

# The Community Preservation Act in Boston



**WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA)?** The CPA enables cities and towns in Massachusetts to create a local dedicated fund for affordable housing, historic preservation, outdoor recreation, and open space projects.

**WHAT PROJECTS CAN CPA FUNDS SUPPORT?** Each fiscal year, CPA communities must spend, or set aside for future spending, the following share of their annual CPA revenues on three core areas:

- 10 percent for affordable housing
- 10 percent for historic resources
- 10 percent for outdoor recreation and open space

The remaining 70 percent of the revenues may be spent or reserved for future projects in any of these three areas, at the community's discretion. CPA funds are dedicated and may only be spent on the CPA core areas of affordable housing, historic preservation, outdoor recreation, and open space.

## **CPA IN BOSTON COULD PROVIDE FUNDING TO:**

- Create and preserve affordable housing for seniors, working families, and veterans
- Restore and preserve historic municipal buildings, libraries, and rehabilitate old structures for new uses to improve neighborhoods
- Create new, and upgrade existing, playgrounds, community gardens, parks, and acquire land to protect water quality for families and future generations
- Leverage additional dollars from state, federal, and foundation grants and private investors

**HOW IS CPA FUNDING GENERATED?** CPA funds are generated through two sources: a small voter-approved surcharge on property tax bills, and an annual disbursement from the statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, which distributes funds each November to communities that have adopted CPA. The Trust Fund's revenues are derived from fees collected at the Registry of Deeds and from state budget surplus funds.

After adopting CPA, Boston would establish a local Community Preservation Committee to review proposals for local CPA-funded projects, and recommend projects to the City Council for approval.

Boston would exercise local control over its CPA budget. With input from neighborhood residents and various boards and committees, it would determine what types of CPA projects would be of most benefit each year.

Boston's committee would include members from these local boards and departments: Department of Neighborhood Development, Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston Landmarks Commission, Parks and Recreation, and the Conservation Commission.

For more information, visit [www.communitypreservation.org](http://www.communitypreservation.org)

### HOW MUCH WOULD CPA COST THE AVERAGE BOSTON HOMEOWNER?

Proponents of CPA in Boston, including a broad coalition of the city's affordable housing, historic preservation, parks and recreation, and conservation organizations, are recommending a 1% CPA surcharge for Boston, with exemptions for low-income homeowners and low- and moderate-income senior homeowners, as well as for the first \$100,000 of residential and commercial property value. Under this scenario, the city of Boston's Assessor's Department calculates that the average Boston single family homeowner would pay \$23.09 annually to the Boston Community Preservation fund.

### HOW MUCH WOULD CPA GENERATE FOR BOSTON?

With a 1% CPA surcharge, and the above listed exemptions, Boston would generate approximately \$13 million annually, according to figures supplied by the city. These locally raised dollars would receive an annual match, at varying percentage levels, from the statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund. Boston can also take advantage of a provision in the CPA statute allowing communities to dedicate additional available municipal revenues (such as linkage fees, impact fees, hotel taxes, etc.) to their CPA Fund, in order to qualify for a higher CPA state match. This would generate even more funds for Boston affordable housing, historic preservation, recreation and open space projects.

**160 communities have adopted the CPA, including the cities of Cambridge, Fall River, Malden, Medford, New Bedford, Quincy, Salem, Somerville, and Waltham.**

