



City of Cambridge

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Community Preservation Act Generates Over \$92 Million for Affordable Housing, Historic Preservation, Open Space

Cambridge voters adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2001. Since then, the city has appropriated/reserved \$92.1 million in state and local CPA funds for affordable housing, historic preservation and protection of open space. The fiscal year 2010 CPA (state and local combined) appropriation totaled \$9.05 million.

The CPA Committee makes annual recommendations on how the CPA funds should be used, based upon public input gleaned through advertised public meetings and suggestions developed by City staff. Below is an overview of projects to date.

Affordable Housing Projects

The \$66.48 million in CPA funds raised between FY02-09 for affordable housing initiatives has been leveraged to support the creation/preservation of about 635 units. CPA funds are used in the preservation of expiring use units, acquisition and creation of rental units and creation of first-time homebuyer units. Through the Affordable Housing Trust (which administers CPA funds for affordable housing), the City has leveraged the amount it has received with over \$152 million from other funding sources. For FY10, \$7,240,000 has been allocated to affordable housing initiatives from CPA funds. Current and planned affordable housing projects underway in FY10 include:

- Revitalization of 113 public housing units at Lincoln Way and Jackson Gardens;
- Development of 40 affordable rental units on Putnam Ave;
- Renovation of 12 affordable rental units on Pine St;
- Acquisition of 26 affordable rental units on Porter Rd;
- Completion of 24 affordable homeownership units on Harvard St;
- Completion of 10 affordable homeownership units on Main St;
- Completion of rehab of 16 affordable rental units on Harvey St;
- Acquisition of affordable units through City's First-time Homebuyer programs.

Historic Preservation Projects

CPA funds help support the Cambridge Historical Commission's Preservation Grants program, providing funds to restore historic exteriors on affordable housing projects and

non-profit institutions. Eligible activities include acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation or restoration of historic resources. Approximately \$8.3 million in CPA funds allocated between FY02-09 has been obligated for: residential and non-profit institutional preservation grants; to support renovation of Cambridge Public Library's historic main building; floor and stair replacement at City Hall; repairs to the Sullivan Chamber at City Hall; restoration of the historic Cambridge Common; restoration of the historic Cambridge Cemetery fence, chapel, granite steps and curbs; Brattle-Craigie historic wall repair; restoration of Fresh Pond Golf Course Clubhouse cupola and clock; accessibility upgrades to Collins Library; window repairs at O'Connell Library; fence restoration at Fort Washington Park; fire station restoration; restoration of the Old Burying Ground; and restoration of City archival collections. Historic Preservation projects funded by FY10 CPA funds totaling \$905,000 include:

- Funding Preservation Grants Program;
- City Hall waterproofing and associated repairs;
- Engine 9 masonry, roof and door repairs;
- Engine 5 flashing, bird netting and door repairs;
- Cambridge Cemetery stairway repairs;
- Old Burying Ground headstone restoration; and
- Restoration/preservation of Archival Collections.

Open Space Projects

Although CPA legislation restricts communities from spending the first 10% of CPA open space funds on active and passive recreation-related open space projects, the City regularly dedicates other sources of funds for the renovation and maintenance of its many parks and recreation areas. Since FY02, the City has expended over \$34 million on these efforts.

From FY02-09, open space initiatives partially funded through CPA funds totaling \$8.3 million included: implementation of the Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan (including Northeast Sector Habitat Restoration, Little Fresh Pond shoreline restoration, Kingsley Point scenic vista restoration and related projects, and design of the Reservation Circulation and Access Plan) and the purchase of a 16-acre parcel in Lincoln, adjacent to Stony Brook (part of Cambridge's public water supply). Open Space funds were used to purchase a parcel of land at 12-14 Watson Street to retain a community garden. Funds were also allocated for an ecological inventory of City owned property in the upland watershed in Lincoln and Lexington and an Open Space Reserve for future open space acquisition and restoration, which now totals \$2.4 million.

In FY10, \$905,000 was appropriated to continue the Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan implementation, including: slope stabilization projects and invasive species removal; Black's Nook Area ecological restoration and improvements; and watershed drainage and stormwater improvements to Stream "C" and South Pond within the Golf Course.