

Community Preservation Program

In 2001, Newton voters adopted the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (CPA) by accepting a 1% surcharge on City real estate taxes to fund projects that further the City's affordable housing, historic resource, open space, and recreation goals. This local funding qualifies Newton for state matching funds generated from fees collected by the Registry of Deeds.

The CPA state statute allows the funding to be used for projects that:

- Acquire, create, preserve, rehabilitate/restore, and/or support community housing (including affordable housing for families, residents with disabilities or special needs, elder adults, etc.)
- Acquire, preserve, and/or rehabilitate/restore historic resources (including archives, art, buildings, structures, objects, or landscapes)
- Acquire, create, preserve, and/or rehabilitate/restore open space (including land for trails, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, etc.)
- Acquire, create, preserve, and/or rehabilitate/restore land for recreational uses (including parks, playgrounds, playing fields, etc.)

CPA funding comes with specific requirements as to how and when it can be used. For example, real estate acquired with CPA funds must be restricted to its CPA-eligible use in perpetuity. CPA funds may be used for capital improvements but not for maintenance or operations, may augment regular public funds but not replace them, and may be bonded or saved and combined over multiple years for major projects.

While the City Council approves the use of any CPA funds, those decisions are based on recommendations made by the all-volunteer Community Preservation Committee (CPC). This nine-member Committee includes five members appointed from other existing City boards and commissions and four non-statutory members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Newton's CPA ordinance aims to ensure that the CPC represents all CPA-eligible resources, and Newton's CPC strives to make its recommendations to the City Council unanimous whenever possible. These requirements and practices allow Newton's CPA program to take a collaborative approach to addressing the community's goals and needs.

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has had an active and productive year. As of February 2025, the CPC and the City Council have approved the following new CPA project funding in this fiscal year:

- \$2,000,000 in Historic Resource funding for the restoration of the First Baptist Bell Tower in Newton Centre.
- \$650,000 of Historic Resource funding for accessibility and sprinkler code improvements to Family ACCESS in West Newton Square, enabling their continued operation of their early childhood education center.
- \$98,500 in Historic Resource funding for a feasibility study for renovations to the West Newton Cinema in West Newton Square.
- \$1.67 million dollars in Historic Resource funding, \$1.47 bonded, to the Jackson Homestead in Newtonville for basement waterproofing and HVAC improvements, ensuring the continued preservation of Newton's historic museum and the expansion of their exhibition space.

The following projects have been recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, and have been recommended to the City Council for approval:

- \$75,000 in Recreation funding for the repair of the deck at the Newton Community Farm in Upper Falls.
- \$214,000 in Historic Resource funding for the architecture and investigation related to the restoration of the War Memorial Stairs at City Hall in Newton Centre.

The number of Historic Resource applications this fiscal year has allowed the CPC to meet the 20% target in the historic preservation spending category, which has historically been underrepresented in the portfolio of Newton CPA projects.

FY2025 also saw the completion of the Gath Pool, which received \$7.5 million dollars of CPA Recreation funding over three phases of work. The pool opened in July 2024, with accessibility upgrades, separate lap and family pools, and splash pad.

The Albermarle Fields project nearby, which also received CPA funding through the greater Athletic Fields project funded last fiscal year, held its groundbreaking in February.

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Community Preservation Program

Fiscal Year 2026 Outcomes and Strategies

Outcome 1

Promote Awareness of the Newton CPA Program

invested the largest portion of our funding (20%) on Affordable Housing projects which have acquired, created, preserved, supported, restored and rehabilitated new and existing affordable housing units throughout Newton. The remaining funds have been almost equally divided between the eligible CPA funding categories of Historic Resources (20%), Open Space (15%), and Recreation (20%).

The CPC will continue to work in FY26 to increase awareness in the community about the Community Preservation Program's possibilities and the positive impacts it has had on neighborhoods across the City. These initiatives will complement the [CPC's webpage](#) which is regularly updated with the latest information on the City's current funding proposals as well as past projects and the CPA funding process, including the [Interactive Online Map](#) showing all the CPA projects completed to date.

In 2001, Newton became an early adopter of the Community Preservation Program which has since raised nearly \$90 million for projects that have accomplished community goals in housing, historic resources, open space and recreation. Over the life of the program, the City has

Outcome 2

Establish New Community Preservation Program Information Sessions and Workshops for Prospective Applicants

diverse network of connections between the CPC and the City's residents and organizations. The CPC also seeks to encourage neighborhoods and organizations that have not previously worked with the CPC to consider what projects or community needs they have that might be eligible for CPA funding.

The CPC will work with the City's community engagement planner to design and implement a community outreach and engagement program. The initiative will include annual information sessions followed by regular project workshops for applicants who are interested in receiving assistance in thinking through potential projects, as well as information for Newton residents on the CPA fund and surcharge. The CPC anticipates that these meetings will be held on an annual or bi-annual basis, based on community demand. The CPC also intends to undertake specific community engagement efforts related to the program's 25th anniversary in 2026.

Although Newton's CPA program has completed hundreds of projects throughout the City over twenty years, organizations in the City are still not aware of the program and its possibilities and we think more neighborhoods can benefit from it. The CPC is actively working to develop new outreach and engagement programs to create a wider and more

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Outcome 3

Provide Plentiful
Information

The Community Preservation Act requires that the CPC “study the needs, possibilities and resources of the city or town regarding community preservation.” These studies provide the CPC with direction on the community’s goals for how the City’s CPA funds should be spent. In FY25, the CPC expanded the uses of the reports and informational materials created in FY23 to provide

the public with more detailed financial information and updates on the program and its projects.

Outcome 4

Develop Additional Tools for Monitoring
Existing and Ongoing CPA Funded Projects

Each of the CPA funding categories has specific requirements and standards that are applied to any projects which receive those funds. The CPC continues to develop processes and tools to monitor new, existing, and ongoing CPA funded projects to ensure their compliance with the CPA funding statute

and requirements and continuously improve the CPA’s processes and outcomes. In FY25, this work will include inviting staff, representing the housing trust, parks projects, and public facilities to give interim reports at project milestones.

CPC reaffirmed funding targets in FY25 and continued to be guided by the category spending listed below.

Newton CPA Allocation Targets: Balancing Funds Across Resources	
Community Housing (statutory minimum 10%)	35%
Historic Resources (statutory minimum 10%)	20%
Open Space (statutory minimum 10%)	20%
Recreation	20%
Total	100%

Draft FY26 Community Preservation Program Administrative Budget Detail

Newton, Massachusetts COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROGRAM			
Budget Detail for Program Administration	MUNIS Accounts (58Z11400 unless shown otherwise)	Fiscal 2025 Final	Fiscal 2026 Provisional
		Approved June 2024	As of February 28, 2025
PERSONNEL			
Prog Mgr: FULL TIME SALARIES (Grade H-9)	511001	\$78,732.00	\$81,090.00
Prog Mgr: CONTRIBUTORY RETIREMENT	58Z10491-570700	\$34,358.00	\$35,388.74
Prog Mgr: DENTAL INSURANCE	57DENT	\$600.00	\$600.00
Prog Mgr: HEALTH INSURANCE	57HLTH	\$8,667.02	\$11,978.69
Prog Mgr: BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57LIFE	\$0.00	\$0.00
Prog Mgr: MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	57MEDA	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Prog Mgr: LONGEVITY	514001	\$0.00	\$0.00
Program Manager(s) total (salary plus benefits)		\$123,857.02	\$130,557.43
Work by Other Depts.	513040	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
SUBTOTAL Personnel		\$128,857.02	\$135,557.43
OTHER			
Consultants	530100	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.00
Advertising/ Publications	534300	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Audiovisual Equipment	585130	\$500.00	\$500.00
Computer Software	585121	\$500.00	\$500.00
Computer Supplies	558500	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
Dues & Subscriptions	573000	\$8,150.00	\$8,150.00
In-State Conferences	571100	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Office Supplies	542000	\$1,000.00	\$500.00
Postage	534100	\$500.00	\$250.00
Printing	534200	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Signs	554800	\$1,000.00	\$750.00
SUBTOTAL Other Expenses		\$37,150.00	\$26,650.00
TOTAL All Expenses		\$166,007.02	\$162,207.43

Draft FY26 Community Preservation Program Budget

City of Newton COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND	Fiscal 2025	Fiscal 2026 Provisional
Program Budget	<i>Approved June 2024</i>	<i>Draft February 26, 2025</i>
REVENUE		
Local CPA surcharge	\$4,269,404.00	\$4,413,745.23
State Matching Funds <i>(For FY25, currently estimating 15% match)</i>	\$825,005.60	\$639,673.22
Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$40,650.68	\$5,975.00
Fund Balance <i>(assume \$0 in budget)</i>	\$0.00	\$0.00
Interest <i>(assume \$0 in budget)</i>	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$5,135,060.28	\$5,059,393.45
EXPENDITURES		
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION & DEBT SERVICE		
Program Administration <i>(max. 5% of annual new funds)</i>	\$163,717.02	\$162,207.43
Debt Service: Webster Woods, Gath Pool and Athletic Fields	\$982,273.35	\$988,963.15
BUDGETED RESERVES		
Community Housing Reserve <i>(min. 10% of annual new funds)</i>	\$513,506.03	\$505,939.35
Historic Resources Reserve <i>(min. 10% of annual new funds)</i>	\$513,506.03	\$505,939.35
Open Space Reserve <i>(min. 10% of annual new funds)</i>	\$513,506.03	\$505,939.35
General Reserve (unrestricted, any CPA purpose)	\$3,594,542.19	\$2,390,404.82
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$5,059,393.45	\$5,059,393.45