

Town Administrator

South Hadley, MA (17,800 pop.), is an inviting and charming community that is rich in history and culture, diverse in recreational opportunities, and convenient to highways. Centrally located in the scenic Pioneer Valley, South Hadley is situated along the eastern bank of the Connecticut River and southern slope of the Mount Holyoke Range, just 14 miles north of Springfield and 90 miles west of Boston. It has easy access to other major cities via Interstates 91 and 90 (Mass Pike). South Hadley is economically diverse, with some neighborhoods having median incomes that exceed the state median while others have incomes below the median. Principally a residential community, South Hadley has several areas where the majority of its businesses are located. The Town has an Aa2 rating and an FY21 budget of approximately \$45 million (including public education). South Hadley's current challenges involve maintaining strong finances, enhancing communications, and some desire for additional economic development that is appropriate for the community. South Hadley's local government is led by a five-member Selectboard.



To serve as its next Town Administrator, South Hadley is seeking an experienced and proactive leader with exceptional financial acumen and strong communication skills. The current Town Administrator is retiring after successfully serving in the position for more than eight years. The next Town Administrator should be a team builder, who is approachable and highly collaborative. Candidates should have strong management skills, including personnel management and human resources, and have the ability to make tough decisions when necessary. South Hadley is fortunate to have talented department heads who will work collaboratively with the Town Administrator to achieve goals and complete projects. South Hadley residents have a wide variety of backgrounds. The Town Administrator needs to recognize and to be empathetic to citizens' diverse concerns. Candidates should have a bachelor's degree (master's preferred) in public administration or a related field. Candidates must have experience as a Town Administrator/Manager or equivalent. Preferred candidates will have a proven record of leadership, and be proficient in financial management, strategic planning, and community-based problem solving. A willingness to serve on appropriate regional and state boards as an advocate for South Hadley and the region is a plus. The next Town Administrator should be innovative, approachable, and have a strong work ethic.

Annual salary: \$140K+/- DOQ. The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package, including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience. South Hadley is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Government

South Hadley has a Selectboard-Town Administrator form of government with representative Town Meeting. The Selectboard members serve as the chief administrative officers of the Town. The [Selectboard](#) are responsible for implementing the decisions of Town Meeting, serve as the town's legal agent, the commissioners of highways, sewers and police, the board of public welfare, and the license board. The Selectboard draws up the warrant for Town Meeting and appoints most of the non-elected officials and boards, with the exception of the Appropriations Committee. The Selectboard appoints the [Town Administrator](#) who carries out the policies of the Board. Residents appreciate a Town government that is communicative, open, and honest.

South Hadley has a number of elected positions, boards, and committees including: Selectboard, School Committee, Moderator, Board of Health, Board of Assessors, Planning Board, Municipal Light Board, Housing Authority, and Town Meeting members. [South Hadley Public Schools](#), serving approximately 2,350 students, has two elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. This past November, the School Committee hired a new Superintendent, who is scheduled to come aboard in July. The [Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School](#) and the [Berkshire Hills Music Academy](#) are located South Hadley. The next Town Administrator must be skilled at collaboratively engaging with South Hadley's various elected and appointed positions, boards, and committees. South Hadley has two independent Fire Districts and two independent Water Districts. The independent [South Hadley Electric Light Department](#) provides cost-efficient electricity to South Hadley residents and businesses as well as to small portions of Granby and Hadley. It also offers fiber internet service to certain neighborhoods.

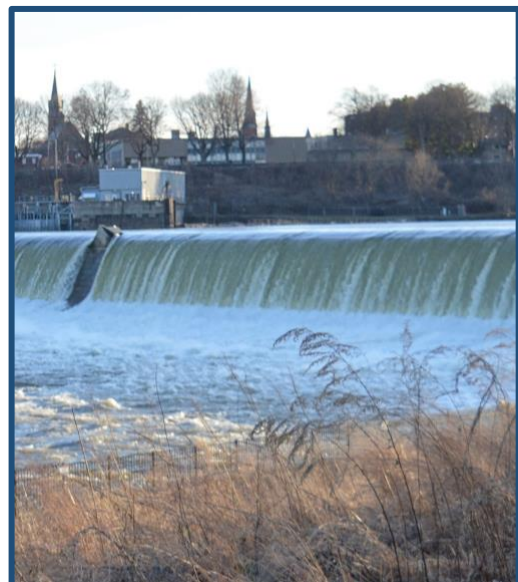
Finances

South Hadley has an FY21 budget of approximately \$45 million and a Moody's rating of Aa2. In FY21, free cash was certified at \$4.3 million. The FY20 tax rate is \$17.58 for residential, commercial, and industrial properties. The property tax base is slightly more than 91% residential, about 4.2% commercial, and 2.5% industrial. Nearly 54.9% of the Town's revenue comes from the tax levy, with 23.88% from state aid, and nearly 17% from local receipts. New growth in FY20 was \$271,245. Maintaining or even improving South Hadley's financial strength while keeping tax increases to a minimum are priorities. Like most municipalities, South Hadley is facing potential revenue constraints due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis as well as the pressures of increasing costs and infrastructure needs. The Town Administrator should seek to expand shared services, when appropriate, to reduce costs and improve efficiencies.

According to a June 2020 Moody's report, South Hadley has a modestly sized tax base, healthy finances supported by conservative budgeting, above average but manageable debt burden, and manageable long-term liabilities including pension and OPEB. There is a desire for appropriate economic development to help fund town services and support infrastructure needs.

Important Links:

- [Town of South Hadley](#)
- [Draft 2020 Master Plan Update](#)
- [Town By-Laws and Code](#)
- [Selectboard-Town Administrator Special Act](#)
- [2018-2019 Annual Town Report](#)
- [Budget Documents](#)
- [Budget Books](#)
- [FY20 Budget](#)
- [Annual Town Meeting Warrants and Minutes](#)
- [Open Space and Recreation Plan](#)
- [2017 Municipal Building Needs Study](#)



Economic and Community Development

Most of South Hadley's commercial development has been largely characterized by a few large centers – [The Village Commons](#) at the intersection of Route 47 and Route 116, the Woodlawn Plaza at the intersection of Route 116 and Route 33, and the Big Y Center on Route 33. Other commercial developments have generally consisted of small shops/office developments or restaurants on Newton Street or Granby Road. E Ink, which is a leader in ePaper technology, has a manufacturing facility in the South Hadley Falls area of Town employing approximately 100. The company is continuing to expand its operations. Additionally, South Hadley is known worldwide as the home of the [Mount Holyoke College](#), with an enrollment of approximately 2,100 students from nations around the world.

In November 2020, South Hadley authorized a \$2.71 million MassWorks grant that will help fund the Town's Newton Street Smart Growth District project. The neighborhood is undergoing an economic transformation, including a 60-unit tiered workforce housing complex that is planned for the plaza at Newton and Lyman streets. The grant funds can be used for capital projects, such as improving roadways, pedestrian and bike access, and water and sewer line upgrades on Lyman, Dayton, and Newton streets. The bidding process will begin in spring 2021. South Hadley would also like to see more redevelopment in former mill buildings. The Town has a significant number of condominiums which assist in diversifying housing options, but more affordable housing is needed, particularly for seniors. The [Redevelopment Authority](#) oversees the South Hadley Falls Urban Redevelopment and Renewal Plan. There is a strong desire to increase the number of shops, restaurants, and businesses in that area. South Hadley owns the Ledges Golf Club, which is a popular course, but operates at a loss of about \$200,000 a year. It was on track to potentially break even in 2020, but shutdowns due to the pandemic had a negative financial impact. There is hope that the golf course may be able to cover its costs when it is again fully operational. South Hadley Electric Light provides cost-efficient electricity and internet to local businesses and places a priority on those establishments.

The next Town Administrator must be adept in attracting economic development projects and businesses that are appropriate for South Hadley. The community voted against allowing any type of cannabis businesses in Town. The Town Administrator must be skilled in explaining the benefits of appropriate economic development projects and know how to achieve community buy-in.

Open Space and Recreation

South Hadley occupies 18.41 square miles at the southern edge of Hampshire County and within the Pioneer Valley. It is bounded by the Connecticut River to the west and the ridgeline and southern slopes of the Mount Holyoke Range to the north. [Buttery Brook Park](#) is beautiful natural resource nestled in the old Buttery Brook watershed. It is open for general use from May-November, with two covered pavilions, a log cabin, a playground, and concession area. Residents are proud of South Hadley's preserved open spaces and are committed to preserving, protecting, and enhancing its heritage and open areas. Working collaboratively with the community to create a thoughtful and acceptable balance of open space and appropriate economic development is critical.

Current projects/issues

- Construction of a new Senior Center is underway. The project, which is being funded without an override or debt exclusion, has a total cost of \$11 million.
- Significant upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant are underway.
- Infrastructure improvements in the Newton Street Smart Growth District project .
- A \$50 million public/private transportation improvement project on Newton Street is slated for 2022.
- Ongoing improvements to the Town's 81 miles of roads and sidewalks.
- Maintaining ongoing regional projects with Granby, Easthampton, Northampton, and other nearby towns.
- Air exchange systems for public school buildings are needed.
- Fee-based curbside trash pickup, provided by the municipality, has sparked concern with some residents as the service was once included within the operating budget and did not have a separate fee.

Potential projects

- A letter of intent has been sent to the MSBA in recent years regarding replacement of the Mosier Elementary School. When the project eventually moves forward, the next Town Administrator will have to help determine how to afford and finance the new building.





The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree required (with a master's preferred), preferably in public administration or a related field.
- Experience as a Town Administrator/Manager or equivalent.
- Strong skills in financial management, personnel management/administration, economic development, and municipal procurement.
- A strong communicator, both internally and externally; active listener; honest.
- Team-oriented; morale builder.
- Strong leadership qualities and experience.
- Ability to coach and mentor staff.
- Knowledgeable of, and able to implement, municipal best practices.
- Skilled in grant acquisition and administration.
- Proficient knowledge of municipal law.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills.
- Strong conflict resolution skills.
- Creative problem solver; proactive.
- Professional, courteous, and respectful.
- Strong work ethic; confident and flexible.
- Forward thinking; strategic; diplomatic.
- Innovative, and calm under pressure.
- Politically savvy; ability to negotiate compromise or consensus.
- Stays abreast of national and international social and economic developments.
- Experience with unique municipal services, such as a golf course or other similar enterprise, is a plus.

How To Apply

Position is open until filled. For a guaranteed review of application materials, send cover letter and résumé via email, in a single PDF, by June 7, 2021, 3:00 p.m. EST to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

**Subject: South Hadley
Town Administrator**

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

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

*The Town of South Hadley, Mass., is an
Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.*