

**CITY OF CHELSEA**

# **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN**

**FY2021 – 2025**

**Adopted: 23 July 2020**

**Prepared for:**

City of Chelsea  
Community Preservation Committee  
500 Broadway  
Chelsea, MA 02150

**Prepared by:**

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*Cover Page Photos Left to Right:*

*Chelsea Streetscape; Chelsea Garden Cemetery, Chelsea Waterfront*

*All Photos: JMG 2018*

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Unless noted, all photographs provided by JM Goldson community preservation + planning.

## Acronyms

<b>ACS</b>	US Census Bureau's American Community Survey
<b>ADA</b>	Americans with Disabilities Act
<b>AHT</b>	Chelsea Affordable Housing Trust
<b>AMI</b>	Area-wide Median Income set by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>CPA</b>	Community Preservation Act, Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws
<b>CPC</b>	Community Preservation Committee
<b>CP Plan</b>	Community Preservation Plan
<b>DCCICC</b>	Designing Coastal Community Infrastructure for Climate Change Plan (2017)
<b>DCR</b>	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
<b>DHCD</b>	Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development
<b>DMH</b>	Department of Mental Health
<b>DPA</b>	Designated Port Area
<b>GGCP</b>	Massachusetts Greening the Gateway Cities Program
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>FIRMS</b>	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year(s)
<b>HUD</b>	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>LHD</b>	Local Historic District
<b>MACRIS</b>	Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System
<b>MFI</b>	Median Family Income
<b>MGL</b>	Massachusetts General Laws
<b>MHC</b>	Massachusetts Historical Commission
<b>MOE</b>	Margins of Error
<b>MWRA</b>	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
<b>NHESP</b>	Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program
<b>NPS</b>	United States Department of Interior, National Park Service
<b>OSRP</b>	Chelsea Open Space and Recreation Plan 2017
<b>PORT</b>	Publicly Organized Recreation Territory
<b>SHI</b>	Massachusetts Subsidized Housing Inventory
<b>TWG</b>	The Warren Group

## 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 for key terms used throughout the document, many of which are based on definitions per MGL c.44B s.2 or other statutes and regulations.

**Active Recreation** – Requires intensive development to create outdoor recreation and often involves cooperative or team activity, including playgrounds, ball fields, and paved bike paths.

**Area-wide 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. In 2018, the HUD median family income (MFI) for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH Metro Area was \$107,800.<sup>1</sup> AMI is also referred to in the document as median family income (MFI).

**Community Housing** – as defined by the Community Preservation Act is housing for individuals and families with incomes less than 100 percent of the Area-wide Median Income, including senior housing. In general, the occupant(s) should pay no greater than 30 percent of his or her 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** – a state law, MGL c. 44B, is enabling legislation that allows communities 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.

**Family Household** - Family households consist of two or more individuals who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption, although they also may include other unrelated people.

**Historic Resource** – a building, structure, document, or artifact that is listed on the state register of historic places or National 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. Family households consist of two or more individuals who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption, although they also may include other unrelated people. Nonfamily households consist of people who live alone or who share their residence with unrelated individuals.

**Local Historic District** – an area or group of historic structures that are deemed significant to the city'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 area-wide median income (AMI) (as defined by the CPA).<sup>2</sup> The AMI is determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). For example, the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HUD Metro FMA Area, which includes Chelsea,

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<sup>1</sup> This is a little less than double Chelsea's median family income—\$58,724 according to US Census 2017 one-year estimates. Chelsea's estimated median household income is \$53,595 per the 2017 American Community Survey.

<sup>2</sup> Note: The CPA defines low-income and moderate-income differently than other state and federal programs. For example, for purposes of MGL c.40B, moderate income is defined as up to 80 percent AMI.

a four-person household with a gross household income of \$81,000 or less is considered low-income under the CPA definition. A one-person household with a gross household income of \$56,800 or less is considered low-income.

**Moderate-income Housing** – housing for persons or families whose annual income is less than 100 percent of the area-wide median income (AMI). The AMI is determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). For example, the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HUD Metro FMA Area, which includes Chelsea, a four-person household with a gross household income of \$107,800 or less is considered moderate-income under the CPA definition.

**Open Space** – land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and salt water 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 open space aspect of a park and which involves a low level of development, including picnic areas and trails.

**Preservation** – the protection of personal or real property from injury, harm, or destruction.

**Recreational use** – Recreation uses are often divided into two categories: 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 for the purpose of making 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). With recreational use, “rehabilitation” includes the replacement of playground equipment and other capital improvements to the land or facilities which make the related land or facilities more functional for the intended recreational use.



## Executive Summary

The Chelsea Community Preservation Committee (CPC) developed this Community Preservation Plan to guide the allocation of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for the next five years (fiscal years (FY) 2020-2024). The principles and goals outlined in this Plan are not binding—rather they are meant to provide guidance for decisions on the use of CPA funds.

## Background of the Community Preservation Act

Chelsea voters adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA), allowed through Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44B, in November 2016. CPA enables communities to collect money to fund community preservation projects. As of December 2018, 175 communities have adopted the CPA (49.9 percent of the state's municipalities).

Chelsea generates CPA funds through a local property tax surcharge of 1.5 percent and a variable distribution from the state Community Preservation Trust Fund. The City of Chelsea adopted the CPA surcharge with exemptions for low-income households, low- and moderate-income senior households, and for the first \$100,000 of property value. Since 2016, Chelsea has collected close to \$1.46 Million.<sup>3</sup>

**Since adoption (2016), Chelsea has collected about \$1.46 Million.\***  
**Desde el año 2016, Chelsea ha recolectado cerca de \$1.46 millones.\***

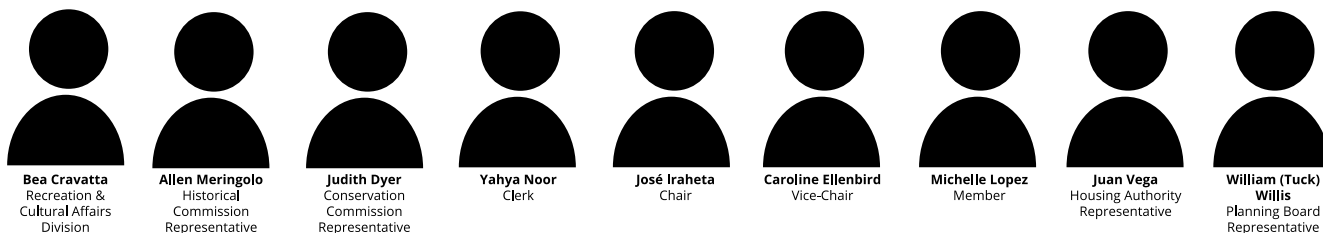
\*includes FY18 estimates    \*incluye estimaciones de FY18



At least 10 percent of CPA funds must be spent or reserved in three categories—Community Housing, Historic Preservation, and Open Space and Outdoor Recreation. The remaining 70 percent of funds can be used for any allowable project within any of the CPA categories. As part of the Community Preservation Plan, Chelsea will determine how the remaining funds should be allocated based on the community's needs. The CPC intends to budget 5 percent of total annual CPA revenue for administrative funds to ensure proper record keeping, grant management, and clerical support, as the CPA statute allows. Unused administrative funds at the end of each fiscal year revert back to undesignated funds. To appropriate CPA funds, the City Council must act on a recommendation from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC)—a nine-member committee with five representatives appointed by various boards and committees and four at-large members.

<sup>3</sup> Includes estimates for FY18 state Community Preservation Trust Fund distribution.

## Chelsea Community Preservation Committee (CPC) El Comité de Preservación Comunitaria (CPC)



## Planning Process

The CPC, through the City of Chelsea, contracted with a planning consultant, JM Goldson community preservation + planning, to assist with the preparation of a Community Preservation Plan. The consultant worked with the CPC members, studied existing plans, and identified Chelsea's community preservation needs and resources. During the process, the CPC received feedback through a variety of community engagement efforts, including:

- **six focus groups** in July 2018—two in Spanish and four in English
- **three community events** during Summer 2018
- **two community workshops** in Fall 2018
- **an online community survey** which ran from August to October 2018
- **a public hearing** in February 2019

The purpose of these community engagement efforts was to understand the needs and priorities in each of the three Community Preservation Act (CPA) categories. In total, close to 400 people participated in the CPC's community engagement. For detailed documentation of these community engagement exercises, please see the appendices.

## Guiding Principles

The CPC developed the following overall guiding principles and specific category goals by carefully considering community feedback. These principles are designed to guide the CPC's evaluation of project requests for CPA funds in all three CPA funding categories and to establish funding preferences.

### 1. LEAD PRIORITIES

Recognizing Chelsea's great and well-documented needs, the CPC will prioritize projects that serve the following key needs:

- create, support, and preserve affordable housing for households at or below Chelsea's median income<sup>4</sup>
- improve public open space and recreation opportunities and protect natural resources that increase the City's resiliency
- improve accessibility to and the preservation of the city's historic resources

### 2. SUPPORTING PRIORITIES

The CPC will also support integration of open space and recreation opportunities throughout the City, housing projects which integrate green space and sustainability initiatives as well as the preservation of outdoor historic resources, such as cemeteries and monuments.

### 3. LEVERAGING FUNDING

The CPC encourages projects which utilize both CPA funds and other public and private funding, including donations and bargain sales. The CPC will prioritize projects where CPA funding will fill a gap or provide a critical need where funding is otherwise unavailable or provide an opportunity that would not be possible—if not for CPA funding. Leveraging can include in-kind donations or sweat equity to reduce project costs.

### 4. PLANNING AND COMMUNITY GOALS

The CPC will prioritize projects that demonstrate a long-lasting benefit to the community, indicate comprehensive planning, and show compatibility with other community initiatives and goals.

### 5. COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN CPA CATEGORIES

The CPC encourages projects that include eligible activities in multiple CPA areas, such as affordable housing and recreation. The CPC will prioritize projects that reinforce or are compatible with both the CPA goals within a project's funding category(ies) and goals in other CPA categories.

### 6. PROTECTING CHELSEA'S MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

The CPC will prioritize projects that support the needs of Chelsea's most vulnerable populations, especially low-income residents, homeless residents, families, at-risk households, older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, and environmental justice populations. The CPC encourages projects which expand access to resources where they are most needed by these populations.

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<sup>4</sup> A four-person household with a gross household income of \$81,000 or less is considered low-income under the CPA definition. A one-person household with a gross household income of \$56,800 or less is considered low-income. Chelsea's estimated median family income is \$58,724 per the 2017 American Community Survey. Chelsea's estimated median household income is \$53,595 per the 2017 American Community Survey.

## Goals

The goals, as summarized below, are intended to guide potential applicants for CPA funding and will be used to direct CPC funding recommendations.

### COMMUNITY HOUSING GOALS

1. Increase the city's homeownership rate for low-income households.
2. Create and preserve affordable units for—and provide support to—Chelsea residents who have extremely low- to low-income, and residents with special needs.
3. Mix housing with parks, playgrounds, and other green space—and integrate sustainability and energy-efficiency efforts.
4. Utilize existing housing stock to create permanently affordable units for Chelsea residents that in the process improves conditions of Chelsea's housing stock.
5. Support CPA-eligible initiatives of existing housing-oriented organizations.

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS

1. Improve public accessibility to historic resources.
2. Improve outdoor public historic places and public monuments.
3. Preserve historic archives including city records.
4. Continue to inventory Chelsea's historic resources to complete city and state records in accordance with CPA eligibility.

### OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

1. Improve and maintain existing parks, playgrounds, and other open space facilities.
2. Improve and create waterfront access.
3. Improve public access to and safety in existing parks, playgrounds, and other open space.
4. Integrate green infrastructure and open space into City's neighborhoods, such as community gardens, rain gardens, and pocket parks.
5. Protect key parcels that enhance community resilience in the face of climate change impacts.
6. Create more outdoor recreation spaces that cater to teens.

# Chapter 1: Overview

## Introduction

The Chelsea Community Preservation Committee (CPC) developed this Community Preservation Plan to guide the allocation of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for the next five years (fiscal years (FY) 2020-2024). The principles and goals outlined in this Plan are not binding—rather they are meant to provide guidance for decisions on the use of CPA funds.

The CPC has identified three priorities for use of Chelsea’s CPA funds for FY2020-2024:

- (1) create, support, and preserve affordable housing for households at or below Chelsea’s median income<sup>5</sup>
- (2) improve public open space and recreation opportunities and protect natural resources that increase the City’s resiliency
- (3) improve accessibility to the city’s historic resources

The CPC will consult the priorities and goals in this Plan to inform its recommendations to the City Council on spending CPA funds. The CPC encourages future applicants seeking CPA funds to use this plan to guide their CPA requests and encourages City Council members to use this plan to guide their decisions on allocation of funds.

This Plan is created in accordance with the Community Preservation Act (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.*

### Chelsea Community History and Regional Context

Nestled between Mill Creek and the Chelsea, Mystic, and Island End Rivers, Chelsea is a diverse urban waterfront city located in Suffolk County two miles northeast of Boston. With only 1.8 square miles of land and over 40,000 people—and growing—it is the second-most dense community in Massachusetts. The city prides itself for its diversity and legacy as an immigrant enclave, its small-town feel, and its large number of community-based activist organizations.

It is only one of three communities where the majority of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latinx. Like other north-of-Boston cities, Chelsea welcomed immigrants and industry throughout the mid-nineteenth century—contributing to the City’s growth and incorporation in 1857. In the mid-twentieth century, the city suffered from industrial divestment, the Tobin Bridge’s construction physically split the community in two, and in 1991, the City entered into state receivership after filing for bankruptcy. In recent years, Chelsea has revitalized. Its close proximity to downtown Boston, easy transit connection via bus, commuter rail, and the silver line, along with its relatively affordable housing stock have made it an attractive place for new-comers priced out of the Boston housing market.

<sup>5</sup> A four-person household with a gross household income of \$81,000 or less is considered low-income under the CPA definition. A one-person household with a gross household income of \$56,800 or less is considered low-income. Chelsea’s estimated median family income is \$58,724 per the 2017 American Community Survey. Chelsea’s estimated median household income is \$53,595 per the 2017 American Community Survey.

## Background

### WHAT IS CPA?

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a state law, MGL c.44B, which was enacted in 2000 and signed by Governor Paul Cellucci. It creates a way for communities to raise and set aside funds for community preservation projects. These projects can include open space, conservation, and outdoor recreation; historic preservation; and community housing. As of December 2018, 175 communities have adopted the CPA (49.9 percent of the state's municipalities).

CPA 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. At least 10 percent of total revenue must be spent or set aside annually in each of the three categories—community housing, historic preservation, and open space and outdoor recreation. Prior to accepting any applications and awarding any funds, the CPC must solicit input from the community and create a Community Preservation Plan that reflects the community's priorities.

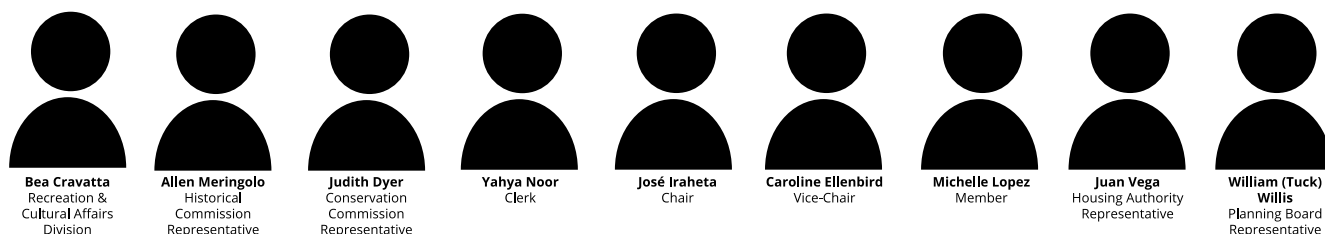
### WHO DECIDES HOW THE FUNDS ARE SPENT?

In December 2016, the Chelsea City Council established by ordinance a nine-member Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Four members-at-large are appointed by the City Manager and approved by the City Council with the following requirements for each of the seats: one seat requires expertise in open spaces, housing and/or historical preservation; one seat requires expertise in development, business, finance, and/or construction; and the two remaining seats will be for individuals with a history of community involvement. As required by MGL c.44B, the CPC must include a member from each of the following five entities:

- Conservation Commission
- Historical Commission
- Housing Authority
- Planning Board
- Recreation Commission

#### Chelsea Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

#### El Comité de Preservación Comunitaria (CPC)



The role of the CPC is to:

- 1) study the City's community preservation needs, possibilities, and resources
- 2) make recommendations to the City Council for funding projects with CPA funds

In addition to regular open public meetings, the CPC is required to hold one or more public hearing(s) as part of its charge to study the community preservation needs, possibilities, and resources of the city. Many CPC's also choose to hold an annual public hearing to solicit feedback on funding requests prior to making recommendations. Typically, this is an opportunity for project applicants to discuss their applications further with the CPC.

The funding recommendations from the CPC are sent to the City Council where the recommended appropriations can be affirmed, rejected, or lowered. Funding recommendations may not be increased. City Council is bound to act only upon an affirmative recommendation of the CPC and cannot consider requests that do not receive a CPC recommendation.

## HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Chelsea generates CPA funds through a local property tax surcharge of 1.5 percent and a variable distribution from the state Community Preservation Trust Fund. The City of Chelsea adopted the CPA surcharge with exemptions for low-income households, low- and moderate-income senior households, and for the first \$100,000 of residential property value. Since 2016, Chelsea has collected close to \$1.46 Million.

In FY2017, the local property tax surcharge generated roughly \$545,000. The state Trust Fund distribution was about \$106,283. In addition to these FY17 funds, the local property surcharged generated an additional \$610,000 in FY2018. The

**Since adoption (2016), Chelsea has collected about \$1.46 Million.\***  
**Desde el año 2016, Chelsea ha recolectado cerca de \$1.46 millones.\***

\*includes FY18 estimates    \*incluye estimaciones de FY18

state Trust Fund distribution is estimated to be roughly \$116,000. Chelsea could generate about \$3.85 million between FY2020 and FY2024, assuming a state Trust Fund distribution of 15 percent and a 3 percent annual growth in local surcharge collections.



## Planning Process

The City of Chelsea contracted with JM Goldson community preservation + planning to assist with the preparation of a Community Preservation Plan in June 2018. JM Goldson worked with the CPC members and studied existing plans, including the *2018 Reimagining Broadway*; *2018 Beacham-Williams Street Corridor Study*; *2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update*; *2017 Comprehensive Housing Analysis and Strategic Plan*; *2017 Designing Coastal Community Infrastructure for Climate Change*; *2016 A Vision for the Chelsea Waterfront*; *2014 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update*; *2012 Chelsea Vision Plan by Sasaki*; *2004 Community Development Plan*; *2014 Broadway Corridor Action Plan*; and *2009 Addison-Orange Neighborhood Revitalization Plan*, to identify Chelsea's community preservation needs and resources.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Soliciting community input was an important component of this planning process. The CPC sponsored focus groups; tabling at community events; interviews with a variety of community members; and interactive community workshops. It also distributed an online survey. The purpose of these community engagement efforts was to understand the needs and priorities in each of the three Community Preservation Act (CPA) categories. To reach Chelsea's large Spanish-speaking population, the CPC utilized interpreters at focus groups and community workshops and provided materials and notices in both Spanish and English throughout the process. The CPC worked closely with GreenRoots, the Chelsea Collaborative, and other community organizations to help broaden outreach to harder to reach populations. In total, close to 400 people participated in the CPC's community engagement.

#### Focus Groups and Statutory Boards

The consultants interviewed community members through six focus groups held over two days—July 24, and July 26, 2018. Four sessions were conducted in English and two sessions in Spanish with the help of an interpreter. The English sessions had 16 total participants and the Spanish sessions had 11 total participants—making a total of 27 participants across the six sessions. They also conducted telephone interviews and met with the five CPA statutory boards—Planning Board, Cultural Council, Housing Authority, Historic Preservation Commission, and Conservation Commission. These interviews helped the CPC further refine its understanding of community preservation needs and resources. Participants also helped to brainstorm possibilities for use of CPA funds.

#### Community Tabling

The CPC tabled at three community events during Summer 2018—National Night Out on August 7, 2018; Back to School Day on August 23, 2018; and Kayaking and Canoeing Day on September 14, 2018. Participants were asked to distribute seven pom-poms or beans—representing the undesignated 70 percent of funds—across the three CPA categories: Historic Preservation, Community Housing, and Open Space and Recreation. In total, 193 people participated in the exercise—72 participants at National Night Out; 89 participants at Back to School Day; and 32 participants at Kayaking and Canoeing Day.

#### Community Workshops

The CPC sponsored two interactive community workshops—one held on September 27, 2018 at the Chelsea Senior Center and one on October 16, 2018 at a community organization, the Chelsea Collaborative. Participants answered demographic questions, submitted answers to create a word cloud, and participated in a live poll based on sample CPA project scenarios. The consultants also presented an overview about the Community Preservation Act. About 50 people participated in the September workshop at the Chelsea Senior Center and about 30 people participated in the October workshop at the Chelsea Collaborative—a total of 80 participants between the two workshops.

#### Online Survey

To obtain broad community input, the CPC also sponsored an online survey. The survey was online from August 21, 2018 to October 17, 2018. The survey contained demographic questions and questions regarding priorities for the use of CPA funds. In total, 87 people responded to the survey.



This diverse community engagement enabled a variety of voices and perspectives to be heard. Multiple methods increased the level and depth of feedback beyond the norm for this type of planning effort in other communities. The consultant continued to work closely with the CPC over the fall and winter and presented a draft plan at a public hearing on February 21, 2019 for public comment. The CPC voted to adopt the plan on February 21, 2019.

## Application & Funding Process

The Chelsea CPC accepts applications for CPA funding on an annual basis, with proposals generally due in October of each year. Eligibility forms and applications will be available at the Public Hearing, the Committee Web Site ([www.chelseama.gov/community-preservation-committee](http://www.chelseama.gov/community-preservation-committee)), and at City Hall. In its first year, beginning in February, the Committee will begin the application process for a pilot round of grant funding. For the pilot round only, applications will be limited to \$50,000. There will be several workshops and opportunities for community organizations to receive assistance in filling out these forms prior to the application deadline. Projects must meet the requirements of the Community Preservation Act and be approved by both the Committee and City Council.

The CPC considers each funding application based on the merits of the project as well as the available CPA balance in an open public meeting. The CPC developed application guidelines with evaluation criteria as part of this planning effort to aid in the CPC's deliberation of funding requests, which is provided in the appendices. Through majority vote, the CPC determines which projects to recommend to the City Council for funding. Projects not recommended by the CPC are not eligible for consideration by the City Council per statute (MGL c.44B).

## General CPA Eligibility

The CPA provides funding for three general project types: community housing, historic preservation, open space and outdoor recreation. See eligibility chart in Appendix C.

**Community Housing:** CPA funds can be used to acquire, create, preserve, and support community housing for households with incomes at or below 100 percent of the area median income (AMI).

**Historic Preservation:** CPA funds can be used to acquire, preserve, rehabilitate, and restore historic resources that are listed on the State Register or determined to be locally significant by the Historical Commission.

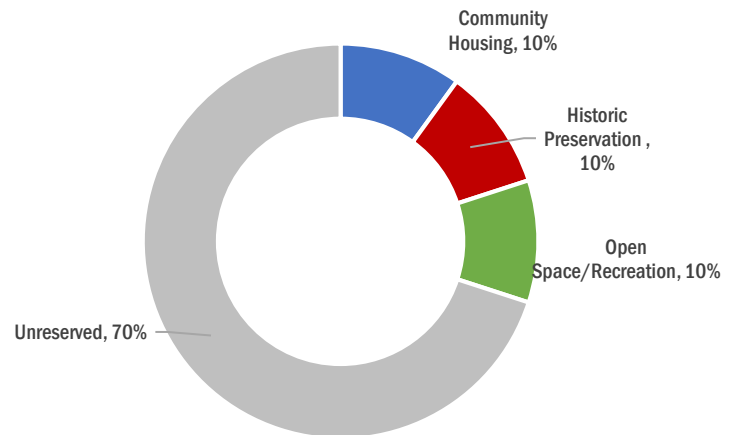
**Open Space and Recreation:** CPA funds can be used to acquire, create, and preserve open space and natural resources. They can also be used to acquire, create, preserve, rehabilitate, or restore land for recreational use.

While the statute provides a generous amount of flexibility for CPA communities to determine the portion of CPA funds allocated to each of the three categories, the statute requires that a minimum of 10 percent of total revenue be spent or reserved for projects in the following categories: community housing, historic preservation, and open space/recreation.

Section 12(a) of the Community Preservation Act requires that a permanent restriction be placed on any "real property interest" acquired using CPA funds to ensure that the property continues to be used for the applicable CPA purpose. Given this statutory requirement, a CPA project involving acquisition of any real property interest is technically not complete until the restriction is approved by the appropriate state agency and filed at the Registry of Deeds. The CPC may require a restriction to protect the nature of their investment for some improvements, such as a new roof, windows, accessibility improvements, and other code-compliant improvements. For private properties, applicants must demonstrate a public benefit which may be accomplished through a public access easement or deed restriction.

See *Chapter 2* for a description of the CPC's allocation policies beyond these minimally required reserves.

**CPA - Minimum Spending/Reserve Requirements**



## Chapter 2: Values, Policies, and Principles

The CPC developed the following overall allocation policies and guiding principles based on its core values and by carefully considering community feedback and broad community goals. These policies and principles are designed to guide the CPC's deliberation of project requests for CPA funds in all three CPA funding categories and will be used to establish funding preferences.

*These policies and principles are not binding; The CPC will ultimately base its recommendations on individual project merits, using these policies and principles as a guide.*

### Five-Year Target Allocation Policies

In addition to the recommended 10 percent reserves of total annual revenue in each of the three categories, the CPC established target allocation policies to guide its recommendations for appropriations of CPA funds. The policies are intended to support community priorities for use of CPA funds.

Category	Minimum Reserves	Undesignated Funds	Total Funds Allocated	Estimated 5-Year Budget Total
Community Housing	10%	30%	40%	\$2.45 M
Historic Preservation	10%	15%	25%	\$1.53 M
Open Space and Outdoor Recreation	10%	15%	25%	\$1.53 M
Administrative	0%	5%	5%	\$306,000
Undesignated		5%	5%	\$306,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$6.12 M</b>

#### UNDESIGNATED FUNDS ALLOCATION

The CPC intends to recommend allocations of the undesignated funds in roughly the proportions shown in the matrix above **as an average over five-years**: 30 percent for community housing, 15 percent for open space and outdoor recreation, and 5 percent for historic preservation. The allocations are not intended to be rigid. The CPC intends to retain flexibility in its approach to allow funding consideration for meritorious applications in any funding category. The remaining 15 percent of the undesignated funds will remain as undesignated. Any undesignated funds that are not appropriated in a given year will roll over and remain undesignated.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDS

The CPC requires professional staff support to ensure proper record keeping, grant management, and clerical support. Therefore, the CPC intends to budget 5 percent of total annual CPA revenue for administrative funds, as the CPA statute allows. Admin funds may be used to support projects that require additional professional and technical support, including but not limited to, feasibility studies, condition assessments, historic evaluations/surveys etc. Additional funds may also be awarded using category funds to support projects. Administrative funds are allocated in the annual budget and their expenditure does not require City Council approval. Unused administrative funds at the end of each fiscal year revert back to undesignated funds.

# Guiding Principles

## 1. LEAD PRIORITIES

Recognizing Chelsea's great and well-documented needs, the CPC will prioritize projects that serve the following key needs.

- create, support, and preserve affordable housing for households at or below Chelsea's median income<sup>6</sup>
- improve public open space and recreation opportunities and protect natural resources that increase the City's resiliency
- improve accessibility to and the preservation of the city's historic resources

## 2. SUPPORTING PRIORITIES

The CPC will also support integration of open space and recreation opportunities throughout the City, housing projects which integrate green space and sustainability initiatives as well as the preservation of outdoor historic resources, such as cemeteries and monuments.

## 3. LEVERAGING FUNDING

The CPC encourages projects which utilize both CPA funds and other public and private funding, including donations and bargain sales. The CPC will prioritize projects where CPA funding will fill a gap or provide a critical need where funding is otherwise unavailable or provide an opportunity that would not be possible—if not for CPA funding. Leveraging can include in-kind donations or sweat equity to reduce project costs.

## 4. PLANNING AND COMMUNITY GOALS

The CPC will prioritize projects that demonstrate a long-lasting benefit to the community, indicate comprehensive planning, and show compatibility with other community initiatives and goals.

## 5. COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN CPA CATEGORIES

The CPC encourages projects that include eligible activities in multiple CPA areas, such as affordable housing and recreation. The CPC will prioritize projects that reinforce or are compatible with both the CPA goals within a project's funding category(ies) and goals in other CPA categories.

## 6. PROTECTING CHELSEA'S MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

The CPC will prioritize projects that support the needs of Chelsea's most vulnerable populations, especially low-income residents, homeless residents, families, at-risk households, older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, and environmental justice populations. The CPC encourages projects which expand access to resources where they are most needed by these populations.

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<sup>6</sup> A four-person household with a gross household income of \$81,000 or less is considered low-income under the CPA definition. A one-person household with a gross household income of \$56,800 or less is considered low-income. Chelsea's estimated median family income is \$58,724 per the 2017 American Community Survey. Chelsea's estimated median household income is \$53,595 per the 2017 American Community Survey.

## Chapter 3: Community Housing



*Chelsea Housing Authority Innes Apartments*

### Goals and Priorities

*To market-rate developers, Chelsea is the next “most affordable” community outside of Boston. Its proximity to Boston, Logan Airport, and its transit availability, its waterfront setting, its investment in its neighborhoods and downtown, and its regionally “affordable” price points offer inviting prospects for multifamily developers.... This is why the city has attracted so much housing growth since 2010. Most incremental housing investments in the City are likely to take place through infill development, teardown/rebuild, or renovation. At the neighborhood level, the city’s small lots make it difficult to build anything of scale without aggregating parcels, and this can be time consuming, unpredictable, and expensive for a developer.<sup>7</sup>*

<sup>7</sup> City of Chelsea Comprehensive Housing Analysis and Strategic Plan, 2017, p. 11.



The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) developed the following housing goals and possibilities through careful consideration of Chelsea's housing needs, public input, and overall community goals. The goals, as described below, are intended to guide potential applicants for CPA funding and will be used to direct CPC funding recommendations. However, applications for funding are not limited to the project ideas listed in this plan.

## GENERAL CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY HOUSING PROJECTS:

- Although the CPA requires that housing developed with CPA funds can serve persons or families with an annual income up to and including 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), Chelsea's local needs are for households with much lower incomes than the AMI.<sup>8</sup> Therefore the Chelsea CPA intends to target CPA funds for initiatives that create, support, and preserve affordable housing for households at or below Chelsea's median income.
- CPA funds can be used to **ACQUIRE, CREATE, PRESERVE, and SUPPORT** community housing.
- CPA funds can also be used **REHABILITATE/RESTORE** community housing that has been acquired or created using CPA funds. Preference is typically given to adaptive reuse of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed sites. See the *Eligible Activities* section of this chapter for more details.

### GOAL 1

#### *Increase the city's homeownership rate for low-income households.*

Housing assistance programs are eligible to use CPA funds in the support and, in some cases, in the creation of community housing depending on the structure of the program. Ownership-oriented housing assistance programs could include a first-time homebuyer program, lease-to-own program, or a down payment/closing cost assistance program as deferred payment loans with recapture provisions. Most of these types of programs, with the exception of the first-time homebuyer model, do not create units that have long-term affordability restrictions.

### GOAL 2

#### *Create and preserve affordable units for—and provide support to—Chelsea residents who have extremely low- to low-income and residents with special needs.*

<b>Percent MFI</b>	<b>Qualifying Household Income</b> <i>(using Boston Metro HUD Median Family Income)</i>	<b>Qualifying Household Income</b> <i>(using Chelsea ACS Median Family Income)</i>
30%	\$32,340	\$17,617
50%	\$53,900	\$29,362
60%	\$64,680	\$35,234
80%	\$86,240	\$46,979
100%	\$107,800	\$58,724

In 2018, the HUD median family income for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH Metro Area was \$107,800.<sup>9</sup> At over \$58,000, Chelsea's median family income is a little more than half. According to the Census, almost 38 percent of households in Chelsea qualify as extremely-low income households (households earning 30 percent or less than the Area-wide Median Income (AMI)).<sup>10</sup> The CPC will prioritize projects which create, preserve, or support Chelsea' extremely-low-income families and households—in other words, projects which evaluate affordability based on Chelsea's AMI.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The FY2018 MFI for the Boston-Metro Area is \$107,800. A four-person household with a gross household income of \$81,000 or less is considered low-income under the CPA definition. A one-person household with a gross household income of \$56,800 or less is considered low-income. Chelsea's estimated median *family* income is \$58,724 per the 2017 American Community Survey. Chelsea's estimated median *household* income is \$53,595 per the 2017 American Community Survey.

<sup>9</sup> These income limits are updated annually and can be accessed at [www.huduser.gov](http://www.huduser.gov).

<sup>10</sup> Also referred to elsewhere as the Median Family Income (MFI).

<sup>11</sup> A four-person household with a gross household income of \$81,000 or less is considered low-income under the CPA definition. A one-person household with a gross household income of \$56,800 or less is considered low-income.

Housing assistance programs are eligible to use CPA funds in the support and, in some cases, in the creation of community housing, depending on the structure of the program. Rental-oriented housing assistance programs could include a local rental subsidy program.

In 2020, the Area Median Income for a family of 4 in the Chelsea area was \$119,000. The following table contains the 50% AMI values for a range of household sizes.

Household Size	50% AMI
1	\$44,800
2	\$51,200
3	\$57,600
4	\$63,950
5	\$69,100
6	\$74,200
7	\$79,300
8	\$84,450

### GOAL 3

#### *Mix housing with parks, playgrounds, and other green space—and integrate sustainability and energy-efficiency efforts.*

As a built-out city, Chelsea must work to integrate open space and recreational amenities throughout the urban fabric—a goal from the City’s 2017 *Open Space and Recreation Plan*. The CPC will evaluate housing projects based on the site context, prioritizing projects which ensure access to quality parks and open space. This can be accomplished by creating new open space, planting trees, or building connection to nearby open space, such as through walking paths or biking trails. Current research shows that in addition to the benefits of direct shade from a robust tree canopy, it is estimated that every 1 percent increase in tree canopy above a minimum 10 percent canopy cover brings a 1.9 percent reduction in energy needs for cooling and up to a 1.1 percent reduction in energy for heating.<sup>12</sup> All households in a neighborhood benefit, not just those directly adjacent to the green space. The CPC will also prioritize projects that incorporate sustainability initiatives, such as rain gardens, and energy-efficiency, such as through solar panels or other LEED standards.

### GOAL 4

#### *Utilize existing housing stock to create permanent affordable units for Chelsea residents that in the process improves conditions of Chelsea’s housing stock.*

This goal can be achieved by converting existing market-rate housing into permanent affordable units for Chelsea residents through deed restricted housing. Rehabilitation, repair, and improvements to community housing that was acquired or created with CPA funds are also CPA-eligible activities. For example, a project could provide funding to a community organization, land trust, or housing trust to purchase a market-rate property and convert the units into affordable deed-restricted units. The funds could also be used to improve the property to support the creation of units that comply with current building, health, and safety codes.

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<sup>12</sup> 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan, p 39.

## GOAL 5

### *Support CPA-eligible initiatives of existing housing-oriented organizations*

Chelsea has many active entities that support households in need, including housing-related initiatives. The CPC will support any CPA-eligible initiatives of any housing-related organizations, including the creation of a non-profit-run land bank or housing cooperative. Chelsea Restoration Corporation (CRC) a nonprofit organization, provides homeownership assistance to low- and moderate-income residents in Chelsea and nearby communities. The Chelsea Collaborative (Collaborative) is a non-profit dedicated to enhancing Chelsea's economic and social health.

Chelsea also created the Chelsea Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) in 2005 when the City Council voted to adopt the provisions of G.L. c. 44 § 55C. In 2007-2008, the Trust allocated funds to Spencer Row, a 32-unit affordable housing development at 215 Spencer Avenue. The AHT was revived in the fall of 2016 after being dormant for several years. The seven-member board is charged with managing the Trust Fund and assisting in the creation of new affordable housing and the preservation, rehabilitation, and maintenance of existing affordable housing in Chelsea. Per the AHT's 2018 Action Plan, the AHT's highest priorities are:

1. **Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Provide housing rehabilitation assistance to income-qualified homeowners or landlords renting to qualified low-income households.
2. **Triple-Decker Acquisitions:** Acquire triple-deckers or two-family structures to create deed restricted rental housing.
3. **Chel-SEA (Support Expanding Affordable Housing in Chelsea):** Fund developers or other housing proponents through grants to create and preserve new deed restricted affordable housing units.
4. **CHAO (Chelsea Homeownership Assistance Opportunity):** A first-time homebuyers program that creates deed restricted homes (single-family and condos) in perpetuity by providing grants to reduce sale prices of existing market-rate homes.

## Community Housing Five-Year Budget

Approximate Amount Available at Year-End FY19	\$226,479
Estimated Community Housing Reserve (10% of Estimated FY2020-FY2024 Revenue)	\$386,000
Total Actual + Estimated Reserve	\$612,000
Targeted Additional Allocation (30% of undesignated funds)	\$1,836,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>Up to \$2,448,000</b>

## 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 of less than 80 percent of the area-wide median income (AMI) and moderate-income housing is affordable to households earning less than 100 percent AMI. Furthermore, the CPA Statute defines "senior housing" as housing for persons 60 years old or over, who also meet the qualifications for low- or moderate- income.

The CPA Statute allows 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. Preservation, which is 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 for the purpose of making



such...community housing functional for their 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 who are eligible for community housing . . .” The CPA Statute also allows CPA funds to be appropriated to a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust (MGL c.44 §.55C).

# CHELSEA COMMUNITY HOUSING NEEDS AND RESOURCES

An aging and limited housing stock coupled with a growing population has led to significant increases in housing prices. This has created an affordability crisis for many of Chelsea's long-term residents—particularly for low-, very low-, and extremely-low-income households.

## HOUSING SUPPLY

Chelsea has an estimated 13,857 total housing units. Of the **13,436** occupied units (2017 ACS)

**74 PERCENT**  
(9,955 units) are  
renter-occupied

**26 PERCENT**  
(3,481 units) are  
owner-occupied

Since 2010, Chelsea  
**GAINED 1512**  
rental units and  
**LOST 683**  
owner-occupied units.  
(ACS and 2010 Census)



The relative  
shortage of  
homeownership  
opportunities  
is reflected in a  
**3 PERCENT**  
vacancy rate.  
(2017 ACS)

## HOUSING TYPE



**46 PERCENT** of homes  
were built in 1939 or earlier.  
Many federally-funded public  
housing units are over 50 years  
old.

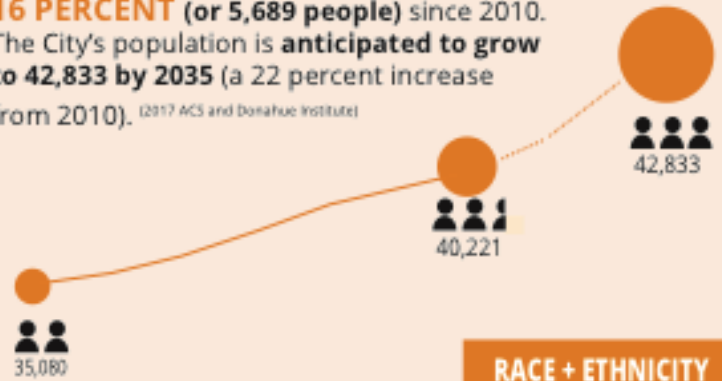
**88 PERCENT**  
of the City's housing stock is multi-  
family (containing 2 or more  
units)—**31 PERCENT** of the total  
housing stock contain ten units or  
more. (2017 ACS)

Less than **12 PERCENT** of housing units are single-family  
homes. Over the past 15 years, total condominium units have  
increased by over **700 UNITS**—some through conversion  
of existing multifamily housing. (2017 Housing Strategic Plan)

Unless noted, 2017 American Community Survey one-year supplemental estimates are used in the plan when applicable and appropriate. Otherwise, American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates 2013-2017 and other data sources are used. Population and housing estimates and forecasts rely on sampling, estimates, and modeling, there is going to be some imprecision in the data. Chelsea has a large foreign-born population and its households are overwhelmingly comprised of renters, and these conditions may elevate the risk of error. However, when the risk of sampling error is spread across all communities in a given region or state, it is likely that the overall patterns reflected in the data are largely accurate and provide a valid basis for planning.

## POPULATION

Chelsea's estimated population has grown by  
**16 PERCENT** (or **5,689 people**) since 2010.  
The City's population is **anticipated to grow  
to 42,833 by 2035** (a 22 percent increase  
from 2010). (2017 ACS and Donahue Institute)



## RACE + ETHNICITY

Chelsea is a **MINORITY-MAJORITY CITY**

About **66 PERCENT**  
identifies as Hispanic/  
Latinx.



About **22 PERCENT**  
identify as white.

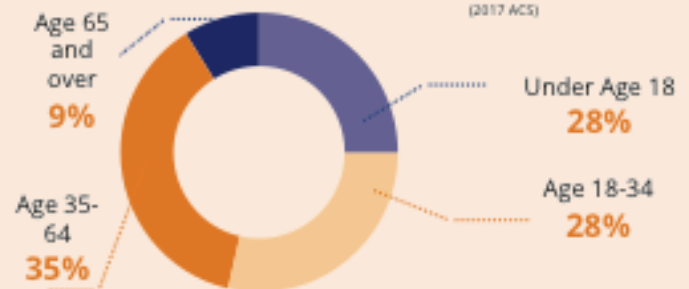


The remaining population identifies  
as African American (about 6  
percent), Asian (3.4 percent), mixed  
race (2.2 percent), or American  
Indian/Alaska Native (0.1). (ACS)



## AGE

(2017 ACS)



As the population continues to grow, the Donahue Institute predicts  
these population segments to grow by 2035



**15% INCREASE**  
in residents 19 and under

**69% INCREASE**  
in residents age 50 to 64

**54% INCREASE**  
in residents 65 and older

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME



In 2017, Chelsea's median family income was

**\$58,724.** (2017 ACS)

This is a **32.4 PERCENT INCREASE** from the 2010 estimated median household income of \$40,487. (2017 ACS and 2010 Census) Still, Chelsea's median household income for a household of four is still **50 PERCENT LOWER** than that of the Boston Metro HUD region (\$53,600 compared to \$107,800). (HUD)

Percent MFI	Qualifying Household Income (using Boston Metro HUD Median Family Income)	Qualifying Household Income (using Chelsea ACS Median Family Income)
30%	\$32,340	\$17,617
50%	\$53,900	\$29,362
60%	\$64,680	\$35,234
80%	\$86,240	\$46,979
100%	\$107,800	\$58,724

## COST OF HOUSING



Between 2013 and 2017, the average value of owner-occupied homes with 2 or more units rose from \$249,000 to

\$311,000—a

**25 PERCENT INCREASE.**

(ACS)



Zillow reports that in Chelsea average monthly rents increased from \$1,599 to \$2,202 between 2011 and 2016—a

**38 PERCENT INCREASE.**

(ZILLOW)

Rising rents and median sale prices of single-family homes has corresponded to an increase in the population that falls in higher income brackets. **Between 2010 and 2016, households making above \$100,000 experienced the largest growth** (11 percentage points) while those in the lowest income brackets (earning less than \$10,000) experienced the largest loss (13 percentage points). (ACS and 2010 Census)

Sources: 2010 Federal Census (2010 Census)  
2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2017 ACS)  
2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (ACS)  
2017 City of Chelsea Housing Strategy

## AFFORDABILITY



**28.5 PERCENT** of homeowners and **41 PERCENT** of renters pay more than 35 percent of their monthly income towards housing costs. (ACS)



**19.3 PERCENT** (2,434 units) of Chelsea's total housing stock is counted as affordable on the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), which is above the State's minimum affordability goal of 10 percent.

(DHCD, September 2017)

## CHELSEA HOUSING AUTHORITY (CHA)

Chelsea Housing Authority (CHA) manages **914 UNITS** of public housing, including:

# of Units	Housing Program
515	HUD Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program
294	state-aided family housing
266	state-aided elder/disabled housing
202	federal-aided family housing
152	federal-aided elder/disabled housing
61	state-aided Massachusetts Rental Vouchers Program (MRVP)/Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP)
8	disabled individuals under the Alternative Housing Voucher Program

Over **3000 HOUSEHOLDS** are on the waiting list for its federal and state housing units—half are waiting for CHA's 418 elderly and disabled units.

(2017 Housing Strategic Plan)

Other housing organizations include: the **CHELSEA RESTORATION CORPORATION (CRC)**, a nonprofit organization which provides homeownership assistance to low- and moderate-income residents in Chelsea and nearby communities; the **NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPERS (TND)** which developed 186 homes in the last decade and owns 389 apartments in Chelsea, including their 2018 French Club Development project in the Mill Hill neighborhood (thirty-four affordable units); and **SOLDIERS HOME**, a state-run veterans health care service facility, also offers 305 dormitory residences.

### Abbreviations:

AMI - Area Median Income (set by the Federal Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD))  
DHCD - MA Dept of Housing and Community Development  
MFI - Median Family Income (set by the Federal Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD))  
SHI - MA Subsidized Housing Inventory



## Chapter 4: Historic Preservation



*Chelsea Garden Cemetery*

### Goals and Priorities

*Many of Chelsea's historic resources, both public and privately-owned, were lost during the Great Chelsea Fires. Preservation and restoration of those remaining historic resources is a key community goal to protect Chelsea's character, preserve the City's historic legacy, and enhance public understanding and enjoyment of local history.*

Chelsea's historic resources include both public resources—such as City Hall, Chelsea Public Library, Chelsea Garden Cemetery, and monuments—and private resources, such as the Governor Bellingham-Cary House, Congregation Agudath Sholom (Walnut Street Synagogue), and Henry C. Kimball House. The CPC developed the following historic preservation goals and possibilities through careful consideration of Chelsea's historic preservation needs, public input throughout the planning process, and overall community goals. The CPA goals, as described below, are intended to guide potential applicants for CPA funding for historic preservation of the community's historic resources and will be used to direct CPC funding recommendations. Applications for funding are not limited to the project ideas listed in this plan.

## GENERAL CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECTS:

- The project must address *public* resources or private resources with *public access* or other demonstrable public benefits.
- The resource must either be listed on the State Register of Historic Places or be determined by the Chelsea Historic Commission as historically significant to the community.
- CPA funds can be used for projects that deal with *tangible* historic resources, but not with historic interpretation, education or heightening awareness of history.
- CPA funds can only be used to **ACQUIRE, PRESERVE, or REHABILITATE/RESTORE** a historic resource. See the *Eligible Activities* section of this chapter for more details.
- All historic preservation work must follow 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).

### GOAL 1

#### *Improve public accessibility to historic resources.*

As the community's population ages, accessibility improvements that accommodate people of all ages and abilities will only grow in importance. The CPC supports accessibility improvements to expand public enjoyment and access to public resources or private historic resources that are open to the public for public enjoyment and use. Per the *City of Chelsea's 2018 ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan*, several of Chelsea's historic public resources included in the study, including City Hall, are "functionally accessible"—meaning that they are generally usable by people with disabilities but are not in full compliance with current accessibility requirements, though they may have been compliant when they were built or last renovated – before 1991. City Hall, as noted by the ADA Plan, offers accessible entrances and routes through the building as well as partially-accessible bathrooms—but service counters are higher than the maximum allowed, limiting access. Other existing accommodations to facilitate public access to Chelsea's historic properties (e.g., ramps, benches, and signage) is similarly limited.

Alterations to historic properties should follow the provisions identified in the 2010 ADA Standards governing historic properties. Under those provisions, alterations should be done in full compliance with those standards for other types of buildings unless following the usual standards would threaten or destroy the historic significance of a feature of the building. If so, alternative solutions may be used. The decision to use alternative solutions for that feature must be made in consultation with the appropriate historic advisory board as designated in the 2010 ADA Standards (for Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Historical Commission), and interested persons should be invited to participate in the decision-making process. Note that any corrective actions needed to ensure program accessibility would also have to comply with the requirements of the 2010 ADA Standards for historic facilities. Other historic buildings have incorporated ramps, replaced door handles with levers, removed thresholds, and other accessibility improvements to enhance public access.

CPA funds can be used for projects that deal with tangible historic resources, but not with historic interpretation, education or heightening awareness of history. However, the CPC encourages project applicants which incorporate outreach, public awareness, and education but cannot fund those components of projects.

### GOAL 2

#### *Improve outdoor public historic places and public monuments*

Chelsea has a number of historic resources and monuments commemorating the City's role in the American Revolutionary War and Civil War, including plots at the Chelsea Garden Cemetery, the Soldiers Monument in front of City Hall, and others. The CPC will prioritize projects which support the preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of outdoor public historic places, such as the Chelsea Garden Cemetery, historic squares, and/or public monuments. The preservation of these resources is important to protect the City's character and public understanding of local history as well as to help support the local tourism economy.

### GOAL 3

#### *Preserve historic archives including city records.*

Preservation of historic archives is important to protect the community's legacy. Chelsea has historic vital records in the custody of the City Archives, located in the basement of the Public Library, and the Historic Commission's records in City Hall. All of these resources are important to protect and preserve for current and future generation's understanding of the community's roots. Protection of archives includes physical preservation, digitization, and restoration of the documents themselves, as well as ensuring proper climate control and secure storage.

### GOAL 4

#### *Continue to inventory Chelsea's historic resources to complete city and state records in accordance with CPA eligibility.*

Inventories provide a comprehensive understanding of the community's historic resources and lay a foundation for prioritization and preservation. The CPA funds are an important source as a local match for the state's Survey and Planning Grant (which is provided through the Massachusetts Historical Commission).

Project funds can be used to support historic resource surveys if the survey serves a specific purpose, such as establishing a Local Historic District (LHD) per MGL c.40C. LHDs provide strong protection for historic resources by preventing demolition or alterations that would be detrimental or incongruous to the historic values of the district. Under this purpose, historic resource survey work helps "preserve" historic resources, defined by the CPA statute as the "protection of personal or real property from injury, harm, or destruction." The CPC may also choose to use their administrative funds to support historic resources, particularly if a survey will support the CPC in its statutorily-required responsibility to study the community preservation needs and resources of the community.

## Historic Preservation Five-Year Budget

Approximate Amount Available at Year-End FY19	\$226,479
Estimated Historic Preservation Reserve (10% of Estimated FY2020-FY2024 Revenue)	\$386,000
Total Actual + Estimated Reserve	\$612,000
Targeted Additional Allocation (up to 5% of undesignated funds)	\$306,097
<b>Total</b>	<b>Up to \$918,000</b>

## Eligible Activities

The CPA Act, 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 local historic preservation 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."

In addition, CPA funds may be appropriated to pay a nonprofit organization to hold, monitor, and/or enforce a deed restriction as described in Section 12 of the CPA Act (amended Summer 2012). Furthermore, within the definition of "rehabilitation", CPA is allowed to fund improvements to make historic resources functional for their intended use, including improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other building or access codes. All rehabilitation work, with respect to historic resources, is required to 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), available online: [www.nps.gov/tps/standards](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards).

Admin funds may be used to support projects that require additional professional and technical support, including but not limited to, feasibility studies, condition assessments, historic evaluations/surveys etc. Additional funds may also be awarded using category funds to support projects.

In general, a rule of thumb is that CPA can fund projects that deal with tangible historic resources, but not with historic interpretation, education or heightening awareness of history. For example, using CPA funds to hire a videographer to film oral histories of members of the community would not be allowed. General surveys, studies and the like that are not connected to a specific CPA project may or may not be eligible, depending upon the specifics of the request and the funding source used.



# CHELSEA

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

### NEEDS AND RESOURCES

Chelsea has **815** documented historic resources including buildings, cemeteries, objects, and structures. (MACRIS)

#### NATIONALLY-DESIGNATED RESOURCES

There are five National Register districts: Bellingham-Square, Downtown Chelsea, Downtown Chelsea Residential, Revere Beach Parkway, and the Boston Naval Hospital. (MACRIS)



Four resources are individually listed on the National Register: Bellingham-Cary House, C. Henry Kimball House, Chelsea Garden Cemetery, and Congregation Agudath Shalom. (MACRIS)

#### ARTIFACTS AND DOCUMENTS

Historic documents include the City's vital records stored at City Hall and Historical Commission records and other local historic records stored at the Chelsea Public Library.

There is no historical society in Chelsea but the Governor Bellingham-Cary House Association opens the house for a number of seasonal events, history-related lectures and by appointment. All are welcome to attend.

The opening of the Chelsea Bridge in 1802—connecting Chelsea to Charlestown—led to the opening of taverns along Broadway near the bridge. Wooden shipbuilding continues to be major industry at the beginning of the century. (MHC)



#### NINETEENTH CENTURY



#### EARLY SETTLEMENT

Chelsea was first called Winnisimmet (meaning "good spring nearby") by the Sagamore Indians that once lived there. In 1624, Samuel Maverick established a trading post—the first in Boston Harbor—and a homestead known as Paradise Cove. (2010 OSRP)



RICHARD BELLINGHAM

In 1635, Maverick sold his land to Governor Richard Bellingham—Chelsea became part of Boston at this time. Soon after, the first ferry service began between Chelsea and Boston. The community remained part of Boston until incorporation in 1739, when it was named Chelsea. (MHC)

#### BELLINGHAM-CARY HOUSE



Portions of the original Bellingham Estate (1659) were incorporated into the structure known now as the Bellingham-Cary House—the city's only surviving dwelling from this time. The home is currently managed by a non-profit organization, Bellingham-Cary House Association. (MHC)

There are only **2** pre-nineteenth century resources listed on MACRIS, the Bellingham-Cary House and Malone Park on Powderhorn Hill (1775). (MACRIS)





## Chapter 5: Open Space and Outdoor Recreation



*Chelsea Waterfront*

### Goals and Priorities

*Chelsea's built-out character presents limited opportunities for large-scale open space growth but some potential for small-scale development. While much has been accomplished, the City must continue to be vigilant for redevelopment opportunities, particularly along the waterfront. As a coastal community, Chelsea continues to be very vulnerable to the effects of climate change.*

The goals and possibilities described in this chapter are based on Chelsea's open space and outdoor recreation needs, community input as part of this process, and overall community goals. This chapter describes open space and outdoor



recreation goals, CPA eligibility for open space and outdoor recreation projects, and minimum spending requirements. In addition, this chapter includes a resource profile describing Chelsea's open space and outdoor recreation needs and resources.

The CPA goals, as described below, are intended to guide potential applicants for CPA funding for open space and outdoor recreation and will be used to direct CPC funding recommendations. However, applications for funding are not limited to the project ideas listed in this plan.

## GENERAL CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PROJECTS:

- Recreational projects must focus on land-based outdoor passive or active uses or facilities. For example, community gardens, trails, youth and adult athletic fields, parks, or playgrounds. See the *Eligible Activities* section of this chapter for the definition of open space and other details.
- CPA funds must be used for capital projects—not ongoing maintenance or operating costs.
- CPA funds can be used to **ACQUIRE** or **CREATE** open space and land for recreation.<sup>13</sup>
- CPA funds can also be used to **PRESERVE** or **REHABILITATE/RESTORE** open space that is existing or has been acquired or created using CPA funds. See the *Eligible Activities* section of this chapter for more details.

## GOAL 1

### *Improve and maintain existing parks, playgrounds, and other open space facilities.*

Given the constraints on developing new open space and parks in the built-out city, Chelsea should continue to manage and maintain its existing facilities in order to optimize their use. City's open space and recreational resources, Chelsea offers 21 parks and 17 playgrounds, ranging from neighborhood "Tot Lots" to larger parks that include jungle gyms, rock climbing structures, and swings. Highland Park (2017), Quigley Park (2014), and Washington Park (2013) are some of the parks that have been renovated in the last five years. According to the *2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update (OSRP)*, new equipment and maintenance may be needed at some facilities, particularly the City's highly-used athletic fields, like the turf field at Highland Park. Age and design of recreation facilities can impact the safety, accessibility, and general functionality. With the July 2012 amendments to the CPA statute, rehabilitation of existing parks and playgrounds are eligible CPA activities.

## GOAL 2

### *Improve and create waterfront access.*

As a Designated Port Area (DPA), Chelsea has a working-waterfront with historically industrial use. There is a walking path along Mill Creek near the Chelsea Housing Authority housing complex that offers limited views to the natural resource, and a Publicly Organized Recreation Territory (PORT) Park community access point next to the easternmost salt pile. Recent plans and studies, including the *2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan*; the *2012 Chelsea Vision Plan by Sasaki*; the *2014 Community Development Plan*; the *2016 A Vision for the Chelsea Waterfront*; and in-progress *Chelsea Creek Municipal Harbor Plan*, have emphasized the need to reclaim the waterfront for public use and improve waterfront access. The CPC encourages projects which improve or create public access to the waterfront.

Per the *2016 Vision for the Chelsea Waterfront*, the key recommendations for the waterfront area is:

1. Create a waterfront point access "park" and new open space zoning district at the Chelsea Street Bridge that will provide recreational opportunities and access to the community, as well as an arrival gateway for drivers, residents, and future Silver Line transit riders.
2. Create mirror-image buffer zones on both sides of the recommended waterfront park flanking the Chelsea Street Bridge that will serve as a long-term interim "public activity node". The node can include temporary facilities including cargo container buildings that can house revenue-generating retail uses as well as community-oriented activities and events.

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<sup>13</sup> For example, open space or land for recreation can be created through demolition of structures and/or clean-up of polluted sites.

3. When market conditions and development interests have changed in the future, the interim “public activity nodes” can house permanent uses that support the principal working port uses and also welcome the public from the adjacent waterfront park. The supporting development will serve as a buffer between the waterfront park and the working port uses to distance community access points from the operations of essential working port businesses.
4. Form a partnership to create a regional online clearinghouse of working port uses to help attract uses that support the economy and are public-friendly.
5. Rezone and transform the Forbes and Eastern Avenue Extension sites into a waterfront, mixed-use residential, commercial/office and, recreation district to allow robust community access in the form of linear park. The district will provide opportunities for market rate and affordable housing, services and leisure.
6. Rezone a portion of the Shurtleff-Bellingham neighborhood to include opportunities for mixed-use low-to mid-rise residential development that will help bring interest toward the waterfront and leverage the forthcoming Silver Line service.
7. Make improvements along the Mill Creek waterfront for recreational boating and kayaking.

The need for expanded bike infrastructure and walking path networks, particularly near and along the waterfront, was expressed by the community during outreach for this plan. In 2018, with the extension of the Silver Line into Chelsea, the City, with assistance from MassDOT and the Commonwealth’s Gateway City Parks Program, created a bicycle and pedestrian path called the “Chelsea Greenway.” The multi-use path follows the Silver Line Gateway from Marginal Street to downtown Chelsea, where it transitions to an on-road bike facility and walking route to the Mystic Mall. Portions of the path are still in-progress. In the future, the City hopes to connect the Greenway to links in the Metro-Boston Greenway, including the Northern Strand Community Trail in Everett and the East Boston Greenway. The City is working to develop several new biking and walking paths, including the Mystic River Overlook Park under the Tobin which includes trails up the hillside and a bike and pedestrian path to the waterfront in conjunction with downtown traffic and parking improvements.

Neighborhood-level studies, including the *2007 Gerrish Avenue/Bellingham Street Neighborhood Action Plan*; *2009 Addison-Orange Neighborhood Revitalization Plan*; *2016 Vision for the Chelsea Waterfront*; and *2018 Beacham-Williams Street Corridor Study*, emphasize the need for increased connectivity, walkability, and protected bike paths. The primary use of any bike or walking paths created using CPA funds must be recreational—not used for transportation or commuting.

### GOAL 3

#### *Improve public access to and safety in existing parks, playgrounds, and other open space*

As the community’s population ages, accessibility improvements that accommodate people of all ages and abilities will only grow in importance. The CPC supports accessibility improvements to expand public enjoyment and access to public resources or private historic resources that are open to the public for public enjoyment and use. Per the *City of Chelsea’s 2018 ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan*, sixteen of Chelsea’s parks and playgrounds included in the study, including Highland Park, Quigley Park, and the Chelsea Garden Cemetery, are “functionally accessible”—meaning that they are generally usable by people with disabilities but are not in full compliance with current accessibility requirements, though they may have been compliant when they were built or last renovated – before 1991. With the July 2012 amendments to the CPA statute, rehabilitation of existing parks and playgrounds are eligible CPA activities. The CPC encourages project proposals to rehabilitate aging or create new recreation facilities to make them accessible to persons of all abilities, including those with special needs, such as additional lighting, fencing, ramps, and other design features.

### GOAL 4

#### *Integrate green infrastructure and open space into the City’s neighborhoods, such as community gardens, rain gardens, and pocket parks.*

As cities grow, urban open space is under increasing pressure to perform important ecosystem services, such as providing urban habitats, mitigating stormwater runoff, and offering additional health benefits to urban populations. Public natural areas and open space, often protected by community land trusts in other Massachusetts’s communities, typically provide these critical ecological functions.

As a built-out city, Chelsea must work to integrate open space and recreational amenities throughout the urban fabric—a goal from the City’s 2017 *Open Space and Recreation Plan*. Although small in size, green spaces on private property make up large parts of the urban land base and provide important roles for habitat and ecosystem services. The CPC will prioritize neighborhood-oriented projects which explore opportunities to improve vacant or underutilized spaces, such as lots or greenspaces shared by an apartment complex and community gardens, through greening infrastructure. Open space should help tie city neighborhoods together, provide buffers against incompatible uses, enable growth of local food sources, and add value to surrounding properties.

*“Since the City is built-out, opportunities for adding to the inventory of open space will be limited to small redeveloped infill parcels.... [These parks play] an important role in providing the surrounding neighborhood with a much-needed sanctuary from the urban environment and create a new outlet for small children to play”<sup>14</sup>*

In urban areas, stormwater runoff is a major cause of water pollution. A high percentage of land surfaces in cities, such as parking lots, streets, or sidewalks, are impermeable—water cannot soak into the ground as it should. Green infrastructure is an urban landscape management strategy which attempts to mitigate runoff by conserving and absorbing rainwater into the soil instead of impermeable surfaces. Green infrastructure practices can employ soils, shallow depressions, and vegetation to minimize the negative impacts of stormwater runoff and more closely reflect natural conditions. Green infrastructure can keep Chelsea’s water and air cleaner, reduce flooding during heavy rainfall, reduce street temperatures during the summer, and save money. Green infrastructure can be designed and implemented for:

- Highly urban areas, even where little open space exists;
- Difficult sites with many constraints (such as shallow bedrock or high groundwater)
- A range of rainfall amounts from very small storms to heavy downpours.

Green infrastructure projects could include: creating rain gardens; harvesting rainwater through cisterns; native landscaping; constructing bio-retention ponds, bio-swales and rainwater planters; and incorporating pervious pavement or pavers. The CPC will also consider other green infrastructure projects not listed here.

## GOAL 5

### *Protect key parcels that enhance community resilience in the face of climate change impacts.*

Approximately 60 percent of Chelsea’s 7.8-mile municipal boundary borders tidally-influenced waterways. Once a network of waterways and tidelands, the City’s low-lying areas are, on average, less than 10 feet above sea level.

*According to Chelsea’s 2017 Designing Coastal Community Infrastructure for Climate Change, “Disruption of these natural systems by urban development has made these areas even more susceptible to coastal flooding under present day and future climate change conditions.”*

As a coastal community, Chelsea is especially vulnerable to coastal flooding, sea-level rise, and other climate change effects. Chelsea’s 2017 *Designing Coastal Community Infrastructure for Climate Change* highlights five vulnerability zones across the city. These zones (36 percent of the City) face flood risk under present day conditions—and vulnerable land expands to 42 percent in 2030 conditions and 49 percent in 2070 conditions.

<sup>14</sup> City of Chelsea Open Space and Recreation Plan 2010-2016. p. 41.



SOURCE: AREAS OF CHELSEA'S VULNERABLE TO COASTAL FLOODING  
2017 Designing Coastal Community Infrastructure for Climate Change, P2.

Urban resilience—the capacity of a community within a city to survive, adapt, and grow regardless of chronic or acute stresses they experience—involves careful open space protection planning to balance protection of sensitive natural environments, including ecotones—the transitional area between two plant communities—with impacts of human and economic activity.<sup>15</sup> CPA funds could support protection of land from development through acquisition or through conservation restrictions held by public entities or non-profit organizations, such as land trusts.

## GOAL 6

### *Create more outdoor recreation spaces that cater to teens.*

During this plan's community outreach process, community stakeholders expressed a desire for a teen-oriented space. Chelsea offers 21 parks and 17 playgrounds, ranging from neighborhood "Tot Lots" to larger parks that include jungle gyms, rock climbing structures, and swings. Playgrounds are primarily geared for children ages 2-12—leaving teens and older youth limited possibilities for places to play and spend time together. According to census estimates, youth (children age 12 to 17) make up 28.3 percent of the population—and predicted to grow. The Donahue Institute predicts that residents under the age of 18 will increase by 19 percent by 2035. The CPC will prioritize projects which create outdoor recreation spaces for teens, including a skate park, outdoor study spaces such as a pavilion and picnic tables, or other passive recreation spaces.

## Open Space/Outdoor Recreation Five-Year Budget

Approximate Amount Available at Year-End FY19	\$226,479
Estimated Open Space/Outdoor Recreation Reserve (10% of Estimated FY2020-FY2024 Revenue)	\$386,000
Total Actual + Estimated Reserve	\$612,000
Targeted Additional Allocation (15% of undesignated funds)	\$918,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>Up to \$ 1,530,000</b>

<sup>15</sup> Rockefeller Foundation. 100 Resilient Cities.

## Eligible Activities

### OPEN SPACE

The CPA defines the term “open space” as including, but not limited to, land deemed necessary to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, lake and pond frontage, beaches, and scenic vistas. The CPA statute allows the use of CPA funds for the acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space. Additionally, the CPA statute allows for the rehabilitation/restoration of open space that was acquired or created with CPA funds. Per MGL c.44B §.5(f), CPA funds may not be used to acquire real property, or property interest, for a price exceeding the value of the property (as determined by methods customarily accepted by the appraisal profession).

In accordance with the CPA statute (MGL c.44B §.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 City using CPA funds will require execution of a permanent restriction that will run with the land and will be enforceable by the City, Town, or Commonwealth. It may also run to the benefit of a nonprofit organization, charitable corporation, or foundation and that is in accordance with the requirements 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”). Please contact the CPA Coordinator with questions on eligibility.

### OUTDOOR RECREATION

The CPA defines recreational use as including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, and 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.”

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



## CHELSEA

# OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

## NEEDS AND RESOURCES

CHELSEA'S BUILT-OUT CHARACTER PRESENTS LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR LARGE-SCALE OPEN SPACE GROWTH BUT POTENTIAL FOR SMALL-SCALE DEVELOPMENT. While much has been accomplished, the City must continue to be vigilant for redevelopment opportunities, particularly along the waterfront. As a coastal community, Chelsea continues to be very vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

### OPEN SPACE

According to the Massachusetts's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, "open space" is "conservation land, recreation land, agricultural land, corridor parks, and amenities such as small parks, green buffers along roadways or any open area that is owned by an agency or organization dedicated to conservation."

Roughly **53.47 ACRES** in Chelsea (4.6 percent of total land area) is open space—primarily city-owned small pocket parks and playgrounds. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>

**40 PARCELS (52.6 ACRES)** are owned and managed by either the City or Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) <sup>(OSRP)</sup>. DCR manages **THREE** parks.

There are some privately-owned parcels, such as the PORT park, but no Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B land <sup>(OSRP)</sup>.



Roughly **83 PERCENT** of Chelsea's open space (44.56 acres) is permanently protected. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>

#### Abbreviations:

DCR: MA Department of Conservation and Recreation

DPA: Designated Port Area

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIRMS: Flood Insurance Rate Maps

GGCP: Massachusetts Greening the Gateway Cities Program

MRWA: Mystic River Watershed Association

PORT: Publicly Organized Recreation Territory

### SCENIC VISTAS



Due to Chelsea's hilly topography, there are scenic vistas of Chelsea, Boston Harbor, and Downtown Boston in Bellingham/Highland, Malone Park, and Mary O'Malley Park. These views should be protected and enhanced—and new views created—where possible. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>

### URBAN FORESTRY

Between 2006 and 2009, the City of Chelsea planted over **253** new trees, earning the city recognition as

"TREE CITY USA"



for the last thirteen years. The City's volunteer-based Tree Board advocates for the preservation and enhancement of the urban canopy. <sup>(OSRP 2010)</sup>

**THE MASSACHUSETTS GREENING THE GATEWAY CITIES PROGRAM (GGCP)** is a partnership designed to reduce household heating and cooling energy use by increasing tree canopy cover in urban residential areas in the state's Gateway Cities, such as Chelsea. GGCP is managed by state departments and local grassroots organizations such as GreenRoots. The program's goal is to **COVER 5 PERCENT OF IDENTIFIED NEIGHBORHOODS IN NEW TREE CANOPY COVER**. Trees are planted by DCR Bureau of Forestry, Urban & Community Forestry crews hired from local communities. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>

### URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS



Tree mortality has risen to **30 PERCENT**.

The 2016 comprehensive tree study by the Davey Resource Group found that Maple (*Acer*) made up a significant portion of the urban forest, raising concerns about Chelsea's biodiversity. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>

## STORMWATER RUNOFF

As a built-out city, Chelsea's high percentage of impermeable surfaces increases the rate of precipitation runoff—reducing the amount of water available for groundwater recharge in wetlands. Stormwater runoff is also one of the leading contributors to water pollution in urban areas. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>



## COASTAL RESOURCES

Approximately **60 PERCENT** of Chelsea's 7.8-MILE municipal boundary borders tidally-influenced waterways, including Mill Creek to the northeast, Chelsea Creek to the south and east, Mystic River to the south, and Island End River to the southwest. All of these are part of the Mystic River Watershed that drains into Boston Harbor. Recent efforts, including the 2016 *A Vision for the Chelsea Waterfront*, have sought to reclaim public access to the city's waterfront areas.

The shoreline varies between coastal bank, coastal beach, salt marsh, tidal flats, upland and rocky shore. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>



### DESIGNATED PORT AREAS (DPA)

DPAs protect water-dependent industrial uses in areas where such activity has historically occurred. To obtain a DPA designation, the waterway or waterfront area must support commercial navigation, have adjacent land that is compatible with industrial development, and have infrastructure that supports the needs of industrial development. The Chelsea Creek DPA extends along Chelsea Creek into Revere and East Boston. Portions of the Mystic River DPA fall within Chelsea between the Tobin and McArdle bridges. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>

There are a few open space and recreation waterfront parcels in non-DPA areas, including:

- Mary O'Malley Park (Admiral's Hill) is the largest public waterfront open space.
- Mill Creek Riverwalk, a 0.554-acre walking and biking path, runs along Mill Creek but offers limited scenic views and access to the creek.
- The PORT park is privately-owned by Eastern Minerals but managed by the City of Chelsea
- Island End Park (Admiral's Hill Marina)

**MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION (MyRWA)** and other community-based organizations, such as Greenroots, promote awareness and appreciation for Chelsea's underutilized water and coastal resources.

## WETLANDS



There are **3** vegetated wetland areas—one along Mill Creek in northeastern Chelsea, one at the head of Island End, and a small salt marsh on Chelsea Creek where the railroad tracks run along the edge of the creek. Groundwater recharge takes place in these wetland areas. <sup>(OSRP)</sup>

**Mill Creek and Chelsea Creek are important habitats for both marine life and shorebirds.** They act as a spawning ground and nursery for smelt, American eel, Atlantic butterfish, Atlantic cod, Atlantic mackerel, Atlantic sea herring, pollock, red hake, and at least four types of flounder. Many birds who feed on the fish hatchlings—such as egrets, swans, herons, and cormorants, are therefore attracted to these estuaries to feed and breed. <sup>(City of Chelsea)</sup>

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

### FLOODING

Once a network of waterways and tidelands, the City's low-lying areas are now flood zones. On average, these areas are **LESS THAN 10 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL**

**20 PERCENT** of the City is mapped within a potential coastal flooding area for present day conditions. <sup>(2017 DCCC)</sup>

**FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAPS (FIRMS)** are developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) using historical climate information including river flow, storm tide, and rainfall. Chelsea's Floodplain Overlay District includes the areas around Mystic and Island End Rivers and Chelsea and Mill Creek as shown on the 2016 Suffolk County FIRM. **FIRMS DO NOT CONSIDER FUTURE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE.** <sup>(FEMA)</sup>



In addition to ongoing flooding, Chelsea is increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

**SEA-LEVEL RISE**  
**IS PROJECTED TO INCREASE BY 0.6 FEET BY 2030 AND 3.2 FEET BY 2080.**

Storm events are anticipated to be more frequent and more intense—increasing in likelihood by **35 PERCENT BY 2030 AND 45 PERCENT BY 2070.** <sup>(2017 DCCC)</sup>



## OUTDOOR RECREATION

**98 PERCENT** of Chelsea residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, playground, or open space—**SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 54 PERCENT.** (OSRP)

Residents in the north of the City can enjoy facilities such as, Voke Park, Washington Park, and Scrivano Park. Carter Park, Malone Park, and Mary C. Burke Elementary School Complex are available to residents in the city center. Residents in the south can access Kayem Park, Mary O'Malley Waterfront Park, Polonia Park, Highland Park, and Quigley Park. (City of Chelsea)

### LOCATIONS IN MODERATE NEED OF A PARK ARE LOCATED IN A COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL AREA:

- 1 - the area between Beecham, 2nd and Market Street adjacent to the Food Distribution Center;
- 2 - the auto body commercial/industrial site between 3rd and Vale streets north of the railroad.

(theodora.parkinson@ci.chelsea.ma.us)

## ATHLETIC FIELDS AND PARKS

There are **21** parks and athletic fields located throughout Chelsea<sup>1</sup>. (City of Chelsea)  
The majority of fields and parks offer benches, playgrounds, and parking. Many offer walking trails and nature and water spray facilities.

<sup>1</sup> Omitted from the map is the City Hall Plaza and Green

Table adapted from City of Chelsea, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Division

Athletic Fields and Parks	Ownership	Soccer and Football	Parking	Tennis	Running Track	Basketball	Picnic Area	Playing Fields	Garden	Benches	Playground	Walking Trails	Nature and Water Spray
Anita's Garden	M												
Carter Park	M												
Chelsea Garden Cemetery	M												
Chelsea River Walk	Private												
Chelsea Square	M												
Depella Park	M												
City Hall Plaza and Green	M												
Highland Green Corridor	M												
Highland Park	M												
Island End Park	M												
Mill Creek Riverwalk	M/Private												
Mystic River Overlook Park	M												
Paul A. Dexter Park	M												
Voke Park	M												
Washington Park	M												
Williams School Courtyard	SOH												
PORT Park	Private/ Municipally Managed												
Mary C. Burke Athletic Fields	SOH												
Veterans Field at Memorial Stadium	SOH												
Malone Park	ST												
Mary O'Malley Memorial Park	ST												

### Sources:

City of Chelsea Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2017 (OSRP)  
City of Chelsea Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2010 (OSRP 2010)  
City of Chelsea Department of Recreation and Cultural Affairs,  
recreation.chelseama.gov (City of Chelsea)

## PLAYGROUNDS AND TOT LOTS

There are **17** playgrounds throughout Chelsea, ranging from neighborhood "Tot Lots" to larger parks that include jungle gyms, rock climbing structures, and swings. (City of Chelsea)

**PLAYGROUNDS ARE PRIMARILY DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN AGES 2-12.** (CITY OF CHELSEA)

All playgrounds and tot lots offer benches and playgrounds, while some offer picnic areas (5); nature and water spray amenities (5); gardens (2); playing fields (2); parking (2); and basketball (1) (City of Chelsea)

Map: City of Chelsea, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Division



A Vision for the Chelsea Waterfront, 2016. (Waterfront)  
Designing Coastal Community Infrastructure for Climate Change, 2017 (DCCIC)  
Beacham-Williams Street Corridor Study, 2018 (BWSC)  
Chelsea Community Development Plan 2004 (CDP)  
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FEMA)

# Appendices

## A. Chelsea Application Guidelines & Scoring Criteria

		<i>Excellent (5)</i>	<i>Good (3)</i>	<i>Fair (1)</i>	<i>Poor (0)</i>	<i>Rating</i>
<b>Application and Narrative</b>						
<b>A</b>	<b>Complete Application</b>	All required responses and documentation is thoroughly provided	One required response or document is missing or not thorough	Two required responses or documents are missing or not thorough	More than two required responses or documents are missing or not thorough	
<b>B</b>	<b>Lead Priorities</b> (See Plan Chapter 2 and Project Narrative Question 2)	Strongly aligned with this principle	Somewhat aligned with this principle			
<b>C</b>	<b>Supporting Priorities</b> (See Plan Chapter 2 and Project Narrative Question 2)		Strongly aligned with this principle	Somewhat aligned with this principle		
<b>D</b>	<b>Leveraging Funding</b> (See Plan Chapter 2 and Project Budget)	Leverages more than 50 percent of total project costs and/or has demonstrable commitment for in-kind donations and/or sweat equity to reduce project costs	Leverages 25-50 percent of total project costs	Leverages less than 25 percent of total project costs.	CPA funds requested for 100% of project cost with no in-kind donations or sweat equity contributions.	
<b>E</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Community Goals</b> (See Plan Chapter 2 and Project Narrative Questions 1, 3, 5 & 6)	Strongly demonstrate comprehensive planning <b>AND</b> compatibility with other community initiatives and goals	Somewhat demonstrates comprehensive planning <b>AND</b> compatibility with other community initiatives and goals	Demonstrates comprehensive planning <b>OR</b> compatibility with other community initiatives and goals	Does not demonstrate comprehensive planning <b>AND</b> does not demonstrate compatibility with other community goals	
<b>F</b>	<b>Compatibility Between CPA Categories</b> (See Plan Chapter 2 and Project Narrative Questions 1 & 3)	Includes eligible activities <b>AND</b> helps achieve CPA goals in <u>all three</u> CPA areas	Includes eligible activities <b>AND</b> demonstrates compatibility (neutral/does no harm) in <u>two</u> CPA areas	Includes eligible activities in <u>only one</u> CPA area <b>AND</b> demonstrates compatibility across CPA goals in <u>two</u> CPA areas	Includes eligible activities in <u>only one</u> CPA area <b>AND</b> does not demonstrate compatibility across CPA goals	
<b>G</b>	<b>Protecting Chelsea's Most Vulnerable Populations</b> (See Plan Chapter 2 and Project Narrative Questions 1, 3 & 4)	Strongly demonstrates support for Chelsea's most vulnerable populations	Somewhat demonstrates support for Chelsea's most vulnerable populations	Demonstrates support for Chelsea's most vulnerable populations	Does not demonstrate support for Chelsea's most vulnerable populations	
<b>H</b>	<b>CP Plan Category Goals</b> (See Plan Chapters 3-6 and Project Narrative Questions 1-4)	Strongly aligns with more than one category goals	Strongly aligns with one category goal	Somewhat aligns with at least one category goal	Does not align with at least one category goal	
<b>I</b>	<b>Long-Term Maintenance</b> (See Project Narrative Questions 5-7)	Strongly demonstrates adequate capacity for long-term maintenance of property/asset/CPA investment <u>with no additional cost</u> to the town	Somewhat demonstrates adequate capacity for long-term maintenance of property/asset/CPA investment <u>with no additional cost</u> to the town	Demonstrates adequate capacity for long-term maintenance of property/asset/CPA <u>investment with some/minimal additional cost</u> to the town	Does not demonstrate adequate capacity for long-term maintenance of property/asset/CPA investment with no/minimal additional cost to the town	
<i>Overall Rating</i>						

## B. CPA Eligibility Matrix

**Chart 1**  
**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND ALLOWABLE SPENDING PURPOSES (G.L. c. 44B, § 5)**

	OPEN SPACE	HISTORIC RESOURCES	RECREATIONAL LAND	COMMUNITY HOUSING
<b>DEFINITIONS</b> (G.L. c. 44B, § 2)	Land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, 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	Building, structure, vessel, real property, document or artifact listed on the state register of historic places or determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of the city or town	Land for 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 Does <u>not</u> include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium or similar structure.	Housing for low and moderate income individuals and families, including low or moderate income seniors  Moderate income is less than 100%, and low income is less than 80%, of US HUD Area Wide Median Income
<b>ACQUISITION</b> Obtain property interest by gift, purchase, devise, grant, rental, rental purchase, lease or otherwise. Only includes eminent domain taking as provided by G.L. c. 44B	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>CREATION</b> To bring into being or cause to exist. <i>Seideman v. City of Newton</i> , 452 Mass. 472 (2008)	Yes		Yes	Yes
<b>PRESERVATION</b> Protect personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>SUPPORT</b> Provide grants, loans, rental assistance, security deposits, interest-rate write downs or other forms of assistance directly to individuals and families who are eligible for community housing, or to entity that owns, operates or manages such housing, for the purpose of making housing affordable				Yes, includes funding for community's affordable housing trust
<b>REHABILITATION AND RESTORATION</b> Make capital improvements, or extraordinary repairs to make assets functional for intended use, including improvements to comply with federal, state or local building or access codes or federal standards for rehabilitation of historic properties	Yes if acquired or created with CP funds	Yes	Yes	Yes if acquired or created with CP funds

Source: Department of Revenue (DOR) 10-5-2012 conference, "Recent Developments in Municipal Law," Workshop B - Local Finances

## C. Project Schedule

### CHELSEA COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN FY2020-2024

UPDATED BY JM GOLDSOHN 2/22/19

	MEETINGS / EVENTS				
	JUNE - JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	NOVEMBER - DECEMBER	JANUARY-FEBRUARY
Meetings / Events	<b>6/21/18</b> Subcommittee Kickoff Meeting to discuss project objectives and schedule  <b>7/24/18</b> Driving Tour of Chelsea and Day 1 of focus groups <b>7/26/18</b> Day 2 of focus groups  Statutory Board Meetings <b>7/24/18</b> Cultural Council <b>7/26/18</b> Conservation Commission	Attend community events to share information and get community input. <b>8/7/18</b> National Night Out <b>8/23/18</b> Back to School Day  Statutory Board Meetings <b>8/7/18</b> Historic Commission <b>8/28/18</b> Planning Board  <b>8/16/18</b> CPC Meeting to review scope/schedule and focus group summary <b>8/20-10/17/18</b> Community Survey Live	Create all materials and presentation(s) for the Community Workshop  Statutory Board Meeting <b>9/12/18</b> Housing Authority Commission  <b>9/20/18</b> - CPC Meeting to discuss the community workshop <b>9/27/18</b> - Community Workshop	<b>11/15/18</b> CPC Meeting to review the community workshop results and discuss content to include in draft plan and application materials  <b>12/20/18</b> CPC Meeting to review draft plan and application materials	<b>1/7 to 2/20/19</b> Public Comment Period  <b>2/21/19</b> Public Hearing to review final plan and application materials
Deliverables	Create CPA profile, summary of community goals related to CPA, and CPA fund revenue projections <b>by 7/17/18</b>	Draft focus group summary <b>by 8/16/18</b>  Finalize survey for release <b>by 8/20/18</b>	Create summary of brainstorming exercises with statutory boards and summary of community survey results <b>by 9/25/18</b>	Summary of community workshop results and aggregated community engagement <b>by 11/15/18</b>  Submit first draft plan and application materials to CPC for review <b>by 12/13/18</b>	Submit revised draft plan for public comment period <b>by 1/4/19</b>  Final Plan completed by <b>2/28/19</b>



## D. Community Engagement Results

FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS SUMMARY OF RESULTS

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SUMMARY OF RESULTS

ONLINE SURVEY SUMMARY OF RESULTS

AGGREGATED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY OF RESULTS

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS SUMMARY OF RESULTS