



**Community
Preservation Coalition**
Preserving our past. Building our future.

2020 *Year in Review*

CPA ADVOCACY: A VITAL RESOURCE FOR COMMUNITIES IN A DIFFICULT YEAR

While 2020 proved to be a challenging year as the world contended with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Community Preservation Act continued to be a vital resource for communities—and due to the Coalition’s legislative work, this year was one marked with success from beginning to end.

January saw two important events connected to the CPA Trust Fund. First, CPA communities received their disbursements from the delayed \$20 million in FY19 state budget surplus funds, boosting the base state match for November 2019 from only 13% to 24%. At the same time, the long-anticipated CPA Trust Fund increase went into effect, and the results are just as significant as we had projected.



The Community Preservation Coalition championed the decade-long effort to pass legislation increasing the fees that generate revenue for the CPA Trust Fund. The new fee schedule at the state’s Registries of Deeds went into effect on December 31st, 2019—and since then, we’ve watched as revenue for the CPA Trust Fund has more than doubled. Because of this, over \$55 million was distributed from the Trust Fund in November 2020, and all CPA communities received a 28.6% match on round one of the distribution.

CPA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Even though our staff shifted to remote operations in March, we worked hard to ensure that it would not negatively impact our day-to-day technical support for communities. The Coalition responded to a huge volume of email and phone inquiries from across the state, offering support for a range of CPA concerns, including project eligibility questions, budgeting issues, warrant article development & review, and assisting adoption campaigns.

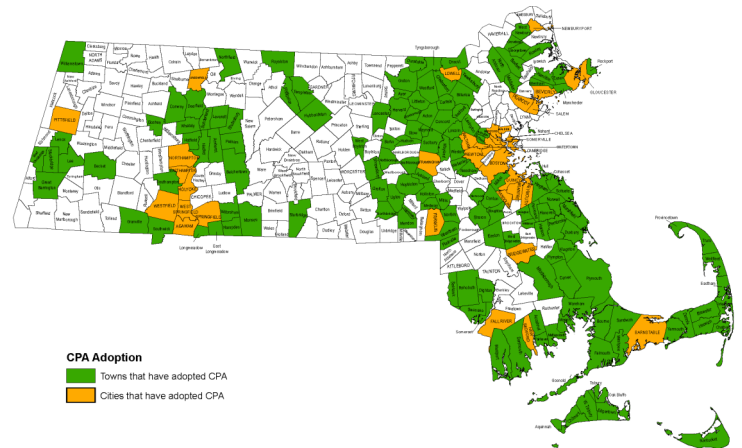
One of the most important tasks in 2020 was making sure that CPA communities understood their options regarding Emergency Rental Assistance Programs in the midst of the pandemic. The Coalition staff participated in webinars hosted by housing organizations, assisted with a statewide rental assistance survey to monitor the progress of CPA’s role in these programs, and provided direct technical assistance to communities pursuing rental assistance with CPA funding. According to a statewide survey conducted by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, over \$33 million was allocated for emergency rental assistance programs as of October 2020, and CPA was noted as the leading funding source across all participating communities.



Our staff continued to add news updates, technical assistance articles, and success stories to the Coalition website. Additionally, the Coalition’s *CPA Update* email newsletter provided valuable information for CPA communities throughout 2020 with an emphasis on helping CPC’s shift to online meetings and form strategies to deal with delayed town meetings. On social media, the Coalition’s Facebook and Twitter accounts continued to highlight inspiring CPA projects from across the state and promote the great campaign work from the communities attempting to adopt the program.

CPA ADOPTION: “CLEAN SWEEP” INCREASES TOTAL TO 186

2020 was a remarkable year for CPA adoption efforts as a total of nine communities passed CPA ballot questions during November’s election. Advocates had to navigate a precarious campaign season filled with socially-distanced town meetings, virtual city council discussions, and even collecting signatures for a ballot petition in one town. Despite this, all nine CPA adoption measures succeeded: the cities of Framingham, Franklin, & Greenfield, as well as the towns of Hopedale, Lancaster, Lee, Milton, Shrewsbury, and Whitman all voted to adopt CPA. These successes, combined with West Stockbridge’s adoption of CPA in the spring of 2020, bring the total number of CPA communities to 186, representing 53% of the municipalities in Massachusetts.



CPA PROJECTS: ANOTHER GREAT YEAR, DESPITE PANDEMIC DELAYS

The Coalition spends hundreds of hours each year ensuring that legislators, communities, state agencies, and the press have access to a robust database on CPA revenue, adoption, and projects. This year’s project reporting was especially challenging with many CPA approvals delayed and disrupted due to the pandemic, but our staff worked throughout the summer to ensure that each community completed the annual report on time. There are now over 12,800 projects that have been approved by local communities, representing more than 20,000 affordable housing units created or supported, 31,861 acres of open space preserved, over 5,800 historic preservation projects approved, and over 2,700 outdoor recreation projects initiated.

COALITION OPERATIONS: PERSONNEL & FINANCIAL REPORT

There’s no doubt that 2020 was a tumultuous year, but the Coalition maintained its operations in spite of these difficulties. Our staff transitioned to working remotely beginning in March, and the Coalition Steering Committee was able to hold full meetings virtually throughout the year. We were pleased to welcome Andrew DeFranza, the Executive Director for Harborlight Community Partners, as an at-large member of the Steering Committee—and at the end of the year, the Committee voted to expand its membership with two additional at-large positions. Recruiting for these new members will launch in early 2021.

The Coalition completed another year on firm financial footing (see our budget report to the right). We are deeply grateful for the support of our member communities and thank them for their advocacy on behalf of CPA, as well as their work on hundreds of impressive housing, recreation, historic, and open space projects that were completed during 2020.

FISCAL YEAR 2020

COALITION FINANCIAL REPORT:

REVENUE

Community Members	\$461,600
Foundation Grants	\$75,534
Total Revenue	\$535,134

EXPENSES

Personnel Costs	\$197,000
Benefits & Personnel Overhead	\$94,560
Professional Services	\$4,303
Travel and Meeting Costs	\$3,577
Rent and Office Costs	\$35,605
Legal, Financial, Admin. & Misc.	\$90,987
Reserves	\$109,102
Total Expenses	\$535,134