



CPA Funding Application Pre-Application

City of Worcester

Submitted On:

Dec 1, 2025, 12:26PM EST

Project Name	Stronger Starts Worcester: District-wide Playground Initiative
Project Location and/or Address	Goddard Elementary School, University Park Community School, Quinsigamond Elementary School, Belmont Street Elementary School, Dual Language Magnet School, Roosevelt Elementary School, Norrback Elemen
Project Lead Organization (or Individual if Applicable)	Worcester Public Schools District
Legal Status of the Organization	Government Entity
Brief Project Description	The WPS Stronger Starts Worcester Initiative seeks funding to create, preserve, and rehabilitate playgrounds at 9 schools across the city. These improvements will enhance safe, accessible recreation spaces that serve both schools and the community.
Project Contact Information	Patrick Barry [REDACTED] [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)	Create Preserve Rehabilitate / Restore
What is the total project budget?	\$2,222,000
How much are you requesting in CPA funding?	\$1,722,000
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.)	Feasibility Studies & Design, Equipment, Materials, Supplies, Labor
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.	This project takes place on public OR private property that is NOT a designated park (such as part of a school campus) OR does not currently have a deeded Conservation or Recreational restriction for the area where the proposed work is to take place.

<p>Please Note: 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.</p>	<p>EAB</p>
<p>Is there anything else you would like us to know about your project at this stage?</p>	<p>Priority was given to schools located in low-income neighborhoods and those serving historically underserved student populations such as students of color, students with disabilities and immigrant students, ensuring resources are directed where they are most need. WPS will contribute approximately \$500,000 in matching funds to the project. In the event the project is partially funded, WPS can reduce the number of grant supported schools and prioritize those in most need.</p>
<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.</p>	<p>EAB</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>EAB</p>



CPA Funding Application Form

Submitted On:

Jan 7, 2026, 09:54AM EST

City of Worcester

Project Name (Please make sure this corresponds with the Project Name on the Determination of Eligibility Form)	Stronger Starts Worcester: District-wide Playground Initiative
Project Contact Information	Patrick Barry [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Please briefly describe your project.	The Worcester Public School's (WPS) Stronger Starts Worcester: District-wide Playground Initiative seeks CPA funding to preserve and rehabilitate playgrounds at eight (8) elementary and middle schools across the city. These improvements will enhance safe, accessible outdoor recreation spaces that serve both students and the surrounding neighborhoods. By investing in high-quality play environments, the project supports children's physical health, cognitive growth, and social-emotional development while strengthening community assets that benefit Worcester residents year-round. Please see the attached School Sites presentation for additional information on each school's playground.
What permissions, permits and plans will be necessary to carry out this project, and what is the status of their acquisition?	No permission is required as WPS and the city own and have jurisdiction over the properties the work will take place at. In addition, no permits are required for the playground work. Finally, site plans have been provided for the major renovations, and have been added to this application as an attachment. No engineered plans will be needed for this project. The City's procurement process requires this project to go out to bid. If awarded, the WPS Facilities Department will work with the City's Procurement Office to complete the bid process and establish contracts for the project.
Please attach any related permissions or permits related to the project.	1. Stronger Starts Worcester - Major Renovation Site Plans.pdf
Do you foresee any delays in acquiring these permissions within the next 6 months? If yes, please explain, otherwise, type N/A.	N/A
What is the desired start and end date of this project?	The anticipated start and end dates for this project are March 1, 2026 to November 15, 2026.
Please attach a Timeline for the project.	2. Stronger Starts Worcester - Project Timeline.docx
Please upload a complete project budget (.xlsx or .pdf) that includes	3. Stronger Starts Worcester - Budget.xlsx

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.	
Please upload any renderings and/or estimates for this project.	5. Stronger Starts Worcester - School Sites.pptx
What is the status of the match funding identified in the budget?	WPS has secured \$500,000 in matching funds for this project through the WPS Facilities Department capital and general funds. These are existing, fully available funds and are not contingent on future appropriations, allowing the district to begin work upon project approval.
Please upload commitment letters and/or funding agreements demonstrating that match funding is in place.	4. Stronger Starts Worcester - Letter of Match _ Maintenance Committment.pdf
Please explain why CPA funding is needed for this project. If CPA is the only proposed funding source for this project, please explain why.	WPS is committing matching funds to this project; however, those funds alone are insufficient to address the full scope of improvements needed across multiple playground sites. Many locations require comprehensive rehabilitation due to aging equipment, accessibility barriers, drainage issues, and safety requirements. CPA funding is needed to close the funding gap, support a coordinated district-wide approach, accelerate timelines, and complete improvements that would otherwise be out of reach.
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.	The WPS Facilities Management Team has extensive experience managing capital projects in compliance with public procurement and regulatory requirements. In fall 2025, the team completed a full renovation of the Jacob Hiatt Magnet School playground (\$238,500), delivering a fully accessible play area with inclusive features and poured-in-place safety surfacing. This project closely mirrors the scope of the proposed CPA-funded work. Additionally, WPS conducted a district-wide playground audit and addressed safety deficiencies at 31 sites over 18 months, demonstrating capacity to manage multi-site projects. The team has also overseen major capital initiatives, including the \$316 million Doherty High School, confirming readiness to deliver this project on time and on budget.
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.	WPS is a large, municipally supported public school district with a stable financial structure and established capital and operating budgets. The district's Facilities Department maintains sufficient capital resources to cover up front project costs while awaiting CPA reimbursement. WPS has secured and allocated \$500,000 in existing Facilities Department capital and general funds to support this project, which are immediately available and not contingent on future appropriations. In addition, WPS regularly manages reimbursement-based grants and capital projects and has established financial controls, cash-flow management practices, and municipal oversight processes to ensure timely payment of vendors and compliance with reimbursement requirements. These systems position WPS to advance project work without interruption and

	successfully manage CPA reimbursement timelines. In the event the project is partially funded, WPS can reduce the number of grant supported schools.
Please upload any reports that may be helpful in establishing a capable financial position.	6. FY26_WPS_Budget Report.pdf
How will this resource/property/building be maintained in the future?	WPS will maintain the improved playgrounds through the district's Facilities Department, which oversees routine inspections, preventive maintenance, and repairs for all school grounds and infrastructure. Maintenance activities will include regular safety checks, equipment repairs, surfacing upkeep, and seasonal site care to ensure playgrounds remain safe, functional, and accessible for students and the community. Existing staff and operational budgets are sufficient to support these activities.
Please upload any maintenance commitments.	4. Stronger Starts Worcester - Letter of Match _ Maintenance Committment.pdf
Please describe how this project/program will benefit Worcester residents in general, as well as specific groups that will benefit from the project.	This project will benefit Worcester residents by upgrading safe, high-quality playgrounds accessible to students and the surrounding community. Students will gain age-appropriate play environments that support physical activity and social development, while neighborhoods will have welcoming recreational spaces outside school hours. The project incorporates inclusive, ADA-accessible design aligned with Universal Design for Learning principles, enabling students of all abilities to play together.
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. PRIORITY 3: Prioritizing investments into projects that address a demonstrated need in a geographic area.
Please describe how this project aligns with the above Community Priorities.	The Stronger Starts Worcester project advances community priorities by improving access to safe, inclusive, high-quality recreational spaces for Worcester residents. Rehabilitated playgrounds will include ADA-compliant, inclusive features and remain open to the public outside school hours, expanding equitable access to neighborhood open space. The project prioritizes underserved neighborhoods with aging infrastructure and limited recreational options, directing CPA resources where families rely on school playgrounds as primary community assets and where investments will have the greatest impact on equity, safety, and quality of life.
Historic Resource Category Goals	This project does not align with any of these Category Goals.
Open Space and Recreation Category Goals	GOAL 2: Refurbish existing park amenities to meet the city's changing needs. GOAL 5: Expand green networks to create corridors for wildlife and alternative mobility options.
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.	The Stronger Starts Worcester project rehabilitates outdated playgrounds on WPS properties that serve as vital neighborhood outdoor spaces. Improvements will modernize equipment, enhance safety surfacing, and add inclusive design features to meet current safety and accessibility standards. The project also strengthens Worcester's network of neighborhood green

	spaces by improving walkable, school-based playgrounds that connect to the city's broader open space system and encourage active transportation, environmental quality, and community connectivity.
Does your project align with any other City or Regional Plans? Please be specific. See the City of Worcester website to view local plans.	Worcester's Now Next plan establishes a citywide framework for investing in open space, recreation, and equitable neighborhood resources. It prioritizes public investments that improve quality of life and expand access to recreation across all neighborhoods. Upgrading accessible playgrounds advances these goals by creating high-quality, publicly available recreational assets that support inclusive use and strengthen neighborhood connections.
Does your project have community support? Please describe outreach efforts for this project.	WPS surveys highlight the need to enhance school infrastructure, including outdoor spaces, and demonstrate active family feedback. The City's Open Space & Recreation Plan survey shows strong support for parks, with 81% rating them very important. The Stronger Starts Worcester project also has backing from parents and PTAs at Belmont Street, Goddard, Worcester Dual Language, and Norrback Schools, who recognize that safe, accessible playgrounds are essential for children's physical/mental health.
Please upload any letters of support.	7. Strong Starts Worcester - Letters of Support.pdf
Is there anything else you want the CPC to know about your project?	The Stronger Starts Worcester: District-wide Playground Initiative is more than a facilities upgrade; it is an investment in equity, community health, and neighborhood vitality. Many of the selected playgrounds are located in underserved neighborhoods where safe, accessible outdoor play spaces are limited. By modernizing equipment, improving safety surfacing, and incorporating ADA-compliant, inclusive features, this project ensures that children of all abilities and families across the city have access to high-quality recreational spaces. With secured local matching funds and established project management systems, WPS is ready to begin implementation immediately upon CPA approval. This funding will allow the district to create a lasting impact for students, families, and the wider Worcester community.