

# BRIDGEWATER, MA – Town Manager



## Position Statement

Bridgewater, MA (28,633 pop.) is a growing and increasingly diverse suburban-rural community located in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, with easy access to Cape Cod. It has a tradition of highly responsive government service and active citizen engagement. Bridgewater is situated approximately 23 miles south of Boston and 29 miles northeast of Providence, Rhode Island, and hosts a commuter rail station, making it a convenient and attractive location for residents and businesses. Bridgewater has a rich history and traditional New England character, and is home to the oldest state college, today's [Bridgewater State University](#).

Bridgewater was chartered in 1656 and developed as a farming and manufacturing community. Throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, Bridgewater's economy was highly dependent upon various factories, particularly those focused on iron works, bricks, nails, and shoes. Bridgewater is now the third most populous community in Plymouth County, home to Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater State Hospital, and Old Colony Correctional



Center. BSU has approximately 8,200 undergraduate and 1,400 graduate students enrolled. Today's Bridgewater has become an increasingly diverse community, including in age and socio-economic conditions. Bridgewater has an engaged citizenry, a prime location, and sound finances.

The last Town Manager, who recently accepted a position managing Barnstable County, served as manager for 12 years, exhibiting the stability of the position.

Bridgewater recognizes the value of collaboration and engagement, and the Town Manager will need to actively communicate, embrace transparency, and work cooperatively, with local staff, officials, and volunteers as well as with the Bridgewater State University administration. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to hire an Assistant Town Manager, thus allowing for complementary skillsets.

Communication and community engagement will be high priorities for the next Town Manager, so candidates must have superior verbal and written communication skills and willingly embrace transparency, attend local events, and meet with stakeholders. Bridgewater is seeking a seasoned leader with proficient municipal finance knowledge and superior project management skills, who is capable of guiding Bridgewater through significant building projects and potential fiscal challenges. The Town Manager must juggle the town's ongoing growth as well as its infrastructure challenges along with the desire among residents to maintain the community's character. The Town is seeking a manager interested in a long-term position who enjoys guiding projects through to completion.

**Annual Salary: \$200,000+/- DOQ.** The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package that is competitive with other Massachusetts towns, including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience.

## Government

Bridgewater has a Council-Manager form of government, with the Town Manager appointed by and reporting to the nine-member [Town Council](#). The Council, which exercises the legislative powers of the town, consists of six



councilors-at-large and one councilor from each of the town's three districts. Councilors are elected to staggered terms of three years. The Town Council adopted a [vision statement](#), which is detailed on the Town's website.

The Town Manager is responsible for the implementation of

policies established by the Council and supervises the general activities of municipal government as well as the operations of all Town departments not under the supervision of other elected officials.

Other elected bodies and positions include Bridgewater Public Library Trustees, Bridgewater-Raynham Regional District School Committee, Bristol-Plymouth Technical School District, and Town Clerk.

Bridgewater is fortunate to have an engaged citizenry with active volunteers serving on the local boards, commissions, and committees. The Town Manager should have a solid understanding of the various boards', commissions', and committees' roles as well as the value they bring to Town policy setting and management. A Manager with experience providing volunteer training and support would be considered a plus.

## Finances

Bridgewater is a fiscally sound community that, like most municipalities, is facing increasing financial pressures due to increasing costs and inflationary pressures across the entire budget. Bridgewater recently approved a \$23 million debt exclusion for a new Fire Department headquarters and is facing other major infrastructure needs, including wastewater treatment improvements and new wells for drinking water. Bridgewater is seeking a Town Manager with superior financial acumen and budgeting experience, who can balance the various needs of the Town while implementing innovative ideas to enhance revenue streams and increase affordability for residents.

Bridgewater's Fiscal Year 2025 general fund operating budget is \$73.35 million, and the Town has a Standard & Poor's bond rating of AA and Moody's rating of Aa3. In FY24, 73.29% of revenue was from the tax levy, 13.02% from all other, 7.04% from local receipts, and 6.65% from state aid. The stabilization fund balance in FY24 is approximately \$7.57 million.

Free cash (general fund balance) was certified at \$3.5 million for FY25. Bridgewater's tax base is 85.12% residential/open space and 14.88% commercial, industrial and personal property. For FY24, the tax rate was \$12.14 per thousand-dollar valuation for all properties. The average single-family tax bill for FY24 was \$6,808. New growth value for FY24 was \$79.3 million with nearly \$34.32 million of that in residential growth value and nearly \$23 million in commercial growth value.

## Education

Bridgewater belongs to the [Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District](#). The district has three elementary schools (one of which was recently built), two middle schools, an intermediate school, and a high school. It has an FY25 budget of nearly \$97 million, with Bridgewater contributing nearly \$38 million for its assessment, capital, and debt, while Raynham contributes nearly \$23.3 million. State aid (Chapters 70 and 71) is approximately \$34.15 million. High school students may also attend the [Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School](#), which serves eight communities including Bridgewater. The Town Manager is expected to foster increased partnerships with the school district and engage in regular dialogue with members of the regional school district administration.

Bridgewater is also home to Bridgewater State University which has approximately 10,000 students enrolled and is interested in deepening its partnership with the community. The next Town Manager must maintain ongoing communications and a collaborative working relationship with the BSU administration as it is a key contributor to the Town's current and future development.

## Economic and Community Development

Bridgewater is a suburban-rural town located eight miles south of Brockton, 23 miles south of Boston, and 29 miles northeast of Providence, Rhode Island, which allows for easy commuting. Three state highways (Routes 18, 28, and 104) converge in downtown Bridgewater, while Route 24 runs through western Bridgewater, and Interstate 495 and Route 106 follow the town's southwestern and northeastern borders, respectively.

Bridgewater State University, which has more than 1,000 full-time employees, has a significant impact on the local economy. The Old Colony Correctional Complex, which includes Bridgewater State Hospital, is also located in Bridgewater. More 2,300 acres of land in Town is held by several state departments – the state Department of Corrections, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, and Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Town owns over 1,100 acres across the community and BSU owns about 239 acres, mostly adjacent to downtown.

The Town's [Comprehensive Master Plan](#) is a roadmap for Bridgewater's future. In the Master Plan, which was approved in 2022, the Town envisions a future in which Bridgewater continues to embrace its historic heritage and charm while welcoming opportunities for growth, change, and economic prosperity. Included in the plan is the desire to strengthen the Town's partnership with BSU to promote additional economic, intellectual, and recreational engagement. Bridgewater's convenient location, with proximity to major highways and a commuter rail service, allows for its establishment as an accessible hub of culture, commerce, education, and entertainment for the greater region. The Town Manager will be expected to guide the ongoing implementation of the Master Plan.

Bridgewater's [Vision to Reality](#) project is designed to revitalize the heart of the Town, preserve the historic character, promote transit-oriented development, and create a more connected community. Considered by the state to be a Commuter Rail Community as it is home to an MBTA station, Bridgewater is already in compliance with state housing and zoning targets under the MBTA Communities Act. There are ongoing discussions regarding the possibility of moving the train station to the downtown, to enhance the area's economic vitality and walkability. The Vision to Reality project includes the relocation in its plan. This issue is being discussed as some residents are concerned about the possibility of increased traffic in the downtown area and the potential impact.

Bridgewater is faced with significant water and sewer capacity challenges as well as water quality issues which inhibit development. A new water treatment facility on High Street officially opened in April 2023 and the town is in ongoing discussions with Taunton to potentially purchase water. It is also considering digging two new water wells. Sewer capacity is at its maximum, with one-third of the town sewer, and additional capacity is needed to allow for future growth. There are ongoing discussions with BSU to have the university's wastewater treated through the correctional institution's treatment plant, which would lessen the demand on Bridgewater's system. Water, sewer, and the transfer station operate via enterprise funds.



## Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

Bridgewater residents value their open space and recreation areas. The Town has an array of athletic fields, open space, and parks within its borders as well as playgrounds and a golf course. There is a strong desire for enhanced recreational opportunities, particularly for the Town's youth, as well as a desire to find new uses for historic buildings, such as old Town Hall.

Bridgewater has significant water resources, including Lake Nippenicket, Carver's Pond, and various river systems. Additionally, Old State Farm, which is approximately 425 acres, is protected under Article 97. The Town strives to preserve open space resources and to improve and upgrade its existing recreation facilities, while also recognizing the need for economic growth. A Town Manager with knowledge and experience in conservation issues and efforts would be beneficial for the community.

## Opportunities and Challenges

Bridgewater, a vibrant and growing community, has a number of significant projects that are either ongoing or anticipated for the near future. Included amongst the opportunities and challenges for the new Town Manager are:

- **Water and Wastewater.** Bridgewater is challenged by its water and wastewater capacity concerns along with water quality issues. There are approximately \$130 million in water and sewer upgrades due in 2030. This provides an opportunity for the new Town Manager to modernize the water system using innovative solutions.
- **Community & Economic Development.** Bridgewater is a dynamic community that is actively seeking additional business growth, particularly the development of buildings that are aesthetically harmonious with the community's character. A mixed-use development is currently under consideration for Broad Street, including a restaurant, townhomes, and apartments, while a hotel is being considered across from Lake Nippenicket.
- **Downtown Revitalization.** The goal of Bridgewater's exciting [Vision to Reality](#) project is to revitalize underutilized downtown properties, attract new businesses and support existing businesses, enhance connectivity between downtown and the surrounding area, promote transit-oriented development, improve walkability, and preserve the historic character. Already adopted form-based zoning will allow for flexibility of use, more stream-lined permitting, and enhance revitalization efforts. Additionally, there is ongoing discussion of relocating the MBTA rail station to the downtown as part of this revitalization effort.
- **MBTA Communities Act.** Bridgewater, which hosts a commuter rail station, already technically meets the state's MBTA Communities Act requirements related to multi-family zoning, allowing it more options in future housing.
- **Housing.** Ongoing residential growth in Bridgewater is challenging the capacity of Town infrastructure. There is also discussion of an increased need for multi-family housing for workers, families, and older adults.
- **Hiring.** A challenge facing the Town, as with most municipalities, is how to best fill the workforce by enhancing Bridgewater's desirability as a place of employment in today's modern work environment. This will allow the new Town Manager the opportunity to develop innovative options that can enhance the overall organization.
- **Finances.** Bridgewater's finances are sound. The new Town Manager will have the opportunity to seek creative financing solutions, develop revenue enhancements, and foster efficiencies, such as shared services, as the town moves forward to address water and sewer infrastructure needs of this growing community.
- **Fire Department Headquarters.** A new state-of-the-art 24,523-square-foot two-story Fire Department headquarters is under construction and expected to be completed between December 2025 and February 2026. It was funded via a \$23 million debt exclusion, including \$2 million in improvements for another fire facility.

### Important Links:

- [Town of Bridgewater](#)
- [Town Charter](#)
- [Annual Town Reports](#)
- [Master Plan](#)
- [Annual Budget Information](#)
- [FY25 Operating Budget](#)
- [Capital Improvement Program](#)
- [Audited Financial Reports](#)
- [Town Manager Operational Updates](#)
- [Vision to Reality Project](#)
- [Open Space & Recreation Plan](#)
- [BSU Strategic Plan 2.0](#)
- [Bridgewater Rising](#)



## The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree (advanced degree preferred) in public administration or a related field.
- Experience as a Town Manager/Administrator or as an Assistant Town Manager/Administrator.
- Superior financial acumen, including municipal budgeting, and understanding of municipal governance. Ability to develop creative financial solutions.
- Exceptional communicator internally and externally, both verbal and written.
- Adept at engaging with the community; visible at Town events; approachable; friendly.
- Excellent project management skills, particularly related to building projects; ability to manage multiple projects and priorities.
- Attentive to details; acknowledges mistakes.
- Ability to successfully write and administer grants and/or oversee such efforts.
- Detail-oriented problem solver.
- Ethical, high integrity, and a strong commitment to transparency.
- Ability to work collaboratively with regional school district and state university.
- Adept at managing a team and skilled in appropriate delegation.
- Superior leadership and collaboration skills; empowers team leaders to lead departments.
- Skilled at making good hires and ability to coach and develop employees.
- Active listener; morale builder; motivator.
- Innovative thinker.
- Consensus builder able to work cooperatively with boards, committees, and all stakeholders.
- Current member of ICMA or willing to become a member and abide by its code of ethics.
- ICMA credentialed managers are preferred.

## How To Apply

For a guaranteed review of application materials, send cover letter and resumé via email, in a single PDF, by January 27, 2025, 3:00 p.m., EST to:

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

**Subject: Bridgewater Town Manager**

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal  
Community Paradigm Associates  
[BLynch@communityparadigm.com](mailto:BLynch@communityparadigm.com)

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