

# The Community Preservation Act – How It Works

CPA is a smart growth tool. It is a state law enacted in 2000 that allows adopting communities to establish a dedicated local fund to **protect open space, generate new recreational areas, preserve historic buildings & resources, & support town-led affordable housing**. 176 communities have adopted CPA to date.

### WHAT WE GIVE

- A 1% surcharge adds \$47.54 annually to Lancaster’s average 2020 property tax bill.
- Exempt:
  1. First \$100,000 of property value for all households
  2. All qualified low income housing
  3. All qualified low & moderate income senior housing

### WHAT WE GET

- A 1% surcharge could raise approximately **\$155,480 annually**.
- We also receive **state contribution funds** based on our %.
- **When CPA dollars are used to fund a project, we save in tax spending, reducing our overall tax rate.** Example: funding a project with CPA funds instead of a debt exclusion.

### WE CONTROL OUR FUND

- Town Boards responsible for community preservation, plus the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen, choose Lancaster’s 9-member Community Preservation Committee. The Committee evaluates and recommends projects to Town Meeting. **Voters decide how to spend the fund's money**, giving at least 10% to each qualified purpose. We can spend funds each year or reserve them for later.
- Town meeting vote sets the surcharge %. It can be changed a future town meeting. There is no minimum. The maximum is 3%. We can revoke CPA after 5 years and keep remaining funds to spend on community preservation.

We are missing out! Every town is contributing to state CPA funding, but only those that adopt CPA receive \$\$\$ back:

Dollars Received By Nearby Towns (Based on Chosen %)	State CPA Distribution November 2019	Total State Distribution Since FY05
Ayer	\$ 26,708	\$ 943,388
Boxborough	\$ 25,800	\$ 166,698
Groton	\$ 153,546	\$ 3,844,199
Harvard	\$ 32,617	\$ 1,232,032
Hudson	\$ 72,435	\$ 1,415,107
Littleton	\$ 90,991	\$ 1,284,655
Stow	\$ 135,657	\$ 3,900,417
West Boylston	\$ 32,887	\$ 644,432
2019 Total	\$ 570,641	\$ 13,430,928

Are you willing to protect Lancaster’s future for less than \$1 per week?

For more information, visit [www.communitypreservation.org](http://www.communitypreservation.org)