

Longmeadow, MA Town Manager

Community & Position Profile

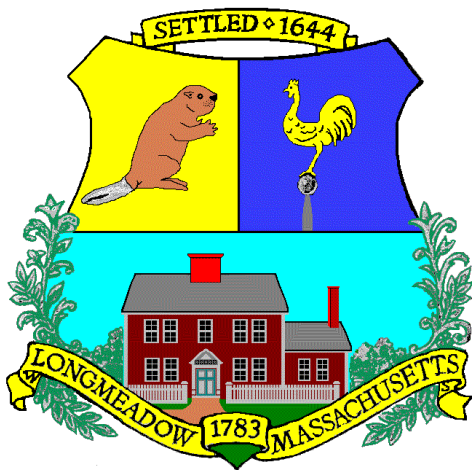


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The Community

The Town of [Longmeadow](#) is a charming suburban community of approximately 15,700 residents located near Springfield in western Massachusetts. It supports professional and highly responsive government service, has strong citizen engagement, and is known for its tree-lined streets, plentiful open space and excellent services. It has long been considered a premiere community in the region. Longmeadow is seeking an experienced municipal management professional with exceptional collaborative leadership and communication skills to serve as its next Town Manager.

History: Once an agricultural community with fertile land along the Connecticut River, Longmeadow offered convenient access to Springfield and Hartford, and thus developed as a classic suburban community. Longmeadow is characterized by its broad Town Green bordered by stately colonial homes built during the 18th and 19th centuries. A large percentage of Town residents work in managerial and professional positions which accounts for Longmeadow having the highest median income in the region.



Suburban development began when the trolley network from Springfield reached the town in 1896. Longmeadow experienced rapid growth as Springfield's development pushed southward through the Forest Park area. Almost all residential construction has been of single-family homes, most of which were built after World War II. A commercial area along Bliss Road features specialty boutiques and general merchandise stores. Since 1970, the Town's population has remained relatively stable.

Longmeadow, founded in 1644, has a rich history which is exemplified by the Simon Colton House, the Town Hall and the Storrs House. Longmeadow residents enjoy numerous community events such as [Long Meddowe Days](#), the annual town festival, which includes a parade, arts and crafts exhibits, musical and dance performances, and the re-enactment of a Revolutionary brigade mustering on the Green.

There is an extensive system of parks in Longmeadow and the 320-acre Fannie Stebbins Memorial Wildlife Refuge is located along the Connecticut River. The Pioneer Valley Yacht Club offers sailing enthusiasts nearby recreation on the river. [Bay Path University](#), which is located in Longmeadow and is the Town's largest not-for-profit landowner, offers all-women bachelor's degree programs as well as co-educational master's degree programs, an occupational therapy doctorate program, and an EdD in higher education leadership. It enrolls approximately 550 students. The highly regarded Willie Ross School for the Deaf, Lubavitcher Yeshiva Academy, and St. Mary's Academy are also located in Longmeadow.

Geography: Longmeadow is 9.7 square miles in size, including 9.1 square miles of land and 0.6 square miles of water. There are approximately 100 road miles in Town. Longmeadow is located on the southern edge of the Connecticut River's Pioneer Valley. It is bordered on the north by the City of Springfield, on the west by the Connecticut River and Agawam, to the east by East Longmeadow, and to the south by Enfield, Connecticut. The community contains significant natural resources and areas of beautiful open space as well as attractive suburban neighborhoods.

Assessed Values: Longmeadow's total assessed value is approximately \$2.18 billion in FY19. Residential properties account for about \$2.05 billion of the Town's total assessed value, while commercial properties account for \$79.66 million, industrial properties for \$4.02 million and personal property for \$42.534 million, according to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services. The average residential property assessment in Longmeadow for FY19 is \$362,905 and the average single-family tax bill is \$8,742. The FY19 property tax rate is \$24.09 per \$1,000 valuation for residential properties, commercial, industrial and personal properties.



Principal Employers: Principal employers in Longmeadow include JGS Lifecare, Big Y World Class Market, and Glenmeadow Senior Living and Retirement Services, according to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. There are two shopping areas in Town, consisting of specialized shops that offer customers personalized services. There is no industry within the Town limits.

Census Data: According to U.S. Census Bureau 2018 estimates, the Town of Longmeadow's racial makeup is approximately 90.0% white, 7.0% Asian, 4.6% Hispanic or Latino, 1.9% two or more races, and 0.7% Black or African American. The median household annual income is \$112,831, which is higher than the state median household annual income of \$74,167. Approximately 3.6% of Longmeadow households have incomes below the poverty level compared to about 10% statewide, according to U.S. Census data.

The Town is demographically somewhat dissimilar to the state regarding resident age cohorts with differences in, for example, the under-18 years cohort with Longmeadow at 23.6% in the 2010 U.S. Census versus 20.0% for the state. In the under-5 years cohort, Longmeadow has 4.3% of its population which is slightly lower than the state's 5.3%. Longmeadow's has a higher percentage than the state in its senior population with the 65 years and over cohort in Longmeadow at 21.2% of its population compared to the state's 16.2%. The median age of residents in Longmeadow is 46.2 years, which is nearly seven years older than the state's 39.4 years.



Government and Finance

Select Board: The Longmeadow [Select Board](#) is the chief executive office of the Town. This elected body formulates policy directives and guidelines for all Town agencies, oversees licensing, and makes appointments to Town offices, boards, and committees, as defined by [Town Charter Section 3-2](#). The Select Board has five members who are elected to staggered three-year terms. The [Town of Longmeadow Charter](#) can be viewed online as can the Town's [General By-Laws](#).

Town Meeting: Longmeadow's legislative branch of government is Town Meeting. Town Meeting is open to all registered voters of the Town. Its powers and responsibilities are defined by Article 2 of the Town Charter. Town Meeting convenes in the spring, no later than the second Tuesday in May, each calendar year with special Town Meetings called as needed.

Committees: There is also an elected seven-member School Committee that oversees the long-range policies of the Town's public school system. The [FY19 budget](#) for public education was approximately \$36.9 million and the [FY20 budget](#) is approximately \$37.4 million. Other elected positions in Town include the Planning Board, Housing Authority, and Moderator. In addition, the Town utilizes many other appointed boards and commissions to conduct municipal operations. The [2018 Longmeadow Town Report](#) is available online.



Town Manager: The Select Board appoints the position of [Town Manager](#) to serve as chief administrative officer of the Town. The [Town Manager](#) is responsible for executing the policy directives of the Select Board and for managing the operations and activities of the Town. Details regarding the qualifications and powers and duties of the Town Manager can be found in Article 5 of the [Town Charter](#).

The Town Manager is specifically responsible for: supervising all departments under his/her jurisdiction; submitting an annual operating budget and capital improvement program; handling personnel and benefits administration, hiring and firing of personnel, employee performance reviews, and collective bargaining; procurement of supplies, materials, and equipment; attending Select Board meetings and Town Meetings; inventory of all Town property, maintenance and repair of all Town and school facilities under the Town Manager's control; coordinating a public communication program for Town departments and agencies; coordinate grant applications and oversee adherence to conditions of grants received; and insure the Town maintains emergency preparedness plans and trains in use of such plans.

Financial Snapshot: Longmeadow holds a Moody's rating of [Aa2](#), as stated in an August 2018 credit opinion. Moody's noted that the Longmeadow benefits from a stable tax base with high resident income levels, sound fiscal management, and sound fiscal policies. The debt burden is considered above average but mitigated by most of the debt being excluded from the levy limits of Proposition 2½.

In FY20, the Town has a \$65.97 million general budget, which includes a \$62.35 million operating



Photo by John Phelan

budget, \$1.83 million capital budget, \$1.45 million in enterprise fund subsidies, and \$0.34 million in other types of appropriations. Revenues include \$53.61 million (81.27%) in property taxes, \$6.97 million (10.56%) in state aid, and \$5.39 million (8.17%) in local receipts. Longmeadow also budgets for four Enterprise Funds: water, sewer, solid waste/recycling, and stormwater. The water and sewer funds, \$2.70 million and \$1.99 million respectively, are both self-sustaining. The \$1.19 million solid waste/recycling fund is funded through

\$285,000 in user fees and a \$904,000 property tax subsidy. The \$843,000 stormwater fund is funded through \$292,000 in user fees and a \$551,000 property tax subsidy.

The [Comprehensive Annual Financial Report](#) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, is available for review on the Town's website as is the [FY19 Annual Budget](#), which earned the GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. [Select Board/Town Manager policies](#), including financial policies, are also available on the Town's website.

The Town historically has a single property tax rate. Nearly 95% of the Town's assessed property value is classified as residential. The Town's last operating override was in 2008. It was designed to last three years but has now carried the Town through more than 10 years. Two successful debt exclusion overrides were passed in the last three years. Both projects, a DPW facility and a new Adult Community Center, are in, or will soon be in, the construction phase.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services, Longmeadow had a FY18 stabilization fund balance of \$3,693,302. The Town's FY19 free cash balance was \$789,377 and its FY19 overlay reserve balance was \$187,352. Longmeadow has excess levy capacity of \$102,492 and its new growth for FY19 was \$266,887.

Longmeadow's next Town Manager should be interested in seeking cost efficiencies to help ease the tax burden on property owners. Additionally, the community is concerned that it is edging toward the Proposition 2½ levy ceiling of \$25 per \$1,000 valuation.

Challenges and Opportunities

- **Economic Development**

As Longmeadow is basically fully built-out, redevelopment of properties is a primary focus rather than development of new parcels. In 2017, the Town voted to create the Dwight Road/Maple Street District Improvement Financing program as part of a public-private collaborative process to promote redevelopment in Longmeadow and East Longmeadow. Identifying alternative sources of revenue to help alleviate the dependence on property taxes and finding methods of “doing more with less” will be a focus for the next Town Manager.

- **Capital Needs**

Longmeadow is facing a number of capital projects as infrastructure ages and needs change with time. The Town is currently building a new \$14 million Adult Community Center at Greenwood Park as the current Adult Center, housed in the former Greenwood Elementary School, doesn't meet residents' needs. The Town is also building a new \$20 million DPW facility and a re-use plan will need to be developed for the current DPW facility. At the May 2019 Town Meeting, voters approved a number of capital projects, including HVAC upgrades, boiler replacements and fire alarms totaling \$1.7 million. Additionally, \$87,556 from the Capital Stabilization Fund was approved for pavement preservation, and the DPW will be getting a new dump truck and backhoe.

- **Education**

Longmeadow takes pride in its strong commitment to education and its school district is consistently one of the highest ranking in Massachusetts. [Longmeadow Public Schools](#) operates three elementary schools, two middle schools, and Longmeadow High School, serving approximately 2,900 students. In 2010, voters supported a Proposition 2½ override to build a new \$78 million high school, which opened in 2013. The school budget for FY20 is approximately [\\$37.4 million](#). Illustrative of the Town's strong support of education is the fact that 96.4% of Longmeadow's residents age 25 years and older have a high school diploma and 65% of the population age 25 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher.

- **Green Community**

Longmeadow is a Massachusetts-designated Green Community. It received the designation by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources in 2013. The Town has received Green Community grant funding totaling \$155,125 to conduct a streetlight study, a ZNE feasibility study, and implementation of high-performance building measures above building code requirements in a new DPW ZNE facility.

- **Citizen Engagement**

The Town embraces civic engagement and appreciates the levels of participation and discourse residents provide. The next Town Manager must be a skilled communicator with a strong belief in transparency. Citizens serve on a significant number of elected and appointed boards and committees as well as in other volunteer capacities. Maintaining a strong and collaborative relationship between residents, employees, and volunteers is vital to the success of the community. Ideas and recommendations regarding improved methods of communicating with and engaging citizens, including new technologies and use of social media, would be welcome.

- **Open Space and Recreation**

Open space is highly valued by Longmeadow residents. More than 30% of the Town is permanent open space. Conservation areas on the west side of Longmeadow include more than 750 acres bordering the Connecticut River. This area supports a wide variety of wildlife, including eagles, deer, beaver, foxes, and wild turkeys. The Town's numerous beautiful parks include Greenwood Park, Bliss Park, Laurel Park, Turner Park, Storrs Park, and Longmeadow Street Park. Residents and visitors enjoy the many opportunities for passive recreation such as hiking, kayaking, bird watching, and nature study. The [Recreation Department](#) offers a wide variety of youth and adult programming, including gymnastics, soccer, karate, tennis, lacrosse, track, swim lessons, art, volleyball, basketball, Zumba, cribbage, and cooking classes. Longmeadow is also home to the Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge, two golf courses, the Pioneer Valley Yacht Club, and Blinn Tennis Courts.



Longmeadow residents value the character and charm of their Town. Voters adopted the Community Preservation Act which is used to fund open space and recreation, community housing, and historic preservation. The Town's [Community Preservation Plan](#), published in Spring 2014, can be reviewed on its website and the Longmeadow Open Space and Recreation Plan 2012-2019 can be viewed [here](#).

- **Public Safety**

The Longmeadow [Police Department](#) has 24 full-time sworn officers along with reserve officers, dispatchers, crossing guards, and administrative personnel. The department was recognized as an accredited agency by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission in June 2019. The Longmeadow [Fire Department](#) provides emergency response, emergency medical services, and code enforcement. It operates out of one station on Williams Street. Dispatch for both departments is handled via a regional emergency communications center that is shared with Chicopee.

- **Department of Public Works**

The Longmeadow [Department of Public Works](#) is responsible for engineering, facilities, grounds maintenance, highways and sidewalks, snow and ice, stormwater, trash and recycling, and water and sewer. The current DPW facility was constructed in 1931; a new, state-of-the-art \$20 million facility is now under construction and a re-use plan for the current DPW facility must be developed.

- **Housing**

Approximately 89% of the housing units in Longmeadow are owner occupied with a median value of \$328,000, according to U.S. Census data. Most of the housing in Town are single-family homes, but there are several higher density housing areas, primarily for senior adults. A Longmeadow [Housing Needs Assessment & Action Plan](#) was completed in 2010.

Ideal Candidate Qualifications

Competencies: The Longmeadow Select Board seeks a talented and innovative Town Manager with municipal management experience, who enjoys being highly engaged with the community, and is a strong and effective communicator.

The successful candidate:

- should be able to demonstrate prior success in leading a complex municipal organization or municipal department.
- should be competent in all areas of municipal management and operations, but especially in finance and budgeting, human resources, and economic and community development.
- should be a strong and effective communicator both internally and externally and be comfortable using technology and newer methods for communicating, such as social media.
- must have strong presentation skills.
- should have experience in sustainable economic development as well as an ability to cultivate and guide public-private partnerships and regional efforts.
- should be skilled in crisis management.
- must be a visionary and decisive leader who can work well with various interests of the Town.
- is expected to work cooperatively and collaboratively with staff, citizens, volunteers, and the business community. He or she should make customer service a priority.
- should be highly approachable, accessible, and relatable.
- must be honest, ethical, even-tempered, mature, and conduct himself/herself in a highly professional manner.
- should be knowledgeable of and willing to implement municipal management best practices.
- must be inclusive, collaborative, and committed to transparency in government.
- must be able to delegate effectively, mentor department heads, and provide support and motivation to ensure continued high performance and professional growth for Longmeadow employees.
- must be a strategic and dynamic leader who employs a teamwork approach.
- should be highly motivated, enthusiastic and strive to build morale.
- must be dedicated, organized, patient, have a strong work ethic, and inspire trust and confidence.
- must have the ability to effectively explain complex issues to officials, staff, and citizens.
- must be a strategic thinker, particularly in regard to budgeting and economic and community development.
- should be skilled in team building, and in developing and maintaining relationships.
- should be a creative problem-solver and active listener who is open to new ideas and considered is a consensus-builder.
- must lead by example, have conflict resolution skills, inspire respect, and be respectful.
- must be a community unifier who manages projects in a participatory manner.
- should promote and embrace community events and enjoy being engaged with the community.

Education and Experience:

- The preferred candidate should hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in Public Administration or a related field (master's degree preferred) and have relevant experience.
- New England region experience is preferred, but not required.



Compensation Package

The Town of Longmeadow will offer an employment agreement and compensation package that is competitive with comparable area communities, with a salary of \$145,000+/-, commensurate with qualifications. An attractive benefits package, including health and retirement plans, is part of the Town Manager's total compensation. Residency is not required.



Longmeadow
MASSACHUSETTS

How To Apply

Interested applicants should send cover letters and résumés, in confidence, by August 16, 2019, 5:00 p.m., via email to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

Subject: Longmeadow Town Manager Search

Please submit a single PDF containing both cover letter and résumé.

Following the closing date, résumés will be reviewed according to the outlined qualifications. The Longmeadow Town Manager Selection Committee will interview the most qualified candidates in confidence. Based upon these interviews, a selection of finalists will be chosen for further evaluation and reference checks and then forwarded to the Select Board. Finalists will be contacted for references and approval of background reviews before their selection is advanced to the Select Board. The Longmeadow Select Board will select the Town Manager.

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal
Community Paradigm Associates
Blynch@communityparadigm.com
978-621-6733

The Town of Longmeadow, Mass., is an EEO/AA employer.



COMMUNITY PARADIGM ASSOCIATES, LLC