



KEY TAKEAWAYS • TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY •

WHY TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY MATTER

A sustainable transportation network supports the local economy and quality of life for residents. For local businesses, an efficient network minimizes disruption in the delivery of goods and services that support their operations, allows employees to travel safely to work, and ensures customers are able to get to their storefronts. Residents use the network to access employment, health care, education, recreation, and consumer goods. Those with low mobility, such as the disabled, elderly, children, and persons with low incomes, rely on more diverse ways of getting around, and if these options are minimized, their access to opportunities is also reduced.

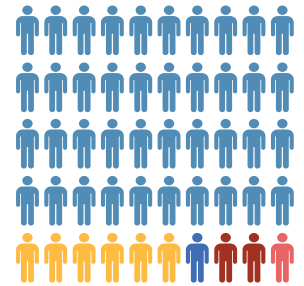
MOBILITY

Although it is possible to travel by foot, bike, car, and bus within Chicopee, the overwhelming majority of existing transportation infrastructure supports vehicles and 90% of residents drive alone to work. Increasing the number of people who walk to work is a worthwhile goal for the City, as neighboring communities such as South Hadley, Springfield, and Holyoke have significantly higher numbers of people who commute by walking.

Approximately 30% of Chicopee’s population is over 55 years old. This demonstrates a need to plan for a population that will soon stop driving individual vehicles by increasing transportation choices for transit, shared rides, walking, and biking.

Out of every 100 Chicopee residents ...

- 90 drive alone to work
- 6 carpool
- 1 takes public transit
- 2 walk
- 1 commutes by other means
- 0 bike



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Chicopee is served by five Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) bus routes. Transportation services are also provided by the RiverMills Senior Center and the Valley Opportunity Council (VOC).



Redevelopment such as the Cabotville Mill complex and former Lyman Mills (Dwight Manufacturing) in Chicopee Center provide opportunity to expand infrastructure that supports transit, walking, biking, and other alternatives to private vehicles and help build a culture where more people feel comfortable using these alternatives.

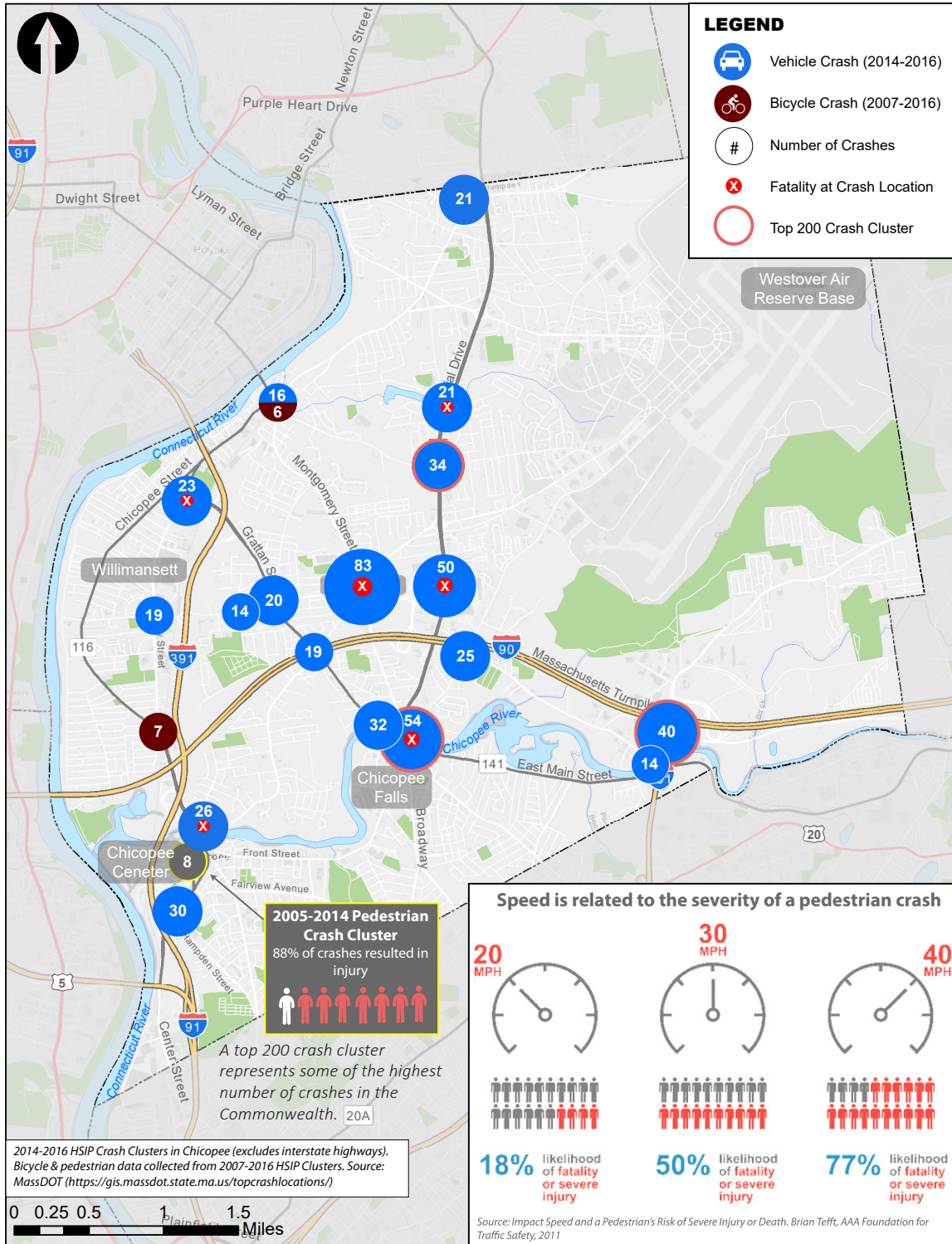
RAIL

Regional rail service is provided by Amtrak between Hartford, CT and Burlington, VT, with stations in Holyoke and Springfield. MassDOT is undergoing a study to assess rail service alternatives along the Boston-Worcester-Springfield-Pittsfield corridor. This connection would better tie Chicopee to the Boston area job market, potentially making Chicopee a more attractive place to live for workers and support economic development.

ROADWAY NETWORK & SAFETY

Chicopee’s roadway network is a mix of interstate highways (Interstate 90, Interstate 291, Interstate 91 and Interstate 391) that provide regional access, but may limit local access for walkers and bikers, state routes (Route 33, Route 141, and Route 116) that provide access within Chicopee and to neighboring communities, and local roads that have the potential to support more walkers and bikers.

The most recent MassDOT crash data shows 20 crash clusters in Chicopee, two of which involved bicycles and nine of which resulted in fatalities. In 2015 a pedestrian crash cluster was identified in Chicopee Center, where 7 of 8 crashes resulted in injury. This was the focus of a WalkBoston Walk Audit. The number of recorded crashes city-wide demonstrates a need for improved safety for all modes of transportation.



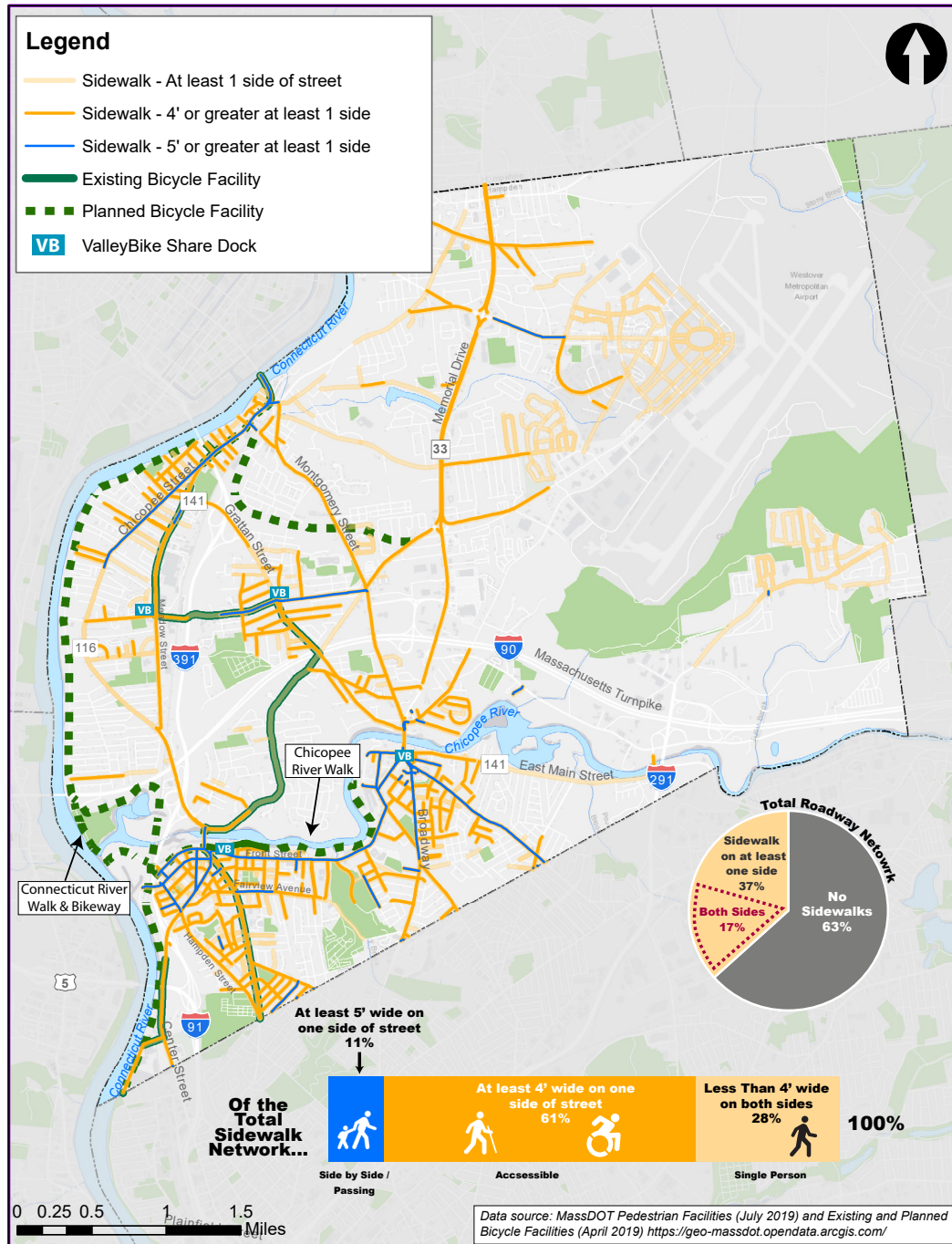
WALKING & BIKING

Several existing reports have documented issues and opportunities for walkers and bikers in Chicopee. There is opportunity to improve on-street networks for both walking and biking to support environmental sustainability and economic development.

The Chicopee Canal and RiverWalk and Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway are developing into the City's first meaningful off-road transportation facilities. When completed, they will improve walking and biking opportunities within Chicopee and regionally, eventually connecting to the larger regional bike network.



Image courtesy of Traillink.com



MULTIMODAL

What is multimodal transportation?

Planning for multimodal transportation considers different modes of transportation (walking, biking, automobile, transit) and the connections between these modes. Planners evaluate available options and access to different transportation modes to meet the needs of residents and impacts on social, economic, and environmental aspects of the community.

There are several current initiatives that support multimodal transportation in Chicopee.

ValleyBike Share

In the Summer of 2020, Chicopee will be installing three ValleyBike kiosks to serve the Chicopee Center, Chicopee Falls, and Willimansett neighborhoods.

Wayfinding in Chicopee Center

Chicopee is working with MassDevelopment on the Chicopee Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) District to improve the branding, wayfinding, and vibrancy of Chicopee Center.

Safe Routes to School

Currently 14 local schools are registered with the MassDOT program. Participation can involve educational programs as well as funding for infrastructure safety improvements.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

There are two dual EV charging stations at the RiverMills Senior Center as well as a few private (but publicly accessible) locations in the City.

Complete Streets

A “complete street” is designed for all users to experience safe, convenient, and comfortable travel regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Currently the City is registered with the MassDOT Complete Streets program. The City can move forward by developing a policy and prioritization plan for improvements to its street network.



PARKING MANAGEMENT

Parking management can provide areas like Chicopee Center, Chicopee Falls, Aldenville, and Willimansett with multiple benefits, ranging from economic to safety. A parking utilization study was completed in Chicopee Center in 2009 and found that many parking areas, public and private, fail to reach 50% utilization over the course of a typical day. There is very little if any shared parking agreements between public and private entities- exploring this arrangement may allow for increasing utilization in existing parking lots as opposed to creating additional parking and thus leaving the undeveloped or redeveloped sites more flexibility for development in neighborhoods where shared parking is a feasible option.

