

Dedham, MA Town Manager

Community & Position Profile

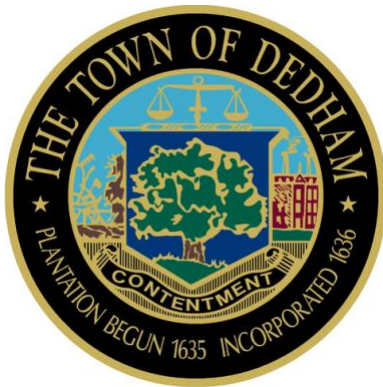


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The Community

The Town of [Dedham](#), Massachusetts, is a vibrant and inclusive community of approximately 25,400 residents. Dedham has a strong economic base and involved citizenry as well as a tradition of highly responsive government service and strong financial management. The Town is seeking an experienced management professional with strong municipal and/or business knowledge as well as exceptional leadership and communication skills to serve as its next Town Manager. He or she should strive to have a visible presence in the community, attending events and become actively engaged with citizens.

History: Dedham has a rich and fascinating history. Settled in 1635 after the General Court issued orders for the establishment of two inland towns to relieve population pressures within existing settlements, Dedham was incorporated in 1636.



The Town's first mill was built in 1642 where townspeople would grind their own corn with power generated from the Charles River. During the next hundred years other mills were built, including one for leather and one used to manufacture paper. Eventually there were industrial mills for manufacturing cotton, wool, wire, carpets, cloth, nails, and stamped coins. These industries sparked a housing boom for mill workers along with churches, shops, and other businesses that residents demanded. Dedham became the county seat of Norfolk County in 1793. Throughout the following two centuries, Dedham continued to grow and prosper. Today, there are hundreds of businesses located in Dedham, employing more than 15,000 workers.

Dedham has recognized three districts in Town for their historic and architectural significance: Franklin Square-Court Street District, also known as the Dedham Village Historic District; Connecticut Corner District; and Federal Hill District. Dedham is home to the [Fairbanks House](#), which is the oldest standing timber-frame house in the United States. Dating back to 1637, it is now a historic house museum and on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1643, Dedham unanimously voted to authorize the first taxpayer-funded public school, setting the stage for its continuing strong support of public education.

Dedham is an active community with numerous annual events that attract both residents and visitors. These [events](#) include: the popular Dedham Flag Day Parade, Dedham Day, Dedham Farmer's Market, Arts at Endicott Summer Concert Series, Dedham Trails Day, James Joyce Ramble, Four on the Fourth, College Fair in the Square, Family Gratitude 5K Turkey Trot, and Holiday Stroll & Tree Lighting.

Geography: Dedham is 10.6 square miles in size, including 10.4 square miles of land and 0.2 square miles of water. There are approximately 107 road miles in Town. The Charles River runs through Dedham and the first man-made canal in North America, Mother Brook, was created in Dedham in 1639, linking the Charles River to the Neponset River.

Dedham is located on Boston's southwest border, just 10 miles from the Commonwealth's capital. On the northwest, Dedham is bordered by Needham, on the southwest by Westwood, and on the southeast by Canton. Dedham has easy access to I-90 (Mass. Pike), I-93, and Route 109. Route 1 runs through Dedham. Logan International Airport is located in nearby Boston.

While the community is located in an urban area, it also contains significant natural and recreational resources as well as suburban neighborhoods. Dedham consists of residential properties as well as a variety of commercial, business and retail districts.

Assessed Values: Dedham’s total assessed value is approximately \$5.08 billion in FY19. Residential properties account for about \$4.15 billion of the Town’s total assessed value, while commercial properties account for \$746.78 million, industrial properties for \$42.2 million and personal property for \$145.4 million, according to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services. The average residential property assessment in Dedham for FY19 is \$499,901 and the average single-family tax bill is \$7,074. The FY19 property tax rate is \$14.15 per \$1,000 valuation for residential properties and \$29.79 for commercial, industrial and personal properties.

Principal Employers: Principal employers in Dedham include Dedham Medical Associates-Atrius Health, American Red Cross, Nobles Day Camp, and Norfolk County Jail, according to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

Census Data: According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the Town of Dedham’s racial makeup is approximately 84.0% white, 8.6% Black or African American, 8.3% Hispanic or Latino, 2.6% Asian, and 2.2% two or more races. The median household annual income is \$89,514, which is higher than the state median household annual income of \$74,167. Approximately 5% of Dedham households have incomes below the poverty level compared to about 10% statewide, according to U.S. Census data.

The Town is demographically similar to the state regarding resident age cohorts with similarities in, for example, the under-18 years cohort with Dedham at 19.3% in the 2010 U.S. Census versus 20.0% for the state. In the under-5 years cohort, Dedham has 6.5% of its population which is slightly higher than the state’s 5.3%. Dedham’s has a higher percentage than the state in its senior population with the 65 years and over cohort in Dedham at 19.8% of its population compared to the state’s 16.2%. The median age of residents in Dedham is 42.4 years, which is slightly older than the state’s 39.4 years.

Government and Finance

Board of Selectmen: The Dedham [Board of Selectmen](#) is the chief executive office of the Town. This elected body formulates policy directives and guidelines for all Town agencies, oversees licensing, and makes appointments to Town offices, boards, and committees, as defined by [Town Charter Section 3-2](#). The Board of Selectmen has five members who are elected to staggered three-year terms. The [Town of Dedham Charter](#) can be viewed online as can the [Town Code](#).

Town Meeting: Dedham’s legislative branch of government is [Town Meeting](#). Town Meeting is representative, with a total of 273 residents elected from the Town’s seven precincts to serve terms of one to three years. Its powers and responsibilities are defined by Town Charter, [Article II](#). Town Meeting convenes for fall and spring meetings each calendar year.

Committees: There is also an elected seven-member [School Committee](#) that oversees the long-range policies of the Town’s public school system. The [FY19 budget](#) for public education is approximately \$42.8 million and the [FY20 budget](#) is approximately \$44.6 million. Other



elected positions in Town include the Planning Board, Board of Assessors, Board of Library Trustees, Board of Health, Parks and Recreation Commission, Board of Commissioners of Trust Funds, Housing Authority, Moderator, and Town Clerk. In addition, the Town utilizes many other appointed boards and commissions to conduct municipal operations. The [2016 Dedham Town Report](#) is available online.

Town Manager: The Board of Selectmen appoints the position of [Town Manager](#) to serve as chief administrative officer of the Town. The [Town Manager](#) is responsible for executing the policy directives of the Board of Selectmen and for managing the operations and activities of the Town. Details regarding the qualifications and powers and duties of the Town Manager can be found in [Section 4](#) of the Town Charter.

The Town Manager is specifically responsible for providing support to the Board of Selectmen; supervising all departments under his/her jurisdiction; financial management and budgeting; handling personnel and benefits administration, hiring and firing of personnel, employee performance reviews, and collective bargaining; purchase of supplies, materials, and equipment; attending Board of Selectmen meetings; inventory of all Town property, maintenance and use of all Town facilities; and create, reorganize, expand, consolidate, or abolish town agencies serving under the supervision of the Town Manager.

Financial Snapshot: Dedham holds a Standard and Poor's rating of AAA with a stable outlook, as stated in a March 2018 rating action. Standard and Poor's noted that the Town has robust operating results, an extremely strong per-capita market value and strong resident incomes, strong and sustainable financial management policies, a mature and diverse tax base, and a good location south of Boston with easy access to many major employment centers. Local property taxes generate 70.32% of revenue, while state aid is 7.22%, local receipts bring in 12.95%, and other available revenue brings in 9.51%.

In FY20, the Town has a [\\$115.1 million budget](#), which includes general government, education, public safety, public works, town facilities, human services, culture and recreation, public education, employee benefits, debt service, and capital expenses. According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services, Dedham had a FY18 stabilization fund balance of \$12,643,841. The Town's FY19 free cash balance was \$6,038,748 and its FY19 overlay reserve balance was \$665,243. Dedham has excess levy capacity of \$9,118,142 and its new growth for FY19 was \$1,323,230. The town's pension fund is close to being fully funded with a nearly 95% funded ratio.



Challenges and Opportunities

- **Finances**

Dedham has a Standard and Poor's rating of AAA with a stable outlook, according to a March 2018 rating action. The Town's goal is to manage its finances in a manner that will serve to maintain its high rating. Dedham takes a conservative approach to budgeting. The Town's FY20 budget is approximately \$115.1 million. The FY20 budget represents a 0.2% decrease over the prior year. The FY19 capital budget is \$1.8 million and the sewer enterprise fund is \$7.6 million. New growth for FY20 is estimated at \$1.25 million. Dedham's [financial policies](#), various [financial reports](#), and [financial newsletter](#) can be viewed on its website.

- **Economic Development**

Dedham is home to 900 businesses which employ approximately 15,000 workers. The Route 1 corridor in Dedham is an extremely active retail and commercial sector and popular [Legacy Place](#) draws a wide range of customers to its many stores, restaurants, and recreational facilities. The



Town is currently looking at ways to finance infrastructure improvements that would beautify, improve traffic flow, and enhance pedestrian access along the Route 1 corridor. If implemented, the project could prove transformational for Route 1 in Dedham. Additionally, the East Dedham Revitalization Committee was established in 2014 to study and propose ways to improve the economics, land uses, and natural and cultural resources of East Dedham. The Town is always interested in thoughtful economic development that will align with the community's character while increasing the vibrancy of Dedham.

Dedham benefits from its location next to Boston, which is the economic engine of Massachusetts. Route 1, which is also known as the Boston-Providence Turnpike, bisects Dedham. Dedham commuters also have easy access to I-90 (Mass. Pike), I-93, and Route 109. Logan International Airport is located a short distance away in Boston.

- **Citizen Engagement**

The Town embraces civic engagement and appreciates the high levels of participation and discourse residents provide. The next Town Manager must be a skilled communicator with a strong belief in transparency. He or she should have a visible presence in the community, attending events and seeking out opportunities to increase engagement with residents. Citizens serve on a significant number of elected and appointed boards and committees as well as in other volunteer capacities. Maintaining a strong and collaborative relationship between residents, employees, and volunteers is vital to the success of the community. Ideas and recommendations regarding improved methods of communicating with and engaging citizens, including new technologies and use of social media, would be welcome.

- **MBTA**

There are two commuter rail stops in Dedham, both located on the Franklin line of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority commuter rail system, with one stop at the Dedham Corporate Center at 125 Allied Drive and the other at Endicott at 186 Grant Avenue. The two rail stops allow commuters easy access to and from vibrant employment centers. MBTA bus shuttles also operate in Dedham with various stops.



- **Capital Needs**

Dedham is facing a number of capital projects as infrastructure ages and needs change with time. The ongoing \$28.3 million [municipal campus project](#) is being developed in three phases. Phase 1 includes renovating the Ames Schoolhouse office building and converting it to a combined Town Hall and Senior Center. Phase 2 includes major renovation and a small addition to the existing Town Hall for conversion to a police station and Phase 3 includes a renovation and expansion to the main fire station, creating a new [public-safety facility](#). Other projects include improvements to streets and sidewalks, parks, and cemeteries as well as maintenance to existing facilities.

- **Education**

Dedham residents place a high value on education. [Dedham Public Schools](#) operates the Early Childhood Education Center, four elementary schools, Dedham Middle School, and Dedham High School. A new Early Childhood Education Center was dedicated earlier this year. There are approximately 2,700 students enrolled in Dedham Public Schools. The school budget for FY20 is approximately \$44.6 million. Students in grades 9-12 also have the opportunity to attend the [Blue Hills Regional Technical School](#) or the [Norfolk County Agricultural High School](#). Northeastern University has a satellite campus in Dedham. Illustrative of the Town's strong support of education is the fact that 93.6% of Dedham's residents age 25 years and older have a high school diploma and nearly



49% of the population ages 25 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher.

- **Green Community**

Dedham is a Massachusetts-designated Green Community. It received the designation by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources in 2010. The Town has converted its streetlights to LED technology and has received two Green Communities grants totaling over \$430,000. Dedham launched the Sustainable Dedham Initiative to educate residents about energy conservation and sustainability. It also installed solar arrays on its high school and Town Hall.

- **Housing**

Approximately 69% of the housing units in Dedham are owner occupied with a median value of \$416,500, according to U.S. Census data. Dedham provides a wide range of housing options for residents, including single-family homes, multi-family homes, condominiums, rental units, senior housing, and affordable housing. The Dedham Housing Authority's [Master Administrative Plan](#) was published in March 2018 and can be viewed on the Town's website.

- **Open Space and Recreation**

The Charles River runs through Dedham, providing a variety of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The Conservation Commission manages more than 271 acres of land within Dedham. These properties protect specific natural resources and are major connectors or linkages of green space or parks. The state and federal government own and maintain another 760+ acres of land in Town, largely acquired to protect wetlands and water resources. There are miles of hiking [trails](#) in Dedham as well as opportunities for bird watching, picnicking, kayaking, and nature study. Dedham has a town pool and a dog park. There are a significant number of recreational programs for adults and youths, such as [organic gardening](#), aquatic fitness, gymnastics, karate, music, tennis, volleyball, diving, flag football, soccer, and dance. The Town's [Parks and Recreation and Open Space Master Plan](#) can be viewed on Dedham's website.



- **Endicott Estate**

The town-owned [Endicott Estate](#) was built in 1904 by Henry Bradford Endicott and is situated on more than 18-acres of rolling lawns surrounded by century-old elm spruce, and weeping willow trees. The three-story, 25-room Colonial Revival mansion is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and plays a vital role in the community and beyond as a place for year-round recreation, corporate, social and educational events, summer concerts, movie filming, and more. There is also a community garden located on the Endicott Estate grounds. Revenues from events held at the Estate total more than \$300,000 annually.



- **Public Safety**

The Dedham [Police Department](#) has 57 sworn officers. The department’s FY20 budget is about \$6.2 million. The department was recognized as an accredited agency by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission in October 2017. The Dedham [Fire Department](#) has 66 full-time personnel. It operates out of two stations, with one in Dedham Square and one in East Dedham, and has a FY20 budget of about \$6 million. There are nine emergency dispatch employees. A new public-safety facility is approved for construction and scheduled for completion in spring 2021.

- **Department of Public Works**

The Dedham [Department of Public Works](#) has 24 full-time employees and approximately 20 summer employees. The department manages all construction on public ways, oversees recycling and solid waste disposal, removes snow and ice, plants and prunes public shade trees, oversees cemeteries, and ensures the proper operation of traffic signal, street lights, and street signs. The department’s FY20 budget is approximately \$12 million.



Photo: John Phelan

Ideal Candidate Qualifications

Competencies: The Dedham Board of Selectmen seeks a talented and innovative Town Manager with strong municipal and/or business management experience, an interest in being highly engaged with the community, and who is a strong and effective communicator.

The successful candidate:

- should be able to demonstrate prior success in leading a complex municipal and/or business organization or department.
- should be competent in all areas of senior-level management and operations, but especially in finance and budgeting, project management, economic and community development, and personnel administration.
- should be a strong and effective communicator both internally and externally and be comfortable using technology and newer methods for communicating, such as social media.
- should be highly visible in the community, enjoy attending local events, and seek to become actively engaged with the community.
- should have experience in sustainable economic development as well as an ability to cultivate and guide public-private partnerships.
- must be a visionary and decisive leader who can work well with various interests of the Town.
- is expected to work cooperatively and collaboratively with staff, citizens, volunteers, and the business community. He or she should make customer service a priority.
- should be highly approachable, accessible, and relatable.
- must be a skilled and effective communicator, and have an open-door management style.
- should be knowledgeable of and willing to implement municipal management best practices.
- should be interested in holding department head meetings and team reviews of completed projects and initiatives to share information and discuss lessons learned.
- must be inclusive, collaborative, ethical, and committed to transparency in government.
- must be able to delegate effectively, mentor department heads, and provide support and motivation to ensure continued high performance and professional growth for Dedham employees.
- must be a strategic and dynamic leader who employs a teamwork approach.
- should be highly motivated, enthusiastic and strive to build morale.
- must be dedicated, organized, patient, have a strong work ethic, and inspire trust and confidence.
- must have the ability to effectively explain complex issues to officials, staff, and citizens.
- must be a strategic thinker, particularly in regard to budgeting, project management, and economic and community development.
- should be skilled in team building, and in developing and maintaining relationships.
- should be a creative problem-solver and active listener who is open to new ideas and considered is a consensus-builder.
- must lead by example, have conflict resolution skills, inspire respect, and be respectful.
- must be a community unifier who manages projects in a participatory manner.
- should embrace participation in community events and enjoy being engaged with the community.

Education and Experience:

- The successful candidate should hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in Public Administration or a related field and five (5) years relevant experience or a master's degree in Public Administration or a related field and three (3) years relevant experience.
- Massachusetts experience is preferred, but not required.



Compensation Package

The Town of Dedham will offer an employment agreement and compensation package that is competitive with comparable area communities, with a salary of \$190,000+/-, commensurate upon qualifications. An attractive benefits package, including health and retirement plans, is part of the Town Manager's total compensation.

How To Apply

This position is open until filled with a first round of applicant reviews on May 26, 2019. Interested applicants should send cover letters and résumés, in confidence, via email to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

Subject: Dedham Town Manager Search

Please submit a single PDF containing both cover letter and résumé.

Following the closing date, résumés will be reviewed according to the outlined qualifications. The Dedham Town Manager Search Committee will interview the most qualified candidates in confidence. Based upon these interviews, a selection of finalists will be chosen for further evaluation and reference checks and then forwarded to the Board of Selectmen. Finalists will be contacted for references and approval of background reviews before their selection is advanced to the Board of Selectmen. The Dedham Board of Selectmen will select the Town Manager.

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

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

The Town of Dedham, Mass., is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

