



# CPA Funding Application Pre-Application

City of Worcester

Submitted On:

Nov 26, 2025, 04:25PM EST

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| Project Name   | 122 Austin "Tot Lot" Renovation  |
| Project Location and/or Address  | 122 Austin Street, Worcester, MA 01609   |
| Project Lead Organization (or Individual if Applicable)  | Worcester Common Ground  |
| Legal Status of the Organization   | 501(c)3  |
| Brief Project Description  | Worcester Common Ground seeks CPA funds to finish a renovation of the Austin Tot Lot by adding equipment for younger children, turf or rubber surfacing, and refreshing landscaping to create a complete, safe, and welcoming neighborhood playground. |
| Project Contact Information  | Annessia Jimenez<br>[REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED]   |
| What CPA category does this project fall under? (Check All that Apply)   | Open Space and Recreation  |
| What activity are you proposing to do in this category? (Check All that Apply)   | Rehabilitate / Restore   |
| What is the total project budget?  | 105000   |
| How much are you requesting in CPA funding?  | 105000   |
| What general budget line items will the CPA funds be used for? (CPA funds can only be used to fund capital expenses. Maintenance activities are not eligible.)   | Playground equipment, turf or rubber flooring for the playground, and landscaping.   |
| Eligible Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Project location. Open Space and Outdoor Recreation projects funded with CPA must take place on land that is permanently protected for recreational or conservation use. NOTE: Projects that take place in the public right of way (ROW) are not eligible for CPA funding in this category. | I Don't Know   |

**Community Preservation Program staff will assist you in determining if the property has an existing deed restriction. Please note that you do not need an existing deeded Restriction to apply for CPA funding. However, by initialing the following box, you recognize that a Restriction will be required as part of your Grant Agreement. More information on deed restrictions can be found in the Worcester Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funding Application Form Guidance for Applicants.**

AJ

**Is there anything else you would like us to know about your project at this stage?**

In 2024, we worked with Working 4 Worcester to renovate the space, but we were only able to replace the equipment on half of the side. Due to the age of the previous equipment, all the equipment needed to be removed from the entirety of the lot. The funding from Working 4 Worcester was only able to cover replacing the equipment on half of the playground. Now the other side, lays completely empty.

**With my initials below, I confirm that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and understand that major changes to the project outlined above may void a positive Determination of Eligibility.**

AJ

**With my initials below, I understand that CPA funding is reimbursement based, and that, if awarded, my organization would have to cover some or all of the upfront costs of the project.**

AJ



# CPA Funding Application Form

City of Worcester

Submitted On:

Jan 6, 2026, 04:48PM EST

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| <b>Project Name (Please make sure this corresponds with the Project Name on the Determination of Eligibility Form)</b>   | 122 Austin "Tot Lot" Renovation   |
| <b>Project Contact Information</b>   | Annessia Jimenez<br>[REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED]  |
| <b>Please briefly describe your project.</b>   | Worcester Common Ground's Austin "Tot Lot" Playground was originally built more than 20 years ago. In 2024, we worked with Working 4 Worcester to renovate the space, but we were only able to replace the equipment on half of the site. Due to the age of the previous equipment, all of it needed to be removed from the entirety of the lot. The funding from Working 4 Worcester covered replacing the equipment on one half of the playground. Now the other side, which had equipment for younger kids, lays completely empty. With CPA funds, we would like to complete the other side of the playground. We would also like to add rubber playground flooring, as it is safe for the children, accessible, and provides easy maintenance for the site. Lastly, we hope to add landscaping to refresh the border gardens. The playground sees a lot of use in the warmer seasons, and the children in this area deserve a safe and fun place to play. |
| <b>What permissions, permits and plans will be necessary to carry out this project, and what is the status of their acquisition?</b>   | For permits, we will have to go to the historical commission and receive a certificate of appropriateness. We may also need a building permit.  |
| <b>Do you foresee any delays in acquiring these permissions within the next 6 months? If yes, please explain, otherwise, type N/A.</b>   | No.   |
| <b>What is the desired start and end date of this project?</b>   | We anticipate this project starting in the Spring of 2026 around March or April. The project should only take about six to eight months to complete, finishing by Fall 2026.  |
| <b>Please attach a Timeline for the project.</b>   | WCG CPA Project Timeline 122 Austin.xls   |
| <b>Please upload a complete project budget (.xlsx or .pdf) that includes the source of the funding for each line item. CPA funds can ONLY be used on CPA eligible project elements. Please make sure to be</b> | WCG CPA Budget 122 Austin.xlsx  |

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| specific about the use of all CPA monies requested.  |  |
| <b>Please upload any renderings and/or estimates for this project.</b>   | MRC Recreation Surfacing Quote.pdf<br>Ultiplay 122 Austin Estimate (Playground Equip.).pdf   |
| <b>What is the status of the match funding identified in the budget?</b>   | In the Spring of 2024, we worked with Working 4 Worcester who provided an in-kind donation in the amount of 40,000 dollars. This donation supported new playground equipment for children 5-12 on one side of the lot and a new sign. This donation also included the removal of all existing playground equipment across the site and the installation of the new equipment.  |
| <b>Please upload commitment letters and/or funding agreements demonstrating that match funding is in place.</b>  | Year 12 Grant Designation-Austin Tot Lot.pdf   |
| <b>Please explain why CPA funding is needed for this project. If CPA is the only proposed funding source for this project, please explain why.</b>   | CPA is needed to be able to complete the playground as the in-kind donation from Working 4 Worcester only replaced equipment on half the site, leaving the area for younger children completely empty. Support from CPA will allow Worcester Common Ground to install age-appropriate equipment on the other side of the site, safe rubber surfacing, and landscaping to ensure a fully functional, safe, and welcoming playground for neighborhood families.  |
| <b>Please describe the experience of the project manager or project management team in completing a project like this one. Please include examples of similar projects pursued in the past, and why they are relevant.</b> | The team who will be managing this project will be the Executive Director and the Community Organizer. The Executive Director has been with the organization for more than twenty-five years, managing construction projects, such as our rental buildings, first time homeownerships, community gardens, and her first project with the organization was the construction of a playground on this lot. The Community Organizer has worked at WCG for four years, in that time she managed several grants by working with contractors, disbursing funds, and meeting reporting requirements. This combined experience makes for a very capable project management team to complete this project. |
| <b>Please describe the financial position of the organization and its ability to cover the upfront costs of this project. CPA funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.</b>  | Worcester Common Ground remains in a stable financial position, and much of our operating funds are supported by grants and donor contributions. WCG manages several grants that are dispersed on a reimbursement basis. Such as last year, we received an Earmark grant through the State of Massachusetts and a portion of it was funded on a reimbursement basis after the reporting and receipts were reviewed. We are more than capable of managing the upfront costs of the renovation of this site.   |
| <b>Please upload any reports that may be helpful in establishing a capable financial position.</b>   | WCG-Finalized 2024 Financial Statements.pdf  |
| <b>How will this resource/property/building be maintained in the future?</b>   | The property is currently and will continue to be maintained by the Community Organizer and the Facilities Manager. Part of their responsibilities are to manage WCG's outdoor community spaces. They do weekly check ins at these properties where they walk the site, pick up any litter, and ensure the site is not in need of any other upkeep. WCG also has a contract with a third-party contractor who can perform larger maintenance projects like leaf pick up in the Fall and bulk item pick up.   |

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| <p><b>Please describe how this project/program will benefit Worcester residents in general, as well as specific groups that will benefit from the project.</b></p> | <p>This project will benefit Worcester residents as there is not much recreational or free play space for children in the Piedmont and Pleasant Street neighborhoods. The families that live within these neighborhood census tracts are primarily people of color and have an average per capita income of 20,000, with nearly 50% of residents living in poverty. Therefore, making free recreational and play space even more essential to families in these neighborhoods.</p>  |
| <p><b>Please identify which of the Community Priorities identified in the Community Preservation Plan align with this project (check all that apply).</b></p>      | <p>PRIORITY 1: Increase accessibility to historic resources, open space, parks, and in community housing.<br/>PRIORITY 3: Prioritizing investments into projects that address a demonstrated need in a geographic area.</p>   |
| <p><b>Please describe how this project aligns with the above Community Priorities.</b></p>   | <p>The are two community priorities that this project aligns with, priority one, increased accessibility to parks, and priority two, prioritizing investments into projects that address a demonstrated need in a geographic area. In the neighborhood, there are not many options for children and families when it comes to outdoor public play space. There are a couple of small parks, but they consist of just an open space and do not include activities for children. The 122 Austin tot lot is the closest park that is in walking distance for neighborhood families. Installing pour in place rubber surfacing will make the space more accessible to people of all abilities, as it is safe flat surfacing. New playground equipment for younger children will tend to younger aged children, making the space usable for a large age range of children.</p>   |
| <p><b>Historic Resource Category Goals</b></p>   | <p>This project does not align with any of these Category Goals.</p>  |
| <p><b>Open Space and Recreation Category Goals</b></p>   | <p>GOAL 2: Refurbish existing park amenities to meet the city's changing needs.</p>   |
| <p><b>Community Housing Category Goals</b></p>   | <p>This project does not align with any of these Category Goals.</p>  |
| <p><b>Please describe how this project aligns with the above Category Goals.</b></p>   | <p>Renovating the 122 Austin Street Tot Lot correlates with goal two which is refurbishing existing park amenities to meet the city's changing needs as the park is more than 25 years old. It can be difficult to find support to update and renovate parks in the city. Working 4 Worcester's donation was significant because they were able to remove the existing worn equipment. Parts of the play structure were broken, cement blocks that were stabilizing structures had become visible and therefore dangerous for children to play around. Though we are grateful for Working 4 Worcester's donation, it could only support replacing equipment on half of the site, and CPA funds would allow for the playground to be finished to be more welcoming for families, especially ones with smaller children. In addition, we have been looking at playground equipment that encourages sensory play and incorporates structures that are equitable for all children to meet the emerging needs of families across the city.</p> |
| <p><b>Does your project align with any other City or Regional Plans? Please be specific. See the City of Worcester website to view local plans.</b></p>            | <p>The City of Worcester has several plans that align with our project. Their municipal priorities that includes creating strong neighborhoods, one way they plan to meet this goal is through providing adequate parks. The Worcester Now Next plan incorporates a goal of preserving parks for the future. In</p>   |

addition, the open space and recreation plan for Worcester states a goal of investing in parks by assessing existing playgrounds and bringing them up to industry standard if necessary.

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| <b>Does your project have community support? Please describe outreach efforts for this project.</b> | Before Working 4 Worcester installed the new equipment, we held a community input session at the park, where we heard from local families about what kind of equipment they wanted to see at the park. After the new equipment was installed, we saw a huge increase in usage of the playground, with many families playing there every day. That speaks highly to how much fun play space is needed for families in this area and the impact updated playground space can have. |
| <b>Please upload any letters of support.</b>  | PSNNC Support Letter for WCG CPA 2026.pdf  |