

Arlington, MA – Town Manager



Position Statement

Arlington, MA (46,308 pop.), is a thriving community that provides diverse neighborhoods, active civic life, and good public transportation options. Located just six miles northwest of Boston, the Town attracts residents who value its geographic location and quality of life. Arlington offers a diverse mix of residential settings and popular retail, dining, and entertainment options. Over the years, the Town has steadily evolved into a more affluent suburban town. Residents have a lot invested in the community and expect excellent municipal services for a reasonable tax bill. Arlington has a strong history of supporting specific initiatives to improve the quality of these services. This support is evidenced in recent years by successful tax override initiatives to upgrade all the school facilities and maintain quality municipal services.



Arlington has an AAA bond rating and a FY23 budget of \$197.16 million. The Town's challenges include a structural deficit with a need for periodic Proposition 2½ overrides, a very limited commercial/industrial tax base, managing the Town's growth, the rising cost of housing as well as the need for additional housing that is affordable and moderately priced, continuing its strong

sustainability efforts, maintaining or enhancing government transparency, and continuing to be in the forefront on critical social issues, including diversity, equity, and inclusion. Arlington recognizes that climate change affects community health, local natural resources, and infrastructure. The Town is a regional leader in making policy and budget decisions through a lens of climate resiliency and sustainability.

Arlington is seeking an experienced, knowledgeable, and inclusive leader with superior community engagement and communication skills, proficient financial acumen and outstanding personnel management skills to serve as its next Town Manager. Candidates should have a bachelor's degree (master's preferred) in public administration or a related field and experience as a city/town manager or assistant city/town manager or an equivalent public or private sector level of experience. Candidates must have at least three years of significant municipal management or administrative experience and must be a U.S. citizen. Candidates should be proactive and strategic thinkers, instill confidence and trust, and be able to build collaborative relationships with appointed/elected officials, residents, employees, and business owners. The Select Board supports the Town Manager having a healthy work/life balance while also accomplishing the Town's goals. The Board will give serious consideration to applications from nontraditional candidates who display exceptional characteristics and the necessary aptitude for this position.

Annual Salary: \$220K+/-. The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience.



Government

The five-member [Select Board](#) is the elected executive branch of municipal government. It is responsible for adopting Town policies, and reviews and sets fiscal guidelines for the annual operating budget and capital improvement programs. The Board also determines CDBG money disbursements, issues Town Meeting warrants, oversees traffic and parking, makes appointments to committees and commissions, and serves as the licensing and permitting board for various businesses and events. The Select



Board appoints the [Town Manager](#) who is responsible for the daily and efficient management of the Town. The Town Manager is responsible for implementation of policies established by the Select Board, for the efficient administration of all Town activities under the manager's control; appointment of various department heads, town officers, and some commissions and committees; employees under the manager's supervision; preparation of the annual operating budget and capital outlay program as well as other responsibilities detailed in the Town Manager Act. Arlington has an elected legislative Town Meeting of 252 members. Among Arlington's elected bodies and positions are: Select Board, School Committee, Assessors, Housing Authority, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Moderator, and Town Meeting members. The Town Manager must engage with Arlington residents, who are highly involved with civic affairs, and collaborate with its various elected and appointed boards, commissions, and committees.

Finances

Arlington has an FY23 budget of approximately \$197 million and a Standard and Poor's rating of AAA with a stable outlook. Arlington regularly updates its long-range financial plan, and it constantly searches for opportunities to reduce the Town's structural deficit. Arlington has a skilled and experienced financial team that will assist the next Town Manager in achieving Arlington's financial goals. The average single-family tax bill in FY22 is \$9,646 and the average assessed value of a single-family home is \$844,658. Approximately 75.28% of the Town's revenue comes from the tax levy, with 12.39% from state aid, 4.68% from local receipts, and 7.66% from all other, according to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services. The total assessed value of Arlington properties in FY22 is nearly \$12.5 billion. New growth value in FY22 was \$82.3 million. Free cash for FY23 was certified at \$15.9 million.

Important Links:

- [Town of Arlington](#)
- [Town Bylaws](#)
- [Town Manager Act](#)
- [2021 Annual Town Report](#)
- [FY23 Annual Budget](#)
- [Select Board & Town Manager Goals](#)
- [Public Annual Financial Reports](#)
- [Projects, Plans, & Reports](#)
- [Arlington Master Plan Documents](#)
- [Arlington Master Plan](#)
- [Open Space & Recreation Plan](#)
- [Net Zero Action Plan](#)
- [Affordable Housing Trust Action Plan](#)
- [Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)

The next Town Manager should have superior financial acumen and the ability to work collaboratively with the Select Board, Long Range Planning Committee, and Finance team to find ways to reduce the structural deficit. The Town Manager needs to be innovative and decisive regarding finances and all aspects of

municipal management. Collective bargaining experience would be beneficial in this position.



Education

[Arlington Public Schools](#) provides an excellent education and currently serves slightly more than 5,866 students with an FY23 budget of approximately \$84.44 million. Arlington operates seven elementary schools, two middle



schools, and Arlington High School. The high school is currently undergoing a \$291 million renovation/construction. Arlington's student body is diverse – 70% White, 13% Asian, 8% multi-race non-Hispanic, 6% Hispanic, and 3% African American – reflecting the ever-changing demographics of the community and the country. Special education serves 15.9% of students. Approximately 4.2% of students are English language learner students. Approximately 27.9% of students are considered high needs students, which is determined if the student is from a household

designated as either low income or economically disadvantaged, is considered an English language learner (ELL) or former ELL (within two years), or is a student with disabilities who is on an individualized education plan.

Economic and Community Development

Arlington is located six miles from Boston and is bordered by Cambridge, Somerville, Medford, Winchester, Lexington, and Belmont. With quick access to neighboring communities via public transit, Arlington is an attractive community for people who work in nearby Boston and Cambridge's universities, hospitals, and tech-related start-ups. The Town's residents tend to be highly educated, with nearly 73% of adults ages 25 years+ holding at least a bachelor's degree and more than 35% of that age group holding a graduate or professional degree. At just under 5.5 square miles, Arlington is a dense community with three "main street" business districts. Arlington's three neighborhood business districts – Arlington Center, Arlington Heights, and East Arlington – provide opportunities for shopping, dining, and recreation, and potentially more development and new growth. While 72% of Arlington's land use is residential, the Town is interested in attracting additional business to increase its commercial/industrial tax base and help resolve the structural deficit in its operating budget.



While Arlington is generally considered a relatively affluent community, approximately 5.5% of the population are considered to have income below the poverty level and a significant number of homeowners are considered to be house-rich but income-poor. The rising cost of housing in Arlington has made it challenging for some residents to remain in their homes and for others to purchase homes here. In November 2022, the Select Board approved the Arlington Affordable Housing Trust's Five-Year Action Plan which focuses on the Trust's principles, goals, and strategies related to affordable housing in Arlington.

Arlington is well integrated within the Boston metropolitan area via Routes 16, 2, 2A/ 3, 3A and 60 as well as through MBTA bus service and access to the MBTA commuter rail and subway transit in nearby Cambridge. Additionally, as the starting point of the Minuteman Bikeway, Arlington has tremendous infrastructure for people who wish to commute by bicycle or to cycle for leisure.



Departments

Arlington's department heads and employees are collaborative and supportive of the Town's many initiatives. The [Health and Human Services](#) department, with 41 full-time and 13 part-time staff members, consists of the [Health Division](#); [Veterans Services](#); [Council on Aging](#); [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Division](#); and the [Arlington Youth Counseling Center](#). The [Department of Public Works](#), with 80 full-time positions, has a new facility under construction and is working to replace aging water and sewer infrastructure, sidewalks, and roadways. [Planning & Community Development](#) has nine staff members overseeing planning and community development activities in town, including serving as liaisons to 35 committees. The [Fire Department](#) has 81 full-time employees. The Town's three fire stations have been remodeled over the past 12 years and are in good condition. The [Police Department](#) has 87 employees and logged 24,579 calls for service in 2021. The [Finance Department](#) team is well regarded and will assist the next Town Manager in developing the budget and managing finances. The [Robbins Library](#) has 24 full-time, 13 part-time, and 22 on-call employees working in its two facilities.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Town of Arlington recognizes and values diversity and strives to advance racial equity, promote a healthier and more inclusive community, and foster community engagement. Since June 2022, Arlington has been conducting a town-wide community equity audit to understand barriers to access for community members and strategies to promote more equitable community engagement. In 2021, the Town approved an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, which all Town entities are encouraged to read at the beginning of public meetings.

Climate and Resiliency Planning

Arlington is a leader in mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects and has two staff members who work on climate issues. The Town participates in many climate change related campaigns, projects, and collaborations. In 2018, the Select Board approved a goal of having the Town become carbon neutral by 2050. Additionally, that same year, the Board set a target of net zero emissions of greenhouse gases. Some of the climate and resiliency campaigns and projects on which staff are currently working include: [Electrify Arlington](#), Net Zero by 2050; [Arlington Community Electricity](#); Charles River Climate Compact; Green Community Grants; Solar Panels on Municipal Rooftops; Electric Vehicle Charging Stations; and the [Resilient Mystic Collaborative](#).

Open Space and Recreation

Arlington is a densely populated suburban community with few large open spaces remaining within its borders and limited direct access to open space resources in adjacent towns. The need to preserve, protect, and properly maintain existing open spaces and recreational resources is widely recognized and deeply felt by Arlington residents. The Town's fourth [Open Space and Recreation Plan](#) highlights accomplishments made over the prior seven years and challenges to meeting the increasing demands on limited public resources for outdoor recreation, such as bikeways, playing fields, playgrounds, and natural green spaces. Arlington is continuing its efforts to increase the amount of protected open space.

Ongoing Projects

- Phase 1 work on the new \$291M Arlington High School has been completed and Phase 2 of construction is estimated to conclude in September 2023. The new school is expected to be completed in autumn 2024.
- The need for a Proposition 2½ override is expected within the next year or two. An \$5.5 million operational override was approved in June 2019.
- Seek development/redevelopment opportunities to increase the commercial/industrial tax base. Mixed-use development is being considered along Massachusetts Avenue and Broadway.
- Continue to build on Arlington's sustainability efforts, including work to increase bicycle & pedestrian safety.
- A new \$44 million DPW facility is under construction with completion scheduled for fall 2023.
- The Mass Ave/Appleton Safety & Accessibility Corridor Project to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Continuing to determine appropriate use of ARPA funding. Earlier this year, \$319,000 from ARPA funding was allocated toward affordable housing.





The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree, preferably in a field related to public administration or business management; advanced degree preferred.
- Minimum of three years of significant municipal management or administrative experience.
- Skilled in community engagement, communications, financial management, personnel management, community and economic development, and project management.
- Exceptional leadership skills; creative thinker.
- Proficient background in municipal operations.
- Highly skilled at community engagement.
- Embraces the critical importance of increasing sustainability and climate resiliency.
- Recognizes and embraces the diversity of the community and supports the goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility.
- Creates a welcoming environment for all.
- Recognizes and embraces the need for affordable and moderately priced housing.
- A strong communicator, both internally and externally; approachable; active listener.
- Data-driven decision making; analytical.
- Creates a vision for the future & secures buy-in.
- Embraces transparency in government.
- Values the uses of modern technologies.
- Experience in setting goals and priorities.
- Treats everyone fairly and respectfully.
- Skilled in long-term planning; organized.
- Forward thinking; proactive; strategic.
- Team-oriented; able to build morale.
- Knowledgeable of best practices.

How To Apply

Send cover letter and résumé via email, in a single PDF, by January 13, 2023, 3:00 p.m. EST to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

**Subject: Arlington
Town Manager**

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

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

Arlington values diversity. We strongly encourage candidates of varied backgrounds, including people of color, persons with disabilities and others to apply. It is the policy of the Town of Arlington to select and employ qualified persons, without regard to race, color, religious views, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, citizenship, age, ancestry, family/marital status, sexual orientation, disability, source of income, or military status, unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification, and to administer all personnel functions, including but not necessarily limited to recruitment, selection and placement, promotion and transfer, compensation and benefits, layoffs and terminations, and training and education on a non-discriminatory basis.

