



TOWN OF WRENTHAM COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

WRENTHAM TOWN HALL
79 SOUTH STREET
WRENTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02093
P 508-384-5441 | F 508-384-3174
www.wrentham.gov | cpc@wrentham.gov

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Community Preservation Act, or CPA, was enacted by the Massachusetts legislature in 2000 to give communities a vehicle to fund open space preservation, community housing, historical preservation and recreation.

Wrentham joined over 160 other Massachusetts communities by approving the CPA in November 2016 by a wide margin in a town-wide election.

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) assembled these questions and answers to help answer some common questions.

Where does the money in Wrentham's Community Preservation Fund come from?

Primarily, it comes from a 1% surcharge on property taxes. The average single-family home pays about \$50 per year. Additionally, the state supplements this revenue from its Community Preservation Trust Fund, which is primarily funded by a surtax on the Deeds Excise Tax paid by anyone who records a deed or other document at the Registry of Deeds.

What is the 1% CPA surcharge based on? Is it 1% of the value of my home?

No. The surcharge is based on 1% of your property tax. After subtracting \$100,000 from the valuation of your home and then taking 1% of the real estate tax applicable to that lower figure, one obtains the surcharge. It is not 1% of the value of your home.

For example, if you pay \$6,400 per year in property tax, 1% of that is \$64. Because the first \$100,000 of residential property value is exempt, your CPA surcharge would be about \$50.

How much does the Community Preservation Act cost the average taxpayer?

The average single-family home in Wrentham is currently valued at \$447,400. Its owner pays \$6,370.98 at the current rate of \$14.24 per thousand. Because there would be an exclusion on the first \$100,000 of value, deduct that amount, which gives you a property value of \$347,400. Tax on that amount, times 1%, would be \$49.47 per year ($\$347,400 \times \$14.24 \text{ per thousand} \times 1\% \text{ CPA surcharges} = \49.47), which is what the CPA costs the average Wrentham homeowner at the FY 2018 tax rate. Actual cost varies based on your property assessment.

What types of projects are eligible for CPA funding?

Projects must fall into one of four categories, and meet certain criteria that apply to each category to be eligible per state law:

- Open Space - Acquire, create, or preserve open space in town. If CPA funds were used to acquire or create an open space parcel, the funds may be used to rehabilitate or restore the open space.
- Historic Resources - Acquire, preserve or restore historic property in town. That property must be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of the town.
- Recreational Land - Acquire, create, or preserve recreational land. CPA funds may also be used to rehabilitate or restore recreational space.

- Community Housing - Acquire, create, preserve, or support housing for low to moderate income individuals. Additionally, if CPA funds were used to acquire or create the community housing, the funds may be used to rehabilitate or restore the community housing.

After adopting the Community Preservation Act, a new community must develop a Community Preservation Plan to facilitate implementation of the Act.

I've heard that there are additional fees when buying or selling houses in towns that have the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Is that true?

No, there are no additional fees when buying or selling property as a result of the town passing the CPA. All transactions at the Registry of Deeds involve a surtax, which funds the statewide Community Preservation Fund. Wrentham's approval of the CPA enables the state to return some of those funds back to Wrentham via a partial funding match -- which we have been missing out on until now.

What are some other advantages of having the Community Preservation Act?

The CPA provides Wrentham with a dedicated source of funding for open space, recreation, historical preservation and community housing. Other towns that have adopted the CPA have been able to preserve open space, protect local historic assets, and improve recreation facilities without tapping into their town's general fund.

Who controls the money in the town's Community Preservation Fund?

Town Meeting has control over Community Preservation fund expenditures.

What is the process by which local Community Preservation funds are granted?

The Town has a nine-member Community Preservation Committee, made up of one representative each from the Open Space Committee, Recreation Commission, Housing Authority, Historical Commission, Conservation Commission, Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, plus two appointed citizens-at-large. The Community Preservation Committee, representing a broad set of interests in our community, establishes the application process, reviews all applications for CPA funding, and recommends projects to Town Meeting for approval. Town Meeting decides whether to authorize the funding on each project.

Who can ask for CPA money via the petition process?

Any town resident can bring a project proposal to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for consideration. These projects may come through the various committees in town that have responsibility for that area of the community. For instance, a project advocating for investment in a recreational area would typically be brought through the town's Recreation Commission after gaining their support and input.

How does someone apply for CPA funding for their project?

Download the Application Form. The application is in two parts: the first part allows the CPC to determine whether the project qualifies for funding. The second part is the full application for the funding itself. Follow the instructions that accompany the form.

Does commercial property in Wrentham also pay into Wrentham's Community Preservation Fund?

Yes. Commercial real property is likewise assessed a surcharge of 1%.

Is there a resource where I can learn more about the Community Preservation Act and what types of investments are being made in communities across the state under this program?

Yes, the Community Preservation Coalition is a state-wide organization that helps communities build programs under the Community Preservation Act, and also tracks CPA-funded projects in those communities in the Success Stories section of their website. Read more at:
<http://www.communitypreservation.org>