

A Dog Park and so Much More Post 9/11 and Service Dog Memorial Park Chicopee, MA

What was Funded

The City of Chicopee, MA, was awarded a \$415,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant for the Post 9/11 and Service Dog Park, a 7.15-acre park project that will include walking trails, an off-leash dog park, nature play and fitness areas, and elements designed to engage and facilitate interactions between community members of all ages and abilities. In its current configuration, it offers limited recreational opportunities to the local residents. It's unique in that it creates a celebratory space in the community, but also prioritizes part of the community master plan, specifically creating a dog park for residents, their friends and guests, and their 4-legged family members.

The regional Post 9/11 memorial space will be located at the Westover Industrial Gate Park at the corner of Westover Road and Honeysuckle Drive adjacent to Westover Air Reserve Base. The plans for the park began through a collaboration between its Veterans Services Office, Department of Planning & Development, and Department of Parks & Recreation.

About the Match

The Land and Water Conservation Fund grant will account for roughly half of the project's cost. The other \$499,000 will be funded by the city.

Local Quote

Planning Director Lee Pouliot said he considers the project one of his favorite endeavors since entering the department. He expressed that the memorial park defies traditional definition in its multi-purpose design. "Instead of having a traditional memorial, this project represents an experience and a space to celebrate service in the post-9/11 area. He said it will be the city's first dog park and that the park's innovative design will allow attendees to reflect on military service in an experiential manner. Construction is set to begin soon.