

# Holyoke

## Comprehensive Plan

UPDATE 2024

**Community Listening  
Session #1**  
September 25, 2024



**Prepared for:**  
City of Holyoke  
Office of Planning and Economic Development

**Prepared by:**  
Agency  
Landscape + Planning



**Holyoke**







# Let's shape the future of Holyoke!

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a decision making tool that helps cities remain vibrant, equitable, resilient, and inclusive places for present and future generations. These plans span all aspects of physical development: from the types of housing that gets built, the transportation we use to get around, our climate resilience, and more. The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update will use your ideas and preferences to refresh Holyoke's vision for the future.

**Did you know?**  
Holyoke hasn't updated its comprehensive plan since 1999!

### Project Timeline

2024

Spring

Summer

Fall

2025

Winter

Spring

Listen & Learn

Envision Aspirational Futures

Identify Implementation Pathways

Outreach in the community

Survey on City Vision

Public Hearings

Small Group Work

Citywide Listening Sessions

Comp Plan Update Completed

Quality of Life

Safe Streets

Protected Environment

Housing for All

Economic Opportunity

## Your Voice Matters!

The Holyoke Comprehensive planning process is built on a foundation of community engagement and shared decision-making by creating a variety of bi-lingual engagement methods for residents to interact and share their thoughts. Each form of engagement offers a unique perspective of community needs, ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan addresses the needs of the entire city. Community engagement will take on various forms, including:

- Pop up booths at local festivals and events
- Interactive community-wide listening sessions
- Focus group meetings with topic specific stakeholders
- City staff specific workshops
- Online surveying
- Community Advisory Committee made up of resident representatives

### Our engagement values include:

Focus on Community Assets

Connect to and Include BIPOC Voices

Reconnect to Previously Engaged Entities

Co-creation and Shared Decision-Making

Keep It Fun and Playful

### Get Involved!

- Subscribe to the OPED Newsletter for project updates
- Attend future City-wide Listening Sessions and Pop-ups
- Take the Community Survey and share your thoughts

Scan the QR Code for updates!

# Understanding Holyoke's History

## From an Industrial Past to a Green Future

Holyoke's growth has been shaped by its industrial origins, diverse immigrant populations, post-industrial challenges, and efforts toward urban revitalization and innovation. Its historical role as an industrial powerhouse is now being re-imagined with a focus on education, green technology, and cultural inclusion.

**Did you know?**  
The first inhabitants of Holyoke were, of course, the Native Americans including the Pequot, Mohegan, and Chippewa. Others included the Agawam to the South, and the Narragansett to the North.

1600: Located on the western edge of the Connecticut River valley, the Pequot, Mohegan, and Chippewa tribes lived in the area. 1676: The first European settlement was established by John Pynchon, a merchant and landowner. 1847: The first Holyoke Mill was built, marking the beginning of the city's industrial era. 1873: The city's first school was established. 1894: The city's first hospital was established. 1900: The city's first public library was established. 1937: The city's first public housing project was established. 1940: The city's first public works department was established. 1959: The city's first public works department was established. 1968: The city's first public works department was established. 1984: The city's first public works department was established. 1992: The city's first public works department was established. 2007: The city's first public works department was established. 2013: The city's first public works department was established. 2018: The city's first public works department was established.

## Holyoke's Rail and Rivers

While Holyoke's growth is mostly accredited to the manufacturing mills none of this would be possible without the railroads and rivers that connected Holyoke to the rest of the region and provided affordable hydroelectric power to the mills in the city by way of the canals.

Today the Holyoke Dam contains two hydroelectric generating wheels with a total installed capacity of approximately 33 megawatts.

**Did you know?**  
Despite being deemed eligible by the Massachusetts Historical Commission as of 2024, no mill properties in the city had been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Place of Opportunity

Industrial expansion attracted large waves of immigrants, particularly Irish, French-Canadian, and later Polish and German workers. These groups helped build and work in the mills, shaping the city's culture and identity. With the decline of industrial economies, many of these ethnic groups would leave for larger cities like Springfield or Boston.

In the latter half of the 20th century, Holyoke saw a significant influx of Puerto Rican residents, especially during the 1950s-1970s.

1680: Holyoke's population was approximately 100. 1940: Holyoke's population was approximately 10,000. 2020: Holyoke's population was approximately 40,000.

## City Development & Growth

While some of the city's neighborhoods, like Oakdale were created by individual developers as streetcar suburbs for mill workers in the 19th century, others like Rock Valley and Elmwood were existing rural villages that predate the city's incorporation.

1680: Holyoke's city limits were approximately 100 acres. 1940: Holyoke's city limits were approximately 1,000 acres. 2020: Holyoke's city limits were approximately 10,000 acres.

# Holyoke Today!

## A City on the Rise

Wards one and two of Holyoke, historically challenged by low household income levels, high unemployment, and low educational attainment, are seeing signs of improvement in both economic and educational trends due to recent adult education programs in the city. In the last ten years the rates of residents finishing high school and graduating college with bachelor's and master's degrees have increased. In March 2024, the Holyoke School District began the process to transition away from school receivership, and the new Peck Middle School is under construction.

**Did you know?**  
Holyoke service providers have concentrated the majority of these programs within Central Holyoke to great success.

Legend: Holyoke Service Providers, Holyoke School District, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

Median Household Income of the Region: Holyoke is below the regional average.

Educational Attainment 2010-2020: Holyoke shows improvement in educational attainment.

## A Hub for Jobs and Entrepreneurship

Holyoke serves as an employment hub for surrounding areas, with a net inflow of about 4,800 workers on their daily commutes. Employment in Holyoke is clustered around the downtown area to the east and the Holyoke Mall to the southeast.

Health services and retail make up some of the largest sector of employment in Holyoke, with the Holyoke Medical Center as one of the City's largest employers. In addition, Holyoke has an active and effective network of workforce development initiatives, proven entrepreneurship support and mentoring initiatives, and a hub for innovative green manufacturing.

**Did you know?**  
As Holyoke looks to the future, the city has a unique economic foundation that includes the existing legacy of advanced manufacturing, new climate tech firms, family-owned businesses, and restaurants.

Legend: Holyoke Employment Hubs, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

Legend: Holyoke Entrepreneurship Hubs, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

Legend: Holyoke Health Services Hubs, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

## What is City Zoning?

Zoning is the way through which a city separates parts of the city into zones, each with its own set of rules of the buildings that can be located there and how dense it can be. Zoning provides clarity for property owners or developers to build or renovate without having to go through a lengthy application process as long as they follow that area's zone rules. Zoning works best when routinely updated to adapt to a city's future needs. When zoning code gets out dated it can cause issues like:

- If zoning codes no longer reflect current needs, developers and property owners will need to request variances and special exceptions to bypass outdated restrictions, creating additional burden on the city and developers.
- Without updates, zoning codes may not reflect the needs of emerging industries. This can prevent cities from attracting and supporting modern businesses, limiting economic growth.
- Older zoning codes may not include provisions for sustainable development, such as green building practices, energy-efficient design, or flood mitigation strategies.
- Without updates, the code can perpetuate inefficient land use patterns that contribute to environmental degradation, traffic congestion, and excessive energy consumption.

Legend: Holyoke Zoning Types, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

**Did you know?**  
It takes the average project between 3-6 weeks to go through a zoning application. While this is still faster than some communities in the area, some residents think that this process could be streamlined in the future.

# Envisioning Holyoke's Future!

## Green and Renewable

Holyoke Gas and Electric (HGE) provides 80% carbon-free electricity, mainly from hydro power, and hosts 28 solar projects of various sizes across the city. The large capacity of affordable electricity and future waste-water investments makes Holyoke an attractive city for potential business owners and future industrial users.

Holyoke Energy Mix: 80% Carbon-Free, 20% Fossil Fuels.

Holyoke Power Sources: 80% Carbon-Free, 20% Fossil Fuels.

Legend: Holyoke Power Sources, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

**Did you know?**  
In 2022, MassDEP granted a filtration waiver due to high water quality, making Holyoke one of two unfettered sources in Massachusetts.

## Holyoke and the Climate

Holyoke, Massachusetts, like many cities, faces challenges from climate change, including increased flooding, extreme weather, and rising temperatures. As the city looks to the future, understanding how to best mitigate these effects will ensure the longevity and resilience of the region.

Legend: Holyoke Climate Challenges, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

Legend: Holyoke Flood Zones, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

Legend: Holyoke Heat Island Severity, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

Legend: Holyoke FEMA Flood Hazard Zones, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

## A City on the Move

Holyoke's transportation system features a gridded downtown, suburban-like neighborhoods, and regional highways. Currently Holyoke is dominated by cars, with limited sidewalks, bike infrastructure, and infrequent bus and train services, which causes economic hardship for the nearly 20% of households without a vehicle. Many of these residents are concentrated in Central Holyoke where pedestrian and bike crashes are most common.

Looking ahead, several MassDOT projects aim to enhance pedestrian access and safety. Similarly, the Holyoke Biking and Pedestrian Committee (HBPC) regularly advocates for improved walking and biking infrastructure but the city lacks an approved Complete Streets Plan or Vision Zero Plan.

**Did you know?**  
From 2021 to April 2024, over 5,000 crashes occurred, with 15 fatalities and 1,119 injuries, mainly downtown and in the Flats.

## Future Bike Infrastructure

Legend: Holyoke Future Bike Infrastructure, Holyoke City, Holyoke Town, Holyoke Village, Holyoke Ward, Holyoke Zone, Holyoke Area, Holyoke Region, Holyoke State, Holyoke Country, Holyoke World, Holyoke Universe.

**Did you know?**  
While a robust bike network is envisioned, funding for these projects is pending.

# How else do you envision Holyoke?



## Gallery

What are Holyoke's greatest assets?

What is most important to your quality of life in Holyoke?

What is your dream for Holyoke?



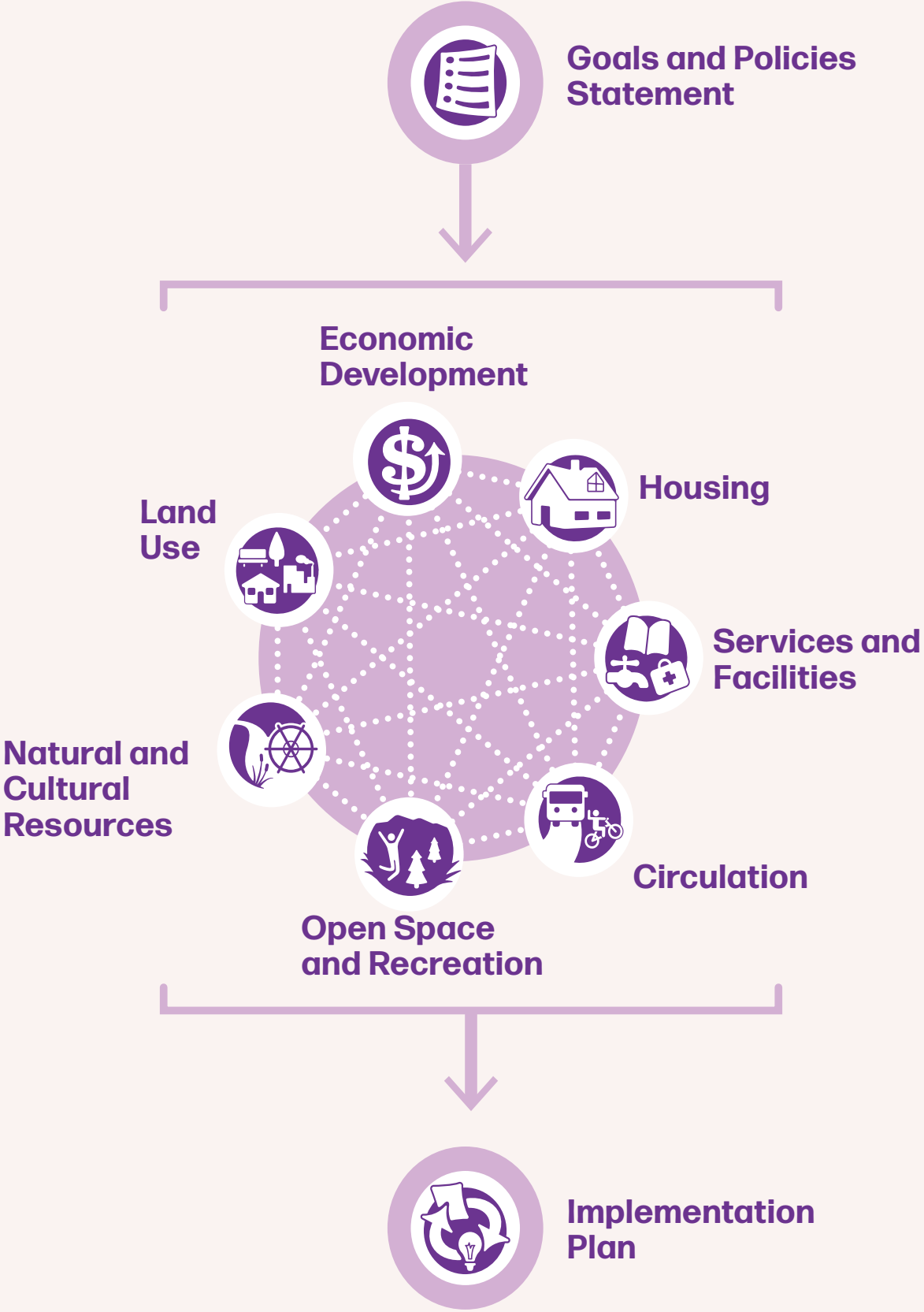


# Comprehensive Plan Overview

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, under MGL Ch 41 Sec. 81D, requires cities and towns to maintain a comprehensive plan for their long-term physical development. Through comprehensive plans, cities and towns envision aspirational futures for themselves and identify implementation pathways for achieving them. These plans span all aspects of physical development--- from the types of housing we have in our community, to how we get around, to our resilience to climate change, and more.

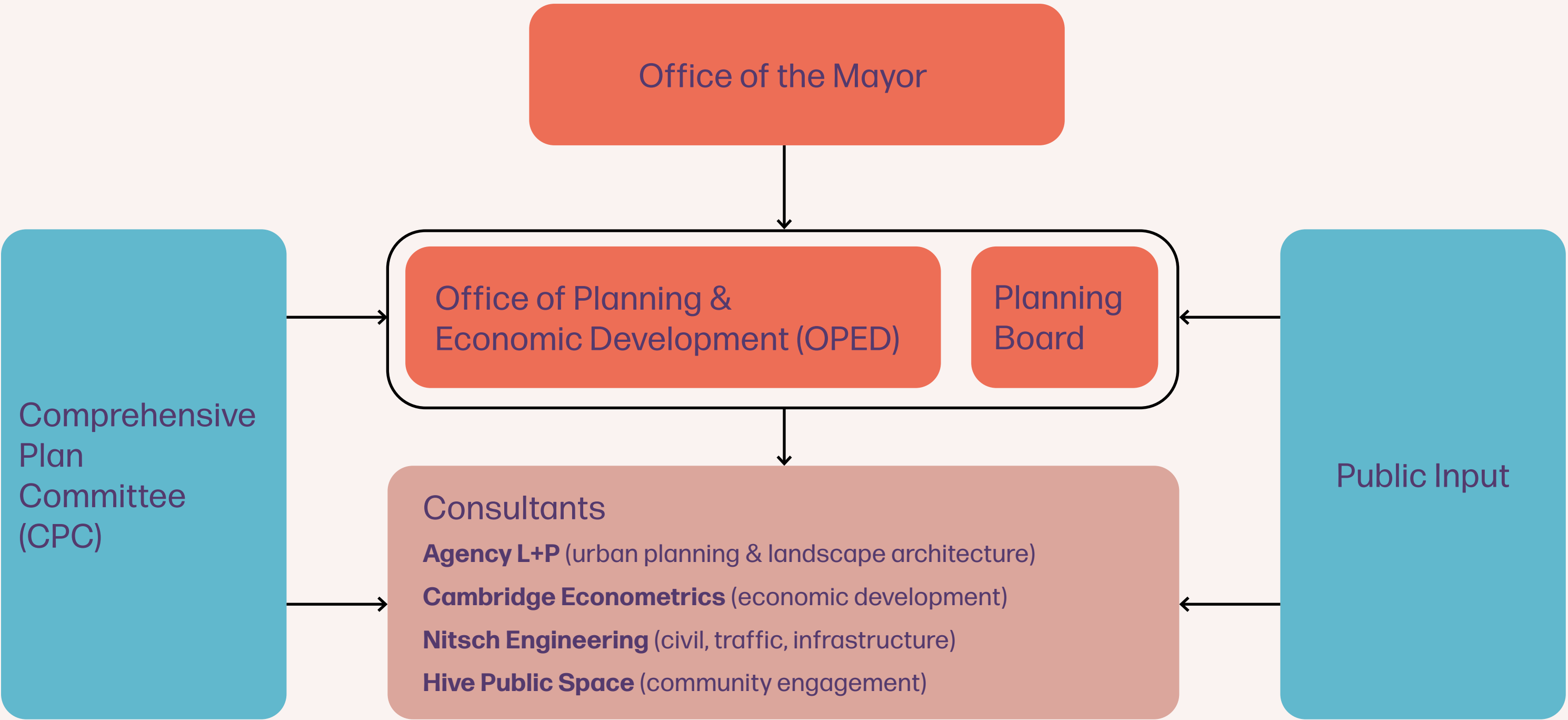
Holyoke last updated its comprehensive plan in 1999. A lot has changed since then and fresh ideas are needed. The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update will refresh Holyoke’s vision for its future.

**“A city that inspires, in constant growth, creating opportunity for all”**  
**-Mayor Garcia**





# Organizational Structure





# Public Engagement Approach

Focus on  
Community Assets



Connect to and Include  
BIPOC Voices



Reconnect to Previously  
Engaged Entities



Co-creation and Shared  
Decision-Making



Keep It Fun and Playful





# Public Engagement to Date

## 7 POP UP EVENTS

- Carlos Vega Park
- Noche de San Juan
- KeyFoods Marketplace
- Community Field Park
- Holyoke Public Library
- Heritage State Park
- Downtown Business Connections

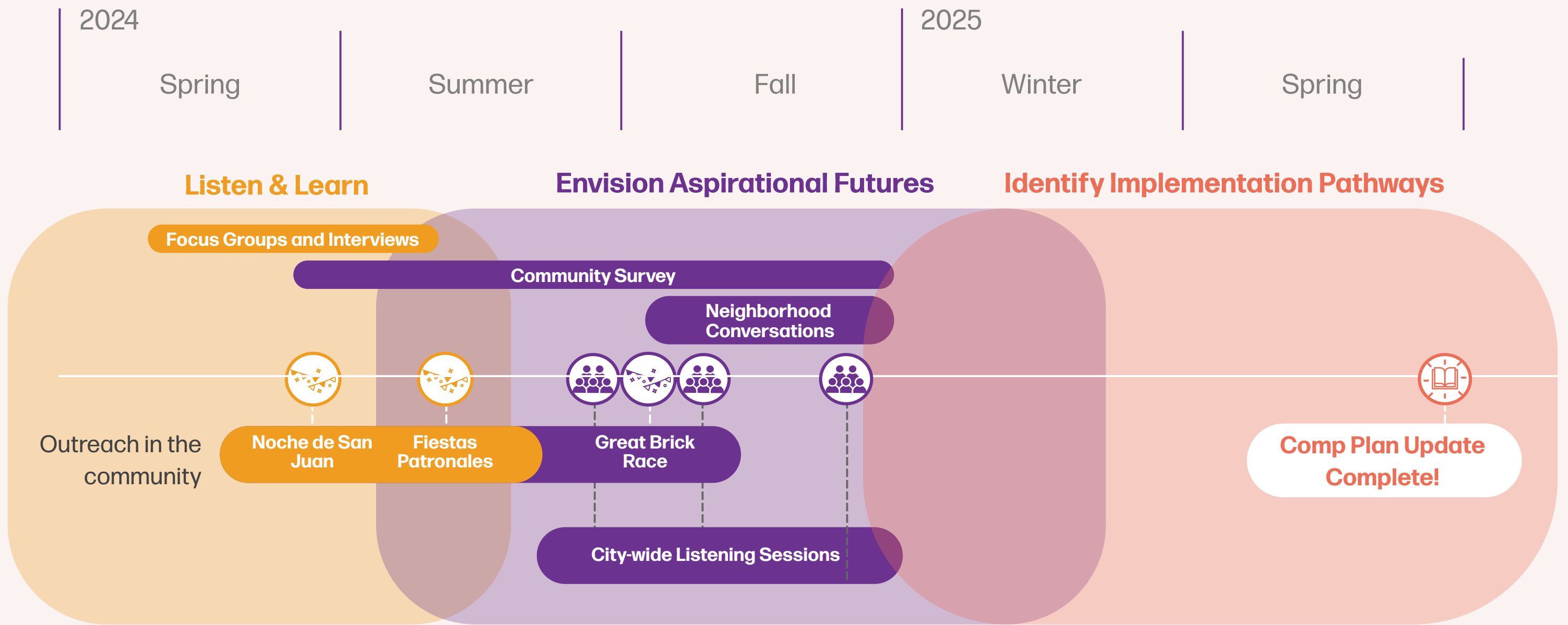
## 6 FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

- Cultural Resources
- Developers
- Land Use & Zoning
- Open Space & Recreation
- Social Services
- Transportation & Mobility





# Engagement Timeline







# **HOLYOKE TODAY**

**1. Community Context**

**2. Housing and Development**

**3. Economy and Workforce**

**4. Natural Assets**

**5. Transportation**

**6. Services and Facilities**





# HOLYOKE TODAY

**1. Community Context**

**2. Housing and Development**

**3. Economy and Workforce**

**4. Natural Assests**

**5. Transportation**

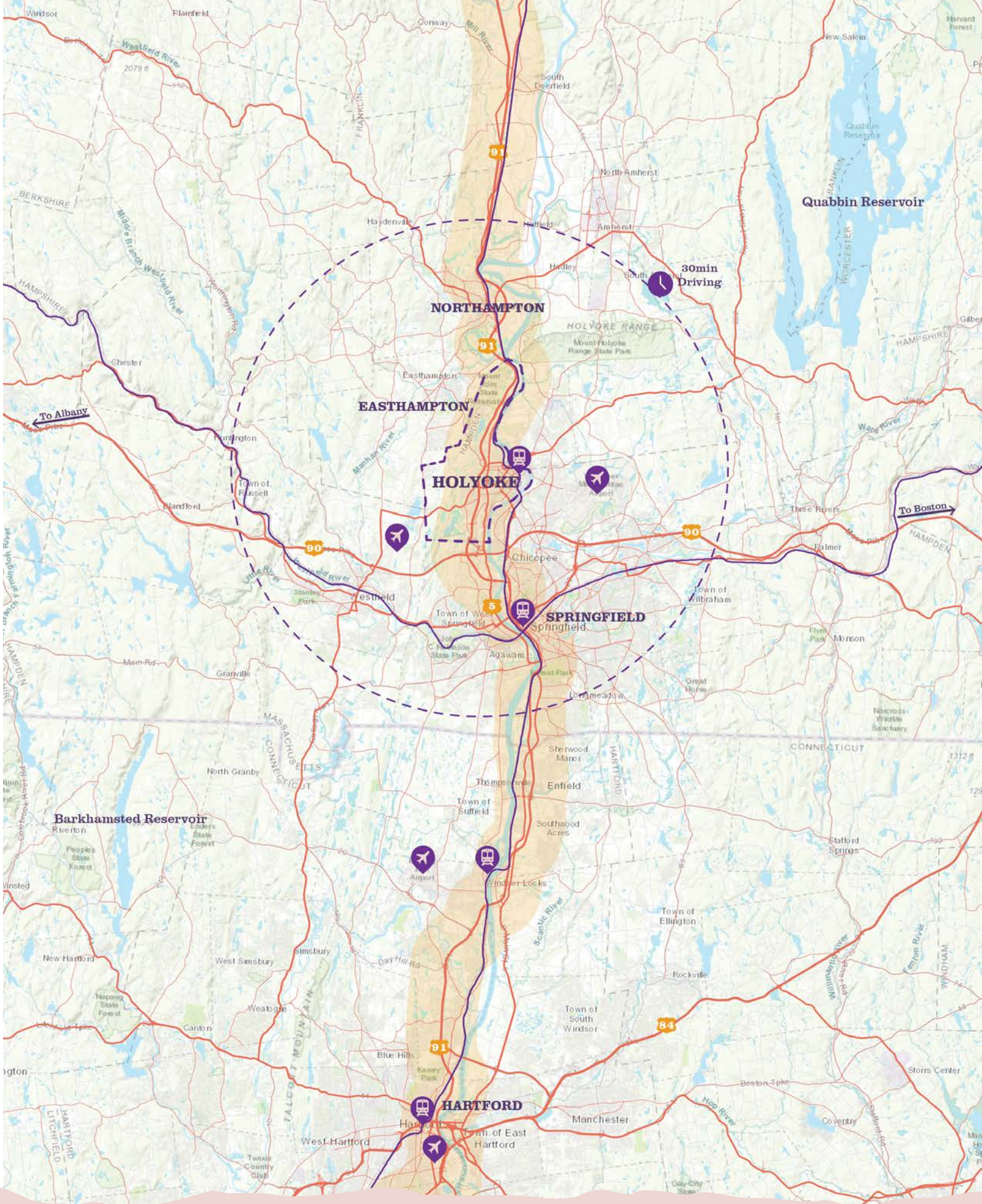
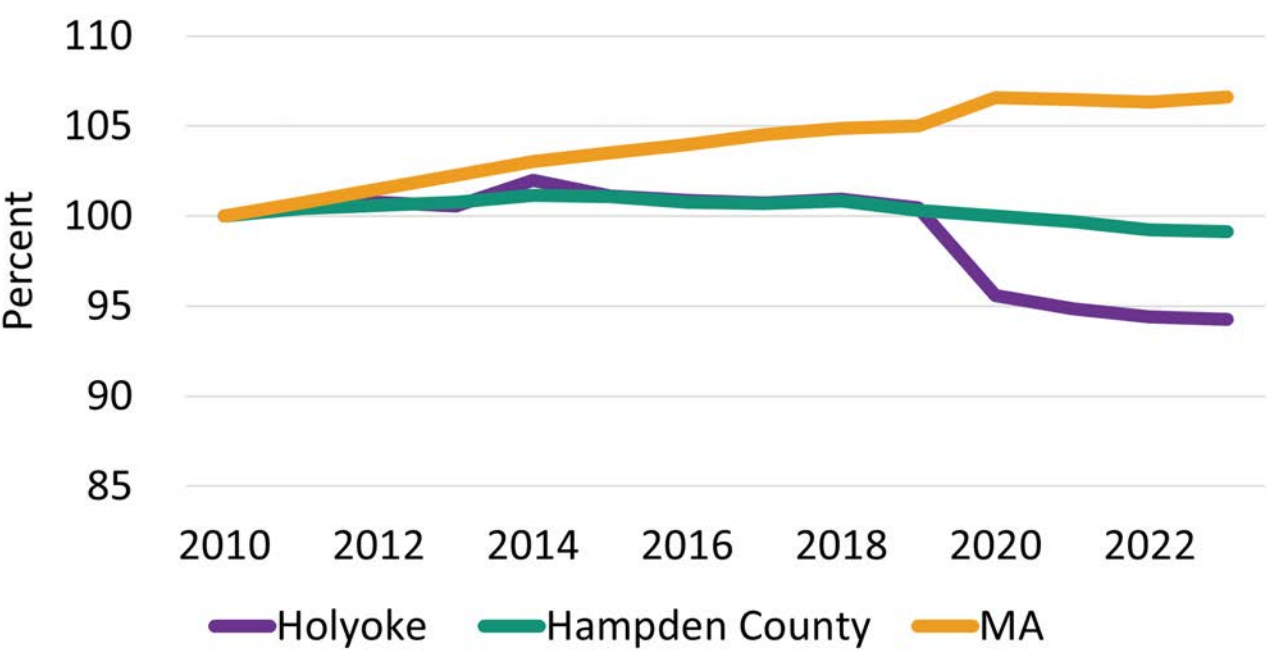
**6. Services and Facilities**



# Regional Context

- Knowledge Corridor
- Natural assets
- Transportation connectivity

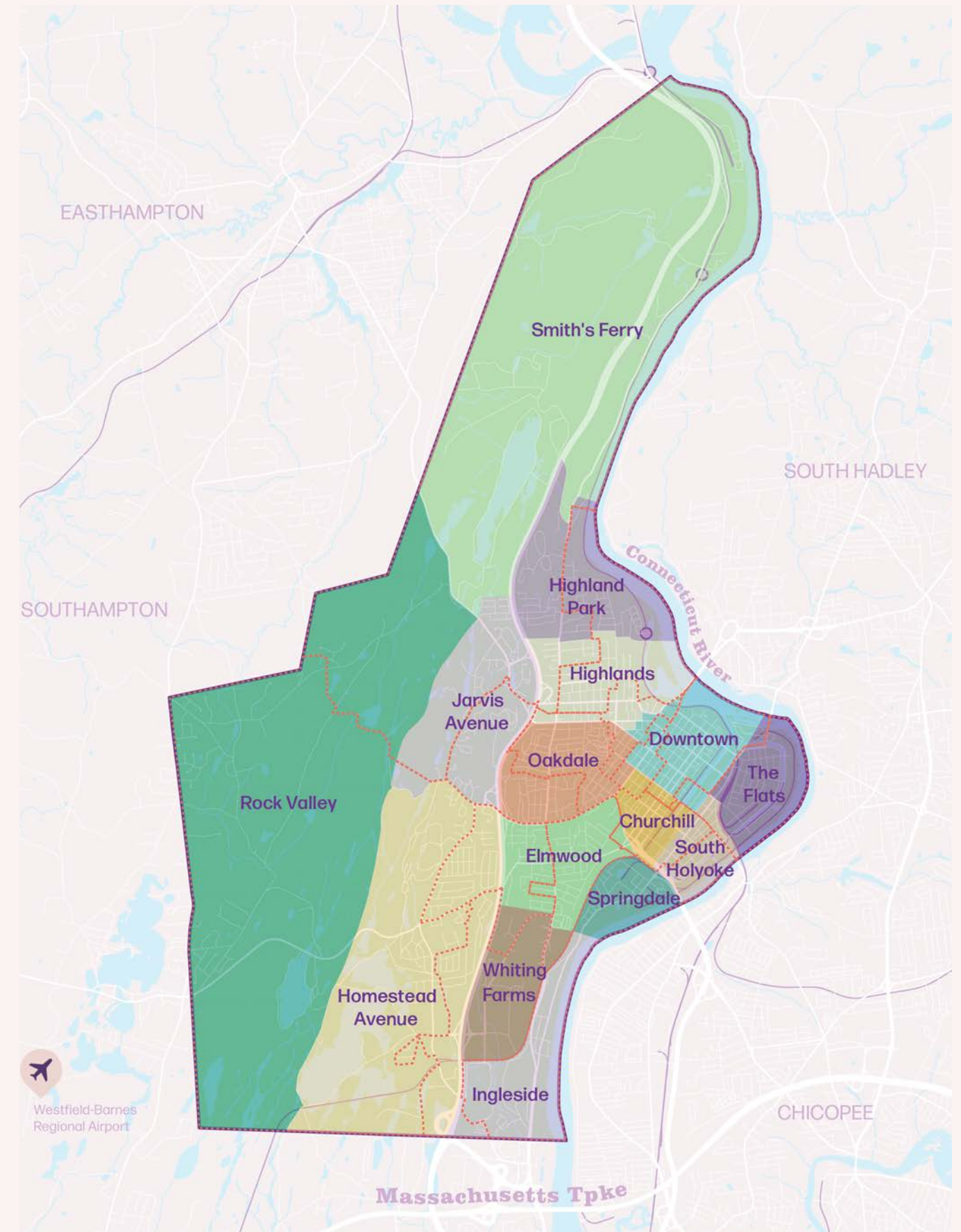
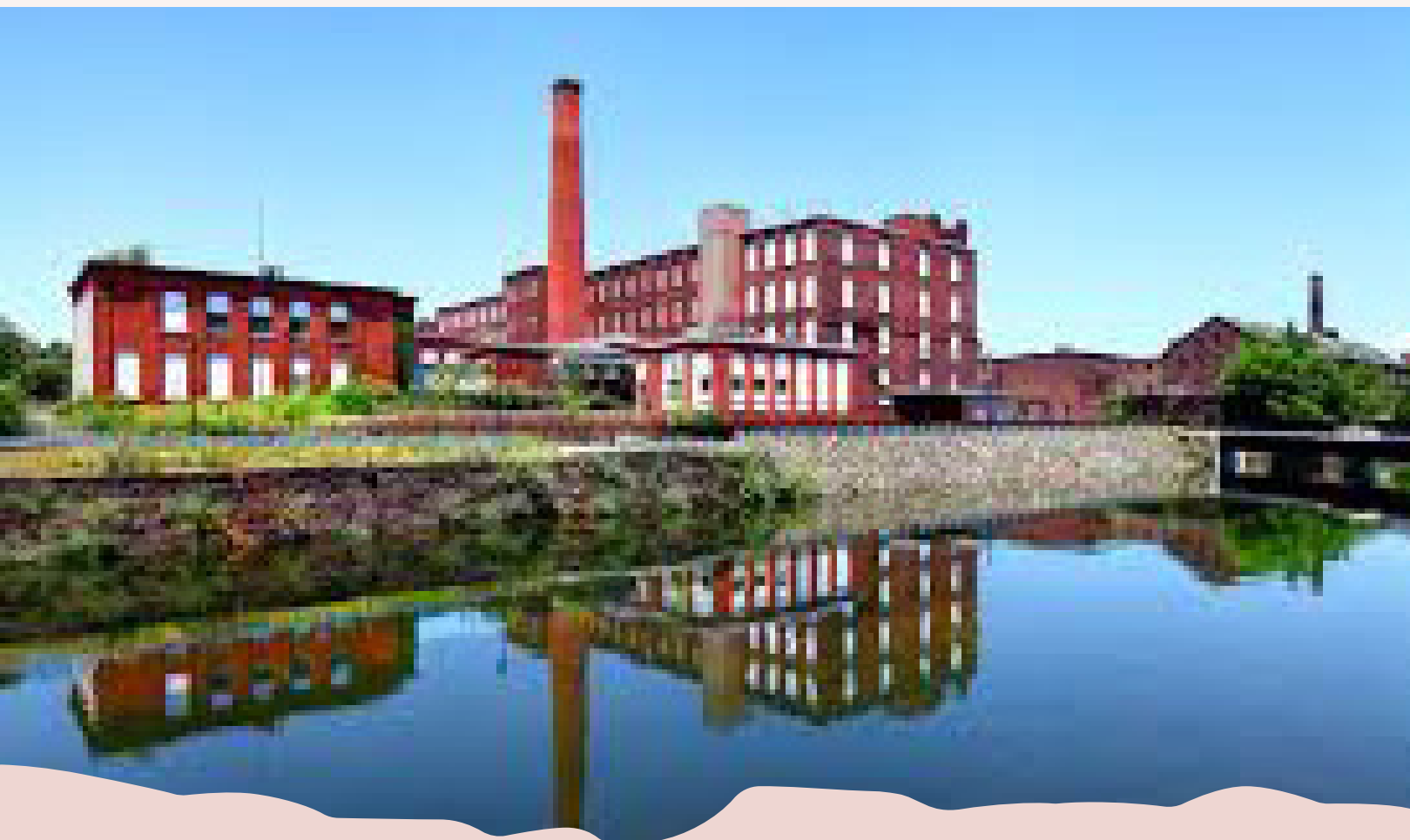
Comparative Population Growth Rate





## Unique Character

- Industrial canals
- Walkable downtown
- Streetcar neighborhoods
- Conservation land

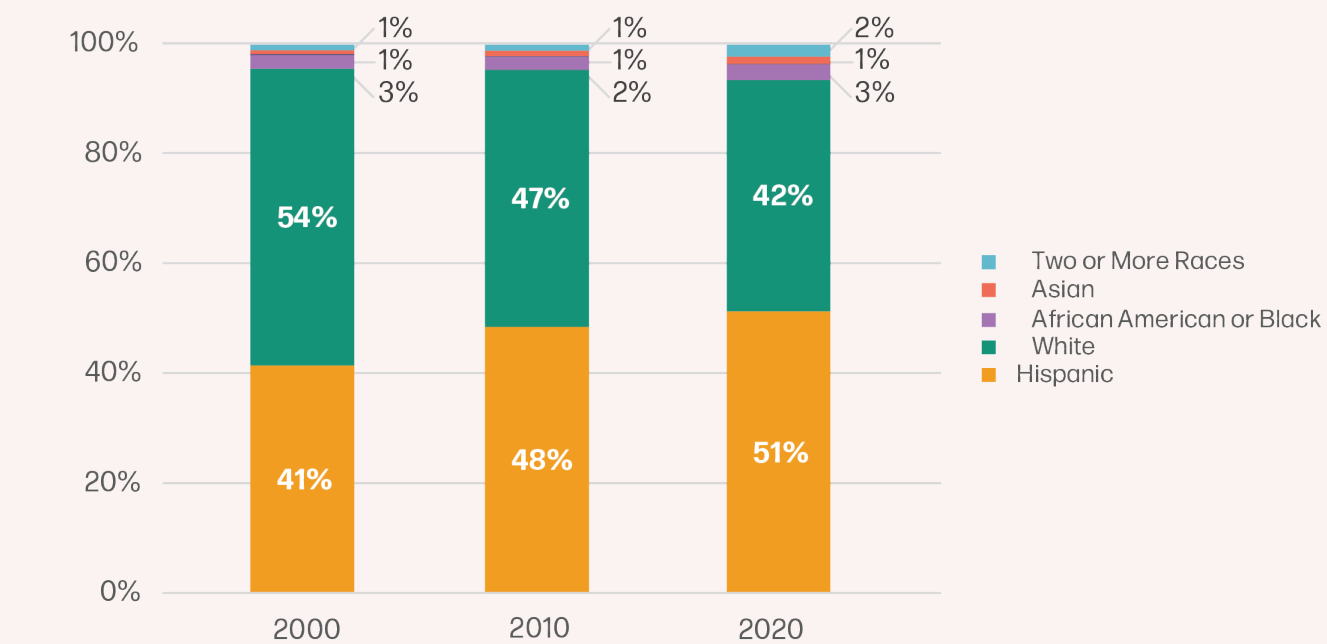




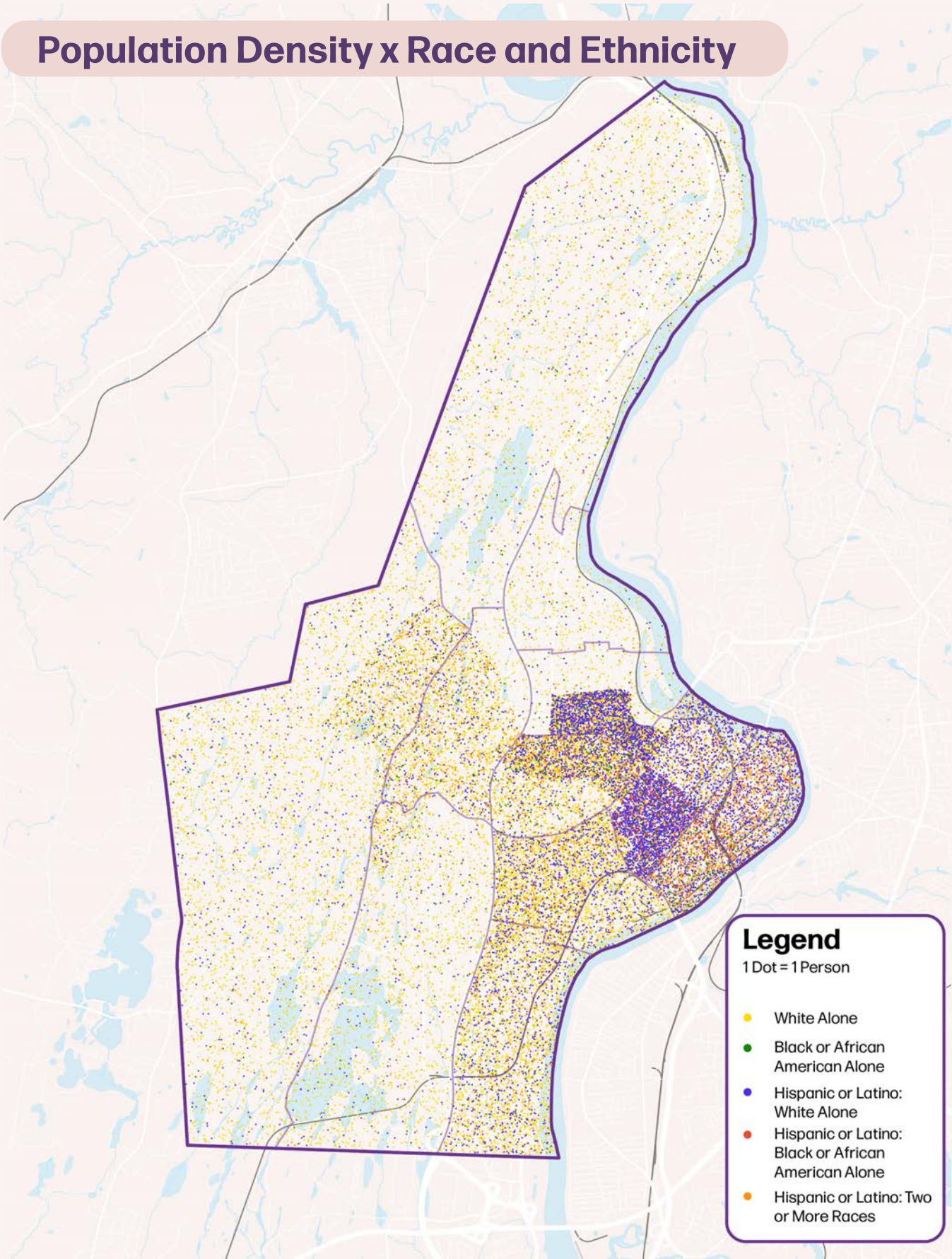
# Gateway Community

- Holyoke is an important community in the Puerto Rican diaspora
- Patterns of settlement and ethnicity

## Race and Ethnicity Over Time



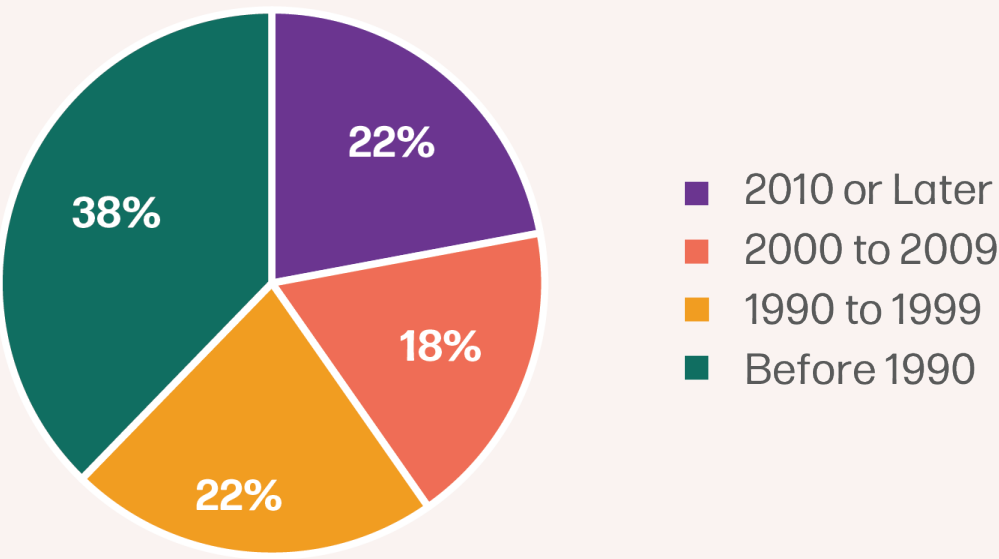
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2000,2010, 2020 five-year estimates



# Gateway Community

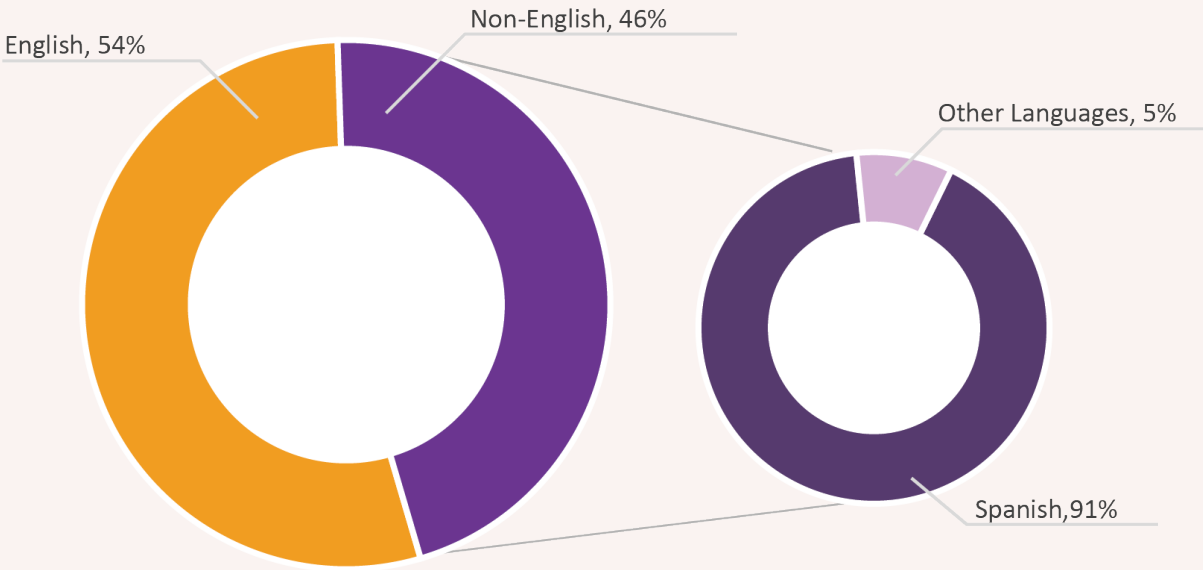
- Many who immigrated to Holyoke have been here for a while
- Spanish is spoken broadly

## Year of Entry for Foreign Born Population



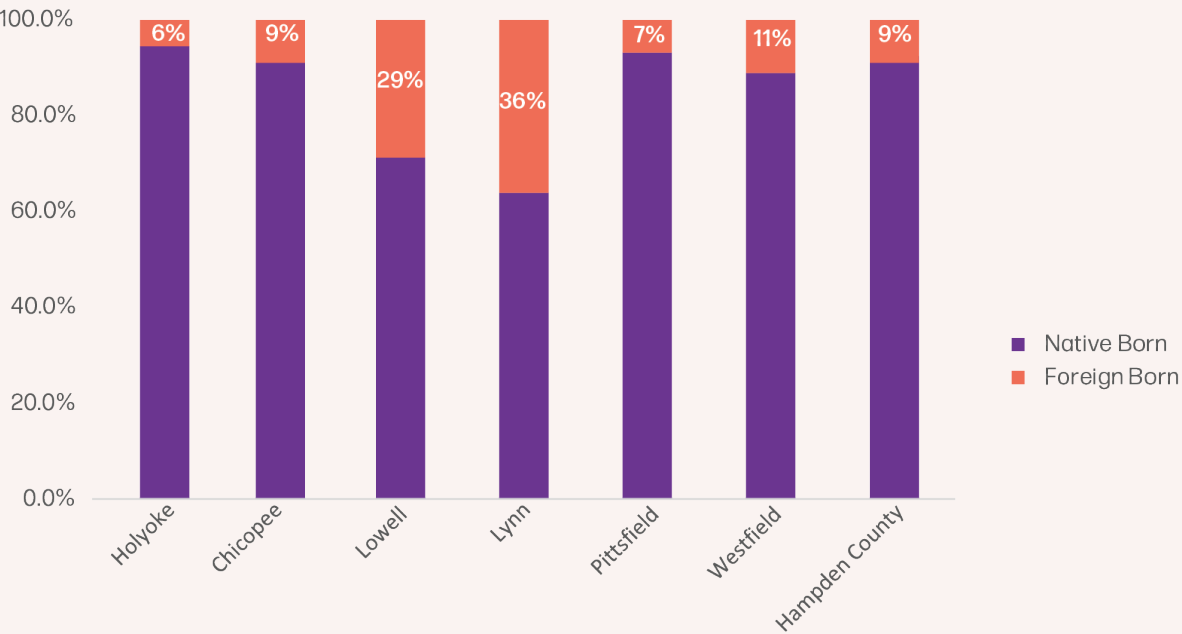
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020 five-year estimates

## Language Spoken at Home



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020 five-year estimates

## Population Nativity



The US government considers individuals born in Puerto Rico to be native-born US citizens.

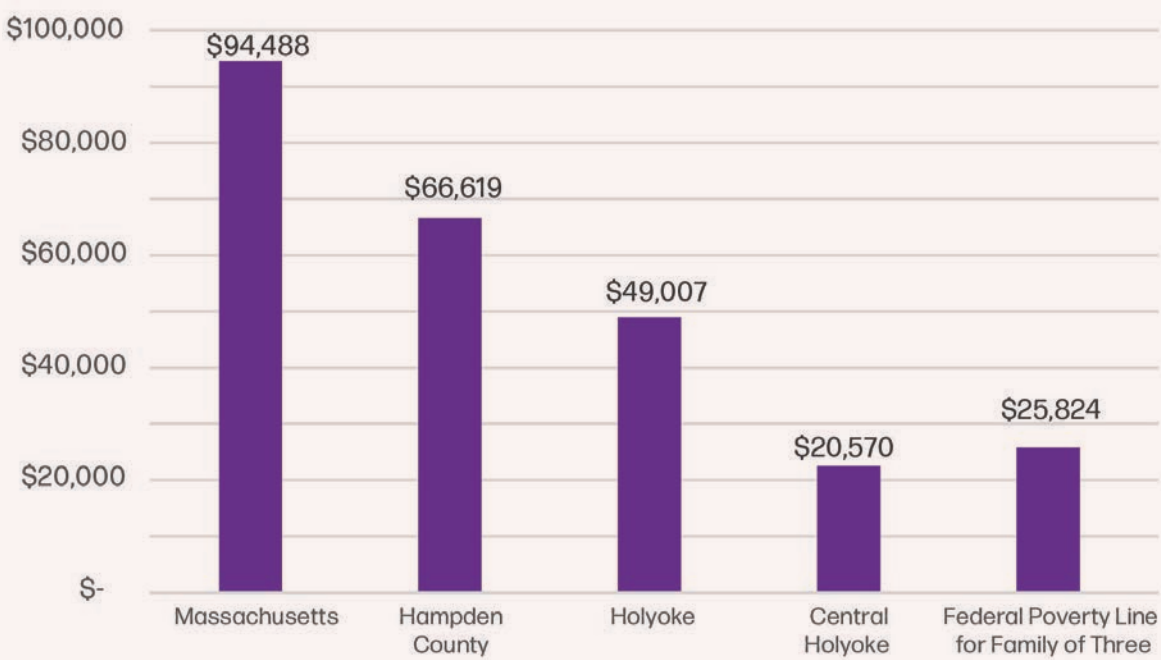
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020 five-year estimates



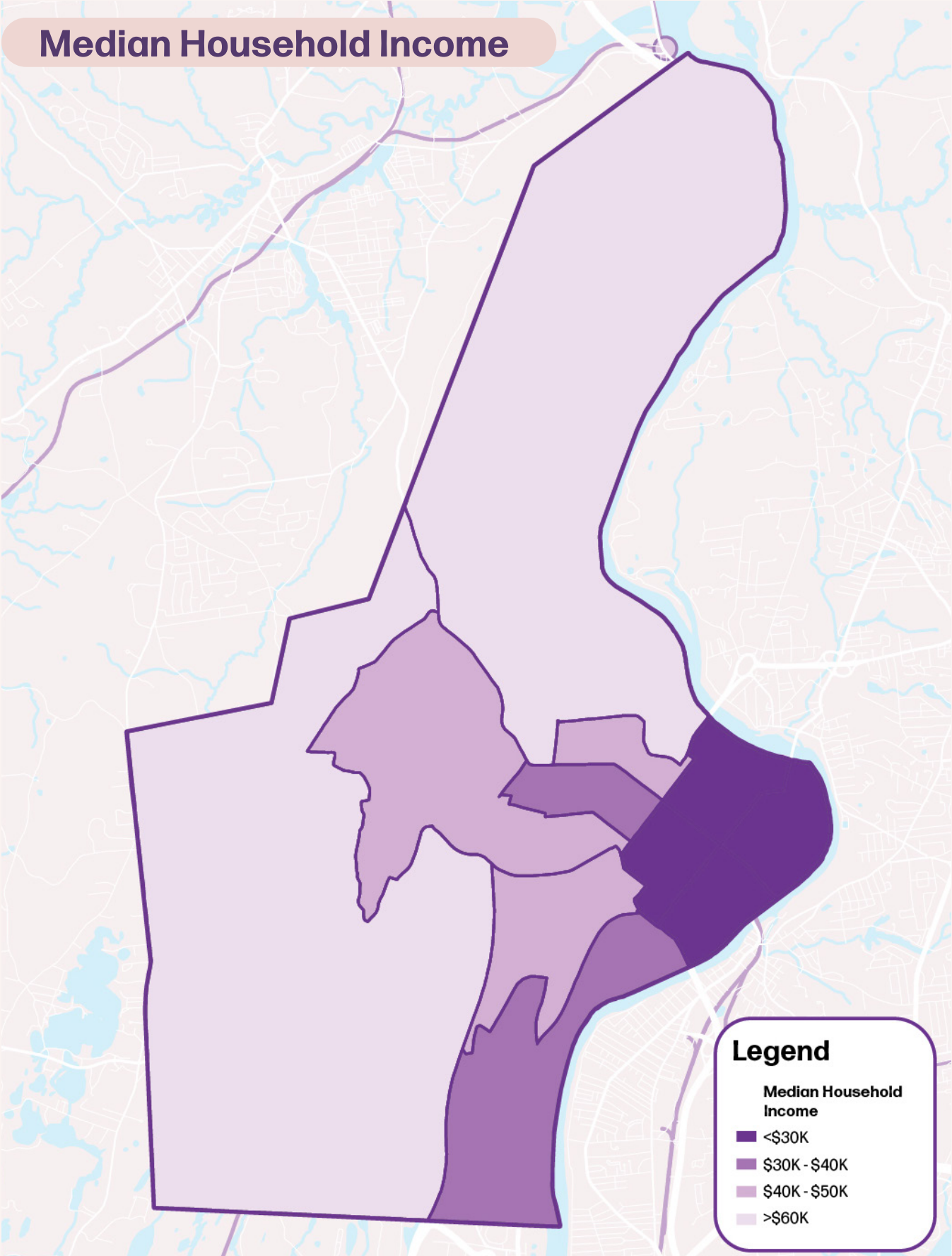
# Household Income

- Many Holyokers are getting by on limited incomes
- Median household in central Holyoke is living in poverty

## Median Household Income by Location



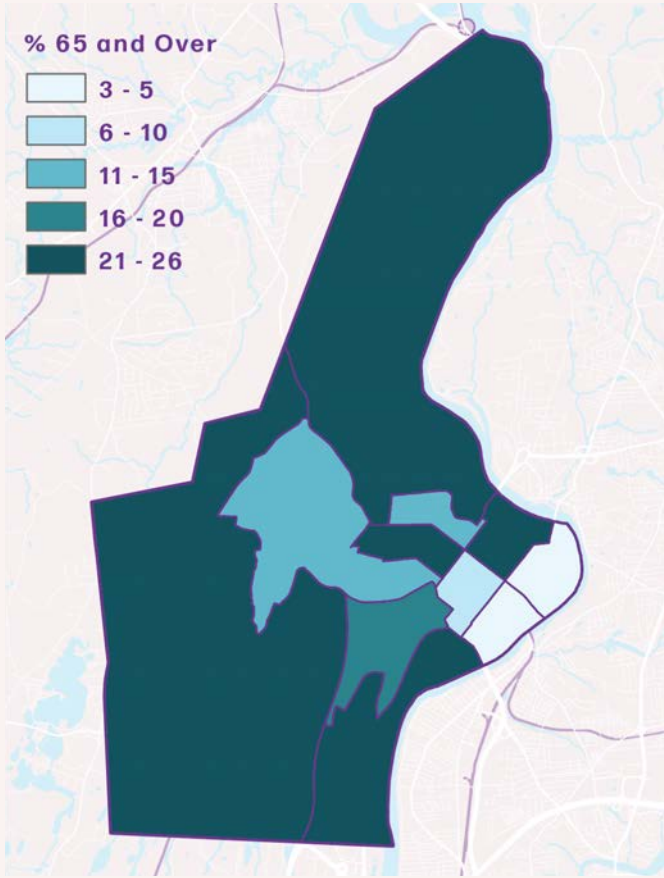
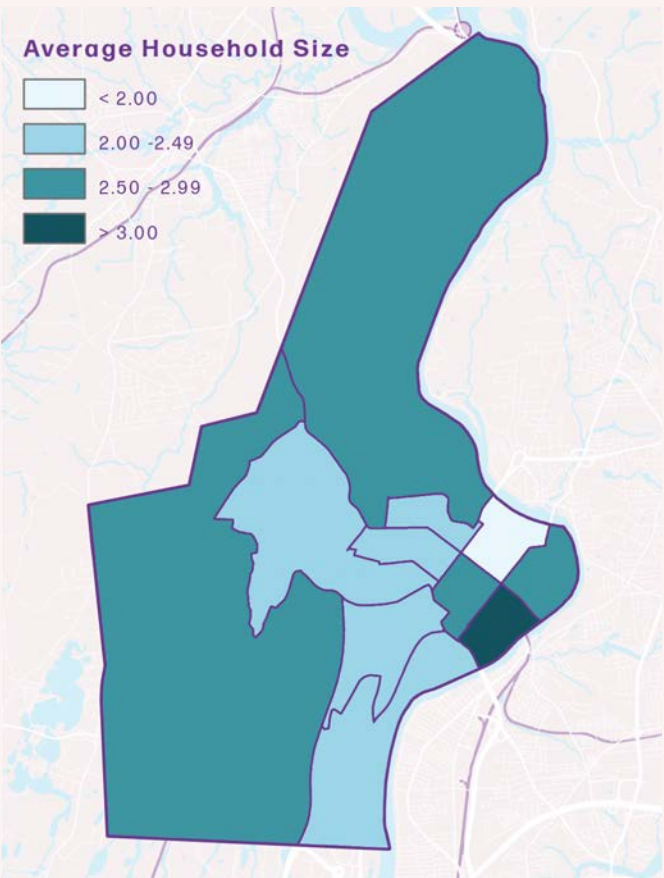
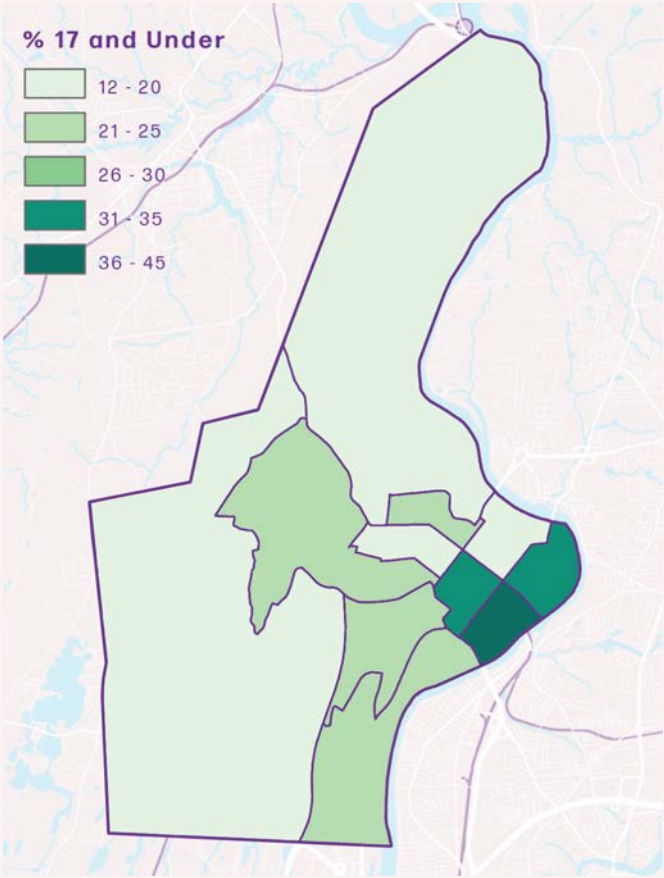
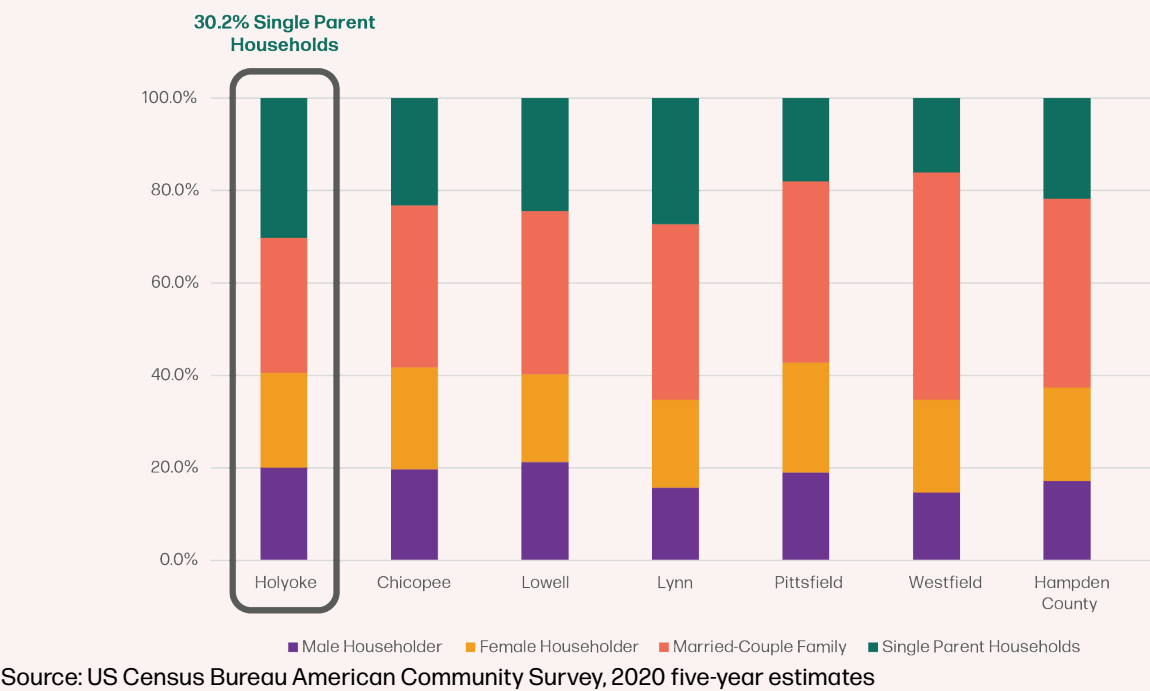
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020 five-year estimates



# Household Composition

- Central Holyoke is home to younger and larger households
- Central Holyoke is home to many families with children
- Single-parent households

# Households by Household Type



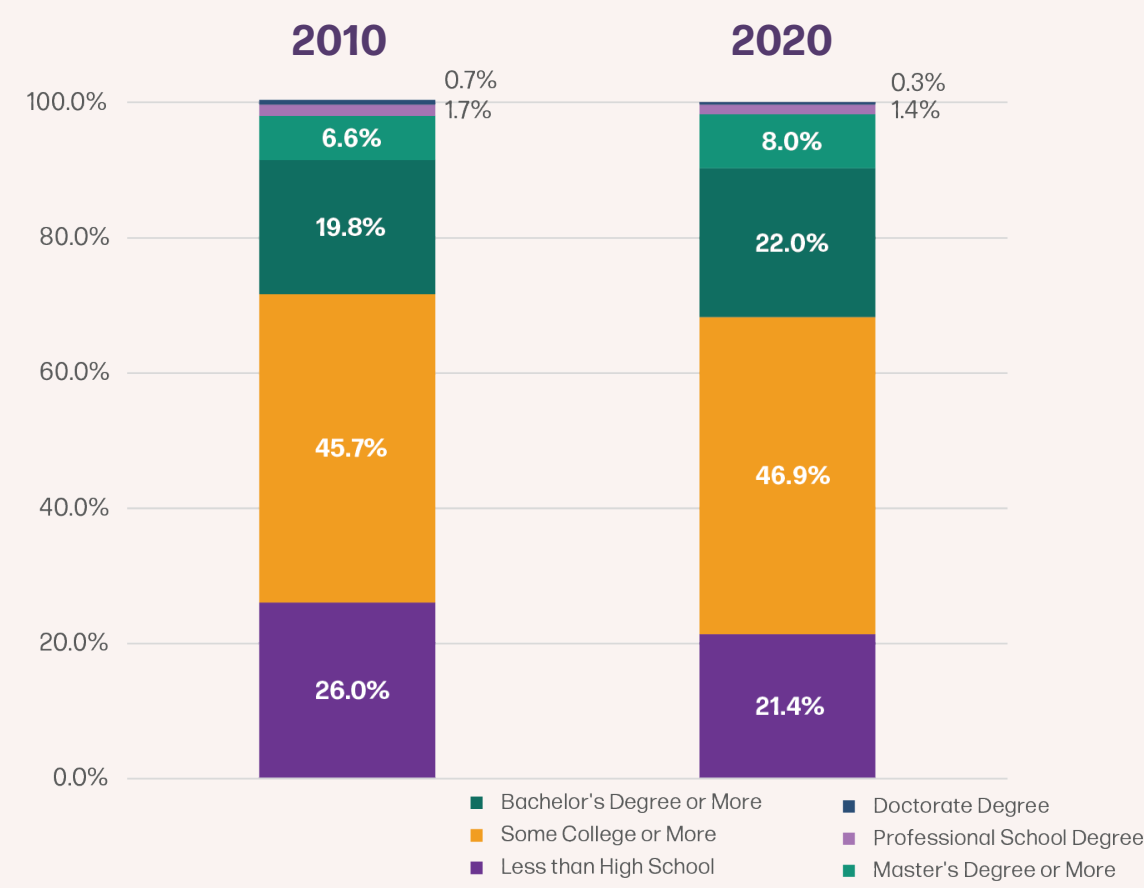


# Educational Attainment

- Education attainment is improving
- 22% of Holyokers have a bachelors degree



## Educational Attainment



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2010, 2020 five-year estimates

**Holyoke Community College in partnership with community non-profits and neighboring schools offers a variety of Adult Education Programs, including:**

- GED & HISET
- English for Speakers of Other Languages
- Adult Learning Center
- Ludlow Area Adult Learning Center
- Picknelly Adult & Family Education Center
- Springfield Adult Learning Center
- Free Job Training Programs
- SNAP Path to Work
- Accelerated Career English Program

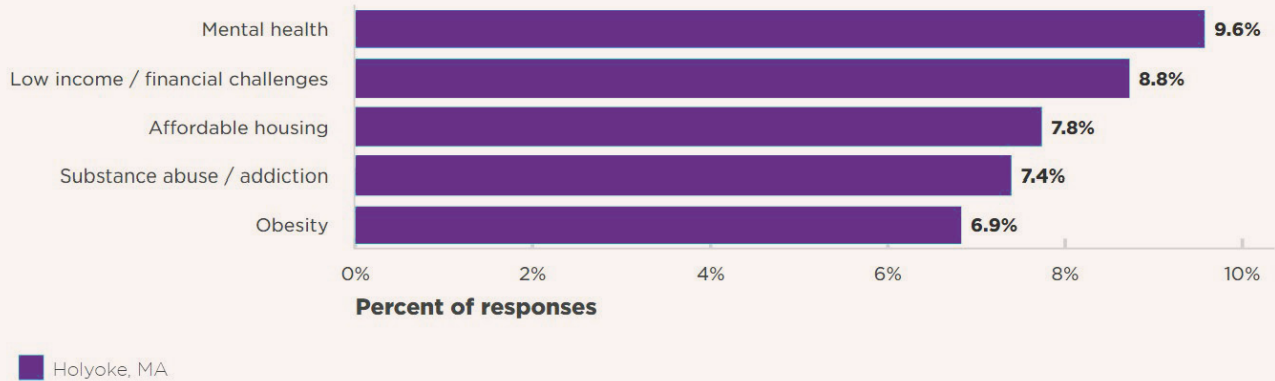
# Community Health

- Mental health, financial challenges, and housing insecurity are top health-related concerns
- Holyokers rely on trusted community-based organizations to access services



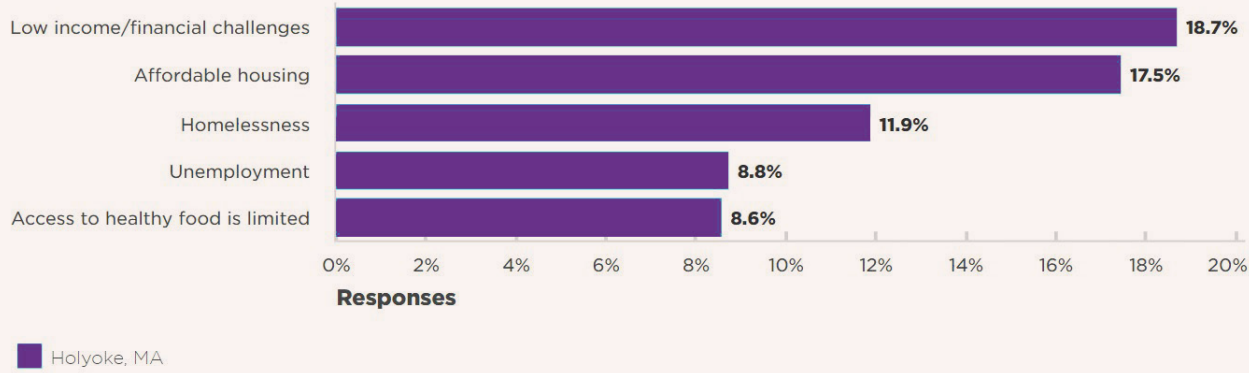
Mayor Joshua Garcia speaks about Holyoke Hub.  
Photo: Dennis Hohenberger

Choose the top five health-related concerns that you believe are the most common in the community where you live.



Sources: CHNA Survey, Holyoke Medical Center, 2022

Choose the top five environmental-related concerns that you believe are the most common in the community where you live.



Sources: CHNA Survey, Holyoke Medical Center, 2022



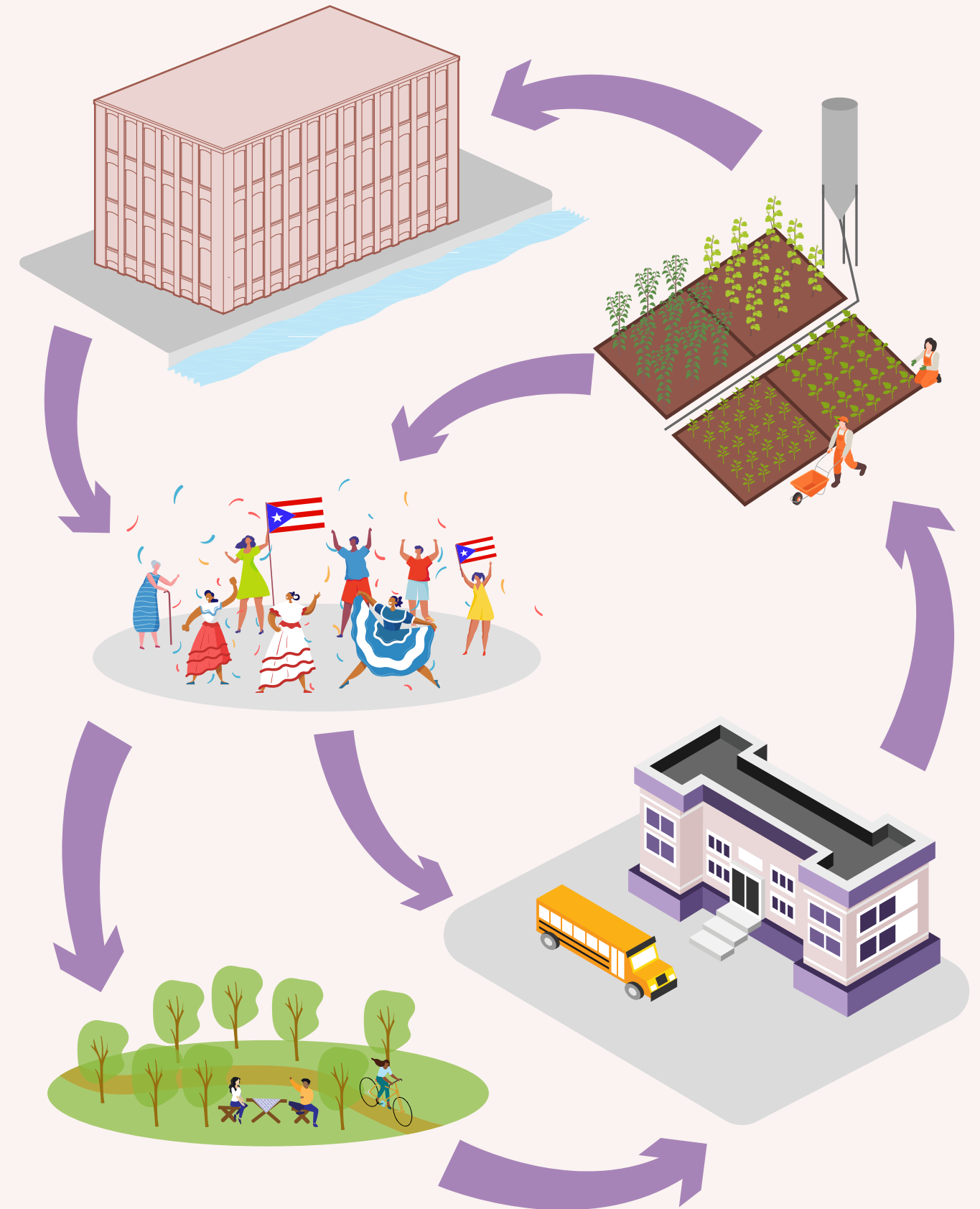
## Community Context Takeaways

### Issues

- Barriers to economic mobility (limited English proficiency, limited childcare access, etc)
- Health challenges such as food insecurity, housing instability, and substance abuse

### Opportunities

- Holyoke Community College
- Network of community-based service providers
- Longstanding role as a gateway city





# HOLYOKE TODAY

**1. Community Context**

**2. Housing and Development**

**3. Economy and Workforce**

**4. Natural Assests**

**5. Transportation**

**6. Services and Facilities**



## Development Patterns

- Local and state government are key partners in making desirable development happen
- Market-rate housing does not typically “pencil out”
- Holyoke attracts civic-minded developers

### Appleton Mill

Winn Development has begun construction on their \$55.3 million housing project of which the first phase is expected to be complete by the spring of 2025. The project will create 88 units of affordable housing for people 55 and older at the former Farr Alpaca Mills site.



### High Street Apartments

Urbanist Development has secured \$2 million through the state's Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) for the construction of 19 new apartments on High Street. The new residential units will sit above an event ballroom, a brunch restaurant, and a shared community cooperative kitchen.





# Housing Stock

- Lots of multi-family housing
- Older housing stock

**24%**  
large, multi-family  
apartments

**33%**  
detached, single-family  
homes

Figure 1.6 Housing Stock by Year Build in Holyoke and Massachusetts, 2020

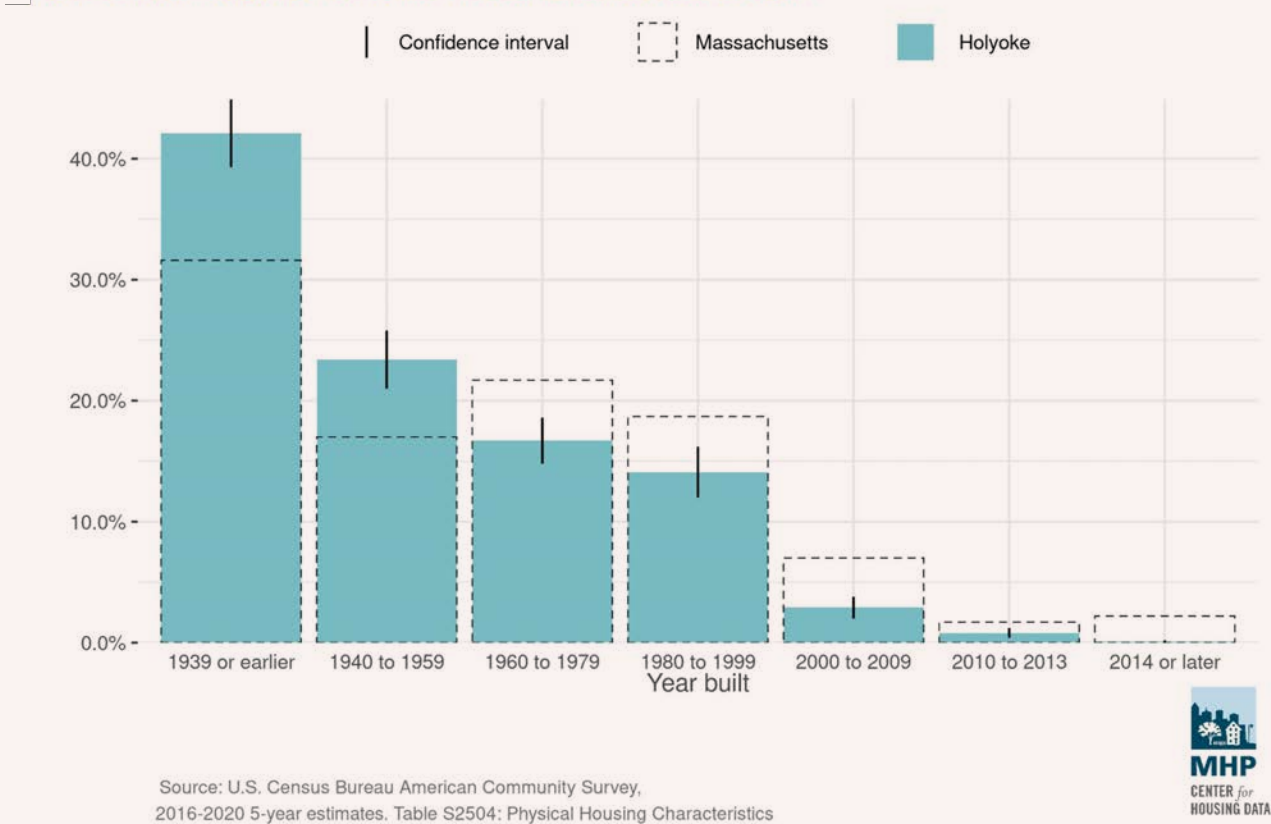
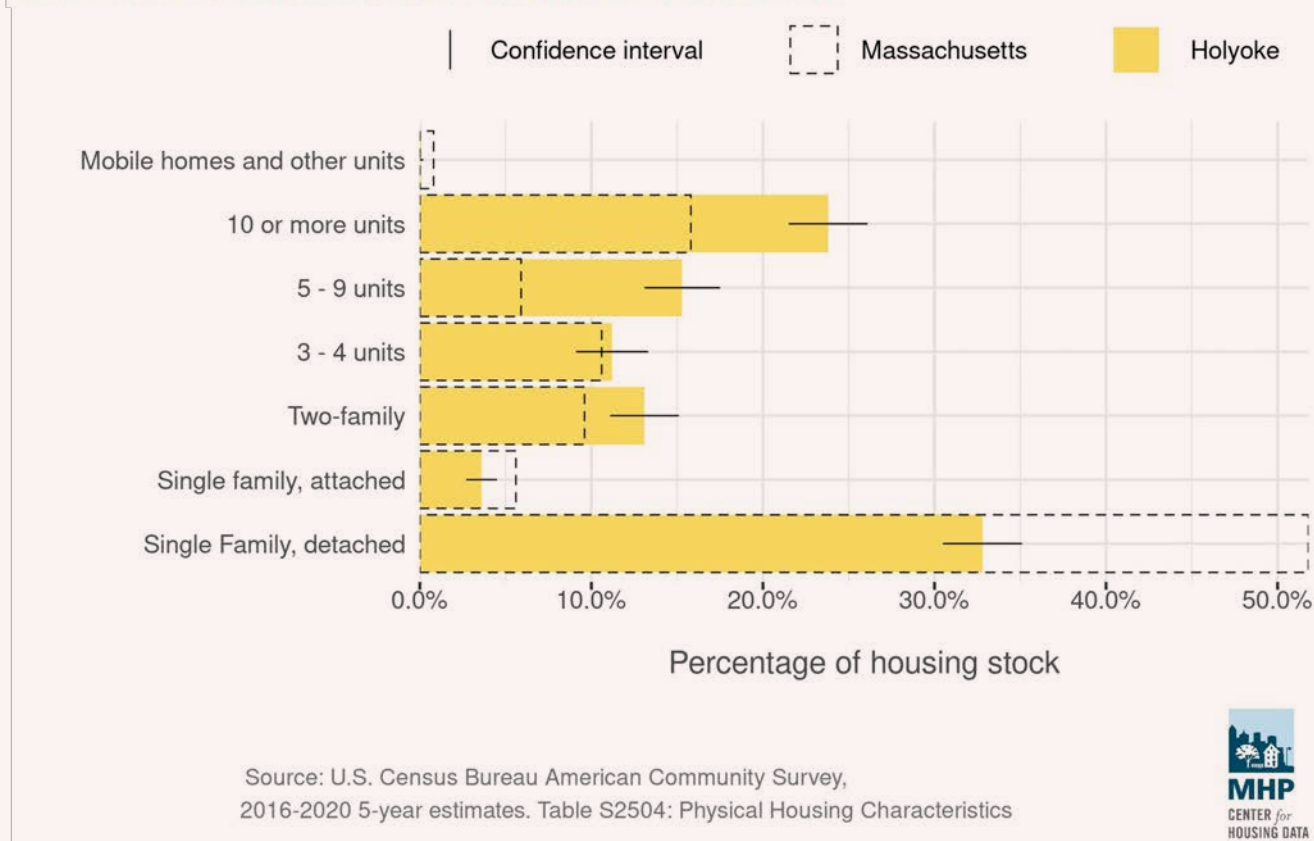


Figure 1.5 Housing Units by Building Type in Holyoke and Massachusetts, 2020

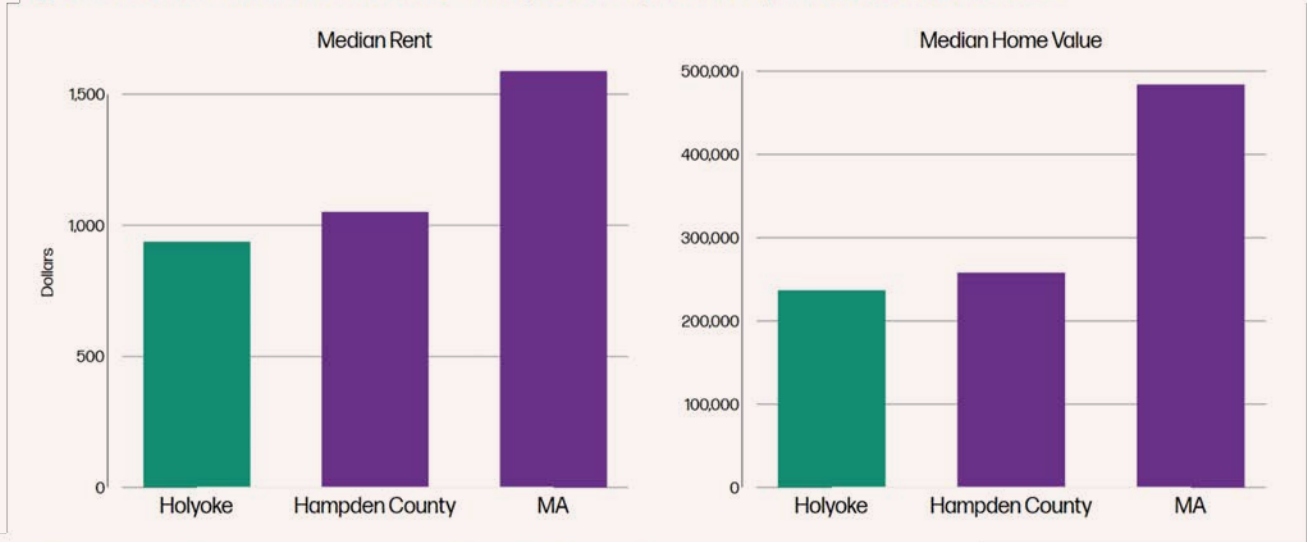




# Housing Affordability

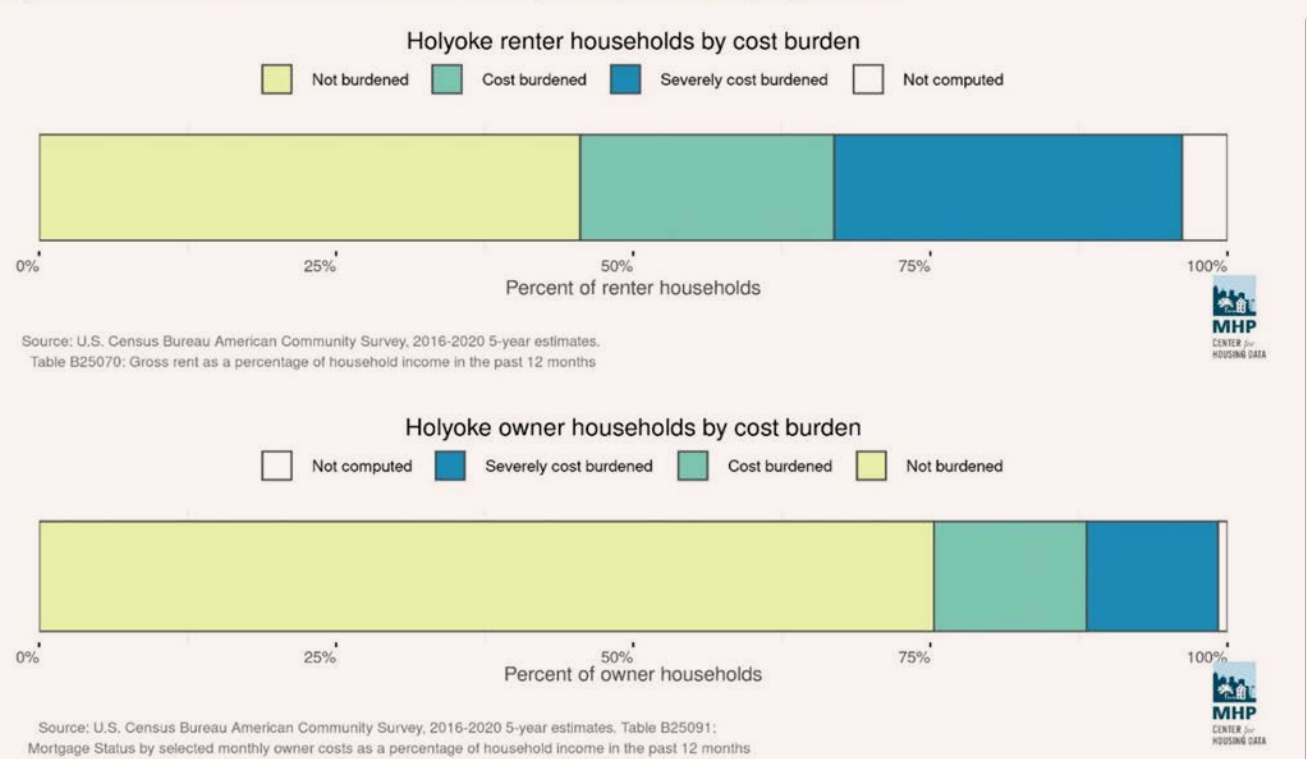
- Inexpensive, but not affordable
- 50%+ of renters are cost-burdened
- \$950 median rent (40% lower than Massachusetts)
- \$237,000 median home value (51% less than Massachusetts)

Figure 1.4 Median Rent and Home Value in Holyoke, Hampden County, and Massachusetts 2022



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022 five-year estimates.

Figure 1.3 Cost Burdened Households in Holyoke by Ownership Type, 2020



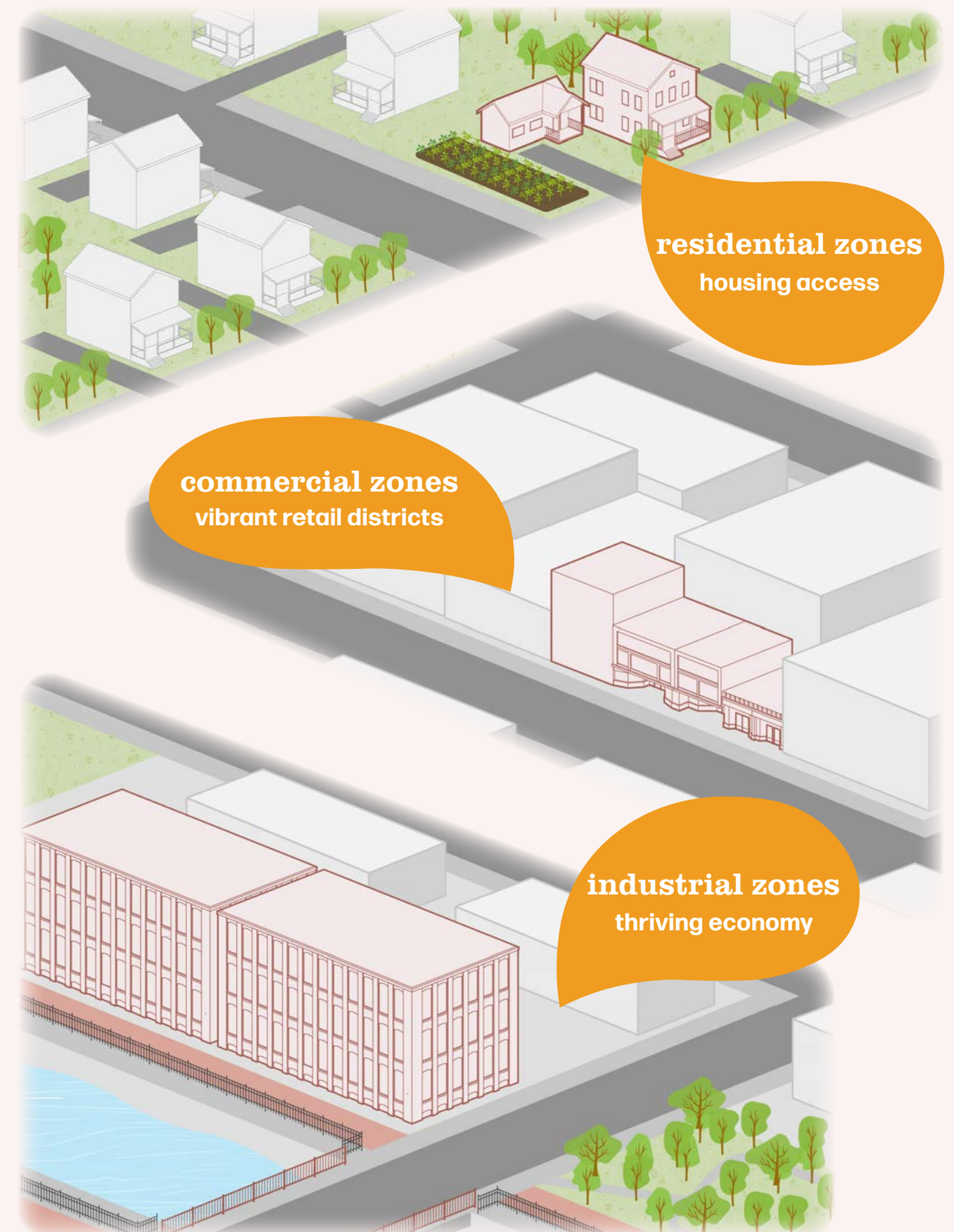
# Housing and Development Takeaways

## Issues

- Inexpensive, but not affordable
- Market-rate development doesn't pencil out

## Opportunities

- Affordable cost of real estate
- Unfulfilled redevelopment potential
- Diverse housing stock
- Density to support walkability







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# Socioeconomic Conditions

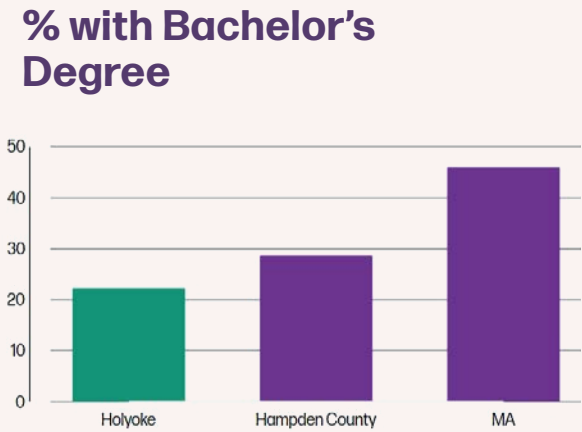
- Socioeconomic indicators are distressed, but improving. In the last decade...
- Bachelors degree attainment is up 5%
- Median household income is up 10%
- Poverty is down 5%

Socioeconomic Conditions in Holyoke and Comparison Areas in 2022

	Total Population	Percent White Alone	Median Household Income	Poverty Rate	Percent with a Bachelor's Degree
Holyoke	38,210	43%	\$49,007	26%	22%
Chicopee	55,441	68%	\$63,866	15%	23%
Lowell	114,737	46%	\$73,008	17%	28%
Lynn	100,653	36%	\$70,046	14%	22%
Pittsfield	43,730	79%	\$66,859	14%	34%
Westfield	40,794	81%	\$78,307	9%	33%
Hampden County	464,575	60%	\$66,619	16%	29%
Massachusetts	6,984,205	69%	\$96,505	10%	46%

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022 five-year estimates

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Holyoke Residents in 2022



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022 five-year estimates



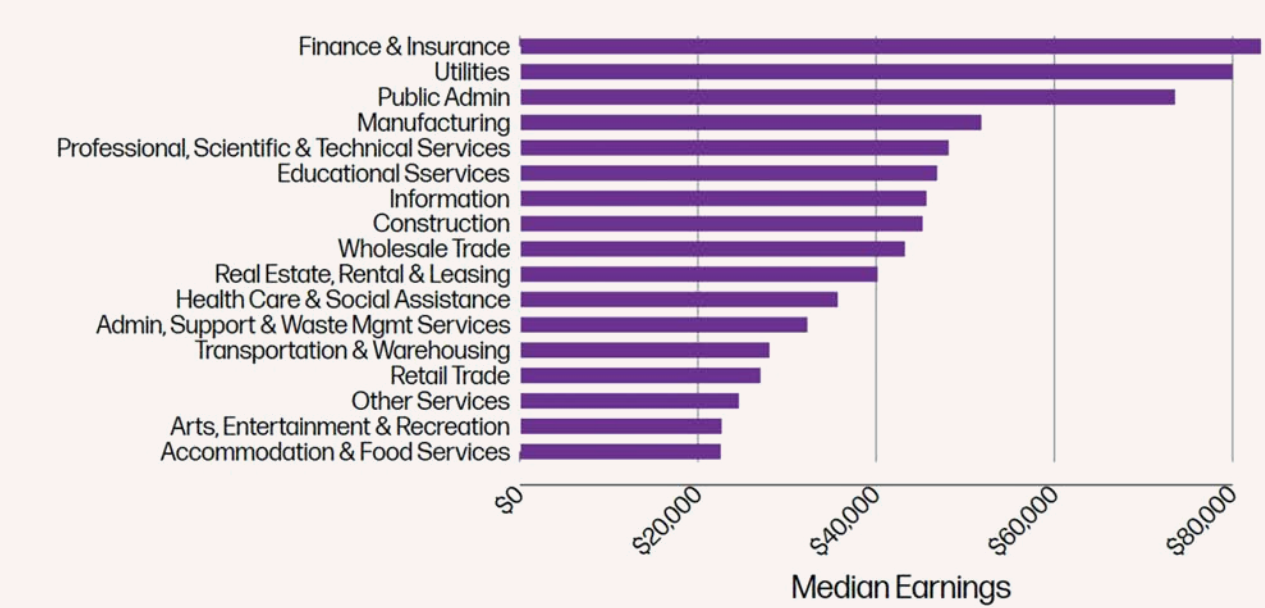
# The Holyoke Labor Force

- Healthcare is the largest employment sector in Holyoke
- Manufacturing is a well-paying sector that makes sense for Holyoke
- Strong workforce development and entrepreneurship initiatives like: EforAll, MassHire, HCC

- Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll) alumni have started 147 businesses in the Pioneer Valley, generating \$2.6 million in revenue in 2023 and 193 local jobs.
- Of these businesses, 95% are BIPOC owned, 68% are women owned, and 16% are immigrant owned.

EforAll

Median Earning by Sector for Holyoke Residents, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022 five-year estimates.  
Note: The figure displays median wages per jobs, which includes part-time and full-time workers.

Employment by Sector for Holyoke Residents, 2021



Source: US Census Bureau LEHD, accessed through OnTheMap.

Industry Trends in Holyoke

- Inexpensive utilities attracting clean tech and cannabis industries
- Growing healthcare sector
- High taxes compared to peer cities



Leah Ellis and Yet-Ming Chiang, co-founders of Sublime Systems, are slated to open a climate-friendly cement plant on Water Street in Holyoke. Source: Boston Business Journal

Economic and Property Tax Data in Holyoke and Comparison Areas

	Total Employment	Jobs to Population Ratio	Residential Tax Rate	Commercial and Industrial Tax Rate	Commercial and Industrial Share of Total Tax Levy
Holyoke	22,116	59%	\$18.76	\$40.17	35%
Chicopee	20,196	37%	\$15.15	\$32.83	25%
Lowell	38,358	34%	\$12.42	\$24.36	16%
Lynn	24,430	24%	\$11.15	\$21.35	13%
Pittsfield	25,478	59%	\$18.32	\$39.21	22%
Westfield	17,935	44%	\$16.98	\$33.52	22%
Hampden County	205,582	45%			20%
Massachusetts	3,596,149	52%			23%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries, Massachusetts Department of Economic Research, ES202.

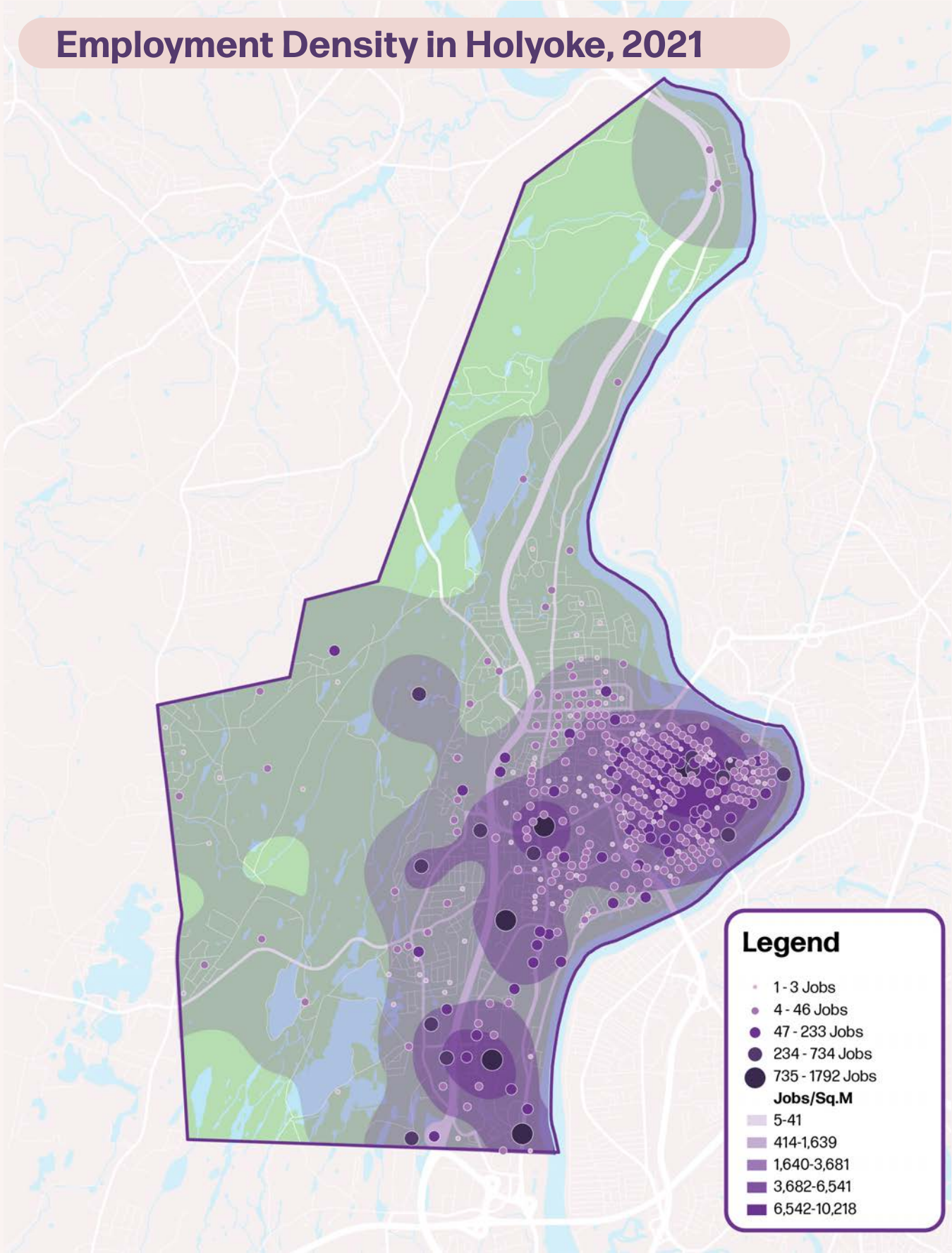
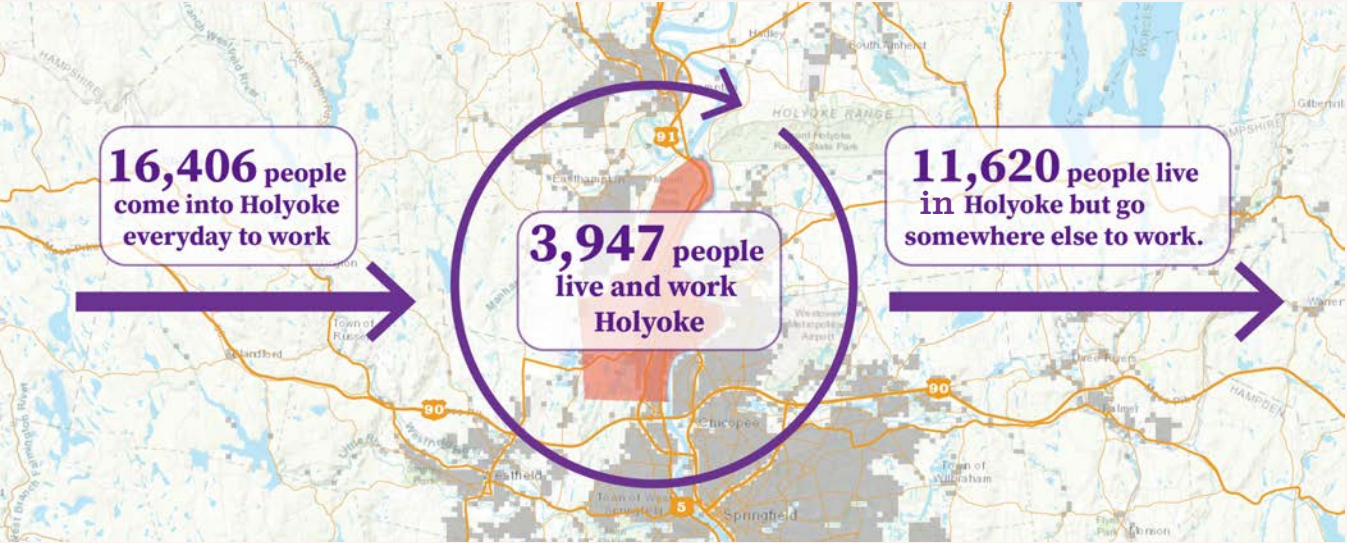


Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center. Source: Boston University Today



# Commuting Patterns

- Holyoke is an employment hub
- Approximately 22,000 jobs in Holyoke
- Net inflow of 4,800 workers
- About 4,000 Holyokers live and work within city limits





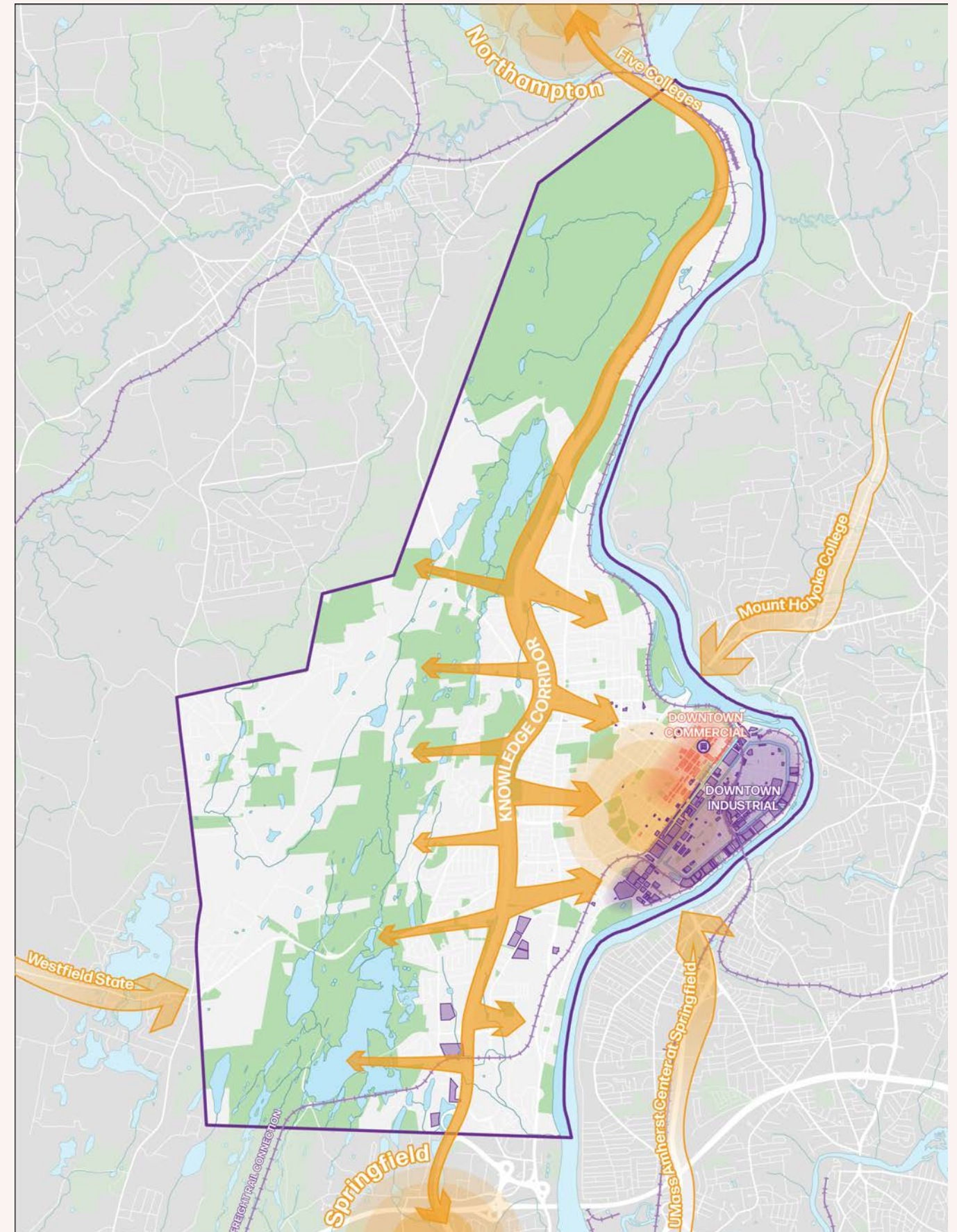
## Economy and Workforce Takeaways

### Issues

- Many Holyokers work low-paying jobs in the healthcare sector
- Many workers choose to commute to jobs in Holyoke rather than live within the city
- High taxes

### Opportunities

- Growth in high-paying industries like clean tech, manufacturing, and cannabis
- Strong start-up incubation and acceleration programs
- Low cost of real estate and utilities







# HOLYOKE TODAY

**1. Community Context**

**2. Housing and Development**

**3. Economy and Workforce**

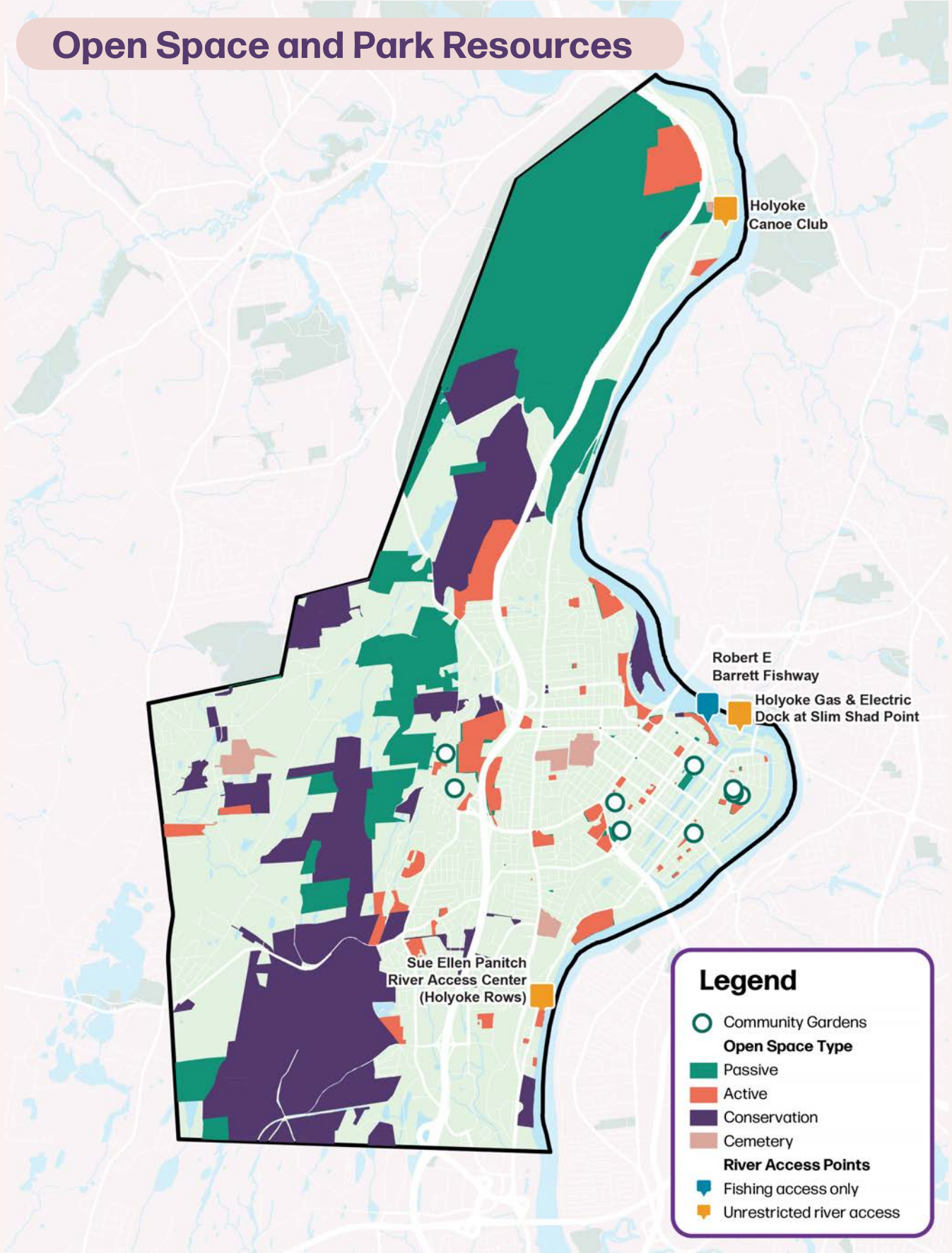
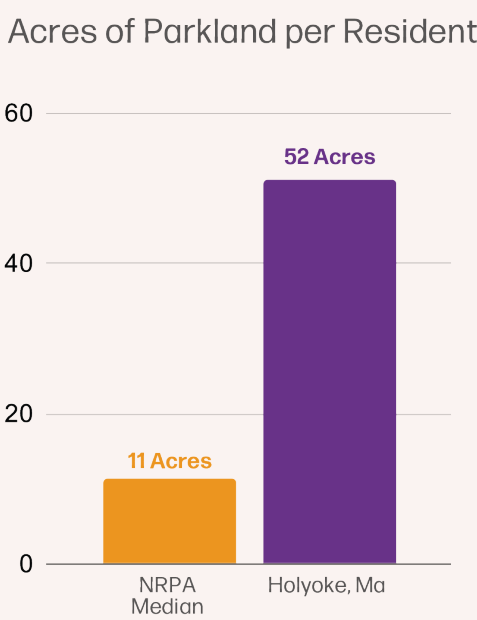
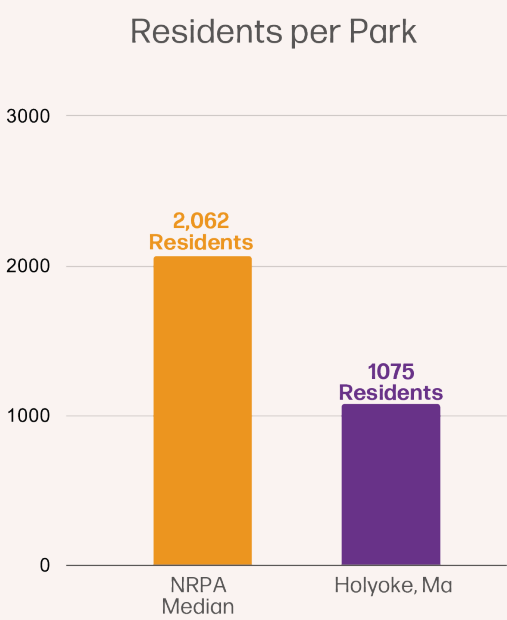
**4. Natural Assests**

**5. Transportation**

**6. Services and Facilities**

# Natural Resources

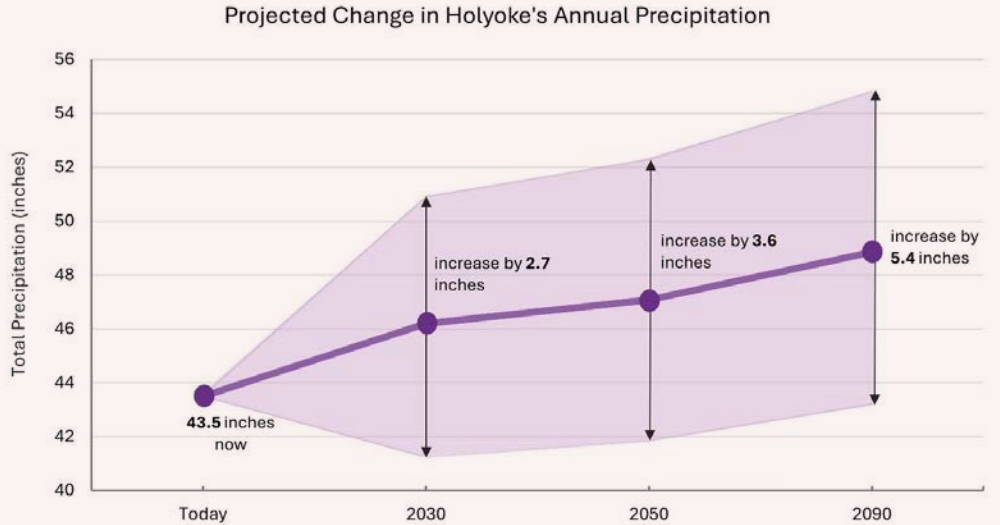
- Abundance of preserved nature
- Connecticut River and industrial canal network
- Limited access
- Urban agriculture increases access to healthy food



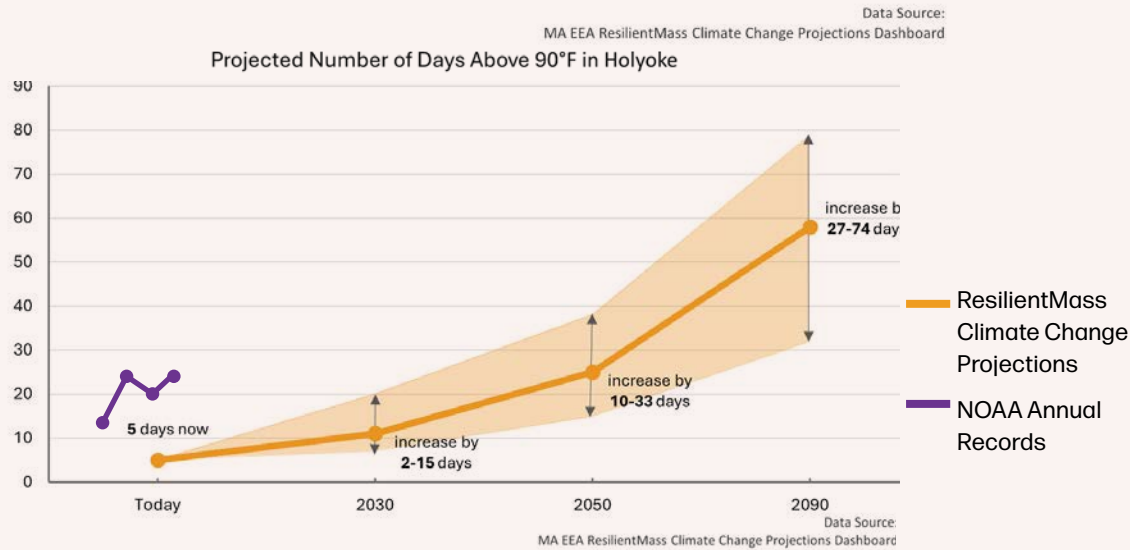


# Urban Heat Island

- The number of dangerously hot days (90°+) is increasing
- Severe rain events and flood risk are increasing

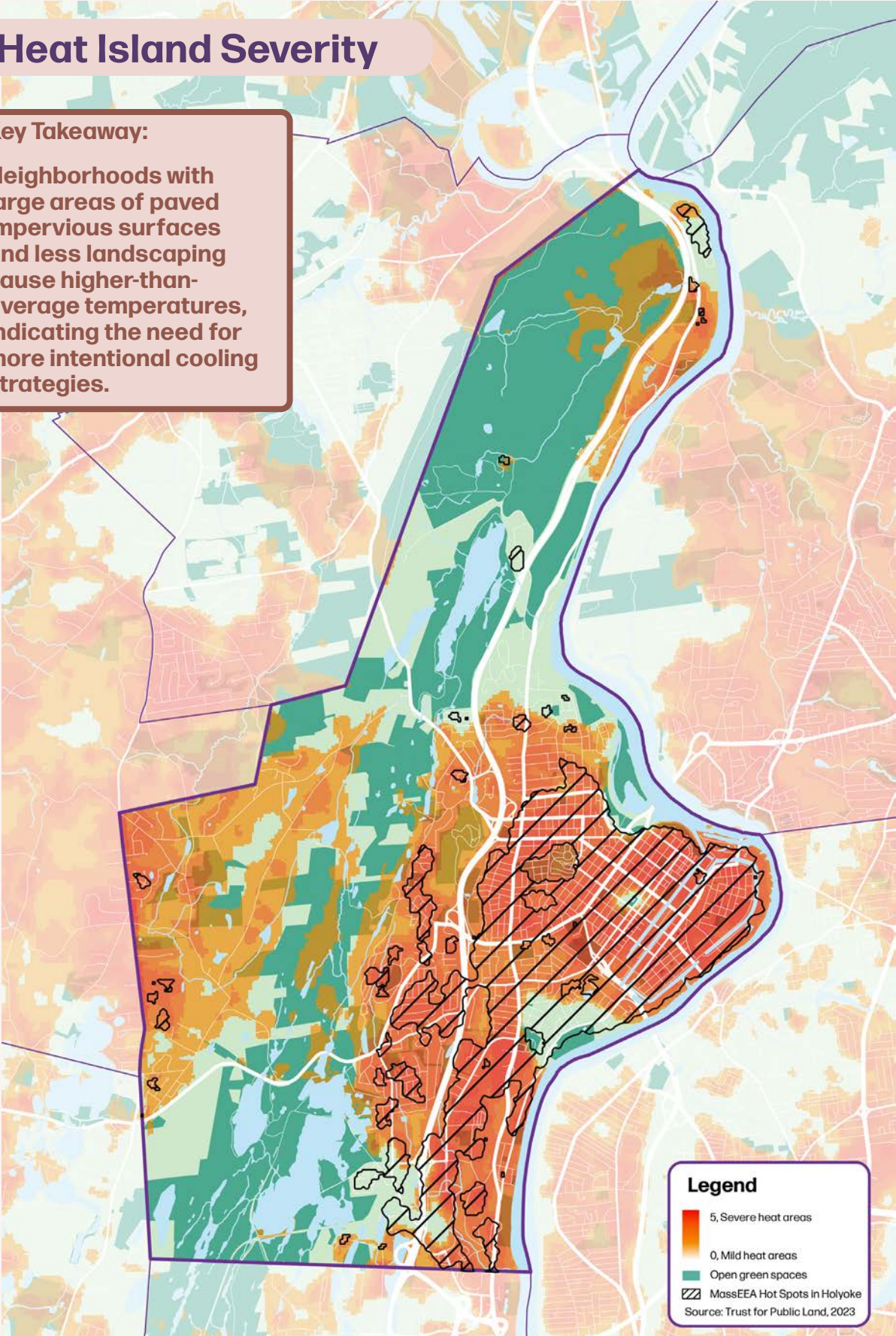


While current state projections estimate less than 10 days over 90 degrees a year in Holyoke, NOAA data from the last four years have shown double that amount already.



## Heat Island Severity

**Key Takeaway:**  
Neighborhoods with large areas of paved impervious surfaces and less landscaping cause higher-than-average temperatures, indicating the need for more intentional cooling strategies.





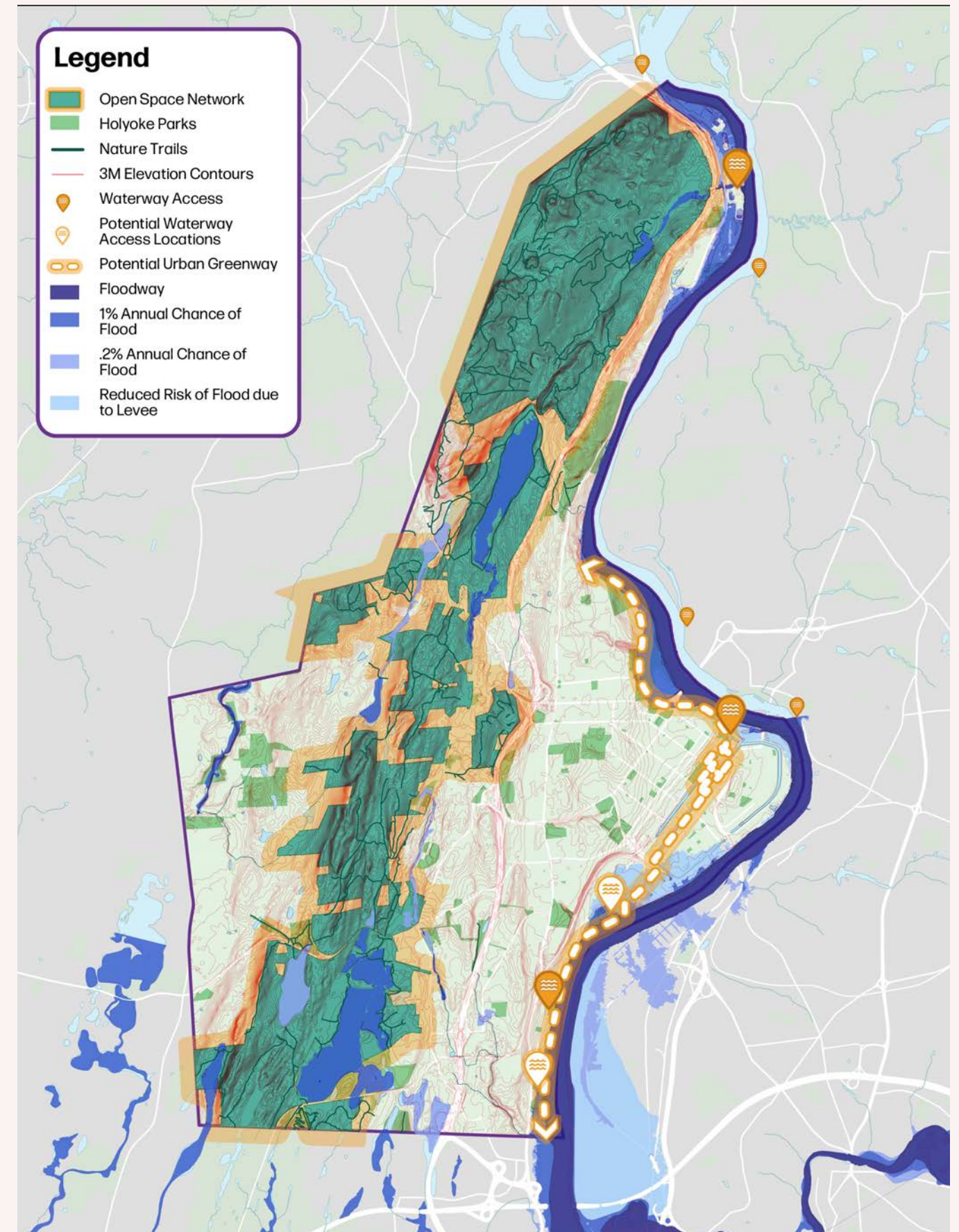
## Natural Assets Takeaways

### Issues

- Paved surfaces increase flood risk and make summers hotter
- 78% of the City lives in state-designated environmental justice areas
- Hard to access natural assets

### Opportunities

- Urban Forest Equity Plan for increasing tree canopy in environmental justice areas
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Climate Resilience Playbook, launching Spring 2025.
- The Holyoke Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan prioritizes integration of resilience into right-of-way upgrades.







# HOLYOKE TODAY

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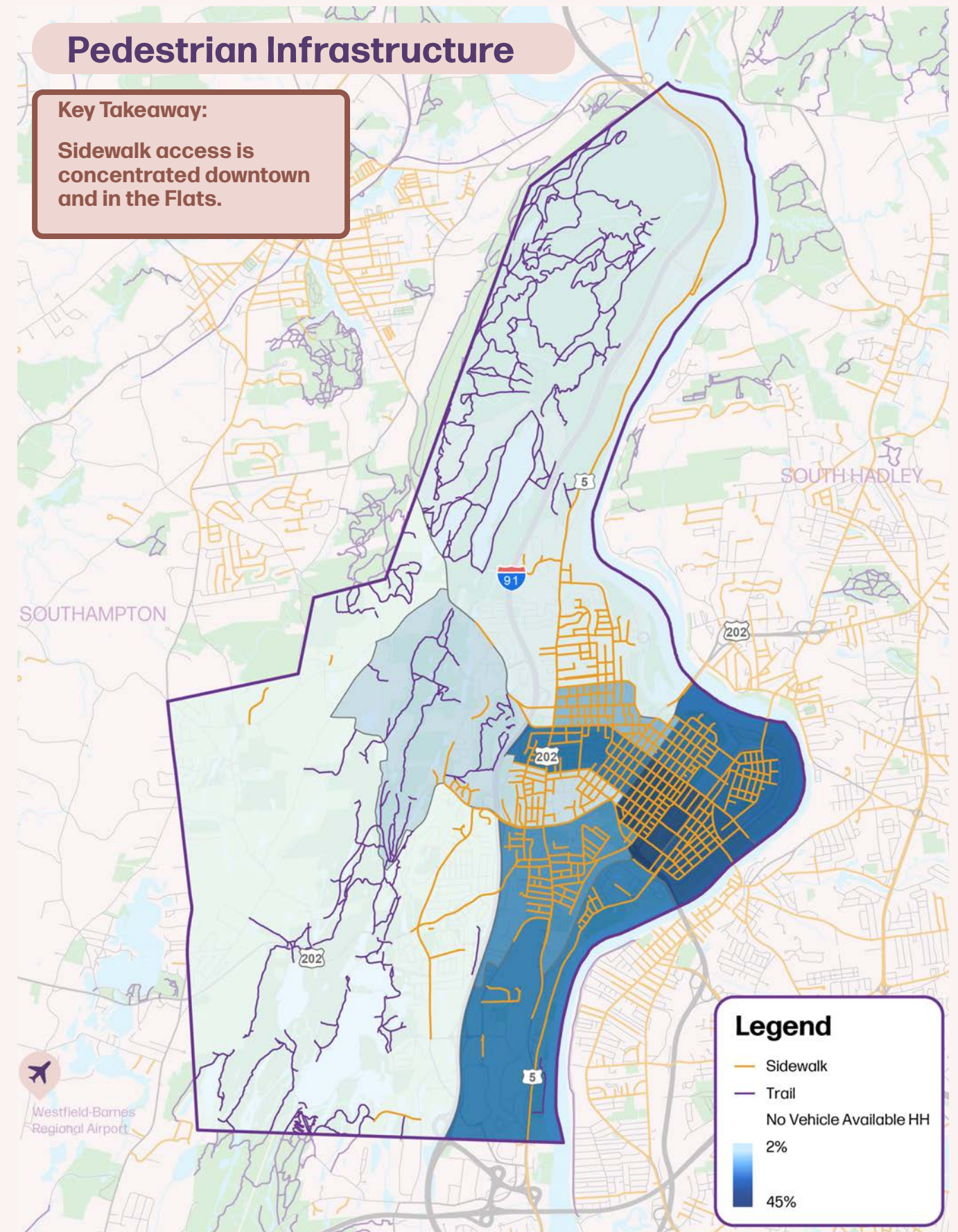


## Bike and Pedestrian Infrastructure

- Compact and well-connect street grid
- 40% of households in Central Holyoke do not have a car and rely on walking, biking and transit
- Limited bicycle infrastructure



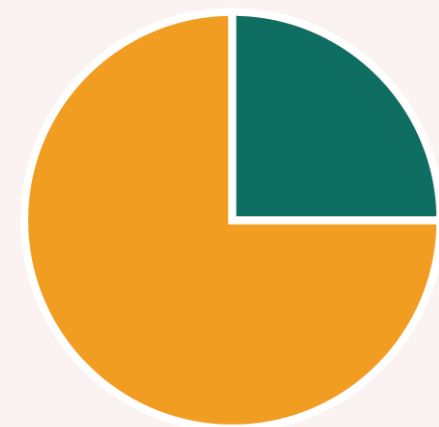
Relaunch of  
ValleyBike





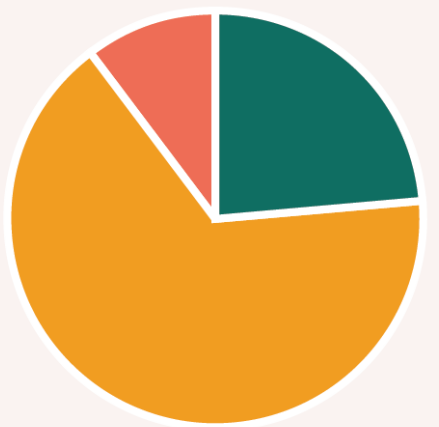
# Traffic Safety

- High-injury crashes concentrated in central Holyoke
- Prioritization of motorists



**Bicycle Crashes** Within the Top 5% of MassDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Clusters

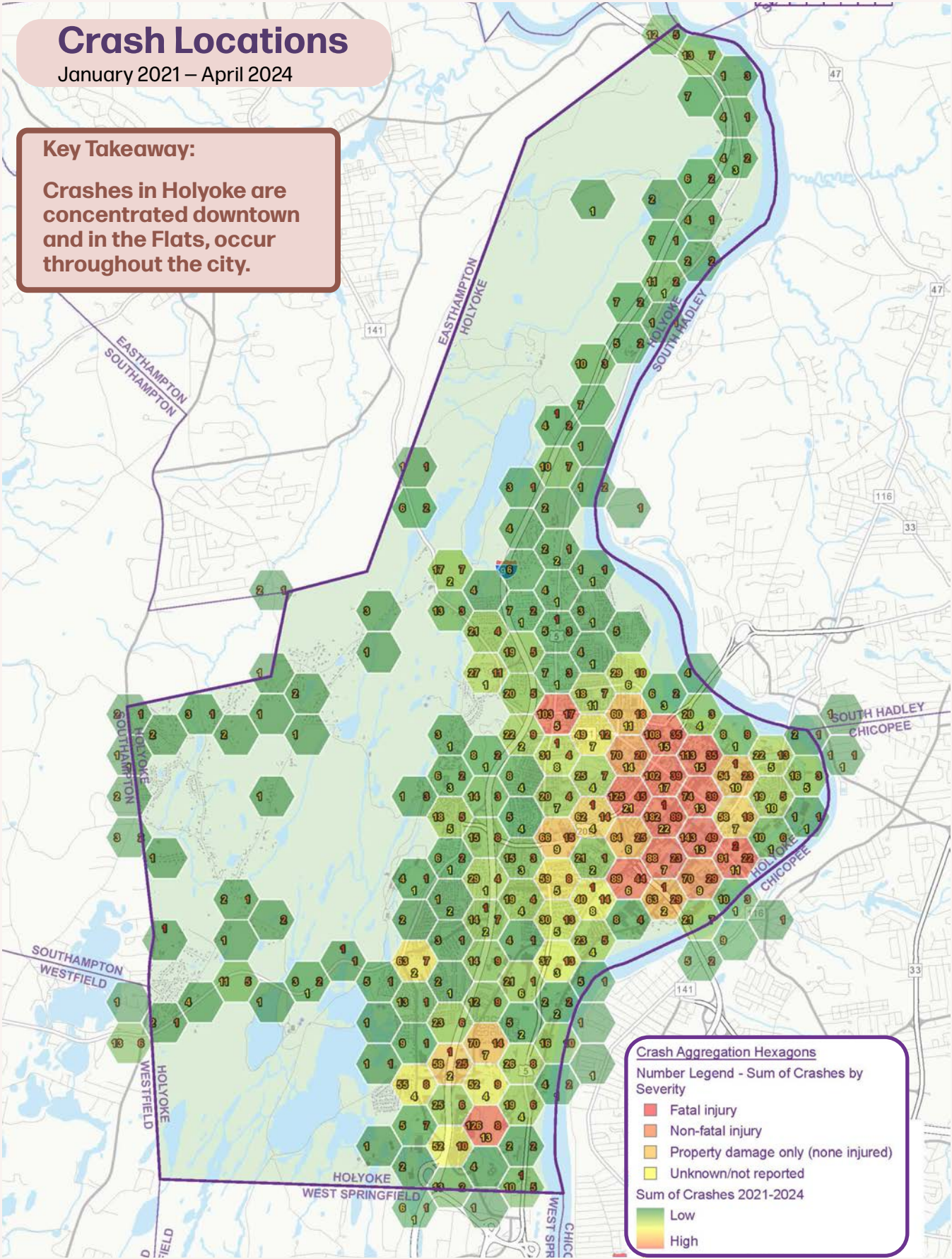
**Total Number of Bicycle Crashes**  
Within Top 5% HSIP Clusters:  
**8**



**Pedestrian Crashes** Within the Top 5% of MassDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Clusters

**Total Number of Pedestrian Crashes**  
within Top 5% HSIP Clusters:  
**88**

- Non-Injury Crashes
- Non-Serious Crashes
- Fatal/Serious Injury Crashes

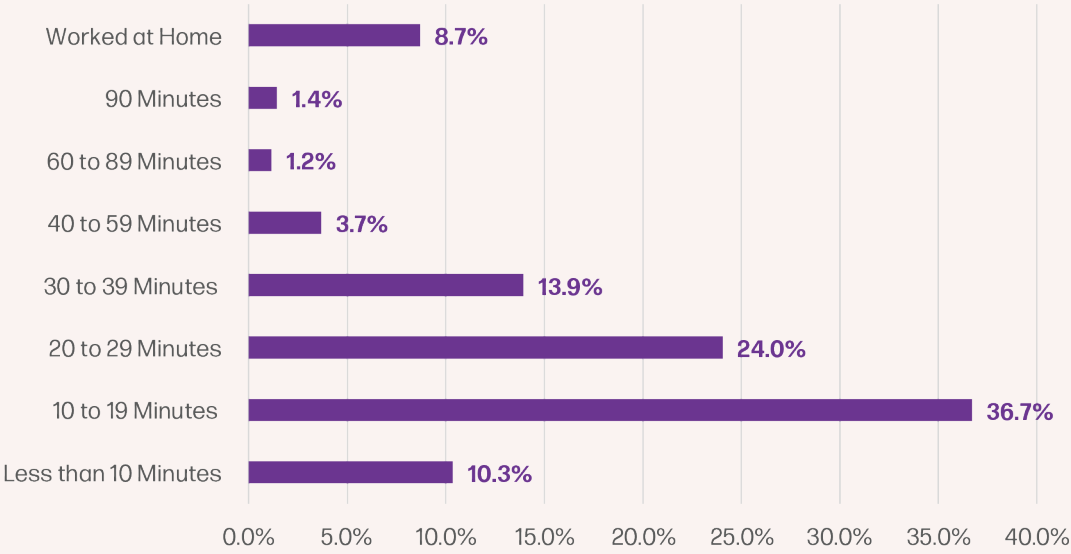




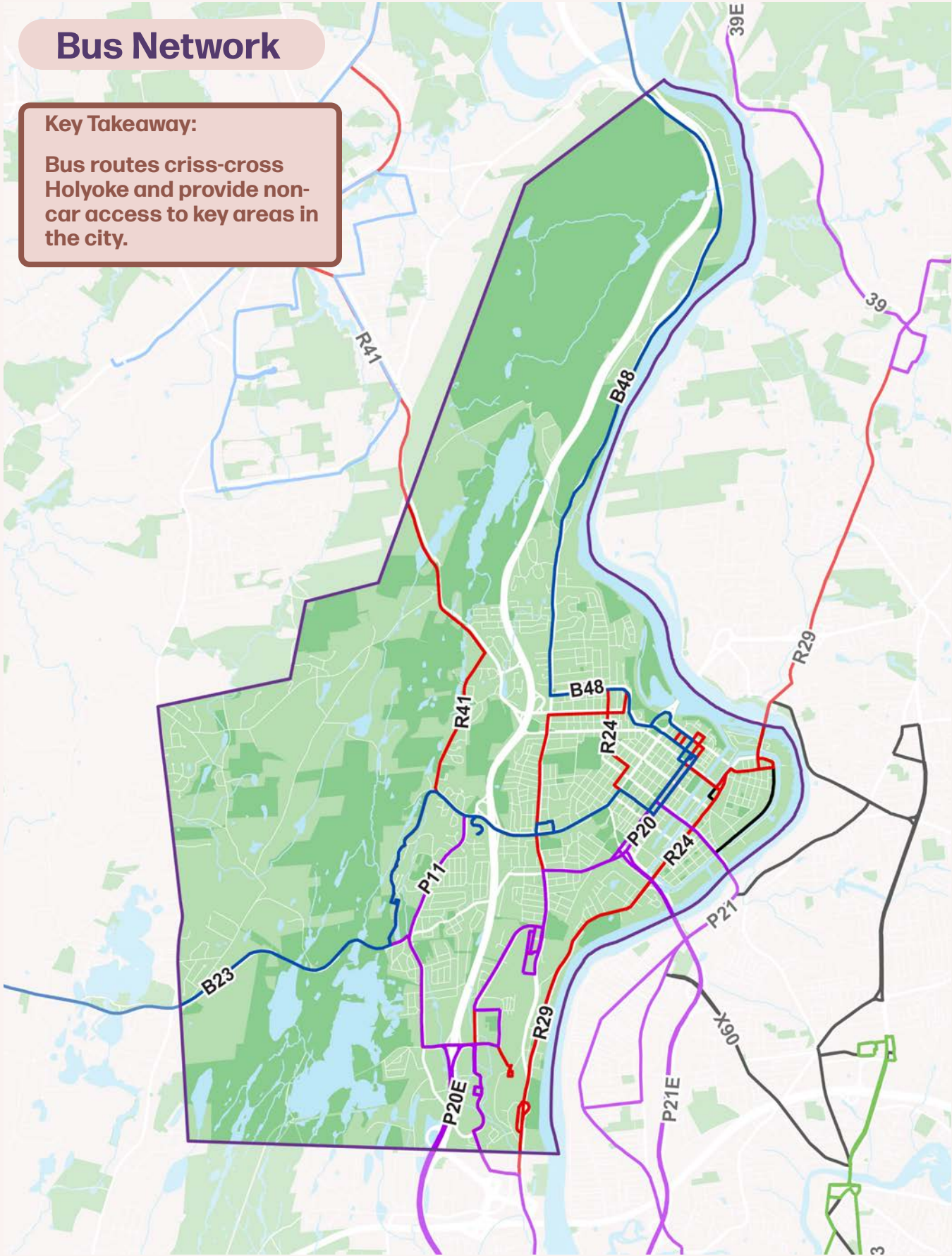
# Transit

- Served by PVRTA
- Staffing shortages and negative social behaviors are challenges
- 22% of transit riders have 1-hour commutes vs only 4% of drivers
- Amtrak service is a start

Commute Time to Work for Residents



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020 five-year estimates



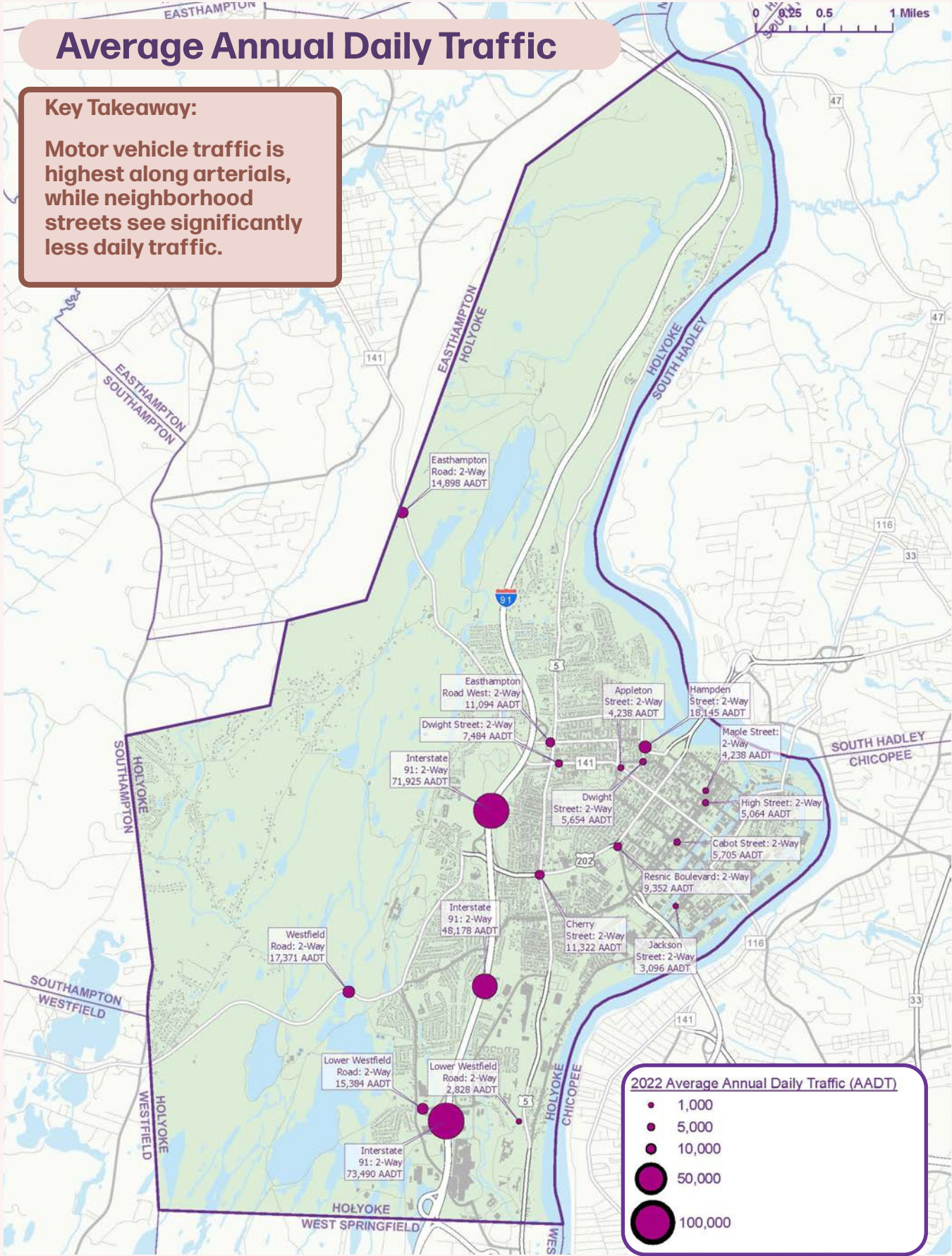


Motor Vehicle

- Crossroads of Mass Pike and I-91
- Ample parking, only 34% of spaces are used
- Low traffic congestion

Household Car Ownership Rates in Holyoke, Hampden County, and Massachusetts

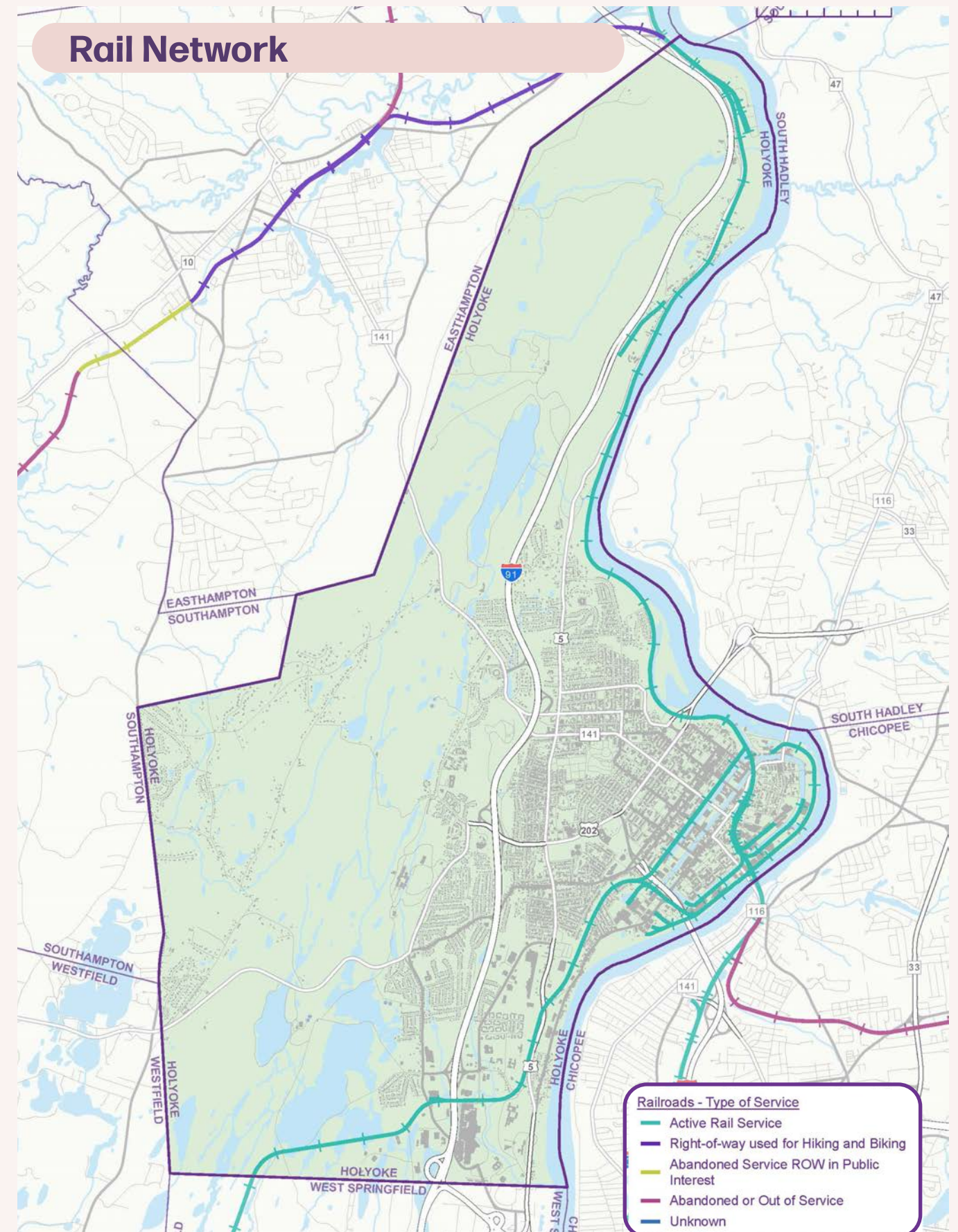
Vehicles Available	None	1	2+
Holyoke	17.9%	44.5%	27.4%
Hampden County	12.2%	37.3%	34.0%
Massachusetts	11.9%	35.5%	35.9%





## Freight Rail

- Freight rail access in a major labor market is competitive advantage for attracting manufacturing jobs
- Good jobs within walking distance
- Holyoke is well-positioned to serve New England market





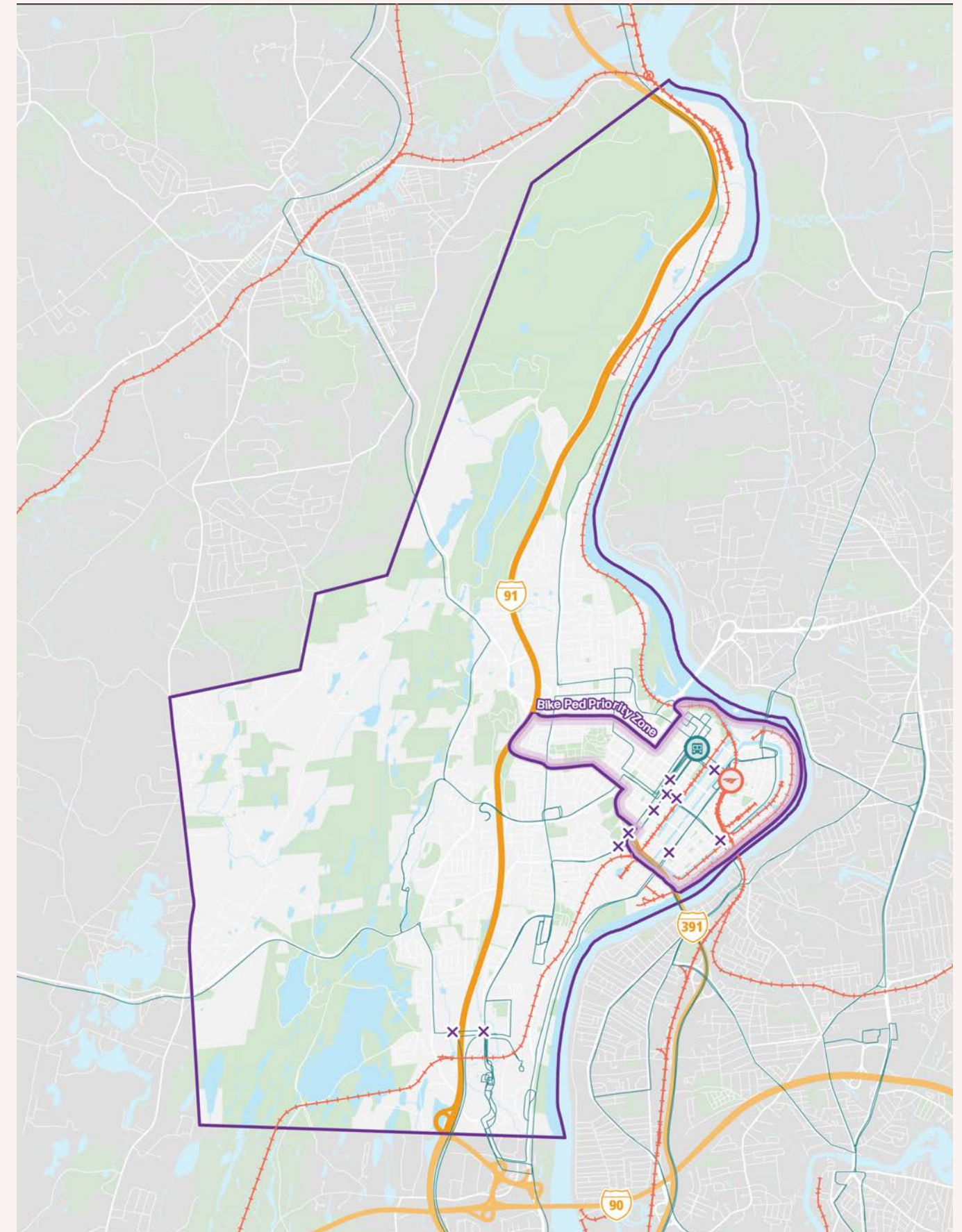
## Transportation Takeaways

### Issues

- Limited transit service
- Unpleasant conditions for walking
- Roadway design leading to high-injury crashes

### Opportunities

- Excellent highway and freight rail access
- Compact neighborhoods
- Jobs within walking distance
- Maple and High Street improvement project





# HOLYOKE TODAY

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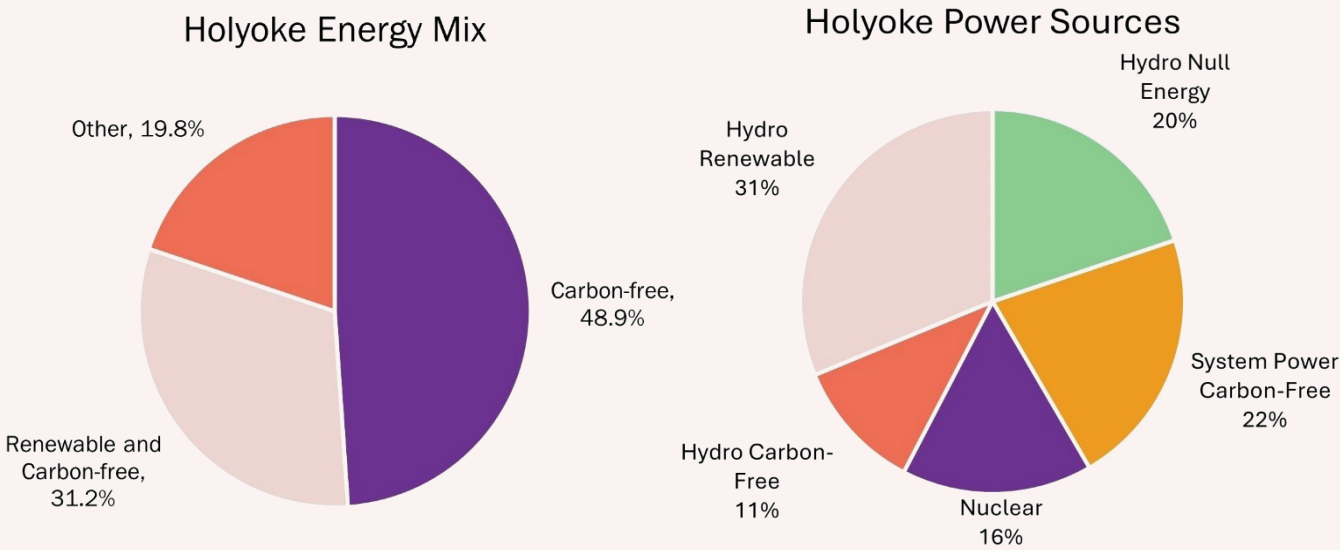
**6. Services and Facilities**



# Utilities

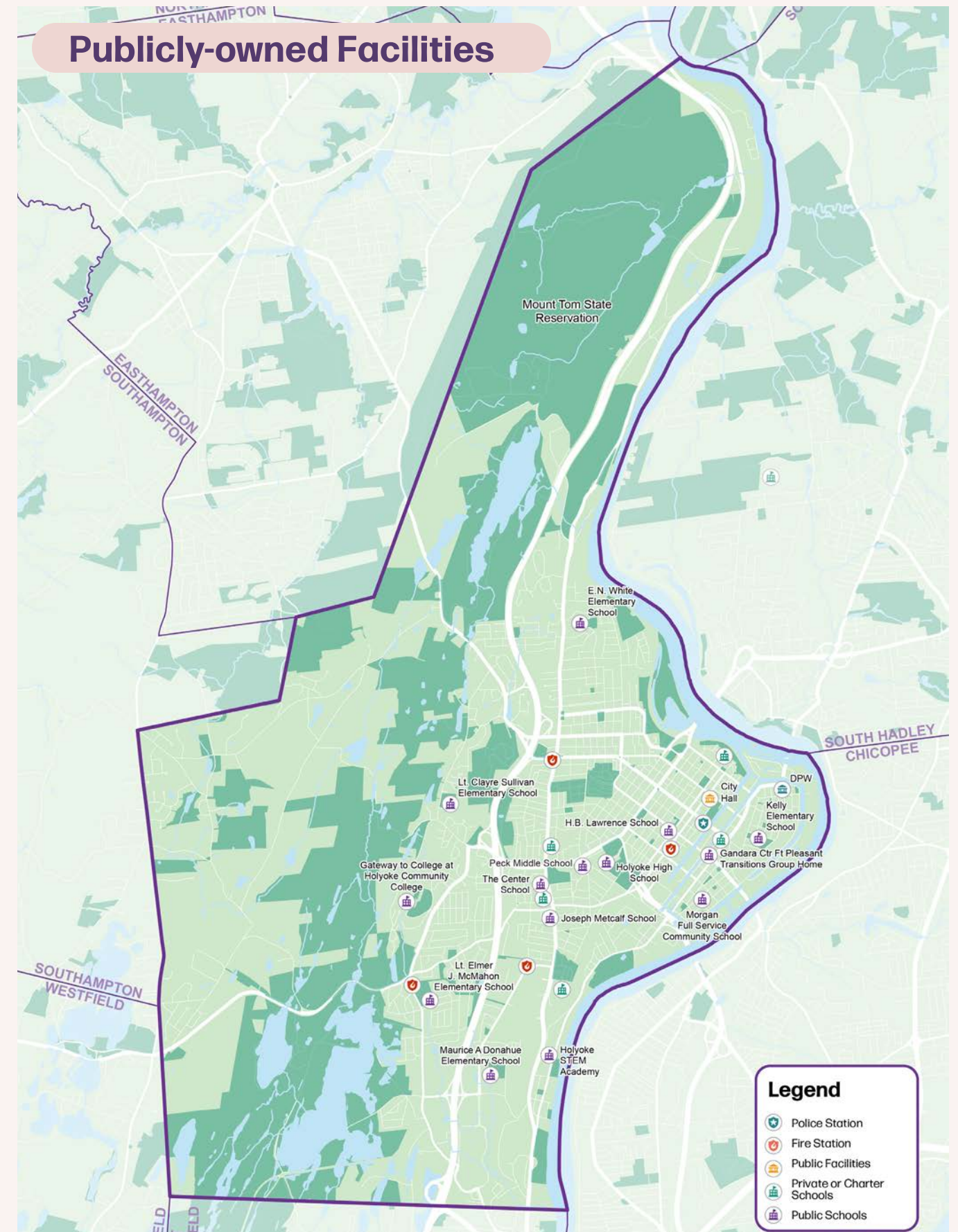
- HG&E 80% carbon-free electricity
- Inexpensive electricity
- Holyoke uses only 6 million of its 15 million gallons of water per day
- Excellent water quality
- Aging, combined sewer system

Power Sources and Energy Mix in Holyoke. Source: HGE 2023 Annual Report.



## Services and Facilities

- Holyoke Public School serves over 5,000 students
- In receivership since 2015
- Staffing shortages limit City's capacity to plan for capital improvements and secure grants





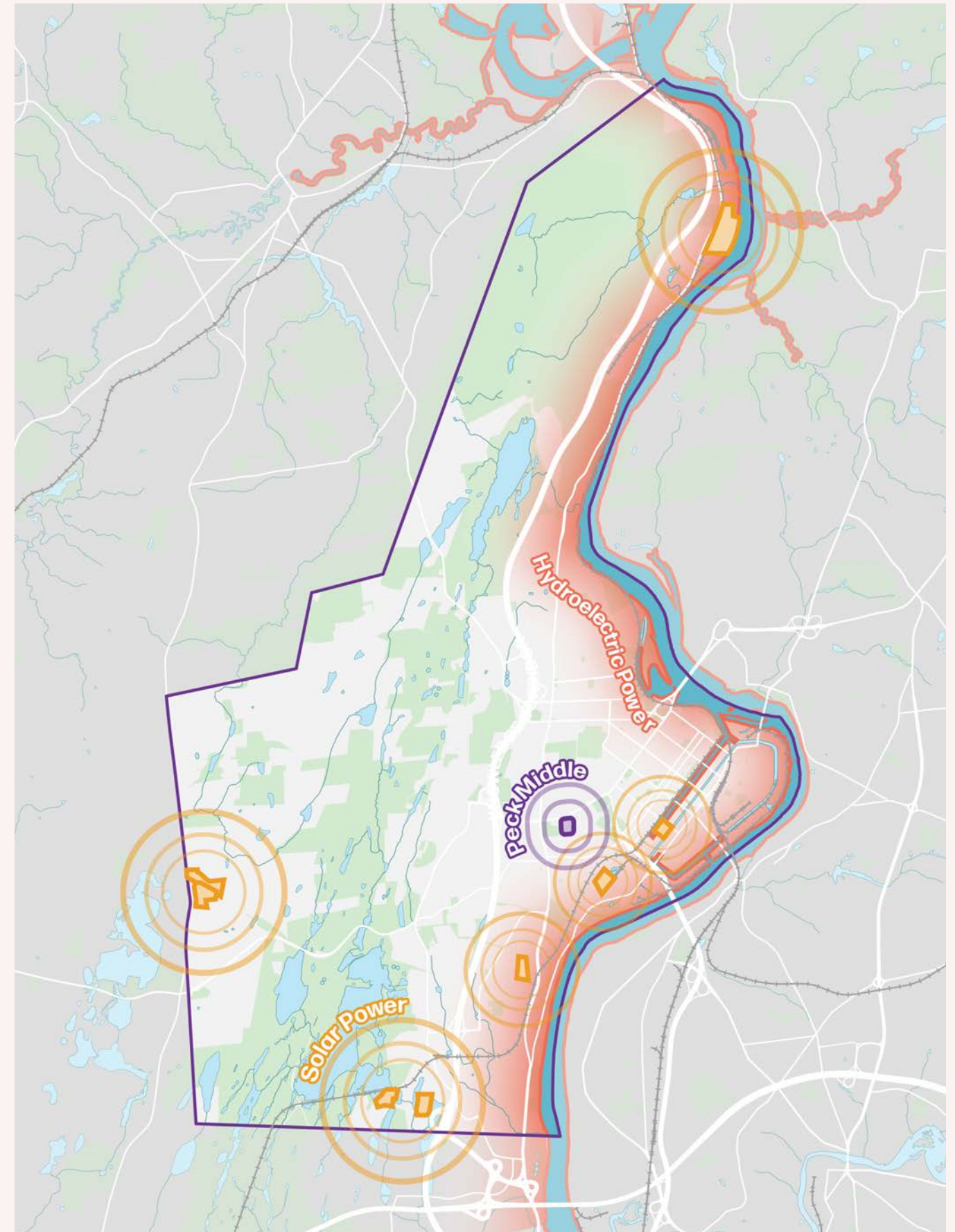
## Services & Facilities Takeaways

### Issues

- Staffing shortages
- Aging, combined sewer system
- Past HPS performance

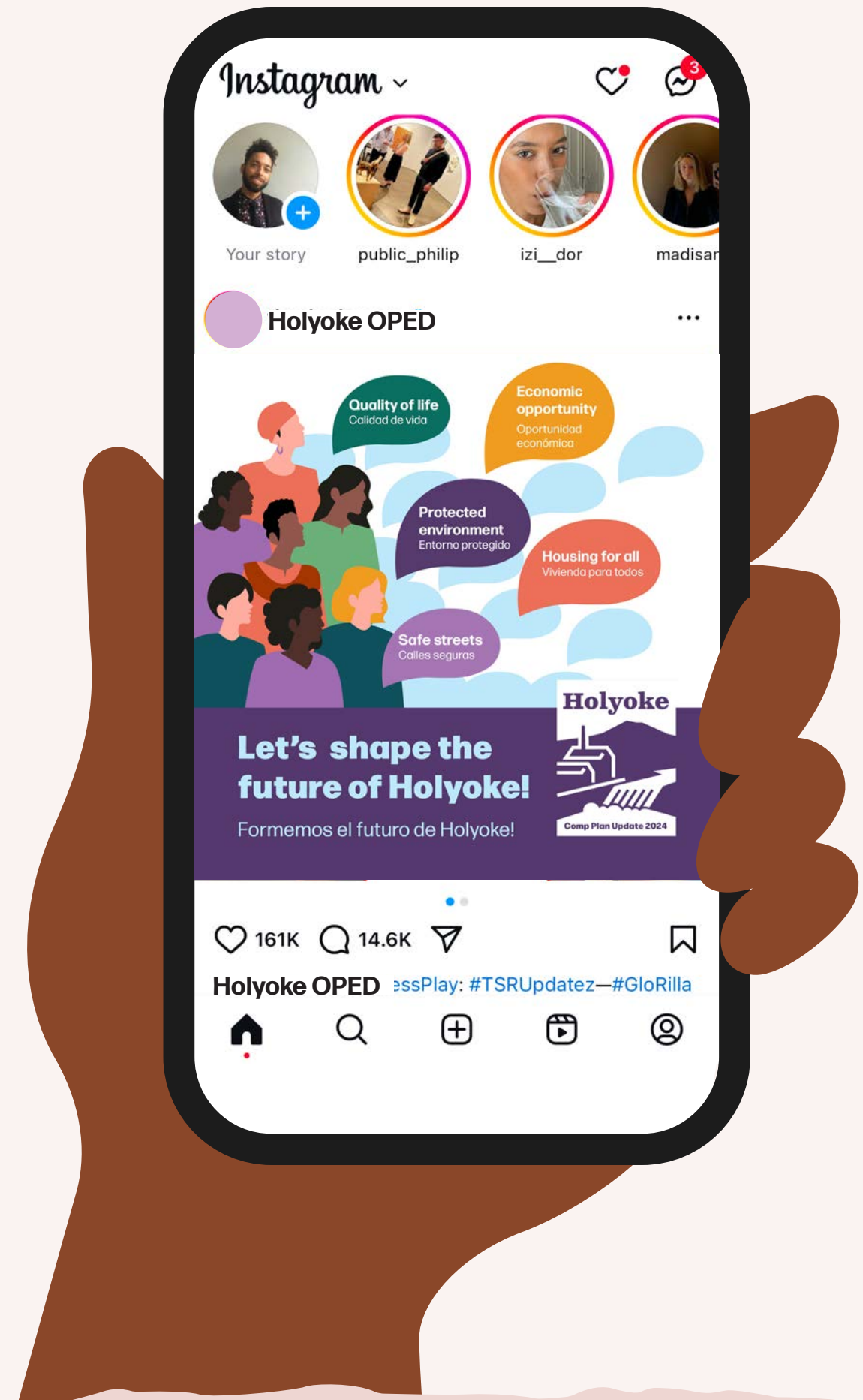
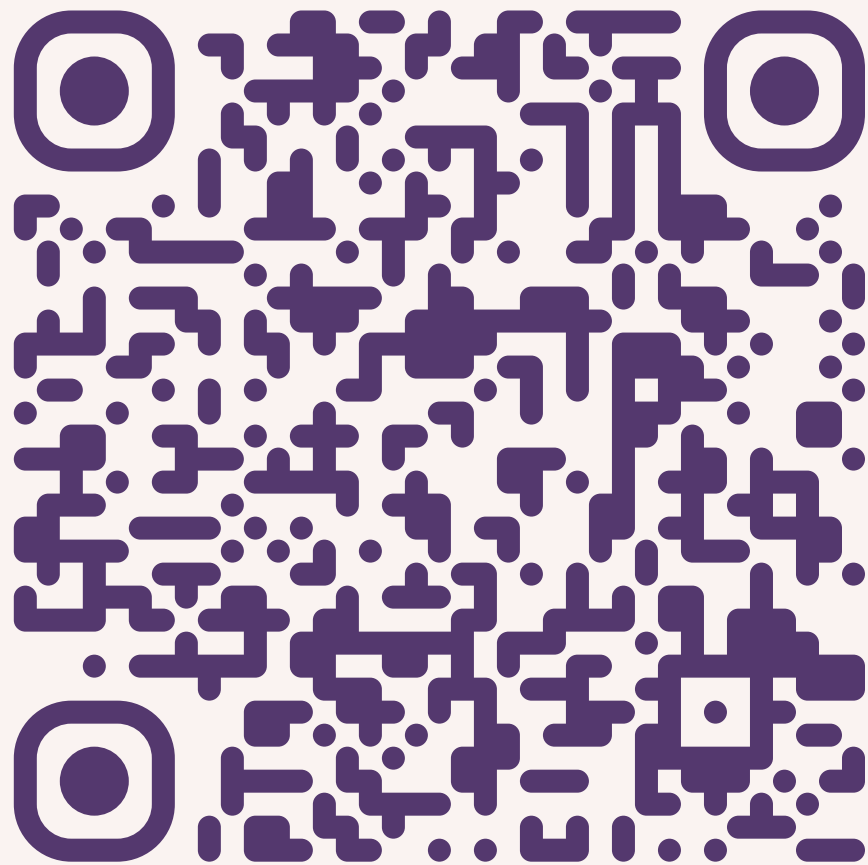
### Opportunities

- Inexpensive, carbon-free electricity
- Abundant, clean water
- 2024 Capacity Building Plan for ending HPS receivership



# Stay in touch!

- Take the survey
- Subscribe for updates
- Learn about upcoming events





# Discussion prompts

How can Holyoke, as a gateway city, provide upward mobility for its residents?

What approaches to easing housing insecurity do you think would be most effective?

Given the development economics of Holyoke, what kinds of development should the city pursue?

What if Holyoke was a regional food and culture destination?

How can Holyoke scale up its success attracting light manufacturing and clean tech employers?



# Discussion prompts

Where would you like to see more green space and less pavement?

What investments in Holyoke's walking, biking, and transit networks would make the biggest impact?

How can Holyoke leverage its affordable and largely carbon-free energy mix to land new employers?

Have you encountered green stormwater infrastructure? What did you think of it?

