



WHERE CAN I FIND... FUNDING TO REPAIR MY HISTORIC HOME?

Do you own a historic home in need of repair? Are you interested in purchasing a historic home but feel it may be costly to rehabilitate? There may be funding opportunities available! This document provides potential avenues for securing financial assistance for the preservation of your historic home.

1 **Has your community adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA)?**

CPA is a program that provides funding for open space, affordable housing, and historic preservation projects.

To find out if your town has adopted CPA, go to the Community Preservation Coalition website. On this page - <https://www.communitypreservation.org/databank/info>, there's a drop-down list of all the CPA towns in Massachusetts. Search for your town's name and if it has adopted CPA, contact your CPA Committee to find out about application procedures. Contact information should be on your town's website or available at your Town or City Hall.

(NOTE: Every community has its own standards for projects; some are reluctant to fund projects involving private property, because CPA projects must provide a "public benefit." However, there have been instances where communities have funded private preservation work in exchange for a preservation easement or some other guarantee that ensures the project provides a public benefit.)

If your community does not have CPA, you might want to consider campaigning for its adoption. CPA funds are the biggest resource for historic preservation grants in Massachusetts. Find out more at the Community Preservation Coalition website: <http://www.communitypreservation.org/>

2 **Does your community's Historical Commission have a grant or loan program for homeowners?**

In a few communities, like Cambridge, the Historical Commission manages a grant or loan program to assist property owners in rehabilitating historic structures. Check with your Historical Commission to see whether your community has a program.

3 **Does your community or regional planning agency have a grant or loan program?**

Some communities have Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) or other sources of funding to assist homeowners with fixing up their property. Check with your community's Planning and/or Community Development Department to see whether they have such a program.

If you live in a small town, CDBG and similar programs are often managed through the Regional Planning Agency (RPA) rather than the municipality. You can find a map of the State's Regional Planning Agencies online here: <http://www.apa-ma.org/resources/massachusetts-regional-planning-agencies>, or a map here: <http://www.massmarpa.org/who-we-are/> http://www.cmrpc.org/sites/default/files/download/margis/MA_RPAs.pdf

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4 Do you live in a rural community?

The US Department of Agriculture sometimes has some grant and loan programs for homeowners in rural areas.

Go to this webpage for information:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/programs-services-individuals>

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-repair-loans-grants>

5 Would you be willing to sell or donate a preservation easement for the property?

A preservation easement is a deed-related restriction that provides protection for historic structures. Sometimes communities will use CPA funds to purchase preservation easements on historic properties.

Preservation easements can also be donated or sold to government entities or non-profit organizations like Historic New England

<https://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/for-homeowners-communities/preservation-easement-program/>.

While a donation won't get you the funds you need to repair your home, easements may help you to get income tax deductions or lower your property taxes.

For information on preservation easements, go to:

<http://forum.savingplaces.org/learn/fundamentals/preservation-law/easements>

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/taxdocs/easements-historic-properties.pdf>

6 Will there be any business use associated with the property?

If your home is also an income-producing property (for example, you're operating a bed & breakfast, part of the home is used for business purposes, or it's a multi-family home), the rehabilitation work you do might be eligible for State and Federal historic tax credits.

There's information on tax credits for houses on the National Park Service's website here: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/taxdocs/intro-wood-frame.pdf>

You can also find information on historic preservation tax credits here:

Federal credit: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

State credit: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhctax/taxidx.htm>

7 Is the house located on a farm or land that has conservation/open space potential?

While there might not be funding for the house itself, there might be funding to help keep the property in agriculture or preserve it as open space. You might be able to pay for renovations to the house by selling the development rights to the community, to the



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State, or to a conservation organization. Communities often purchase development rights to land using CPA funds.

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), through its Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (APR), purchases development rights to farmland in order to ensure that the land remains in agriculture. Information about the program is online here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-preservation-restriction-apr-program-details>

(MDAR also has many other grant and loan programs for farmers. Check out their website for more information.)

Land trusts and conservation organizations will often purchase or accept donations of development rights to agricultural or open-space properties. The Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition has a list of land trusts on its website: <http://www.massland.org>

8 **Is there a trade or vocational school in your area?**

Sometimes trade or vocational schools will take on rehabilitation projects as part of their coursework. This could reduce the cost of your rehab project. However, you'll need to be sure that the instructors and supervisors for the project are familiar with working with historic structures, and that students' work will be well-monitored.

Here is a list of Massachusetts Vocational Public Schools:

<https://www.publicschoolreview.com/massachusetts/vocational-public-schools>

9 **Would your property qualify for a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Rehab Loan?**

The HUD Section 203(k) program enables homebuyers and homeowners to finance both the purchase (or refinancing) of a house and the cost of its rehabilitation through a single mortgage or to finance the rehabilitation of their existing home. Certain restrictions apply. See https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/203k/203k--df for more information.