



Framingham Community Preservation Plan

2022 – 2023

Inaugural Year

September 6, 2022



A Message from the City of Framingham's Community Preservation Committee September 2022

Framingham's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) thanks you for your interest in the City's Community Preservation program. In the Fall of 2020, by popular vote, the citizens of the City of Framingham adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and agreed to a 1% CPA surcharge on property taxes to be spent in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44B, the Community Preservation Act. This dedicated fund, when combined with matching funds from the statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, helps cities and towns support community housing, create and rehabilitate parks and playgrounds, protect open space resources, and preserve historic buildings and resources.

To implement the CPA, the City Council passed an ordinance establishing Framingham's Community Preservation Committee. We on the Committee recognize the trust that has been given to us and are committed to transparency and inclusiveness as we strive to administer the CPA effectively and efficiently. We recognize our city's unique character and diversity of landscapes, people, and cultures, but also realize that all residents do not have equal access to its resources. We welcome this opportunity to play an important role in the careful stewardship of Framingham's Community Preservation Fund to protect our cherished resources and enhance the quality of life for all who call Framingham home.

Framingham's inaugural Community Preservation Plan is an informational document about the Community Preservation program for the City's residents, community organizations, and other interested parties. It includes an explanation of the CPA, project eligibility criteria, and the responsibilities of the Framingham CPC. The Plan identifies resources, needs, goals and opportunities in each of the areas that can be funded under the CPA: Community Housing, Outdoor Recreation, Open Space, and Historic Preservation. It also provides guidelines and instructions for applicants seeking project funding. The CPC recognizes that this Community Preservation Plan may be modified by future CPCs in response to changing goals and experience with the CPA over time.

The projects that will be considered for CPA funding do not originate with us, but with YOU!

We respectfully submit the Framingham Community Preservation Plan 2022-2023 to the residents of Framingham. We would like to thank the many citizens who participated in our Community Forum, former Community Preservation Committee members, City officials, and members of City committees, boards and departments for their help and input in the development of this Plan.

Sincerely,

Framingham Community Preservation Committee

Thomas Mahoney, Chair, At-large
Karen Margolis, Vice Chair, At-large
Steve Weisman, Clerk, Conservation Commission
Judith Grove, At-large
David Gudejko, Parks and Recreation
Stephen Joyce, Housing Authority
Joseph Norton, Planning Board
Mary-Anne Tratchel, At-large
Fred Wallace, Historic Commission



Table of Contents

<i>A Message from the City of Framingham’s Community Preservation Committee</i>	3
<i>Table of Contents</i>	4
<i>Chapter 1: Community Preservation Act Overview</i>	6
Framingham Adoption of CPA.....	6
CPA Funding Process	6
Community Preservation Committee	7
Community Preservation Committee Roles and Responsibilities	7
Framingham’s Community Preservation Plan Chapters.....	8
<i>Chapter 2: CPA Allowable Uses</i>	9
Overview	9
Community Housing Projects.....	9
Outdoor Recreation Projects.....	9
Open Space Projects.....	10
Historic Resources Projects.....	10
Summary of Allowable Projects	10
<i>Chapter 3: Community Housing</i>	11
Overview/Background.....	11
Needs, Goals and Opportunities	14
Public Input on Housing from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022.....	19
Community Housing Evaluation Criteria	20
<i>Chapter 4: Outdoor Recreation</i>	21
Background.....	21
Needs, Goals and Opportunities	21
Framingham Recreation Assets.....	24
Public Input on Outdoor Recreation from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022.....	28
Outdoor Recreation Evaluation Criteria.....	29
<i>Chapter 5: Open Space</i>	30
Background.....	30
Needs, Goals, and Opportunities	30



Current Open Space Resources 32

Public Input on Open Space from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022 38

Open Space Evaluation Criteria 38

Chapter 6: Historic Resources 39

 Background 39

 Needs, Goals & Opportunities 41

 Current Historic Resources 43

 Public Input on Historic Resources from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022 45

 Historic Resources Evaluation Criteria: 45

Chapter 7: The CPA Application Process 46

 FY23 Project Application and Evaluation Schedule 46

 Who Can Apply for CPA Funding? 46

 Project Applications 46

 Project Evaluation Criteria 47

 Project Application, Evaluation, and Selection Process 49

Appendices 52

 Appendix A: CPA Community Forum 6-22-22 52

 Appendix B: CPA Project Eligibility Form 60

 Appendix C: CPA Project – Full Application 60

 Appendix D: Glossary 61

 Appendix E: References- CPA & General 62

 Appendix F: References - Community Housing 62

 Appendix G: References - Recreation & Open Space 63

 Appendix H: References - Historic Resources 64

 Appendix I: Framingham’s Recreation Properties 65



Chapter 1: Community Preservation Act Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and the structures that the City has put in place to implement the CPA and meet the requirements of the law.

Framingham Adoption of CPA

On November 3, 2020, Framingham voters overwhelmingly approved a referendum adopting the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act – MGL c. 44B which was created in 2000. This legislation enables cities and towns that adopt the CPA by voter referendum to establish a dedicated Community Preservation Fund¹. The purpose of this Fund, as set forth under the law, is to help communities preserve open space and historic resources, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities, activities that enhance the quality of life in a community. As of June 2022, 189 Massachusetts cities and towns have voted to adopt CPA.

CPA Funding Process

Per the CPA statute, Community Preservation funds are raised through a local CPA surcharge of up to 3% on annual property taxes. Framingham's 2020 voter referendum established a 1% CPA surcharge on all local residential and commercial property taxes. Framingham's referendum also established a surcharge exemption for residents who met specific income criteria.

The CPA statute also created a statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, administered by the Department of Revenue (DOR) and capitalized with surcharges on real estate transactions at county registries of deeds. The Trust Fund makes guaranteed distributions each year to communities that have adopted the CPA, supplementing the local CPA funds they raised. In some years, the State Legislature using budget surpluses, has made additional contributions to the Trust Fund. The State match has been averaging 35% of local annual CPA surcharge revenue.

Local CPA surcharge revenues and any matching funds the City receives from the state's Community Preservation Trust Fund are deposited in Framingham's dedicated Community Preservation Fund, which is kept separate from other City accounts and can only be used for CPA purposes. In addition, unlike tax revenues in the City's General Fund, CPA funds carry over and accumulate year to year. The CPA statute also establishes specific requirements for the annual CPA budgets created by cities and towns. Every fiscal year, Framingham must spend or reserve a minimum of 10 percent of its CPA revenues in each of three funding categories: 1) Community Housing, 2) Historic Preservation, and 3) Open Space and Outdoor Recreation which equals 30% of the total budget.

The statute also stipulates that up to 5 percent of annual local CPA surcharge revenues may be budgeted for allowed administrative and operational expenses such as administrative staff, equipment, newspaper ads, promotional brochures, and community surveys. Funds may also be used for due diligence consultant review e.g., land appraisal, environmental assessment, and historic preservation construction review, and other CPA administrative expenses. At the end of each fiscal year, unused administrative funds revert to the undesignated funds of the Community Preservation Committee.

The remaining funds may be allocated to any one or a combination of these three allowable CPA budgeting categories, or may be unallocated and set aside for spending in later years.

¹ More information on CPA can be found at <https://www.communitypreservation.org/about>



Community Preservation Committee

Each community that adopts the Community Preservation Act must establish a Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to administer the program and make recommendations regarding allocation of CPA funds. Framingham's CPC was created in 2021 by City Ordinance after the City's adoption of the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act in 2020. This ordinance spells out the committee's composition, length of member terms, and whether the optional "at large" positions are appointed or elected, as well as outlining the responsibilities of the new committee. As directed by State statute, Framingham's nine-member committee is made up of representatives from these boards: the Historic Commission, the Conservation Commission, the Parks & Recreation Commission, the Framingham Planning Board, and the Framingham Housing Authority, plus four "at-large" members appointed by City Council.

Current Community Preservation Committee (as of August 1, 2022)

Name	Position	Appointing Authority	Joined CPC	Term Expiration
Thomas Mahoney	Chair	City Council	July 2021	June 2024
Karen Margolis	Vice Chair	City Council	July 2022	June 2024
Steve Weisman	Clerk	Conservation Commission	May 2022	June 2023
Judith Grove	Member	City Council	July 2021	June 2024
Stephen Joyce	Member	Housing Authority	May 2022	June 2023
Joseph Norton	Member	Planning Board	July 2021	June 2024
Fred Wallace	Member	Historical Commission	July 2021	June 2025
Mary-Ann Tratchel	Member	City Council	July 2022	June 2025
Dave Gudejko	Member	Parks & Recreation Commission	June 2022	June 2025

The 2021 Inaugural Community Preservation Committee

Name	Position	Appointing Authority	Joined CPC	Term Expiration
Thomas Mahoney	Chair	City Council	July 2021	June 2024
Judith Grove	Vice Chair	City Council	July 2021	June 2024
Liz Kaprielian	Clerk	City Council	July 2021	June 2022
Shannon Stevens	Finance	Parks & Recreation Commission	July 2021	June 2022
Joseph Norton	Member	Planning Board	July 2021	June 2024
Steve Starr	Member	Housing Authority	July 2021	June 2023
Doug Stephan	Member	City Council	July 2021	June 2023
Fred Wallace	Member	Historical Commission	July 2021	June 2022
T.J. Liveston	Member	Conservation Commission	July 2021	June 2022

Community Preservation Committee Roles and Responsibilities

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is responsible for developing a Community Preservation Plan (CPP) and updating it yearly. The CPC uses it as a guide to solicit, evaluate, and recommend specific projects to the City Council for appropriations from the Community Preservation Fund. Committee recommendations are made based on clearly defined criteria, described in detail in Chapter 7: The CPA Application Process.

The City Council makes all final funding decisions, but no project can receive an appropriation without a positive recommendation from the Community Preservation Committee.

Other CPC responsibilities include creating processes for administering Framingham's program in accordance with CPA requirements, keeping records, preparing an annual budget, and holding a yearly public forum to solicit feedback regarding the community's needs and priorities. The CPC strives to uphold a process that is accessible and transparent and represents Framingham's geographic and demographic diversity.



Framingham's Community Preservation Plan Chapters

Chapter 1, provides an overview of the Community Preservation Act and the structures the City has put in place to implement the Community Preservation Act locally, in accordance with Massachusetts CPA requirements.

Chapter 2 describes activities that are eligible for CPA funding under the statute.

Chapters 3 - 6 provide detailed descriptions of the CPA eligible activity categories (Community Housing, Outdoor Recreation, Open Space, and Historic Resources) in the context of Framingham's needs, goals, and opportunities, and identify category-specific criteria that the CPC will apply to proposed projects.

Chapter 7 describes the CPA Application Process, including timelines that the CPC will use in its review of applications and the criteria that the Committee will use to evaluate applications for funding.

Appendix A includes a summary of the Framingham CPA Public Forum, held on June 22, 2022.

Appendices B and C contain the Eligibility and Full Application Forms.

Additional Appendices provide source references for the information and data found in the CPP, as well as supplemental materials for ease of reference.



Chapter 2: CPA Allowable Uses

This chapter describes the project categories and activities defined by CPA as eligible for funding by cities and towns through their Community Preservation Fund. A more detailed discussion of each of these project categories as they pertain to Framingham’s needs, opportunities, and priorities follows in Chapters 3 through 6.

Overview

Community Preservation Funds may only be used for the Community Preservation purposes of Community Housing, Outdoor Recreation, Open Space, and Historic Resources. CPA funds cannot be used for operations, maintenance, programming, community events, and other uses not permitted under CPA. They also may not replace existing operating funds.

The following guidelines summarize the primary activities of each use category, which meet a public purpose, as permitted under the CPA.

Community Housing Projects

Eligible projects include **acquisition, creation and preservation** of community housing, as well as **support** for community housing. Funds cannot be used for the rehabilitation or restoration of community housing unless it has been acquired or created using CPA funds. The CPA requires that whenever possible, preference be given to the adaptive reuse of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed sites.

The CPA defines Community Housing as, “low-and moderate-income housing for individuals and families, including low-or moderate-income senior housing.” Community housing under CPA must be affordable for individuals and families making less than 100% of area median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The CPA defines the term “support of community housing” as including, but not limited to, “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 or to an entity that owns, operates, or manages such housing, for the purpose of making housing affordable.”

Outdoor Recreation Projects

Eligible projects include **acquisition, creation, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration** of recreation land.

The CPA defines recreational use as, “active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field. ‘Recreational use’ shall not include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium, or similar structure.” Also, CPA funding may not be used for artificial turf.

The CPA also adds “that with respect to land for recreational use, ‘rehabilitation’ shall include the replacement of playground equipment and other capital improvements to the land or the facilities thereon which make the land or the related facilities more functional for the intended recreational use”. A “capital improvement” is defined as “reconstruction or alteration of real property that: (1) materially adds to the value of the real property, or appreciably prolongs the useful life of the real property; (2) becomes part of the real property or is permanently affixed to the real property so that removal would cause material damage to the property or article itself; and (3) is intended to become a permanent installation or is intended to remain there for an indefinite period of time.”



Open Space Projects

Eligible projects include **acquisition, creation and preservation** of open spaces. Funds cannot be used for the rehabilitation or restoration of any open space unless it has been acquired or created using CPA funds.

As defined by CPA, Open Space “shall include, but not be limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh water marshes and other wetlands, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, lands to protect scenic vistas, and for wildlife or nature preserve, and land for recreational use (now a separate category).”

It is important to note that a permanent deed restriction is required for all real property interests acquired under CPA.

Historic Resources Projects

Eligible projects include **acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration** of historic resources.

The CPA recognizes historic resources as, “historical structures and landscapes,” including “a building, structure, vessel, real property, document or artifact that is listed or eligible for listing on the State register of historic places or has been determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of a city or town.” Historic resources also include monuments or artifacts. Framingham’s Historical Commission acts as the “local preservation commission” as described above.

Summary of Allowable Projects

The chart below, updated by the Community Preservation Coalition, is a simple tool for understanding the allowable uses of CPA funds in each of the CPA project categories: Open Space, Historic Resources, Outdoor Recreation, and Community Housing and for determining whether a proposed project is eligible for CPA funding.

Projects are eligible for CPA funding if they fit in a box with a green "Yes" in the chart below. This chart was adapted from "Recent Developments in Municipal Law," Massachusetts Department of Revenue, October 2012.

This chart is updated periodically. Please reference the Community Preservation Coalition’s [CPA Allowable Uses](#) webpage for the most current information and guidance.

	Open Space	Historic	Recreation	Housing
Acquire	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Preserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	No	No	No	Yes
Rehabilitate and/or Restore	No <small>(unless acquired or created with CPA \$\$)</small>	Yes	Yes	No <small>(unless acquired or created with CPA \$\$)</small>

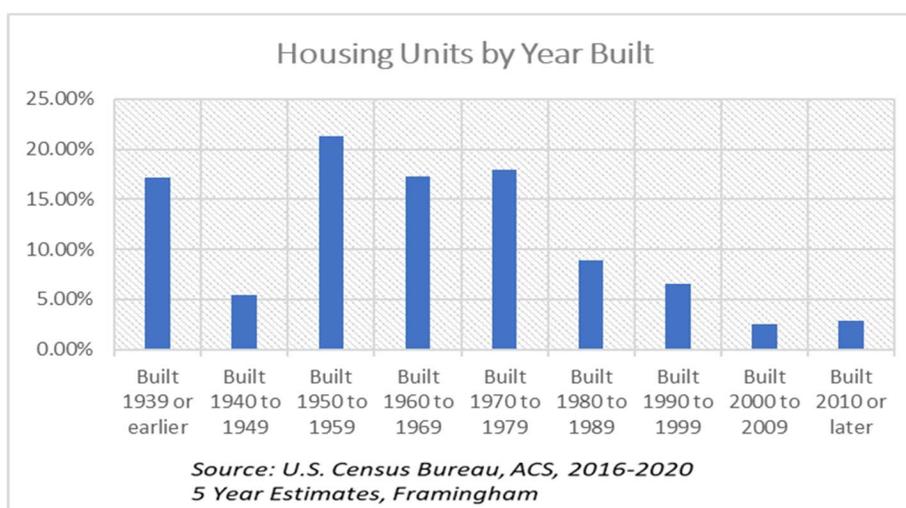
Chapter 3: Community Housing



Overview/Background

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, 72,362 people make Framingham their home. Located just 20 miles west of Boston, Framingham is at the heart of Boston’s MetroWest region, both geographically and also in terms of commerce, job opportunities and transportation. The city offers a wide range of housing to serve a population ranging from economically challenged to affluent households. While Framingham has historically served as an affordable option to the Boston inner core and to some of its more affluent neighbors, today much of the housing in Framingham is no longer affordable to low- or moderate-income households due to a very low inventory of available housing and rapidly rising housing costs.

Nearly 80% of Framingham’s housing stock was built in the 1970’s or earlier, including most of its multifamily housing; prior to Federal Fair Housing Law requirements for accessible common areas and adaptable units. Housing built in those years was typically designed with traditional and able-bodied families in mind.



Framingham Household Demographics

Framingham has a diverse population. As reported in the 2020 U.S. Census, just over half of the City’s residents (53.7%) identifies as White alone (not Hispanic or Latino); the next largest grouping is Hispanic or Latino of any race (16.8%). Among those who identify as non-Hispanic were the following: multi-Racial (8.7%), Some Other Race (7.6%), Asians (7.2%) and African Americans (5.9%).

Like elsewhere in the country, typical households in Framingham are not as uniform as they once were. The most recent U.S. Census Data from the American Community Survey 2016-2020 estimates offers a snapshot of Framingham’s households.

Changing household composition: Family households are estimated to comprise just 65% of all Framingham households, while an estimated 27.9% are householders living alone. The remaining households consist of unrelated household members.

Smaller household sizes: Households over the decades have become smaller, with an estimated average household size in Framingham of 2.45 people. The average size of an owner-occupied unit is 2.62 persons per household, while renter-occupied households average 2.24 persons per household. Just 30.4% of Framingham households have one or more children under the age of 18. Nearly 28% consist of householders living alone.

An aging population: Framingham’s households are becoming older. 38.1% of Framingham’s households have one or more people in the household aged 60 or older. 11.6% of Framingham households consist of a single householder over 65 living alone.

Disability and Aging: According to this census data, an estimated 11.5 percent of non-institutionalized people living in the community in Framingham have a disability. This rises to 47.5% for those 75 and older. An estimated 33.8% of people 75 and older living in the community have mobility impairments.

Housing in Framingham

In Framingham, you can find a wide range of single-family homes on large lots near the rural farms in the northwest quadrant of the city and south of the reservoirs. The city has many suburban neighborhoods of single floor ranch homes north of route 9 from the post-war era, as well as traditional capes, small colonials and splits in many neighborhoods. There’s an abundance of traditional older two-family homes and mid-rise multifamily housing near the downtown, and a more urban historic mixed-use downtown with apartments above commercial establishments. Higher density residential development, built in the 1970’s can also be found primarily along Route 9. New multi-family apartments in buildings with elevators have been built more recently, primarily in the downtown area and off of Old Connecticut Path. Multilevel townhouses have been built in recent years off of Old Connecticut Path and in age-restricted developments, mostly on previously undeveloped land.



Colonials in NW Framingham



Small Capes in Saxonville



Two-families near Downtown



High Density Apts. Route 9

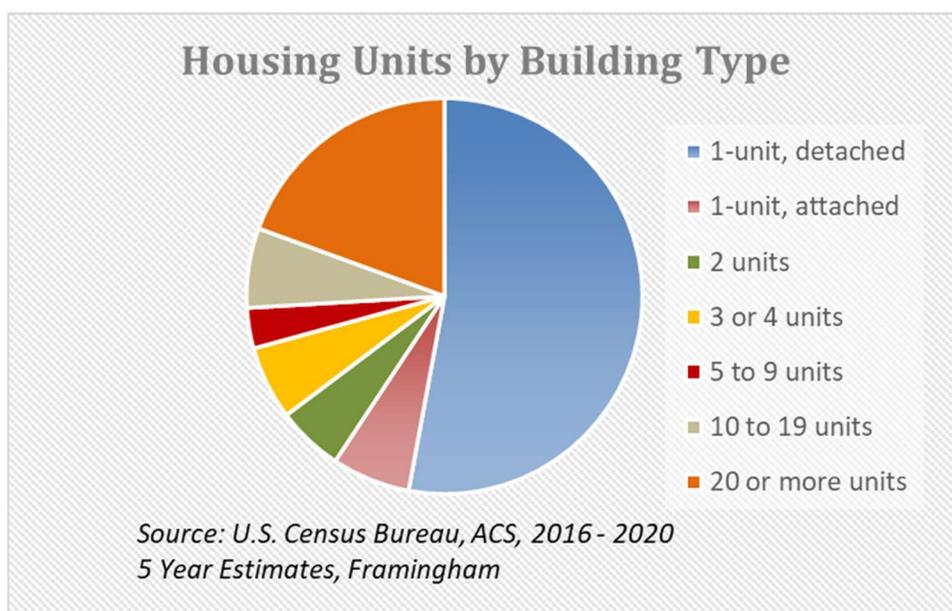


Modern Apts.in Saxonville off OCP



Downtown Apts.

- There are 29,033 housing units in Framingham, an increase of 1504 units or 5.5% from 2010 to 2020. The housing stock in Massachusetts increased 6.8% over the same period. (US Census 2020)
- 59.2% of Framingham’s housing units are estimated to be single family homes; 11.4% are in smaller structures with two to four units each, and just under 30% are units in midsize and larger multifamily structures. (US Census Data 2016-2020 American Community Survey Estimates)



- 56.1% of housing in Framingham is estimated to be owner occupied, and 43.9% is estimated to be renter occupied. Nearly 70% of owner-occupied households in Framingham still have a mortgage. (US Census Data 2016-2020 American Community Survey Estimates)
- Vacancy rates in Framingham are very low, with an estimated Homeowner vacancy rate of 0.1%, and an estimated rental vacancy rate of 1.8%. (US Census Data 2016-2020 American Community Survey Estimates). Very low vacancy rates push up both the cost of homeownership for those entering the market and rental housing costs.
- The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Framingham was estimated to be \$439,400 in 2020, as compared to \$345,700 in 2015. (US Census Data 2016-2020 and 2011-2015 American Community Survey Estimates)
- The median rent in Framingham in 2020 was estimated to be \$1,421. (US Census Data 2016-2020 American Community Survey Estimates)

- The median monthly housing cost for homeowners in Framingham with a mortgage in 2020 was \$2,506, while for homeowners without a mortgage it was \$909. (US Census Data 2016-2020 American Community Survey Estimates)
- The value of homes in Framingham have gone up significantly in recent years. According to Zillow’s home value index at the end of February 2022, the estimated values of all homes across Framingham is \$571,249. According to Redfin, median home sale prices were up 24.6% compared to last year, with a median home sale price of \$533,000 in February 2022. (Zillow and Redfin websites, accessed 3/18/22)
- Rents in Framingham have gone up significantly since the disruptions to the market from Covid. The average rent for all apartments in Framingham in early 2022 is noted to be \$2,046. The average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Framingham in early 2022 was \$2,565 per month (Apartments.Com, accessed 3/18/22)
- Given the steep rise in home sales prices and in rents in Framingham, current housing cost burdens for Framingham residents, including renters and newer homeowners, can be expected to be very high.
- The City had 2,963 units with affordability restrictions in December 2020, comprising 10.2% of Framingham’s 29,033 housing units. The restrictions on these housing units keep them affordable to households at or below 80% of the Area Median Income. By staying above 10%, the city meets the requirements under the State’s Comprehensive Permit Law, Chapter 40B. (DHCD’s Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory; US Census 2020 housing unit count)
- Over a third of the subsidized/affordable housing in Framingham, 1056 units, are managed by the Framingham Housing Authority (FHA). These include 821 state-funded and 235 federally-funded public housing units. Of the 1056 public housing units in Framingham, 386 are family units and 670 are elderly/disabled units. Additionally, the FHA has 24 special needs units. (FHA data; DHCD’s State & Federal Public Housing Units Per Local Housing Authority, By Program)
- As noted in the Consolidated Plan, on January 30, 2019, the annual Point in Time (PIT) count found 592 homeless Framingham residents. At that time, there were 481 households (only 95 of whom were without children) living in an Emergency Assistance Shelter.

Needs, Goals and Opportunities

Housing Needs

The City of Framingham faces many challenges relative to housing affordability and adequate housing supply, as well as to available housing options to meet the needs of residents with a range of household compositions, incomes, ages and abilities. Even with 10.2% of the housing units in Framingham identified in the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory, as of December 21, 2020 (using preliminary 2020 housing stock figures), many in our community still face challenges in affording their housing or finding a safe and suitable home to live in.

Framingham is a CDBG Entitlement Community, and the program is administered by the City’s Community Development Department. Framingham’s Five-Year Consolidated Plan 2021-2025, the most recent Consolidated Plan, as required by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for all Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) communities, provides the most comprehensive information for the City of Framingham related to housing need.

The Needs Assessment, included as part of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, looks at “the City of Framingham’s housing and community development needs as determined through analysis of data from public and private sources, as well as interviews with community organizations, residents and businesses, and

City officials.” Their community outreach process included a Needs Assessment public hearing and focus group interviews with key staff and service providers in December 2019. As noted in the Plan, the Community Development Department of the City also administered a Community Needs Survey in September, 2019 with citizen input from 120 respondents.

The Department of Planning and Community Development (PCD) identified the following overall housing needs as part of its Consolidated Plan process:

- More accessible units, especially first floor units for mobility-impaired households;
- More subsidized units;
- More extremely low income (ELI) units;
- Housing affordable to people who work in Framingham; and
- Housing accessible to employment centers and transit options.

As noted in the Consolidated Plan, making use of HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data for Framingham: In 2015, 38 percent of all households were considered cost-burdened – they pay more than 30 percent of their income toward housing costs. Of these households, 20 percent were severely cost-burdened (paying more than 50 percent of their income toward housing costs), and 18 percent were moderately cost-burdened (paying between 30-49 percent of their income toward housing cost). Housing costs include rent and utilities for renters; mortgage payments, property taxes, insurance, and condo fees (where applicable) for homeowners.

As would be expected, and as documented in the Consolidated Plan, low- and moderate-income (LMI) households in Framingham are significantly more likely to be cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened than those with higher incomes. Among LMI renters, nonfamily households are most likely to be severely cost-burdened, whereas the elderly are most likely to be severely cost-burdened among LMI homeowners.

The Consolidated Plan reported that high housing costs disproportionately affects older homeowners and young families in Framingham, minority communities, first time homebuyers, and local workers looking for rental housing, among others.

The Plan noted that 65% of Framingham households with at least one child under the age of six, and 64% of Framingham households with at least one person over the age of 75, are of low or moderate income. The need for safe and affordable housing for these populations was highlighted.



It was reported in the Consolidated Plan that 86% of MetroWest area service providers surveyed by South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) for its own FY18-20 Strategic Plan ranked affordable housing needs as a high priority among its clients.

Wait lists for Public Housing in Framingham are very long due to a lack of an adequate supply of affordable housing. It was reported in the Consolidated Plan that the Statewide Housing Authority waiting list included 15,168 applicants who have chosen Framingham as one of the communities to reside in for a public housing unit. Sixty-one percent of these households are families, 15 percent elderly, and 11 percent include a person with a disability. At the time that the Consolidated Plan was published, the statewide waiting list was ten years. Affordable housing operated by other private entities similarly have long waiting lists.

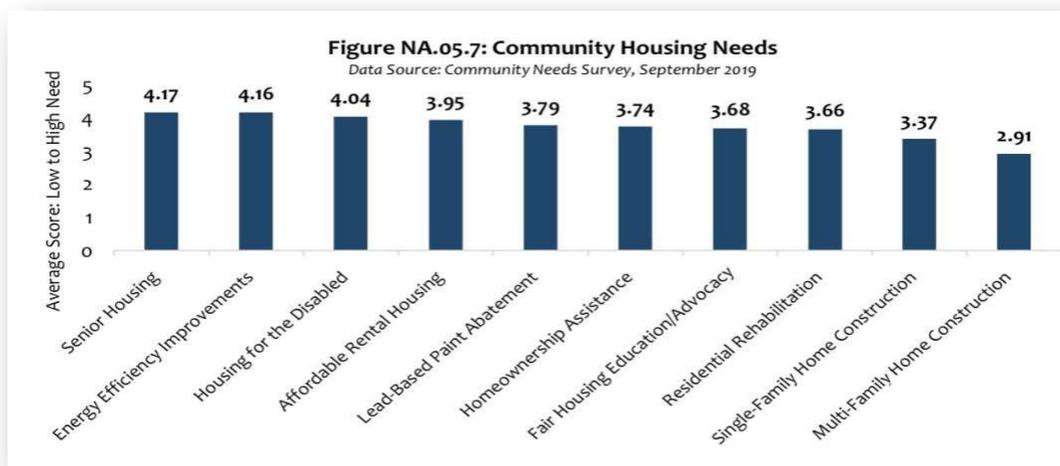
As noted in the Consolidated Plan, the Framingham Housing Authority also administers 988 tenant-based Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs), also known as Section 8 vouchers. The FHA is part of a centralized state-wide waiting list for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs). At the time of that the Plan was published, 1,822 households on this centralized state-wide list indicated a preference to live or work in Framingham. Due to a scarcity of HCVs, the need for such assistance is hard to come by for those who would otherwise be eligible.

Of the 670 FHA operated public housing units designated for elderly and disabled tenants, only 42 are accessible units. The Framingham Housing Authority reported a need for additional accessible bathrooms and first-floor units or buildings with elevators to accommodate those with mobility impairments.



The Consolidated Plan points to a critical need for more affordable housing for select populations including elderly and disabled residents, and points to many in need of support and financial assistance for home renovations to make their homes safe and accessible. “Affordable” housing was described as not being affordable to those who need it. In the Plan, the Department of Planning and Community Development specifically identified a lack of affordable, accessible, first-floor units for households with mobility issues, as well as a lack of workforce housing units located near to the City’s major job centers as two pressing concerns.

Figure NA.05.7 from the City’s Consolidated Plan displays the average scores for all categories included in this question related to Community Housing Needs from the September, 2019 Community Needs Assessment Survey, with one being low need and five being a high need. As noted in the Plan, the Community Development Department of the City received citizen input from 120 respondents.





CPA Funding and Community Housing

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) allows for the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing, as one of the four areas eligible for CPA spending. The ability to fund proposals that “support” Community Housing, allows for a broader range of activities that directly support such housing affordability in a community. CPA funds may not be used to rehabilitate or restore housing, except when it was acquired or created with CPA funds. The law also provides a preference for the reuse of existing buildings or new construction on previously developed land, over construction on previously undeveloped land.

For purposes of Community Preservation Act funding, the term “Community Housing” refers to housing meeting the needs for individuals and families of low and moderate incomes. By definition those households served with CPA funding must be below 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI) as determined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Framingham is located within the Boston – Cambridge – Quincy Metropolitan Statistical Area, as defined by HUD. This plan uses the terms community housing and affordable housing interchangeably. By focusing local CPA funding to support housing for those at or below the low-income limit of 80% of the Area Median Income, the Community Preservation Committee has the potential to better serve the needs of more challenged community households.

**2022 CPA Affordable Housing Income Limits - Framingham
(Boston – Cambridge – Quincy Metropolitan Statistical Area)**

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
Low-Income Limits 2021 (80% AMI)	\$78,512	\$89,728	\$100,944	\$112,160	\$121,133	\$130,106
Moderate-Income Limits 2021 (100% AMI)	\$98,140	\$112,160	\$126,180	\$140,200	\$151,416	\$162,632

Housing Goals Identified in City and Framingham Housing Authority Planning Reports

Below are some of the identified housing goals and actions outlined in various City/Town of Framingham and Framingham Housing Authority planning documents, which are aligned to support community housing efforts which could potentially qualify for CPA funding.

- Preserve the City’s existing inventory of affordable housing;
- Continue to meet the 10 percent statutory minimum under Chapter 40B;
- Support the preservation and physical improvement of existing affordable housing;
- Expand affordable housing opportunities;
- Provide housing for a diverse mix of households;
- Provide housing opportunities for special needs and at-risk populations;
- Establish a workforce housing stock;
- Preserve existing housing stock;
- Preserve and maintain an adequate supply of safe, decent housing that is affordable and accessible to homeowners and renters with a range of incomes and household needs;



- Foster retention of residents and providing opportunities to age in place;
- Re-use existing buildings and developed land, encouraging adaptive re-use of historic buildings, and supporting infill housing development where appropriate;
- Support programs that overcome barriers to affordable housing in Framingham. Framingham residents with long-term support needs must have accessible, affordable housing options to remain stably housed, such as tenant-based assistance.
- Assist with the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic in a timely and supportive fashion, supplying financial support to those at risk of losing their housing due to job loss and or a significant reduction in business traffic.
- Join a regional housing consortium to support local affordable housing efforts.
- Explore options to create an Affordable Housing Trust.

Opportunities

The City's Housing Plan (2014) describes existing housing initiatives and programs that have the potential to be expanded by the availability of CPA funds. Current funding sources for Framingham's existing housing initiatives include Federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds and Federal HOME funds (as part of Framingham's membership in the WestMetro HOME Consortium); as well as affordable housing development funds (obtained by the City as part of permitting approvals from other developments).

CPA funds utilized to support proactive, locally initiated activities such as have been successfully executed by the City's Community Development Department utilizing HOME and CDBG funds, will enable the City to fulfill its stated interest and goals to preserve, develop, and support both community and affordable housing.

Potential CPA fund-eligible initiatives already supported by the City, the Framingham Housing Authority (FHA) and/or local stakeholders include:

- Expand eligible housing initiatives currently offered by the City's Community Development Department, which utilize HOME and CDBG funds, and potentially expand initiatives to support to households up to 100% of the Area Median Income;
- Increase the supply of assisted housing units through partnership opportunities and engagement between the Framingham Housing Authority with current and potential landlords;
- Increase the supply of assisted housing through partnership opportunities of the Framingham Housing Authority / Framingham Housing Development Corp. II (the non-profit arm of the FHA), the City of Framingham, and state housing funding agencies such as the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) and Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), augmented with CPA funds;
- Create of a first-time homebuyer's program with a partnership of the Framingham Housing Authority and the City;
- Develop affordable home-ownership opportunities through the purchase & rehabilitation of existing properties for sale to income-eligible households. (City of Framingham Neighborhood Stabilization Program in partnership with Framingham Housing Authority/Framingham Housing Development Corporation II);
- Develop affordable rental opportunities (Framingham Housing Community Development Corporation II/ Framingham Housing Authority; South Middlesex Opportunity Council);



- Preserve current affordability of at-risk units by extending affordable deed restrictions (City of Framingham, project owners, DHCD, HUD);
- Support and expand existing tenant based rental assistance to Framingham households in need (City of Framingham Security Deposit Assistance Program; South Middlesex Opportunity Council rental assistance; Framingham Housing Authority);
- Develop and improve accessibility of public housing (Framingham Housing Authority, utilizing State/Federal agencies as funding sources);

Other opportunities for the use of CPA funding for Housing include:

- Use CPA funds to fulfill the requirement for a local match for affordable housing funding opportunities that require it, for housing that has been approved locally.
- Use CPA funds to work with landlords to permanently further reduce rent of some affordable units created under local inclusionary zoning (now affordable to households at 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) to provide permanent rental opportunities affordable for households at 50% of AMI.
- Join a regional housing consortium or hire an experienced Housing Coordinator to support local affordable housing efforts, and to provide local professional capacity related to housing.
- Fund Housing Planning activities (e.g., Comprehensive City Housing Plan with up-to-date housing data; Housing Needs Assessment);
- Establish a local Affordable Housing Trust;
- Fund pre-development activities for City-supported affordable community housing (e.g., feasibility study, site testing, planning, demolition activity);
- Support the development of affordable, service rich housing for older adults;
- Use CPA funds to support the physical preservation of existing affordable housing;
- Establish an Emergency Rent Relief Program.

Public Input on Housing from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022

There were a number of public comments related to Community Housing at the CPA Public Forum. Many of the comments reflect housing needs identified in this Plan. Some commenters noted that affordable housing is not affordable, pointing to affordable housing serving people at 80% of the area median income being still out of reach for most people. Some expressed how complex affordable housing is and the need for a more up to date Housing Plan and also collaboration of activities within the City and community to address housing, perhaps in the form of a Housing Committee. Commenters noted that people in the community are hurting and need their basic needs met. A couple commenters noted the needs of older adults, and potential activities supported by CPA to include housing that is accessible near to community services, help for seniors to age-in-place, and rent subsidies. One commenter supports having the non-profit arm of the Framingham Housing Authority or the housing arm of the EDC purchase and rehab older housing stock, and then make the renovated housing available at an affordable cost. A couple commenters supported balancing housing in any area of the community with open space and green.



Community Housing Evaluation Criteria

Community Housing proposals which address as many of the following criteria as possible will receive preference:

- Contribute to the supply of affordable housing by adding affordable units that would be eligible for the City's Subsidized Housing Inventory.
- Promote a socioeconomic environment that encourages a diversity of income, ethnicity, ability, and age
- Provide housing that is harmonious in design and scale with the surrounding community
- Intermingle affordable and market rate housing at levels that exceed state requirements for percentage of affordable units
- Ensure long-term affordability in perpetuity
- Promote use of existing buildings or construction on previously developed sites
- Convert market rate units to affordable units
- Add housing units affordable to very low (50% AMI) income households.

Chapter 4: Outdoor Recreation

Background

The City of Framingham consists of a blend of urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods, which leads to a great diversity of open space and recreation needs and desires. These needs and desires were solicited through a public opinion survey, public forums, public meetings, and personal conversations. The value of open space and recreation opportunities becomes more apparent as undeveloped land in Framingham dwindles, as neighborhoods redevelop, and as environmental challenges present increasing risks to the community.



Approximately 364 acres of recreation land are under the authority of the Framingham Parks and Recreation Department which is protected by M.G.L. Chapter 45. An additional 80 acres of athletic fields on school property are owned by the Framingham School Department but are maintained and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Parks and Recreation properties vary in size, type of facility, and intensity of use. Some are designed to serve nearby residents in surrounding neighborhoods while others may serve users from other communities as well.

Please refer to the Appendix for a list of Framingham’s Recreational Properties, their locations, and amenities.

Needs, Goals and Opportunities

Framingham has an Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) which was updated in November 2020. The overall purpose of this Plan is to serve as a guide for protecting, managing, improving, and expanding Framingham’s open space and recreation resources in the face of continuing development pressures.

Framingham’s goals, ascertained through public meetings and surveys, include two broad themes: Access & Inclusion and Sustainability. This vision will help Framingham realize many of the benefits of recreation opportunities and open space protection.

Needs

Access & Inclusion

Ensure that recreation facilities and open space are accessible to all who wish to use them and be responsive to the diverse needs of all residents of Framingham. Residents should have easy access to a diverse range of safe and clean facilities regardless of age, race, gender, disability, lack of transportation, low income, or neighborhood.

1. Reach environmental equity through the increase of new recreation facilities where needed most on the south side of Framingham.
2. Create new recreational facilities to fill unmet needs. Take advantage of creating new parks, playgrounds, and passive facilities wherever the opportunity presents itself. High priority examples include undertaking remediation and construction of Mary Dennison Park; developing a reuse plan for Danforth Green; expanding land holdings at Cushing Park; and expanding the City's community garden network.
3. Create and complete corridors for non-motorized passage that serve as greenways and provide access to passive and active recreation facilities, places of work, school, public transportation connections, or other points of interest in the city.
4. Pursue connection from Downtown (near Route 126 and Route 135) to the Farm Pond area by safe pedestrian and bicycle routes.
5. Research the feasibility of creating a loop trail around Farm Pond. (Chris Walsh Trail).
6. Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
7. Coordinate enhanced public access to the aqueducts working with the MWRA. Expand the usage of MWRA aqueduct trails system both in the North and South side of the City, adding to the 5 miles currently available for usage.
8. Develop trails and signage to connect the Framingham State College property, Bowditch Field, Mass Bay Community College, Cushing Memorial Park, Farm Pond, and the Downtown.

Sustainability

The value of recreation and open space opportunities becomes more apparent as undeveloped land in Framingham dwindles, as neighborhoods redevelop, and as environmental challenges present increasing risks to the community. Ecological disruption threatens our recreation and open space assets while at the same time these facilities provide essential services. Sustainability goals as it concerns recreation and open space includes the following:

1. Active Management of City Properties – Improve existing recreation facilities. Utilize management techniques to maximize ecological benefits and minimize risks to the community from flooding, extreme weather, pollution, pests, etc.
2. Preservation of undeveloped lands – Consider ways to further limit development of undeveloped or sparsely developed areas via regulations, acquisitions, or conservation restrictions.
3. Health – Encourage the community to use recreation facilities to improve health outcomes and lower health costs.



4. Education – Utilize our open space and recreation assets to increase knowledge and awareness of health and sustainability concerns.
5. Transportation – Encourage residents to reduce their environmental footprint by using open spaces more efficiently and expand transportation options through dedicated pedestrian and bicycle paths
6. Energy – Maximize opportunities to generate renewable energy and reduce energy use at open space and recreation facilities.
7. Stormwater Drainage improvements and nature-based solutions – to further the City’s efforts for climate resiliency and water quality improvements, the City will take steps to improve stormwater drainage systems at City parks and open space facilities.

Goals

1. Increase accessibility to existing and future recreation areas
2. Promote inclusion of all demographics in existing and future recreation areas

Opportunities

High Priority Large Parcels: Opportunities for acquisition or creative protection come and go and vary from situation to situation. Therefore, priorities will change as fiscal, political, and developmental circumstances change. There are, however, some parcels of such high priority, that they are worth setting forth here:

MCI for Women

Located in Southeast Framingham. Commonwealth of Massachusetts has announced plans to close this 500-acre property, which could be de-accessioned in much the same way that state hospitals have been. Other host cities and towns have taken ownership of portions of such properties, and Framingham may want to do the same, using the CPA Fund to make improvements

Nobscot Boy Scout Reservation of the Knox Trail Council

This 150-acre property with an extensive trail network straddles the Framingham/Sudbury town line. It connects to Framingham conservation land and abuts other already protected open spaces.

Eastleigh Farm

Located at 1062 Edmands Road, is an historical farm, preserving over 120 acres on the south slope of Gibbs Mountain in the northwest part of town. This inventoried area covers a mid-19th century farmstead improved in the 1930s as a rural suburban estate and working dairy farm and encompasses the largest collection of 19th and 20th-century farmstead buildings still in private ownership in Framingham.

Sons of Mary Missionary Society

This is a 29-acre parcel bounded by Gates Road, Country Club Lane, and Salem End Road in Southwest Framingham, just below Route 9.

Edgell Road Parcel

This is a privately owned 29-acre parcel adjacent to Nobscot Reservation and City of Framingham Conservation Land.

Framingham Recreation Assets

Cushing Memorial Park, 100 Dudley Road and Winter Street

Cushing Memorial Park property was originally a military hospital site. Early in World War II it was purchased by the US War Department, and a military hospital complex was built on the site consisting of over 100 buildings, including seven operating room suites. It was named after Dr. Harvey Cushing, a pioneer in the field of neurosurgery. It specialized in the treatment of wounds to the neurological system – brain, spine, and peripheral nervous system. By the end of the war almost 14,000 service men and women had been treated there. Following the war, it was acquired by the state of Massachusetts, and for many years was a center of geriatric care and research.

This 67.5-acre property is dedicated to passive recreational pursuits, and it has become central to the Framingham Park and Open Space system over a 20-year period. The grounds are unique as the property continues to evolve from its historical roots as an expansive state hospital with massive infrastructure into a major public park and open space asset.

Park Features:

- Children's Grove Playground
- Paved Walking and running paths
- Large open green space areas, lawns and meadows, mature trees, gardens, benches, picnic tables, gazebos, birdhouses, and pedestrian promenades.
- Historical sites: Cushing Memorial Chapel, the Academy Building, the Cushing Building and the 9-11 Memorial for Framingham victims of the 9-11 tragedy.



Bowditch Field Athletic and Cultural Complex, 475 Union Avenue

Bowditch Field is the main public athletic facility for the City of Framingham. It is located on Union Avenue midway between the City’s Downtown and the Historic Framingham Center where Framingham State University, the Framingham History Center and the Danforth Art Museum are located. Bowditch Field, along with Butterworth and Winch Parks, were all built during the Great Depression of the 1930s as Works Progress Administration projects.



The Bowditch facility houses a large multi-purpose football stadium that includes a top-quality natural turf playing surface complete with a 6-lane track (with seasonal walking lights for nighttime usage) and modern stands capable of accommodating approximately 5,300 spectators. The Bowditch Athletic and Cultural Complex also includes a baseball field, 2 basketball courts, and 4 tennis courts. Bowditch hosts multiple sporting events for 2 local high schools, 2 area colleges, various youth leagues and semi-professional teams located within MetroWest.

Farm Pond Park

Farm Pond, a well-used recreation resource near to the downtown, is located across from Cushing Park on Dudley Road. Farm Pond offers fishing, boat access, a fully accessible playground, bocce courts, walking trails, a dog park and a skatepark.



Framingham’s first Skatepark opened at Farm Pond Park on June 21, 2018.

The Farm Pond Skate Park offers beautiful views of Farm Pond, onsite parking, nearby recreational paths (paved and wooded), a handicap accessible playground, and open greenspace. It is located approximately 1 mile from the downtown and commuter rail station. The Skatepark is constructed of concrete and includes features like a bench, a rail, stairs, ledges, bowls, and ramps. It is ideal for skateboards, scooters, or BMX bikes.



Water-Based Recreation and Access

The Sudbury River, lakes, and ponds in Framingham provide opportunities for canoeing, power boating, sailing, fishing, swimming, skating, and other water-based activities.



Water Properties		
Name	Public Uses	Acres
Farm Pond, Big	Boating, Fishing	124
Farm Pond, Little	Fishing	23
Gleason Pond	Fishing	12
Lake Cochituate	Boating, swimming	195
195 Learned Pond	Swimming	34
Mohawk Pond	Fishing	2
Norton Pond	Fishing	5
Sucker Pond	N/A	5
Waushakum Lake	Boating, swimming	82
Total Number	9	Total Acreage 483

Soccer and Lacrosse Fields

Victory Fields

In 1996, the town purchased this 6.5-acre property from the Fitts Family with help from the Sudbury Valley Trustees and Framingham United Soccer. This field is located just north of Route 9 at 14 Auburn Street.

Amenities: Lacrosse and Soccer.

Merchant Road Fields

This \$700,000 complex opened in 2000 and located in South Framingham. Its 126 acres contain 8 soccer fields. Framingham Soccer Club has a 30-year lease on the land from the Framingham Parks and Recreation Department.



Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridors

Framingham established its first-ever Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in 2017 and is continually working to better serve bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the community by improving the road and trail systems. The Rail Trails are on corridors under varying forms of state and municipal ownership and agreement, and so have varying degrees of protection.



Cochituate Rail Trail

The Cochituate Rail Trail is a multi-use accessible path on the former Saxonville Branch line. It extends from Saxonville Village to Natick Center, with bridges over Route 30 and Route 9 into Natick. It now also provides access to Cochituate State Park. It is a well-used regional recreation resource for cyclists, pedestrians, skaters and people in wheelchairs. Connection to the final terminus at Natick Center MBTA is expected within a year.

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Framingham recently received a 2022 Mass Trails Grant to complete the conceptual design plans for the final section of this multi-use bike and pedestrian path, covering 3.4 miles from the Sudbury line to Framingham Centre. Plans are underway to facilitate purchase of this abandoned railroad land for recreational use, and development of this resource would then follow. Once completed, the Framingham portion will connect to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, providing 30 miles of connectivity from Lowell to Framingham.

Conservation Commission Trails

Framingham also has natural trails for hiking and enjoying open space. Several parcels under control of the Conservation Commission have trails, including Morency Woods, the Carol Getchall Trail, Cochituate Brook Reservation, Macomber and Whittenborg Woods.

MWRA Aqueduct Trails

In recent years, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) has partnered with host communities to open up portions of their inactive aqueducts for recreational pedestrian use and to facilitate connections to other trail corridors. In Framingham, 1.7 miles of the Weston Aqueduct is open to the public for pedestrian use, as is 0.6 miles of the Sudbury Aqueduct. State and Federal funds have recently been allocated for the design and creation of the Chris Walsh Memorial Aqueduct Trail along the Sudbury Aqueduct. Once completed, it will provide residents in the downtown Framingham area with direct access to this recreational corridor and adjoining open space.

The Bay Circuit Trail

The Bay Circuit Trail (BCT) is a 230-mile corridor running through fifty (50) cities and towns around greater Boston. Locally, it follows pre-existing trails from Sudbury through Nobscot Hill, and Reservation, various Sudbury Valley Trust properties in northwest Framingham, and Callahan State Park, and into Marlborough. Another small portion of the Bay Circuit Trail is in the extreme southwestern edge of Framingham connecting Southborough and Ashland.

Public Input on Outdoor Recreation from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022

Numerous suggestions for recreational uses were received at the Public Forum and from emails and social media posts. Parks and recreation resources noted in this Plan were identified as valuable resources deserving of CPA funding. However, some of the public suggestions might not be able to be funded under CPA, such as commercial uses or programs. Farm Pond had the most comments.

Farm Pond

- **Make the Farm Pond area and South Framingham a destination** with the Chris Walsh Trail, the Farm Pond Skatepark, the Farm Pond Dog Park and Cushing Park all within close proximity....Boat rides, rentals, restaurants, and live music....there are a lot of opportunities for revenue growth.
- **Make Farm Pond Special** with a continuous walking and biking paths all the way around it with connections to the Downtown and build from there.
- **Build an adaptive boat launch and dock** on Farm Pond.
- **Provide canoe and paddleboat rentals**, maybe a water taxi/ferry, that crosses back and forth from Franklin Street to Dudley Road.

Parks, Playgrounds, Community Gardens and Trails

- **Parks** - add tables with benches or chairs, where multigenerational families can get together to have a picnic, where people can play chess, dominos, mahjong...
- **Create more outdoor gathering spaces** where events can be held, particularly in South Framingham.
- **Mary Dennison Park** - remediate and redesign it.
- **Simpson Park** – make it accessible.
- **Cedar Swamp** – build a boardwalk to make it accessible for all residents.
- **Sudbury River** - build an ADA Dock.
- **Tennis courts** – restore courts at Framingham High School
- **Spray Parks** - start building 1 a year. Waltham has 11 spray parks, many partially financed by CPA funds. <https://www.city.waltham.ma.us/.../spray-parks-in-waltham>.
- **Concerts on the Common** – expand programs to other Parks.
- **Public market** and other outdoor gathering spaces. A Public Market in Framingham (like Haymarket, Eataly, etc.) would be amazing!
- **Community Gardens** are needed all over our community.
- **Community Gardens** - revitalized some dead (contaminated) spots and turn them into raised community gardens.
- **Trails** - open more trails within Framingham while better connecting us to our neighbors in Natick, Sudbury and beyond.
- **Bruce Freeman Bike trail**- extend it into Framingham
- **Become a Regional Trail Hub** - Framingham was successful in receiving a National Parks Service Recreational Trails Assistance Program Grant to assist Framingham in writing a blueprint to become a local and regional trail hub. This would allow Framingham to apply for many different types of grants which could then be matched with CPA funds.
- **Carol Getchell Trail** – build a boardwalk to improve accessibility.
- **Saxonville Levee Trail** could connect the Cochituate Rail Trail to the Carol Getchell Trail.
- **Chris Walsh Trail** - there is potential to connect the Chris Walsh Trail in Southeast Framingham to the Upper Charles Trail in Milford.

Outdoor Recreation Evaluation Criteria

Recreational proposals which address as many of the following criteria as possible will receive preference:

- Provide multiple active and passive recreation uses.
- Serve a significant number of residents.
- Expand the range of recreational opportunities available to all Framingham residents of all ages and abilities.
- Maximize utilization of land already owned by Framingham.
- Promote the creative use of railway and other corridors to create safe and healthful non-motorized transportation

Chapter 5: Open Space

Background

Open Space is an integral part of Framingham’s physical fabric. Framingham’s open space resources are extensively detailed in the Framingham 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Open space enhances the historical and scenic character of the City; protects important watershed and biological values, including wetlands, streams, floodplains, and wildlife habitats; and affords opportunities for passive recreational and educational uses, including hiking, walking, bird watching, picnicking, and nature exploration. In the face of increasing residential and commercial development pressures, Framingham needs to protect, improve, and increase its current inventory of conservation and open space parcels.

Open Space provides a range of benefits to the citizens of Framingham:

- In rapidly growing urban and suburban areas, any preserved land can offer relief from congestion and other negative effects of development. In a time of intense development pressures within our community, protecting (or conserving) open space lands has never been more important.
- Parks, natural areas, wetlands and forests supply storm-water drainage and wildlife habitats; farms and forests provide aesthetic benefits to surrounding residents.
Open space helps preserve valuable biodiversity through habitat protection.
- Parks and open space often increase the value of nearby properties, along with property tax revenue.
- Parks and open space attract businesses and trained employees in search of a high quality of life.
- Conserved open space helps safeguard drinking water, clean the air, and prevent flooding – services provided much more expensively by other means.



Needs, Goals, and Opportunities

Using surveys and feedback from its residents Framingham created an Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) which was last updated in November 2020. The overall purpose of this Plan is to serve as a guide for protecting, managing, improving, and expanding Framingham’s open space and recreation resources in the face of continuing development pressures.

Needs

1. Prioritize the open space and recreation needs for all citizens of Framingham by following the 2020 Framingham Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)
2. Assess the effects of development and plan accordingly in-order to preserve open space and natural corridors. Residential and commercial developments have affected and continue to affect open space and recreation in many ways. Loss of parcels that had not been regarded as threatened, such as the Millwood Golf Course, continues to erode the open space opportunities within Framingham.
3. Preserve or restore wild and natural areas, native species, and wildlife habitats.

Goals

1. Capitalize on opportunities to expand, preserve, restore, acquire, and create new public open spaces through purchase or restoration throughout the community.
2. Support Climate Resiliency and protect neighborhoods by acquiring parcels that:
 - a. have high ecological value, for example, which protect wetlands and water resources,
 - b. have high value for mitigating the impact of climate change (flood storage capacity),
 - c. are connected to other protected open space (to serve as an expansion, a link, or a buffer)
 - d. that have few invasive, exotic, hazardous, or noxious weeds or materials.
3. ADA Compliance - Support and increase as full accessibility, as is feasible, to Open Space for people with disabilities. Since 1968, under 521 CMR Rules and Regulations of the Architectural Access Board, all new construction and renovation of public facilities were required to be accessible to people with disabilities." In 2010 the ADA guidelines were re-written to includes access standards for outdoor activities (e.g., hiking trails and rail trails). A summary of the ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan is included in the Appendices.
4. Provide Environmental Equity (OSRP Table 4-14. Environmental Equity and Open Space Analysis) by acquiring parcels located in areas with little protected open space, which are publicly accessible and offer opportunities for public education.
 - a. On a city-wide scale, the total open space acreage and population shows an excellent average of 39 acres per 1000 people across Framingham.
 - b. A Census Tract located in the NW area of City where Callahan State Park is located, contains the most open space per person with 138 acres for every 1,000 residents.
 - c. Four census tracts however do not meet the National Standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people. They are all located in the most densely populated area of the City, the downtown and the south side of Framingham. These census tracts also contain environmental justice neighborhoods. The deficit in these areas ranges from 1 to 5 acres.
 - d. While acquiring new open space lands in the densest part of the community poses challenges, reaching environmental equity through the increase of new conservation and recreation facilities where needed most on the south side of Framingham, is an important goal.

Opportunities

1. Protect Open Space Parcels - Identify parcels in the City of Framingham, for Open Space protection. This would include neighborhood pocket parks, larger tracts with public access walking trails, scenic vistas, and critical wildlife habitat areas, and parcels that connect trails or adjoin Open Space parcels in other cities or towns.
2. Identify tax title priority parcels for acquisition based on size, current land use, ecological diversity, presence of rare species, adjacency to protected land, or are near Environmental Justice neighborhoods.
3. Expand land holdings at Cushing Park
4. Danforth Green - develop a reuse plan
5. Cedar Swamp - Improve access for the disabled with boardwalks through properties such as the Cedar Swamp, access to city beaches and bath houses and signage in Braille.
6. Reach environmental equity by creating and improving open space opportunities for residents of the southside of Framingham where it is most needed. Increase awareness of systemic equity disparities in Framingham and make this a priority in grading proposed funding requests.
7. Encourage submission of projects to the Community Preservation Committee which will utilize CPA Funds, in combination with other funding sources, to purchase properties, or to obtain conservation



restrictions that will ensure the property's permanent protection as open space. For example, neighborhood pocket parks, larger tracts with public access walking trails, scenic vistas, and critical wildlife habitat areas citywide.

8. Conserve and protect rivers and streams, lakes, ponds, and aquifers, wildlife habitats, and horticultural, agricultural, and sylvan resources. Encourage submission of projects to use CPA funds for removal of invasive plant species from the Sudbury River, the 3 Reservoirs, ponds (Waushakum, Farm Pond), wetlands (Cedar Swamp) and streams (Beaver Dam Brook). Support the Massachusetts DCR in their efforts to address species infestations in Lake Cochituate.
9. Protect Framingham's precious scenic vistas or viewsheds, including its open meadows, woodlands, and farmlands visible from roadsides, trail ways, and other viewing points, through a variety of strategies, including securing conservation restrictions.
10. Use CPA funds to Rehabilitate Brownfields which are defined by the US EPA as abandoned or underutilized properties (especially industrial and commercial facilities). Brownfield properties tend to be in environmental justice communities, and this is the case in Framingham. A prime example of such property is General Chemical on Leland Street and the Hess Gas Station on Hollis Street.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified several large properties for preservation:

1. Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph, located in Southwest Framingham. This 73-acre nursing home property on Bethany Road includes 50 acres of undeveloped land.
2. Sons of Mary Missionary Society. This is a 29-acre parcel bounded by Gates Road, Country Club Lane, and Salem End Road in Southwest Framingham, just below Route 9.
3. MCI for Women, located in Southeast Framingham. Commonwealth of Massachusetts has announced plans to close this 500-acre property, which could be de-accessioned in much the same way that state hospitals have been. Other host cities and towns have taken ownership of portions of such properties, and Framingham may want to do the same, using the CPA Fund to make improvements.
4. Nobscot Boy Scout Reservation of the Knox Trail Council. This 150-acre property with an extensive trail network straddles the Framingham/Sudbury town line. It connects to Framingham conservation land and abuts other already protected open spaces.
5. Eastleigh Farm, 1062 Edmands Road, is an historical farm that was established in the early 1800's. The area today known as "Eastleigh Farms", located on land known as "Gibbs Mountain", is situated in the northwesterly corner of Framingham near the Marlborough line.
6. Edgell Road Parcel. This is a privately owned 29-acre parcel adjacent to Nobscot Reservation and City of Framingham Conservation Land.

Current Open Space Resources

Article 97 of the Massachusetts State Constitution provides permanent protection for certain lands acquired for natural resources purposes, meaning "conservation, development and utilization of the agricultural, mineral, forest, water, air and other natural resources." Lands of this nature are often owned by the municipal conservation commission, recreation commission, water department, or by a state or federal conservation agency.

Conservation Commission Land

The Mayor appoints the seven-member Framingham Conservation Commission (FCC), with the approval of the City Council. The FCC is entrusted with promoting and managing the City's natural resources; administering and enforcing the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. c. 131 §40 - the WPA) and Framingham's Wetland Protection Ordinance; and for acquiring and managing open space.

The Conservation Commission manages 57 properties, a total of 122 parcels. This is a combined total of approximately 551 acres. About half of the properties have been delineated and bounded with small markers nailed into trees. Six of the seven primary parcels have well-marked trails. Most of the properties are not maintained for public use but are managed for their wildlife habitat value or wetland resource value. Major properties include the [Wittenborg Woods Reservation](#) (99.6 acres), the [Macomber Reservation](#) (57.86 acres), and [Cochituate Brook Reservation](#) (27.4 acres).

The protection of Wetland Resource Areas as defined in the WPA, and the Bylaw is crucial to the preservation of functional, natural communities as well as the protection of human health and safety. Any activity within 100 feet of wetlands and 200 feet of perennial streams falls under the authority of the FCC. Review of these activities is crucial to ensuring that development projects do not have adverse effects:

- Wetlands (marshes, bogs, fens, swamps, wet meadows) that border on surface waters,
- Bank of ponds, lakes, streams, and rivers,
- Land under waterbodies and waterways,
- Riverfront Area (defined as land within 200’ of the mean annual high-water mark of perennial streams)
- Land Subject to Flooding (Bordering and Isolated),
- Vernal Pools, provided they exist within one of the Wetland Resource Areas protected under the Framingham wetlands Protection Bylaw (Article V, sec. 18)
- Freshwater wetlands, whether they border surface waters,
- Potential and Certified Vernal Pools, regardless of if they are within another protected resource area.

Natural Communities

Framingham consists of over 26 Natural Communities as described in the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program’s “Classification of the Natural Communities of Massachusetts.”

Here are some examples of Conservation Land with trails that allow visitors to observe these community types:

White Pine – Oak Forest

Typically found on dry, moraine or till soils, this is the largest natural community in Framingham and is expressed in wide distribution throughout the City. Trails along the [Wittenborg Woods](#) provide visitors with an opportunity to explore this community type.

Successional White Pine Forest

Often these communities are found where old fields have been left to grow in or along the transitional edge between woodlands and fields. Examples of this community type can be found near the fields of the Mohawk Pond Natural Area.



Oak-Hemlock-White Pine Forest

This community is common on rocky, shallow well-drained soils, with few nutrients. Examples of this community type can be found at Macomber Woods.

Oak-Hickory Forest

Several of Framingham’s conservation areas have woods that are dominated by a mixture of oak and hickory. Located along SVT’s [Henry’s Hill](#) and the [Nobscot Boy Scout property](#), these areas are well drained, upper slopes, with west and south-facing aspects.



Red Maple Swamp

Many of Framingham’s wetlands are red maple swamps. The trail at [Cedar Swamp](#) off Mellon Street skirts the edge of this community type. These areas are characterized by acidic soils that are seasonally flooded by groundwater seepage or surface water flow.

Vegetated Wetlands

Most of the vegetated wetlands in Framingham are swamps dominated by woody vegetation. Many wetlands border surface waters, while others are isolated. Prominent wetland systems in Framingham include the Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW) east of Walnut Street, east of Cedar Street, and east of Little Farms Road.



Marshes

Framingham has areas of deep emergent marsh along the Sudbury River and adjacent to both its natural and man-made ponds and low-grade streams. Deep emergent marshes form in broad, flat areas where mucky mineral soils are seasonally inundated and permanently saturated. These wetland communities provide critical waterfowl habitat and are home to leopard, pickerel, green and bull frogs and red-spotted newts. Bird species commonly found in marshes include common yellow throat, tree swallow, common grackle, swamp sparrow and red-winged blackbird.

Vernal Pools

Framingham’s rolling topography makes for great vernal pool habitats. Eighteen (18) vernal pools have been certified in Framingham though many others are known to exist. In fact, there are over 100 potential vernal pools in Framingham according to the Massachusetts Aerial Photo Survey of Potential Vernal Pools (Spring 2001). Vernal pools provide unique habitats for a variety of forest and wetland organisms, some of which depend on this habitat for their survival, such as wood frogs, spotted turtles and two local species of mole salamanders. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has established specific criteria for certification of a vernal pool including:

- land area that has a confined basin depression,
- holds water for a minimum of two continuous months during spring and/or summer for most years,
- is free of adult fish populations or dry up sometime during the year, and
- provides essential breeding habitat for certain amphibians and/or food, shelter, migrating, and breeding habitat of other wildlife.



City Ponds

City ponds are protected under Article 97 of the State Constitution. The City of Framingham has an abundance of water resources (OSRP Table 4-1. Ponds and Lakes in Framingham). In addition to the Sudbury Reservoirs, it has eight major ponds and lakes. Five of them are recognized by the State as “Great Ponds” (any pond or lake that contains more than 10 acres in its natural state). They are required to have public access. Farm Pond is the largest with 147 acres. Great Ponds are also within the authority of the MA Chapter 91 permitting program. Projects such as docks, stairs, require a Chapter 91 permit through the State.

Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Historic and cultural resources are aspects of the environment that reflect the activities and human contributions of an area. These resources give communities their character, sense of time and place, and contribute to the quality of life in an area. They include historic buildings and structures, scenic roads and landscapes, important institutions, and landmarks. The value attributed to scenic landscapes is based on values that most people consider to be intrinsic with their own well-being. These include clean air and water, open space, solitude, and harmony between man and nature. Examples include state park land, municipal conservation land, the Sudbury River, private open space, and agricultural land in the northwest of Framingham, and the expanse of reservoirs, free flowing river, and open space in the southwest of Framingham.

Federally Regulated Open Space Assets

Sudbury River

The Sudbury River is a navigable waterway, and so is under federal authority. Framingham is part of the Sudbury River Watershed. Approximately 7.6 miles of the Sudbury River flow through Framingham. The headwaters are in Cedar Swamp in Hopkinton and Westborough. The river flows easterly through Southborough and Ashland, entering Framingham from the southwest.



Wild and Scenic River Designation - A 29-mile segment of the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord (SuAsCo) Rivers was designated by Congress to be added to the National Wild and Scenic River system. Designated rivers must possess at least one "outstanding remarkable resource value." The study found that the SuAsCo segment has five (5) of these qualities: ecological, recreational, historical and/or archaeological, scenic, and literary. 14.9 miles of the Sudbury River have been designated as scenic by the National Park Service. The section of the Sudbury River so designated begins in Framingham at the Danforth Street Bridge, includes the oxbow, and continues downstream (north) through Wayland, Sudbury, and Concord. Wild and Scenic designation protects the rivers from "federally initiated, funded, or permitted actions that would harm the values for which the rivers were designated" (US Dept of Interior Wild and Scenic Designation). Land along the Sudbury River is also protected open space. Framingham's most expansive wildlife corridor follows the Sudbury River throughout the City. The Sudbury River is a warm water fishery and supports such species as catfish, Bluegill and Pumpkinseeds, Largemouth Bass, Perch, Smallmouth Bass, and Pickerel. The Sudbury River corridor also supports several species of turtle and frog, but protection of adjacent riparian areas and upland is critical to maintain diversity along the Sudbury River corridor.

The Sudbury River also supports several confirmed mammal species including river otter, muskrat, beaver, and mink. The corridor, and associated upland open spaces support coyote, deer, fox, fisher, and numerous small mammals such as voles, moles, mice, etc. These species then support the presence of several raptor species such as hawk and owls, while osprey and even eagle, also inhabit the Sudbury River Corridor.

Massachusetts Open Space Properties

The State of Massachusetts owns and manages several areas of open space and recreation land in Framingham:

Lake Cochituate

Lake Cochituate is owned and operated by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Saxonville Beach is located in the 195-acre North Pond portion of Lake Cochituate.

Callahan State Park

The largest public property in Framingham is [Callahan State Park](#) managed by Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Callahan State Park is an 820-acre day use area located in northwest Framingham and eastern Marlborough. Callahan has seven miles of marked trails. Within the park are nearly one hundred (100) acres of open fields, seventy (70) acres of which are currently under an agricultural lease.

Reservoirs

The City of Framingham is fortunate to be the home of a series of historic public water reservoir and aqueduct lands. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) manages three public water reservoirs in Framingham – the Foss, Stearns, and Brackett reservoirs. Framingham Reservoirs include the impounded portions of the Sudbury River and the shores of the impoundments.

Aqueducts

The Hultman, Sudbury, and Weston Aqueducts traverse the City of Framingham from east to west. They are owned and managed by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). These grassy-topped, naturalized areas are prime examples of continuous, linear wildlife corridors. As sections of the aqueducts are open for low impact walking trails to the public, they also continue to serve their wildlife corridor function, allowing for passage of various animals.



Non-Profit and Privately Owned Open Space

Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) Property

Approximately 390 acres of open space in Framingham are owned by the [Sudbury Valley Trustees](#) (SVT). Some of the land is managed for passive recreation, some for agricultural use, and some for watershed and wildlife habitat protection (OSRP Table 5-4). All SVT properties are protected by an implied charitable trust enforceable by the donor and the Massachusetts Attorney General.

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

The APR program allows the State, City, or combination of the two, to purchase the development rights on farmland in-order to preserve the land's use for agriculture. The owner is compensated by the difference between the full market value (development value) and the agricultural value (the current use). The only property in Framingham falling under this APR classification is the portion of Hanson's Farm on the west side of Nixon Road.



Conservation Restrictions

A conservation restriction (CR) permanently protects private property from development. The land remains in the ownership of the landowner, but the "development rights" have been permanently restricted. A CR ensures that land will remain in its predominantly natural condition.

Public Input on Open Space from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022

Open Space Public comments were received via social media, emails, and the Forum itself.

Commentators discussed the year round physical and mental health benefits of open space for our community and in particular its ability to decrease the high levels of stress and anxiety for our school children. They advocated for the protection and expansion of open space and prevention of the loss of farmland and large, undeveloped parcels to development. They supported equitable access of open space especially in South Framingham where there is a deficit.

Open Space Evaluation Criteria

Open Space proposals that address as many of the following specific criteria as possible will receive preference:

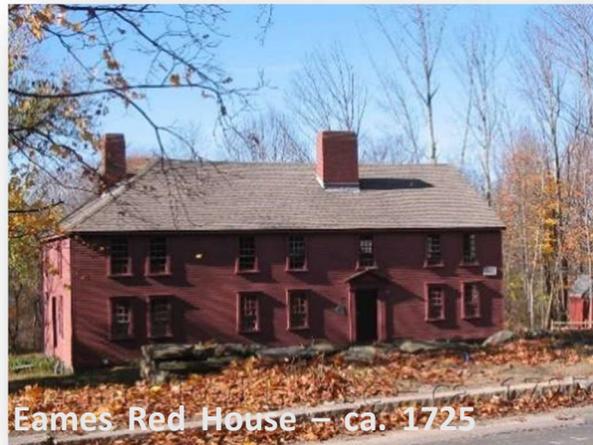
- Provide Environmental Equity by creating an equal balance of access to open space across the entire city.
- Provide ADA accessibility.
- Permanently protect important wildlife habitat, including areas that:
 - a. are of local significance for biodiversity
 - b. contain a variety of habitats, with a diversity of geologic features and types of vegetation
 - c. contain a habitat type that is in danger of vanishing from Framingham; or
 - d. preserve habitat for threatened or endangered species of plants or animals
- Provide opportunities for passive recreation and environmental education
- Protect or enhance wildlife corridors, promote connectivity of habitat, or prevent fragmentation of habitats
- Provide connections with existing trails or potential trail linkages
- Preserve scenic and historic views
- Provide flood control/storage
- Preserve important surface water bodies, including wetlands, vernal pools, or riparian zones
- Preserve active agricultural use

Chapter 6: Historic Resources

Background

From the time of its first English settler in 1645 to the present Framingham has held a proud place in the history of our nation. We are the birthplace of Revolutionary War hero, Peter Salem, a freed slave, and of Christa McAuliffe, who died tragically in the explosion of the Challenger spacecraft. Events and people such as these are memorialized in the cultural resources which remain standing here today.

In the housing boom following World War II precious examples of those resources began falling victim to the wrecking ball. A prime example of this was the so-called Eames Red House on Union Avenue, built by one of the town's first families. In 1969 a developer filed a plan for an apartment complex on that site, which would require demolition of that structure. An alert citizenry stepped in and mounted a campaign to save it.



They were successful and at the same time Town Meeting voted to establish a historical commission. That marked the beginning of a community wide awareness of the importance of historic preservation in Framingham.

In the years that followed, historic preservation grew in importance. A historic district commission was formed, and two historic districts were established – one at the Centre Common and another along Pleasant Street. In the early 1980's, with the assistance of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) the town undertook its first survey to identify and document the community's historic resources. Fifteen *areas*, 392 *buildings* and sixteen *monuments* and *structures* have since been identified and registered with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Of these 186 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and in the Massachusetts Cultural Resources Inventory System (MACRIS). Survey work (Form B's) continues up to the present day.

Today our community is known throughout the world as the home of the Framingham Heart Study, a longitudinal medical research project, begun in 1947 and now spanning three generations.

In 2002 The Historical Commission prepared its first Historic Preservation Plan with help from Town Staff and the Historic District Commission. It was updated in 2016 in cooperation with the Planning Board.



1768 Postal Mile Marker

Our city also is home to a unique and extensive network of dams, reservoirs and aqueducts constructed here in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to provide water supply to the City of Boston. While highly significant historically, these are under the control of the state, so our city has no role in their preservation or upkeep.



Gatehouse on Sudbury Aqueduct – ca. 1875

Needs, Goals & Opportunities

Until the “awakening” to the importance of historically and/or architecturally significant objects and structures in the 1960’s, our community gave little attention to preservation. In many cases older city owned buildings were simply closed and “mothballed” with little care or maintenance. This practice became known as “demolition by neglect.” Often in budget deliberations communities tend to give these types of issues lower priority.

Needs

The historic preservation needs of Framingham are well documented in the City’s Historic Preservation Plan (2016). A few of the more prominent historic resources, needs and opportunities in historic preservation in this community are listed below. This is not intended to be all-inclusive. The scope and limits on the use of CPA funds for historical preservation are set forth elsewhere in this plan.



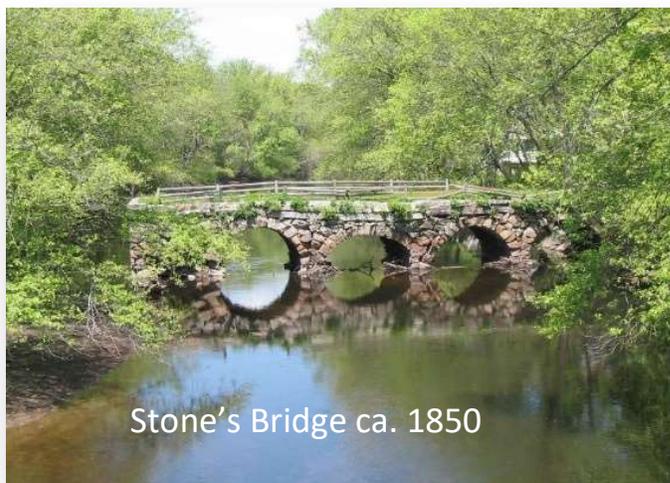
Accessibility Challenges

Around the Centre Common there are three historically significant structures which are leased to the Framingham History Center. These are the Village Hall (formerly Town Hall), the Edgell Library and the Old Academy. These structures are in use constantly by the public, including children from our public schools. The Village Hall recently underwent a restoration and was made ADA compliant. The others need to be restored and made fully accessible as well.



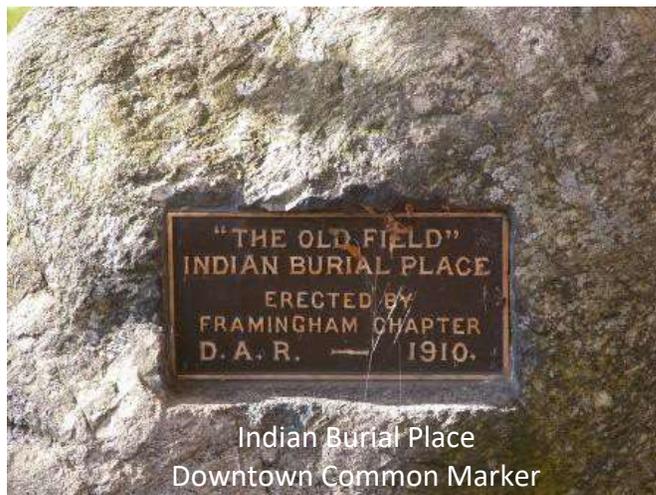
Recognizing Indigenous and Historic Communities

We need to remember that long before the first Englishman or woman came to this area it was inhabited by indigenous peoples, the Nipmucs of the Algonquin Tribe. The woodlands and rolling meadows, the abundant waterways and ponds provided a perfect environment for them. Several villages existed within the boundaries of our city. Archeologists have conducted digs in one or two locations. The State has discouraged making such locations public because of the threat of looting, Nevertheless, we must make a greater effort to preserve these peoples' place in our history.



Stone's Bridge ca. 1850

A smaller, but equally important group in our early history were the slaves. It comes as a surprise to some that many of the earliest settlers brought with them African peoples, as slaves. In the year the town was incorporated, 1700, there were about forty families. Among them were several well-to-do persons who "owned" slaves. Among them was Reverend John Swift, the spiritual leader of the community. Swift owned five slaves! Recently the Framingham History Center has been collecting records to more fully tell the story of those persons and their role in our history. We need to encourage this work to continue and expand.



Indian Burial Place
Downtown Common Marker

A unique quality of this community is its diversity. Following the Civil War, several factors combined to draw large numbers of skilled and unskilled immigrant workers here. The need for a complex group of dams, reservoirs and aqueducts to supply the city of Boston with water is one example. Many Italian immigrants with skills in working with stone were drawn here. A whole neighborhood in south Framingham became known as Tripoli. The construction of several shoe factories here, and the arrival of the Dennison Manufacturing Company in the late 1800's drew large number of Irish and well as other groups. A small Jewish community grew when a garment factory moved here from Boston in the 1890's bringing their workers with them. Framingham was at the center of a complex of railroads that connected it with urban centers throughout the east and in the early years of the twentieth century, an automobile factory was built here. Smaller groups of immigrants came in the mid 1900's such as Puerto Ricans, Asians (Vietnamese. & Thai), Russians and other eastern European peoples. Perhaps the largest immigrant group and the one which is having the greatest impact on our city today is our Brazilian population. Their story is an integral part of the history of the latter 20th and early 21st centuries. They must be given the recognition they deserve in the telling of our history.

Goals

1. Promote preservation of historic sites, documents, and objects.
2. Promote accessibility to historic sites, documents, and objects.

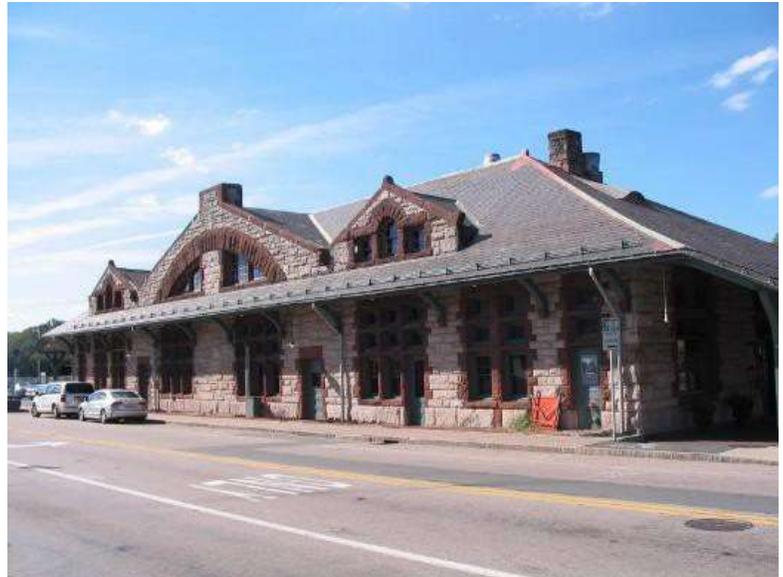
Opportunities

Quoting from the recent Report of the Community Preservation Act (PCA) Study Group, opportunities include:

- Further development of the city's Cultural Resource Inventory through survey grants from the National Historic Preservation Program
- Expansion of public outreach to raise awareness of the benefits of historic preservation to the quality of life in our community
- Creation of additional historic districts and architectural districts where appropriate
- Opposition to encroachment by State owned facilities such as Framingham State University and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (e.g., dams, reservoirs, & aqueducts) into adjoining historically significant neighborhood

Current Historic Resources

The current historic resources within our community are the buildings, structures, objects, and areas which are associated with significant persons and events of the community's founding and development. The three steps in historic preservation are: *identification, evaluation, and protection*. The process of identification is done by conducting historical surveys. These were begun in the early 1980's and are ongoing today under the direction of the Historical Commission. They are compiled in the *Framingham Cultural Resource Inventory*, available on the city website. As of January 2016, there were 392 buildings, 16 monuments and structures, and 15 areas which had been identified and registered with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Of these, 186 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Inventory (MACRIS), available online.



Four areas within the community deserve special mention because they have been designated National Register Historic Districts. These are:

- The Centre Common National Register District
- Irving Square National Register District
- Concord Square National Register District
- Saxonville National Register District

Two Local Historic Districts also deserve special mention:

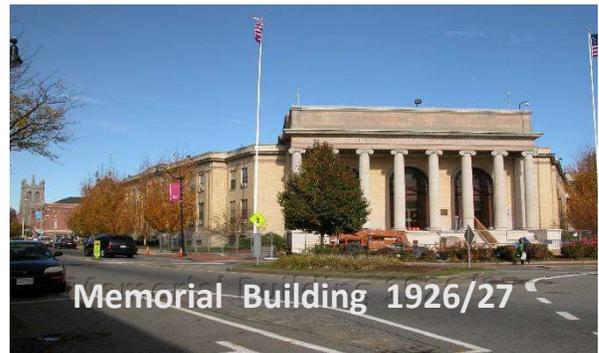
- Centre Common Local Historic District
- Jonathan Maynard Local Historic District

In addition to municipal bodies charged with the responsibility for historic preservation there are two non-profit organizations that support and advocate for historic preservation here in town. They are:

- The Framingham History Center
- The Friends of Saxonville

The Memorial Building (City Hall)

Built in 1926/27, it is approaching 100 years of age. Numerous studies have documented its shortcomings by 21st century standards. Its unique design makes it obsolete by today's ADA standards. The front part of the building is a monument to citizens of the town who have served the country in time of war. Hence the name "Memorial Building." There have been proposals to demolish the building and build a new City Hall. Any such plan should include preservation of the Memorial Building.



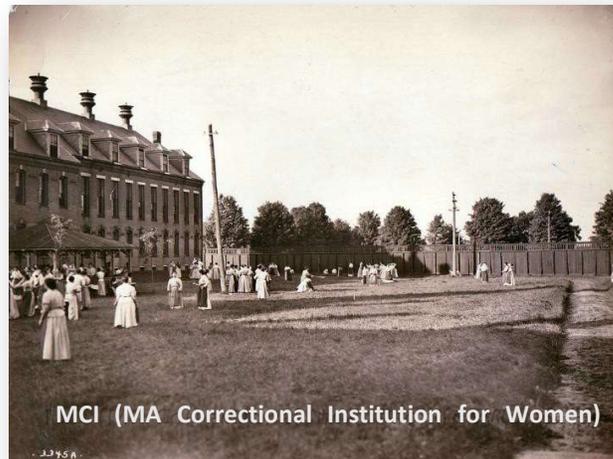
Athenaeum Hall

This structure, built as a community center in the late 1840's, has been a topic of discussion for restoration and repurposing for years. Proposals have been made but always have been shelved!

The old high school, more recently known as the Danforth Museum, is presently vacant. It could be restored and repurposed.

MCI (MA Correctional Institution for Women)

Presently owned by the State, may soon be closed, and sold. This would present a wonderful opportunity for the city to acquire a large parcel of land with potential as open space or for recreational purposes. The complex of buildings themselves are of historical significance, being the oldest remaining correctional facility of its kind in the country. Two structures of special significance are the superintendent's residence and Hodder House. Both are associated with women who were leaders in their field.



Public Input on Historic Resources from CPA Public Forum – June 22, 2022

Many of the valued historic properties in Framingham, noted above, and other historic resources were mentioned at the CPA Public Forum as deserving of support for CPA funding. At the forum, there was support for funding the restoration, and potentially the future reuse of the Memorial Building as a cultural center, and the desire to make it fully accessible. Two buildings, with historic commercial architecture critical to the fabric of the downtown and deemed historically significant, were noted as deserving of exterior rehabilitation and preservation. These buildings are all located in the Concord Square Historic District. The Edgell Memorial Library and Old Academy Building were both identified at the Public Forum as being in need of rehabilitation and repair. Both are valued historic resources in the Framingham Centre Common Historic District. Other properties noted as valued historic structures at the Public Forum deserving of preservation include the two historically significant houses on the MCI property in South Framingham, including the Superintendent's House, and Stone's Bridge, a shared valuable historic resource located between Framingham and Wayland over the Sudbury River.

Historic Resources Evaluation Criteria:

Historical proposals which address as many of the following criteria as possible will receive preference:

- Address a need or objective expressed in the City's Historic Preservation Plan (2016)
- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate historic, cultural, architectural, and archeological resources of significance, especially those that are threatened
- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate City owned properties, documents, features, or resources of historical significance
- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate the historical function of a property or site
- Support the adaptive reuse of historic properties
- Is located within the City's historic districts, on a State or National Historic Register, or eligible for placement on such registers, or on the City of Framingham's Historic Commission's Cultural Resource Inventory
- Increases the overall breadth of historical context of the item(s)
- Returns a historically significant building that is abandoned, unused, or damaged, back to public use



Chapter 7: The CPA Application Process

FY23 Project Application and Evaluation Schedule

August 5, 2022	Eligibility Screening and Application process opens
September 26, 2022	Deadline for submission of Eligibility Screening requests
October 31, 2022	Deadline for submission of Project Applications
October to December 2022	CPC evaluation of complete applications
December 2022	CPC short-lists potential projects
January 2023	CPC votes recommended projects and submits package to City Council for review and appropriations

Who Can Apply for CPA Funding?

Any of the following entities can submit Project Applications and be awarded CPA grants:

- City departments, boards and commissions
- Public agencies and authorities
- State-certified non-profit organizations, for example: historical societies, environmental organizations, park and recreation associations, neighborhood, community, and affordable housing organizations
- Affordable housing developers, and developers of community or neighborhood assets
- Private individuals and organizations serving a public purpose or benefit

While applicants are usually from the private non-profit or public sector, private entities or individuals could be directly awarded a grant under limited circumstances, as allowed under the CPA. Be advised that state law limits the distribution of public funds to private parties, such that they must serve a public purpose or create a public benefit. This might entail the municipality acquiring a deed restriction, or providing public access to the property where there was none before, or some other public benefit. While the Community Preservation Act does not prohibit the ultimate use of CPA funds for projects on privately owned property, the “public benefit” being created must be explicitly protected and preserved.

Project Applications

The CPC uses a two-step application process. The first step is for the Applicant to complete and submit the CPA Project Eligibility Form. The second step, once a project is confirmed as eligible, is for the Applicant to submit a Full Application. Both the Project Eligibility Form and Full Application Form are among the Plan’s Appendices



Project Eligibility Form

This Form is used to help determine if the proposed project meets the CPA requirements. In addition to requesting a description of the project and contact information from the Applicant, it asks who controls or owns the property where a project is proposed and if the project has the owner's support; which CPA project categories and activities the proposed project addresses; and what public benefits the project would create.

As described in Chapter 2, the Community Preservation Fund can only support projects that are eligible for funding under Massachusetts CPA legislation guidelines to advance Community Housing, Outdoor Recreation, Open Space protection, and/or Historic Resources preservation, and are limited to specific types of project activities in each of the four project categories, as described more fully in that Chapter.

Within 15 business days of receiving the Eligibility Form, the CPC will notify an Applicant whether or not the proposal is eligible. In cases where a proposed project is determined to not be eligible, the CPC will provide an explanation.

Full Application

Applicants whose projects are eligible will be invited to submit the Full Application, which asks the Applicant to provide all relevant project details that the Committee will need to understand the relative merits of their proposed project, and its likelihood of success. It also asks: how the proposed project addresses the Community Preservation Plan's priorities and criteria; who supports the project; whether the request of project funding is time-sensitive; how the project will be implemented and by whom; the project timeline; and the total budget proposed, including the amount of CPA funding requested and all other funding sources.

The CPC will use this information to evaluate each proposed project, in order to choose which projects and at what CPA funding level it will recommend to the City Council.

Project Evaluation Criteria

The Framingham Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has developed the following criteria to evaluate the relative merits of project proposals and their likelihood of success and, ultimately, to rank the proposals and make recommendations for funding to the City Council. The Committee recognizes that not all of these criteria will be applicable to all project applications. Taken as a whole, these criteria represent the Committee's priorities.

CPC identifies two "types" of criteria:

General Criteria, which reflect the overarching goals of Framingham's Community Preservation program (*below*).

Category-Specific Criteria, which reflect the needs, opportunities, and priorities identified for each of Framingham's four CPA use categories, as described in Chapters 3-6 (*end of chapters*).

The Committee recommends that Applicants address all relevant General and Category Specific Criteria as they prepare their project applications.



General Criteria

Preference will be given to project proposals which address as many of the following General Criteria as possible, including these, to be consistent with community's needs and values:

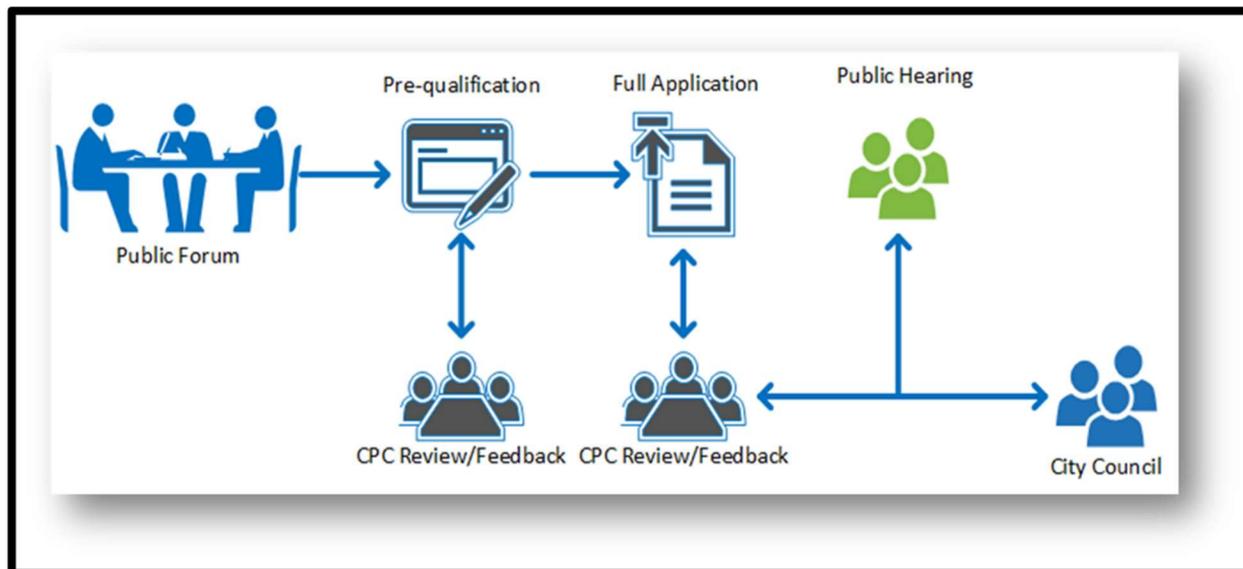
- Addresses identified needs, goals, and priorities consistent with the Community Preservation Plan and current city planning documents which have received wide-spread scrutiny, public input and have been adopted by the City;
- Has strong support from Framingham boards, commissions, departments, community groups and diverse resident populations;
- Is publicly visible, accessible, and generates broad benefits for our community;
- Benefits underserved geographic areas and populations;
- Supports the needs of Framingham's at-risk populations, i.e. low-income residents, veterans, older adults and people with disabilities;
- Saves valued resources that would otherwise be threatened or lost; and
- Protects the natural environment, deploys sustainable design practice and addresses climate resiliency needs;

and these, giving preference to proposals which use CPA funding strategically:

- Leverages the value of CPA capital through additional public or private funds, in-kind contributions, labor, materials, or other cost-saving measures;
- Addresses long-standing or urgent needs, or exceptional time-sensitive opportunities in the community;
- Demonstrates practicality and feasibility regarding project management and project team's expertise, a reasonable and informed project budget, a realistic project timeline with milestones, and a long-term maintenance plan;
- Either serves more than one CPA purpose (especially in linking open space, recreation and community housing) or demonstrates why serving multiple needs is not feasible; and
- Serves as catalysts for transformative change to enhance the aesthetics, connectivity, and quality of life in the community.

Project Application, Evaluation, and Selection Process

The following process description provides the major milestones associated with Application submission and review.



STEP 1 Applicant submits CPA Project Eligibility Screening Form.

CPC must confirm a proposed project’s eligibility under CPA guidelines before an Applicant submits a Full Application. Massachusetts CPA eligible use guidelines are provided in Chapter 2.

Applicants can submit CPA Project Eligibility Forms from August 5 to September 26, 2022.

Email the completed Form to CPC@framinghamma.gov or mail or hand deliver the Form to: **Framingham CPC, c/o Planning and Community Development Department, Memorial Building, 150 Concord St., Framingham, MA 01702.**

STEP 2 CPC determines project eligibility and invites Applicant to submit Full Application

CPC will notify Applicant within 15 business days whether a proposed project, as described, is eligible for funding under CPA guidelines. CPC will invite Applicants with eligible projects to submit a full Project Application and will provide a Project Tracking Number to use on future submitted materials.

In cases where proposed projects are determined to not be eligible, CPC will indicate the reason. The CPC welcomes revised Eligibility Forms from Applicants through September 26, 2022.



STEP 3 Applicant submits Full Application

CPC recommends that Applicants submit complete Full Applications as early as possible in the Application window to ensure maximum consideration.

Applicant must submit two (2) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy of the signed Application and all additional supplemental documents requested by the CPC. Applicant may also include any additional information for the CPC to consider in evaluating the proposed project as part of their submission.

Applications shall be submitted to: ***Framingham CPC, c/o Planning and Community Development Department, Memorial Building, 150 Concord St., Framingham, MA 01702.***

STEP 4 CPC confirms receipt of Full Application. It will also inform Applicant if it is missing required information.

CPC will notify Applicant in writing that Application is under review. If the application is incomplete, the CPC will notify the Applicant of what required information is missing and when it must be received in order to keep their Application active.

STEP 5 CPC develops questions for Applicant about the project and requests additional information

The CPC may make a written request to the Applicant for specific additional information and will include a timeline for when it must be received. CPC may also request that Applicant meet with CPC representatives to discuss the proposed project.

STEP 6 Applicant with complete Application will be invited to attend a CPC meeting

The CPC will invite an Applicant with complete application to a public meeting to discuss their application and to respond to questions about their proposal.

STEP 7 CPC completes its review of project Applications based upon evaluation criteria, and develops a list of proposed project recommendations.

Upon completion of its evaluation of Applications and funding requests, the CPC shall publish its proposed project recommendations and notice of a hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the community and on a Municipal Bulletin Board for two consecutive weeks before the Committee takes a final vote on such recommendations to the Council.

STEP 8 CPC votes on final recommendations and sends recommendation package to City Council

CPC meets to vote on a list of projects to recommend to City Council for funding, with recommended funding amounts.



STEP 9 City Council votes on recommendations and appropriations

The Community Preservation Act requires the City's legislative body, in Framingham the City Council, to make final funding decisions on Community Preservation projects. They are only permitted to consider the CPA projects and budgets that the CPC has recommended.

The City Council has the authority to make these decisions:

1. Approve a CPC recommended project at the CPC recommended budget level.
2. Approve the CPC recommended project but with a reduced budget. (The City Council may not increase the budget level.)
3. Reject the CPC recommended project outright.



Appendices

The appendices in this section provide documentation of the CPA Public Forum, the Eligibility form and Full Application, and references and links to CPA related topics.

Appendix A: CPA Community Forum 6-22-22

CPA Public Forum Framingham Community Preservation Committee June 22, 2022

Introductions

Mayor Charlie Sisitsky welcomed the public to this important Community forum. He explained that over the last year, the Community Preservation Committee has been hard at work putting together a vision for the use of the Community Preservation Act Funds. He also stated that the Community Preservation Committee will now have the support and help of Framingham's newly appointed Director of Planning and Community Development, Sarkis Sarkisian who was also in attendance. The Community Preservation Act is a smart growth tool that will help Framingham preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. Mayor Sisitsky looks forward to hearing the thoughts of the Committee and the Public.

Tom Mahoney, CPC Chair, explained that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) members have been working diligently to create our Community Preservation Plan (CPP), but one important piece is missing – Input from the Public. That is why we are here tonight.

Translation services in Spanish and Portuguese were announced.

Presentation

Judith Grove, CPC Vice Chair, thanked the public for voting in November 2020 to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA). She noted that the CPA requires that input from the Public be integrated into the Community Preservation Plan (CPP) and that her presentation would be followed by a Discussion Session with plenty of time for the Public to ask questions and suggest project ideas. She will focus on these areas: Open Space and Recreation, Historic and Community Housing.

Ms. Grove's Power Point Presentation covered these topics:

1. **The CPA was adopted by Framingham on November 3, 2020.**
2. **How is the CPA is funded?** – By a 1% local property tax surcharge, a guaranteed yearly distribution from the state Community Preservation Trust Fund administered by the Department of Revenue, and interest from CPA Reserve Accounts.
3. **What can CPA funds be spent on?** – According to the CPA Allowable Uses Chart there are 4 areas (but only 3 funding buckets since Open Space and Recreation are funded together):
 - Acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of **historic resources**,
 - Acquisition, creation, and preservation of land for **open space use**,
 - Acquisition, creation, preservation and rehabilitation/restoration of land and outdoor facilities for **outdoor recreational use**,
 - Acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of **community housing**.

Funds cannot be spent on maintenance or operating expenses and cannot supplant general municipal revenue. This is for new quality of life programs.



4. **Who Can Apply for CPA funding?** Government Departments, Boards and Commissions, nonprofits, but not loosely formed neighborhood groups. However, groups and individuals can seek the support of a Framingham board or committee.
5. **CPA Budget Details** - The only major rule is that the CPC needs to spend or reserve funds for later spending in these 3 accounts:
 - 10% of total revenue for the Community Housing reserve account,
 - 10% for the Historic reserve account,
 - 10% for the Open Space and Outdoor Recreation reserve account,

Up to 5% may be used for the administrative expenses of the CPC Examples include: an administrative assistant, newspaper ads, legal assistance, consultants, and appraisals, to assure due diligence on project recommendations. Funds may not be used to pay the municipal staff. The unspent balance is returned to the Flexible Account also called the Undesignated Fund at the end of each Fiscal Year.

65% of funding is flexible. It could be approved for only one project, split up into the 3 different areas, or saved in the budgeted reserve account for spending in future years.

Bonding is permitted under CPA Rules. The 3 major uses are: to rehab historic municipal buildings, to acquire land for Open Space or Recreation and to build athletic fields, parks, and playgrounds.

6. **What is the Community Preservation Committee?**

- The CPA requires a community to establish a Community Preservation Committee to administer the Community Preservation Act Program.
- Framingham's CPC has 9 volunteer members - 5 from these city boards: Conservation, Historic Commission, Parks and Recreation, Planning Board, and Housing Authority. The City Council appoint 4 At-large members.

7. **What are the Responsibilities of the Community Preservation Committee?**

- Develop the Community Preservation Plan (CPP), a guidebook for funding projects,
- Hold an annual Public Hearing. Input from today's Public Hearing will be incorporated into our initial Community Preservation Plan which will be updated yearly.
- Evaluate funding proposals and make recommendations including the amount of funding to the City Council for a final vote.
- Record and prepare an annual budget
- Uphold a process that is accessible, ethical, transparent, and which represents the diverse geographic and demographic of Framingham.

8. **What are the Primary Criteria for Projects?**

- Consistent with CPP, City Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan
- Able to serve multiple needs and populations
- Addresses long-standing, unmet or urgent needs in the community,
- Could serve as a catalyst for transformative change,
- Demonstrates practicality and feasibility and can be implemented within a reasonable, feasible schedule and budget,
- Demonstrates a long-term, feasible strategy for ongoing maintenance of the CPA funded project.

9. **What is the CPA Application process and the timelines for obtaining CPA funding for community projects?**

- Application Process has 2 steps: A brief pre-qualification/eligibility Form and a Full Application.



- Applications may be filed at any time but if the deadline is missed, they will be considered in the next funding cycle.
- By February 1, 2023, projects need to be referred to the City Council for a final vote.

More information on the CPC can be found on the CPC Website:

<https://www.framinghamma.gov/3286/Community-Preservation-Committee>

For questions and/or comments, send emails to CPC@framinghamma.gov

Discussion Sessions

Session #1 Historic Preservation

Moderator Fred Wallace, Framingham's Historian and CPC Member

Definition of Historic Resource per CPA Law: "A building, a structure, a vessel, real property, a document, an 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, archaeology, architecture or culture of the city or town.

The greatest usage (numbers of projects) of CPA funds today is the restoration and rehabilitation of historic buildings, primarily municipally owned such as the Village Hall at Framingham Center Common.

Other Allowable Uses – preservation old city records and documents, acquisition of historic objects. For example, Concord purchased a revolutionary war era musket with CPA funds. Another is to give grants to non-profits that own historic buildings.

Eligibility Resources – To be eligible for CPA funds a building or object must be deemed significant by the MA Historical Commission or by the Framingham Historical Commission. A list of significant historic objects can be found on the City Website which contains the Framingham Cultural Resource Inventory Document. Another source is MACRIS (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Inventory System). This can be found by going on web browser and entering MACRIS. Then select "Framingham".

Frequent Question "Would my private home be eligible for CPA Funds?" Generally – No. but you can contact the Framingham Historical Commission or a member of the CPC for more information.

Public Input

1. **Memorial Building** - Framingham City Hall would not be a good office building but would be a good cultural center. It used to have a concert series, and this would be a good use. Need to make it handicap accessible.
Wallace – Restoration of this building is one of primary uses of CPA funds. It was designed about 100 years ago. Any restoration plan would include making it fully accessible.
2. **Edgell Memorial Library and Old Academy Building - Anna Tucker, Director of History Center.** (1) Repair of broken tiles in original flooring of Edgell Memorial Library and Old Academy Building. (2) Painting/wall Repairs at Edgell Memorial Library.
Wallace – the second floor of the Academy Building has been closed off because it is not safe to have people up there. Both buildings are owned by the City, but the History Center is a 501C3 and we could do something cooperatively with them.
3. **Project Funding Question by Councilor Tracey Bryant** - Does the Committee favor using all the money in a year for one project, or a few projects every couple of years.
Mahoney – We do not want to spend all our money in one year. Can Bond a multi-year project.
4. **Statues** Can Framingham add a statue?
Wallace – Not if we create it. It has to already exist.

5. **Framingham Savings Bank and Farmers and Mechanics Bank**, Is there a chance for Public/Private partnerships? Examples of commercial architecture are critical for the fabric of downtown Framingham.
Wallace – *both are considered significant and are within the Concord Square Historic District.*
Weisman – *You could get a preservation restriction on the façade.*
6. **Restoration of Stone Bridge** between Wayland and Framingham. How definitive do budgets need to be?
Wallace - *Applicant should be thorough in gathering what information is possible.*
Grove – *The Full Application is going to require detailed budgets.*
7. **MCI property purchase question by Councilor Bryant** - What kind of Historic Preservation Project is this?
Wallace – *Two houses including the superintendent’s house are historically significant.*
Grove – *It would come under both Historic and OS & Recreation and could be funded by both.*
8. **Bandstand on Common** (movable).

**Session #2 Community Housing
Moderator Tom Mahoney, Chair CPC**

Framingham has a number of plans related to housing. One referenced here, the Consolidated Plan, which is done every five years from the Department of Housing and Community Development, identified overall Framingham community housing needs.

- More accessible units, especially first floor units for mobility-impaired households;
- More subsidized units;
- More extremely low income (ELI) units;
- Housing affordable to people who work in Framingham; and
- Housing accessible to employment centers and transit options

The definition of income limits for low-income and moderate-income housing has changed recently, so what was affordable housing no longer meets people’s housing affordability needs. The Planning and Community Development Department wants to create lower income thresholds for affordable housing by creating needed extremely low-income (ELI) units.

We have many different types of housing in Framingham from multi-unit housing to single family housing scattered around town. We have many different housing options.

Public Input

1. **Need for Collaboration of Housing Activities in the City to address complex housing problems** noted by **Former member of Fair Housing Committee** – Difficult challenge for the Fair Housing Committee to be consistent with what is going on in other areas within the same division, to understand the roles of various groups working on housing and to work together. To what extent will the funding that is used for affordable housing be evaluated against the existing plan that are in place and needs? What will be the criteria? Will you look at consensus of the most serious problems? Where is the opportunity to make proposals? There’s a need for collaboration of activities within the City Administration and community to address housing, which is a very complex problem. People are hurting and need help.
Steve Joyce, Housing Member of CPC – *Agrees that housing is a complex issue. Definition of affordable housing does not meet affordable for most people. Need to look carefully look at proposals that come in. Keep housing stock available and in good condition. Adding new stock needs seed money and public/private partnership since there is not enough money in CPC alone. We need to coordinate different departments and work together.*
Sarkis Sarkisian, Director of Economic Development – *We need an updated housing plan and a Housing*



Committee. Our housing plan is not up to date and doesn't reflect the new housing units we now have; especially in the downtown. We are at 10.7% affordable housing units but need be at 15%, and need to restructure our Planning Department and our boards and committees. We need to create a Housing Committee to look at affordable housing comprehensively. Affordable housing at 80% Area Median Income (AMI) is not affordable to people who live here. Might need housing for 50% AMI. There's not enough housing. Might think about using CPA money as seed money for comprehensive housing studies.

Mahoney – Mentioned potential projects that CPA could be used for, such as first-time homebuyer programs, programs to support those at risk of losing housing, or City-approved affordable housing. He emphasized that the CPA doesn't create projects but reviews applications and recommends them to the City Council. The Housing Authority could propose a project.

Grove – Section on Housing in the Community Preservation Plan is very detailed and helpful.

2. **Housing Committee and Upgrade Housing Stock for Affordable Units** comments by **Councilor John Stefanini** – Agrees on need for Housing Committee. Would like to see the non-profit at the Framingham Housing Authority or the housing arm of the Economic Development Committee apply for funding. The Housing Authority could purchase and rehab old housing stock in neighborhoods, and create affordable housing, with other matching funds. Great from neighborhoods rehabilitation standpoint.
Mahoney agrees that non-profit organizations can apply, and that the use of multiple funding sources is viewed favorably.
3. **Accessible Housing for Older Adults and Updated Housing Plan** – Important to have an updated Housing Plan with updated data to help identify primary housing needs. Affordable housing is not affordable. Need to make units accessible and options for older adults to find appropriate housing, including modern accessible buildings with elevators, in locations where they can access services.
4. **Balance Housing with Open Space** comment by **Councilor Tracey Bryant** – Need to balance need for housing in a neighborhood with the need for green space and open space, so that what is developed is desirable for people.
Joyce – agrees to the need to balance housing with open space in every part of the community.
5. **Focus on Seniors** – Prefers **smaller housing development**, better setbacks and green space as balance. Seniors are a population with housing needs. They need help to age-in-place. CPA money has been used for setting up a Housing Trust Fund and providing **rent subsidies**. Older people need help with **accessible housing**. Friends of Callahan Center has unending list of people who need help.
6. **Meet Basic Needs** – Noted that homeless families are something she cares about. We need to have solutions to housing problems, not just saying something needs to be done. People need their basic needs to be met.
Housing is not affordable.

Session #3 Open Space and Recreation **Moderator: Judith Grove, Vice Chair CPC**

I will be discussing both Recreation & Open Space Sections of the Community Preservation Plan (CPP) since they are in the same funding bucket and are closely aligned. The value of open space and recreation becomes more apparent as undeveloped land in Framingham rapidly dwindles, as numerous apartments are built and as environmental challenges present increasing risks to our community. When I researched and wrote the OS and Recreation Sections of the Community Preservation Plan, I looked at Plans from about 20 other communities. In comparison, I was impressed by all that Framingham already has to offer our residents.



Outdoor Recreation

Framingham has become a mecca for recreation activities because of these outstanding resources:

1. **Bowditch Athletic Field** supports football, track, and tennis.
2. **Cushing Memorial Park** has an outstanding playground, historic signage and walking paths.
3. **Farm Pond** offers an accessible playground, a regional **Skatepark**, **Dog Park**, and Bocce courts.
4. **Numerous neighborhood parks**, support baseball, soccer, tennis, basketball, and pickle ball.
5. **Three city beaches.**
6. **Walking and biking trails** connect us to other communities and continue to expand.

Open Space

Framingham has significant environmental features including:

- An abundance of **water resources**: wetlands, marshes, vernal pools and streams.
- Eight major **ponds and lakes**, five of them recognized by the State as “Great Ponds”.
- **Sudbury River** -7.6 miles of the river flow through Framingham.
- **Oak-Hemlock and White Pine forests** and a **red maple swamp**.

Our city parks, natural areas, wetlands, and forests supply storm water drainage and wildlife habitats. Farms and forests supply ecologic and aesthetic benefits. In a rapidly growing community like ours, preserved land can give relief from congestion and other negative effects of development. It is important for the mental health of our community.

Environmental Equity is an important topic covered by Framingham’s Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Community Preservation Plan.

- On a city-wide scale, the total Open Space acres across Framingham shows an excellent average of 39 acres per 1000 people. The goal is 10 acres per 1,000 people.
- The Northwest area, where Callahan State Park is located, contains 138 acres/1,000.
- Southeast Framingham’s Environmental Justice neighborhoods have a deficit with 4-9 acres.

Although achieving equity here poses challenges this is an important goal for the CPP. We have to find ways to provide access to people who live all over our city, not just those in EJ neighborhoods but also for the disabled. The Trust for Public Land has a nation-wide initiative that says parks or green spaces must be within a safe 10-minute walk for every resident.

Project Example, Cedar Swamp, located in a Southside densely populated neighborhood, is not accessible to the public. It supports deer, turkeys, birds, ferns, moss, mature trees and a running stream. The Conservation Commission has been seeking grants for a handicap accessible boardwalk which would connect Cypress Street to Waverly, a short distance. This unused asset could also become an outdoor environment educational classroom for our schools.

Input from Emails and Facebook

Ms. Grove reported on e-mails received by the CPC and comments on FB regarding suggestions for Open Space and Recreation. Many comments address the potential for Farm Pond and increasing the trail networks:

1. **Make Farm Pond Special.** Start with continuous walking and bike paths all the way around with connections to downtown Framingham and build from there. There is so much potential with Farm Pond. A great use for CPA funds.
2. **Adaptive boat launch and dock** on Farm Pond.

3. **Water ferry** on Farm Pond which goes to the Downtown.
4. **Rental business for watercrafts, a restaurant and live music** on Farm Pond.
5. **Canoe and paddle boat rentals, maybe a water taxi /ferry** , that crosses back and forth over from Franklin Street to Dudley Road.
6. **Chris Walsh Trail** around Farm Pond a destination.
7. **Continuous walking and biking paths around Farm Pond with a connection to the downtown.**
8. **Restore Aqueduct buildings** on Farm Pond.
9. Make **South Framingham a destination** with the Chris Walsh Trail, the Skatepark, the Dog Park and Cushing Park in close proximity.
10. **Remediate and redesign the playground at Mary Dennison Park.**
11. **Don't lose** any of our **Open Space**. Preserve whatever open space we have left.
12. **Project residents would benefit from year-round**. Personally, I would love to see money invested in preserving (and expanding or adding to the value of) our open spaces.
13. **Prevent loss of Open Space**. Do what can be done to prevent Eastleigh, Fafard, etc. from being developed (whether it's now or in the future).
14. **Revitalized some dead spots and turn them into raised community gardens** (like the old gas station on Hollis Street).
15. **Public Market** in Framingham (like Haymarket, Eataly, etc.) would be amazing!
16. **Create more outdoor gathering spaces** where events can be held, particularly in South Framingham.
17. **Spray parks!** Start building 1 a year. Waltham has 11 spray parks, many partially financed by CPA funds. <https://www.city.waltham.ma.us/.../spray-parks-in-waltham>.
18. Create a **public market** and **outdoor gathering spaces**.
19. **Improvements to Callahan Senior Center**. Possibly adding breakfast / lunch, expand space, more programming.
20. **Add tables, chairs to our parks**, where multigenerational families can get together to have a **picnic**; where people can play chess, dominos, mahjong ...
21. **Open more trails for walking, running and biking** within Framingham while better connecting us to our neighbors in Natick, Sudbury and beyond.
22. **Extend the Bruce Freeman bike trail** into Framingham. My understanding is that a path currently exists, and the next step would involve Framingham officially buying that land from the entity that purchased it from CSX.

Input at Public Forum

1. **Councilor Michael Cannon - Make Simpson Park accessible**. It is located District 4 which has the least amount of public open space. It is incredibly difficult to get to, but it doesn't have to be. For a limited investment there are opportunities to increase parking and make it accessible for the entire community.
Grove When we evaluate projects this one would receive points for both an unmet need and for making it accessible.
2. **Priscilla Sousa, School Committee Chair - Equitable access to Open Space** is needed for our school children to mitigate the lingering effect the pandemic has had on them. Being in the outdoors reduces their high levels of stress and anxiety. The neighborhoods in South Framingham especially need more open space.
Mahoney - This is one of our priorities.
3. **Community Gardens** are needed all over our community. Where would we find technical help?
Grove First step is to complete the Pre-qualification form which is not difficult. Look on-line at the communities that have CPA supported community gardens. Use their documents as a guide.



4. **ADA Dock on the Sudbury River.** There's actually 2 Simpson Parks in Framingham – one on Central Street and one on Simpson Drive. The one on Central Street has potential matching funding from a non-profit of about \$30,000 for this project.

5. **Trail Initiatives Update**

- There is a MA trails grant for the **Bruce Freeman Trail** conceptual design. There also one for the **Carol Getchell Trail** boardwalk conceptual design.
- There is a study paid for by the Solomon Foundation for the Saxonville Levee trail which would connect the **Cochituate Rail Trail** to the **Carol Getchell Trail**.
- There is potential funding from the SuAsCo River Stewardship Council to pay for a Master Plan for the Carol Getchell Trail. The **Chris Walsh Memorial Trail** is moving forward in downtown Framingham.
- There is great potential to connect the **Chris Walsh Trail** to South Framingham by connecting the Upper Charles from Milford. It is completed to Holliston. Sherborn is actively engaged in their section. It ends just south of ADESA where the Framingham line is. There is potential to bring that trail into Southeast Framingham. This might be a good time to reach out to the new owners of this property to look at a spur which connects with the trailhead that starts in Milford and could eventually connect with the Sudbury Aqueduct that flows into Natick.
- City was successful in receiving a **National Parks Service Recreational Trails Assistance Program** grant to assist Framingham in writing a blueprint to become a local and regional trail hub. This would allow Framingham to apply for many different kinds of grants which could be matched with CPA funds.
- **Question** - Can we have CPA money set aside specifically in the Open Space/Recreation account for when it is needed for Trails?

Grove – No, but you can apply for the 65% flexible spending funds. Asked about Bruce Freeman Trail linkage.

Response – the city is in negotiation to buy the land from CSX.

6. **Improve the Diversity of the Community Preservation Committee.** Use a point system to select projects to send to the City Council for a vote.

Mahoney – We are in process of creating evaluation criteria and it will be on the website. Also discussed how projects will be rated.

Grove addressed representation. We definitely want diversity on the CPC. We keep asking people to volunteer, but it is a big commitment of time and few people have this time.

7. **Expand the Concert on the Common to other parks,** with removable stage.

Closing Remarks

Tom Mahoney thanked everyone who attended the Public Forum either in person or on Zoom, Ms. Grove, Mr. Sarkisian and Mayor Sisitsky. The Community Preservation Committee will incorporate all the ideas presented into the Community Preservation Plan.



Appendix B: CPA Project Eligibility Form

Fillable form found on the Framingham Community Preservation Committee Webpage.

<https://www.framinghamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/47484/CPA-Project-Eligibility-Form->

Appendix C: CPA Project – Full Application

Fillable form found on the Framingham Community Preservation Committee Webpage.

<https://www.framinghamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/47698/CPA-Full-Application-FINAL-22-9-12>



Appendix D: Glossary

Acronym	Term	Definition
CPA	Community Preservation Act	
MGL	Massachusetts General Law	
DOR	Department of Revenue	
	Undesignated Funds	Funds not dedicated to a defined purpose
	Community Housing	Housing meeting the needs for individuals and families of low and moderate incomes.
AMI	Area Median Income	
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development	
	40B Subsidized Housing	Chapter 40B is a state statute, which supports the development of affordable housing and provides a mechanism for local Zoning Boards of Appeals for approval of affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions.
FHA	Framingham Housing Authority	
PCD	Department of Planning and Community Development	
ELI	Extremely Low Income	
CDBG	Federal Community Development Block Grants	
HOME	Federal HOME funds	HOME Investment Partnerships Grants to states and units of general local government to implement local housing strategies designed to increase homeownership and affordable housing opportunities for low and very low-income Americans.
OSRP	Open Space and Recreation Plan	



Appendix E: References- CPA & General

Description	Reference
MA CPA Law	https://www.mass.gov/lists/community-preservation-act
CPA Coalition Website	https://www.communitypreservation.org/about
Framingham CPCs Website	https://www.framinghamma.gov/3286/Community-Preservation-Committee
Framingham’s CPC Ordinance	https://www.framinghamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/41255/2021-011-Approve-Community-Preservation-Ordinance---Veto-by-Mayor?bidId=
Framingham’s CPC FAQ	https://www.framinghamma.gov/3469/CPC-FAQ

Appendix F: References - Community Housing

Description	Reference
City of Framingham’s Five-Year Consolidated Plan	https://www.framinghamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/39850/Framingham-2021-2025-Consolidated-Plan--2021-AAP---revised-July-6-2020
The City of Framingham’s Master Plan 2020 Update	https://www.framinghamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/39646/Framingham-2020-Master-Land-Use-Plan-Update-FINAL-large-file-27-MB



Description	Reference
The Town of Framingham’s 2014 Draft Housing Plan Update	https://www.framinghamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15491/DRAFT-Housing-Action-Plan-62414
CPA Community Housing Low- and Moderate-Income Limits	https://www.communitypreservation.org/income-limits
DHCD's Subsidized Housing Inventory, Dec. 2020	https://www.mass.gov/doc/subsidized-housing-inventory/download
U.S. Census 2020 – “Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting” dataset – Summary Framingham	https://donahue.umass.edu/data/pep/dashboards/census2020_dashboard.html
U.S. Census, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates – CP04 Comparative Housing Characteristics – MA & Framingham	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=massachusetts%20framingham%20comparative%20housing&tid=ACSCP5Y2020.CP04
U.S. Census, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates – S1101 Households and Families - Framingham	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=housing%20Framingham&tid=ACSST5Y2020.S1101
U.S. Census, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates – S1810 Disability Characteristics – Framingham	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=2020%20ACS%20Framingham%20MA&tid=ACSST5Y2020.S1810
2019 Federal Census Data for the City of Framingham	https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/framinghamcitymassachusetts/PST045219
The updated 2016 Guidebook on CPA and Community Housing	https://www.mhp.net/writable/resources/documents/CPA-guidebook-2016_lowres.pdf

Appendix G: References - Recreation & Open Space

Description	Reference
Framingham 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)	https://www.framinghamma.gov/1510/Open-Space-and-Recreation-Plan
Framingham Community Preservation Study Group Report, May 28,2020	http://framinghamma.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?Frame=&MeetingID=11884&MediaPosition=&ID=3629&CssClass=
Framingham Master Plan	https://www.framinghamma.gov/294/Framingham-Master-Plan
ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan	https://www.framinghamma.gov/283/ADA-Self-Evaluation-Transition-Plan



Appendix H: References - Historic Resources

Description	Reference
Historic Preservation Plan	www.framinghamma.gov/historicpreservationplan
Historic District Commission Cultural Resource Inventory	www.framinghamma.gov/culturalresourceinventory
Massachusetts Cultural Resource Inventory System (MACRIS)	www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch.stnds 8 2.htm
Massachusetts Historical Society	https://www.masshist.org/
National Register of Historic Places	https://nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/
Department of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation	https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm
Framingham History Center	https://framinghamhistory.org/
The Friends of Saxonville	https://www.friendsofsaxonville.org/
The Framingham Heart Study	https://www.framinghamheartstudy.org/

Appendix I: Framingham's Recreation Properties

District	Name	Location
8	Anna Murphy Park & Playground   	Cove Street and Lake Avenue
8	Apple Street Playground 	Bethany Road (off Route 135)
8	Arlington Street Playground 	Arlington Street & Gordon Street
8	Bates Road Park and Playground  	Bates Road
6	Barbieri School Playground 	100 Dudley Road
5	Bowditch Field Athletic Complex    	Union Ave
3	Brophy School Playground   	575 Pleasant Street / Route 30
7	Butterworth Park and Playground    	Grant Street and Bishop Street
2	Charlotte Dunning School/ Walsh Complex 	48 Frost Street
5	Cushing Memorial Park Playground	Dudley Road and Winter Street
2	Danforth Park and Playground  	Danforth Street
5	Furber Park and Playground  	Fairbanks Road
6	Farm Pond and Woodland Playground 	100 Dudley Road
9	Harmony Grove School Playground	Beaver and Leland Street
1	Hemenway School Playground 	729 Water Street
4	Juniper Hill School Playground 	29 Upper Jocelyn Avenue
6	Keefe Tech     	750 Winter Street
2	King School Playground  	454 Water Street
7	Learned Pond Beach 	Union Avenue and Concord Street
6	Loring Arena, and Long/Ryan Complex  	Dudley Road
9	Mary Dennison Park and Playground  	54 Beaver Street
5	Mason Park and Playground	Maple Street and Franklin Street
9	Merchant Road Soccer Fields 	Merchant Road
5	Galvani/Musterfield Complex  	Guadalcanal Road
5	McCarthy School Playground, Fuller and Farley Fields 	Flagg Drive
5	Mt. Wayte Park Playground	Chautauqua Avenue
1	Oakvale Park and Playground 	Burbank Circle (off Hadley Road)
1	Potter Road School Playground  	492 Potter Road
2	Reardon Park Playground  	Laclede Avenue/Maymont Drive
8	Roosevelt Park and Playground 	Fay and Seminole Avenue
2	Saxonville Beach  	Lake Road, on Lake Cochituate
4	Simpson Park, Playground and boat launch 	Simpson Drive & Sudbury River
1	Stapleton School Playground and Woodfield Park	Elm Street and Sloane & Gregory Road
3	Temple Street Playground	Temple Street
3	Victory Soccer Field 	14 Auburn Street
	Walsh Middle School Playground	301 Brook Street
2	Winch Complex    	115 A Street
8	Waushakum Lake and Beach  	Nipmuc Street

 Baseball/softball  Basketball  Tennis  Football  Soccer  Swimming  Boating