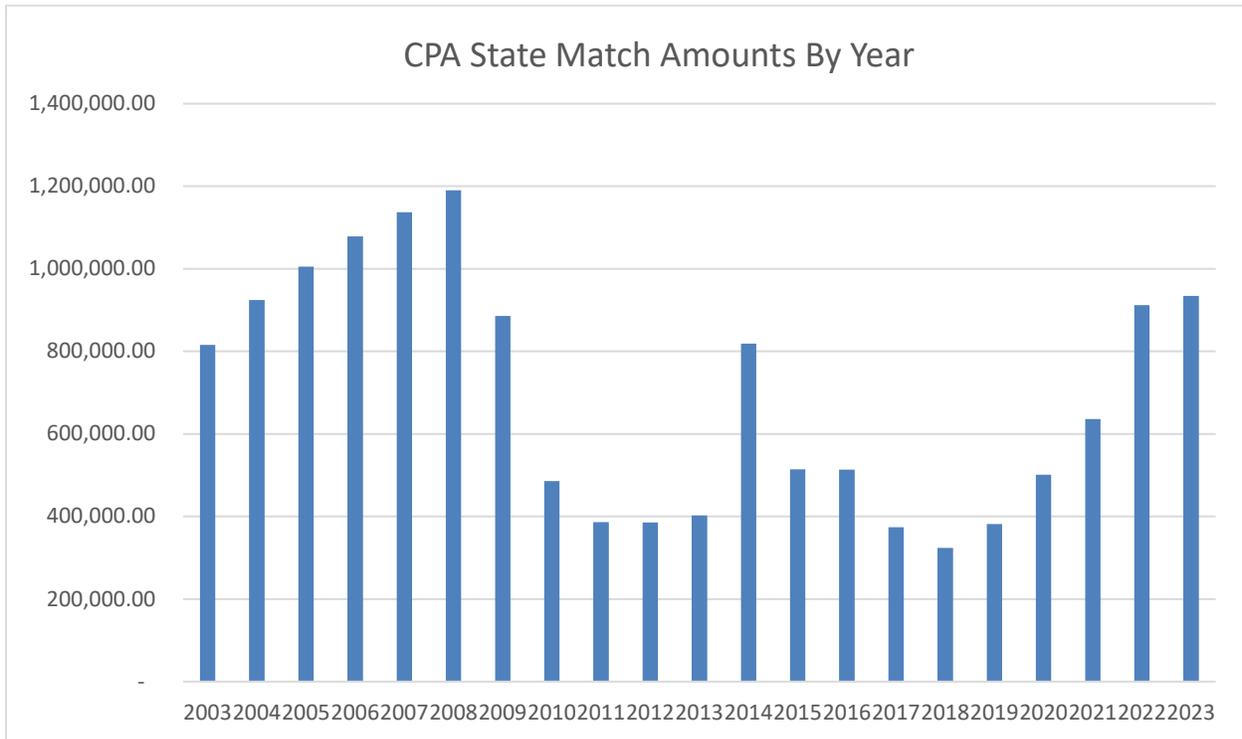


A Look at Westford's Community Preservation Adoption

Almost 22 years ago, in May of 2001, our Town voted to adopt CPA legislation in the amount of an annual 3% surcharge on homeowners. The purpose of this was to assist our municipality in its effort to support the areas of *open space, historic preservation, affordable housing, and recreation*. Exemptions built into our local law include low income and no taxation for the first \$100,000 of the value of any home.

The Community Preservation Act also created a statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, administered by the Department of Revenue, which provides distributions to communities that have adopted CPA. Initially, 34 communities adopted this law and as of March 2023 the number has increased to 194 (out of a total of 351 communities). The first six years of this program brought Westford a 100% match rate from the State. The State's revenues come from "a surcharge placed on all real estate transactions at the State's Registries of Deeds". The increase in communities that have adopted CPA and the decrease in revenues received from the Registries of Deeds have diminished the Town's match to around 38.5%. However, that said; the match we are given far exceeds any return of money we can earn elsewhere. The total Trust Fund distributions from the State for Westford (thru 2023) have been \$14,607,093.



Applications for Westford Community Preservation Funds may be obtained by emailing Jesse Beyer jbeyer@westfordma.gov or Jeremy Healy jhealy@westfordma.gov. The Community Preservation Committee holds a Town-wide Needs Assessment hearing in December, which is open to the public. At this Needs Assessment meeting the public is encouraged to present ideas for specific or general needs around Town that fit within the four CPA categories mentioned above. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) reviews application packages in January and February. During the application process, applicants appear before the 9-member committee for interviews and to provide additional information about their application. The CPC then makes their recommendations for projects and these projects are presented at the Finance Committee and Board of Selectman meetings. Finally, the projects are presented at Town Meeting for the Westford voters' consideration. In instances of emergency or a time sensitive issue the CPC may entertain applications out of cycle. If an applicant wishes to

apply outside the Annual Town Meeting timeframe (i.e. Special Town Meeting in October), please contact the CPC Administrator (Jesse Beyer) jbeyer@westfordma.gov for more information.

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