

DRAFT November 2017

**City of Pittsfield
2018 Community Preservation Plan**



**Community Preservation Committee
Adopted XXXX**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT IN PITTSFIELD	2
HOW CPA FUNDS CAN BE USED	5
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION	8
COMMUNITY HOUSING	11
HISTORIC RESOURCES	13
CPA PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS	15
CPA GOALS	17
THE CPA FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS	19
APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION	22
PROJECT APPLICATION FORM - 2018	24
REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION CRITERIA	26
APPENDIX	28
1. THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES	28
2. PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS	29

INTRODUCTION

The Pittsfield Community Preservation Plan describes the process for administering the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in the City of Pittsfield. The Plan presents a description of the CPA as it applies to the City, a definition of CPA goals, and a methodology and procedure by which the CPA is administered. As such, it represents an informational document for residents, business owners, and other interested parties, a guideline and instructional document for applicants seeking project funding through the CPA, and a guidance document for this and future CPA Committees in making recommendations to the City Council for project funding. The Committee fully recognizes that this document may be modified by future CPA Committees in response to changing goals and experience with the CPA over time.

The Community Preservation Committee (or “CPC”) wishes to thank residents and other members of the community that helped develop this Plan.

For additional information on the CPA statute and how it is being utilized in Massachusetts, visit the Community Preservation Coalition website at www.communitypreservation.org. For information on Pittsfield’s Community Preservation activity, visit the CPC website at http://www.cityofpittsfield.org/city_hall/community_preservation_committee/index.php.

THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT IN PITTSFIELD

The Community Preservation Act, M.G.L. c. 44B, (“the CPA”) allows Massachusetts cities and towns to raise monies through a surcharge of up to 3% of the real estate tax levy on real property. These funds may then be used to acquire, create and preserve open space; acquire and preserve historic resources; acquire, create, preserve and support community housing; and acquire, create and preserve land for recreational use. The Act also provides State matching funds. The growing number of communities that have adopted the CPA (approximately half of the Commonwealth) has resulted in decreases in matching funds. In the early 2000’s, the State match was at or near 100% of the local, while in FY2019 it could be as low as 10-15%.

Pittsfield voters approved the Community Preservation Act at the November 2016 General Election. Electing to fund the CPA account through a 1.0% surcharge on all real estate property tax bills with three exemptions:

- Property owned and occupied as a domicile by any person who qualifies for low income housing or low or moderate income senior housing in the City, as defined in Section 2 of the Community Preservation Act;
- \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property; and.
- \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of class three, commercial property, and class four, industrial property, as defined in Section 2A of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59.

The collection of CPA surcharges began in Fiscal Year 2018. The anticipated surcharge collected in FY2018 is as follows:

	FY 2018	FY 2019
From local surcharges	\$ 423,529	\$ TBD
State matching funds	\$ 0	\$ TBD
Reserve from prior years	\$ 0	\$ 423,529
Recapture from prior years	\$ 0	\$ 0
Interest	\$ 0	\$ 0
Total	\$ 423,529	TBD
Appropriations	\$ 0	TBD

For FY 2018, revenues from the local CPA surcharge are estimated at \$423,529. The level of State matching funds anticipated to be collected in the Fall of 2018 is expected to be in the range of 10-15%. Funds collected in FY2018 will be held for potential disbursement until FY2019 to allow for a full year of surcharge collection.

Community Preservation Committee: Formation and Responsibilities

The CPA requires that the City create a Community Preservation Committee (or “Committee”) tasked with planning for the use of CPA funds and creating a process for soliciting and receiving applications for funding. The Committee then recommends specific projects to the City Council for funding. The City Council makes all final funding decisions, but no decision can be made without a positive recommendation of the Committee. The Committee is also charged with hosting a public hearing once a year to allow for public feedback in evaluating the funding process and community priorities.

The CPA requires that a committee consist of representatives of a community’s planning board (in Pittsfield, the Community Development Board), historical commission, conservation commission, parks commission and housing authority. In addition to these five representatives, the ordinance adopted by the City Council in February 2017 allowed for the appointment of four “at large” members nominated by the Mayor and subject to City Council approval. The 2017-2018 Committee is comprised of:

- James Conant (representative of the Conservation Commission), Chair
- John Dickson (representative of the Historical Commission), Vice-Chair
- Thomas Cracolici, At-Large
- Shirley Edgerton, At-Large
- Alexandra Groff, At-Large
- Sheila Irvin (representative of the Community Development Board)
- George Moran (representative of the Pittsfield Housing Authority)
- Simon Muil (representative of the Parks Commission)
- Danielle Steinmann, At-Large

The Mayor has assigned the Department of Community Development to provide staff support to the Committee.

This Plan was created through feedback provided through public input and a wide selection of planning and policy documents related to the CPA focus areas. The planning and policy documents include, but are not limited to: the Pittsfield Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, Housing Needs analysis, CDBG Consolidated Plan, Conservation Management Plan, Endangered Properties Casebook, the Capital Improvement Plan, and other relevant documents. This Community Preservation Plan attempts to capture Pittsfield’s community preservation needs and goals in the four CPA target areas. This Plan also outlines the processes by which the Committee solicits, reviews, and recommends proposals for CPA funding, including the application package. It is updated every year to reflect changes in goals or emphasis.

CPA Funding Requirements

The CPA mandates that each fiscal year Pittsfield must spend, or set aside for later spending, at least 10% of the annual Community Preservation Fund revenues that were collected from the local surcharge and State match for three CPA target areas: open space/recreation, historic resources, and community housing. Beyond these required allocations, the City Council decides how much of the remaining 70% of the funds to spend on the three purposes identified above, based on the recommendations of the Committee. The spending mix for the remaining 70% of the Fund can be modified each year, and any monies not appropriated remain in the Fund for future distribution.

A recommendation by the Committee and an approval by the City Council are both required to spend any CPA funds for particular community preservation purposes. Appropriations from the Fund, except borrowing, are made by a simple majority vote of both bodies. Borrowing monies for CPA purposes requires a two-thirds majority vote by the City Council.

The City Council may approve, reduce, or reject any amount of spending appropriation recommended by the Committee. At the Committee's recommendation, the City Council may also decide to set aside all or part of the annual Fund revenues for later spending by allocating revenues to a reserve for one or more community preservation purpose category. The City Council may not, however, increase any recommended appropriation or allotted reserve. In addition, the City Council may not appropriate or reserve any fund monies on its own initiative without a prior favorable recommendation by the Committee.

The Committee's meetings are all subject to the Open Meeting Law and open to the public. The times and locations of these meetings are posted at City Hall and on the City website, <http://www.cityofpittsfield.org/>.

Written comments or questions are welcome and may be submitted via email to choss@cityofpittsfield.org or directed to the Community Preservation Committee, c/o CJ Hoss, Department of Community Development, City Hall, 70 Allen Street, Room 205, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

HOW CPA FUNDS CAN BE USED

Community Preservation Act funds must be used for public community preservation purposes in the areas of recreation, open space, historic preservation and community housing. The following guidelines summarize these public purposes.

The CPA legislation defines “preservation” as “the protection of personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction.”

As detailed by the CPA, funds may be spent to undertake the following primary community preservation purposes:

- **Open Space** – includes acquisition, creation and preservation of open spaces. As defined by the CPA, “shall include, but not be limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh water marshes and other wetlands, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for recreational use.”
- **Community Housing** – includes acquisition, creation and preservation of community housing as well as, support for community housing. The CPA defines community housing as, “low-and moderate- income housing for individuals and families, including low-or moderate- income senior housing.” This is translated as income for individuals and families making less than 100% of area median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CPA defines the term “support of community housing” as including, but not limited to, “programs that provide grants, loans, rental assistance, security deposits, interest-rate write downs or other forms of assistance directly to individuals and families who are eligible for community housing or to an entity that owns, operates, or manages such housing, for the purpose of making housing affordable.”
- **Historic Resources** – includes acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources. The CPA recognizes historic resources as, “historical structures and landscapes,” including “a building, structure, vessel, real property, document or artifact that is listed or eligible for listing on the State register of historic places or has been determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of a city or town.” Historic resources also include monuments or artifacts. Pittsfield’s Historical Commission acts as the “local preservation commission” as described above.
- **Recreation** – includes acquisition, creation, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration. The CPA defines recreational use as, “active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field. ‘Recreational use’ shall not include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium, or similar structure.” The CPA also adds “that with respect to land for recreational use, ‘rehabilitation’ shall include the replacement of playground equipment and other capital improvements to the land or the facilities thereon which make the land or the related facilities more functional for the intended recreational use”. A “capital improvement” is defined as “reconstruction or alteration of real property that: (1) materially adds to the value of the real property, or appreciably prolongs the useful life of the real property; (2) becomes part of the real property or is permanently affixed to the real property so that removal would cause material damage to the property or article itself;

and (3) is intended to become a permanent installation or is intended to remain there for an indefinite period of time.”

Community Preservation Act funds may also be used for the following purposes:

- The “rehabilitation or restoration of open space, land for recreational use and community housing that is acquired or created” using CPA monies.
- Revenues “set aside” for “later spending.”
- Annual “administrative and operating expenses” of the Committee, not to exceed 5% of the Fund’s estimated annual revenues.
- Annual principal and interest payments, preparation, issuance, and marketing costs for bonds or notes for borrowings for community preservation purposes.
- Damages payable to property owners for real estate interests taken by the Town by eminent domain for community preservation purposes.
- “Local share for state and federal grants” for allowable community preservation purposes.
- Property acquisition-related expenses including appraisals, land surveys, baseline studies to establish conservation values, title searches, legal fees, costs regarding the issuance of the required restriction on the land, and other closing expenses for the project.
- If a grant of a perpetual restriction to a not-for-profit conservation organization is intended, the amount requested to the City Council may include funding for the holder of the restriction for ongoing site monitoring and potential enforcement.

Community Preservation Act funds may **not** be spent for the following purposes:

- As a replacement or substitute for operating funds. The CPA is a supplementary funding source intended to increase available resources for community preservation efforts.
- Payment for routine maintenance, defined in the CPA as “incidental repairs, which neither materially add to the value of the property nor appreciably prolong the property’s life, but keep the property in a condition of fitness, efficiency or readiness.”
- Gymnasiums, stadiums, or any similar structure.
- Acquisition of artificial turf for athletic fields.
- Projects without a public purpose or public benefit.

The following table was created by the Community Preservation Coalition to outline eligible projects:

Determining Project Eligibility

	Open Space	Historic	Recreation	Housing
Acquire	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
Preserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	-	-	-	Yes
Rehabilitate and/or Restore	Yes – if acquired or created with CP Funds	Yes	Yes – if acquired or created with CP Funds	Yes – if acquired or created with CP Funds

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

In the 2017 City of Pittsfield Open Space and Recreation Plan (the “OSRP”), the residents of Pittsfield identified five key open space and recreation goals:

1. Protect, preserve and maintain natural resources to ensure an adequate amount, variety, and distribution of open space and water resources to maintain biodiversity and provide benefit to the public.
2. Provide opportunities, resources, accessibility and quality facilities for both recreation and conservation uses.
3. Ensure necessary funding for open space, natural resources, and park planning for the upgrade and maintenance of existing parks and to further the goals, objectives and strategies of the Open Space & Recreation Plan.
4. Develop while preserving traditional land use patterns, decreasing sprawl and protecting large open spaces.
5. Promote active public involvement through public awareness, open space stewardship, and ownership of Pittsfield’s Open Space & Recreation Plan.

In reaffirming these five key goals, the residents of Pittsfield continue to recognize the importance of open space and adequate passive and active recreational areas as critical to preserving the character of the City and thereby the quality of life shared by its citizens.

Open Space Resources and Needs

Pittsfield is a community blessed with abundant natural and scenic resources, including dedicated conservation lands, active farmlands, open fields, woodlands, and wetlands and waterways. These resources contribute to making the City a desirable place to live and work a factor which has fueled modest residential growth. Without planning, the appearance of a community, the condition of its natural resources, and the quality of life experienced by its residents can be dramatically altered through changes in land use. Through thoughtful planning, communities assess where they are, where they would like to go and how to get there. It is important that communities plan to protect important open space and recreational facilities and encourage compatible growth in the future.

While Pittsfield values its open spaces, the City recognizes the challenges of commercial, industrial and residential development. The quality of life for all of Pittsfield’s residents is greatly enriched by the quality of the open space in the City, whether the space can be enjoyed for recreational activity or conserved to protect wildlife habitat and sensitive natural resources.

Although Pittsfield is the urban center of Berkshire County, almost 70% of land within the City remains undeveloped, with forest being the largest proportion of undeveloped land cover. Approximately 22% of the land area of Pittsfield is permanently protected from development, with the City owning approximately ¼ of those lands. In total there are 5,965 acres of land in the city that are permanently protected, with the Commonwealth owning 2,800 acres and the City of Pittsfield owning 1,606 acres as part of its vast and publicly-accessible park and conservation area holdings. Other significant landowners are Berkshire Natural Resources Council (The Boulders) and Mass Audubon (Canoe Meadows). These lands support a wildlife habitat and a variety of recreational and historic facilities and programs, in addition to providing nature study opportunities and visual amenities. In addition to these lands, private landowners of large blocks of land that are in some way open to outdoor recreational use include four

golf courses, a downhill ski area, and three summer camps. The CPA offers a significant tool for increasing the protection and preservation of the City's open spaces, farmlands, and natural resources.

As conservation and outdoor recreational lands often extend beyond the City's boundaries, there are large blocks of protected undeveloped lands that provide wildlife habitat and linkages which can also provide human recreational space and linkages. The City should continue to partner with conservation organizations to identify and act upon opportunities to acquire land or easements that add to or expand existing open space lands, and linkages between existing lands to create pathways for wildlife and recreational movement.

The Berkshire Natural Resources Council has initiated a Berkshire High Road concept, with the goal of "building a system of trails and conservation land that will tie together all the Berkshires' finest features: the mountains, the streams, the farm valleys and wildlands to the villages, cafes and cultural institutions." In Pittsfield, envisioned walking trail routes could link downtown Pittsfield southward to the Lenox Mountain conservation lands, westward to Pittsfield State Forest and the Taconics, and northeastward to The Boulders.

The CPA allows and encourages the acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space. CPA funds may be used to protect open space by outright purchase, through bonding, through purchases made in conjunction with other private and/or public funds, and/or by extinguishing or limiting development rights through the purchase of permanent land conservation or agricultural preservation easements or restrictions. In identifying multiple land preservation and funding methods, the CPC recognizes that CPA funds alone will likely not be sufficient for the protection of significant tracts of land.

Recreational Resources and Needs

Pittsfield's parks have seen a significant transformation over the past several years. Although this has not been an easy task, the City has worked to renovate the City's parks and open spaces while increasing the level of maintenance each area requires. There have been many positive improvements occurring in Pittsfield as a result of better management, community collaborations, and receipt of grant and donated funds. However, the ability to continue this upward trend does depend in part on continued increases in city operating budget and with City, State and Federal funding through programs such as Community Development Block Grants, Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Community Program and others including use of CPA funds. Capital improvements in City parks are largely dependent upon just those types of funds. Even with a continued emphasis on preventative and routine maintenance, infrastructure such as play structures, court surfaces and park benches eventually need significant and costly repair or replacement. Pittsfield residents have indicated a strong preference for expending City resources to maintain and improve the existing public parks and spaces that the City already owns, and less of a preference for the acquisition of new properties.

There is a trend nationally that has resulted in a change in recreation needs over the years towards more active uses that require more space, such as soccer. That trend, combined with a locally changing demographic where there are older and more active city residents, make it important to think critically about the future of the park system. It is essential that the City continue to evaluate the existing park system and respond accordingly to accommodate a changing and dynamic community need.

Specifically, the need for improved bike routes, particularly the extension of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, continues to be rated as the highest, single most desired recreational improvement for the City. This kind of amenity makes the community more attractive to current residents and newcomers. Very few

roads within the City have adequate bicycle lanes or shoulders. Many areas within the City are not safe for cyclists. Often, roads or paths do not connect to provide access from one place to another. Throughout the public participation process residents have stated a desire to have parks that are lit at night to offer extended hours of use and to increase safety. As an example, the desire for lights at Clapp Park has consistently been raised in past and current surveys and public forums. Lights at this park could complement the improvements planned for the baseball field, playground and bathroom facilities. In addition, there is a stated desire among the community for new and creative recreational and entertainment opportunities. Additional low cost, high impact recreation opportunities should be provided whenever and wherever possible, though this often requires investment in park infrastructure to support it.

Aside from city offered recreation, Pittsfield is fortunate to have several very active recreation and social service organizations located near the center of the City. The facilities of these agencies, Pittsfield Family YMCA, Gladys Allen Brigham Center, Boys & Girls Club of Pittsfield, Catholic Youth Center, Jewish Community Center and Salvation Army, are vital in supplementing the public recreation supply, with indoor play opportunities during the winter as well as programs in other seasons. Each of these agencies serves a city-wide clientele, and each has its individual focus or purpose. However, because of their downtown locations and their social service orientations, they are of particular benefit to the inner-city neighborhoods, helping ameliorate the relative lack of public parkland there. Many activities are free, and annual membership and any program fees are modest.

COMMUNITY HOUSING

The CPA statute defines “community housing” as housing for low- and moderate-income individuals and families, including senior housing. Generally, low-income is for those individuals or households with annual income less than 80% of the area-wide median income. Moderate income is for those individuals or households with annual income less than 100% of the area-wide median income. American Community Survey estimates for 2011-2015 that the City’s median household income is \$51,030 for a single-person household, which is determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Through the CPA legislation, this category includes the acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of community housing. The CPA defines the term “support of community housing” as including, but not limited to, “programs that provide grants, loans, rental assistance, security deposits, interest-rate write downs or other forms of assistance directly to individuals and families who are eligible for community housing or to an entity that owns, operates, or manages such housing, for the purpose of making housing affordable.”

The City has three primary documents that address housing conditions and needs: the 2009 Master Plan, the 2009 Housing Needs Analysis and Development Recommendations, Sustainable Berkshires, and the City’s five-year Consolidated Plan.

Community Housing Resources and Needs

Based on data collected in the 2015 Consolidated Plan, the cost burden of housing remains the most significant housing problem. A small percentage of residents experience substandard housing. There is some belief amongst City staff, especially in relation to code enforcement, that HUD data collection does not adequately reflect the true need for additional housing rehabilitation in Pittsfield. Overall, while there is a perception of a high rate of affordable housing, much of the information and reporting points towards a lack of quality affordable housing units in the City.

A number of other issues identified in local and regional planning include:

- Lack of diverse housing choices;
- Concentration of affordable units in singular development projects;
- Significant portion of housing developed pre-1940;
- Lack of incentives/programs to improve housing;
- Lack of units with >2 bedroom;
- Lack of accessible units;
- Low property values; and
- Cost of accessibility and other code requirements.

One theme that has emerged over the last decade is the lack of diverse housing choices, meaning not just income but types of residential units (e.g., townhouse, complex style, etc.). This is especially important because it fails to address the needs of our aging residents that wish to stay in Pittsfield and young professionals, especially those that do not wish to own a single-family home.

The challenges in creating new affordable units outside of singular affordable housing projects has also been brought to the City’s attention. In discussions with developers, most incentive programs focus on

a singular type of housing (e.g., market rate or affordable) versus projects that provide housing for a mixture of incomes. Over the past several years, the City has waived the affordable housing requirement of 20% in downtown projects involving residential development, while also having projects like the Silk Mill or New Amsterdam Apartments that the significant majority are affordable units. The planning documents referenced above generally or specifically recommend mixed, diverse housing choices.

In 1969, legislation was passed to develop the Comprehensive Permit Law. This law created a standard threshold that each community in the Commonwealth provide a minimum of 10% of total housing units as affordable. Most recent calculations place Pittsfield at 9.2%, or approximately 1,936 units. Pittsfield is approximately 168 units short of the 10% threshold. This results in developers of affordable housing to apply for a Comprehensive Permit that provides the ability to override certain aspects of City ordinances and regulations. While this process is used often in Eastern Massachusetts, the only Comprehensive Permit applied for in Pittsfield was part of Soldier On's project for homeless female veterans that began permitting in the Fall of 2017.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic Resources are defined by the CPA as buildings, structures, vessels, documents and artifacts, or real properties that are listed or eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places or are significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of Pittsfield as determined by the local Historical Commission. CPA funds may be used for the preservation, restoration or rehabilitation of historic resources (including City-owned historic resources), but not for routine maintenance. Unless such historic resources are in public ownership, the public purpose of investments in historic resources must be apparent, and must be protected by a permanent preservation restriction that ensures a public benefit. All rehabilitation projects funded in the Historic Resources category must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix 1).

Currently, the City has a number of properties listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, including the Allen Hotel, William Russell Allen House, Berkshire Life Building, Frank-William Davol House (Springside Park), Eaton, Crane and Pike Company Factory, Hancock Shaker Village, Samuel Harrison House, Frank Howard Building, Herman Melville House, Morewood School, North Street Commercial Block, Old Central Fire Station, Old Central High School, Pilgrim Memorial Church and Parish House, Pittsfield Cemetery, Pittsfield Town Hall, Charles Whittlesey Power House, Providence Court, A.H. Rice Silk Mill, Saint Stephen's Church, South Mountain Concert Hall, Wahconah Park, Wollison Shipton Building, and the Women's Club of Pittsfield. The Park Square Historic District and the Upper North Street Historic District are the two primary historic districts in Pittsfield and include dozens of significant structures that contribute to the district designation. The City also maintains a significant inventory of hundreds of surveyed structures dating back to the 1970's, and recently completed the Endangered Properties Casebook, which provides an inventory of properties deemed to be at risk by the Historical Commission.

Historic Resources and Needs

Pittsfield has an active Historical Commission, largely driven by the review of projects related to various state or federal resources. The Commission is authorized to weigh in as a local agent for the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and to review proposed demolitions subject to the City's Demolition Delay Ordinance. Any buildings deemed to have historical significance and preservation value that are over 75 years of age can result in the Commission delaying demolition for up to 12 months. As described above, a significant number of structures/properties have been inventoried and listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Additionally, there are at least 13 properties that hold preservation restrictions by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Over 900 properties have been inventoried going back to the late 1970's, many of which have been deemed to be eligible for listing on the State and National Register. The City does not have any locally designated historic districts that provide protection to historic resources.

The 2009 Master Plan calls out the value of Historic Preservation in Pittsfield and directly (and indirectly) identifies multiple strategies to further efforts, including:

- Create tax incentives and grant programs for the preservation of homes and historic buildings.
- Protect historic buildings and neighborhood character.
- Improve the appearance of city neighborhoods and gateways.

- Create a citywide inventory of historic and cultural resources.
- Become a Certified Local Government, which is a Federal/State program that requires a community to adopt a local historic district and historic district commission.

In addition, the City is on the verge of completing the Endangered Properties Casebook project. This project was funded by the City and a grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, focusing on 25 properties in the City with historic value that are endangered by neglect, development pressure and other circumstances. The project focuses on some of the local/regional issues that make preservation difficult, including the lack of a local historic district(s) in Pittsfield, building/fire code compliance and the need for additional incentives to make preservation more feasible.

CPA PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The Committee took three official steps in gathering public input: an initial public session on September 25, 2017; an online and hard copy survey that was open from October 30 – November 20, 2017; and a public hearing held on December 11, 2017.

Public Meeting – September 25, 2017

The Committee held a public meeting to kick off the CPA planning process in September. This meeting kicked off with a presentation that provided a brief overview of the CPA, the Committee’s progress since forming, and next steps. The meeting was then open to a question and answer session, followed by an interactive exercise to begin the process of collecting community preferences and project ideas.

At least 50 members of the public attended and provided responses to the interactive exercise. Much of the contingent favored Open Space/Recreation, with over approximately two-thirds of the responses favoring the category. Historic Preservation was the second most preferred, followed by Community Housing.

Specific projects were listed under each area by respondents. Projects such as new athletic fields and the preservation of St. Mary’s was listed, and the creation of pickleball courts was very popular.

Community Survey

The community survey was available for three weeks from October 30 to November 20. The survey was listed in two visible locations on the City website, had multiple press releases published in local media, and was circulated through multiple posts in several social media groups. The Superintendent of Pittsfield Schools sent out an email blast to parents and students, and other community organizations also encouraged responses. The survey received 665 responses over three weeks, which represents just over 1.5% of the City’s population.

The survey asked for responses to multiple questions. The first question asked for a preference of how the three primary categories are funded. Generally, the largest portion of respondents chose to distribute evenly among the three categories. Outside of that, the two observations that stand out is the next largest support distribution was to provide Open Space/Recreation with greater than 50% of CPA funds, and just over 8% favored providing Open Space/Recreation with the required minimum funding.

	10% (Required Minimum)	11-25%	33% (Even Distribution)	>50%
Historic Preservation	22.5	22.1	39.4	16
Community Housing	23.5	19.2	38.5	18.9
Open Space/Recreation	8.3	14.8	41.1	35.9

The questions that followed provided comprehensive support for various activities that could be supported with CPA funds through each category. Several demographic questions were answered in an attempt to track differences in responses by different attributes. It is worth noting that the survey was well represented by respondents age 19-64. Those age 65+ also had a large number of responses, with those 18 years or younger being underrepresented with four total responses.

CPA Goals

Based on document review and the public input process, the following are goals that have been developed based on the three CPA funding areas.

Open Space Preservation Goals

- Provide a sufficient amount of open space to maintain biodiversity, support habitats, and fulfill the needs of residents on a City-wide scale, including in the downtown, and at neighborhood levels.
- Protect critical watershed areas including wetlands, aquifers and maintain water bodies (Onota Lake, Pontoosuc Lake, and Richmond Pond) for water quality, habitat, recreational value and aesthetics.
- Support the preservation of existing farmland, open fields and other areas of rural character and scenic beauty within the City.
- Preserve contiguous tracts of open space by providing connections between protected parcels, thereby reducing fragmentation of plant and animal populations, maintaining animal migration routes and facilitating public use of protected land.
- Create linkages of green-space between recreation and conservation areas and cooperate with neighboring towns to create/connect/extend regional trail systems (BNRC's High Road) where possible.
- Encourage and create incentives to promote infill and brownfield redevelopment and development in urban centers and zones identified for growth pursuant to the comprehensive planning process.
- Maintain traditional neighborhood development patterns and discourage development which damages the character of the community or the neighborhood.

Recreation Goals

- **Maintain and Improve Existing Recreation Areas:** Parks and recreational facilities which are clean, safe, functional, attractive and easily accessible are essential to the community. Maintenance and rehabilitation of existing recreational parks and playgrounds is a high priority, as highlighted in the 2017 OSRP.
- **Provide a Diversity of Recreation Facilities:** A wider diversity of recreation facilities for teenage and elderly populations is needed.
- **Provide for Bicycles:** More bike paths, bike lanes, bike routes and bike linkages are needed in the City as many people have expressed an interest in bicycling for recreation, exercise and commuting.
- **ADA Accessibility:** Most of the City's parks have some portion of the property that is ADA accessible, particularly the parks and playgrounds in the dense city center. However, there are large blocks of land that are not accessible to the disabled. The Springside Park Master Plan includes the development of an ADA accessible trail, and Clapp Park and Wild Acres planned improvements include ADA components.
- **Provide Recreational and Entertainment Opportunities through capital investment:** Additional low cost, high impact recreation opportunities should be provided whenever and wherever possible.

Community Housing Goals

- Acquire, create, preserve and support community housing and rehabilitate or restore community housing that is acquired or created under the CPA. Give preference to the reuse of existing buildings and to the construction of new buildings on previously developed sites.
- Ensure that new housing units created with the use of CPA funds are counted toward Pittsfield's 10% goal for affordable housing.
- Promote economic diversity of Pittsfield residents by providing housing for households earning at a range of 30%-100% of the Area Median Income.
- Provide permanent rental housing units that include family housing and accessible housing for elderly and persons with disabilities.
- Encourage non-profit organizations to build and advocate for affordable housing in Pittsfield.
- Encourage diversity in Pittsfield's population by achieving a mix of homes that enhances community character and provides needed choices for all its residents. This includes assisting developers provide the required 20% affordable units that is often waived in downtown residential projects.
- Encourage housing designs that preserve the character of Pittsfield's established residential neighborhoods.
- Promote Smart Growth and be guided by sustainable development principles.

Historic Preservation Goals

- Protect, preserve, and/or restore historic properties and sites throughout Pittsfield of historical, architectural, archeological, and cultural significance.
- Protect threatened properties of particular historical significance.
- Preserve urban and rural landscapes in Pittsfield.
- Update and maintain existing historic survey forms and prepare new surveys to determine historical significance.
- Create tax incentives and grant programs for the preservation of homes and historic buildings. – 2009 Master Plan
- Assist historic property owners in overcoming building code and accessibility concerns that are common in many of the City's historic building stock.
- Preserve the City's landmark churches.
- Identify and preserve artifacts and documents that have historical significance to the City.

THE CPA FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS

The Committee invites CPA funding application for the upcoming funding round. It is the responsibility of the Committee to review all applications and to make recommendation(s) as to which, if any, of these applications should be approved for CPA funding by the City Council. The Committee expects to bring its recommendations to the City Council during the overall Fiscal Year 2019 budget process in the Spring of 2018. The Committee has developed the following process for reviewing, recommending, and funding of CPA proposals.

Step 1. Submit Completed Phase 1 Application by January 5, 2018

Applications shall consist of:

- 10 double-sided printed copies of the complete application (Project Application Form and all attachments).
- 1 electronic copy of the complete application in *.doc or *.pdf format, and

Applications must be received by 4:00 pm on January 5, 2018 to be eligible for review of eligibility for approval in 2018. At its discretion the Committee may vote to extend or waive the deadline due to special circumstances or for compelling reasons.

Applications for CPA funding must be submitted to the following address:

Community Preservation Committee
c/o Cornelius Hoss, City Planner
Department of Community Development
70 Allen Street, Room 205
Pittsfield, MA 01201
choss@cityofpittsfield.org

Step 2. Community Preservation Committee Review for Eligibility

- A. Application Review:** The Community Preservation Committee will review submitted applications to determine whether the proposed projects are eligible for Community Preservation funding.

The application must be approved by the property owner.

- B. Project Review Meetings:** The Committee may ask applicants to meet with the Committee or its representatives to discuss their applications. These meetings will be publicly noticed. Applicants are encouraged to meet and consult with other appropriate City committees to assist with the vetting process, for instance with the Historical Commission for historic preservation project proposals.
- C. Notification:** The Committee will notify applicants of its decisions concerning eligibility and invite applicants to submit the more detailed second phase applications for project funding. It

may ask eligible applicants to submit additional information. The due date for Phase 2 applications will be provided to applicants as part of the notification of eligibility.

Step 3. Submit completed Phase 2 Application

Follow same instructions from Step 1 above. The due date will be determined by the Community Preservation Committee, and eligible applications will be informed of the due date in their notification of eligibility.

Step 4. Community Preservation Committee Review and Public Comment

- A. Application Review:** The Community Preservation Committee will review submitted applications to determine whether the proposed projects:
 - 1. Are sufficiently developed in terms of their work plan and ripe in terms of timing for further consideration; and
 - 2. Are consistent with the goals for CPA funding as set forth in this Plan; and
 - 3. Are authorized by the property owner.
- B. Project Review Meetings:** The Committee may ask applicants to meet with the Committee or its representatives to discuss their applications. These meetings will be publicly noticed. The Committee will seek public comments on proposed projects. Applicants are encouraged to meet and consult with other appropriate City committees to assist with the vetting process.
- C. Notification:** The Committee will notify applicants of its decisions concerning recommendations to the City Council. It may ask eligible applicants to submit additional information.
- D. Committee Recommendations:** The Committee will make its final recommendations for funding in the form of one or more orders to be voted on by the City Council in the Spring of 2018. The Committee may recommend a project as proposed by the applicant, or may modify the project, or it may recommend partial funding or funding for only a portion or phase of the proposed project. The Committee's recommendations to the City Council may include detailed project scopes, conditions, and other specifications as the Committee deems appropriate to ensure CPA compliance and project performance.

The Committee will present its recommendations to the City Council for discussion and vote. The City Council may invite applicants to present their projects at a City Council meeting(s). The City Council has the final authority to award funds from the Community Preservation Act Fund. A simple majority vote is required to approve funding. A two-thirds vote is required for borrowing.

Step 5. Award Letter

For projects approved by the City Council, the Committee will issue award letters with information on funding amount, funding conditions, project modification as voted by the City Council (if any), City staff contact information, and guidelines for project execution.

Step 6. Project Execution

Funding for approved projects will be available following the issuance of the award letter on or after July 1, 2018, subject to conditions contained in the award letter. CPA monies are public funds raised from dedicated City tax revenues and from State subsidies to the City. Projects financed with CPA funds, and carried out on public property or by a public entity must comply with all applicable State and municipal requirements, including the State procurement law, which requires special procedures for the selection of products, vendors, services, and consultants.

All CPA funds are administered and disbursed by the City of Pittsfield, and project management, oversight, execution, and financial control will be under the control of the Department of Community Development. All public bid documents or requests for proposals must be approved by the Director of the Department of Community Development. All contractual agreements with vendors or service providers must be approved and signed by the Director of Community Development. Payments are made only after the receipt of goods or services. The Director of Community Development may approve partial payments for partially completed service as may be specified in a City-approved service contract or on a case by case basis.

Where a private funding source supplements a CPA appropriation for a project to be carried out by the City of Pittsfield or on land owned by the City of Pittsfield, all such private funds must be donated to the City before any goods or services are procured for the project and must be utilized first before CPA funds can be accessed.

The aforementioned guidelines do not strictly apply to a non-governmental entity or a governmental or quasi-governmental entity other than the City of Pittsfield. However, the Community Preservation Committee and the Director of Community Development may require accounting and reporting procedures that are appropriate in the context of the project and that satisfy the City's need to comply with municipal finance laws.

The Committee may request project status updates from Fund recipients. The purpose of such update is to aid the Committee in refining the Plan and to identify issues that may assist future applicants.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

1. The application process for Community Preservation Funding is twofold. The Application for Community Preservation Eligibility will introduce your proposal to the Committee so that it can determine the project's eligibility and offer guidance. If the Committee agrees that your proposal is eligible, an Application for Community Preservation Funding must be completed. The Committee will review both the application for eligibility and that for funding according to the General Criteria outlined below.
2. In order to be considered for recommendation for Fiscal Year 2019 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), you must submit an Application for Community Preservation Eligibility no later than January x, 2018. Final Applications for Community Preservation Funding must be received no later than January xx, 2018 to be considered for recommendation for Fiscal Year 2019.
3. Each application must be submitted to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) using the Application for Community Preservation Funding/Eligibility as a cover sheet.
4. Applications should be submitted in PDF form and ten (10) hard copies of all project materials to the attention of Cornelius Hoss, City Planner, Department of Community Development, City Hall, 70 Allen Street Room 205, Pittsfield, MA 01201.
5. Please include any maps, diagrams, and/or photos that pertain to your project.
6. All applicants will be expected to present their project at a CPC meeting and be available to answer questions about their proposals. The CPC will set a public meeting schedule to review project proposals in March 2018. Applicants will be notified regarding the date of the meeting they should attend.
7. The CPC will provide its recommendations to the City Council for final approval.
8. If approved, project funding would be available as soon as July 1, 2018, assuming appropriate contracts and/or deed restrictions have been finalized with the applicant.
9. All projects receiving funding shall expend funds by an agreed upon date. Appropriated funds not expended by that specific date shall be subject to revocation.
10. The CPC is not obligated to allocate 100 percent of available funds in a Fiscal Year, and is not obligated to fund a project at the full requested amount.

General Criteria

The Community Preservation Committee will give preference to proposals which address as many of the following general criteria as possible:

- Are eligible for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding according to the requirements described in the CPA legislation; specifically
 - The acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space
 - The acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources.
 - The acquisition, creation, and preservation of land for recreational use.
 - The creation, preservation, and support of community housing.
- Are consistent with the priorities of the Community Preservation Plan and documents referenced within;
- Save resources that would otherwise be threatened and/or serve a currently under-served population;
- Demonstrate practicality and feasibility; demonstrate that the project can be implemented expeditiously and within budget;

- Leverage additional public and/or private funds, including the voluntary contributions of goods and services;
- Preserve or utilize current City-owned assets; and
- Receive endorsement by other municipal boards or departments.

For further information about the application process or to discuss a project's eligibility, please contact Cornelius Hoss at choss@pittsfieldch.com or (413) 499-9366, or visit Pittsfield's Community Preservation Committee website at:

http://www.cityofpittsfield.org/city_hall/community_preservation_committee/index.php. For additional information on the CPA statute and how it is being applied in towns across the State, visit the Community Preservation Coalition website at www.communitypreservation.org.

REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION CRITERIA

It is the responsibility of the Committee to review all projects proposed for funding through the CPA Fund and to make recommendations to the City Council as to which, if any, of the proposed projects should be funded. In order to be considered eligible for review by the Committee, a project must at a minimum meet the statutory requirements of the CPA.

A project submitted to and deemed eligible for consideration by the Committee will be evaluated in relation to the following “Review and Recommendation Criteria.” Recommendations for funding will be based on how well the individual projects meet these criteria, recognizing that all criteria may not apply to every project. The Committee will also give due consideration to the urgency of the project, with particular consideration given to those projects whose successful implementation is constrained by scheduling factors not controlled by the applicant.

- The project is consistent with the goals of the City of Pittsfield *Community Preservation Plan*.
- The project is consistent with the relevant policy documents outlined within this document. In the case of Historic Resource projects, the work specified is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation – see Appendix 1.
- The project is economically or otherwise reasonably feasible to implement.
- The project serves a currently under-served population.
- The project serves multiple needs and populations and/or addresses more than one focus area of the CPA.
- The project leverages additional or multiple sources of public and/or private funding.
- The project utilizes, preserves, protects, or enhances currently City-owned open space, recreation, historic and/or housing assets.
- The applicant/applicant team has successfully implemented projects of similar type and scale, or has demonstrated the ability and competency to implement the project as proposed.
- The applicant has site control, or the written consent by the property owner to submit an application.
- The applicant has given notice of the proposed project to abutters and the neighborhood where the project is proposed.

The draft scoring sheet as developed by the Committee is as follows:

Criteria	#	Value	Notes
Impact (# citizens affected)		1 – neighborhood 2 – city-wide 3 – beyond city	

Reaches Underserved Communities (geographic)		1 – meets 2 – exceeds	
Aligns with City priorities (planning documents)		1 – a little 2 – somewhat 3 – a lot	
Leverages other Funding (dollar amounts)		1 – less than 20% 2 – 50% or less 3 – more than 50%	
Receives in-kind Support		1 – a little 2 – somewhat 3 – a lot	
Partners with Other organizations		0 – none 2 – yes	
Employs locally		1 – 5 or less 2 – 5-10 3 – more than 10	
Involves youth (hires, benefits)		1 – a little 2 – somewhat 3 – a lot	
Practicality feasibility (timing, budget)		0 – needs work 2 – meets 3 – exceeds	
Demonstrates experience in successfully implemented projects		0 – none 1 – meets 2 – exceeds	
Community support		1 – a little 2 – somewhat 3 – a lot	
Preserves, utilizes City assets		0 – no 1 – a little 2 – a lot	

APPENDIX

1. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

*The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for establishing standards for all national preservation programs under Department authority and for advising federal agencies on the preservation of historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. There are four distinct, but interrelated, approaches to the treatment of historic properties -- Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction. **Preservation** focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time. **Rehabilitation** acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character. **Restoration** is undertaken to depict a property at a particular period of time in history, while removing evidence of other periods. **Reconstruction** re-creates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes.*

STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical and physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

APPENDIX

Results from Open House on September 25, 2017

Historic Preservation: 34 dots

Suggestions:

- William Russell Allen House
- Masonic Temple
- St Mary's
- Morningside Baptist
- Capitol Marquee
- Springside House
- Whitney Center for the Arts
- Green house on Appleton Avenue

Community Housing: 15 dots

Suggestions:

- More social services off North Street and convert space to housing
- Infill development using tiny homes (e.g., old parking lots/vacant lots)
- Development intergenerational housing with on-site preschool and other services
- Develop artist housing and gallery space
- St Mary's
- Senior housing downtown and on bus routes

Recreation: 88 dots

Suggestions:

- Pickleball courts
- Bike trails
- Skatepark phase II
- Exercise equipment park
- Dog park
- Restoration of PHS track at Clapp Park
- Develop lake areas to serve community and visitors
- Develop Springside House for recreation, trails and tourism
- Softball Fields
- Rehabilitate athletic fields at Taconic High School
- Buddy Pellerin Field at Clapp Park for PHS and Post 68 and community – bathrooms, concession, seating, improved track, lights
- Overall athletic fields with quality amenities

Open Space: 19 dots

Suggestions:

- Pontoosuc Lake picnic tables
- Pontoosuc Lake swimming area
- Springside Pond
- West Side Riverway