

Town of Sunderland

Community Preservation Fund

Guidelines

Prepared by the Sunderland Community Preservation Committee

Overview

The Sunderland Community Preservation Committee (CPC) developed these guidelines by conferring with relevant town boards and committees and residents, as well as reviewing guidelines from other Community Preservation Act (CPA) communities.

The Sunderland CPC strongly encourages and seeks projects that:

- Have broad resident benefit and participation
- Contain forms of cost sharing
- Have positive impact on town operating budgets
- Have town revenue potential.

The CPC seeks to maximize the impact of Sunderland's limited CPA funds. Therefore, we encourage projects that creatively leverage and supplement Town CPA funding with other income from public and private sources.

In the pursuit and implementation of CPA projects, the CPC promotes wide town involvement and an enhanced sense of community spirit.

Guidelines for Historical Preservation Projects

The overall goal is to preserve, rehabilitate and acquire historical and archeological assets of Sunderland and to heighten the awareness and appreciation for the unique aspects of the town that contribute to our sense of place.

1. Preserve significant historical resources that contribute to the unique character of Sunderland.
 - a. Support efforts of property owners to attach preservation restrictions to deeds.
 - b. Support efforts to use investment tax credits for protection of historic properties to rehabilitate for commercial income ventures.
 - c. Provide financial assistance to preserve artifacts and documents of importance to the town's history.
 - d. Identify and create incentives to preserve the heritage landscapes of the community.
2. Rehabilitate historic resources.
 - a. Support efforts to return a historic property to a state of utility through repair or alteration.
 - b. Provide financial assistance for rehabilitating the historic character of the linear common.
 - c. Rehabilitate monuments and other town structures.
3. Acquire property.
 - a. Acquire in order to preserve property important to the historic character of the town.
 - b. Support collaboration with organizations such as Massachusetts Historical Commission and The Trustees of the Reservation to purchase historical structures.

Guidelines for Open Space Projects

The overriding goal is to protect and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Sunderland that ensure a high quality of life for its residents. The following goals can be achieved through collaboration among various town boards, state and federal agencies, and conservation organizations.

1. Protect and restore the natural resources of Sunderland.
 - a. Drinking Water – Collaborate with the Planning Board and Water District to ensure aquifer protection. Secure funds to protect vulnerable aquifer lands in Sunderland. Work with the Board of Health to prevent water pollution from septic systems, residential and commercial activities, and storm water overflow.
 - b. Wildlife and Fish Habitats – Continue to identify and prioritize important fish and wildlife areas, corridors and unique habitats for conservation. Identify and secure lands with high wildlife diversity and ecological integrity as shown on Natural Heritage Endangered Species and Priority Habitat Maps, BioMap, and Living Waters Core and Supporting Landscapes. Improve stream continuity and water quality.
 - c. Forested Lands – Evaluate the threats of development around Mt Toby. Secure funds to permanently protect lands of critical importance for open space and ecological integrity. Promote the conservation of private timber lands.
2. Preserve Sunderland's rural character.
 - a. Agricultural Lands – Promote the preservation of farmland through the MA Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program or other public and private conservation programs. Provide administrative support for the APR process. Monitor properties in Chapter 61 program. Assess properties coming out of Chapter 61 program for value of invoking Right of First Refusal for Town purchase.
 - b. Protect important and valued scenic resources.

Guidelines for Community Housing Projects

The overarching goal is a housing infrastructure that fosters a vibrant community in Sunderland for generations to come. To that end we seek to enable young families to root here, elders to stay part of the community fabric, and working people who provide our services to have an ownership stake in the town. In other words, we seek to cultivate a sense of belonging in Sunderland, across the socioeconomic and generational spectrum.

We invite creative proposals that fit within the CPA guidelines, align with the Sunderland Housing Plan, and represent progress toward one or more of the following town housing objectives:

1. Approach the 10% affordable housing requirement as stipulated in MGL Chapter 40B and determined by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). This means that the units must be both deed-restricted in value and market-restricted to qualified low-income occupants.

- a. Convert existing rental units to permanently affordable housing.
 - b. Convert existing owner-occupied units to permanently affordable housing.
 - c. Create new units that increase our affordable housing percentage.
 - d. Pursue another strategy for increasing the percentage.
2. Increase the number of housing units available for low- and moderate-income ownership.
 - a. Create new units for purchase by low- and moderate-income buyers.
 - b. Convert existing rental or owner-occupied units to housing designated for low- or moderate-income ownership.
 - c. Pursue another strategy for enabling low- and moderate-income ownership.
3. Add housing appropriate for senior citizens, including those with disabilities.
 - a. Develop new accessible housing for seniors.
 - b. Support programs that enable seniors to stay in their homes.
 - c. Pursue another strategy to provide senior housing.
4. Take intermediate steps toward the abovementioned goals.
 - a. Conduct necessary research.
 - b. Obtain necessary technical assistance or expertise.
 - c. Prepare the town to react quickly when opportunities arise.
 - d. Create programs to encourage bequests and gifts of property that can add to the town's affordable housing portfolio.
 - e. Pursue other steps that move the town closer to its housing goals.

Guidelines for Recreation Projects

The overall goal is to provide recreational opportunities that benefit all ages and abilities, promote a sense of well-being and connection to fellow community members, and improve the overall quality of life in Sunderland.

1. Create accessible community gathering places.
 - a. Provide a natural destination for pedestrians.
 - b. Provide amenities for group activity, such as gardens, playgrounds, and picnic areas.
2. Provide recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities.
 - a. Develop venues for outdoor activities such as walking, biking, jogging, skiing, skating, bird watching, and boating.
3. Enable appreciation of and connection to Sunderland's natural resources.
 - a. Provide access to areas such as the river, woodlands, waterfalls, and caves.
 - b. Provide opportunities for learning about Sunderland's natural history.

Review, Approval, and Implementation of Projects

1. **Public Forum:** Projects will be evaluated by the Community Preservation Committee at a public meeting using these Guidelines. The CPC must vote to recommend proposals before they can be placed on the Town Warrant.
2. **Town Meeting Approval:** Each project must be approved for funding at a Town Meeting. The meeting can approve, reduce, or reject recommended funding for a project by majority vote.
3. **Project Implementation:** Funds for approved projects will be available as determined by the Town Treasurer and are subject to the satisfaction of any conditions or procedures established by the CPC.
4. **Payment Requests:** Invoices for work completed should be submitted to the CPC Treasurer.
5. **Progress Reports:** Reports should be provided when requested by the CPC.

More Information

If you have questions about these guidelines or the application process, please contact the Sunderland CPC by emailing cpc@townofsunderland.us or by calling the Office of the Board of Selectmen at 665-1441, extension 1.

To learn more about the Community Preservation Act and see examples of successful projects in other towns, go to www.communitypreservation.org.