



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

City of Newburyport
Community Preservation Committee

Applications for funding are due by **Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.** Applicants should file eleven (11) copies of the completed application and all accompanying documents with the Community Preservation Committee, c/o Office of Planning and Development, City Hall, 60 Pleasant St., Newburyport MA 01950.

PROJECT NAME: Open Space Reserve Fund
PROJECT ADDRESS: Newburyport
MAP/LOT: To be determined
APPLICANT NAME: City of Newburyport (Open Space Committee)
CONTACT PERSON: Michael Frey, Member, Open Space Committee
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COMMUNITY PRESERVATION CATEGORY: Open Space

INTRODUCTION:

Since 2014, through appropriations from the Open Space Reserve Fund, the City successfully protected 10+ acres of land on Curzon Mill Road and a significant portion of the Colby Farm land on Low Street (pending). The existence of the Reserve allowed the City to take the opportunities when they were presented. We need to continue setting aside funds for similar future opportunities. Recent CPC funding rounds have restored the Reserve to its current balance of \$729,966.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The OSC continues to work on conserving open space based on goals and priorities described in the City's Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan. Potential opportunities that we continue to watch will require a substantial funding "match" on our part. In anticipation of the potential need to put together funding for a single large project, or two or more smaller projects within a short time, we need to continue to grow the Open Space Reserve Fund to allow for prompt action when landowners are ready to come to the table. We need to be able to respond to one-time opportunities when they arise, and they will arise. When such opportunities are lost, they are likely lost forever. We submit this application to address the on-going need to continue saving for future open space preservation opportunities.

We are once again submitting this application as a "placeholder," with the intention of submitting supplementary application(s) about specific projects, as agreements are reached, outside funding and project partners identified, and we are otherwise able to provide more project details for your consideration. No funds will be appropriated from the Open Space Reserve Fund without the CPC's review and recommendation, and City Council's approval of the specific projects.

CPA funding has made possible substantial progress in the past several years in protecting several individual properties within larger areas of conservation interest. More specifically, remaining priority open space projects constitute “missing pieces” in these large, landscape-scale efforts, as listed in the Open Space and Recreation Plan and including the natural, scenic, and historic lands around the Common Pasture and Artichoke Reservoir. We also continue to watch opportunities in the Little River Headwaters Area.

We are also seeing increased public interest in additional active and passive recreation space and programming and interpretation of and improved access to already protected conservation and agricultural lands.

PUBLIC BENEFIT:

Preservation of Newburyport’s priority open space, as defined by the City’s Open Space and Recreation Plan, protects the essential character of the city in many ways. It protects residents’ most cherished heritage landscapes and scenic vistas, and it preserves the historical setting for our built environment. It permanently protects important wildlife habitat and habitat connectivity needed for species migration prompted by climate change. It allows for the continuation of centuries of agricultural use and responds to public interest in local working farms. It protects drinking water quantity and quality. It provides natural storm water management and flood mitigation and helps make Newburyport more resilient to a host of other impacts associated with climate change. It supports residents’ quality of life by presenting all ages and income levels opportunities for exploring nature – supporting both physical and mental health.

Most of these benefits are associated with large, landscape-scale areas, in which the sum is greater than the individual-parcel parts. We’re not yet at the half-way point in protecting these areas. Continued CPA support is essential to building an on-going capacity to complete this important work.

CONTROL OF SITE:

Potential projects may involve acquisition of land by the City and other protection strategies, such as conservation restrictions or agricultural preservation restrictions. We will provide details as projects come to fruition.

FEASIBILITY:

As with previous CPA-supported open space projects, any new project is likely to tap the professional expertise of the City’s Senior Project Manager, Geordie Vining, who will work with the Open Space Committee to oversee the completion of legal and grant requirements. Other City Planning Office staff may also participate. Any conservation or preservation restrictions will require the approval of the City’s legal counsel and corresponding state agencies.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

Timing for specific projects will be discussed in supplementary applications.

FUNDING:

A. **Amount of Newburyport Community Preservation Funding Requested: \$170,000.**

B. **Other Sources of Funding:** Each project is likely to involve partnering and state, federal, and/or private grants and other fundraising options. Details will be discussed in supplementary applications as opportunities arise.