

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

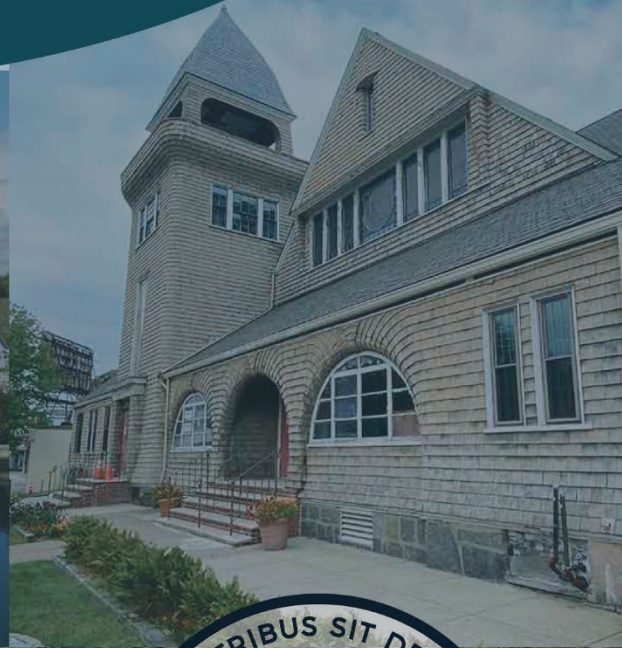
AUGUST 26
2026

FY2023–FY2027

The Boston Community Preservation Committee and the CPA Program Administration prepared this plan, to be updated annually, to help guide the City of Boston's allocation of CPA funds for fiscal years 2023 through 2027 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2027).

This document has been updated as of August 26, 2026, and it includes data from FY2018 to FY2026.

THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE APPROVED
THIS PLAN ON 9/27/22.



JM GOLDSON
CPA | Community
Preservation
Act

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August 26, 2026

Dear Members of the Boston Community:

We are pleased to present the Boston Community Preservation Plan (CP Plan) for FY2023 – FY2027.

This plan reflects several months of analysis, engagement, and thoughtful consideration to create goals for the Boston Community Preservation Act (CPA) Program over the next five years, which will be reviewed and updated annually.

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and Community Preservation Office staff, with support from a consultant, collaborated to evaluate the City's existing program and develop strategic goals that will guide applicants for funding and inform the CPC's funding recommendations to the Mayor and City Council.

The CPA Program has substantially and directly benefited the Boston community by creating and preserving affordable housing, developing and enhancing open spaces and recreation, and preserving historic resources. The City has used CPA funds to support projects in every Boston neighborhood, promote greater equity, and strengthen our City's climate resilience.

Consistent with the City Council ordinance, the CPA Office updates this Plan annually following each funding round to incorporate new project data and analysis, including information on the use of CPA funds, the geographic distribution of funded projects, and the economic and demographic characteristics of benefiting areas.

Since its implementation in 2018, the CPA Program has significantly advanced Boston's community development goals. The CPA plan facilitated the creation of 2,491 new affordable housing units and assisted 1,030 first-time homebuyers, addressing Boston's pressing housing needs. In addition, the plan funded 167 open space projects, enhancing recreational areas across neighborhoods, and supported historic preservation by investing in 207 projects that maintain Boston's heritage. These efforts collectively strengthen community equity, climate resilience, and neighborhood vitality.

We look forward to continuing to improve the quality of life for you and your neighbors.

Sincerely,

Felicia Jacques, Chair, Community Preservation Committee
Thadine Brown, Director, Community Preservation Office

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	7
Chapter 1: Overview	15
Chapter 2: Summary of Findings	21
Chapter 3: Overall Goals	46
Chapter 4: Affordable Housing	49
Chapter 5: Open Space and Recreation	64
Chapter 6: Historic Preservation	74
Chapter 7: Recommendations for Program Operations	84
Appendices	93

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the community members, community-based organizations, including CPA applicants and grantees, Community Preservation Committee members, City staff, and public officials who contributed their time and local knowledge to this report by participating in interviews and surveys. In total, 269 former applicants and community organizations provided input via a survey, and the project team conducted 25 one-on-one interviews.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT IS THE CPA?

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is state-enabling legislation (MGL c. 44B) that authorizes municipalities to generate funds to promote affordable housing, historic preservation, open space protection, and outdoor recreation. CPA funds can help improve residents' quality of life, enhance neighborhoods, strengthen communities, and promote equity. Boston residents voted to adopt the CPA in November 2016, with 74 percent of voters supporting it. The municipality has been allocating CPA funds in Boston neighborhoods since 2018.



Lena Park | Unity Park Ribbon Cutting. Source: Boston Community Preservation Program

Boston generates CPA funds through a one percent local real property tax surcharge. A variable distribution from the State Community Preservation Trust Fund (Trust Fund) is also made each year. From 2018 to 2026, the program generated over \$260 million and funded 440 grants within the City.

Some of the accomplishments of the CPA program to date are

- Created 2,491 new affordable housing units¹.
- Assisted 1,030 first-time home buyers through the ONE+ Program.
- Funded 19 projects to preserve historic buildings that house organizations that provide social services to the community, including legal services, food pantries, substance abuse recovery programs, immigrant heritage centers, and veterans' assistance programs.
- Funded 68 projects for the historic preservation of historic properties operated by religious institutions that offer services to the community, including food pantries and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.
- Improved 75 open spaces and recreation resources, and funded 13 projects for planting trees and preserving vegetation.
- Acquired, designed, or constructed 79 new open spaces and recreation resources.

"Overall, I have a positive impression of the CPA and CPC. The CPC brings innovation and a broader perspective when examining projects. The committee members care and want to use the money well. They respect the public element and engage with community members well." – Excerpt from an interview.

¹ This figure includes 375 housing units that were initially purchased at market rate and subsequently converted into affordable housing. On the CPA Office's project map, these initiatives are labeled as "acquisition of market-rate housing units to preserve affordability".



The old William Barton Rogers School has been converted into The Pryde, an LGBTQ-friendly senior housing development. Source: Boston Community Preservation Program

WHAT IS THE CPC?

The Mayor and City Council appoint a Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to recommend a slate of CPA projects for funding. The CPC approves a quinquennial Community Preservation Plan (CPP), recommends an administrative budget, sets priorities, solicits community input, reviews project proposals, and makes recommendations, holding at least one public hearing annually. All CPC meetings are open to the public. Attendance by at least five of the nine members represents a quorum. CPC members will recuse themselves from a vote if they, their colleagues, or family members have a direct or indirect financial interest in the matter being voted on.

WHY WAS THIS PLAN CREATED?

This CPP was created to help guide the CPC's funding decisions. Laying out the program's goals and priorities will help the CPC prioritize projects to recommend for funding. The City of Boston initiated this process to ensure the municipality has a clear understanding of how the program has progressed to date and what the City aims to achieve in the coming years.

HOW WAS THIS PLAN CREATED?

Through the City of Boston, the CPC contracted with JM Goldson, a planning consultancy, to assist with preparing an updated Community Preservation Plan. The consultant team evaluated the City's existing Community Preservation Program, including the types and locations of funded and unfunded projects, compared the program's performance to its existing Community Preservation Plan and other relevant City plans, and measured the equity of fund distribution using a variety of indicators. A summary of findings is included as part of this plan (see the Appendix).

The consultant team solicited input from several City departments, the CPC, the CPA program staff, and community organizations through interviews and a survey to assist with this analysis. Chapter 2 provides more information about the planning process.

In accordance with the City Council ordinance, the CPA Office revises this Plan annually following each funding round to incorporate new project data and analysis.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

ANALYSIS REPORT

In developing the Analysis Report, the project team first compared the goals of the current CPP with those of other plans for the City of Boston, including Imagine Boston 2030, Boston's Housing Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and others. The following are key findings from this analysis.

- Ultimately, the 2018-19 Community Preservation (CP) Plan is closely aligned with the other relevant city plans, as described below.
- The CP Plan's goals and priorities are aligned with the other affordable housing goals set by other City plans.
- Currently, no plans in the City of Boston focus on historic preservation with specific goals and priorities; however, other city plans have recognized the importance of historic preservation.
- Overall, the CP Plan's goals and priorities in the open space and recreation category are aligned with the goals and priorities identified in other City plans, as they are focused on acquiring new open spaces, improving existing open spaces, and protecting the natural environment in Boston.
- The CP Plan does not list goals for specific locations, like in the Imagine Boston 2030 report, though those goals can still be achieved by following the goals and priorities outlined in the CP Plan.

Another critical component of the report was the analysis of projects that have received CPA funds. The project team analyzed the project descriptions and conducted spatial analyses, comparing the projects against various indicators to measure their impacts. A summary of these findings is provided throughout this document, and a comprehensive study report is available in the Analysis Report.

The final piece of the Analysis Report was determining the extent to which the CPA program has met the goals set out in the plan. The project team analyzed the projects in each CPA category against the goals to determine how each goal has been addressed through the funded projects. The funded projects have addressed most of the goals set out in the original plan. The analysis report provides a complete description of the analysis and findings from this portion of the study.

INTERVIEWS

To learn more about the CPA program in Boston, the project team held one-on-one interviews with 25 individuals, including CPA program staff, CPC members, and representatives from departments that work directly with the CPA program.

The project team gained insight into the program from various perspectives through the interview process. Overwhelmingly, the interviewees' opinions about the CPA program were positive. Interviewees expressed that the CPA program plays an essential role in funding Boston communities.

Some of the areas for potential improvement brought up by interviewees included refining the application process; increasing the CPA staff capacity; improving coordination between CPA staff, CPC, City Departments, and neighborhood groups; clarifying the role of the CPC; determining how to be more equitable; and refining the goals and priorities in the plan.

A summary of the interview findings is presented in Chapter 2.

SURVEY

The project team designed a survey and sent it to over 300 past applicants and neighborhood organizations in Boston. The survey directed past applicants to answer questions about the application process and asked all respondents to share their perspectives and opinions on the CPA's goals and priorities. Two hundred and sixty-nine people participated in the survey. The following are key findings. A summary of the survey and all key findings is provided in Chapter 2.

- Past applicants indicated that they found completing the application to be a task of medium difficulty and that, over the years, changes made to the application made it slightly more accessible to complete.
- The most significant open space priorities among survey respondents included creating more open space projects in underserved neighborhoods and protecting natural resources to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- In the active recreation category, most respondents indicated that improving parks, playgrounds, or athletic fields in underserved areas and creating more parks, playgrounds, or athletic fields in underserved neighborhoods was significant.
- The community housing project idea with the most support was ensuring that existing homes stay affordable.

- When asked what types of historic preservation projects are the most important, preserving historic properties that honor historically marginalized populations scored the highest.
- Most respondents agreed that allocating 50 percent of funds to affordable housing and 20 percent each to open space and recreation, and historic preservation was a good distribution. The remaining ten percent is allocated as needed to other projects in the three program areas or is kept in the CPA to hold in reserve.
- One of the concepts mentioned most was climate change. Survey respondents emphasized the need for climate-focused initiatives across all project categories.
- Survey respondents indicated that CPA funding should go toward creating spaces and opportunities for individuals, children, and families, and improving conditions in underserved neighborhoods so that all people who call Boston home can feel welcomed and valued.

WHAT ARE THE CPC'S FIVE-YEAR CPA GOALS?

The CPC created these goals by carefully considering input from each component of the planning process, including the quantitative analysis, interviews, a survey, CPC meetings, and working sessions. There are overall goals that apply to all categories, as well as specific goals within each category. The relationship between the overall goals and category goals is illustrated in the graphic below. Each of the goals listed below is described in greater detail in the following chapters.



OVERALL CPA GOALS

1. Prioritize CPA funding for projects that further equity by addressing documented needs in historically underserved and under-resourced Boston neighborhoods.
2. Prioritize CPA funding for projects that directly advance Boston's climate resilience and sustainability.

3. Balance the use of CPA funds to support both community-led projects and further City priorities as documented in current City plans.
4. Continue to establish a CPA funding allocation formula annually to help guide CPC recommendations.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING GOALS

1. Create new income-restricted housing opportunities in all Boston neighborhoods, including higher-cost, higher-opportunity areas, to expand choice, promote mobility, and reduce displacement pressures, using transparent criteria tied to fair housing goals (e.g., cost burden, income mismatch, access to transit/services).
2. Preserve naturally occurring affordable housing, including historic properties, through acquisition and preservation programs.
3. Continue to use CPA funds to promote homeownership and enable household equity growth in neighborhoods where households earn below the Area Median Income (AMI).
4. Consider support for local rental assistance and relief programs to expand the limited reach of existing federal and state housing vouchers.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS

1. Promote climate equity and resilience by supporting open space and recreation initiatives, including expanding the tree canopy, that help mitigate the effects of climate change for Boston residents by prioritizing neighborhoods with high climate-risk exposure (heat, flooding, stormwater), limited access to quality open space, and related health vulnerabilities.
2. Promote healthy local food access in historically underserved Boston neighborhoods, such as through funding for community gardens, urban agriculture properties, and community farms.
3. Support larger City efforts to create more public open space in historically underserved neighborhoods to improve health outcomes by closing documented park-access and recreation gaps.
4. Support larger City efforts to rehabilitate existing parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, greenways, and schoolyards in historically underserved neighborhoods where condition, accessibility, or environmental/health indicators show significant need.
5. Support larger City efforts to promote the creation of greenways that connect neighborhoods, provide park and recreation amenities, and support multimodal recreational infrastructure, including biking and walking.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS

1. Support historic preservation projects that help address affordable housing needs.
2. Support historic preservation projects that document, interpret, and increase public access to underrepresented histories in Boston based on the cultural significance of the resource and its demonstrated public benefit.

3. Further preservation and rehabilitation of properties that provide public access or that provide environmental, economic, and/or social benefits.
4. Protect privately owned properties that are threatened by demolition or demolition by neglect and will provide a demonstrated public purpose.

ELIGIBILITY

The appendix at the end of this Plan contains an eligibility chart that identifies which types of projects are eligible as CPA projects and which are not. These [eligibility charts](#) help interpret the [state law](#).

CPA funds are primarily limited to capital projects, including the purchase, construction, and preservation of affordable housing, open space, parks, recreational spaces, and historic resources. Restoration and renovation are allowable for historic resources, parks, recreational spaces, and open spaces. CPA funds may not be used for operation, maintenance, or programming. [The CPA legislation](#) outlines more detailed information and definitions of allowable projects.

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The CPC and CPA Program staff will use this plan to help decide how to recommend allocating CPA funding. The CPC encourages future applicants seeking CPA funds to refer to this plan to guide their CPA requests and enables the Mayor's Office and the City Council to use this plan to guide decisions on the allocation of funds.

This plan is created in accordance with the CPA, Massachusetts General Laws c. 44B, § 5(b)(1). The law states: "The community preservation committee shall study the needs, possibilities, and resources of the city or town regarding community preservation, including the consideration of regional projects for community preservation."

"I love what the CPA represents, and you all have funded some great projects. I hope the work continues." – Survey respondent.

CPA ELIGIBILITY

The CPA funds four general project types: community housing, historic preservation, open space, and outdoor recreation. The eligibility chart is included in the appendices.

Community Housing: The City can use CPA funds to acquire, create, preserve, and support community housing for households with incomes at or below 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). The AMI for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HUD Metro FMR Area is \$164,600². The CPA legislation defines Community Housing as "low- and moderate-income housing for individuals and families, including low- or moderate-income senior housing."

Some of the CPA-funded housing projects in Boston resulted in the construction of newly affordable units, the acquisition of market-rate units to convert them into permanently affordable units, and direct housing assistance for income-eligible first-time homebuyers. This document interchangeably uses the terms "community housing" and "affordable housing" (the more commonly used terms outside of CPA).

Historic Preservation: The city can use CPA funds to preserve historic buildings, structures, documents, artifacts, and vessels, including acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration.

² Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research, "FY 2026 Income Limits Summary", HUD User, [https://www.huduser.gov/datasets/il/il2026/summary?reporttype=county&year=2026&counties=2502507000&states=25&q=Boston%20city,%20MA%20\(Suffolk%20County\)](https://www.huduser.gov/datasets/il/il2026/summary?reporttype=county&year=2026&counties=2502507000&states=25&q=Boston%20city,%20MA%20(Suffolk%20County)), Accessed on June 26th 2026.

The property must be listed on the State Register of Historic Places or confirmed to be locally significant by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission. The Massachusetts Historical Commission maintains the State Register of Historic Places.

Open Space & Recreation: The City can utilize CPA funds to acquire, develop, and preserve open spaces and natural resources. Open space is defined as “land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and saltwater marshes and other wetlands, the ocean, rivers, streams, lakes, pond frontages, beaches, dunes, and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserves, and land for recreational use.”

Some examples of open space projects in Boston include planting trees and vegetation on the Charles River Esplanade, in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Mount Hope Cemetery, and Belle Isle Marsh.

In addition, the City can use CPA funds for recreational land use as it does for open space. However, with recreational land use projects, it is also possible to fund the rehabilitation and restoration of existing outdoor recreation land (these don't need to have been acquired or created using CPA funds, unlike rehabilitation and restoration of open space). The CPA legislation defines recreational use as 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.”

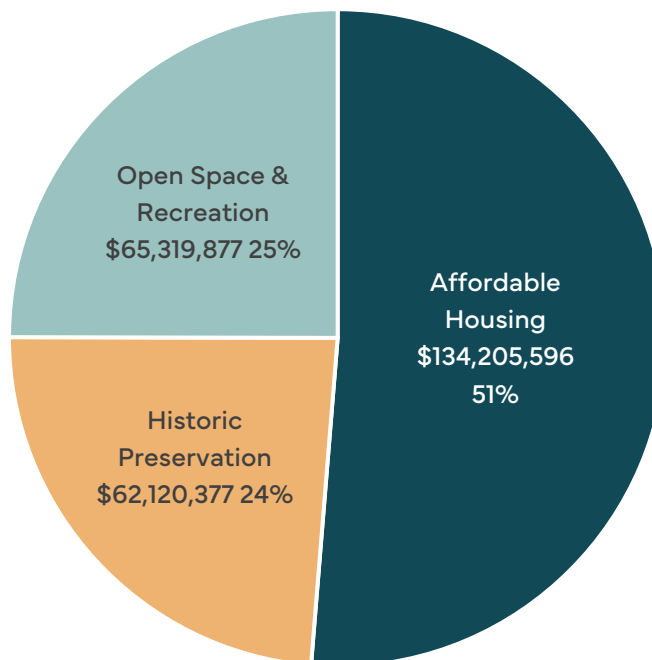
Boston's recreation projects involve designing and building new parks, renovating existing ones, and enhancing community spaces. Examples include adding sea-level-rise mitigation features to Langone Park in the North End, as well as creating community gardens and walking trails.

BACKGROUND

CPA IN BOSTON

Boston adopted the CPA through a ballot initiative in November 2016. Seventy-four percent of Boston voters voted in favor of adopting the CPA. Boston generates CPA funds through a one-percent local property tax surcharge and a variable distribution from the State Community Preservation Trust Fund.

PROJECT FUNDING AWARDED BY CATEGORY (2018–2026)



Notes: 1) This chart includes updated data provided by the City in June 2026; 2) CPA funding allocation information shows what the City approved but does not account for projects withdrawn after funding was approved.

The City implemented its first round of CPA funding in 2018 and has allocated more than 260 million dollars between 2018 and 2026 to community preservation projects across the CPA funding categories. Up to 5 percent of total CPA funds may be allocated to CPC administration. In addition, the CPA statute requires a minimum of 10 percent to be spent or reserved for each of the following CPA categories:

1. Affordable Housing
2. Historic Preservation
3. Open Space & Recreation

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC), Boston's City Council, and others determine on a discretionary basis the total percentage of CPA funds allocated to each CPA category above the ten percent minimum.

The CPC has been following a funding allocation target. Five percent of the CPA budget is set aside yearly for administrative costs. The remainder of the budget is available for CPA-eligible projects. Of the project budget, the CPC has target allocations of 50 percent for affordable housing, 20 percent for open space and recreation, 20 percent for historic preservation, and 10 percent for any other category designated by the CPC or held in reserve.

The CPC has used this allocation formula as a guideline since 2019. In 2018, the program's first year, 19 percent of the funding was allocated to affordable housing, 42 percent to historic preservation, and 39 percent to open space and recreation. According to staff, this initial allocation, with a priority for historic preservation, open space, and recreation projects, was based on the CPC's desire to focus first-year funding on shovel-ready projects that could positively impact Boston community members.

WHO DECIDES HOW THE FUNDS ARE SPENT?

Boston established a Community Preservation Committee (CPC), as required by MGL c.44B, to make funding recommendations to the City's Mayor. The mayor then submits the recommendations to the City Council, which hosts a public hearing. The City Council can approve or deny the CPC's recommendations. The City Council can also approve the CPC's recommendation for a reduced funding amount. The City Council may not approve funding without a recommendation from the CPC.

The CPC has nine members, including four at-large members from the public whom the City Council appoints. All committee members serve a three-year term and may serve a maximum of two terms. Per MGL c.44B, the CPC also includes a member from each of the following five entities:

- Boston Conservation Commission
- Boston Landmarks Commission
- Boston Housing Authority
- Boston Planning and Development Agency
- Parks and Recreation Commission

The role of the CPC is to:

1. Study the City's community preservation needs, possibilities, and resources, and produce a Community Preservation Plan (CPP)³
2. Hold a public informational hearing regarding the study before updating the Plan⁴
3. Make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council for funding projects with CPA funds

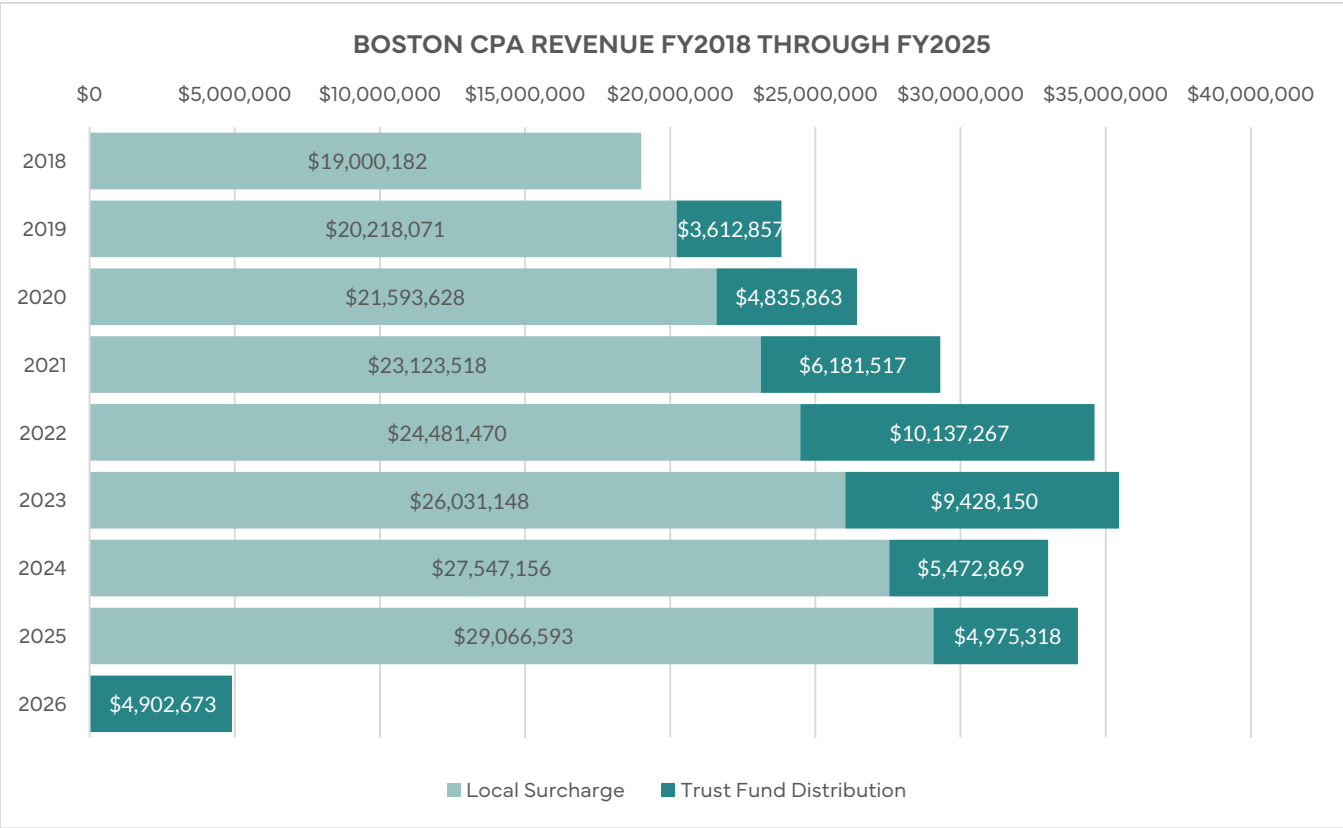
³ This document is the Community Preservation Plan (CPP)

⁴ Public hearings of the Committee shall be planned to maximize citizen attendance including a preference to hold hearings in the evenings or off-site from City Hall. The public hearing shall be posted publicly on the City website and published for each of two weeks preceding a hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the City.

Boston’s CPC meets regularly. During the CPA application period, the CPC typically meets on Thursdays from 12 PM to 2 PM and on Mondays from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. Additional meetings are held at the discretion of the CPC. These are open public meetings, and members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend. Notices of CPC meetings and agendas (with links to virtual meetings when needed) are posted on the City’s Public Notices webpage at <https://www.boston.gov/public-notice>. Boston’s Community Preservation staff hosts presentations, Q&A sessions, forums, and meet-and-greets across the city.

How Much Funding Is Available?

Boston generates CPA funds through a one percent local real property tax surcharge and a variable distribution from the State Community Preservation Trust Fund (Trust Fund). Boston has collected over \$240 million (as of June 2026), including over \$191 million from the local surcharge and \$49.5 million from Trust Fund distributions. In FY2025, the local property tax surcharge generated \$29,066,593, and the Trust Fund distribution was about \$4,975,318 (14.6 percent of total funding). The following graph shows the CPA program’s revenue from 2018 to 2026.



Note: In 2018, the state contribution was \$0 because the state contribution in one year is based on the prior year’s local contribution. Boston’s program was in its first year of existence in 2017 and therefore did not have a local contribution to base a 2018 match on. Local contributions for FY26 have not yet been updated.

Source: Community Preservation Coalition, “Information on Individual CPA Communities”, 2026, at: https://www.communitypreservation.org/cpc-report?report_src=bbzvidkqg|a=dr&rid=287, accessed on June 26th 2026

APPLICATION AND FUNDING PROCESS

The Boston CPC accepts CPA funding applications annually in the fall; applicants must submit an eligibility form to be considered. Upon review of eligibility forms, the CPA Program staff will invite eligible applicants to submit a complete application. Instead of an eligibility form, applicants for affordable housing CPA funds must submit a letter of intent and complete a Request for Qualifications by the end of September.

Eligible candidates are invited to submit applications between early October and early November. The CPC requires application materials to be submitted online. Application materials and deadlines are updated annually. Current application forms and deadlines are available on Boston's CPC webpage, "[How to Apply for Community Preservation Funds](#)." The CPC considers each funding application based on the project's merits and the available CPA balance. It reviews all applications by January and, through a majority vote, determines a list of proposals to recommend to the Mayor in February.

CHAPTER 2: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The project team conducted a thorough analysis of the CPA program in Boston to inform the update of the Community Preservation Plan. Through this process, the project team reviewed what the Boston CPA program has funded, how it coordinates with other City Departments, conducts community outreach, communicates with residents and organizations, and what the CPA application process is like for applicants. Overall, the CPA program in Boston has been a notable success. The findings derived through this process informed the development of the goals in this document, which are intended to help the CPA program build on its success. The following are key findings from this analysis.

“I would say that the program has been an extreme success. I’m impressed by the CPA staff, and I’m supportive of the program” – Interviewee.

The CPA program funded **440** projects from 2018 to 2026, totaling **\$261,645,850**.

The **Roxbury** and **Dorchester** neighborhoods received the most funding from Boston. However, because Dorchester’s population is more than twice that of Roxbury, the funding per person is significantly lower. On average, a Roxbury resident benefits from **\$823** in funding, while a Dorchester resident benefits from **\$289** — almost one-third of Roxbury’s per-person amount.

-  Chinatown, Downtown Boston, the South End, South Boston, and Back Bay are the neighborhoods **most vulnerable to heat events** according to Boston’s Heat Resiliency Plan.
-  Survey respondents emphasized the need for **climate-focused initiatives** within projects in every category.
-  Interviewees emphasized the need to **streamline** the application process.

Applicants have praised the CPA staff for their help and willingness to support them. However, a revised application and eligibility form can help ensure that projects are **“shovel-ready”** when they receive funding without needing as much support from the staff ^[1].

267 out of 440 projects (60.7 percent), totaling over \$152 million of CPA funds (58.3 percent), have been awarded in Boston areas in which over 65 percent of households earn less than the AMI, over 40 percent of households live below the poverty line, over 6% of residents have a language access need, or over 65 percent of residents identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

^[1] Since this CPP was written in 2022, the CPA Office has revised the application and eligibility form to ensure funding priorities for “shovel-ready” projects.

ANALYSIS APPROACH

The project team evaluated the Community Preservation Program using qualitative and quantitative methods. The team began the analysis process in January 2022 by conducting geographic and statistical analyses of the projects recommended for funding by the CPC. Then, the team performed the engagement portion of the study, which included interviews and a survey. This process is illustrated in the project timeline below. The following paragraphs outline the methodologies employed in each phase of the analysis and engagement portions of the project.



The team reviewed the 2018-2019 Community Preservation Plan (CP Plan), with a particular focus on the goals and funding priorities for each project category. The project team then compared the CP Plan’s goals and priorities to those of other relevant City plans to determine whether the CP Plan is aligned with other City Departments and programs.

The team analyzed the program and funded projects at the city level. The project team mapped the projects that the City has funded. It compared them to neighborhood-level indicators, including poverty level, median income, percentage of the population identifying as BIPOC, access to open space, households with limited English language proficiency, educational attainment, commuting time, citizenship, and housing vacancy rates. The team used web mapping and advanced geospatial analytics software to perform the spatial analysis. As part of this process, the project team visited the CPA project sites across all categories in each of Boston’s neighborhoods. This enabled the team to gain a deeper understanding of the local context of each project and the distinct characteristics of each neighborhood. Please refer to the separate Analysis Document for a comprehensive research report.

The project team also conducted one-on-one interviews with City CPA staff, department heads who work directly with CPA, and members of the Community Preservation Committee. The interviews were essential to learning how the CPA program has operated in the past, what has gone well, and what should be changed looking forward. The project team also surveyed past applicants and community organizations that may apply for CPA funds in the future. The survey asked past applicants about their experiences with the application process and gathered insights into how it

might be improved. The survey also asked all participants how they would like the CPA program to prioritize project types.

The analysis and engagement processes led the project team to create the goals presented in this document. Engaging with those who have exceptional knowledge of CPA gave the team valuable insight into improving the process. The survey of community leaders helped identify priorities that reflect the city's desires, and the analysis ensures that the CPA can continue to meet the community's needs equitably.

In accordance with the City Council ordinance, the CPA Office updates this Plan annually after each funding round to include new project data and analysis. The Boston CPP was revised in October 2023, October 2024, July 2025, and June 2026 to reflect projects and funding disbursements from fiscal years 2022 through 2026.

Boston is a complex city comprising neighborhoods with different identities, needs, and resources. The Community Preservation program should impact all areas of Boston while also addressing equity and providing funds for projects in areas with specific needs. The following section summarizes the analysis completed as part of this research process.



The Haley House Bakery Café in Roxbury received CPA funds for the rehabilitation and restoration of its building which was originally built in 1915. Source: JM Goldson

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

REVIEW OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

The Community Preservation Plan needs to consider the City's established goals. The City of Boston has several planning documents that establish community goals for the CPA funding categories. These include the 2018-19 Community Preservation Plan, Imagine Boston 2030, Housing Boston 2030, the 2015-2021 Boston Open Space & Recreation Plan, Resilient Boston 2017, the 2021 Boston Climate Action Report, the 2016 Economic Inclusion and Equity Agenda, the 2020 Boston Parks & Rec Department Annual Report, and the 2025 Anti-Displacement Action Plan. The following are some key findings from this portion of the analysis. Ultimately, the 2018-19 CP Plan is closely aligned with the other relevant city plans.

The City aims to prioritize affordable housing for Bostonians through new construction and preservation efforts. It also seeks to enhance public health and combat the urban heat island effect by developing or improving open spaces and outdoor recreational areas. Additionally, Boston intends to protect its heritage and history by preserving and rehabilitating historic sites.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Understanding what the CPA program has accomplished and where it has focused can help when looking forward and determining what should be changed or where the focus should be adjusted. The following sections summarize the completed quantitative analysis, which includes analyzing and comparing the program to various equity indicators. The CPA program has funded 440 City projects totaling \$261,645,850.

DATA SOURCES

The equity analysis draws on demographic data from the City of Boston and the U.S. Census Bureau. These sources provide the demographic indicators used to assess the distribution of CPA-funded projects and funding relative to measures of neighborhood vulnerability.

- **Neighborhood-level population:** Boston Planning Department. *Boston in Context: Neighborhoods*. January 2025. Accessed June 2026. Boston in Context: Neighborhoods.
- **Language-access data:** City of Boston. *Boston Language and Communications Access Demographic Data Report – Language*. Accessed October 2023. Boston Language and Communications Access Demographic Data Report – Language.
- U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2020–2024*.
 - B19001, “**Household Income** in the Past 12 Months”;
 - **Cost burden data:** B25140, “Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months”;
 - B17010, “**Poverty Status** in the Past 12 Months of Families by Family Type by Presence of Related Children Under 18 Years by Age of Related Children”;
 - B02001, “**Race**.” Accessed June 2026.

UNDERSTANDING CHANGES IN DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS OVER TIME

The demographic indicators used in this analysis serve as proxies for neighborhood vulnerability and may vary from year to year in the plan update. Changes in the percentage of CPA projects or funding associated with each indicator should therefore not necessarily be interpreted as changes in CPA funding priorities. Several factors can affect these results:

- **Neighborhood demographics change over time:** The analysis relies on block-group-level data, where changes in population and household composition can shift a block group above or below an indicator threshold. These changes can be particularly pronounced in areas with higher residential mobility, including neighborhoods with larger populations of low-income renter households.
- **ACS data are estimates:** American Community Survey (ACS) estimates are subject to margins of error, particularly for smaller geographic areas such as block groups. Year-to-year differences may therefore reflect both actual demographic change and statistical variation in the estimates.
- **The universe of CPA projects also changes:** Since 2018, CPA staff have removed approximately 20 projects from the Project Map, including several located in block groups identified by these indicators as having greater socioeconomic vulnerability. Consequently, changes in the results may reflect changes in both neighborhood demographics and the projects included in the analysis.
- **AMI requires an estimated block-group measure:** No single available dataset provides Area Median Income (AMI) measures at the block-group level. Therefore, the analysis estimates the share of households below the applicable AMI threshold using ACS household income categories. Because ACS income data are reported in ranges, an AMI threshold that falls within a range cannot be measured precisely, introducing additional uncertainty into this indicator.

For these reasons, the indicators are best understood as annual estimates of the geographic distribution of CPA investments relative to changing measures of neighborhood vulnerability, rather than as directly comparable fixed measures from year to year.

EQUITY ANALYSIS

One of the goals of this analysis is to evaluate the extent to which CPA funds have been distributed equitably. To explore this, the team analyzed the distribution of projects and funds compared to several equity indicators, including income level, poverty rates, language access needs, and the presence of BIPOC populations.

First, the following table shows the total amount of funding distributed per neighborhood and the per-person funding per neighborhood.

■ *On average, each Boston citizen benefits from approximately \$365 in funding.*

PROJECT FUNDING PER CAPITA

Neighborhood	Total Funding	Funding Percentage	Population	USD Per Person
Chinatown	\$ 11,673,053	4.5%	6,371	\$ 1,832
Roxbury	\$ 46,750,459	17.9%	56,800	\$ 823
Mattapan	\$ 17,601,260	6.7%	24,424	\$ 721
Jamaica Plain	\$ 21,866,428	8.4%	42,949	\$ 509
Charlestown	\$ 8,956,672	3.4%	19,232	\$ 466
North End	\$ 3,748,455	1.4%	10,635	\$ 352
Beacon Hill	\$ 3,052,466	1.2%	9,327	\$ 327
Mission Hill	\$ 6,084,342	2.3%	19,000	\$ 320
Back Bay	\$ 5,510,660	2.1%	18,983	\$ 290
Dorchester	\$ 35,576,513	13.6%	123,056	\$ 289
West End	\$ 2,622,007	1.0%	9,306	\$ 282
Roslindale	\$ 7,269,753	2.8%	29,378	\$ 247
Hyde Park	\$ 7,428,450	2.8%	33,469	\$ 222
Downtown	\$ 2,933,019	1.1%	15,752	\$ 186
South End	\$ 5,939,135	2.3%	34,582	\$ 172
East Boston	\$ 7,651,521	2.9%	46,892	\$ 163
South Boston	\$ 7,665,293	2.9%	49,193	\$ 156
Allston-Brighton	\$ 10,010,616	3.8%	87,679	\$ 114
Fenway-Kenmore	\$ 4,364,000	1.7%	42,351	\$ 103
West Roxbury	\$ 3,031,100	1.2%	31,381	\$ 97
NEIGHBORHOOD TOTAL	\$ 219,735,202	84.0%	716,313	\$ 307
Citywide	\$ 41,910,648	16.0%	716,313	\$ 59
BOSTON TOTAL	\$ 261,645,850	100.0%	716,313	\$ 365

Notes: 1) This table includes updated data provided by the City in June 2026; 2) Population data comes from the City of Boston Planning Department, "Boston in Context: Neighborhoods", January 2025, <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/45b1d52a-e762-42a4-b81d-d52072bfda61>, Accessed June 2026. 3) CPA funding allocation information shows what the City approved, and it accounts for projects withdrawn after funding was approved; 4) Boston Harbor projects have been included in South Boston; 5) Citywide refers to citywide programs; 6) This table omits the Longwood neighborhood because it was excluded from the CPA Office's project map. However, it still includes its population in the Neighborhood Total to ensure accurate per-person USD calculations.

CPA PROJECTS AND EQUITY ANALYSIS

To perform the equity analysis, the team chose the following indicators:

- Income Indicator: Percentage of households earning below the Area Median Income (AMI) ⁵.
 - Measurement: Over 65% of households earn below the AMI.
- Poverty Indicator⁶: Percentage of households living below the poverty line.
 - Measurement: Over 40% of households live below the poverty line⁷.
- Language Indicator⁸: Percentage of Residents with a Language Access Need.
 - Measurement: Over 6% of residents have a Language Access Need.
- Demographic Indicator: Percentage of residents who identify as People of Color.
 - Measurement: Over 65% of residents identify as People of Color.

Overall, 267 projects (60.7 percent) totaling almost \$152 million in CPA funds (58.3 percent) were awarded in areas that exceeded at least one of the four measurements. These projects are in the following neighborhoods: Allston-Brighton, Beacon Hill, Charlestown, Chinatown, Dorchester, Downtown, East Boston, Fenway-Kenmore, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Mission Hill, North End, Roslindale, Roxbury, South End, and West Roxbury.

The map on the next page displays the distribution of funded CPA projects, categorizing them based on the presence of the indicator's measurements in the areas where they were awarded. For example, a project labeled "AMI & Poverty" has been awarded in an area in which over 65% of households earn below the AMI, and over 40% of households live below the poverty line.

Seven projects were awarded in northern Roxbury census block groups where all four indicators' measurements exceeded. One was an affordable housing project, one was an open space project, and five were historic preservation projects.

⁵ The FY2026 AMI for Boston is \$164,600.

⁶ Poverty is defined by household makeup. The Census Bureau estimates the number of people earning an income below the poverty level. The threshold for an individual is \$15,960, and the threshold for a family of four is \$33,000.

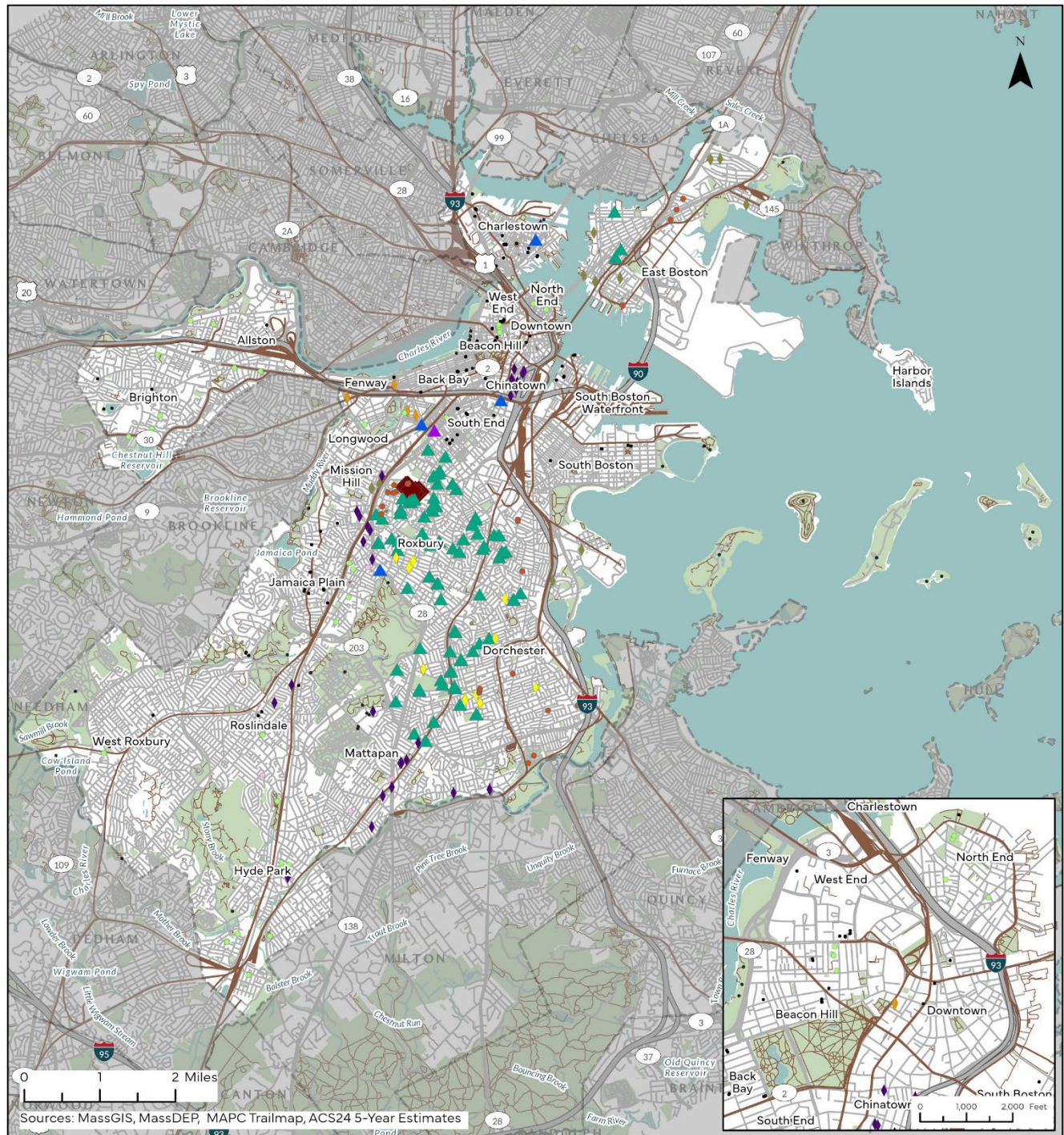
⁷ This metric highlights certain areas, like Fenway-Kenmore, with large student populations. The student population in some areas might skew the results to indicate a larger population living in poverty than is the case, as students are more likely to have their rent subsidized by families or to receive tuition assistance that helps them financially.

⁸ City of Boston, "Boston Language and Communications Access Demographic Data Report – Language", https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/embed/file/2019-03/demographic_data_report_-_language.pdf, Accessed October 2023.

CITY OF BOSTON - CPA PROJECTS + EQUITY ANALYSIS

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

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- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Trails | AMI, Poverty, Language & Demographics | AMI & Poverty |
| Water bodies | AMI, Poverty & Language | Language & Demographic |
| Open space | AMI, Poverty & Demographic | AMI Only |
| | AMI, Language & Demographic | Demographic Only |
| | AMI & Demographic | Language Only |
| | AMI & Language | None |

The following table details each indicator, its measurement, the number of projects, and the funding amount awarded. Additionally, the following pages detail the results of each indicator.

Indicator	Measurement	Projects (#)	Projects (%)	Funding (\$)	Funding (%)
Percentage of households earning below the AMI	Over 65% of households earn below the AMI	212	48.2%	\$128,733,037	49.2%
Percentage of households living below the poverty line	Over 40% of households live below the poverty line	19	4.3%	\$10,278,124	3.9%
Percentage of Residents with a Language Access Need	Over 6% of residents have a language access need	170	38.6%	\$92,430,806	35.3%
Percentage of residents who identify as People of Color	Over 65% of residents identify as People of Color	177	40.2%	\$107,228,482	41.0%

Note: The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

The percentage of Boston’s population living in census tracts where the projects are located, according to each indicator and measurement, is summarized below:

- Sixty-one percent (61.0 percent, or approximately 402,574 people) of Boston’s total population lives in census block groups where over 65 percent of households earn below the AMI. Forty-eight percent (48.2 percent, or 212 projects) of projects are located in these areas.
- Eight percent (7.8 percent, or approximately 51,817 people) of the city’s population lives in census block groups where over 40 percent of households live below the poverty line. Four percent (4.3 percent, or 19 projects) of projects are located in these areas.
- Thirty-three percent (33.4 percent, or approximately 220,461 people) of Boston’s population lives in census block groups where over 6 percent of residents have a language access need. Thirty-nine percent (38.6 percent, or 170 projects) of projects are located in these areas.
- Thirty-seven percent (36.7 percent, or approximately 242,449 people) of the population lives in census block groups where over 65 percent of residents identify as People of Color. Forty percent (40.2 percent or 177 projects) of projects are located in these areas.

CPA PROJECTS AND AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) BY CENSUS TRACT

The map on the following page shows the distribution of funded CPA projects alongside data indicating the concentration of households earning 100 percent or less of the Area-wide Median Income (AMI). The FY2026 AMI in the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HUD Metro FMR Area is \$164,600.

The City has funded 212 out of 440 projects (48.2 percent) in census block groups where over 65 percent of households make 100 percent of the AMI or less.

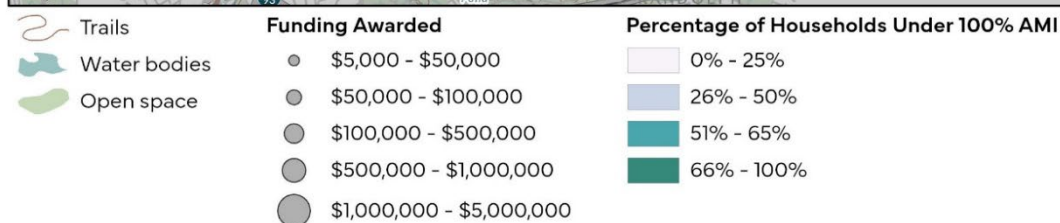
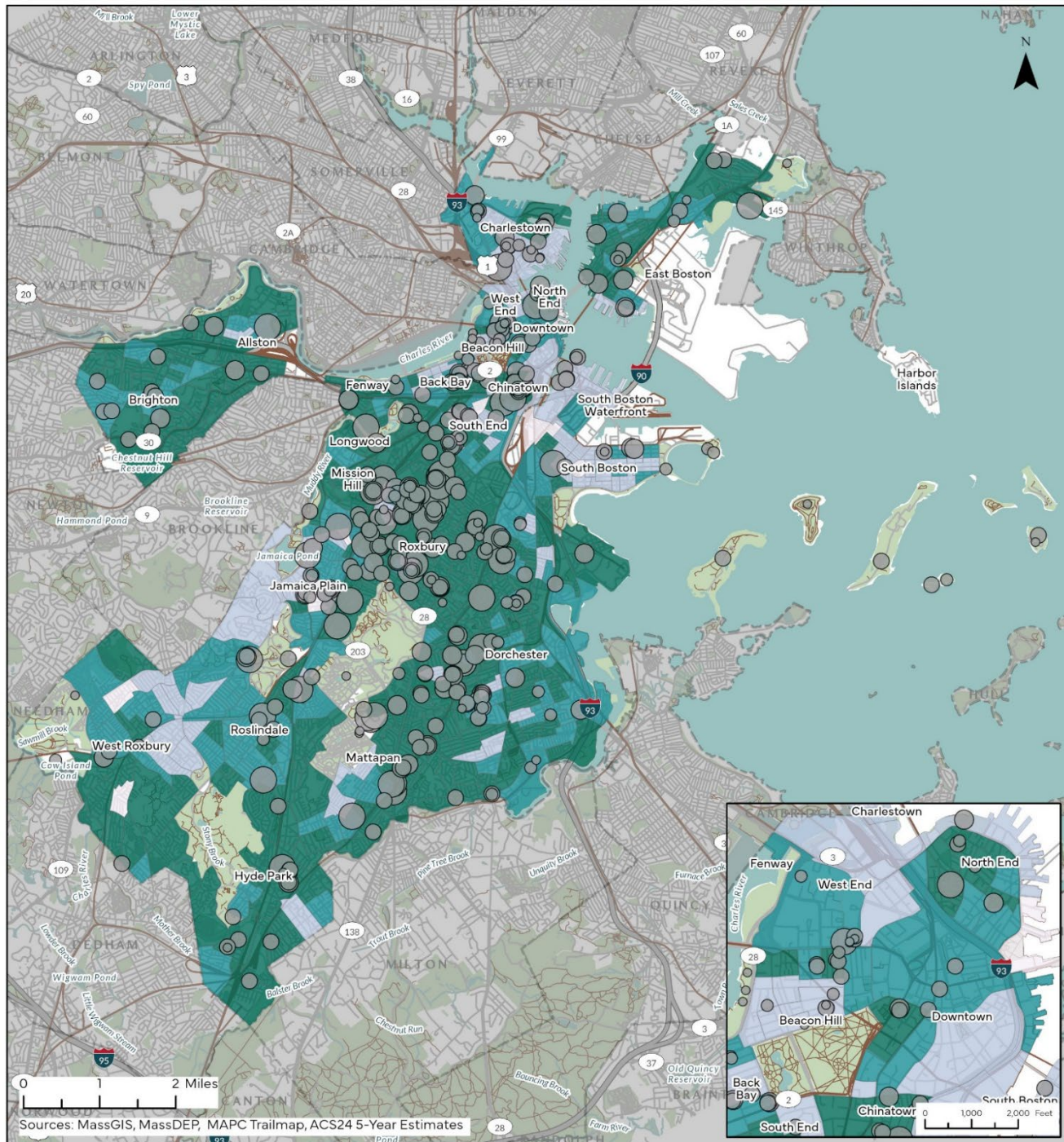
Percentage of Households under 100% AMI	Funding Awarded (\$)	Projects (#)	Projects (%)	Affordable Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space
0 – 25%	\$590,000	2	0.5%	1	1	0
26 – 50%	\$32,789,936	72	16.4%	4	46	22
51 – 65%	\$45,261,930	101	23.0%	8	62	31
Over 65%	\$128,733,037	212	48.2%	43	82	87

Source: 1) U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2020 - 2024", Accessed in June 2026; 2) The table above does not add to 440 projects because it does not include city-wide projects or projects located in large open spaces (see note in map below); 3) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

CITY OF BOSTON - CPA PROJECTS + AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI)

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

JM GOLDSON



Note: Although the American Community Survey provides household data for block groups corresponding to the Arboretum, Forest Hills, and Mount Hope Cemeteries, as well as Boston Logan International Airport, these areas were excluded as they are primarily open spaces.

CPA PROJECTS AND POVERTY RATE BY CENSUS TRACT

The map on the following page shows the project distribution alongside poverty rate data. In general, census block groups with higher poverty rates are concentrated in the City's geographic center, including the Allston, Brighton, Dorchester, Fenway-Kenmore, Longwood, Mission Hill, Roxbury, and South End neighborhoods.

The City has funded 19 out of 440 projects (4.3 percent) in census block groups with elevated poverty levels, where over 40 percent of residents live below the poverty line.

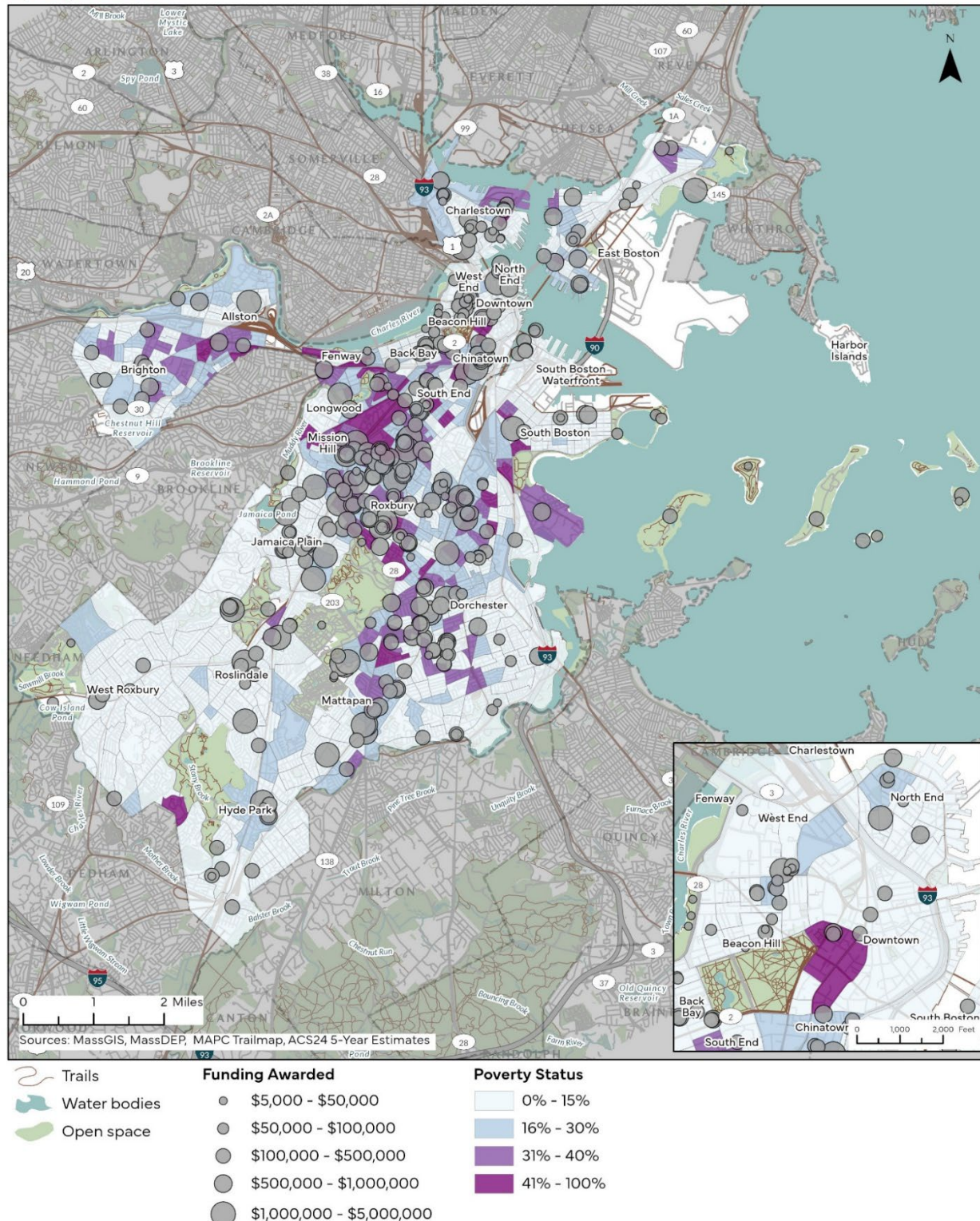
Percentage of Individuals under Poverty Level	Funding Awarded (\$)	Projects (#)	Projects (%)	Affordable Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space
0 – 15%	\$98,645,834	204	46.4%	22	115	67
16 – 30%	\$57,549,546	102	23.2%	18	41	43
31 – 40%	\$40,901,399	62	14.1%	13	23	26
Over 41%	\$10,278,124	19	4.3%	3	12	4

Source: 1) U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2020 - 2024", Accessed in June 2026; 2) The table above does not add to 440 projects because it does not include city-wide projects or projects located in large open spaces (see note in map below); or programs which serve low to moderate income households; 3) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

CITY OF BOSTON - CPA PROJECTS + POVERTY STATUS

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

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Notes: 1) Some of these block groups that have a large student population, such as Fenway or UMASS Boston, might skew the results to indicate a larger population that lives in poverty when, in reality, students are more likely to have their rents subsidized by families or tuition assistance programs; 2) Although the American Community Survey has population data for block groups corresponding to Harbor Islands, Franklin Zoo, Arboretum, Forest Hills and Mount Hope Cemeteries, and Boston Logan International Airport, these areas were removed after corroborating with Census 2020 population data or because they are mainly open spaces.



CPA funds financed the exterior renovation of the historic 1912 James P. Fox Apartment Building, which now houses Sociedad Latina, a non-profit founded in 1968 that supports at-risk Latino youth in the Mission Hill neighborhood of Boston. Source: Studio Luz Architecture Urban Design

CPA PROJECTS AND LANGUAGE ACCESS NEEDS BY NEIGHBORHOOD

The map on p. 35 shows the distribution of projects alongside data indicating residents with language access needs⁹. Most residents with language access needs live in Dorchester and East Boston. In Dorchester, 23.7 percent of residents speak Spanish, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese/Cape Verdean Creole. In East Boston, 18.4 percent of residents speak Spanish or Arabic¹⁰, amongst other languages.

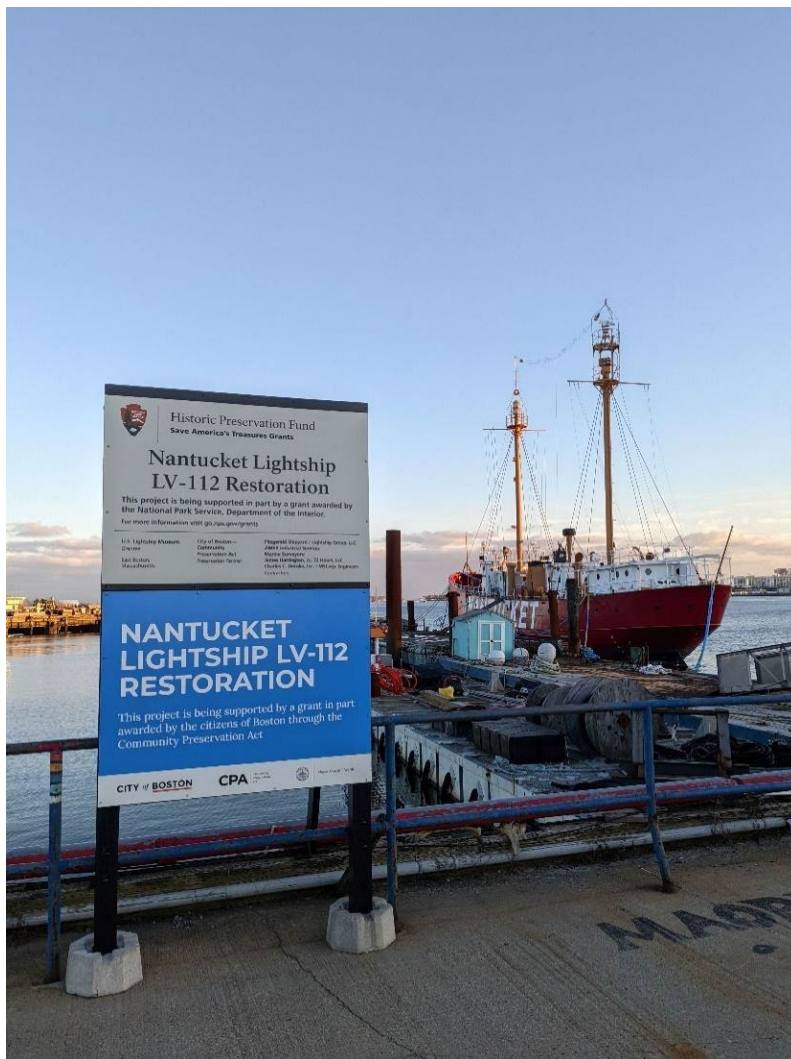
The City has funded 170 of 440 projects (38.6 percent) in neighborhoods with the highest language access needs, as shown on the map below on p. 35.

⁹ The percentages represent the ratio of residents with language access needs in the neighborhood to residents with language access needs in the City of Boston.

¹⁰ City of Boston, "Boston Language and Communications Access Demographic Data Report – Language", https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/embed/file/2019-03/demographic_data_report_-_language.pdf, Accessed October, 2023.

Percentage of Residents with a Language Need	Funding Awarded (\$)	Projects (#)	Projects (%)	Affordable Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space
0 – 1.0%	\$25,974,543	65	14.8%	5	51	9
1.1 – 3.5%	\$30,740,073	55	12.5%	8	25	22
3.6 – 5.9%	\$59,129,481	98	22.3%	18	40	40
Over 6.0%	\$92,430,806	170	38.6%	25	74	71

Source: 1) City of Boston, “Boston Language and Communications Access Demographic Data Report – Language”, https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/embed/file/2019-03/demographic_data_report_-_language.pdf, Accessed June 2026; 2) The table above does not add to 440 projects because it does not include city-wide projects or projects located in large open spaces (see note in map below); or programs which serve low to moderate income households; 3) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

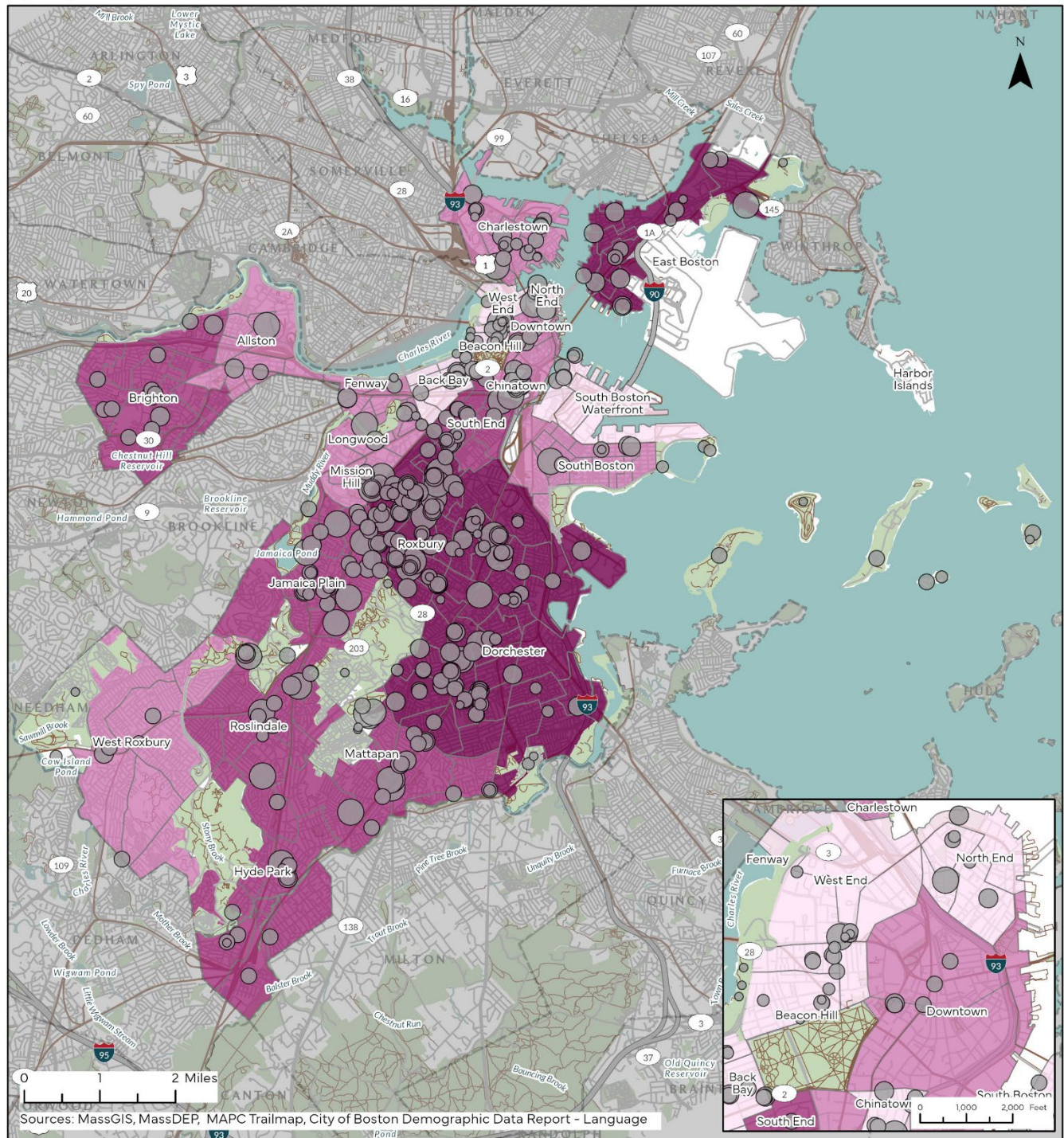


Funds from the CPA supported the restoration of key structural components of the Nantucket Lightship, moored in East Boston, to ensure the integrity of the ship's hull below the waterline.
Source: JM Goldson

CITY OF BOSTON - CPA PROJECTS + LANGUAGE ACCESS

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

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- Trails
- Water bodies
- Open space

Residents with a Language Access Need

- 0% - 1%
- 1% - 3.6%
- 3.6% - 6%
- 6% - 23.7%

Funding Awarded

- \$5,000 - \$50,000
- \$50,000 - \$100,000
- \$100,000 - \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$1,000,000
- \$1,000,000 - \$5,000,000

CPA PROJECTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION BY CENSUS TRACT

This section provides descriptive demographic context to help the City understand how CPA investments intersect with neighborhood racial/ethnic composition. Demographic data is used for analysis only and does not affect eligibility or scoring for CPA funds.

The City has funded 177 of 440 projects (40.2 percent) in neighborhoods where over 65 percent of residents identify as people of color.

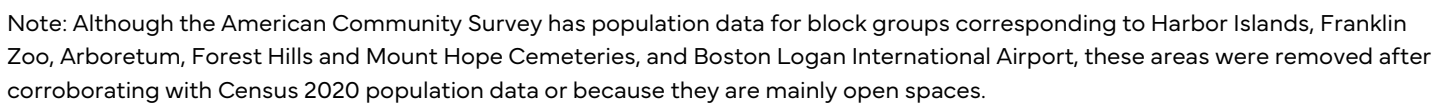
Percentage of Population that Identifies as People of Color	Funding Awarded (\$)	Projects (#)	Projects (%)	Affordable Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space
0 – 25 %	\$16,743,194	39	8.9%	4	29	6
26 – 35 %	\$35,591,455	62	14.1%	7	33	22
36 – 45 %	\$17,964,818	46	10.5%	6	31	9
46 – 64%	\$29,846,954	63	14.3%	7	28	28
65 % or More	\$107,228,482	177	40.2%	32	70	75

Note: Demographic share shown for context only; CPA eligibility and project selection do not consider race.

Investments are guided by race-neutral indicators (income, poverty, language access, access to resources) related to CPA statutory goals; demographic data help evaluate whether those investments reach communities experiencing historic disparities, including communities of color.

Source: 1) U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2020 - 2024", Accessed in June 2026; 2) The table above does not add to 440 projects because it does not include city-wide projects or projects located in large open spaces (see note in map below); 3) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC



CPA PROJECTS AND ACCESS TO OPEN AND RECREATION SPACE

Finally, the team analyzed the distribution of projects in relation to access to open spaces. The map on the following page shows the Boston areas within a quarter mile of open space. Most of the City is within walking distance of a park, except for a few key gap areas highlighted in red on the map. These areas of need are located mainly in the city's southern half, specifically in West Roxbury, Roslindale, and Jamaica Plain. Additionally, these areas also have the lowest density of Community Preservation projects.

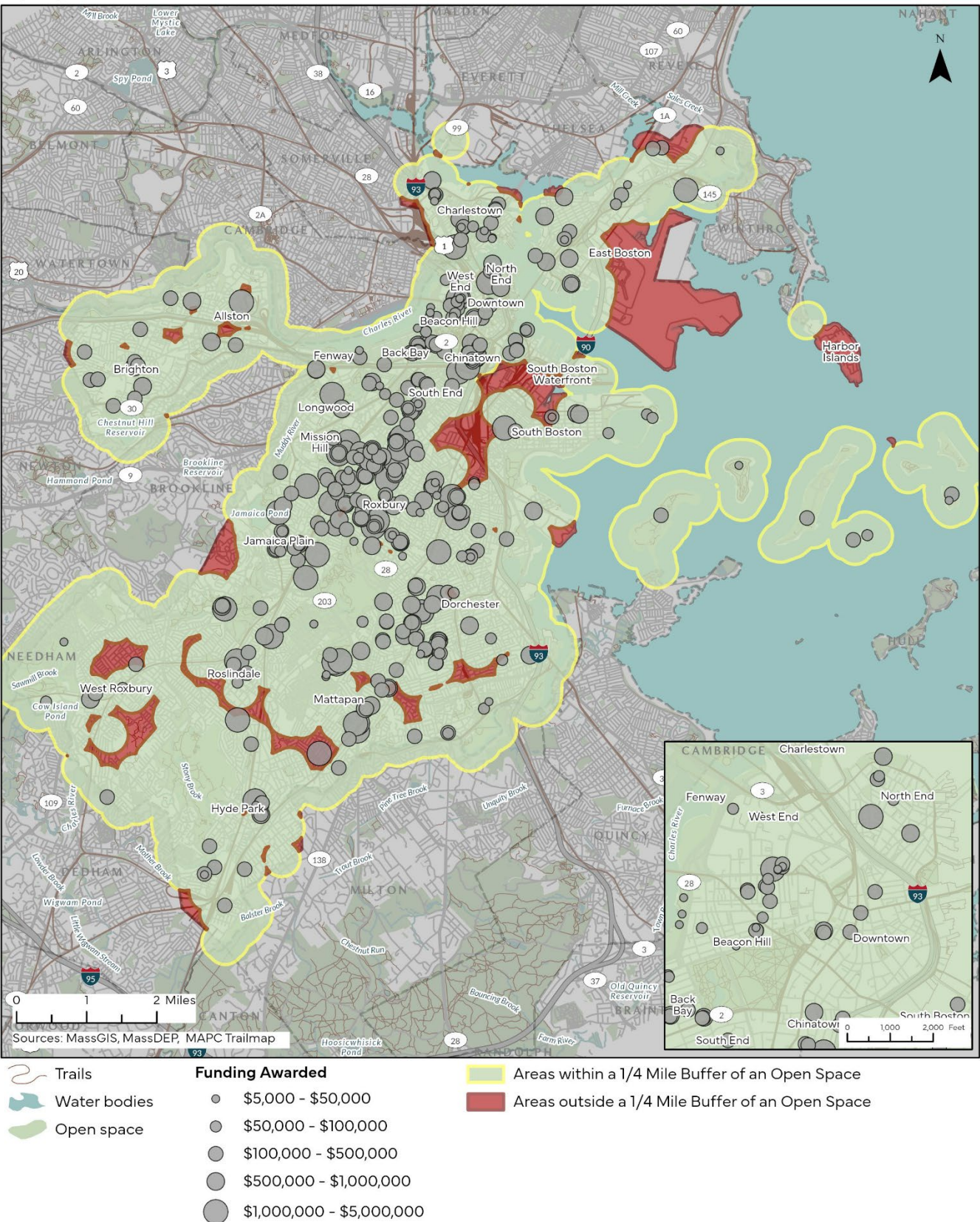
413 out of 440 projects (93.9 percent) are located within a quarter mile of an open or recreational space, or are open recreation space projects themselves.



A new community garden with a public gathering area was built in Roslindale's Healy Field through CPA funds. Source: JM Goldson

CITY OF BOSTON - CPA PROJECTS + OPEN AND RECREATION SPACE ACCESS

JM GOLDSON



Furthermore, heat islands are parts of cities that experience warmer temperatures due to the prevalence of impervious surfaces. They are often found in highly urbanized parts of cities. Heat islands can be mitigated by reducing impervious surface area in warmer regions or by increasing green space and vegetation. The maps on the following pages show the mean summer average surface temperature and the tree coverage per census tract.

Neighborhoods such as Allston, Charlestown, Chinatown, Dorchester, Roxbury, South End, and South Boston have both higher average summer surface temperatures and lower tree coverage.

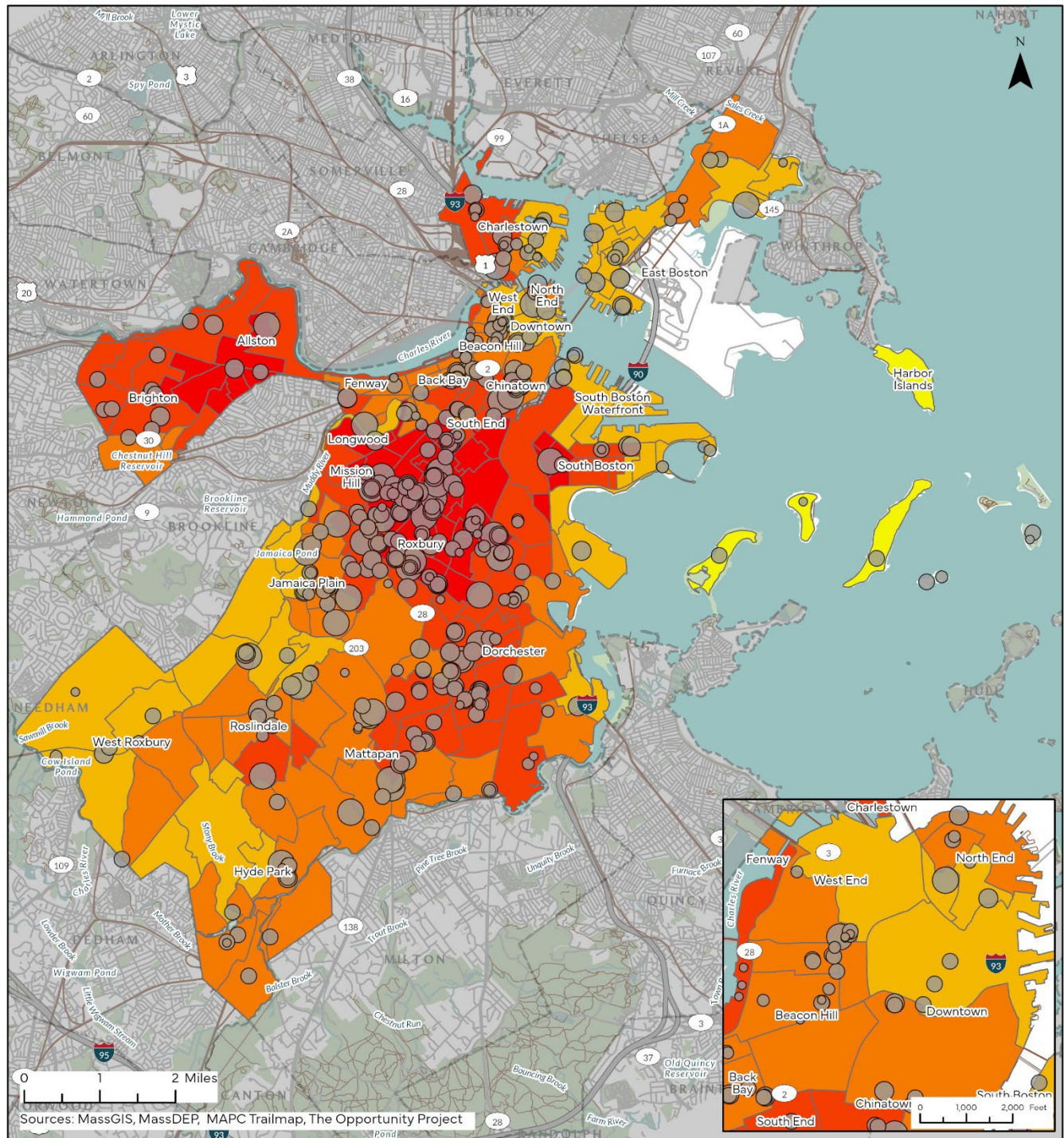


Olmsted Park in Jamaica Plain received CPA funds to restore wood stairs and paths. Olmsted Park is part of the Emerald Necklace in Boston. Source: JM Goldson

CITY OF BOSTON - CPA PROJECTS + HEAT HEALTH

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

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- Trails
- Water bodies
- Open space

Funding Awarded

- \$5,000 - \$50,000
- \$50,000 - \$100,000
- \$100,000 - \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$1,000,000
- \$1,000,000 - \$5,000,000

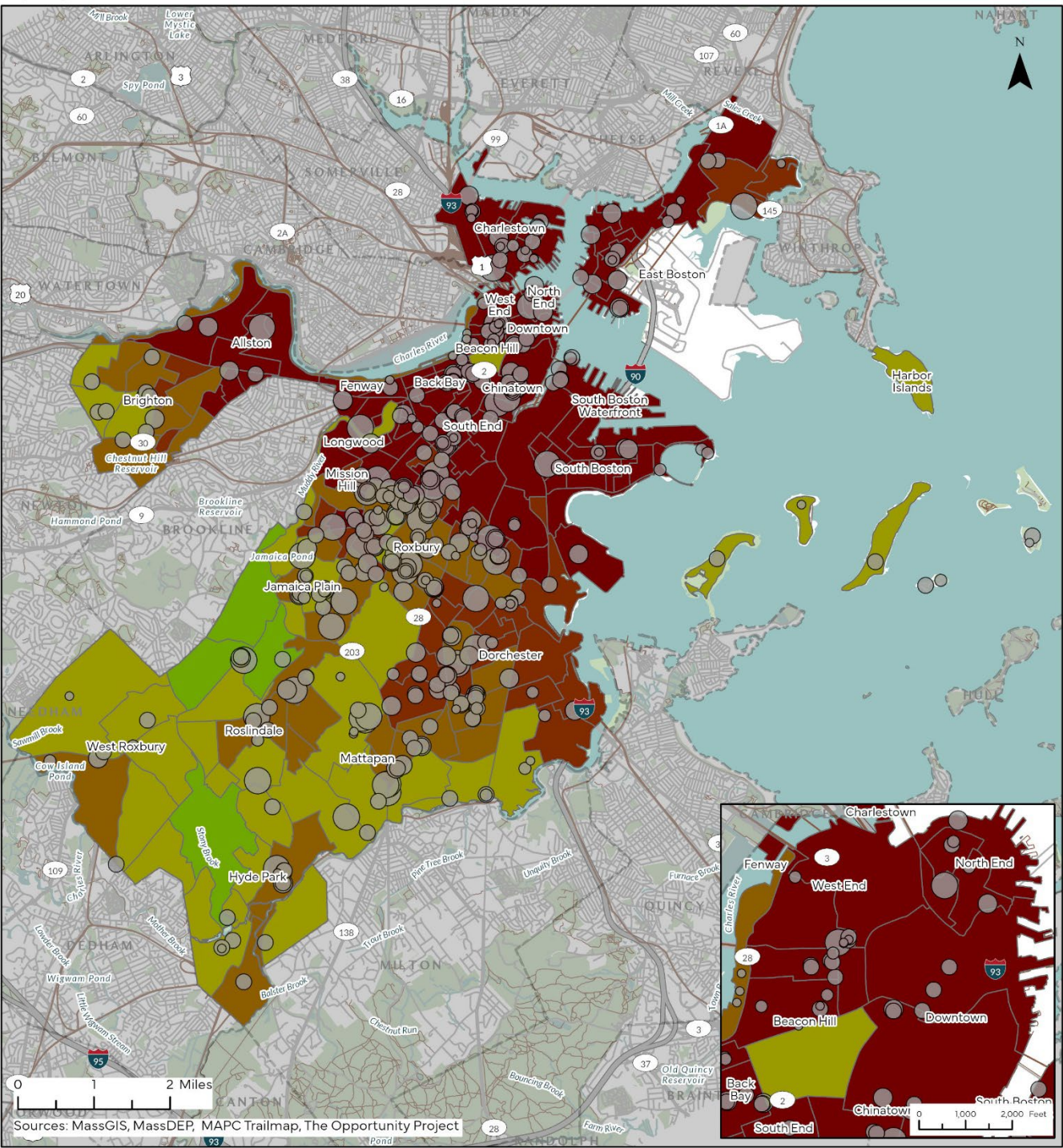
Summer Average Land Surface Temperature (°F)

- 67 °F
- 67 - 92 °F
- 92 - 95 °F
- 95 - 98 °F
- 98 - 102 °F

CITY OF BOSTON - CPA PROJECTS + TREE COVERAGE

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

An essential part of understanding the current CPA program and determining how it can be improved in the coming years is speaking with people directly involved in the process and hearing from people who could be impacted by the CPA or have a particular interest in it. The project team interviewed Boston CPA staff, CPC members, and department heads who regularly work with the CPA program. A survey was sent to over 300 contacts, including past applicants and organizations with a particular or potential interest in the CPA program. These groups included neighborhood organizations, advocacy groups, and more.

The project team engaged with 294 individuals through interviews and a survey as part of the qualitative research engagement process in 2022.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The Boston CPA Interviews aimed to gather insights into the CPA program from various perspectives. Interviewees were asked about their reactions to the quantitative analysis, their opinions of the CPA program so far, their views on equity, how they measure progress, and the CPA program's internal processes, departmental coordination, and support for the current plan.

One key point raised during the interviews was that the CPA program in Boston is highly regarded. The interviewees were quick to elaborate on the excellent work the program has done and the amount of money that CPA staff and CPC have invested in Boston communities. While the interviewees noted ways the program could be improved or streamlined, the program is overall viewed by CPA staff, other departments, and the CPC in a positive light.

Some key themes that emerged from the interview process were the need for an eligibility and application form and for more streamlined communication among CPA staff, the CPC, City Departments, and neighborhood groups.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

The purpose of the Boston CPA Survey was to gather information about the project application process from past applicants and to gather different perspectives on overall priorities for CPA funding, as well as specific priorities related to housing, open space and recreation, and historic preservation, from both past and potential future applicants. Two hundred and sixty-nine people participated in the survey. The survey was active for approximately one month, from April 2022 to May 2022. Complete responses to all survey questions, along with the full survey summary, are available in the Appendix.

The following are the key findings from the survey results:

- Most respondents (about 80 percent) live in Boston, about 15 percent work in Boston but do not live in the City, and about 5 percent have another connection to the City.
- Over 60 percent of respondents have lived, worked, or otherwise been associated with Boston for over 20 years.
- Past applicants indicated that they found the application to be of medium difficulty and that it became slightly more accessible to complete over time.
- The most significant open space priorities among survey respondents include creating more open space projects in underserved neighborhoods and protecting natural resources to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- In the active recreation category, most respondents indicated that improving parks, playgrounds, or athletic fields in underserved areas and creating more parks, playgrounds, or athletic fields in underserved neighborhoods were significant.
- Some concepts that received the most support from survey respondents for open space and recreation were improving accessibility in existing parks and connecting open spaces with walking and biking trails.
- The community housing project idea with the most support was ensuring that existing homes stay affordable.
- When asked about specific neighborhoods for creating affordable housing, most neighborhoods were mentioned. Among those most mentioned were Allston, Brighton, Charlestown, Beacon Hill, Back Bay, Chinatown, Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan. While most respondents indicated that their neighborhoods needed affordable housing, some mentioned neighborhoods without connections, and many listed multiple neighborhoods in need.
- Some of the most supported ideas for affordable housing include programs for first-time homebuyers, affordable homeownership, and a rental assistance program.
- When asked what types of historic preservation projects are the most important, preserving historic properties that honor historically marginalized populations scored the highest.
- Survey respondents indicated that many historic buildings need preservation and restoration work even though they have not been officially designated as historic.
- Most respondents agreed that allocating 50 percent of funds to affordable housing and 20 percent each to open space & recreation and historic preservation was a good distribution of funds.
- One of the concepts mentioned most was climate change. Survey respondents emphasized the need for climate-focused initiatives across all project categories.

Survey respondents indicated that CPA funding should be allocated to creating spaces and opportunities for individuals, children, and families, as well as to improving conditions in underserved neighborhoods, so that all people who call Boston home can feel welcome and valued.

CHAPTER 3: OVERALL GOALS

The CPC developed the following overall CPA goals by carefully considering the analysis findings, the interviews, and the community feedback gathered through the survey. The goals will guide the CPC's deliberations on project requests for CPA funds across all three CPA funding categories and will be used to establish funding preferences. The policy and goals are not binding; the CPC will ultimately base its recommendations on the individual merits of each project, using the overall goals as a guide.

- 1. Prioritize CPA funding for projects that further equity by addressing documented needs in historically underserved and under-resourced Boston neighborhoods.**

Generations of economic, social, and environmental inequity present complex challenges for Boston residents. The CPA is vital in creating a more equitable and inclusive Boston. To help achieve just and fair inclusion, where all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential in Boston, the CPC will strive to recommend CPA funds for projects and initiatives that promote equity and social justice. When a program or policy is equitable, its aim is not to treat populations uniformly; rather, it is responsive to differences, as inequity is experienced by people in different ways.

Furthermore, the CPC recognizes that impacts need to go beyond absolute numbers of residents impacted by CPA funds to include the level and extent of impacts to address community-level needs and to strengthen neighborhood vitality, safety, and social cohesion, with priority to address needs in historically underserved and under-resourced neighborhoods, including areas of Dorchester, Mattapan, Mission Hill, Roxbury, and similar neighborhoods, based on documented indicators of need and resource gaps.

- 2. Prioritize CPA funding for projects that directly advance Boston's climate resilience and sustainability.**

The City of Boston has a steadfast commitment to environmental action and climate justice, and it is actively working toward its goal of achieving carbon neutrality and mitigating the effects of climate change for all Boston residents. The Department of Neighborhood Development leads a zero-emission building standard for City-funded affordable housing, the Environment Department and Boston Transportation Department released a Zero Emission Vehicle Roadmap, the City advanced its goal of becoming a zero-waste city, and the City released Climate Ready initiatives and studies in multiple neighborhoods, including Dorchester, Downtown, the North End, Charlestown, and East Boston in addition to a heat resilience study.

The CPA funds are an essential funding source for achieving these larger City-wide goals and are recognized by community members and city officials throughout this engagement process. Projects in every CPA project category can be crucial in addressing climate

resilience and sustainability. The CPA funds can prioritize green affordable housing projects, including net-zero and passive homes. Historic preservation projects, by their nature, protect the energy already embodied in existing buildings and structures. Additionally, protecting natural resources, including open spaces, trees, wetlands, and other natural habitats, is crucial for enhancing resilience. One of the leading open-space priorities among CPA survey respondents was protecting natural resources to mitigate the impacts of climate change (over 70%), indicating this area was considered critical.

3. Balance the use of CPA funds to support both community-led projects and further City priorities as documented in current City plans.

The first word in the CPA is “community.” The Boston CPA program provides a valuable opportunity for community members to take local action to improve their neighborhoods. Community gardens, pocket parks, preservation of locally essential spaces and historic structures, and other neighborhood-level projects can seem small on a grander scale. Still, the impacts on a neighborhood can be immeasurably significant.

The CPA program and other City Departments have successfully supported these community-led projects by providing technical assistance, resources, and guidance to foster community-initiated ideas. This is and will continue to be an essential component of the Boston CPA Program.

In addition, it will continue to be essential to take a balanced approach so that CPA funding allocations can support both community-led ideas and broader City initiatives and priorities, including and especially those that promote equity and climate resilience and are promoted as part of other guiding City policy documents, including Imagine Boston 2030, Boston’s Economic Inclusion and Equity Agenda, and other relevant City plans.

The CPC recognizes that community-led ideas and broader City initiatives are not necessarily mutually exclusive and can often work together. The CPC will encourage project submissions at all levels and strive to promote a balanced approach to funding recommendations, ensuring that both CPA-eligible community-led ideas and broader City initiatives are appropriately supported.

4. Continue to establish a CPA funding allocation formula annually to help guide CPC recommendations.

Since the program’s inception, the CPC has used an allocation formula to guide funding recommendations. The current formula, which has guided CPA allocations since 2019, allocates 50 percent of project funds to affordable housing, 20 percent to open space and recreation, and 20 percent to historic preservation. The remaining 10 percent may be allocated to any category or to be held in reserve. An additional five percent is reserved for administration costs.

Survey respondents and city officials generally agreed that the existing formula is appropriate given the City's significant need for affordable housing, climate resilience, quality-of-life improvements for Boston residents, and equitable access to resources. However, the program also benefits from its flexibility and adaptability as a funding source, responsive to change.

Throughout the years of this five-year plan, the CPC will continue to use the existing allocation formula to guide its funding recommendations. The CPC will reassess the formula annually to determine any adjustments based on anticipated needs and changing circumstances.

CHAPTER 4: AFFORDABLE HOUSING



CPA funds supported the construction of UHomes, a new 20-unit homeownership development, in Allston-Brighton. 12 of the units are deed-restricted affordable condominiums, which will be available to first-time homebuyers who earn up to 80% of the AMI. Source: JM Goldson

The CPA Legislation defines “community housing” as “low- and moderate-income housing for individuals and families, including low- or moderate-income senior housing.”

CPA Funds can be used to:

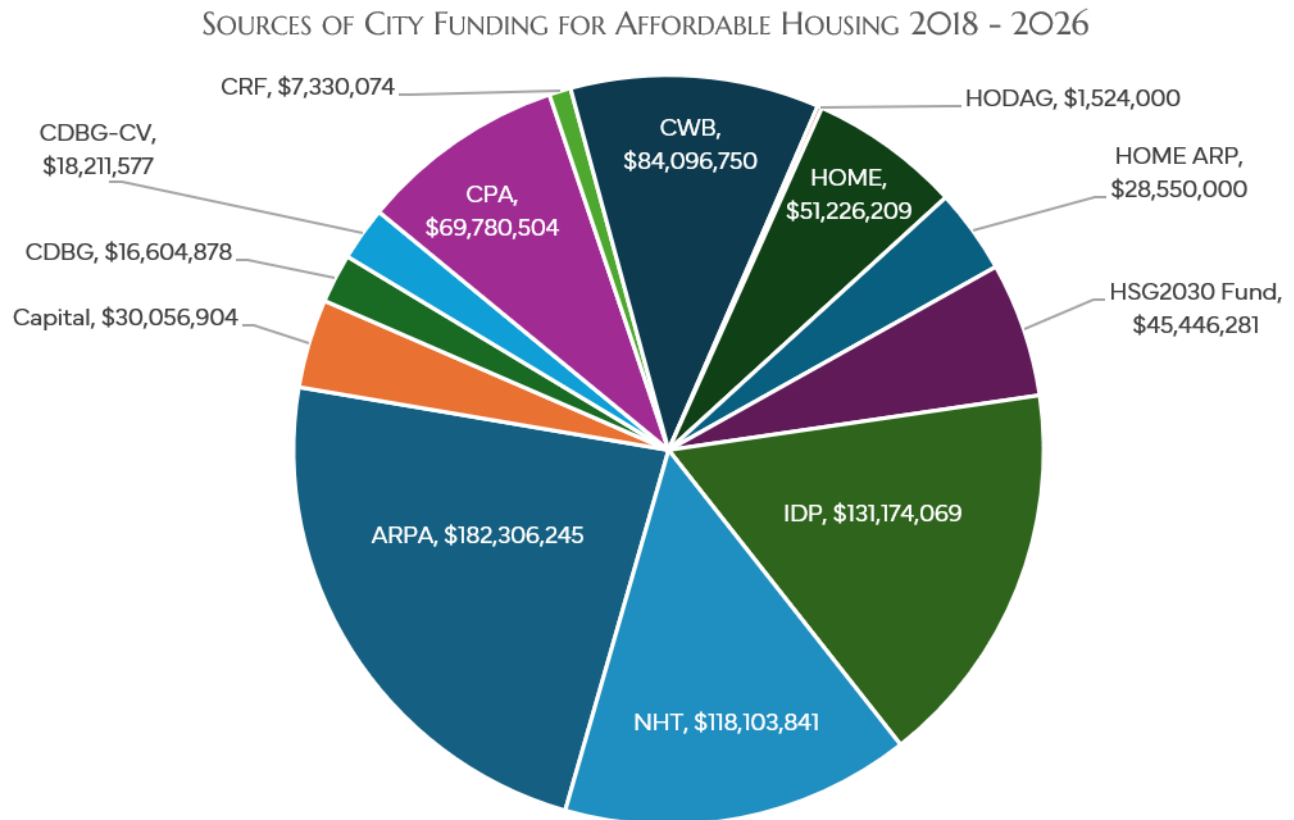
- Acquire or create land/buildings for community housing.
- Preserve existing community housing.
- Rehabilitate or restore community housing acquired or created using CPA funds.
- Support housing affordability (including direct assistance programs).

NEEDS

Boston’s housing crisis is well-documented. Real estate prices are already high and continue growing, pricing many people out of the city they call home. According to the Housing Boston 2030

Plan, Boston needs more market-rate housing that is affordable to middle-income households without public subsidies, in addition to lower-income housing.

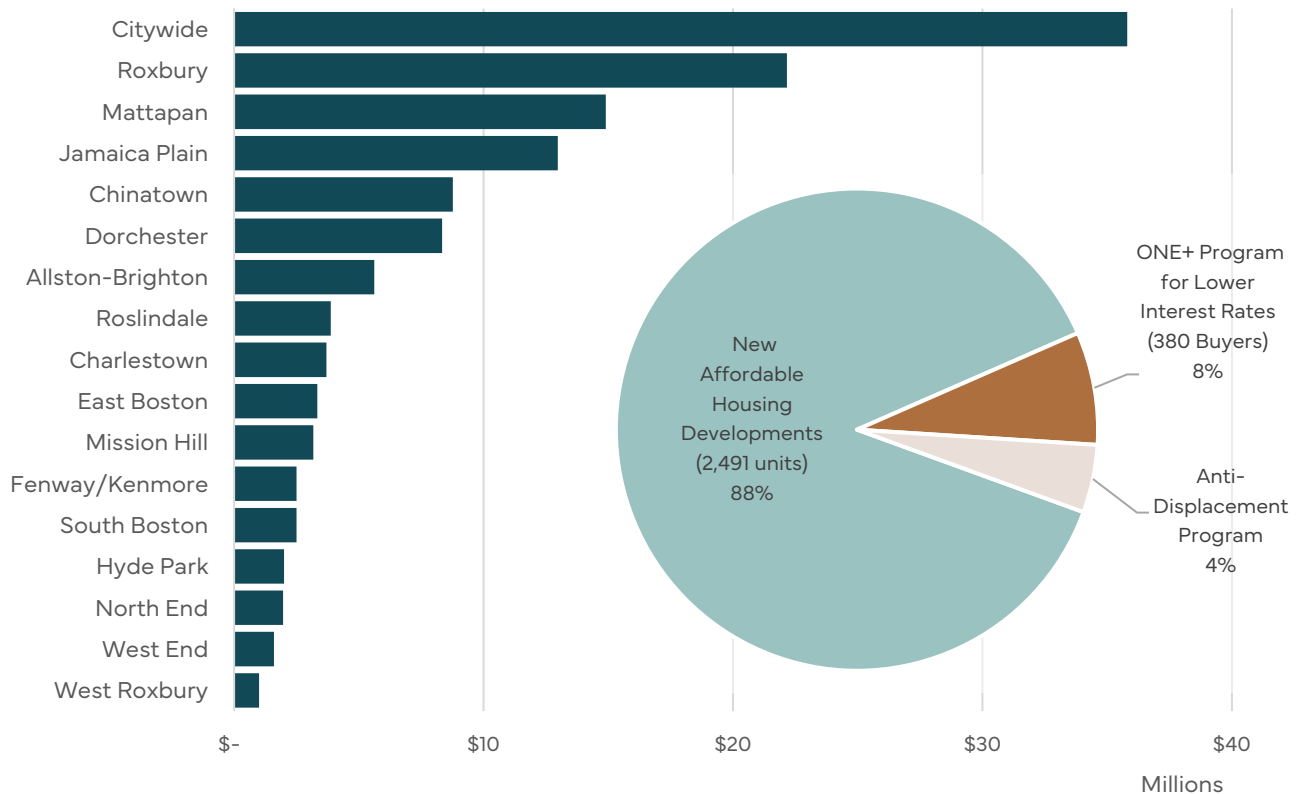
CPA funds are just one of the funding sources the City uses for housing initiatives, but they still have a significant impact. According to Boston’s Department of Neighborhood Development, as illustrated in the following chart, CPA funds comprise about four percent of total housing creation and preservation funds.



Source: Neighborhood Housing & Supportive Housing Divisions, Mayor's Office of Housing

From 2018 to 2026, the City funded 66 affordable housing projects with CPA funds, totaling \$134,205,596 in investments.

CPA AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING BY NEIGHBORHOOD



Notes: 1) The above table only shows neighborhoods that have been granted affordable housing funding; 2) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

In addition to analyzing CPA funding by neighborhood, the team examined the types of projects funded. The CPA has funded affordable housing projects in three categories: 88 percent of funding has been used to create 2,491 new housing units¹¹, 8 percent for the first-time homebuyer program (ONE+), which assisted 1,030 buyers, and 4 percent for the anti-displacement program.

One way the team analyzed affordable housing projects was by comparing existing affordable housing units to the new units created with CPA funds by neighborhood, alongside data showing the percentage of households in each neighborhood that would qualify for affordable housing through CPA (households earning up to 100 percent of the Area Median Income, or AMI). Generally, the rate of qualifiable households correlates with the number of affordable units created with CPA funds. For example, Roxbury has the highest percentage of households that could qualify and the second-highest number of units created with CPA funds. Jamaica Plain is an outlier neighborhood with the highest number of units created with CPA funds, but the percentage of qualifiable households is lower than the Boston average.

¹¹ This figure includes 385 housing units that were initially purchased at market rate and subsequently converted into affordable housing. On the CPA Office's project map, these initiatives are labeled as "acquisition of market-rate housing units to preserve affordability".

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS BY NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighborhood	Percent of Households that Would Qualify for Affordable Housing through CPA	City of Boston Income-Restricted Housing Units	Affordable Units Created with CPA Funds
Boston	67.5%	57,552	1,821
Allston-Brighton	76.7%	4,404	149
Back Bay	56.5%	681	-
Beacon Hill	50.8%	343	-
Charlestown	47.7%	2,405	123
Chinatown	77.6%	1,227	284
Dorchester	75.3%	8,708	174
Downtown	57.1%	994	-
East Boston	71.7%	2,816	63
Fenway-Kenmore	81.9%	2,320	51
Hyde Park	72.0%	928	75
Jamaica Plain	58.4%	4,040	427
Mattapan	78.3%	1,830	323
Mission Hill	83.1%	2,591	107
North End	66.5%	321	23
Roslindale	62.3%	1,405	109
Roxbury	85.0%	10,912	384
South Boston	48.3%	3,827	35
South End	57.1%	5,484	-
West End	50.0%	867	119
West Roxbury	57.1%	1,449	45

Notes: 1) U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2019 - 2023", Accessed in November 2023; 2) City of Boston, "Income-Restricted Housing Inventory 2022", Accessed in June 2026, at: <https://data.boston.gov/dataset/income-restricted-housing>; 3) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026; 4) Boston Harbor projects and open spaces have been included in South Boston.

While the CPA addresses the need for affordable housing in some neighborhoods, such as Roxbury, other neighborhoods require affordable housing yet have received little to no CPA funding. The City has not yet allocated CPA funds for affordable housing in Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Downtown, and the South End. These neighborhoods, on average, have higher income, higher education levels, and less affordable housing.

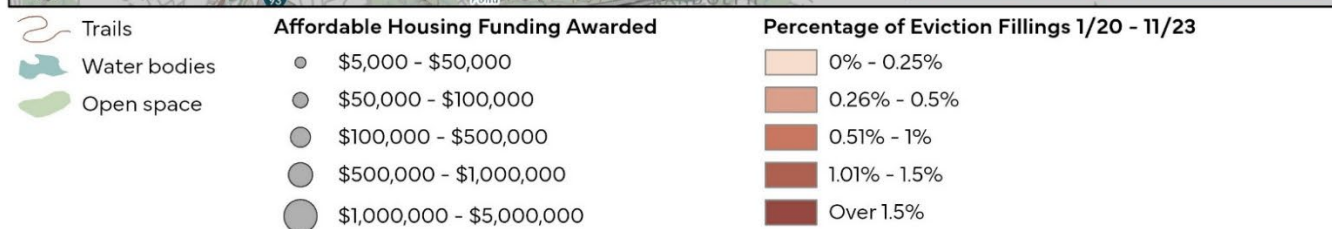
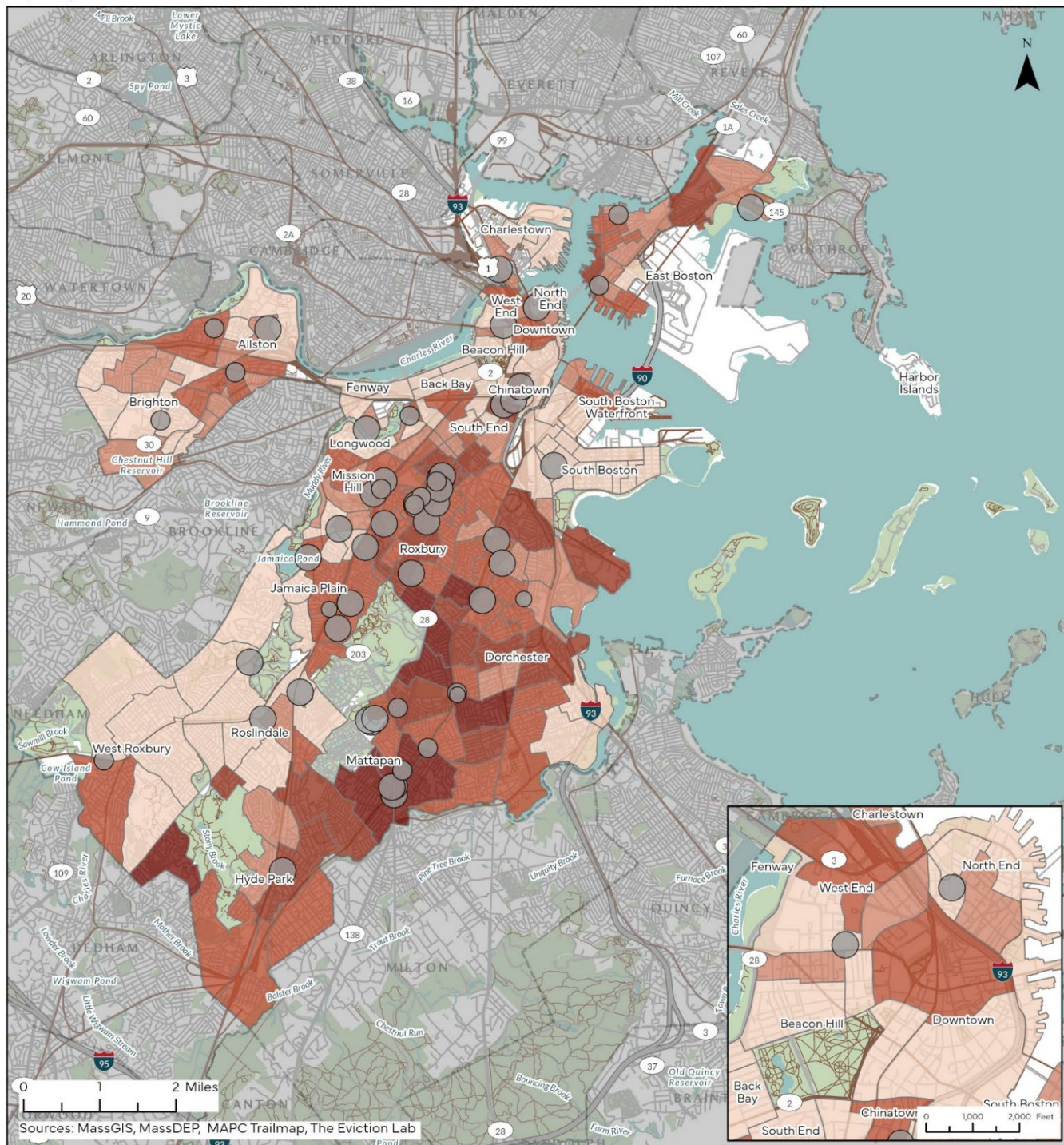
The following map shows the distribution of affordable housing projects and data showing the eviction rate by census tract. This map shows that the affordable housing projects funded by the CPA are concentrated in areas with higher eviction rates. From January 2020 to November 2023, the Mattapan neighborhood had the highest percentage of eviction filings in the city and a median household income of \$72,614, below Boston's \$94,734¹². It is also among the neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of CPA-promoted affordable housing units. Other neighborhoods, such as Dorchester, Hyde Park, and Roxbury, also have census tracts with high eviction rates. However, Hyde Park has the fewest subsidized housing units and CPA-funded affordable housing projects among these neighborhoods.

¹² City of Boston Planning Department, "Boston in Context: Neighborhoods", January 2024, <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/45b1d52a-e762-42a4-b81d-d52072bfda61>, Accessed June 2026.

CITY OF BOSTON - AFFORDABLE HOUSING CPA PROJECTS + EVICTION FILLINGS

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

JM GOLDSON



Note: Although the Eviction Lab has population data for the tracts corresponding to the Boston Logan International Airport, and the Forest Hills and Mount Hope Cemeteries, these areas were removed as they are mainly open spaces.

The following map illustrates the distribution of affordable housing projects funded by the City through the CPA, alongside data on the concentration of severely cost-burdened households. Essentially, these households currently spend 50 percent or more of their income on housing-related costs. Households earning less than the AMI are concentrated in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan. Additionally, other severely cost-burdened households are located in different parts of the City.

Percentage of Severely Cost-Burdened Households	Affordable Housing Funding Awarded (\$)	Affordable Housing Projects (#)	Affordable Housing Projects (%)
0 – 10%	\$21,761,053	13	19.7%
11 – 20%	\$33,195,452	17	25.8%
21 – 30%	\$25,331,241	17	25.8%
31 – 40%	\$9,117,850	6	9.1%
Over 40%	\$2,500,000	3	4.5%

Source: 1) U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2020 - 2024", Accessed in June 2026; The table above does not add to 66 projects because it does not include city-wide projects; 3) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

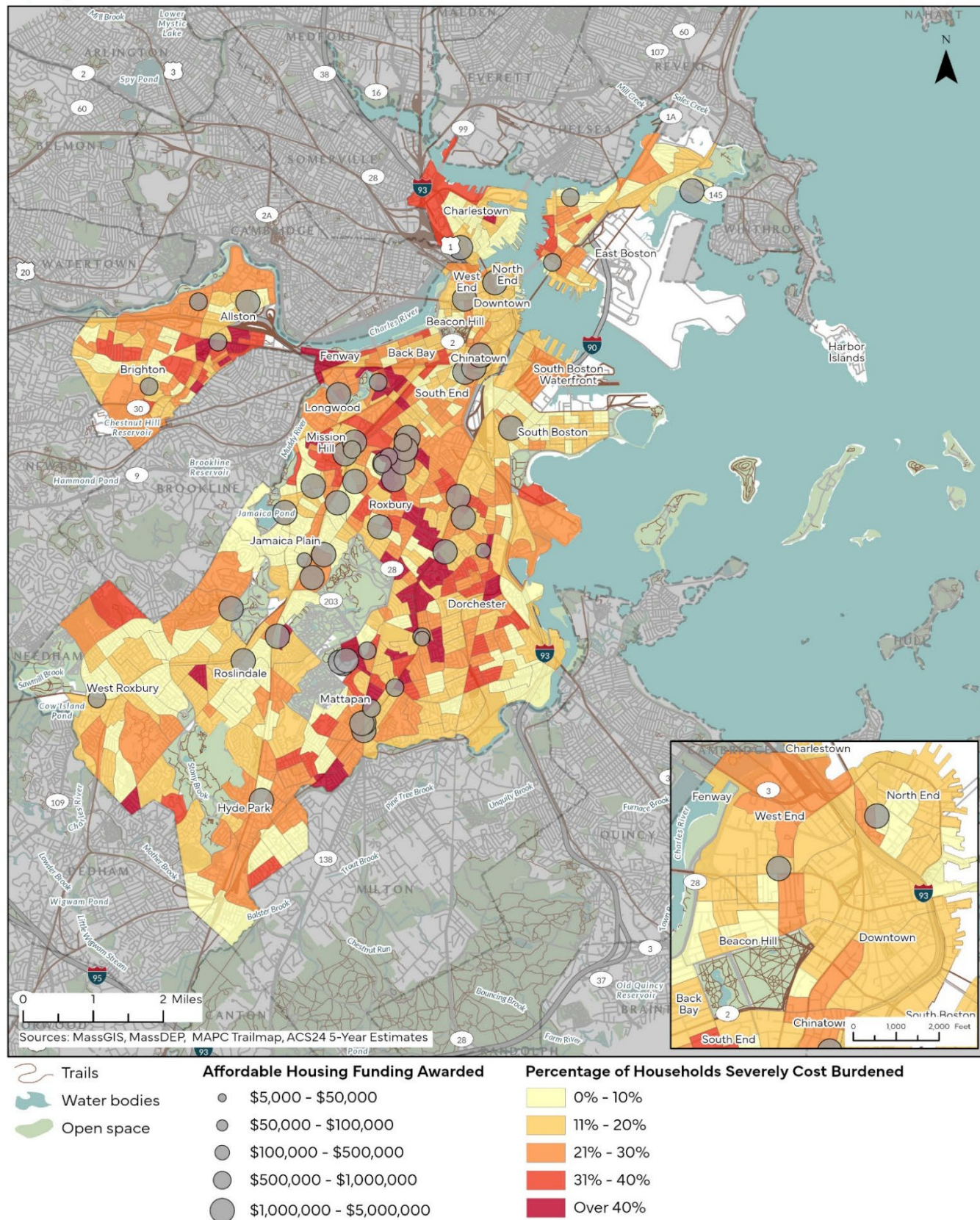


On July 2024, the Hyde Park’s vacant William Barton Rogers School conversion into a vibrant, mixed-income, LGBTQ-friendly senior 75-unit housing development through CPA funding was completed. Source: JM Goldson

CITY OF BOSTON - AFFORDABLE HOUSING CPA PROJECTS + COST BURDEN

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

JM GOLDSON



Note: Although the American Community Survey has household data for tracts corresponding to the Arboretum, Forest Hills and Mount Hope Cemeteries, and Boston Logan International Airport, these areas were removed as they are mainly open spaces.



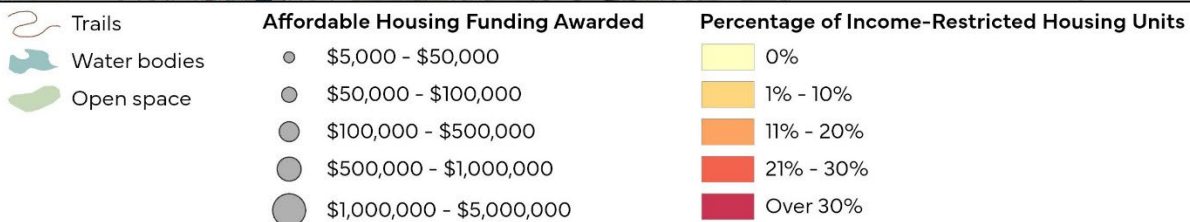
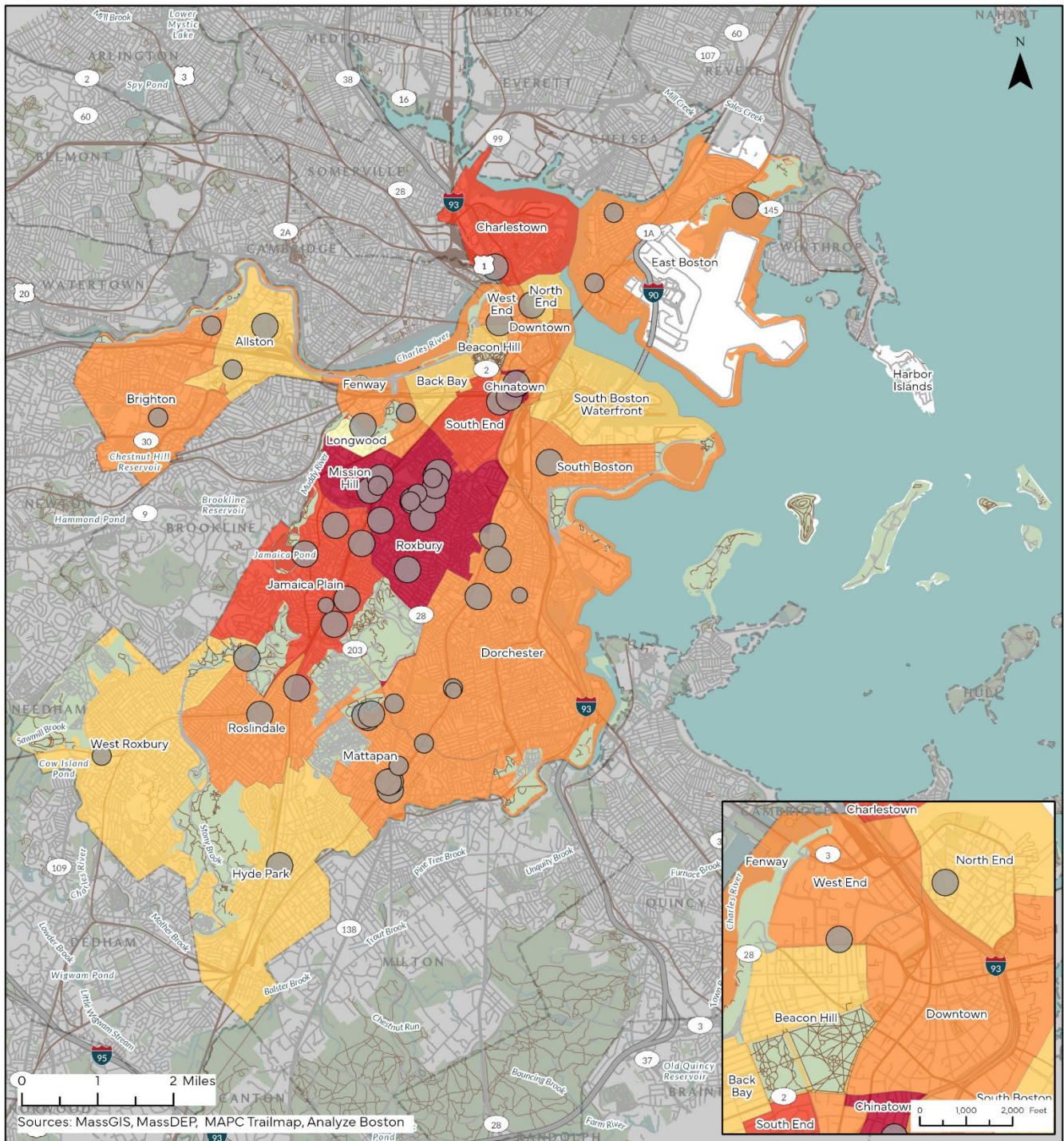
In the North End, CPA funds supported the adaptive reuse of the existing Knights of Columbus headquarters to create 23 affordable apartments for seniors, including three units reserved for seniors experiencing homelessness. This CPA project also developed a meeting space for the North End community and acquired a new space for the Knights of Columbus. Source: JM Goldson

This map displays the distribution of affordable housing projects alongside data on the concentration of income-restricted housing units¹³. Roxbury, Mission Hill, and Chinatown have the most existing income-restricted housing units. While the city awarded the highest amounts of affordable housing funds to Roxbury and Chinatown, it allocated a smaller portion of those funds to Mission Hill.

¹³ 2) City of Boston, "Income-Restricted Housing Inventory 2022", Accessed in June 2026, at: <https://data.boston.gov/dataset/income-restricted-housing>;

CITY OF BOSTON - AFFORDABLE HOUSING CPA PROJECTS + INCOME-RESTRICTED UNITS
Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

JM GOLDSON



Throughout the CPA program, ten citywide projects have been awarded. Six of these projects fall into the affordable housing category. The goals of the citywide affordable housing projects were to:

- Provide funding for a program that will assist first-time homebuyers.
- Provide funding to combat displacement by purchasing existing rental units to income-restrict them as permanently affordable housing.
- Provide funding for the city's ONE Plus Boston program, which assists first-time homebuyers in receiving lower interest rates.

The City has funded a wide range of affordable housing projects and programs with CPA funds, including grants ranging from \$500,000 to \$5 million. The following sample of grant awards provides some perspective on how CPA funds have been awarded to address the full spectrum of Boston's affordable housing needs.



CPA funds are supporting the construction of Grace Apartments in East Boston. When finished, this multi-family development will have 42 units of low-income senior housing, including five units reserved for individuals experiencing homelessness. Source: JM Goldson.

Allston-Brighton	\$617,856	16 new SRO units for residents at 30 percent of AMI
	\$1 million	79 new senior units with 15 homeless units
Citywide	\$14 million	Fund an anti-displacement program by purchasing existing rental units to preserve affordability.
	\$12.8 million	Fund to assist first-time home buyers
Dorchester	\$500,000	36 new mixed-income rental units with ground-floor retail
	\$500,000	19 new rental units for tenants at 60 percent of AMI
East Boston	\$400,000	4 new affordable homeownership units
Hyde Park	\$2 million	LGBTQ adaptive reuse senior units that commemorate the former school
Mission Hill	\$927,500	13 new artist rental units for tenants at 80 percent of AMI

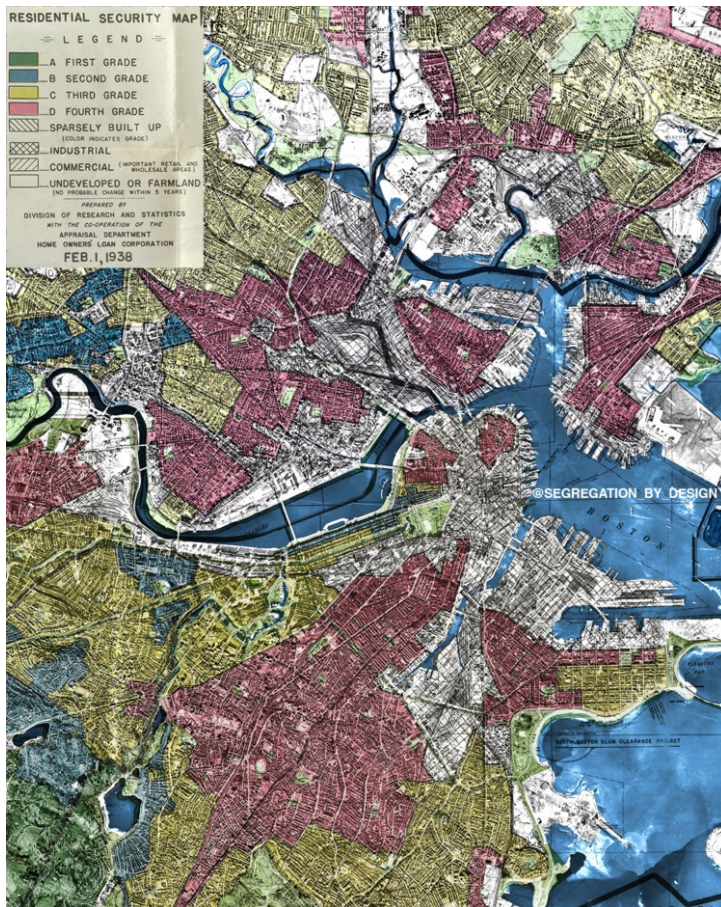
Note: The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2025.

GOALS

- 1. Create new income-restricted housing opportunities in all Boston neighborhoods, including higher-cost, higher-opportunity areas, to expand choice, promote mobility, and reduce displacement pressures, using transparent criteria tied to fair housing goals (e.g., cost burden, income mismatch, access to transit/services). Funding decisions are made based on geographic/needs-based, not the resident's race.**

As highlighted in the Boston Economic Equity and Inclusion Agenda (2016), economic equity is a pervasive issue that will continue to require concerted effort to address, including through City support for economic mobility and stabilization at the individual, family, and community levels. Housing is a critical component of equity, foundational in many senses.

The City is committed to advancing fair and equitable housing opportunities by using data-driven indicators of need to guide CPA investments, such as cost burden, displacement risk, historic underinvestment, and access to opportunity.



Residential Security Map of Boston (AKA "Redline Map") from 1938. Source: Segregation by Design: <https://www.segregationbydesign.com/boston/redlining>

Roxbury currently has the highest number of income-restricted housing units of any neighborhood in the City, at 10,912. The City has awarded over \$22 million in CPA funds for affordable housing projects in Roxbury. This represents the highest amount of CPA funds allocated to affordable housing in a single neighborhood. In contrast, the neighborhoods of Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Charlestown, Roslindale, South Boston, South End, and the West End, which, on average, have higher incomes, higher education levels, and less affordable housing, have received fewer CPA funds to create affordable housing.

The CPC acknowledges that various limitations and complexities impact the selection of sites for creating new affordable housing opportunities. The CPC also recognizes the importance of making housing with good access to public transit and is eager to continue funding innovative housing models, including artist housing, community land trusts, senior housing, and supportive housing.

The CPC will strive to continue funding the creation of affordable housing in all Boston neighborhoods, including areas with higher poverty levels and a larger existing stock of affordable housing, as well as areas with higher median incomes and a smaller existing stock of affordable housing. The CPC will also strive to fund new affordable housing that prioritizes local residents, helping income-eligible residents stay in their neighborhoods.

2. Preserve naturally occurring affordable housing, including historic properties, through acquisition and preservation programs.

Rapid and/or sudden increases in rent can be severely destabilizing for households and lead to displacement or even homelessness. There is dignity in having an affordable, decent home in a safe neighborhood. Housing stability not only helps individuals and families live quality lives but also benefits neighborhoods in countless ways. Housing provides stability, access to opportunity, and a foundation for community life—not just financial returns. In this sense, it is more than an investment vehicle. The City has several housing stability and anti-displacement initiatives and is considering additional measures to help prevent the displacement of Boston residents.

The CPC will continue to support the City's anti-displacement initiatives, notably Boston's Acquisition Opportunity Program. In 2018, the City established a new goal to assist its housing partners in acquiring 1,000 units of unrestricted but affordable market-rate housing and converting them into long-term income-restricted units, providing a cost-effective way to increase affordability while preventing displacement. Between 2019 and 2023, the City allocated \$14 million in CPA funds to support this program.

The CPC would consider supporting other CPA-eligible programs or initiatives, including income-eligible households, to help prevent displacement, such as through a preservation program for low-income homeowners.¹⁴ CPA funds can help support CPA-eligible programs led by the Office of Housing Stability.

3. Continue to use CPA funds to promote homeownership and enable household equity growth in neighborhoods where households earn below the Area Median Income (AMI).

The CPC is committed to helping more households become homeowners and will continue to do so by funding projects that create income-restricted homeownership units, provide down payment assistance, and offer mortgage programs, especially with resale provisions that enable homeowners to build equity.

4. Consider support for local rental assistance and relief programs to expand the limited reach of existing federal and state housing vouchers.

In addition to state and federal rental housing assistance programs, the City of Boston launched a Rental Relief Fund in 2020 in response to a sharp rise in housing instability during the COVID pandemic. The City secured \$3 million in seed funding from federal Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds and later obtained an additional \$5 million. The average rental arrears paid was \$4,200, covering 2.8 months of rent. Although

¹⁴ For example, a preservation program to help existing low-income homeowners could be modeled from the City of Cambridge's Affordable Housing Preservation Grants Program: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/permitsApplications/preservationgrants#:~:text=ELIGIBILITY%20REQUIREMENTS%3A,more%20than%20four%20rental%20units.>

there are various other funding sources for such rental relief and assistance, the CPC would consider supporting organizations that provide direct financial support at an appropriate level in the coming years to help expand the critical support rental relief and assistance can provide for Boston residents.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws (CPA Statute) defines “community housing” as “low- and moderate-income housing for individuals and families, including low- or moderate-income senior housing.” Low-income housing is affordable to households with annual incomes below 80 percent of the AMI, and moderate-income housing is affordable to households earning below 100 percent of the AMI. Furthermore, the CPA Statute defines “senior housing” as housing for persons 60 years old or over who also meet low- or moderate-income qualifications.

The CPA Statute allows expenditures for the acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of community housing, as well as the rehabilitation of community housing acquired or created through the CPA. Preservation, a permitted activity for community housing, is defined as the “protection of personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction, but not including maintenance.”

Rehabilitation, which is only permitted for housing created using CPA funds, is defined as “the remodeling, reconstruction, and making of extraordinary repairs, to...community housing to make such...community housing functional for its intended use, including, but not limited to, improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal, state or local building or access codes.”

The CPA Statute defines the term “support” as programs that provide grants, loans, rental assistance, security deposits, interest rate write-downs, or other forms of assistance directly to individuals and families eligible for community housing. The CPA Statute also allows CPA funds to be appropriated to a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust (MGL c.44 s.55C). Any CPA funds allocated to a Housing Trust must be used for CPA-eligible purposes, as clarified through the 2016 amendments.

CHAPTER 5: OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION



With CPA funding, the Hyde Park Branch of the Boston Public Library transformed an unused area of open public space into a passive park featuring artifacts of historical significance to the community. Source: JM Goldson

The CPA Legislation defines “open space” as including but not limited to “land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and saltwater marshes and other wetlands, ocean, river, stream, lake, and pond frontage, beaches, dunes, and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for recreational use.” It also defines “recreational use” as 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.”

CPA Funds can be used to:

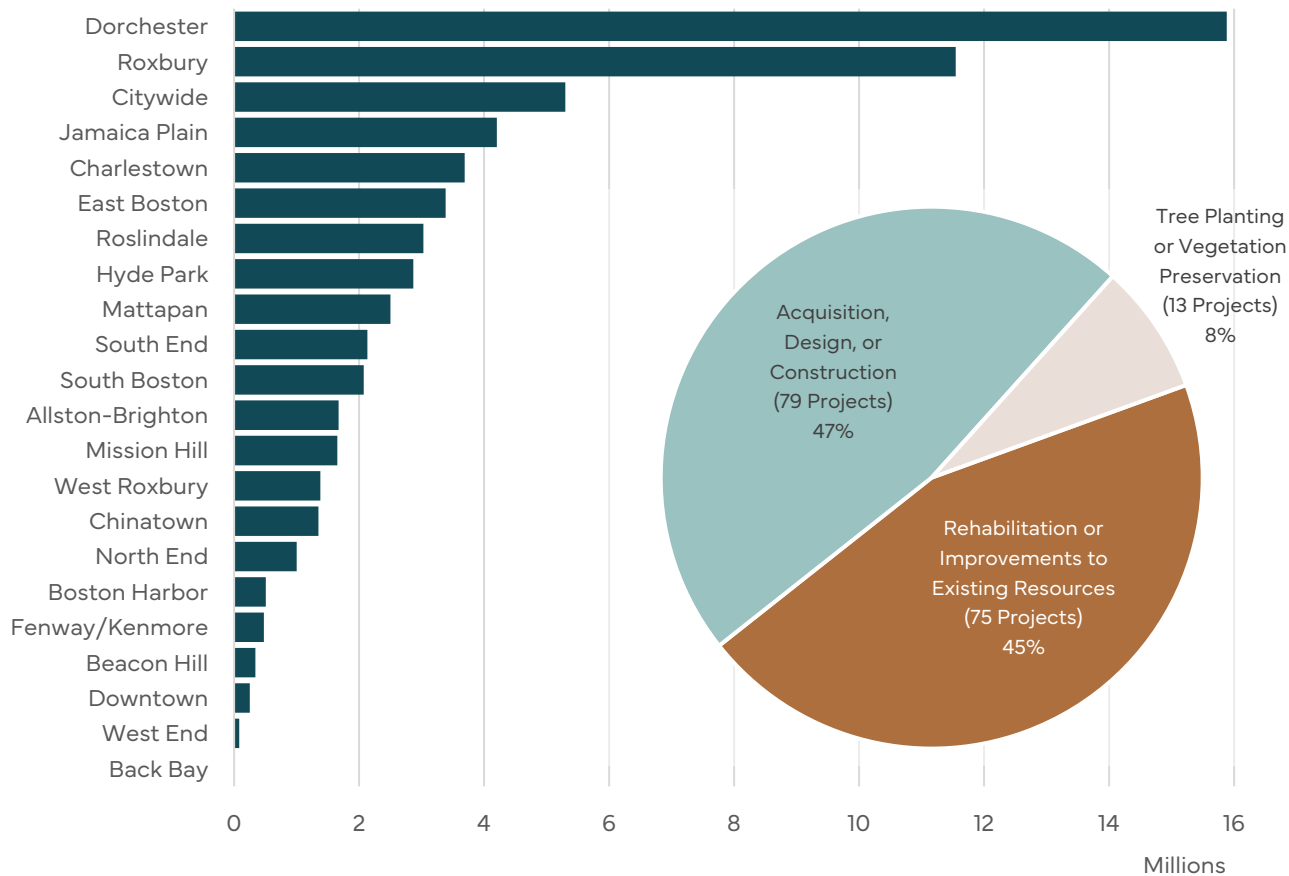
- Acquire or create open space or land for recreation.
- Preserve open space lands.
- Rehabilitate or restore open spaces acquired or created using CPA funds.
- Preserve, rehabilitate, and restore existing recreational lands.
- CPA funds cannot be used for indoor facilities or artificial turf.

NEEDS

Open space and outdoor recreation benefit both people and the environment. Research has shown that increased access to open space can help improve both mental and physical health. Additionally, increased green space and tree canopy can help the city's natural resources by reducing the urban heat island effect and managing stormwater runoff. Boston has a long history of prioritizing open space, with the Boston Common being the country's oldest public park. In addition to the Emerald Necklace, Charles River Esplanade, Malcolm X Park, and Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston residents enjoy hundreds of neighborhood parks, playgrounds, squares, courts, and fields that provide open space and recreation opportunities.

The CPA program has funded 167 open space and recreation projects totaling \$65,319,877. In addition to analyzing funding by neighborhood, the team examined the types of projects funded. The CPA has funded open space and recreation projects in three categories, shown in the chart below.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FUNDING BY NEIGHBORHOOD



Note: The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

The team examined access to open space and the amount of open space across neighborhoods to further analyze Boston's CPA open space and recreation projects. When examining access to open space, the team determined the percentage of the neighborhood area within a quarter mile (walking distance) of open space. When analyzing the amount of open space, the team determined the square feet of open space per capita in each neighborhood. It is essential to note that these metrics do not account for the quality or condition of the open space, but rather the quantity of open space and its location. The table below summarizes these statistics.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PROJECTS BY NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighborhood	Percent of Neighborhood within ¼ Mile of an Open Space	Square Feet of Open Space per Capita	Total CPA Open Space Projects
Boston	90.26%	334.85	167 (including 6 citywide)
Allston-Brighton	97.6%	90.02	5
Back Bay	100.0%	58.97	1
Beacon Hill	100.0%	367.01	4
Charlestown	96.6%	129.81	10
Chinatown	100.0%	2.03	4
Dorchester	95.7%	190.13	35
Downtown	100.0%	51.58	1
East Boston	67.4%	297.54	10
Fenway-Kenmore	99.9%	238.44	3
Hyde Park	93.6%	1,358.61	8
Jamaica Plain	93.5%	485.97	8
Mattapan	94.2%	1,142.09	9
Mission Hill	100.0%	70.58	3
North End	100.0%	55.65	1
Roslindale	92.1%	129.36	8
Roxbury	96.5%	455.59	26
South Boston	79.3%	213.98	12
South End	97.6%	33.99	6
West End	100.0%	110.16	2
West Roxbury	88.8%	1,205.32	5

Notes: 1) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026; 2) City of Boston Planning Department, "Boston in Context: Neighborhoods", January 2024, <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/45b1d52a-e762-42a4-b81d-d52072bfda61>, Accessed June 2026; 3) Boston Harbor projects and open spaces have been included in South Boston; 4) East Boston includes Airport area.

In addition to analyzing these statistics at the neighborhood level, the team analyzed the geographic distribution of projects and existing open spaces within neighborhoods to identify trends. The team also assessed the types of projects funded in each neighborhood to determine which projects

involve the acquisition of new parkland, which focus on improving existing amenities, and which have a mix of both.

The map below shows the distribution of open space and recreation projects funded by the CPA, alongside data showing the green space per capita in each census tract. Boston has numerous parks within its city limits, ensuring a well-distributed network of green spaces. In most neighborhoods, over 90 percent of the area has access to open space within a quarter mile.

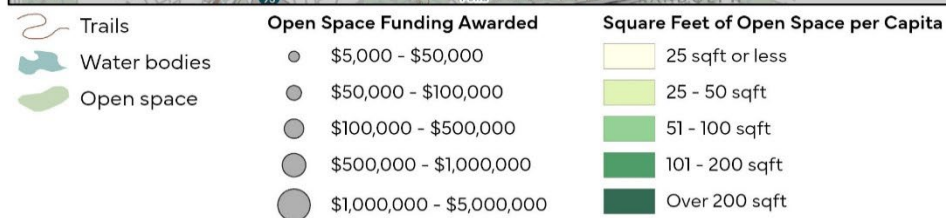
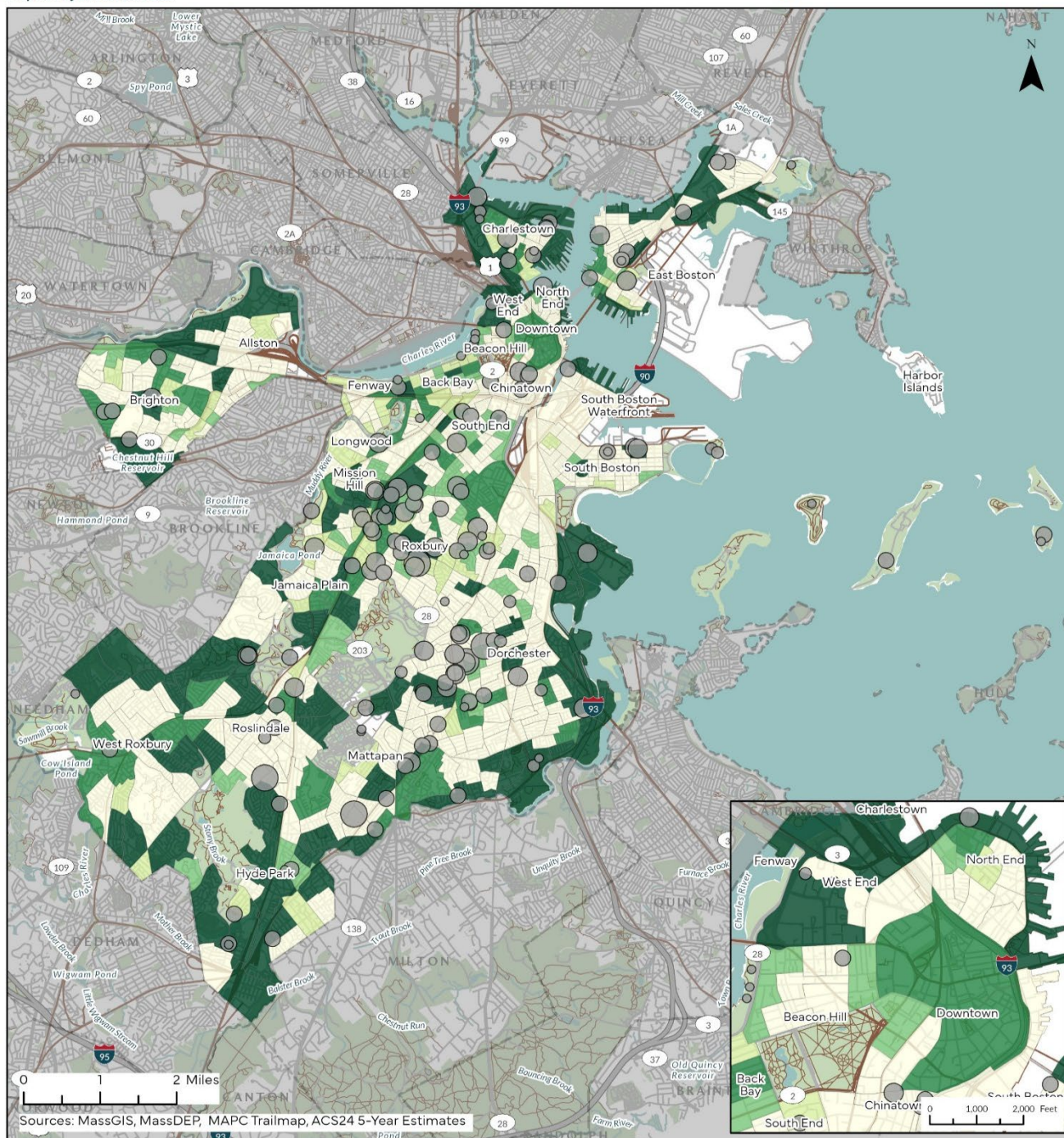
Most Boston neighborhoods have open spaces within walking distance (a quarter mile). The neighborhoods with less access to open spaces are East Boston, South Boston, and West Roxbury, where at least 10% of the area is not within walking distance of an open space.

The City awarded these neighborhoods 27 out of 161 CPA open space and recreation projects (16.8 percent). Sixteen of these projects were for new recreational spaces rather than improvements to existing parks, which helps increase access to open space for more people.

CITY OF BOSTON - OPEN SPACE CPA PROJECTS + OPEN SPACE PER CAPITA

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

JM GOLDSON



Note: Population denominator data comes from the American Community Survey 2020-2024 5-year estimates. Although the American Community Survey has population data for tracts corresponding to the Harbor Islands, Franklin Zoo, Arboretum, Forest Hills and Mount Hope Cemeteries, and Boston Logan International Airport, these areas were removed after corroborating with Census 2020 population data or because they are mainly open spaces.

In addition to the open space projects tied to specific locations and neighborhoods, the City has funded the Boston Open Space Acquisition Fund, which covers citywide costs associated with open-space land acquisition. This fund will work to implement the City's Open Space and Recreation Plan goal of providing additional open space throughout Boston. The open space acquired through the fund will be permanently protected and publicly accessible.

A wide range of projects and programs received grants ranging from \$6,000 to \$1.5 million. The following sample of grant awards offers some perspective on how CPA funds have been allocated to address Boston’s open space, park, and recreation needs.

Citywide	\$1 million	Open Space Acquisition
Allston-Brighton	\$300,000	Shore and woods restoration
Back Bay	\$250,000	Capital improvements to Statler Park (private funding will be used to create a memorial to the Cocoanut Grove fire victims)
Hyde Park	\$1.5 million	Restore the elementary school yard
Roxbury	\$400,000	New public space inspired by Olmsted and African-American garden traditions
South End	\$250,000	Create Allan Rohan Crite Park, dedicated to the renowned African American artist

Note: The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2025.



A vacant parcel in Mattapan was converted into an urban farm—known as Astoria Farm—for education and the cultivation of fresh, local produce. Source: JM Goldson

GOALS

- 1. Promote climate equity and resilience by supporting open space and recreation initiatives, including expanding the tree canopy, that help mitigate the effects of climate change for Boston residents by prioritizing neighborhoods with high climate-risk exposure (heat, flooding, stormwater), limited access to quality open space, and related health vulnerabilities.**

The City of Boston’s commitment to environmental action and climate justice is vital as the City works to overcome many challenges on its way to carbon neutrality and mitigating the effects of climate change for all Boston residents, as described in the FY21 Boston Climate Action Report, the Urban Forest Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the Boston Heat Resilience Solutions Report. As a coastal city, the city is already experiencing the effects of rising sea levels, flooding, and extreme heat, with elevated risk for residents in historically underserved and redlined neighborhoods. Heat-vulnerable focus areas in Boston are Chinatown-Leather District, Dorchester, East Boston, Mattapan, and Roxbury.

As the Boston Heat Resilience Plan describes, “Boston’s green spaces and outdoor spaces are critical to the City’s network of cooling resources. Trees and outdoor green spaces are among the most effective nature-based heat mitigation strategies.”¹⁵

CPA-eligible initiatives to promote climate equity could include expanding Boston’s urban tree canopy, including in public parks, preparing outdoor public recreation facilities for climate changes, acquiring private property to protect the City’s urban wilds, wetlands, and coastal areas and flood zones, and following the Parcel Priority Plan to support the City’s Open Space and Recreation Plan’s vision of a comprehensive park system and for protective infrastructure.

- 2. Promote healthy local food access in historically underserved Boston neighborhoods, such as through funding for community gardens, urban agriculture properties, and community farms.**

Through CPA-eligible open space and recreation projects, the CPC will strive to recommend CPA funds to create open space and recreation land and to promote healthy food access, particularly in historically underserved neighborhoods.

As described in the Open Space & Recreation Plan: *“Boston has 175 community gardens located in 11 Boston neighborhoods. . . Community gardens are vital focal points in many Boston neighborhoods and are unique among the city’s open spaces. Most began and*

¹⁵ City of Boston, *Heat Resilience Solutions for Boston* (2022), https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2022/04/04212022_Boston%20Heat%20Resilience%20Plan_highres-with%20Appendix%20%281%29.pdf, p. 232

continue as food-producing plots used by people of limited means, but have also grown to serve as important social and educational centers for gardeners, their families, and neighbors.”

The City allocated \$4.2 million to fund not-for-profit community gardens in Charlestown, Dorchester, East Boston, Mattapan, Mission Hill, Roslindale, and Roxbury between 2018 and 2026. These projects are primarily driven by community members and groups, creating valuable assets for neighborhoods.

3. Support larger City efforts to create more public open space in historically underserved neighborhoods to improve health outcomes by closing documented park-access and recreation gaps.

As described in the Boston Heat Resilience Plan: “Parks play critical roles in resident health and wellbeing, social connections, ecological health, and resilience, including cooler communities.” The City aims to enhance and enlarge Boston’s network of resilient community parks. It is transforming the Parcel Priority Plan to a long-term program called Planning for Future Parks, emphasizing permanent protection and public access, and expanding park access in densely populated city neighborhoods. This effort aims to acquire and protect new parklands and natural areas that fill gaps in existing spaces.

BPRD’s Open Space Acquisition Program, which CPA funds supported with \$5.2 million between 2021 and 2026, enables the City to negotiate land purchases for future open spaces. The CPC anticipates continued support for this critical initiative as the Parks Department effectively implements initial support.

4. Support larger City efforts to rehabilitate existing parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, greenways, and schoolyards in historically underserved neighborhoods where condition, accessibility, or environmental/health indicators show significant need.

The City’s Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) outlines several CPA-eligible priorities for improving existing parks based on public input, resource analysis, and neighborhood demographic characteristics. Among the OSRP’s objectives is to revitalize and renovate parks in accordance with facility life cycles and to maintain Boston parks at the highest level feasible. CPA-eligible projects to implement these objectives include rehabilitating basic infrastructure, such as paths, drainage systems, site furnishings, and soil, to maintain parks in consistently good to excellent condition and enhance universal access to parks.

Access to high-quality parks, schoolyards, and open spaces is crucial for promoting health equity among all Boston residents. The CPC will strive to support eligible projects that preserve and rehabilitate Boston’s parks, schoolyards, and open spaces in the city’s historically underserved neighborhoods, aligning with the City’s goals for open space and recreation.

5. Support larger City efforts to promote the creation of greenways that connect neighborhoods, provide park and recreation amenities, and support multimodal recreational infrastructure, including biking and walking.

This goal connects the City's mobility, open space, and recreation priorities across several citywide plans. The City's mobility plan, *Go Boston 2030*, seeks to "make Boston's neighborhoods interconnected for all modes of travel"¹⁶, while the City's Comprehensive Plan, *Imagine Boston 2030*,¹⁷ identifies the need to create an extended network of green spaces across the City, particularly in underserved neighborhoods.

These priorities converge in the Boston Department of Transportation's Boston Green Links, a citywide initiative that connects Boston residents in every neighborhood to the city's greenway network. Green links are missing bike-and-pedestrian connections that, when completed, will create a seamless network of greenway paths connecting every neighborhood. In addition to increasing access to green, open spaces, Green Links envisions improved mobility, accessibility, and safety for all active transportation modes.

In 2019, the City allocated \$900,000 in CPA funds for two of these projects: the Charlesgate Park Transformation in Fenway-Kenmore and the Arboretum Path in Roslindale. In addition, in 2021 and 2023, the City allocated \$750,000 in CPA funds to the Jackson Square Redevelopment Greenway. CPA funds could support the implementation and completion of other greenways, such as the Neponset and Fairmount Greenways, as well as green links, including the proposed Columbia Road Green Link.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The CPA defines the term "open space" as including, but not limited to, land deemed necessary to protect existing and future wellfields, aquifers, and recharge areas, as well as marshes, wetlands, watershed lands, agricultural lands, lake and pond frontage, beaches, and scenic vistas. The CPA statute allows the use of CPA funds to acquire, create, and preserve open space. Additionally, the CPA statute provides for the rehabilitation/restoration of open space acquired or created with CPA funds. Per MGL c.44B s.5(f), CPA funds may not be used to acquire real property or interest for a price exceeding the property's value (as determined by methods customarily accepted by the appraisal profession).

Following the CPA statute (MGL c.44B s.12(a) and (b)), an acquisition of real property is required to be owned by the municipality and to be bound by a permanent restriction. Any open-space acquisitions by the Town using CPA funds will require the execution of a permanent restriction benefiting a nonprofit organization, charitable corporation, or foundation and complying with the requirements

¹⁶ City of Boston, *Go Boston 2030* (2017), https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/document_files/2017/03/go_boston_2030_-_6_boston_in_2030_spreads.pdf, p. 62

¹⁷ City of Boston, *Imagine Boston 2030* (2018), https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/embed/file/2018-06/imagine20boston202030_pages2.pdf

of MGL c. 184. In addition, CPA funds may be appropriated to pay a nonprofit organization to hold, monitor, and enforce the deed restriction on the property (sometimes called a “stewardship fee”).

The CPA defines recreational use as including, but not limited to, land use for community gardens, noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground, or athletic field. The definition goes on to prohibit “. . . horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium, or similar structure.”

According to the July 2012 amendments, the CPA statute permits the use of CPA funds for the acquisition, creation, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of land for recreational purposes. Note that the 2012 amendments allow “rehabilitation,” whereas previously, it only allowed recreational land created through the CPA. This amendment would enable existing parks and playgrounds to be rehabilitated with upgraded and new facilities and amenities. Maintenance costs are not eligible for CPA funds. In addition, the acquisition of artificial turf for athletic fields is expressly prohibited in Section 5(b)(2).

CHAPTER 6: HISTORIC PRESERVATION



CPA funds were used to complete the restoration of the historic 1872 Dr. Marie E. Zakrzewska Building, which has served as an inpatient substance abuse disorder treatment center for men. Source: buildingsofnewengland.com

The CPA Legislation defines “historic resources” as “a building, structure, vessel, real property, document or artifact that is listed 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.” If a resource is listed on the state register of historic places, designation by the local historic commission is not required for eligibility. CPA Funds can be used to acquire, preserve, rehabilitate, or restore historic resources.

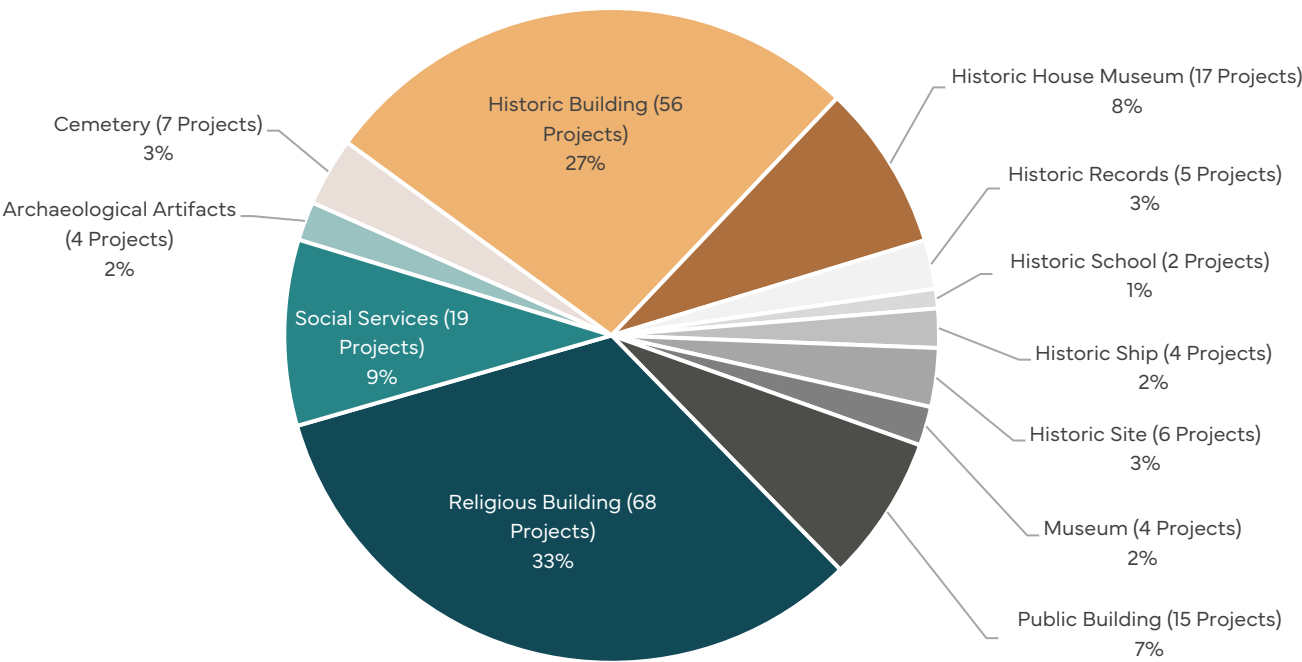
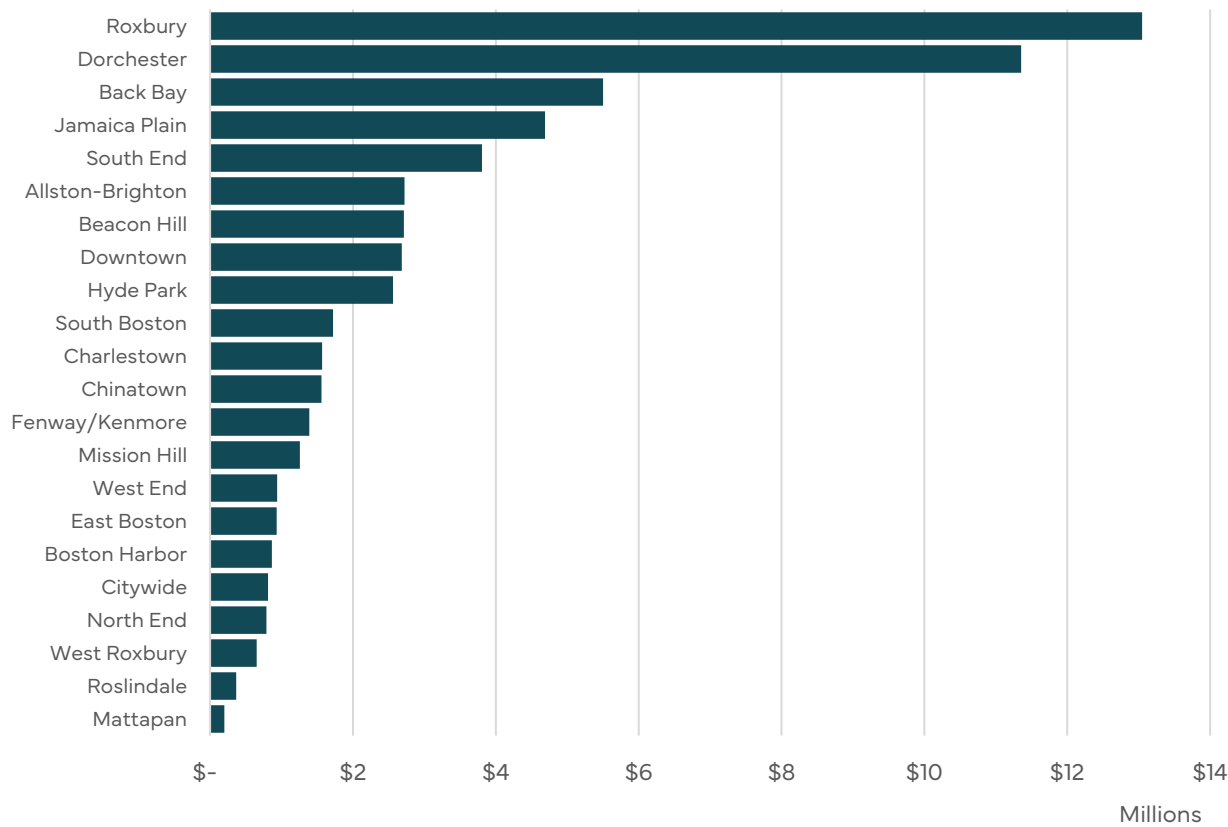
NEEDS

Boston is nationally recognized as the site of several significant events and movements that have shaped the nation's future. Among these are the Abolition movement, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the Battle of Bunker Hill. Aside from these places of national historic importance, Boston is also home to numerous historic architectural landmarks. Boston has a rich native history, was a key player in women's history, significantly advancing women in medicine, and was an essential place for the civil rights movement. Today, the City is greatly influenced by immigrant populations that have made Boston home for generations. Preserving historic sites, buildings, museums, monuments, and other cultural landmarks is extremely important to Boston's cultural heritage and significance. The Community Preservation Plan's goals enable the program to fund historic preservation projects that preserve and activate historic sites and buildings in innovative ways, bringing the community together while celebrating and protecting its history.

The City of Boston has not yet created a comprehensive plan with a city-wide historic preservation vision and thorough needs documentation. This type of effort would be within the purview of the City's new Office of Historic Preservation. The Office of Historic Preservation staff has identified a citywide survey and preservation plan that will prioritize the identification and documentation of historic resources across all Boston neighborhoods as the best way to ensure an equitable distribution of CPA funding.

The CPA program has funded 207 historic preservation projects totaling \$62,120,377. In addition to analyzing funding by neighborhood, the team examined the types of resources funded, as illustrated in the pie chart. Most of these buildings, once historic homes and schools, are now owned by nonprofits, community organizations, and museums, or serve as affordable housing for the community. While the CPA program generally excludes private residences, a recent pilot initiative to rehabilitate a historic single-family home in Roxbury demonstrated that such funding is legally permissible under the statute. CPA Staff are now evaluating lessons learned from this project for potential future application rounds.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUNDING BY NEIGHBORHOOD



Note: The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026.

In each neighborhood, the project team also reviewed the historic preservation projects to understand the history and significance of the buildings and the work being done to them. The team primarily focused on projects related to historically marginalized populations. To know where CPA projects were funded, the team analyzed project locations compared to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) Historic Places¹⁸, the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) Landmarks, and the BLC Historic Districts. This table summarizes the distribution of this overlap across Boston's neighborhoods compared to the total number of CPA historic preservation projects.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECTS BY NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighborhood	CPA Historic Preservation Projects in MHC Historic Areas	CPA Historic Preservation Projects in BLC Landmarks	CPA Historic Preservation Projects in BLC Historic Districts	Total CPA Historic Preservation Projects
Boston	93	14	48	207 (including 5 citywide)
Allston-Brighton	6	1	2	7
Back Bay	19	4	16	19
Beacon Hill	11	0	11	11
Charlestown	3	0	0	9
Chinatown	0	0	0	7
Dorchester	7	1	0	38
Downtown	3	3	0	8
East Boston	0	0	0	4
Fenway-Kenmore	1	1	0	4
Hyde Park	0	0	0	7
Jamaica Plain	10	1	0	17
Mattapan	0	0	0	1
Mission Hill	1	1	0	2
North End	0	0	0	4
Roslindale	0	0	0	1
Roxbury	23	1	0	33
South Boston	4	0	4	10
South End	11	0	11	12
West End	4	0	4	5
West Roxbury	1	1	0	3

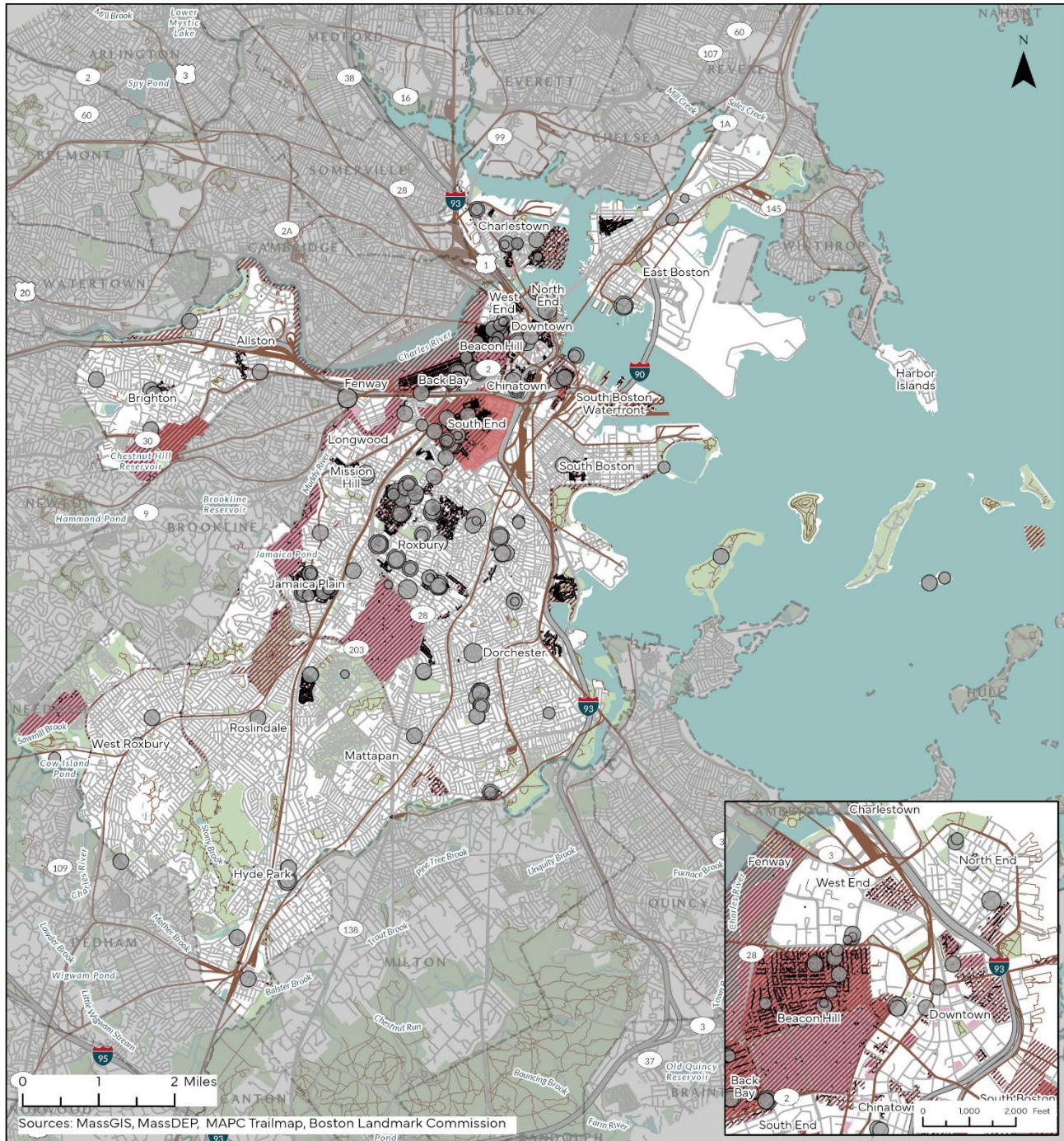
Note: 1) The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2026; 2) Some MHC and BLC Areas overlap; 3) Boston Harbor projects and open spaces have been included in South Boston.

The following map illustrates the distribution of historic preservation projects funded by the CPA, alongside data layers that display historical information. Some parts of the city have been identified and documented as having more historic resources. Because this information is incomplete, no priority is assumed for these already designated areas and resources.

¹⁸ The CPA allows funding for projects that are not listed on the State Register of Historic Places if the local Historic Commission determines that there is local historic significance. Note: The mapping used contains out-of-date information and other inaccuracies in the data at the state level.

CITY OF BOSTON - HISTORIC PRESERVATION CPA PROJECTS + HISTORICAL RESOURCES
Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

JM GOLDSON



Eight neighborhoods (Chinatown, Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Mattapan, Mission Hill, Roslindale, and Roxbury) have populations that are over 50 percent BIPOC¹⁹. These neighborhoods make up 47.4 percent of Boston's total population. Ninety-three (93) of 207 historic preservation projects (44.9 percent) were done in these neighborhoods.

Several projects related to the history and culture of BIPOC residents were implemented in neighborhoods with a higher proportion of BIPOC residents. These projects included preservation projects on several Black churches, the National Center of Afro-American Artists, and a Latino social services organization.

The City has funded other projects for historic preservation in Boston that are directly related to historically marginalized populations in neighborhoods that have a smaller proportion of BIPOC residents as well. Examples include grant funding for masonry repair at the League of Women for Community Service (The League) in the South End. The League is exceptionally significant due to its role in the Underground Railroad and its association with Coretta Scott King. In 1920, it became the headquarters for the League, a pioneering Black women's organization that promoted Black cultural values and engaged with social issues. Another example is the Union United Methodist Church, for which the City awarded funds to complete accessibility features for its community food pantry and meeting space. Union United Methodist Church is the oldest African American United Methodist Church in New England, with a congregation that was first formed in 1796.



Union United Methodist Church (South End) received CPA funds to finish building a handicap accessibility entrance for the church's well-used community space. Source: JM Goldson

¹⁹ City of Boston Planning Department, "Boston in Context: Neighborhoods", January 2024, <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/45b1d52a-e762-42a4-b81d-d52072bfda61>, Accessed July 2025.

The following sample of Historic Preservation grant awards provides some perspective on how CPA funds have been awarded to address multiple CPA Plan goals.

Charlestown	\$26,000	Restoration work at the Constitution Museum to address sea level rise.
Allston- Brighton	\$200,000	Adaptive restoration of Charles River Speedway buildings for dining, retail, and other facilities. (Built 1899)
Beacon Hill	\$340,000	Restoration of a former school building for 42 affordable housing units for individuals and families. (Built 1910)
Boston Harbor	\$365,000	Masonry repair for Salah Hall on Thompson Island to continue STEM education. (Built 1909)
Charlestown	\$400,000	Roof restoration of a historic school that provides child and senior care. (Built 1894)
Dorchester	\$500,000	Pierce Building restoration as a cornerstone for the Arts and Innovation District (Built 1804)
Jamaica Plain	\$200,000	Roof restoration for Prosperity Center, which provides small business services, job training, ESC classes, and other programs.
	\$200,000	Restore the foundation of Footlight Club, the country's oldest community theater. (Built 1831)
Roxbury	\$850,000	Window restoration for the Dimock Community Health Center, which offers a residential recovery program that has played a significant role in the history of women in medicine and serves as both a teaching and a practicing hospital.
South End	\$400,000	Masonry repair for the League of Women for Community Service, a building of major importance to the underground railroad, home of Coretta Scott King, a pioneering Black women's organization. (Built 1857)

Note: The table above is based on data provided by the City in June 2025.



The USS Constitution Museum in Charlestown received CPA funds to relocate the museum's sprinkler system equipment. Source; JM Goldson

GOALS

1. **Support historic preservation projects that help address affordable housing needs.**

Despite its reputation as an avenue for gentrification, historic preservation can be instrumental in building community and supporting socioeconomically and ethnically diverse neighborhoods. It can also be a beneficial policy intervention to help slow down neighborhood change, particularly when paired with affordable housing initiatives.

Recognizing the critical need for more affordable housing to help address Boston's housing crisis, the CPC will favor historic preservation projects that contribute to addressing the City's affordable housing needs. CPA-eligible opportunities could support the City's anti-displacement initiatives by combining these purposes into projects, such as the preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), which refers to unsubsidized, federally funded rental properties. NOAH properties are typically older, with relatively low rents compared to the regional housing market, and affordable to low- and moderate-income households. These adaptive reuse projects convert historic buildings, such as former school buildings or religious structures, into affordable housing and programs, including the Cambridge Historical Commission's preservation grants for low-income homeowners.

2. **Support historic preservation projects that document, interpret, and increase public access to underrepresented histories in Boston based on the cultural significance of the resource and its demonstrated public benefit.**

Historic preservation can be a tool to help Boston build a more inclusive city. Historic resources are not just museums or buildings stuck in time. They are living resources that contribute to their neighborhoods and help us understand who we are and where we came from. Preserved historic resources are living records that tell stories and help communities nurture a sense of pride in place and authentic identity.

When asked which types of historic preservation projects are most important, preserving historic properties that honor historically marginalized populations received the highest rating (67.9 percent selected "very important").

3. **Further preservation and rehabilitation of properties that provide public access or that provide environmental, economic, and/or social benefits.**

The CPC will continue to prioritize historic preservation projects that provide public access or other demonstrably impactful, direct public benefits (including affordable housing, social services, and other community benefits). Providing public benefits is essential for legal reasons (i.e., to comply with the Anti-Aid Amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution) and as a policy to direct the use of CPA funds to promote the greatest public good through direct, positive community impacts.

Preserving irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest. Maintaining a legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic, and energy benefits will enrich future generations.

Economic benefits: Older buildings are constructed using higher-quality materials. Demolition wastes rare-quality building materials such as chestnut and heart pine. Newer buildings have a shorter life expectancy, whereas many older buildings were built to last. Retaining historic buildings and improving them to meet modern codes and requirements can make economic sense.

Rehabilitating old buildings not only preserves an area's character but can also help attract investment and cultural tourism if the structures are historically significant. For example, a historic but abandoned industrial building could be transformed into a small business incubator or a mixed-use development, giving the building and the entire neighborhood new life.

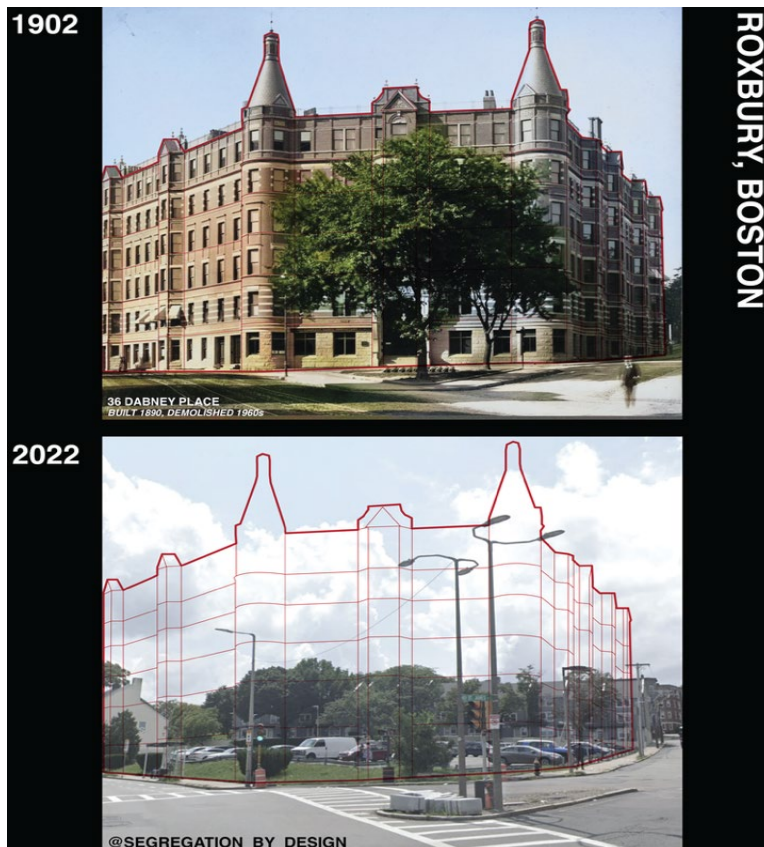
Aesthetic importance: When the public can visually access older buildings, often made with unique artisan handwork using valuable materials such as tile, marble, or old brick for decorative detailing, the local area's identity and distinctive character are recognized. People often want to linger in and around old buildings, which are typically more aesthetically appealing than modern ones. An added benefit to retaining old buildings is that historic artistry methods are preserved for study.

Environmental considerations: Recycling has become widely understood, and preserving old buildings is a form of recycling on a larger scale. Repairing and reusing existing buildings uses embodied carbon and material resources more efficiently, reducing waste and carbon emissions. Razing structures releases toxins and pollutants into the environment.

4. Protect privately owned properties that are threatened by demolition or demolition by neglect and will provide a demonstrated public purpose.

When historic resources are demolished, they are permanently lost, leaving a void and missed opportunities to continue contributing to the community's good. Privately owned historic resources can be protected by acquiring a fee interest or Preservation Restrictions to preserve the resource permanently.

While protecting threatened resources can provide numerous public benefits, the practicality of such an initiative can be challenging, given how quickly the real estate market operates compared to the CPA program's annual funding cycle. However, the CPC will consider supporting such initiatives if opportunities arise that can appropriately demonstrate public benefits (see goal 3) resulting from preservation.



Nubian Square – the historic Dabney Place, which was demolished in the 1960s, is now home to a parking lot.
Source: Segregation by Design:
<https://www.segregationbydesign.com/boston/roxbury>

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The CPA as amended in July 2012, defines a historic resource as “a building, structure, vessel, real property, document, or artifact that is listed on the State Register of Historic Places or has been determined by the Boston Landmarks Commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of a city or town.” CPA funds can be used for the “acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources.”

Within the definition of “rehabilitation,” CPA can fund improvements to make historic resources functional for their intended use, including those that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other building or accessibility codes. In addition, CPA funds may be used to acquire historic buildings subject to preservation restrictions.

All rehabilitation work concerning historic resources must comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the US Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (codified in 36 C.F.R. Part 68).

CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM OPERATIONS

The City has successfully run the Boston CPA program since 2017, allocating over \$261 million to affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space and recreation projects. The program has grown in the number of applications, the number of funded projects, and the amount of funding. In 2018, the program awarded 34 projects (3 affordable housing, 16 historic preservation, and 15 open space and recreation) totaling over \$8 million in CPA funds. So far, in 2026, the program has awarded 45 projects (6 affordable housing, 23 historic preservation, and 16 open space and recreation) totaling over \$32.6 million in CPA funds.

The Boston CPA program has served a critical and growing need to address the City's affordable housing, open space, and recreation, as well as historic preservation needs, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. Within eight years, the CPA program has funded projects five times as many as it did when it started.

Along with the program's growth, the oversight and management of needs for existing projects have grown. At the time of this writing, 281 projects and 6 programs have been completed. The CPA Office staff are managing 74 active projects and 1 active program, with 78 additional projects that have been awarded but have not yet commenced.

The program staff has significant responsibilities across all aspects of the CPA program, including generating innovative ideas in all neighborhoods, encouraging excellent applications that align with the program's goals, supporting the CPC's evaluation and recommendation process, and executing and managing grants. The CPA office currently employs eight full-time staff members.

To ensure the Boston CPA program is as effective as possible in promoting this plan's goals and creating the best outcomes for the people of Boston, this chapter provides recommendations for program operations, including:

1. Increasing staffing capacity and a strategic plan for department organization.
2. Adopting a standard set of metrics to measure the program's performance.
3. Broadening inclusive community engagement.
4. Refining the application evaluation process.

GOAL 1. INCREASING STAFFING CAPACITY AND A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

Strengthening the program’s staffing capacity has been a key goal, and significant progress has been made. A program of this size and complexity requires strategic talent expansion in three critical areas: 1) community engagement and communications, 2) grant compliance, and 3) project management.

The CPA Director has successfully advanced this goal by increasing the team's alignment with the strategic staffing plan. New hires have strengthened the program's capacity in core functions and positioned it for continued success.

On August 3, 2026, a new Open Space and Recreation Manager began working at the CPA office. Looking ahead, **the CPA office plans to hire a part-time bilingual staff member.** Depending on future needs and the organizational structure, the CPA Office will also assess whether an additional affordable housing compliance-monitoring role is warranted to support project compliance and evaluation.



GOAL 2. ADOPTING A STANDARD SET OF METRICS TO MEASURE THE PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE

This plan lays out essential goals for the CPA program. Goals are conditions to aim for, helping the CPA program deliver the greatest benefit to Bostonians. Goals are often measurable. Where possible, track metrics to support City officials, the broader Boston community, and the CPC in understanding and assessing the CPA program's performance in achieving the goals outlined in this plan.

For all applications, consider adding requirements that applicants provide specific metric information and verify it with a project completion report. Here are a few criteria to consider when requesting:

- Universal metrics (number of people served).
- Identifying and defining neighborhood needs.
- Identify the specific populations served by the project.
- Identify other funds leveraged (both public and private).

Note: The CPC should utilize the latest available mapping and other data to analyze and evaluate project applications. Data such as tree canopy coverage, urban heat island effects, and other relevant information are regularly updated by City Departments. They should be provided to the CPC as updates become available.

TRACK PERFORMANCE TOWARD OVERALL CPA GOALS

Measurable Overall Goals:

1. **Prioritize CPA funding for projects that further equity by addressing needs in the City's historically underserved neighborhoods and marginalized populations.**
 - a. **Potential Metric to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:** a percent of total projects or total funding to be allocated to neighborhoods or sub-neighborhoods with at least one of the following characteristics:
 - i. Over 65 percent of Households earn below the AMI.
 - ii. Over 40 percent of residents are living below the poverty line.
 - iii. Fifteen percent or more of Boston residents have a Language Access Need.
2. **Prioritize CPA funding for projects that directly advance Boston's climate resilience and sustainability²⁰.**
 - a. **Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. Plant a certain number of trees annually (or a certain number over 5 years).
 - ii. Convert a certain number of acres of impervious surfaces to vegetated open space annually (or a certain number over 5 years).

²⁰ It will be important to align any metrics regarding climate resilience and sustainability with the Urban Forest Plan and Heat Resilience Plan.

- iii. A certain percentage of affordable housing and historic preservation projects result in net-zero-carbon properties.
- iv. A certain number of miles of new bike/pedestrian paths annually (or a certain number of miles over 5 years).
- v. A certain percentage of projects promote diversity of flora and fauna.
- vi. A certain percentage of projects or of total funding promotes improved coastal resilience.

TRACK PERFORMANCE TOWARD AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Measurable Affordable Housing Goals

1. **Prioritize CPA funds to promote homeownership and enable household equity growth.**
 - a. **Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain number of first-time homebuyer households assisted annually, or a certain number of affordable homeownership units created (or a certain number over 5 years).
2. **Create new affordable housing units in all Boston neighborhoods, including areas with higher median household income, to help provide greater opportunities, mobility, and choice while preventing people from being priced out of their current neighborhoods.**
 - a. **Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain number of new affordable units in each Boston neighborhood over 5 years – perhaps create a target for each neighborhood based on the percentage of total affordable housing units.
3. **Preserve naturally occurring affordable housing through acquisition and preservation programs.**
 - a. **Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain number of preserved units annually (or a certain number over 5 years).

TRACK PERFORMANCE TOWARD OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Measurable Open Space and Recreation Goals:

1. **Promote climate equity and resilience by supporting open space and recreation initiatives in neighborhoods with high climate-risk exposure, limited access to quality open space, and related health vulnerabilities.**
 - a. **Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain number of acres of open space protected, restored, or improved in high-need neighborhoods annually (or over 5 years).
 - ii. A certain number of open space and recreation projects funded and completed in neighborhoods with high climate-risk exposure and/or documented environmental and health vulnerabilities.
2. **Expand access to quality parks, recreation, and healthy local food opportunities in historically underserved neighborhoods.**

- a. Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain number of parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, schoolyards, community gardens, urban agriculture properties, or other recreational/open-space facilities created or improved annually (or over 5 years).
 - ii. A certain number of projects that close documented gaps in access to parks, recreation, or healthy local food opportunities in historically underserved neighborhoods.
- 3. Support the creation and improvement of greenways and other open-space connections that increase neighborhood connectivity and opportunities for walking, biking, and recreation.**
 - a. Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain number of miles of trails, pathways, or greenways created, restored, or enhanced over 5 years.
 - ii. A certain number of projects that improve community access, accessibility, or connectivity to parks, greenways, and recreational opportunities.

TRACK PERFORMANCE TOWARD HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Measurable Historic Preservation Goals

- 1. Support historic preservation projects that help address affordable housing needs.**
 - a. Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain percentage of historic preservation projects funded create or preserve affordable housing.
- 2. Support historic preservation projects that document, interpret, and increase public access to underrepresented histories in Boston based on the cultural significance of the resource and its demonstrated public benefit.**
 - a. Potential Metrics to Measure Level of Goal Attainment:**
 - i. A certain percentage of historic preservation projects funded by the city increases public access to the historical contributions of Boston's historically marginalized populations.

To support the CPC's deliberation and evaluation of funding applications, provide baseline documentation and mapping for each metric, and an updated report tracking progress toward these measurable goals as part of the CPA staff recommendation materials for each funding round. Provide these materials to the Mayor and City Council to support the CPC's recommendations.

GOAL 3. BROADENING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Continue to Implement and Maintain an Annual Outreach Plan

Since this plan was first adopted, CPA staff have diligently expanded and refined their annual outreach planning process. The team now implements a yearly calendar of CPA-led outreach sessions, including meet-and-greets, information sessions, and workshops, held in collaboration with City Councilors and at city-run events such as the Mayor’s Coffee Hours and the Civic Summit.

CPA staff continue to expand neighborhood-specific outreach through in-person sessions, targeted engagement in underrepresented neighborhoods, and multilingual materials and interpretation services to enhance accessibility. The team also maintains an active email list, collaborates with neighborhood associations and cultural groups, and, during Spring and Summer 2026, began hosting outreach events at completed CPA project sites to showcase their impact, a practice they plan to continue.

By maintaining this plan annually and tracking progress, CPA staff continue to prioritize resources effectively, partner with civic and neighborhood organizations, and use participation and demographic metrics to ensure equitable and accountable engagement.

Continue to Explore Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations to Support Community-Initiated Projects

Since the adoption of the plan, CPA staff have made substantial progress building partnerships with non-profit organizations to strengthen community-led projects. They have developed standard processes for small community groups proposing projects on City agency-owned property, giving neighborhood groups a voice while leveraging the long-term maintenance capacity of City agencies or partner organizations.

The CPA Program has also collaborated with neighborhood-based organizations with active volunteer bases to ensure long-term stewardship and community involvement. Staff continues to work with non-profits that have strong community relationships and inspire local engagement to sustain completed projects.

Continue to Explore Small Grants Initiatives to Support and Encourage Community-Led Initiatives

CPA staff continue to consider developing small grants or pilot initiatives to strengthen community-led projects. Building on earlier discussions, the team has identified the potential for mini-grants that support project design and smaller-scale work. While a dedicated program has not yet launched at the time of this writing, staff maintain this as a long-term goal, contingent on staffing levels and funding availability. As outreach and partnerships continue to deepen, CPA staff remain positioned to pilot such a program when capacity allows.

Continue to Create and Refine a System to Provide Efficient and Increased 1:1 Technical Assistance

Since this plan was first adopted, CPA staff have made significant strides in technical assistance. Three new full-time roles have significantly increased the program's capacity to provide individualized support. Staff now routinely offer one-on-one calls, site visits, and monthly check-ins with applicants before and after grant awards.

The office has streamlined scheduling through online tools like Calendly, allowing applicants to self-book meetings and access support more efficiently. Technical resources and instructions have been enhanced, with plans to add an FAQ section to the CPA website and to expand multilingual support. These improvements have made the program more accessible, efficient, and welcoming to applicants, particularly those without prior experience navigating city grant programs.

Continue to Explore Adopting a New System of Project Coordination and Communication with Neighborhood Stakeholders

Since the adoption of the original plan, the CPA office has piloted new processes to improve coordination between community groups and property-owning agencies.²¹

The CPA office has also introduced a new application guidance document for applicants seeking funding for projects on City-owned land, to ensure clear expectations, transparency, and early coordination. Staff continues to explore additional opportunities, such as requiring regular meetings or check-ins at project milestones, to enhance collaboration and ensure community voices remain central throughout project implementation.

²¹ https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JPeyu5t8QTGVqhwc2i9OMHL2TQLB_nJh/edit?tab=t.0

GOAL 4. REFINING THE APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCESS

Systematize the Evaluation Process and Tools

Consider Adjustments to the Evaluation Process

In previous years, the CPA staff distributed all eligible and complete applications to CPC members for review before public deliberations. The CPA staff conducts site visits and thoroughly evaluates each application, preparing funding recommendations for the CPC's consideration. The Staff then presents these recommendations to the CPC for discussion. Currently, the CPC simplifies this process by dividing applications into three categories:

1. High: applications that address this plan's goals at a high level and that both the CPA staff and CPC members (through their evaluation tool, discussed below) identify as high priorities for funding
2. Low: applications that do not address this plan's goals adequately, and both the CPA staff and CPC members identify as low priorities for funding
3. Middle: applications between high and low priority or have mixed evaluations.

These groupings can help the CPC focus its deliberations on the applications in the middle group, where they are most helpful. If there is sufficient funding, high-priority applications can be approved with minimal discussion, and low-priority applications can be disapproved without much debate.

The middle group of applications, however, will require thoughtful discussion. The CPA staff's role would be to identify issues, including the pros and cons of the applications in the middle group, and to facilitate CPC discussion over one or more public meetings. Still, the Staff would not make recommendations for this group. After discussion and consideration, the CPC would vote on the individual applications in this middle group to determine which to recommend for funding, in addition to the high-priority group.

Consider Adjustments to the Evaluation Tool

The CPA staff provided the CPC with evaluation-criteria worksheets for application review. The worksheets provide space to indicate the extent to which each application addresses each CPC goal for the applicable funding area. The worksheets are Excel files. There is one for each CPA funding category. These have been offered as an optional tool for CPC members to fill out individually and submit to CPA staff before public deliberations. The evaluation criteria worksheet is available separately and may be requested from the CPA staff.

Consider renewing efforts to encourage CPC members to use the worksheets and submit them with sufficient time for CPA staff to review and incorporate them into the evaluation and recommendation process before presenting the low, middle, and high application categories, as described above.

CPA Eligibility Matrix

Allowable Uses	Community Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space	Recreation
Acquisition	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Creation	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Preservation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	Yes	No	No	No
Rehabilitation/Restore	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds	Yes	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds	Yes

Source: City of Boston Community Preservation Office, *“Community Preservation Committee Project Evaluation Packet”*, received November 2023.

APPENDICES

KEY DEFINITIONS

This list of key definitions is intended to assist the reader and is not intended to replace applicable legal definitions of these terms. The following definitions are provided for key terms used throughout the document, many of which are based on definitions found in MGL c. 44B, s. 2, or other statutes and regulations.

Active Recreation: Requires intensive development to provide outdoor recreation and often involves cooperative or team activities, such as playgrounds, ball fields, and paved bike paths.

Areawide Median Income: The median gross income for a person or family as calculated by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, based on the median income for the Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Chapter 40B: A state statute that enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals (ZBAs) to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20-25 percent of units have long-term affordability restrictions.

Chapter Lands: Chapter Lands refer to Chapters 61, 61A, and 61B of the Massachusetts General Laws. Lands are classified as forestry, agricultural/horticultural, or recreational. Landowners can apply for their property to be considered “Chapter Land”, in which case the tax will be assessed on the value of the land for forestry, agricultural/horticultural, or recreational uses, rather than the fair market value based on the land’s highest and best use as would be the case if the land were not classified.

Community Housing: As defined by the CPA, it refers to housing for individuals and families with incomes below 100 percent of the Area-Wide Median Income, including senior housing. In general, the occupant(s) should pay no greater than 30 percent of their income for gross housing costs, including utilities.

Community Preservation: The acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space; the acquisition, creation, preservation, and rehabilitation/restoration of land for recreation; the acquisition, preservation, and rehabilitation/restoration of historic resources; and the acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of community housing.

Community Preservation Act (CPA): A state law, MGL c. 44B is enabling legislation that allows municipalities to raise and set aside funds for community preservation projects, including open space and natural resource conservation, outdoor recreation, historic preservation, and community

housing. It is funded through a combination of a local property tax surcharge of up to 3 percent and a variable state contribution from the Community Preservation Trust Fund.

Community Preservation Committee: The committee established by the legislative body of a city or town to make recommendations for community preservation, as provided by Section 5 of MGL c. 44B.

Community Preservation Fund: The municipal fund established by Section 7 of MGL c. 44B.

Historic Resource: A building, structure, document, or artifact that is listed 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.

Household: All the people, related or unrelated, who occupy a housing unit. It can also include a person living alone in a housing unit or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit as partners or roommates.

Housing Production Plan: A community's proactive strategy for planning and developing affordable housing. In an HPP, a community creates a strategy to produce housing units and meet the 10 percent goal under Chapter 40B.

Local Historic District: An area or group of historic structures that are deemed significant to the town's history, archeology, architecture, or culture and protected by public review.

Low-income Housing: Housing for persons or families whose annual income is less than 80 percent of the average median income (AMI). The AMI is determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Moderate-income Housing: Housing for persons or families whose annual income is less than 100 percent of the average median income (AMI). The AMI is determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Open Space: Land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and saltwater marshes and other wetlands, oceans, rivers, streams, lake, and pond frontage, beaches, dunes, and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve, and/or land for recreational use.

Passive Recreation: That which emphasizes the natural aspects of open space, and which involves a low level of development, such as hiking trails.

Preservation: The protection of personal or real property from injury, harm, or destruction.

Recreational use: Recreational uses are often categorized into two main types: passive and active recreation. See definitions for “Passive recreation” and “Active Recreation.” Recreation, under the CPA, does not include horse or dog racing, or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium, or similar structure.

Rehabilitation: Capital improvements or extraordinary repairs to historic resources, open spaces, lands for recreational use, and community housing to make the above functional for their intended uses and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal, state, or local building or access codes. With historic resources, “rehabilitation” must comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (codified in 36 C.F.R. Part 68). For recreational use, “rehabilitation” includes the replacement of playground equipment and other capital improvements to the land or facilities that enhance their functionality for the intended recreational use.

Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI): The official list of units, by municipality, maintained by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) that is used to measure a community’s stock of low- and moderate-income housing for M.G.L. Chapter 40B’s 10 percent goal.