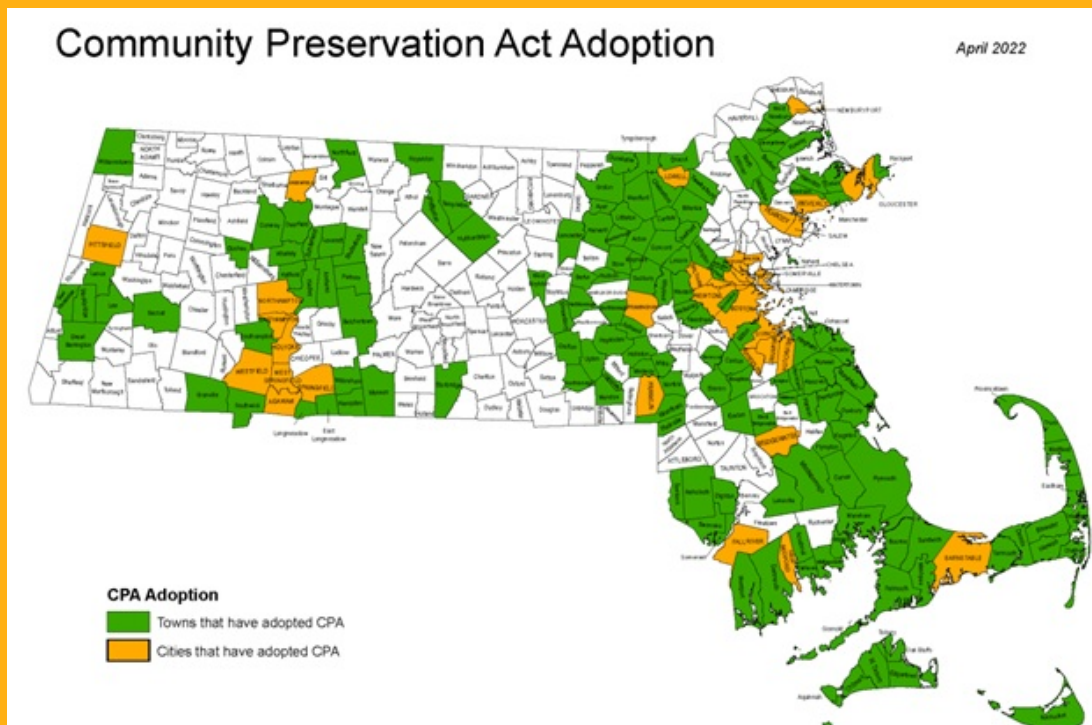


Community Preservation Act to be added to November Ballot



Pictured above is a map representing the cities and towns in the Commonwealth that have adopted the CPA as of April 2022

Photo credit:
CommunityPreservation.org

The Worcester City Council voted last month in favor of putting the [Community Preservation Act \(CPA\)](#) on the November 8, 2022 ballot, giving voters an opportunity to decide whether to adopt it in the City of Worcester. The CPA is a smart growth tool that allows cities and towns to place a small surcharge on property taxes and use that revenue, plus additional matching funds from the state, to create affordable housing, preserve open space and historic sites, and develop outdoor recreational facilities.

The effort is led by *Yes for a Better Worcester*, a growing coalition of local and statewide organizations dedicated to the passage of the CPA in Worcester, which issued this [press release](#) on the Council's decision, noting those who voted in favor, including Mayor Joe Petty. The Foundation provided a \$26,000 grant to help the coalition raise awareness of the benefits of the CPA as a sustainable resource for community investments that would contribute to the health and wellbeing of all Worcester residents.

The CPA became state law in 2000, and local adoption would enable Worcester to become eligible for matching funds from the state's CPA Trust

Fund, which generates revenue through collection of recording fees at the Registry of Deeds and from legislative appropriation. Worcester residents, through Registry fees, are already paying into this statewide CPA Trust Fund. As noted on the map above, more than half the state's municipalities have adopted the act, and more than 65% of Massachusetts residents live in a CPA community.

With this CPA proposal, *Yes for a Better Worcester* is proposing a 1.5% surcharge on local property tax bills, and low-income households and low/moderate income seniors as well as the first \$100,000 of all properties would be exempt. For example, a residential property assessed at \$380,000 would have an annual surcharge of approximately \$64. At a matching rate of 35% from the statewide trust fund in 2022, the City would be able to distribute an estimated \$3 - 4 million annually for local projects.

[The Leadmine Mountain project](#) in Sturbridge serves as one of the oldest examples of how CPA funds have been used to protect open space. This 839-acre property was acquired in 2006 by the town thanks to a partnership between their CPA program and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. After more than a decade of permanent protection, the property is now utilized for public outdoor recreational uses such as hiking, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. On a smaller scale, the Main Street project in Northborough demonstrates how CPA funds were used by the town to both preserve historic property and further its affordable housing goals by partnering with Habitat for Humanity. In 2017, the town allocated CPA funds to repurpose two historic homes into four affordable housing units for families, and Habitat volunteers worked on the renovations.

Yes for a Better Worcester's partner organizations include Worcester Cultural Coalition, Worcester Interfaith, Regional Environmental Council, Preservation Worcester, Walk Bike Worcester, Greater Worcester Land Trust, Worcester Common Ground, League of Women Voters of the Worcester Area, and Mass Audubon/Broad Meadow Brook. For more information on the coalition and how to get involved in the cause, visit www.cpaworcester.org

Visit our website

