshop  
Save the Date!  
April 15

## Small Group Discussions

- Q1: What is something **positive** happening in Chicopee? Why is it positive?
- Q2: What has potential but **needs improvement**? What might some of those improvements be?
- Q3: What is something that could be **transformed** to meet your vision of Chicopee's future? What does that transformation look like? What are the opportunities and challenges to making this happen?

## Report Back

- Top Transformations from each Group

