

East Bridgewater, MA Town Administrator

Community & Position Profile



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East Bridgewater Massachusetts

The Community

East Bridgewater, MA is a welcoming community of approximately 14,000 residents, situated in Southeastern Massachusetts approximately 25 miles south of Boston and 35 miles north of Providence, R.I. Residents enjoy East Bridgewater's small-town character as well as its highly respected school system, wealth of public services, and abundant recreational opportunities including hiking, fishing, horseback riding, and boating.

The Town of [East Bridgewater](#) was an early industrial inland town located on the northern portion of the Taunton River system. Its early economy was based on agriculture, but the community also had grist and



sawmills, iron forges, and tanneries. The Keith brothers iron slitting mill is known as one of the earliest reported in southeastern Massachusetts. The first triphammer to make scythes, axes, and other edged tools was established in Town in 1740, and cannons and muskets for the revolution were made in East Bridgewater.

The late 19th and early 20th century saw residential development along the trolley lines in the community. The Bridgewater Branch Railroad from Whitman through East Bridgewater stimulated further industrial growth, and the Town was the site of boot and shoe manufacturing and textile mills. The real

population expansion occurred in the post-war era of suburban development when the Town grew from just under 5,000 to its current population of about 14,000.

The Town, which is located in Plymouth County, contains 17.5 square miles of area and is bordered by Whitman, Hanson, Halifax, Bridgewater, West Bridgewater, and Brockton. The principal highways serving the Town are State Routes 18 and 106. The Town is also in close proximity to State Routes 24, 3, 495 and Interstate 95. East Bridgewater has easy access to nearby commuting rail stations in five of its adjacent communities. There are businesses of various sizes in Town, with its largest non-governmental employers being Compass Medical, Sachus Skilled Nursing Home and Ridder Country Club. As with most primarily residential communities, the majority of residents in the workforce commute outside town for employment.

East Bridgewater has a population that is similar to the average Massachusetts community, with the main difference in the number of young residents. The population under-18 years of age in East Bridgewater is 25% of the population compared to 20% for the state, which illustrates that young families are a statistically significant part of the community. In the 65 years and older cohort, East Bridgewater has 15.3% of its population which is similar to the state's 16.2%, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. The median age in East Bridgewater is 39.8 years compared to the state's 39.1 years. The median annual household income in East Bridgewater is \$90,528, which is nearly 12% higher than the state median of \$81,215. While East Bridgewater is considered to be a generally middle-income community, approximately 6.3% of the population live in poverty, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

The Government

East Bridgewater's government is comprised of a three-member [Board of Selectmen](#) that serves as the Chief Elected and Executive Officers of the Town. Selectmen are elected to staggered three-year terms and are vested with all the municipal authority not specifically retained by the Town's legislative body, Town Meeting, or other elected boards. East Bridgewater has an Open Town Meeting form of government that serves as the legislative body of the Town. According to the Town's [By-laws](#), Annual Town Meeting is held on the second Monday of May each year.

The [East Bridgewater Public School District](#), which is managed by a six-member elected School Committee and an appointed School Superintendent, consists of three facilities, the Central Elementary School, the Gordon W. Mitchell School, and the Junior/Senior High School. As of June 2021, the total enrollment was 2,112 students. Overall, student enrollment has been relatively constant over the last number of years.

The Town is also a member of the [Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School District](#), which had a total enrollment, as of June 2021, of 1,519 students, of which 79 were from the Town. The Town has one elected representative on the district School Committee.

Other elected positions include: Library Board of Trustees, Board of Health, Board of Assessors, Housing Authority, Moderator, Planning Board, and Town Clerk. The Town also utilizes a number of volunteer boards and commissions, with various modes of appointment, to conduct municipal operations. The Town's [2020 Annual Report](#) can be accessed via its website.

The East Bridgewater [Board of Selectmen](#) appoints the position of Town Administrator as the Chief Administrative Officer, Personnel Director, and Procurement Officer of the Town. The Town Administrator is responsible for executing the policy directives of the Board of Selectmen and for administering the operations and activities of the Town.

The Town Administrator acts on behalf of the Board of Selectmen to administer the Board's role in day-to-day operations. The Town Administrator's authority is derived from Chapter 41, [Section 23A](#) of the Massachusetts General Laws, which provides the authority for the Board to delegate responsibilities to a Town Administrator. The Town Administrator is the primary officer responsible for the implementation of the Board of Selectmen's policies and Town By-Laws. East Bridgewater's [Town By-Laws](#) can be reviewed on its website as can a [Human Resources Review](#) which was completed in December 2020

The Town Administrator sets the strategy of the Town in accordance with Board of Selectmen directives, sets overall operating goals for the Town, and oversees the efficient and effective administration of Town government to achieve those goals. The Town Administrator is responsible for ensuring the continued economic, social, and financial viability of the Town, and also for ensuring the delivery of quality services to the residents and taxpayers of East Bridgewater. Included in the responsibilities handled by the Town Administrator are: preparing the annual operating and capital budgets, an ongoing capital improvements program, personnel management, negotiating collective bargaining contracts, Town Meeting preparation, grant writing, economic and community development, communications with staff and citizens, and general problems and administrative actions.

East Bridgewater is fortunate to have experienced and talented department heads who will assist the next Town Administrator in accomplishing strategic goals and objectives.



Finances

East Bridgewater's FY22 budget is approximately \$53.6 million, with about \$23.9 million dedicated to the public school system. The FY22 Water enterprise budget is \$2.8 million and the FY22 solid waste enterprise budget is about \$998,000. Property taxes account for the major source of revenue for the Town with approximately \$32.9 million, or nearly 60% of the total budget. The Town has two stabilization funds. Its general stabilization fund has a balance of \$2.31 million and a capital stabilization fund with a balance of \$4.07 million. East Bridgewater has been paying post-employment benefits on a pay-as-you-go basis. Its total OPEB liability, as of June 30, 2020, is approximately \$64.2 million. Basic [financial statements](#) for recent fiscal years can be reviewed on the Town's website.



East Bridgewater has a Standard and Poor's rating of AA with a stable outlook. The rating reflects the Town's strong financial position and moderately sized tax base with above average wealth and income profile. It also takes into account the Town's elevated debt burden and pension liability.

East Bridgewater is primarily a residential community, with approximately 89% of the Town's assessed value attributable to residential uses, about 6% associated with commercial, 2.9% with industrial, and 2.1% with personal property. The FY21 tax rate was set at a single rate of \$17.05 per \$1,000 valuation.

Challenges and Opportunities

- **Capital Needs.** East Bridgewater strives to address its infrastructure issues in a timely manner; however, there are some infrastructure needs. A substantial sewer project has been approved that includes a tie-in with Brockton's system and allows for increased economic development along Route 18. The Central School will likely need renovation within the next five years. A detailed five-year capital plan, outlining upcoming capital needs, should be developed.
- **Economic Development.** While the tax base is mainly residential, town officials are actively working to expand economic development opportunities to ease the tax burden on residents, provide increased job opportunities, and enhance the availability of local shops and services. Several years ago, a sewer district was created along Route 18 from the high school to the center of Town. The district is now being expanded along Route 18 toward the East Bridgewater/Whitman town line and will connect to the Brockton system. The Town is working toward rezoning some land parcels under Chapter 40R which allows for the creation of dense residential or mixed-use smart growth districts. Several potential projects are lined up, including two mixed-use projects and a 300,000-square-foot warehouse. The rezoning is expected to go before Town Meeting this fall. A former mill building on Central Street is being considered for a mixed-use redevelopment to include luxury condominiums and small storefronts. The Old Colony Planning Council finalized an [East Bridgewater Center Market Analysis](#) in 2016 that identified strategies to enhance the Center business district. Municipal water is supplied throughout Town. East Bridgewater welcomes economic development that is harmonious with the community's character.

- **Housing.** East Bridgewater homes have a median value of \$321,600, according to U.S. Census data. The Town, considered a bedroom community, has attracted a significant number of young families in recent years. There is also a sizeable older population, which illustrates the need for mixed housing styles. Approximately 84% of housing units are owner occupied.
- **Education.** The highly respected [public school district](#) includes the Central Elementary School, the Gordon W. Mitchell School, and the East Bridgewater Junior/Senior High School, which was built in 2015. The total FY22 school budget is approximately \$22.9 million and there are 2,112 students enrolled. High school students are also eligible to attend the [Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School](#). The School Department has one of the lowest per pupil expenditures in Massachusetts, spending \$13,115 per pupil compared to the state average of \$17,149.
- **Department of Public Works.** The [DPW](#) is responsible for water quality and distribution; solid waste management; recycling; facilities; maintenance of roads, sidewalks, and storm drains; parks and athletic fields; and snow and ice operations. Currently, the department has 22 full-time employees.
- **Fire Department/EMS.** The [Fire Department](#) currently has 23 full-time firefighter/paramedic positions, including the chief and deputy chief, and approximately four part-time on-call positions. The Fire Department operates out of a single station on Bedford Street. The department also provides EMS services with the majority of firefighters certified as paramedics.
- **Police Department.** The [Police Department](#), which has 23 full-time sworn officers and six civilian dispatchers, is located next to Town Hall. The department is working toward receiving certification from the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission.
- **Public Library.** The [East Bridgewater Public Library](#) is popular with residents who enjoy its various collections as well as abundant programming for all ages and numerous events throughout the year.
- **Council on Aging.** The [Council on Aging](#) provides a wide variety of services for older persons, disabled persons of all ages and their caregivers, and others in need of services and referrals. Services include health/wellness clinics, educational opportunities, social events, special interest programs, safety issues, fuel assistance, transportation, shopping trips, and referrals.
- **Recreation.** The Town has an active Recreation Department that provides the opportunity for leisure and athletic activities for children and adults. There are also trails and woodlands for hiking and biking as well as Robbins Pond for fishing, kayaking and canoeing. The [Beaver Brook Beagle Club](#) is 139 acres of conservation property owned by East Bridgewater. There are no public trails, but the land is open to the public. The Matfield River enters the Town through Bridgewater, branching off to the Satucket River and Poor Meadow Brook, providing opportunities for wildlife sighting and bird watching. East Bridgewater's popular Community Center, which has a function room available for rent, is also home to the Council on Aging.



East Bridgewater holds numerous community events that contribute to the Town's charm, including Concerts on the Common, Christmas on the Common, a [Christmas Parade](#), a Business Expo on the Common with activities for children, pancake breakfasts, and various other family-focused events that are popular with residents. The Town's 200th anniversary is in 2023 and the next Town Administrator will be able to assist in planning celebratory events.

The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree required (with a master's preferred), preferably in public administration or a related field.
- Has experience as a Town Administrator/Manager, Assistant Town Administrator/Manager, head of a significant department in a complex municipal organization, or equivalent.
- Has strong skills in economic development and community planning, human resources, financial management and budgeting, collective bargaining, municipal procurement, strategic planning, and grant writing and administration.
- Exhibits superior communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Has strong leadership skills including the ability to delegate and not micromanage.
- Must be experienced in handling human resources responsibilities as there is no human resources coordinator.
- Is an active listener and is open to input from all constituencies; is honest and ethical.
- Must be committed to transparency and citizen engagement.
- Is skilled at team building; is supportive, respectful, and approachable.
- Enjoys working collaboratively with the Board, staff, all Town departments including the School Department, elected and appointed officials, and volunteers.
- Is able to build trust and morale within the organization and in town government.
- Fosters a team approach to problem solving.
- Is able to delegate effectively, and provide guidance, support and motivation to all municipal employees.
- Has the ability to coach and mentor staff.
- Is knowledgeable of, and able to implement, municipal best practices.
- Has proficient knowledge of municipal law.
- Must be comfortable assuming some of the duties for which a planner is typically responsible as there is currently no town planner.
- Has excellent presentation skills.
- Exhibits strong conflict resolution skills.
- Is a creative problem solver; is proactive.
- Behaves in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner.
- Develops and sustains strong and credible relations with employees, volunteers, and residents.
- Is adept at working with different personality types; exhibits patience; has an open-door policy.
- Exhibits a strong work ethic; is confident and flexible.
- Should be technologically savvy and use technology to create more efficient and effective processes.
- Must lead by example, and be strategic, motivated, diplomatic, organized, and goal oriented.
- Is forward thinking and innovative.
- Has the ability to help develop a shared vision for East Bridgewater.
- Remains calm under pressure.
- Is politically savvy; has the ability to negotiate compromise and/or consensus.
- Has the ability to serve as an energetic ambassador for the community.
- Embraces becoming actively engaged with the community, including attending local events.
- Interacts with colleagues throughout the region and in professional organizations.
- Should be Procurement certified by the state or able to attain certification within the first six months of employment in East Bridgewater.



Compensation

Annual salary: \$145K+/-, DOQ. The Town of East Bridgewater will offer an employment agreement and compensation package that is competitive with comparable Massachusetts' communities and is dependent on qualifications. An attractive benefits package, including health and retirement plans, is part of the Town Administrator's total compensation. Residency is not required.

East Bridgewater
Massachusetts

How To Apply

Interested applicants should provide résumés and cover letters, in confidence, by 3:00 p.m. on August 13, 2021, to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

Subject: East Bridgewater Town Administrator

Submit materials via a single PDF

Following the closing date, cover letters and résumés will be reviewed according to the outlined qualifications. Finalists will be contacted for references and approval of background reviews before their selection is publicly advanced to the Board of Selectmen. The East Bridgewater Board of Selectmen will interview finalists and select the Town Administrator.

Questions regarding the position should be directed to Bernard Lynch, Principal, Community Paradigm Associates, at: blynch@communityparadigm.com or 978-621-6733.

The Town of East Bridgewater is an Equal Opportunity Employer.