

Hopedale, MA – Town Administrator



Position Statement

Hopedale, MA (6,000 pop.), is a charming community located in the Blackstone River valley in central Massachusetts, approximately 40 miles from Boston. A primarily residential community, Hopedale has a small-town atmosphere that residents cherish. A good working relationship between the municipal government and school department has been the practice in Hopedale. The Town has an Aa3 rating, an FY20 budget of approximately \$24 million, excellent public schools, and strong community spirit. Hopedale is bordered by the communities of Bellingham to the east, Upton to the west, Mendon to the south, and Milford to the north. Hopedale is led by a three-member Board of Selectmen.

Hopedale is seeking an experienced, energetic, and community-focused leader with excellent economic development and financial management skills to serve as its next [Town Administrator](#). Preferred candidates should have a Bachelor's degree (Master's preferred) in public administration or a related field and experience as a city/town manager or assistant city/town manager or equivalent, with demonstrated skills and abilities in municipal finance, economic development, community planning, procurement, and communications. Candidates should have a proven record of leadership, be a strategic thinker, instill confidence and trust, and be able to build cooperative relationships with appointed/elected officials, residents, employees, and businesses. Candidates should be approachable, enthusiastic, and have strong communication skills.

Annual salary: Up to \$110K. The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Important Links:

- [Town of Hopedale](#)
- [Town Code](#)
- [Zoning Bylaws](#)
- [Community Development Strategy](#)
- [Master Plan](#)
- [FY17 Annual Report](#)
- [FY20 Budget](#)
- [Town Administrator Responsibilities](#)
- [2019 Annual Town Meeting Warrant](#)



Challenges and Opportunities

Economic Development

Hopedale is interested in attracting new businesses. The Town was once home to the former Draper Corporation, which thrived for more than 100 years. The company was the largest manufacturer of textile machinery in the country as well as producing doors, window sashes and blinds, and operating a printing office. At its peak, Draper employed more than 6,000 people in 1.6 million square feet of space. The Draper facility was acquired in the 1960s by Rockwell International but, due to national and international competition, production gradually declined until the facility closed permanently in 1979. The Draper facility has remained vacant for approximately four decades. The property is an excellent site for redevelopment and could work particularly well for mixed-use development. The Town has significant interest in successfully developing this property, which will be a high priority for the next Town Administrator.



Hopedale has recently signed host agreements with two marijuana cultivators and is in discussions with one retailer. The Town received a \$1 million MassWorks grant this year to fund improvements at the Route 16 and Hopedale Street intersection, including widening the roadway and adding turn lanes. The updated Master Plan, once completed, is expected to focus on balancing residential neighborhoods and community character with the need for commercial, industrial, and retail investment. Future growth is needed to minimize the tax burden on residents.

Master Plan

The Town's [Master Plan](#), completed in June 2007, is scheduled to be updated with the assistance of the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. Efforts are scheduled to begin in January 2020. The updated version will serve as a blueprint for the future, guide any regulatory changes, land use policies, budgeting decisions, and community decision making. The next Town Administrator will play an important role in updating and implementing this strategic plan. Hopedale's [Community Development Strategy](#) provides a snapshot of the Town's community development goals and was approved in February 2017. The [Hopedale Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) was also adopted in February 2017.

Capital Planning

Like most communities, Hopedale has a number of capital needs. The Town Hall is in need of renovation and a number of Town-owned buildings require maintenance and repair, including the police station, fire station, library, and schools. A complete facilities assessment would be helpful in determining infrastructure needs and the Town's capital plan should be updated annually.

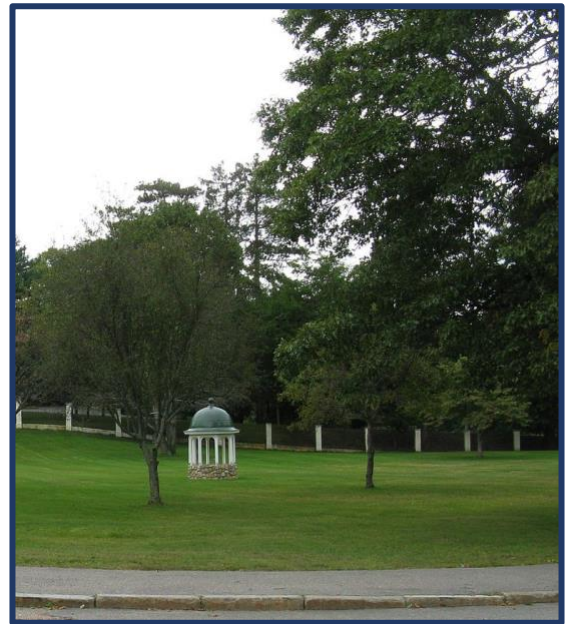
Government

Hopedale has a three-member [Board of Selectmen](#), which appoints a [Town Administrator](#) to manage the daily operations of the Selectmen's Office and is the administrative supervisor of department heads appointed by the Board. The Town Administrator also coordinates cooperative purchasing activities and serves as the Chief Procurement Officer, Town Safety Coordinator, Municipal Hearing Officer, and Town Coordinator of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Hopedale has an open Town Meeting form of government with a required quorum of 50 voters.

Finances

Hopedale has an FY20 budget of approximately \$24.4 million and a Moody's rating of Aa3. The Town is fiscally conservative, and the Town Administrator will be expected to run a tight fiscal ship. The FY19 tax rate is \$17.57 for residential properties and \$28.29 for commercial, industrial, and personal properties. The average single-family tax bill in FY19 was \$6,097. Maintaining or improving Hopedale's financial strength and bond rating while keeping tax increases to a minimum are priorities.

Nearly 53% of the Town's revenue comes from the tax levy, with approximately 31% from state aid. In August 2019, voters approved a \$430,000 override to Proposition 2½ to fund operational expenses of Town departments, including supplies, fuel, and building and vehicle maintenance. This was the community's first Proposition 2½ override. The Town is supportive of its public-school system and the new Town Administrator should work collaboratively with the school department.



Recreation and Open Space

Hopedale has an abundance of recreation options within its 5.3 square miles of area. The largest body of water is Hopedale Pond, which is located near the Town Center. The Hopedale Pond and Parklands are considered the "crown jewels" of the Town and are used for recreational activities by Hopedale residents and those from surrounding communities. Hopedale Pond is 86 acres and is used primarily for boating (no combustion engines) and fishing. The Parklands is nearly 180 acres and an ideal location for hiking, biking, picnicking, and observing wildlife. The Recreation Department operates a tennis program for youths and adults as well as other seasonal sports, arts and crafts, band concerts, and cultural events. Hopedale's Town Park has a playground, tennis courts, bandstand, basketball court, baseball field, and open space.



The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree in field related to public management with a Master's degree in public administration preferred.
- Minimum of 2-3 years of experience as a city/town manager, assistant city/town manager, or equivalent public or private sector level experience.
- Skilled in economic development, financial management, community planning, communications, and procurement.
- Able to implement effective processes and procedures; strategic thinker.
- Knowledgeable of best practices.
- Collaborative, enthusiastic, transparent, team-oriented, innovative, and decisive.
- Skilled in use of traditional and modern communication tools.
- Community-focused, morale-builder, analytical, creative problem solver, professional, and organized.
- Approachable, have an open-door policy, and be open to exploring new ideas.
- Strong work ethic, inspire trust and confidence, empower others, and enjoy working with people.

How To Apply

Send cover letters and résumés via email, in a single PDF, by Jan. 9, 2020, 5:00 p.m. EST to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

**Subject: Hopedale
Town Administrator Search**

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

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

Applicants are considered without regard to race, color, religion, gender orientation, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, or the presence of a non-job-related medical condition or handicap.