



TOWN OF AYER COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

FUNDING APPLICATION PACKET

The Town of Ayer's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) invites funding applications for projects that meet the criteria specified in the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Applicants are advised that there are legal limitations on the allowable use of CPA funds. Additional information on the CPA and CPC can be found on the Town's website at www.ayer.ma.us under Boards & Committees. Applicants are also encouraged to review the CPA (M.G.L. Chapter 44B) and the Town Bylaw (Article XLVI). The Community Preservation Coalition (www.communitypreservation.org) is an especially useful resource for additional information when considering applying for CPA funding.

PLEASE NOTE: Prospective applicants are encouraged to meet informally with CPC at any time to discuss potential projects prior to beginning the application process!

Ayer CPC generally meets in Town Hall at 6 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month. The Committee may be contacted by telephone: 978-772-8220, by email: cpc@ayer.ma.us, and by mail:

**Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee
1 Main Street
Ayer, MA 01432**

APPLICATION APPROVAL

The role of the Community Preservation Committee is as a gate-keeper to review and determine which projects it will put forward and recommend for funding before Town Meeting. The final decision to approve funding is made by a **TOWN MEETING VOTE**. The Town may vote to accept, reduce, or reject CPC recommendations.

Ayer holds its Annual Town Meeting in May of each year. The Town generally holds an additional Special Town Meeting in October. Votes to approve the use of Ayer CPA funding may be taken at either of these Town Meetings.

In order to meet deadlines for placement of a CPC Article on the Town Warrant, applicants must therefore begin the application process by the first Wednesday in December for Spring Town Meeting, and by the first Wednesday in May for Fall Town Meeting.

CPC reserves the right to waive its deadlines in limited and unusual circumstances.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applying for CPA funding in Ayer is a two-step process:

- 1) Submission of the **APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION OF ELIBILITY**. This form introduces the applicant and the applicant's proposal to CPC so that the Committee can determine the project's CPA eligibility, whether it is sufficiently developed in terms of work plan, budget and timing, and offer guidance on the preparation of a viable funding application. Please see the General Criteria listed below.
- 2) If the Committee agrees that your proposal is eligible, the **APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING** form must be completed. Please see the Guidelines and General Criteria outlined below. It is during this step that CPC will hold a Public Hearing as part of its evaluation process before voting whether or not to move an application forward. The CPC may recommend a project as proposed by the applicant, may modify the project, or may recommend partial funding or funding for only a portion or phase of the proposed project.

GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT SUBMISSION

The following guidelines should be used in preparing the **Application for Determination of Eligibility** and the **Application for Community Preservation Funding**.

1. Contact CPC for placement on its monthly meeting agenda and submit seven (7) copies of the **Application for Determination of Eligibility**. The **Eligibility** application must include a brief **project description**.
2. If your project is deemed eligible for the next step, please submit twelve (12) paper copies of the **Application for Community Preservation Funding** to the CPC as well as an electronic copy of the complete submission in *.doc or *.pdf format. The electronic copy should be submitted to **cpc@ayer.ma.us**.
 - Each project request must be submitted using the Town of Ayer CPC Application forms. Additional pages should be added as necessary.
 - The **Funding** application must include a **statement of community need** and a **detailed narrative** describing the project and its scope. The narrative should address how the project meets CPA criteria as well as how it will benefit the Town of Ayer and its residents. The use of maps, diagrams, architectural plans, site plans, studies, references, statistics, photos, and other supplemental information, as appropriate, is strongly encouraged. Any existing restrictions (deed, preservation, conservation, or other) should be clearly noted. Where applicable, a copy of the deed, purchase-and-sale agreement, option agreement, or other document to prove that the applicant has site control (including the property owner's written consent to the application and proposed project) should be submitted with the applications.
 - The applications should specifically address the CPC's General Criteria, as listed below.
 - Applicants should obtain written proposals, cost estimates, appraisals, quotes, and/or other such evidence to document the project's scope and projected costs. Cost estimates should be

itemized and provide a full explanation by line item, including back-up material where necessary.

- Letters of recommendation, support or endorsement from other Town Boards, Committees and Departments, as well as expressions of community support, should be included if applicable.
- Additional funding sources should be identified.
- For applicants with multiple applications, it is important to prioritize projects.

3. All applicants will be expected to be present at CPC meetings as well as a formal Public Hearing to answer questions about their proposals. After the first meeting when the Application for Determination of Eligibility is presented to the CPC, applicants will be notified regarding the scheduling of additional meetings, including the Public Hearing that they must attend.

4. Following the Public Hearing, CPC members will vote whether or not they will recommend a project to Town Meeting for a final decision regarding funding. If the vote is positive, CPC will prepare the Warrant Article(s) for Town Meeting.

5. Town Meeting votes on CPC Articles may take place in May or October.

6. In general, applicants will be asked to sign a Grant Agreement with CPC and adhere to the terms and conditions of the agreement. Terms of the Agreement will be reviewed during the application process, although the Agreement itself will not be signed until after funding has been approved by Town Meeting vote. This Agreement may include requirements such as submission of Project Status reports; provision of detailed and itemized invoices for payment subject to CPC approval; display of temporary or permanent public notice (i.e. signs, medallions) indicating Ayer CPC funding of the project, and so forth. CPC will not vote to release funds to pay for invoices until the Grant Agreement has been finalized and signed by both parties.

7. If approved, project funding should be available in July following Spring Town Meeting, and in after the Fall Town Meeting.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects are eligible for CPA funding if they fall into one, **or more**, of the following categories: **Open Space, Recreation, Historic Preservation, and Community Housing**. There are legal restrictions within each category that prohibit the use of CPA funds. For allowable spending purposes, please see M.G.L. c. 44B, section 5. Please note that CPA funds may not be used for general maintenance purposes. Again, prospective applicants are encouraged to meet informally with CPC at any time to discuss potential projects!

Open Space

The CPA defines Open Space as including, but not limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields; aquifers, recharge areas, and watershed land; agricultural land; grasslands, fields and forest land; fresh and salt water 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.

CPA funds may be spent for the acquisition, creation, and preservation of Open Space. They are legally allowed to be used for the rehabilitation or restoration of Open Space only if it was acquired or created using CPA funds. CPA funds may not be used to acquire real property, or property interest, for a price exceeding the value of the property. In addition, a permanent deed restriction is required for all real property interests acquired under CPA. This restriction must be filed as a separate instruction, such as a Conservation Restriction or Agricultural Preservation Restriction, and until this step has been completed, the terms of the CPA Grant Agreement have not technically been fulfilled.

Recreation

CPA defines Recreation as “active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field.” CPA allows use of CPA funds for the acquisition, creation, and preservation of land for recreational use and allows rehabilitation or restoration only for recreation land acquired or created with CPA funds. Maintenance costs are not eligible for CPA funds. As a rule of thumb, CPA funds can be used for projects that will protect the resource from harm (preservation), but not for projects intended to extend the resource’s useful life (rehabilitation).

Historic Preservation

CPA defines historic resources as a building, structure, vessel, real property, document, or artifact that is listed or eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places or has been determined by the local Historic 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.” Projects using CPA funds on historic resources must comply with the US Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Typically a Preservation Restriction, lasting in perpetuity, will be required.

Community Housing

The CPA defines community housing as low and moderate income housing for individuals and families, including low or moderate income senior housing. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development income guidelines are used to determine eligibility for living in affordable housing units developed with CPA funds. The Act allows CPA expenditures for the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing and for the rehabilitation of community housing that is acquired or created through CPA funding.

GENERAL CRITERIA

Proposals will preferably address as many of the following general criteria as possible:

- Are consistent with the most recent Comprehensive Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, Community Preservation Plan and other planning documents that have received wide scrutiny and public input, and have been adopted by the Town;
- Preserve and enhance the character of the Town as described in the Comprehensive Master Plan;
- Save resources that would otherwise be threatened;

- Serve a currently under-served population;
- Serve more than one CPA purpose (for example, linking Open Space and Recreation, or Community Housing and Historic Restoration);
- Demonstrate practicality and feasibility;
- Demonstrate that the project can be implemented expeditiously and within budget;
- Provide proof of site control;
- Provide a time line for expected completion of the project, including major milestones, and an estimate of when the CPA funds requested will be needed;
- Leverage additional public and/or private funds;
- Preserve or utilize current Town-owned assets;
- Receive endorsement by other municipal Boards, Committees, Departments, and/or community groups.