



CPA Funding Application Pre-Application

City of Worcester

Submitted On:

Nov 22, 2025, 12:26PM EST

Project Name	The Dr. Robert & Esther Goddard Center for Inspiration
Project Location and/or Address	1 Tallawanda Drive, Worcester MA 01602
Project Lead Organization (or Individual if Applicable)	The Wonder Mission, Inc.
Legal Status of the Organization	501(c)3
Brief Project Description	The Wonder Mission will restore and preserve the house that is the birthplace and residence of Dr. Robert Goddard, known as the "father of modern rocketry, and will transform it into a inter-active learning environment and resource center.
Project Contact Information	Charles Slatkin [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
What CPA category does this project fall under? (Check All that Apply)	Historic Resources
What activity are you proposing to do in this category? (Check All that Apply)	Create Preserve Rehabilitate / Restore
What is the total project budget?	\$125,000
How much are you requesting in CPA funding?	\$125,000
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.)	CPA funds will be used to purchase new windows and zoned HVAC equipment and systems vital to the preservation of historic artifacts, and for the comfort of visitors and guests who will be welcomed to the Center for Inspiration.
Eligible Historical Resources: Which of the following applies to your historical resource?	The historical resource has received a Positive Determination of Local Historic Significance from the Worcester Historical Commission.
Please upload a copy of your Determination of Local Historic Significance.	Determination Letter - Tallawanda Drive.pdf
Preservation Restrictions: Does your property have any deeded Preservation Restrictions? Note: Project awards over certain thresholds may require the Awardee	No

to place a Preservation Restriction on the property as part of the grant agreement. More information on award thresholds and Preservation Restrictions can be found in the Worcester Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funding Application Form Guidance for Applicants.	
Please Note: You do not need an existing Preservation Restriction to apply for CPA funding. However, by initialing the following box, you recognize that a Preservation Restriction may be required as part of your Grant Agreement. More information on award thresholds and Preservation Restrictions can be found in the Worcester Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funding Application Form Guidance for Applicants.	CHS
Is there anything else you would like us to know about your project at this stage?	<p>The Wonder Mission is grateful to the Worcester CPA for its award during the spring/summer funding period.</p> <p>Renovations (roofing, complete painting of the exterior) to the building at 1 Tallawanda Drive are nearing completion.</p> <p>A series of public events are set to occur in March 2026 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Dr. Goddard's successful rocket launch. The CPA funds we are now seeking will enable the Wonder Mission to render additional renovations and upgrades to the center.</p>
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.	CHS
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.	CHS



CPA Funding Application Form

Submitted On:

Jan 6, 2026, 07:01PM EST

City of Worcester

Project Name (Please make sure this corresponds with the Project Name on the Determination of Eligibility Form)	The Dr. Robert & Esther Goddard Center for Inspiration
Project Contact Information	Charles Slatkin [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Please briefly describe your project.	Phase Two of The Wonder Mission's project will restore and preserve the house that was the birthplace of Dr. Robert Goddard, widely regarded as the "father of modern rocketry." It will develop the building into an interactive learning environment, accessible to students and educators in Worcester, Central MA, and beyond. Upon completion of the safety and environmental upgrades outline in Phase Two, the Wonder Mission proposes to pursue and establish a permanent historical status through the formation of a Preservation Trust to protect the house for posterity.
What permissions, permits and plans will be necessary to carry out this project, and what is the status of their acquisition?	Permits will be sought as required as each step of the electrical, plumbing and replacement and installation of new windows.
Do you foresee any delays in acquiring these permissions within the next 6 months? If yes, please explain, otherwise, type N/A.	No delays are anticipated.
What is the desired start and end date of this project?	Phase Two will begin in the spring of 2026 and will be completed within six months.
Please attach a Timeline for the project.	Goddard Project - Phas Two timeline.docx
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 specific about the use of all CPA monies requested.	Goddard Project Budget Estimates (Phase 2).xlsx
Please upload any renderings and/or estimates for this project.	Riley electrical estimate -CPA 2026.pdf 8' L Silver Spring Folding Aluminum Wheelchair Access Ramp with HandrailsENJOY 10_ OFF YOUR FIRST OR.pdf

	<p>PVI OnTrac Wheelchair Access Ramp with Handrails.pdf</p> <p>GATEWAY® 3G Portable Solid Surface Entry Ramps by EZ-ACCESS® _ Wheelchair Liberty.pdf</p> <p>CPA 2026 West Boylston Plumbing Bids .pdf</p> <p>CPA 2026 Kavenilli Plumbing Bids .pdf</p> <p>CPA Ruffo Plumbing 2026 Plumbing Bids .pdf</p> <p>Bay State Windows Quote-Slatkin-Worcester.pdf</p> <p>Central Mass Electrical Contractors LLC estimate 857.pdf</p> <p>Goddard electrical Estimate - WF Riley.pdf</p>
What is the status of the match funding identified in the budget?	<p>The Wonder Mission will apply prior to February 1 to the Amelia Peabody Charitable Trust for a capital grant. A decision is expected by April 2026. The Wonder Mission will also apply for additional grants, including Round 32 of the Massachusetts Preservation Project Fund (MPPF) grant program.</p>
Please explain why CPA funding is needed for this project. If CPA is the only proposed funding source for this project, please explain why.	<p>CPA funding is sought to help initial costs for the renovation and preservation of the historic birthplace and residence of space pioneer Dr. Robert Goddard. Other funding will be sought from private and public sources to support the ongoing maintenance of the property and its development as a community resource and education center.</p>
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.	<p>Charles Slatkin, founder of the Wonder Mission, is the project manager. He and volunteers have overseen and managed all aspects of the 2025 CPA funding award and subsequent work at 1 Tallawanda Drive. Mr. Slatkin has decades of experience in multi-media creation and development, specializing in science, film, video, stereoscopic photography, and holography. He founded the production companies WOW Inc. and Wave, whose clients included PBS, NOVA and the Discovery Channel. He also served as president of the Kettle Brook Lofts Condo Association and oversaw the rehab of 70,000 square feet of mixed-use space in Cherry Valley. Philip Niddrie, a member of the project management team, served for many years as a special project coordinator in the City of Worcester's Development Office. He instrumental in the restoration, preservation and relocation of the historic Stearns Tavern which was constructed in 1812 and moved in 2016 from its location on Park Ave. to Mill Street, adjacent to Coes Pond.</p>
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.	<p>The Wonder Mission's founder, Charles Slatkin, has used a personal line of credit to cover upfront costs incurred during the project's initial phase and will do so again for Phase Two. Also, a fundraising campaign will target and solicit the support of individuals, businesses, and corporate, private and public foundations with proceeds earmarked for property maintenance and to support the Goddard Center for Inspiration's ongoing community outreach and programming.</p>
How will this resource/property/building be maintained in the future?	<p>The Wonder Mission will contract with appropriate vendors and contractors to render maintenance services as required.</p>
Please describe how this project/program will benefit Worcester residents in general, as	<p>The Wonder Mission will collaborate with private, public and charter schools, colleges and universities, students and educators, to offer access to the Goddard Center for Inspiration, where students will be able to view and study historic artifacts, documents, inter-active audio and visual displays tracing Dr.</p>

well as specific groups that will benefit from the project.	Goddard's experiments, notes, biography etc. The Center will stimulate interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and inspire students to pursue careers in these fields.
Please identify which of the Community Priorities identified in the Community Preservation Plan align with this project (check all that apply).	PRIORITY 1: Increase accessibility to historic resources, open space, parks, and in community housing.
Please describe how this project aligns with the above Community Priorities.	Young people and educators and community groups will be invited to the Goddard Center for Inspiration for meetings, lectures and presentations. The house will also be offered to like-minded organizations for ideation, brainstorming, non-profit events, and class presentations.
Historic Resource Category Goals	GOAL 1: Acquire and restore historic buildings in danger of demolition. GOAL 2: Promote adaptive reuse or deconstruction for historical preservation. GOAL 3: Preserve, digitize, and archive historic records. GOAL 4: Preserve underrepresented stories.
Open Space and Recreation Category Goals	This project does not align with any of these Category Goals.
Community Housing Category Goals	This project does not align with any of these Category Goals.
Please describe how this project aligns with the above Category Goals.	Mr. Slatkin acquired the property at 1 Tallawanda Drive in 2021 as it was slated for demolition. He was determined to preserve the historic birthplace and residence of Dr. Robert Goddard and many of the documents related to his experiments and research, to develop it into a "center for inspiration" that would enlighten, educate and inspire this and future generations of young people while promoting careers and interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Ownership was transferred to the Wonder Mission in 2025 that is dedicated to paying tribute to Dr. Goddard's pioneering achievements and rendering the Center for Inspiration a source of immense civic pride. The Center will serve as the launch point for the proposed National Space Trail that will identify local sites that were relevant in Dr. Goddard's career (e.g. South High School, Clark University, WPI) and will link them to points across the U.S. that have been pivotal in the history of space flight.
Does your project align with any other City or Regional Plans? Please be specific. See the City of Worcester website to view local plans.	The project aligns with City of Worcester plans for the preservation and restoration of historic properties.
Does your project have community support? Please describe outreach efforts for this project.	The project has received enthusiastic support from the superintendents of the Worcester Public Schools, Diocese of Worcester School Department, Congressman James McGovern, Preservation Worcester, and the Webster Square Neighborhood Association. Meetings have been held with directors of the Worcester Area Chamber of Commerce, Worcester Business Development Corp., Clark University and WPI leadership.
Please upload any letters of support.	David Perda letter of support 4-29-2025.pdf

Is there anything else you want the CPC to know about your project?

The multi-generational house at 1 Tallawanda Drive was constructed in 1825 and later became the birthplace of Dr. Robert Goddard in 1882, and the residence of Dr. Goddard and his wife Esther, who resided there until her passing in 1981. March 16, 2026, signals the 100th anniversary of Dr. Goddard's first successful liquid fuel rocket that will include a re-enactment on Pakachoag Hill. The Wonder Mission seeks to give Worcester and the Goddard birthplace its rightly and richly deserved place on the map as a living memorial that will bring pride to our community. The response from the community and neighbors has been enthusiastically positive and exceptionally supportive. The Wonder Mission has used the house for educational presentations to organizations such as: Scouting USA, Civil Air Cadets, Museum of Worcester, Preservation Worcester, WPI graduate students, and local and regional STEM/STEAM educators.