

# Plymouth, MA – Town Manager



## Position Statement

Plymouth, MA (62,000 pop.), is a vibrant and historic coastal community located in southeastern Massachusetts approximately 40 miles south of Boston. Known as “America’s Hometown,” Plymouth is the site of the colony founded by the Pilgrims in 1620 and is where New England was first established. The Town is geographically large with 106 square miles and is principally a residential community with a significant amount of open space and distinct commercial and retail sectors. Plymouth has an AA+ rating and a total FY22 operating budget of approximately \$260.4 million. The Town’s finances are strong; however, the decommissioning of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant is a financial concern along with pressing facilities and infrastructure needs. Plymouth’s current challenges involve enhancing transparency and communications with the community, facilities and infrastructure renovations and repairs, encouraging increased collaboration, and a desire for additional economic development that is harmonious with the Town’s character. Plymouth’s local government is led by a five-member Select Board. The community values education and has an excellent public school system.



To serve as its next Town Manager, Plymouth is seeking a professional, highly transparent and collaborative leader with superior communication skills, the ability to build strong, motivated teams, and a desire to engage with the community. Plymouth, a growing community that offers miles of coastline, an active harbor, significant tourism, a dynamic arts and culture scene, and an airport, is an exciting community in which to live and work. Candidates should have strong financial acumen, embrace a service-oriented culture, have experience with economic development, and understand modern technology and the ways it can be used to improve municipal services. Candidates should have a bachelor’s degree (master’s preferred) in public administration or a related field. Preferred candidates will have a proven record of leadership, be a strategic thinker, and be able to build collaborative relationships. The next Town Manager needs to inspire trust and be approachable, innovative, energetic, and engaged.

**Annual salary: \$200K+/- DOQ.** The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience. Plymouth is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

## Government

Plymouth has a Select Board-Town Manager form of government with representative Town Meeting. The five-member Select Board is the chief executive body of the Town and is responsible for goal setting, long-range planning, and policy making. The Select Board appoints the Town Manager as the chief administrative officer of the Town, who is responsible for the effective management of all Town affairs as detailed by the Charter, the Select Board, bylaw, or vote of Town Meeting as well as for implementation of Town policies established by the Select Board. A Charter Review Commission is in the process of reviewing the Town's form of government. It is important to residents that the Town's government is open and communicative. The current Select Board is focused on conducting Town business in a highly transparent, responsive, and collaborative manner.

Plymouth has a number of elected positions, boards, and committees including: Select Board, School Committee, Planning Board, Housing Authority, Redevelopment Authority, Charter Commission, Town Meeting members, and Moderator. There are also a significant number of appointed boards and commissions with dedicated volunteers committed to the Town's success. The next Town Manager must be skilled at collaboratively engaging with Plymouth's various elected and appointed positions, boards, and committees.

## Staffing

The Plymouth Town Manager is responsible for leading myriad departments, which include 523 full-time and 26 part-time municipal employees. There are currently 46 municipal positions vacant. In addition to the more standard departments in a municipality, Plymouth departments include a Municipal Airport (with an elected Airport Commission), Economic Development & Tourism, Harbormaster, and Marine & Environmental Affairs. The Town Manager will be able to dig into global issues such as climate resiliency, aquaculture, and tourism. The Plymouth Fire Chief is slated to retire in April 2022 and there is a succession plan in place. The Town currently has an acting Police Chief. The new position of grant writer was approved at fall Town Meeting. In the school department, there are 1,111 full-time and 232 part-time employees overseen by the School Superintendent, with whom the Town Manager will collaborate. There are 13 school buildings, including two high schools, an intermediate school, and a middle school.

## Finances

Plymouth's financial condition is strong. The Town has an FY22 operating budget of approximately \$260.4 million and a Standard and Poor's rating of AA+. The FY21 tax rate is \$16.16 for residential, commercial, and industrial properties. Approximately 78% of the Town's revenue for the general fund budget (which is 93% of the total operating budget) comes from property taxes, with about 13% from state aid. Local receipts bring in about 7% of the annual revenue. Plymouth has a number of enterprise funds, including for: sewer with an FY22 operating budget of \$8.18 million; water, \$5.02 million; solid waste, about \$749,000; cable, nearly \$1.6 million, and airport, \$1.59 million. The Town's free cash was recently certified at more than \$19 million. Approximately \$6 million to \$8 million of free cash will be put toward funding collective bargaining contract agreements. Maintaining or even improving Plymouth's financial strength and bond rating while keeping tax increases to a minimum are priorities. Plymouth is facing potential revenue constraints due to the decommissioning of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station, which was purchased by Holtec International in August 2019, as well as the pressure of increasing costs of facilities and infrastructure needs. The Town has received approximately \$21 million in federal ARPA funds and about \$11 million from the CARES Act. The Select Board has voted to use ARPA funds for any qualifying projects, including sewer, water, and IT projects. Candidates should have a proven record of building balanced budgets that reflect needs but respect policies and limited resources. There is a desire for additional commercial development to help fund town services, support infrastructure and facility needs, and provide additional employment for residents.

### Important Links:

- [Town of Plymouth](#)
- [Town Charter](#)
- [General By-Laws](#)
- [Town Reports](#)
- [Master Plans](#)
- [Mass. General Laws Chapter 41](#)
- [FY22 Budget Approved at Town Meeting](#)
- [Various Financial Reports](#)
- [2021 Fall Town Meeting Warrant](#)
- [Open Space and Recreation Plan](#)
- [2019 Housing Production Plan](#)
- [Facility Condition Assessment 2019](#)



## Arts and Culture

Plymouth, site of the colony founded by the Pilgrims, is a popular tourist destination and has a number of popular museums, including: [Plimoth Patuxet Museums](#) which includes [Historic Patuxet](#), a [17<sup>th</sup> Century English Village](#), the [Mayflower II](#) and [Plimoth Grist Mill](#); [Pilgrim Hall Museum](#); [1749 Court House](#), and [Hedge House Museum](#), as well as numerous other historic homes and, of course, Plymouth Rock. The international headquarters of [The Mayflower Society](#) is located in Plymouth.

Plymouth is also a popular destination for those interested in the arts, as it is home to the [Plymouth Philharmonic Orchestra](#), the [Spire Center](#) for the Performing Arts, [Priscilla Beach Theatre](#), [Plymouth Center for the Arts](#), [Plymouth Memorial Hall](#) with various performing arts events, free summer concerts on the waterfront, juried art exhibitions, and other events and activities. The Town receives between 750,000 to 1 million visitors annually.



Credit: Plimoth Patuxet Museums

## Economic and Community Development

Plymouth, which is a tourist destination for many, has a bustling downtown and waterfront areas that include retail establishments, restaurants, shops, and professional services, active commercial areas, and historic structures and locations. The Town offers a mix of residential neighborhoods, including single family homes, condominiums, and apartments. Plymouth is accessed by three divided highways: Routes 3, 44, and 25 (to Interstate 495). It is also serviced by two secondary highways: Routes 80 and 3A. These corridors serve as easy access for business and visitors as well as prime locations for numerous commercial and retail establishments. Plymouth's waterfront includes an active marina. Residential/open space account for nearly 83% of Plymouth's total assessed values, with commercial/industrial/personal property accounting for slightly over 17%. Fishing and farming, including cranberry harvesting, were once the main sources of income for residents and, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Plymouth thrived as a center of rope making, fishing and shipping. The port remains active with both commercial and recreational fishing and boating, and continues to be a major landing port for lobsters; however, the major industry in Plymouth today is tourism.

Plymouth is home to several large planned communities, including The Pinehills, Redbrook, and White Cliffs, which contribute property taxes while utilizing fewer town services than traditional neighborhoods. The Town's population, which continues to grow, has significantly increased over the past 20 years, from approximately 45,600 in 2000 to its current 62,000 and is projected to reach 70,300 by 2035.

Approximately 10% of the town has public sewers, primarily in the downtown and North Plymouth, and about 65% is on town water. Construction continues at the 55-acre waterfront Cordage Commerce Center, on Route 3A, which is a mixed-use waterfront development to include 350,000-square-foot of loft office space, 204 apartments, and approximately 23,000-square-foot of office retail. [Plymouth Municipal Airport](#) has been an integral part of the Town since 1934. The airport is home to more than 30 businesses, including flight schools and medical air ambulance, and is the site of Cape Cod Community College's aviation maintenance technology program. The next Town Manager must be adept in attracting economic development projects and businesses that are harmonious with the character of Plymouth. Candidates must be skilled in explaining the benefits of such projects and able to achieve community buy-in.

## Open Space and Recreation

Plymouth, geographically the largest Massachusetts municipality with 106 square miles, offers tremendous natural resources for residents and visitors to enjoy. The Town has 36 miles of coastline, approximately 365 inland ponds, including 32 globally rare coastal plain ponds, and contains the third largest area of globally rare pine barren in the eastern United States. Plymouth contains the third highest per square mile occurrence of rare, threatened and endangered species of any community in Massachusetts. It also sits on the second largest sole-source aquifer in the state. The amount of privately owned undeveloped land in Plymouth is approximately 18,000 acres and there also are approximately 18,900 acres of protected open space.

Among the many beautiful natural areas that Plymouth residents and visitor appreciate are the 12,400-acre Myles Standish State Forest that include ponds and trails, Ellisville Harbor State Park with trails and ocean access, Plymouth Long Beach and White Horse Beach, Eel River, Hedges Pond, Nelson Memorial Beach Park, Morton Park, Brewster Gardens, and myriad woodland preserves and conservation areas. Additionally, Plymouth is home to numerous golf courses including those at Waverly Oaks, Southers Marsh, CrossWinds, Pinehills, and White Cliffs.

Preservation of open space is important to the residents of Plymouth and residents seek to have a thoughtful and acceptable balance of open space and appropriate economic development.



## Current Projects/Challenges

- Seek to purchase or otherwise secure 1,500 acres surrounding the decommissioned Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station for use as open space and commercial economic development.
- Assist Select Board in determining appropriate use of ARPA and CARES funds.
- Major renovation/reconstruction of Fire Station in West Plymouth.
- Improve employee morale and turnover; fill vacant positions.
- Roof replacements at three elementary school buildings.
- Significant and ongoing repairs and maintenance to the Town's many facilities.
- Ongoing repairs to bridges and more than 300 miles of roadway.
- Ongoing repairs to the water system.
- Encourage greater citizen engagement in the governmental process.

## Future/Potential Projects

- Major renovation or rebuild of Fire Station in Manomet. (Plymouth has a total of seven fire stations, most of which are in need of repairs/renovations.)
- Clear deeds on 1,000 acres in South Plymouth that are in tax title and could be considered for future commercial development.
- Water Street promenade project.

The next Town Manager needs superior communication and collaboration skills and should be enthused about engaging with community boards, committees, and volunteers. Candidates must be highly approachable, have the ability to motivate others, and be able to create consensus. The Town Manager must actively support transparency in government, have strong management skills, and be dynamic, strategic, and capable of moving the Town to greater levels of achievement. Both traditional and non-traditional candidates are encouraged to apply.



## The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree (with a master's preferred), preferably in public administration or a related field.
- A minimum of 5 years of full-time paid experience as a City/Town Manager, Assistant City/Town Manager, Town Administrator, or Assistant Town Administrator, or the equivalent level of experience.
- A strong communicator, both internally and externally; active listener.
- Actively supports transparency in government; forthright and trustworthy.
- Strong skills in financial management, economic development, personnel management, collective bargaining, and grant administration.
- Ability to build trust.
- Highly approachable and professional.
- Provides inspirational, innovative, and respectful leadership; morale builder.
- Strategic and highly collaborative.
- Strong leadership qualities and experience.
- Willing and able to hold others accountable and to be held accountable.
- Enjoys engaging with the community.
- Excellent follow-through; strong work ethic.
- Creative problem solver; proactive.
- Exhibits excellent attention to detail.
- Diplomatic; strong conflict resolution skills.
- Team-oriented; calm under pressure.
- Knowledgeable of best practices.

## How To Apply

Send cover letters and résumés via email, in a single PDF, by November 24, 2021, 3:00 p.m. EST to:

[Apply@communityparadigm.com](mailto:Apply@communityparadigm.com)

**Subject: Plymouth  
Town Manager**

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal  
Community Paradigm Associates  
[Bylynch@communityparadigm.com](mailto:Bylynch@communityparadigm.com)  
978-621-6733

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