



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- OPEN SPACE & RECREATION •

## WHY OPEN SPACE & RECREATION MATTER

Recreational resources provide a variety of ways for everyone in the community to be healthy, happy, and active. They provide spaces for people to exercise, gather with their friends and neighbors or just have fun. Parks are vitally important public spaces where everyone is welcome. Consequently, it is absolutely necessary that parks be equitably accessible and maintained for everyone across the City. Open Space and recreation lands are important to Chicopee residents in many ways. As a small city, Chicopee has to be especially aware of maintaining and protecting its remaining open spaces and park land to sustain the social, environmental, and economic benefits these resources provide to the public.

### RIVERWALKS

Chicopee is fortunate to have significant riverfront access to both the Connecticut and Chicopee Rivers. However, it is often difficult for residents and visitors to know the rivers are even there, let alone enjoy these beautiful riverfronts. Two ongoing riverwalk projects are seeking to improve access to the rivers while also connecting people to various other parks and recreation areas throughout the City.

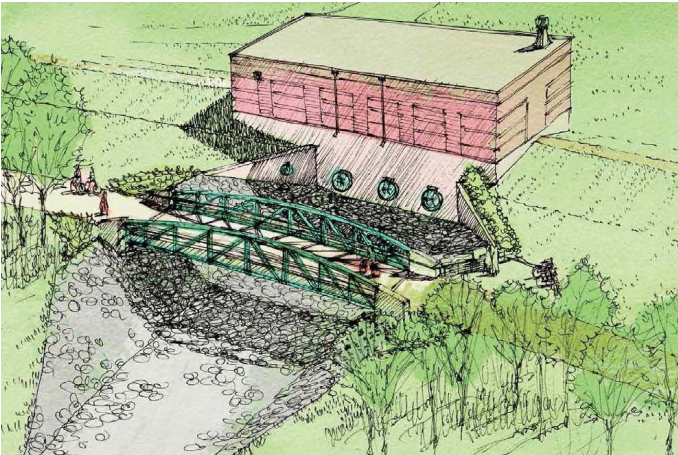
The Chicopee Canal and RiverWalk repurposes an old rail line as a walking and biking trail. It follows the Chicopee River and is being developed in three phases. Phase I is complete and extends from the City center to Grape Street. Phase II, currently in design, will extend the RiverWalk to the former Uniroyal property. Phase III will bring the project to a trailhead at the RiverMills Senior Center, completing the connection of the path between Chicopee Center and Chicopee Falls.

The Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway is a regional effort to build a 21-mile pedestrian and bicycle path planned along the banks of the Connecticut River. The Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway North begins at the Medina Street boat ramp and parking lot and continues north to Nash Field. Construction for this section is slated for summer and fall of 2020. Additional proposed plans call for the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway South, a route continuing south from this point and connecting into Springfield. This whole system will be a major benefit for recreation and transportation purposes across the region.



Chicopee Canal and Riverwalk

Image courtesy of Trillink.com



Connecticut River and Bikeway North

Image courtesy of Beta Engineering

# PARKS & RECREATION

Chicopee is responsible for 32 parks and recreational facilities throughout the City, including several school grounds. These facilities offer a wide range of amenities, including splash pads and wading pools, multipurpose fields, baseball fields, basketball courts, playgrounds, ice rinks, pools, walking trails, and picnic and seating areas, among many others.

The City Parks and Recreation Department organizes a broad range of programming and events for residents of all ages and manages the Chicopee Community Gardens located at Lincoln Grove Park with an expansion of that program to be offered at Rivers Park in the Spring/Summer of 2021.

