



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

October 21, 2025

7:00 PM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Council Chambers/2nd Floor

The Town Council meeting is being streamed Live via You Tube.

Go to the Town of Bridgewater Facebook Page for the link.

MEETING AGENDA

Due to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements, discussions will not take place during Public Comment periods. If appropriate, responses to questions and concerns will be given by the Town Manager at a future Town Council meeting.

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) October 7, 2025 Meeting Minutes

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

C. PROCLAMATIONS

D. CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

E. APPOINTMENTS

- a) DEIB Committee - Jane Meyrick (Annual Term)
- b) Cultural Council - Jane Meyrick (2025-2028)

F. HEARINGS

G. LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

H. PRESENTATIONS

- a) Water Presentation

I. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- a) Fire Station Update
 - Fire Department Staffing: Chief Schlatz
- b) Boards, Committees and Commissions Process
- c) Municipal Aggregation Informational Meetings
- d) FY26 Budget Update

J. DISCUSSIONS

K. COMMITTEE REPORTS

L. LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- a) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-002: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter: Article IV, Section 4-1 Town Manager Term of Office
Refer to Advertising: Rules and Procedures voted 3-0 to recommend at their 9/9/25 meeting.
- b) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-003: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter Article VIII, Section 8-2 Citizen Referendum Petition Timeframe
Refer to Advertising: Rules and Procedures voted 3-0 to recommend at their 9/9/25 meeting.
- c) Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004: Amendment to Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 - Business Ethics and Conduct
Refer to Advertising: Rules and Procedures voted 3-0 to recommend at their 9/9/25 meeting.

M. OLD BUSINESS

N. NEW BUSINESS

O. CITIZEN COMMENTS

P. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Q. EXECUTIVE SESSION

R. ADJOURNMENT



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Council Chambers - Second Floor

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MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Loreti called the Town Council meeting to order at 7:00pm on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 in the Council Chambers.

Present: Adelene Ellenberg, Sonya Striggles, Mary McGrath, Johnny Loreti, Paul Murphy, Sean Kennedy, Mark Linde, Marilee Hunt and Dr. Kevin Perry (via Zoom).

Also in attendance was Town Manager Justin Casanova-Davis, Town Attorney Jason Rawlins, Finance Director Laurie Guerrini, CED Director Bob Rulli, Town Planner Shane O'Brien and Chief Assessor Shelley McCauley.

Councilor Loreti read the names of recent veterans who have passed and asked for a moment of silence.

- Michael G. Frisoli, US Air Force (Korea) – passed away on September 5th.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) September 2, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Under comments during the presentation of BSUs check, Councilor Hunt made a motion to amend the meeting minutes as of the September 2, 2025 as follows:

Councilor Hunt noted that while she was Bridgewater's elected Town Clerk working in the Old Town Hall, responses from BSU were always incredible. A few years after the Town Hall basement was flooded it became a dangerous mess and bad for everyone's health and when called, BSU came immediately to clean it up. When she digitized all of our Annual Town Reports and went to our IT department asking to put the documents on-line, they said we did not have that capacity. She called the University and they were quick to have all the documents on line and available to the public.

This was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

Motion passed 9-0.

Councilor Linde made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 2, 2025 as amended, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

b) September 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Councilor Linde made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 16, 2025, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

At 7:05pm Council President Loreti opened the Public Hearing for Order O-FY25-071.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to continue the Pubic Hearing to after Legislation, which was duly seconded by Councilor McGrath.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

Council President Loreti noted that public comments during citizen open forum is for public comments and any comments that pertain to the Public Hearing should be done during the public hearing so that they are an official part of the record. Look forward to a spirited discussion and hope everyone treats everyone with respect.

PROCLAMATIONS - None

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: spoke about water issues and lake shore area, being overdeveloped.
- Julie Blanchard, 27 Bridle Road: spoke about water supply crisis and memo that G. Tansey wrote.
- Marilyn McDonald: spoke in favor of supporting the legislation for changing the license of Kotak.
- Bill Wood, Hayward Street: spoke about road improvements and multiple road rage incidents that was seen in one hour. Spoke about being opposed to the TIF.
- Ray Ajamian, Aldrich Road: invited everyone to the Tree Forum on 10/22 at the Library at 6:30pm.
- James Stantley, Journey House: spoke about an issue that he is having at the Journey House, thinks it should be closed down.
- MJ Spagone, 5 Lakeshore Center: spoke about the appointments and how the Finance Committee was left out.

APPOINTMENTS

- a) Town Council Finance Committee Appointments:
- 1) Dana Sullivan (2025-2028)

Councilor Murphy made a motion to ratify Dana Sullivan to the Finance Committee as a Town Council appointment. This was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll-call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

2) Christopher Raymond (2025-2026)

Councilor Striggles made a motion to ratify Christopher Raymond to the Finance Committee as a Town Council appointment. This was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

b) Open Space Committee:

1) John Fitzgerald (2025-2028)

Councilor Linde made a motion to ratify John Fitzgerald to the Open Space Committee. This was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

HEARINGS

a) Order O-FY25-071: An Order Establishing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for 60-86 Broad Street

Public Hearing: Advertised in the 9/23/25 Enterprise and on the Town Website.

Council President Loreti re-opened the Public Hearing at 8:16pm

Town Manager Casanova-Davis gave a presentation on what a TIF is, what benefits it has to a town. Approved at a local level. 5 different tax exemptions. We are looking at EDIP-TIF Exemption. TIF does not negate property taxes on that property. Solely on the assessed value. The vote tonight is to establish a TIF District not to approve a TIF agreement. It will allow the staff to have conversations. The Town Council will have the final say.

Council President Loreti asked if anyone in the audience had any general questions:

- Carol Nestler, 10 Brownfield Drive: asked if there would be a third party independent third party review. Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that he has a great team and feels comfortable with that group doing the work and will present publicly.
- Ray Ajamian, Aldrich Road: asked if the Planning Board involved in this and Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that the Planning Board does not have a say.
- Mark Peterson, Church Street: asked if the town council could employ a third party review. Council President Loreti noted that the council could discuss possibly doing that.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: questioning #2 on the order, question the word “proposed”.

- Jon Higgins, Knotty Pine Road: asked how can this be discussed without knowing the water and sewer. Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that the vote tonight is for a TIF District not a TIF agreement. There has been no discussion on a TIF Agreement.
- Sandra Cundari, 493 Summer Street: what is the district, is it the whole downtown. CED Director Rulli noted that the order calls out the addresses of the established.

Town Attorney Rawlins noted that the Town Council does not approve developments, they go through a different process. Some need special permits, variances, they need a permit of some sort. This is not approving any TIF Agreement. As it relates to specific developments, this council does not decide what developments go where in town, this is not zoning legislation.

- Marie Hayes, 50 Holden: how does this effect town residents. Who makes up the shortfall, it will effect the town.
- Donna Jewell, 50 Keith Place: 60 Broad Street is on the Order which is the bowling alley. Council President Loreti noted that there is an easement so that address has to be included.
- MJ Spagone, LakeShore: issue with the speed of this request and the fact that there was no open discussion with people.
- Chris Ventura, Leonard Street: spoke about an impartial third party to look at the TIF agreement and water issues.
- Eric Christianson, 214 South Drive: why can't we just evaluate the process. President Loreti noted that this is the process, you need to establish a TIF district first.
- Stacey Cundari, 535 Conant Street: what would the value be if taxable and what would the town get versus no TIF. CED Director Rulli noted that the town would collect the taxes we collect today. We have not seen numbers yet for a new project so we don't know what that number would be.
- James Walsh, 60 Pleasant Street: we should really look at our zoning for 2025;

Council President Loreti asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak in favor:

- Bob Cormier, 65 Grange Park: One stop grant got denied yesterday. 60 Broad Street is in the agreement because the parcels are connected. That building is not included. The order before you is for a TIF District. Our goal is to pay our own way and then some. What we would like to establish is a new revenue for any increased costs. Third party is a brilliant idea. I would like to get to the point as to the reason for this TIF. TIF does not change quality standards. The Town has to hold the developer accountable.
- Justine Grossman, Pratt Avenue: feel strongly that the TIF District should be created so that discussions can be had about a possible TIF agreement so that it can be decided. Need to invest in our downtown.
- Jeff Raybull, Pratt Avenue: in favor of creating a TIF District and then allow the Town Manager and staff to go over the TIF Agreement.

Council President Loreti asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak in opposition:

- Bill Mallard, 270 Grange Park: creating a district you are creating a title with this particular land. Someone can buy that land and owner can ask for more. Council President Loreti asked CED Director Rulli if there was a value assigned to the district and Mr. Rulli noted that there was not.

- Tom Pratty, 37 Moulton Place: noted that a TIF was never discussed prior to the owner buying it two years ago; not this district.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: not in favor of a TIF District; many things wrong with this process.
- Nick Palmieri, 36 Dartmouth Road: spoke about land on Bedford Street and no TIF district was created for that; the town not in the greatest shape. Not a good time for a TIF District in town.
- Sandra Wright, : you take leadership and tough choices, not easy to say no, we do not have the support.
- Stef D'Melia, Harvest Lane: not opposed to a TIF district but not for the downtown. Corner of Elm and 104 is the spot for it.
- Pat Neary, Lakeside Drive: asked the council to vote no, too late in the process, primarily apartments, how will it benefit the town.
- Donna Jewell, 50 Keith Place: asked councilors to vote no; union contracts were voted on with a lower increase, should not look at giving a tax exemption to a developer. Middleboro approved a TIF yesterday.
- Eric Christianson, South Drive: opposed to a TIF district
- Marie Hayes, 50 Holden Place: opposed to the TIF, cannot afford it.

Council President Loreti closed the public comments portion of the public hearing and opened it up for Council deliberation.

Councilor Linde noted that residents have spoken loud and clear, over 200 have sent emails against and 25 for. Need every dime for the schools. Noted Foundry project giving money to the town. Is the developer embarrassed about the property.

Councilor Ellenberg noted that the town needs revenue, schools have cut out all the AP classes, our children are being short changed.

Councilor McGrath noted that 80% of the town revenue is from property taxes. I struggled with this and can't find any benefit for having a TIF district. I can't vote for the district.

Councilor Hunt noted that she was elected to this position by the citizens of the town, and will be voting for what the citizens want.

Councilor Kennedy noted that many residents contacted the councilors, some are viewing as a way to solve problems in town. Process raised concerns with residents. Voting no.

Councilor Striggles noted that she urges those that are no votes to be willing to allow for discussion. We sit here and ask for respect for all parties involved. Need to maintain decorum in this room. Creation of a district is just that, I wanted it to be larger, more properties on Broad Street. I would commit to looking into a third party platform.

Councilor Perry noted that he cannot vote on this Order because he owns property that abuts this property. This is the first time the Town would go through a TIF process. This could be a good process for other TIF areas in town. This property has been blighted for so long.

Councilor Linde asked for a point of order and asked if Councilor Perry should be speaking about the Order if he cannot vote for it.

Town Attorney Rawlins noted that there is no conflict for him to discuss the Order, he just can't vote on it.

Councilor Perry continued by saying that maybe the Town could negotiate up front money like Middleboro did but by saying no it defeats any conversation that could be had, gives the town the opportunity to go through the process.

Council President Loreti asked Mr. Cormier if financing has been secured and Mr. Cormier noted that the project is moving forward, construction loan has been secured.

Council President Loreti asked what less money would mean and Mr. Cormier noted that tenant improvement as not a high quality material would be used and the ability to attract a commercial tenant would be reduced.

Council President Loreti asked about the accountability for job creation, if you don't create 20 jobs then the agreement would be null and void. Mr. Cormier noted that it would be clearly stated in an agreement, would have to supply labor reports.

Councilor Ellenberg asked if residential would the rents be sufficient to build out later and Mr. Cormier noted that that is already written in the financing.

Councilor Kennedy thanked Mr. Cormier for taking the initiative to try to solve the problem.

Council President Loreti closed the public hearing at 9:48pm.

Councilor Striggles made a motion for a brief recess at 9:48pm which was duly seconded by Councilor Murphy.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0

Councilor Linde made a motion for the council to resume their meeting at 10:04pm which was duly seconded by Councilor Murphy.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0

Councilor Linde made a motion to extend the meeting past 10:00pm which was duly seconded by Councilor Murphy.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0

Council President Loreti noted that it was clear after speaking with everyone that at this time the order will be rescinded.

Councilor Linde asked what does that do with this being brought up again and Town Attorney Rawlins noted that if withdrawn, it can be submitted again.

Councilor Loreti made a motion to withdraw Order O-FY25-071, which was duly seconded by Councilor Murphy.

A roll call was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – No; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – No; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Abstained; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – No; Linde – No.
Motion failed 4-4-1

Councilor Linde made a motion to approve Order O-FY25-071, which was duly seconded.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – No; Ellenberg – No; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – No; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Abstained; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – No; Linde – No.
Motion failed 3-5-1

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS – None

PRESENTATIONS

a) Municipal Energy Aggregation Update

Town Manager Casanova-Davis gave a presentation on the Municipal Energy Aggregation which including what products are being offered; launching in December 2025 for 35 months; residents will realize savings; opt out program, no fees associated with opting out. If National Grid has fees lower you can opt out and not pay any fees.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis introduced Mark Cappadonna and Denise Allard, energy consultants from Colonial Power Group.

Mr. Cappadonna noted that the program is about choices in the market place, automatically opted in to the program, you must opt out. Mailings will be sent out, if you do nothing you will be enrolled.

Ms. Allard noted that the mailings would be going out on October 15th and there is a 30 day opt out period.

Councilor Linde noted that the information should be put on social media, cable recording it as more information the better.

b) MBTA Update: Jeff Davis, Horsely Witten Group

Jeff Davis, Senior Planner for Horsely Witten Group gave an update on the MBTA communities. Noting that Section 3A does not require that multi-family housing be built; compel communities to design or pay for new infrastructure to accommodate future multi-family housing.

The original approach was for the MBTA station platform to be moved closer to downtown, then the CBD could simply serve as the MBTA communities district – but that did not occur.

Key issue is the ½ mile radius around current station; lots of University land cannot be counted. Environmentally constrained land excluded. State took that into consideration when creating standards for Bridgewater.

20% of the 50 acre minimum is 10 acres. 281 unit capacity must be within that area. If you cap 15 units per acre you would not hit a 281 unit capacity. Other option would be to expand and where would you expand.

Density can be capped at 30 units per acres but encourage not to get hung up on numbers. The odds of anything being built at 30 units per acre are slim to none.

Options for the Town could be to 1) keep the MBTA zoning as is but make the adjustments requested by the State. 2) Cap the density in Residential D subdistrict (Plymouth Ave) to 30 units per acre, paired with some or all of the CBD and/or the 40R (Waterford Village) or 3) expand the land area within the Station area in order to cap the density to 15 units per acre.

CED Director Rulli discussed the MBTA communities funding opportunities and what the town is eligible for and will lose if not in compliance.

Councilor Linde asked to receive the numbers attached to the grants of what the town received and what the town could receive.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that a water presentation will be on the next council agenda.

DISCUSSIONS - None

COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- a) Order O-FY26-021: To Request the Legislature to Allow an Additional All Alcohol Beverages Package Store License for 233 Broad Street
Voice vote for approval. This measure was not referred to committee. 14 days has elapsed per Section XVII of the Council Rules & Procedures, therefore this measure may be finally considered this evening.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-021, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

Motion passed 9-0.

- b) Order O-FY26-022: Bridgewater DPW Union, AFSCME Local 1700 Collective Bargaining Contract Ratification
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 10/7/25. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 9/29/25 meeting.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-022, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

- c) Order O-FY26-023: Bridgewater DPW Union, AFSCME Local 1700 Collective Contract Appropriation Transfer
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 10/7/25. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 9/29/25 meeting.

Councilor McGrath made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-023, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

- d) Order O-FY26-024: Bridgewater Public Library Staff Association Collective Bargaining Contract Ratification
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 10/7/25. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 9/29/25 meeting.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-024, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

- e) Order O-FY26-025: Bridgewater Public Library Staff Association Collective Contract Appropriation Transfer
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 10/7/25. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 9/29/25 meeting.

Councilor Ellenberg made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-025, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Order O-FY26-026: Laying Out and Accepting a Private Way – Magnolia Way
Refer to Planning Board.
Councilor Striggles made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-026 to the Planning Board, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

Motion passed 9-0.

- b) Order O-FY26-027: Laying Out and Accepting a Private Way – Hickory Lane

Refer to Planning Board.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-027 to the Planning Board, which was duly seconded by Councilor Murphy.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

Motion passed 9-0.

- c) Order O-FY26-028: Laying Out and Accepting a Private Way – Sycamore Lane

Refer to Planning Board.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-028 to the Planning Board, which was duly seconded by Councilor Ellenberg.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.

Motion passed 9-0.

- d) Order O-FY26-029: Adoption of Scope of Work for Independent Review of the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District

Council President Loreti noted that he is sponsoring this as a scope of the work that would be sent to the CLA to ask them send a scope and a contract to understand what the cost would be. Estimated cost would be \$50k to \$60k. Would be sharing with the cost of Raynham.

Councilor Linde made a motion to retain Order O-FY26-029 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

Councilor Murphy noted that he is adamantly against any internal audit, the scope and the cost should be done by the superintendent and school committee. Recommendations may be made and sent to the school committee but will the school committee do the changes. There is a clear gap with what the state is giving to Bridgewater/Raynham School District Voting against this.

Councilor Linde noted that we need to do this, tax payer confidence issue with the school district. First step and all parties have agreed to it.

Councilor McGrath noted that 18 kids go to Bristol Aggi and no busses were there for the first day of school. They are trying to put it on the finance director and we gave money for transportation. Parents were told that no one was in charge of transportation because of budget cuts. There are things that are worth being seen.

Councilor Murphy noted that he is in agreement but there are issues with our school system, I just don't think this is the route to go. Why are we not holding school committee members accountable for the issues.

Councilor Kennedy noted that he agrees with the Order as the school is made up of 60% of the town budget, this is one of the things we can do and voters are asking us to do this.

Attorney Rawlins asked if this is an appropriation to hire an auditing firm to do this and what is the procurement process going to be? If Bridgewater, then the Town Manager should be doing the procurement. If the school committee is doing the procurement, they are their own entity and they should be doing their own thing. This order needs a lot of vetting. Not sure how an entity was even procured.

Councilor Kennedy asked if it would be appropriate to postpone a vote on this and Attorney Rawlins noted that can continue to a few meetings down so we can have a conversation. Need to follow the law. There is a procurement process and need to know the process which is the Town Manager.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that there is a lot of moving parts and needs to be discussed.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Brad McKinnon, 86 Spring Street: noted that whatever happened to make you feel unsafe should not happen; the microphones catch what everyone says; the town needs to stop being divided.
- James Walsh, 60 Crescent Street: MBTA presentation we have the ability to deny based on availability.
- Bill Mallard, 270 Grange Park: \$60k procurement needs sealed bids, opening up to a lawsuit.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: thanked everyone and happy to hear that councilors listened to the majority.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Linde: Friends of the Library raised \$1,200 to put back into library programs. Residents elect us, they should tell us what they think. Do not think the school district is doing anything wrong. Thanked the Lions Club for the decorations in town.
- Councilor Hunt: spoke about her Nebraska friend in town visiting; 10/25 Walk for Survivors will be taking place at the Middle School in Bridgewater, starts at 9:30am and would love the council to walk.
- Councilor Murphy: no comments
- Councilor Perry: thanked the Lions Club for setting up the Fall display because they are fishing for new members. Looking forward to working on the lights. Thanked the BBA for the Autumnfest, went well. Thanked the Police Department for the 5K was well attended and fun was had by all.
- Councilor Striggles: thanked everyone who came this evening. Hope you can understand that votes were made on the knowledge base, I believed in the ability of town staff but it didn't work out in that favor and I respect my fellow councilors votes.
- Councilor Ellenberg: thanked the people who came out tonight and expressed their view points.
- Councilor Kennedy: thanked the public for coming out. This was a good process. Appreciate their input regardless of where they stood on this.
- Councilor McGrath: thanked everyone for sending emails and coming out tonight.
- Councilor Loreti: thanked everyone for coming out. A lot of enthusiasm for the TIF district. I hope people can stay engaged, a challenge to stay engaged. South Shore Farmers Brew Festival next Sunday at Town River Landing. 4th of July committee still trying to raise money to keep the common lit.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Linde made a motion to adjourn, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:46pm.

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Committees](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Board/Committee/Commission Application
Date: Saturday, September 6, 2025 11:41:08 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Board/Committee/Commission Application

Board/Committee/Commission (B/C/C) Application

Select the Board,
Commission, or
Committee applying for

Other

If Other, Which B/C/C
are you applying?

Cultural Council

Personal Information

First Name Jane

Middle Name Alison

Last Name Meyrick

Address1 1507 Summit Drive

City Bridgewater

State MA

Zip 02324

Primary Number

Alternate Phone *Field not completed.*

Email Address

Are you presently, or
have you ever served
on a Board,
Committees, or
Commission in Town of
Bridgewater?

No

Are you Applying for
reappointment?

No

Town Website

How did you hear
about this vacancy?

Please Attach Resume [Meyrick_PS Resume.pdf](#)

In addition to providing a resume, please detail below experience and skills relevant to the B/C/C to which you are applying. List work/volunteer experience, technical skills or other abilities which will make a positive contribution to the B/C/C.

I'm an educator, creative strategist, and systems builder rooted right here in Bridgewater. My work centers on inclusive design, emotional intelligence, and community storytelling—values I believe are essential to cultural programming that truly reflects and uplifts our town. I hold a B.S. in Earth Science and Secondary Education and an M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration, with additional training in universal design, program development, and inclusive teaching.

Over the years, I've taught justice-driven science in public schools, led intercultural programming at Bridgewater State University, and supported neurodivergent learners in transition programs. I also founded Universal Humanity and Universal Learning—platforms that create modular guides, advocacy tools, and emotionally resonant content designed to make knowledge and creativity accessible to all.

I bring technical fluency in workflow design, digital platforms, and multimedia storytelling, along with a deep commitment to honoring unseen labor and amplifying marginalized voices. Whether it's crafting affirming messaging, building community-centered resources, or supporting local artists and educators, I'm excited to contribute to the Cultural Council's mission of celebrating Bridgewater's diverse identities and creative spirit.

Please be advised that the applicants being considered for appointment to a B/C/C in the Town of Bridgewater, MA may be subject to background investigations and financial disclosure.

I understand that participation in a board or committee is strictly voluntary and is not subject to compensation. I further understand that the Town of Bridgewater does not discriminate its selection process for committee members based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, gender, age, military status, sexual orientation, or genetic history.

Signing below indicates my understanding of the above disclosures and certifies that the information provided above to me is true and accurate to the best of my ability.

Electronic Signature Agreement I agree.

Electronic Signature Jane A Meyrick

Date 9/6/2025

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Committees](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Board/Committee/Commission Application
Date: Saturday, September 6, 2025 11:38:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Board/Committee/Commission Application

Board/Committee/Commission (B/C/C) Application

Select the Board,
Commission, or
Committee applying for

Other

If Other, Which B/C/C
are you applying?

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee

Personal Information

First Name Jane

Middle Name Alison

Last Name Meyrick

Address1 1507 Summit Drive

City Bridgewater

State MA

Zip 02324

Primary Number 7817385553

Alternate Phone *Field not completed.*

Email Address jane.a.meyrick@gmail.com

Are you presently, or
have you ever served
on a Board,
Committees, or
Commission in Town of
Bridgewater?

No

Are you Applying for
reappointment?

No

Town Website

How did you hear
about this vacancy?

Please Attach Resume [Meyrick_PS Resume.pdf](#)

In addition to providing a resume, please detail below experience and skills relevant to the B/C/C to which you are applying. List work/volunteer experience, technical skills or other abilities which will make a positive contribution to the B/C/C.

I'm a solo founder, educator, and systems strategist based in Bridgewater, and I aspire to lead with empathy. My background includes a B.S. in Earth Science and Secondary Education, an M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration, and advanced training in universal design, program development, and inclusive teaching. I've taught justice-driven science in public schools, led intercultural programming at Bridgewater State University, and supported neurodivergent learners in vocational and college transition programs.

Through my platforms—Universal Humanity and Universal Learning—I'm cultivating modular guides, advocacy tools, and emotionally resonant messaging that help translate complex topics into formats that are clear, affirming, and actionable. I'm comfortable with digital platforms, workflow design, and technical problem-solving, and I use those skills to build systems that honor unseen labor and empower marginalized voices.

I bring radical empathy, systems fluency, and a deep commitment to ethical transparency in everything I do. I believe DEI work must be both structural and personal—rooted in listening, storytelling, and community accountability. I'd be honored to serve on Bridgewater's DEI committee and contribute to initiatives that make our town more inclusive, responsive, and future-facing.

Please be advised that the applicants being considered for appointment to a B/C/C in the Town of Bridgewater, MA may be subject to background investigations and financial disclosure.

I understand that participation in a board or committee is strictly voluntary and is not subject to compensation. I further understand that the Town of Bridgewater does not discriminate its selection process for committee members based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, gender, age, military status, sexual orientation, or genetic history.

Signing below indicates my understanding of the above disclosures and certifies that the information provided above to me is true and accurate to the best of my ability.

Electronic Signature Agreement

I agree.

Electronic Signature

Jane A Meyrick

9/6/2025

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Equity-driven, neurodivergent education professional with teaching, research, and leadership experience across inclusive learning, student services, and program development. Holds an M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration and is committed to fostering access, human dignity, and systemic change through transformative, neurodivergent-inclusive education

SOCIAL JUSTICE/ADVOCACY EXPERIENCE

Founder & Creative Strategist, Universal Humanity | Jul 2025- Present

Universal Humanity is a multidimensional that fuses radical empathy, systemic critique, and inclusive storytelling to reimagine cultural narratives and foster community-driven dialogue across digital ecosystems.

- Scaled Universal Humanity across key digital platforms to grow reach and impact.
- Produced multimedia content integrating systemic critique with inclusive narrative design.
- Built efficient, neurodivergent-friendly systems to streamline creative workflows.
- Designed audience-centered formats to strengthen engagement and platform resonance.

Graduate Assistant, EXCEL Program, Bridgewater State University | Aug 2024 – May 2025

The EXCEL Program provides individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, aging out of high school, with the same experiences as their college peers in the areas of academics, socialization, professional development, and independent living.

- Supported neurodivergent and differently abled students in transitioning to college/vocational paths.
- Assisted in organizing the “Spectrum Surfing – Celebrating Unique Waves of Brilliance” event.
- Provided vocational machinery shop training and individualized career readiness check-ins.
- Digitized administrative processes and developed resource materials for the program team.

Higher Education Administration Practicum

Lewis & Gaines Center for Equity & Inclusion, Bridgewater State University | May – Aug 2024

The Lewis and Gaines Center for Inclusion and Equity is dedicated to academic success, personal growth, and retention of intercultural students.

- Collaborated in staff meetings to set strategic goals and events.
- Analyzed DEI seminar data to refine the BSU Empowering Students Transition (BEST) Program.
- Facilitated mentor training and coordinated campus orientation efforts.
- Volunteered with the Minnock Institute for Global Engagement during the 2024 Mandela Washington Fellowship.

International Orientation Leader, International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)

Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, MA | Aug 2024

ISSS supports global learners through tailored immigration guidance, employment authorization, and cultural orientation.

- Offered guidance on academic and cultural integration and planned cultural exchange events.
- Coordinated airport pickups and campus transfers for international students.

Science Teacher

Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School, Chicopee, MA | Aug 2021 – Jun 2023

The Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School empowers students, through transformative, justice-driven education, through fostering academic excellence, leadership, and community engagement to cultivate socially responsible graduates committed to equity and sustainability.

- Taught and managed seven courses across science and social justice disciplines over two years, contributing to departmental leadership and curriculum delivery.
- Delivered engaging, multisensory lessons using kinesthetic, visual, and auditory methods.
- Implemented technology-based assessments and mentored colleagues in Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Participated in Instructional Teaching Rounds and organized after-school programs.
- Attended professional development workshops on classroom management and learning strategies.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

SIMuR Fellowship – Shiraki International Multidisciplinary Undergraduate Research

Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, MA | Jan 2020 – Apr 2021; Oct 2022; Jan 2024

- Received \$8000 from NSF to participate in multi-year cohort to conduct multidisciplinary research
- Researched the collapse of a civilization on Georgia's Shiraki Peninsula using topographical and sediment analysis; presented findings at BSU's Mid-Year Symposium.
- Led on-site research in Tbilisi and participated in outreach to California institutions promoting virtual reality integration and archaeological preservation.
- Engaged in a collaborative week-long research initiative with SDSU and the University of San Diego, exploring immersive teaching technologies.

SKILLS

Technical: Adobe Creative Cloud; Apple iOS & macOS; Google Workspace; Microsoft Office Suite

Languages: Limited Working Proficiency in Spanish (Castilian), Turkish; Elementary Proficiency in Chinese (Standard), Georgian, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese

RELATED PRESENTATIONS

How & Why to Change the ASD Narrative, Students Arts & Research Symposium (StARS), Bridgewater State University, May 2025

- Advocated for neurodiversity and inclusive policy through research highlighting the shift from deficit-based autism narratives to asset framing
- Emphasized storytelling power in shaping public discourse and institutional reform, with special focus on virtual reality's role in empathy-driven education.

Empathy in the Age of Adversity: Nurturing DEI through Technological Innovation – StARS, Bridgewater State University, April 2024

- Researched the intersection of technology and equity through SDSU's Empathy Lens initiative
- Analyzed how virtual reality fosters DEI by mitigating bias, enhancing empathy, and promoting inclusive institutional change amid national challenges to civil rights progress.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant, Alumni & Development

Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, MA | Sep 2023 – May 2025

- Organized alumni and student engagement events to strengthen the institutional network.
- Supported scholarship and fundraising initiatives through targeted promotions and recruitment.
- Managed marketing tasks including website updates, event registration, email campaigns, and social media.

EDUCATION

Master of Education in Higher Education Administration

Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, MA | May 2025

- Graduate Commencement Student Speaker
- Recipient, Meditech Sponsor-A-Student Scholarship (Fall 2024)

Bachelor of Science, Double Major in Earth Science & Secondary Education, *cum laude*

Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, MA | July 2021



**Bridgewater Citizen's Advisory Committee
Applicant Recommendation Form**

Name of Applicant: Jane Meyrick

Board/Committee/Commission Applied for: DEIB Committee and Cultural Council

Date of Interview: 09/25/25

Summary of qualifications the applicant will bring to the committee: Applicant has master's and undergraduate degree from BSU. Applicant has varied teaching and supervisory experience especially in inclusive learning environments.

Summary of why the committee would like to recommend the applicant: Applicant voiced passion about wanting to make a positive impact in the town of Bridgewater through involvement and volunteering.

Were there other candidates to consider? If yes, how many? No

Additional Comments:

Date Citizen's Advisory Committee Vote Taken: 09/25/25

Vote Results: 3-0 to recommend

Completed by: Keith Buohl



Monthly Project Memo

Project Updates: Month of October 2025

Construction Update

- **Site & Building Progress**
 - Drywall installation is substantially complete
 - Above Ceilings MEP's complete
 - Interior and exterior painting continue
 - ACT tiles install underway
 - Apparatus bay doors have been installed
 - Exterior Windows are installed
 - Flooring is substantially complete on Admin side
 - Plumbing fixture installations ongoing
 - The outbuilding concrete slab has been placed
 - The north side apparatus bay concrete apron was placed
 - Entrance curbing complete
- **Utilities**
 - Permanent power has been energized in the building
 - The gas meter has been installed
 - The fiber optic line has been pulled into the building
- **Safety**
 - No incidents to report to date
 - Safety measures continue to take place on site
 - MOCC has daily safety meetings on site
- **Next Steps**
 - Continue interior finishes
 - Install ACT ceilings
 - Landscaping (trees, seed, etc.)
 - Install lockers
 - Complete Apparatus Bay floor

Risk Log

- **Budget**
 - Team continues to track budget / potential change orders
- **Schedule**
 - Monitoring weather conditions during summer months
 - Schedule is on track

Project Meetings

- Weekly OAC meetings Wednesdays at 9:00 am
- Weekly Designer Coordination Meetings Mondays at 1:30pm

Progression Photographs



Apparatus Bay Apron



Entrance Curbing

Bridgewater Fire Headquarters



HVAC Rooftop Equipment Start Up

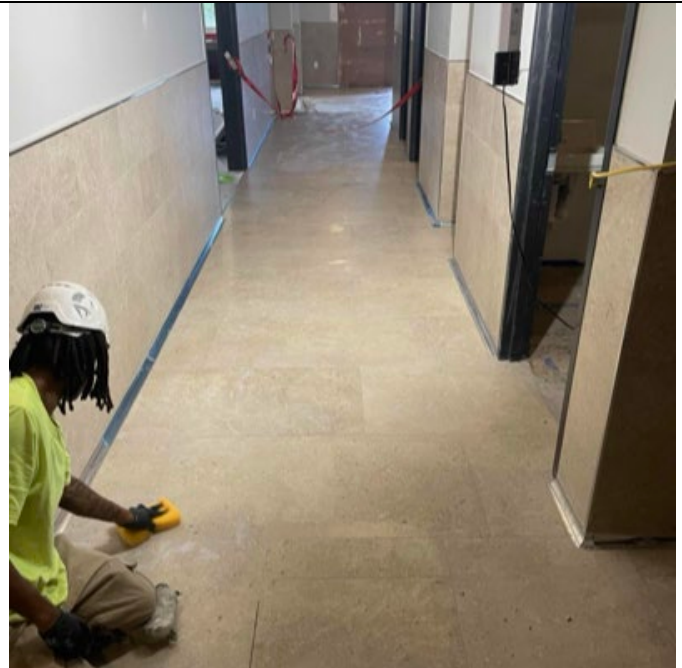


Millwork/ Counter Installation

Bridgewater Fire Headquarters



Carpet Installation in Admin



Tile Flooring at Corridor

Bridgewater Fire Headquarters

Three (3) Week Look Ahead

ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	2, '25	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M
1	SITE ACTIVITIES												
2	Prep for paving	15 days	Tue 10/14/25	Mon 11/3/25									
3	BUILDING ACTIVITIES												
4	Sprinkler work / finishes Apparatus Bay / training twoer	15 days	Tue 10/21/25	Mon 11/10/25									
5	HVAC 1st & 2nd floor and Apparatus Bays Finishes	15 days	Tue 10/14/25	Mon 11/3/25									
6	Electrical Apppartus / offices finishes	15 days	Tue 10/14/25	Mon 11/3/25									
7	Interior & exterior painting	15 days	Tue 10/14/25	Mon 11/3/25									
8	Millwork window sills/ cabinets	4 days	Tue 10/14/25	Fri 10/17/25									
9	Tiling 2nd floor Kitchen backsplash	3 days	Wed 10/15/25	Fri 10/17/25									
10	Plumbing finishes	14 days	Tue 10/14/25	Fri 10/31/25									
11	Locker install	14 days	Wed 10/15/25	Mon 11/3/25									
12	Install toilet accessories	5 days	Wed 10/15/25	Tue 10/21/25									
13	Exterior Glass door install	1 day	Fri 10/17/25	Fri 10/17/25									
14	Concrete polishing	15 days	Tue 10/14/25	Mon 11/3/25									
15	ACT Ceilings flooding of ceilings	3 days	Tue 10/14/25	Thu 10/16/25									
16	LVT flooring	4 days	Tue 10/14/25	Fri 10/17/25									
17	Gear Grid lockers	5 days	Wed 10/15/25	Tue 10/21/25									
18	Roofing misc flashing /gutter & downspouts	5 days	Tue 10/14/25	Mon 10/20/25									
19	Flagpole delivery	1 day	Fri 10/17/25	Fri 10/17/25									
20	Install doors / hardware	15 days	Tue 10/14/25	Mon 11/3/25									
21	Attic Insulation	5 days	Mon 10/13/25	Fri 10/17/25									
22	Dumpster Enclosure	2 days	Thu 10/16/25	Fri 10/17/25									
23	Landscaping	3 days	Wed 10/15/25	Fri 10/17/25									

Project Bridgewater Fire Station
Date: 10-13-25

Task

Split

Milestone

Summary

Project Summary

Inactive Task

Inactive Milestone

Manual Task

Duration-only

Manual Summary Rollup

Manual Summary

Start-only

Finish-only

Inactive Summary

External Tasks

External Milestone

Deadline

Progress

Manual Progress



Budget Summary

BRIDGEWATER FIRE HEADQUARTERS 1185 Pleasant St

Total Project Budget \$25,962,615

Expenditures Paid to Date 10.14.25 \$21,491,112 82.78%

USES OF CURRENT FUNDING Snapshot of Activities Spent to date

TYPE PAYMENT	VENDOR	AMOUNT
1-ENGINEERING/OPM	CHA CONSULTING	771,138.00
	JACUNSKI	1,136,326.90
	JACUNSKI-	19,668.88
	STRONGPOINT	
	BER	4,200.00
2-SURVEY/PERMITS/TESTS		123,944.24
3-ADMIN COSTS		123,994.05
4a-CONSTRUCTION	MOCC	19,271,019.85
4-MISC CONSTRUCTION		15,414.83
5-POLICE DETAILS		6,799.42
6-FURNISHINGS	FURNITURE	18,606.00





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 14, 2025

CONTACT: Justin Casanova-Davis,
Town Manager
508-697-0919
Mark Cappadona,
Colonial Power Group
508-485-5858 ext. 3

BRIDGEWATER ANNOUNCES ENERGY PROGRAM START DATE
Notifications mail in mid-October. Program will lower electricity costs and offer environmental benefits.

BRIDGEWATER, MA – The Town of Bridgewater is pleased to announce that it's launching its Community Choice Power Supply Program this winter to provide an energy program that is stable, affordable and incorporates additional renewable energy. Bridgewater signed a thirty-five month contract with Dynegy Energy Services.

Beginning with the December 2025 meter reads, Bridgewater's Program will offer three products with varying amounts of renewable energy content. "Municipal aggregation allows us to use the Town's collective buying power to secure a competitively priced, fixed electric supply, thereby providing energy for Bridgewater in a way that reflects what matters most to us: keeping it affordable, dependable, and sustainable. Our program is truly about letting consumers make the most cost-effective decision for themselves," said Justin Casanova-Davis, Bridgewater Town Manager.

Product	Renewable Energy Content	Program Rate (per kWh)	National Grid Rate* (per kWh)	% Savings	Est Monthly Savings
Standard (default)	Meets MA renewable energy requirements	\$0.14123	\$0.15484	9%	\$8
Optional Green	100% renewable. Includes 37% National Wind RECs	\$0.14223	\$0.15484	8%	\$8
Optional Green 10	10% MA Class I RECs above minimum state requirements	\$0.14504	\$0.15484	6%	\$6

*National Grid's Residential Basic Service meets MA renewable energy requirements and is in effect from August 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026. Assuming usage of 600-kilowatt hours of electricity per month, residents can expect to see an average savings for that period.

The Bridgewater Community Choice Power Supply Program is a municipal aggregation program which, according to Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c. 164, § 134), enables local government to combine the purchasing power of its residents and businesses so that it can provide them with an alternative electricity supply. Approximately 215 Massachusetts communities, to date, have chosen to develop community choice electricity programs to benefit their residents and small business owners.

Residents will not notice any change in their electricity service. The only discernible difference will be that Dynegy will be printed under “Supply Services” on National Grid’s monthly bills starting in January 2026. Residents and small business owners will continue to receive one bill from National Grid and to send payments to National Grid for processing. There will be no interruption in billing, power, or customer service.

No action is required by ratepayers to participate in this cost-saving program. The Program will be operated on an opt-out basis, meaning that all Bridgewater residential and business customers currently on National Grid’s Basic Service will be automatically enrolled into the Program unless they choose to opt-out.

There are no enrollment, early termination, or cancellation fees attached to the Bridgewater electricity program. Residents who choose to opt-out can also opt-in at a later date if they so choose at no cost. However, anyone switching from a contract with a third-party supplier may be subject to penalties or early termination fees charged by that supplier. Ratepayers should verify terms before switching.

Basic Service rates change twice a year or more, depending on rate class. As a result, the aggregation rate may not always be lower than the Basic Service rate. The goal of the aggregation is to deliver savings over the life of the program against National Grid’s Basic Service. However, future savings cannot be guaranteed.

Residents or business owners with a supplier block on their account must contact National Grid to request that the block be removed if they want to participate in Bridgewater’s electricity program.

National Grid has several programs to help income-eligible families and customers needing special assistance meet their energy needs. To learn more visit nationalgridus.com/MA-Home/Bill-Help/Payment-Assistance-Programs.

Information sessions to answer questions about Bridgewater’s Community Choice Power Supply Program will be held by the Town and representatives of Colonial Power Group as follows:

- Thursday, October 30, 2025 at 6:30 pm at Town Hall in the Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, MA
- Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 1 pm at the Cole-Yeaton Senior Center, 10 Wally Krueger Way, Bridgewater, MA

Residents may also visit colonialpowergroup.com/bridgewater or call (866) 485-5858 ext. 1 to learn more about Bridgewater’s Community Choice Power Supply Program, to opt-in or opt-out, or to change your product selection.



ABOUT COLONIAL POWER GROUP: *Based in Marlborough, Mass., Colonial Power Group is the leading aggregation-consulting firm in Massachusetts. Colonial Power has been working with local governments since 2002 in the design, implementation and management of municipal aggregation programs.*



MEMORANDUM

To: Justin Casanova-Davis, Town Manager
From: Senior Department Leader Staff
Date: October 3, 2025
Subject: Voluntary Reduction in Contractual Pay

Dear Justin,

As a team, we want to express our commitment to the Town of Bridgewater and its mission during this challenging period.

In solidarity with our colleagues and in recognition of the broader needs of the Town, we are voluntarily reducing our annual rate of cost-of-living adjustment down to 2% effectively through the remaining months of this fiscal year FY2026, knowing also that our personal contracts do not have steps built into them at all.

We take this step with a sense of pride and shared responsibility. We believe it is important to stand beside our coworkers and contribute in a meaningful way as the Town navigates this difficult time.

While it is not an easy decision, we are proud to set an example of collective support and to do our part in helping ensure the strength and resilience of the organization. Thank you for your leadership and continued dedication. We look forward to working together toward a stronger future.

Respectfully,

Chris Delmonte, Police Chief
John Schlitz, Fire Chief
Azu Etoniru, DPW Director
Robert Rulli, Community & Economic Development Director
Brad Dzierzak, Chief Information Officer
Laurie Guerrini, Finance Director



A Perfect Storm: Cities and Towns Face Historic Fiscal Pressures

An Analysis of Fiscal Pressures on Massachusetts Municipalities

OCTOBER 2025





Cities and towns across Massachusetts provide many of our most essential public services, including everything from clean water and safe streets to high-quality schools and dependable emergency services. These are the quality-of-life services that impact the lives of residents every day.

Offering these vital services requires substantial expertise, consistent leadership, and adequate funding. But funding has become an especially acute challenge for municipalities all across Massachusetts, caught as they are between inflation-driven increases in costs and binding constraints on their ability to raise new revenue.

Fixing what ails Massachusetts municipalities, and creating the conditions for municipalities to thrive, requires an honest assessment of the challenges, along with careful attention to the distinct needs and capacities of different locales.

Virtually all cities and towns in Massachusetts face budgetary challenges, but the challenges confronting rural towns can be quite different from what you find in gateway cities or Boston suburbs.

The Massachusetts Municipal Association partnered with the Center for State Policy Analysis at Tufts University to plumb the key factors shaping municipal budgets and to identify the most effective, targeted solutions.

We found that:



Rising costs and sluggish state aid are putting enormous pressure on local budgets across Massachusetts.



A prohibition against local sales and income taxes, combined with a 2.5 percent cap on property tax increases, prevent municipalities from raising adequate revenue on their own to respond to community needs.



Different municipalities are being affected in very different ways. For example, rural towns have been forced to curtail spending in key areas, like education. By contrast, gateway cities have boosted education spending, thanks to an infusion of targeted state aid, but are falling behind in virtually all other areas of local spending.

What follows is a fuller exploration of these core findings, including background on municipal finance in Massachusetts, and a detailed presentation of the different issues facing rural, urban, and suburban locales.

THE MANY RESTRICTIONS ON MUNICIPAL FINANCE

Massachusetts has a strict set of rules for how cities and towns fund fire departments, public schools, and other core services. Chief among them is that cities and towns don't get to set their own strategies for raising revenue.

Local income taxes are prohibited, and local sales taxes are restricted to very limited levies on hotels and meals. Motor vehicle excise taxes are a core part of local revenues, but they are subject to minimal growth and economic volatility.

This leaves the property tax as the overwhelming source of revenue for all Massachusetts municipalities. And even here there are strict limits put in place by a 1980 ballot question called Proposition 2½.¹ As the name suggests, the cardinal rule is that property tax revenue cannot increase by more than 2.5 percent from year to year (allowing for adjustments to reflect new and upgraded buildings).

There is a limited exception, where a city or town can raise property taxes by more than 2.5 percent in a given year to fund vital investments in things like new school buildings or to fill short-term budget shortfalls. But the relief is temporary and it requires a costly and uncertain public referendum.

A comparison with cities and towns in other states highlights this constraint. Between 2010 and 2022 (the most recent year available), real, inflation-adjusted spending on current operations in Massachusetts municipalities grew at just 0.6 percent per year, which is slower than the U.S. average for local spending growth. It's also vastly slower than the growth in real spending through the state budget, which has risen at roughly 2.8 percent per year.

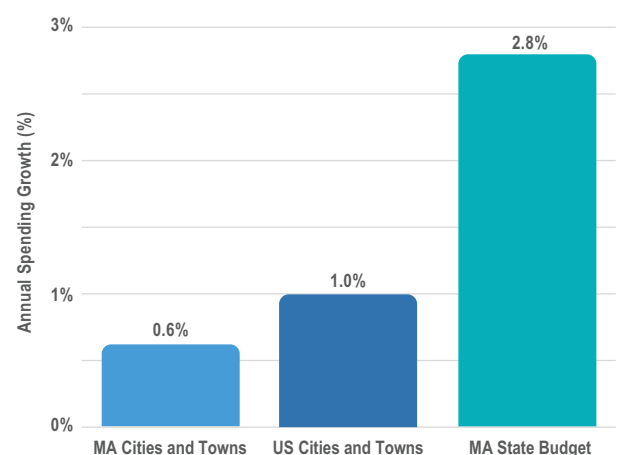
Proposition 2½ was intended to limit local spending, but real spending growth of 0.6 percent per year suggests the constraints may be too restrictive. This austere growth in spending has made it extremely difficult for cities and towns to attract staff, repair roads, and generally fund the essential services their residents demand.

Real, inflation-adjusted spending on municipal operations grew at just 0.6 percent per year — far slower than the U.S. average.

FIGURE 1

Massachusetts Municipalities Have Been Frugal

Annual change in total operating spending, 2010-2022



U.S. Census Bureau, MassBudget's Budget Browser, CSPA calculations

1. See Appendix for more on this law.

One way cities and towns have sustained core services is with help from state lawmakers. For decades, the state has proved a vital ally and essential backstop for municipal needs, offering several invaluable streams of support, including for public schools, roads, and other government services.

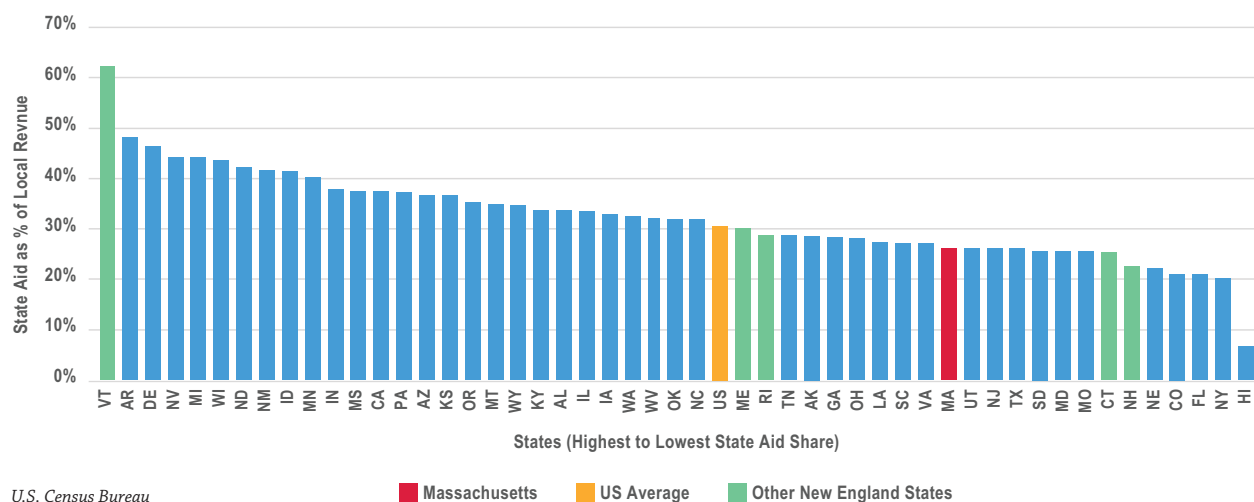
State aid has been a lifeline for cities and towns. But it's also true that, compared to other states, state aid in Massachusetts doesn't stand out as particularly generous.

Nationwide, cities and towns get about 31 percent of their revenue via state aid. Here in Massachusetts, it's 26 percent.

FIGURE 2

State Aid as Share of Local Revenue by State

Percentage of local government revenue from state government



Also, a lot of the state money comes with its own restrictions, making it hard to flexibly deploy. That leaves one substantial but falling source of unrestricted state support, which gets the guttural shorthand UGGA, for Unrestricted General Government Aid.

A Tightening Vice

Beyond the core structural challenges facing cities and towns in Massachusetts — state aid that doesn't quite compensate for revenue restrictions imposed by state law — there are two key reasons that municipal budgets face particular strains right now:

- **Inflation** — The 2.5 percent cap on annual property tax increases doesn't include any kind of adjustment for inflation. Obviously a 2.5 percent increase in tax receipts is a lot more manageable in a low-inflation environment, when costs are growing 1-2 percent per year, as they did through the 2010s. When costs grow over 3 percent per year, as they have since COVID, cities and towns are effectively obligated to cut real spending every year.
- **Disappearing Federal Aid** — In the immediate aftermath of the COVID pandemic, the federal government provided substantial direct assistance to cities and towns, but that support has now ended and was always intended to be temporary.

Technical Note

One important caveat, before we dive more deeply into the distinct issues facing rural, suburban, and urban municipalities. We are focused chiefly on operating budgets, meaning the flow of annual revenue and annual spending in cities and towns.

There are other important pieces of the municipal finance puzzle, including capital investments and long-term pension liabilities. And these are separate in some ways, with their own distinct timeframes, rules, and regulations.

But the operating budget is the hub, as all the other activities ultimately show up on this annual ledger — whether in the form of bonds that need to be repaid or as retirement benefits that come due.

TALE OF THREE CITIES

Every city and town strives to build a sound budget — a plan for funding vital public services while keeping taxes manageable for residents. But the impediments and trade-offs vary mightily from place to place.

The rural towns of western Massachusetts are very different from the Boston suburbs, and none of those could be mistaken for a gateway city on the south coast.

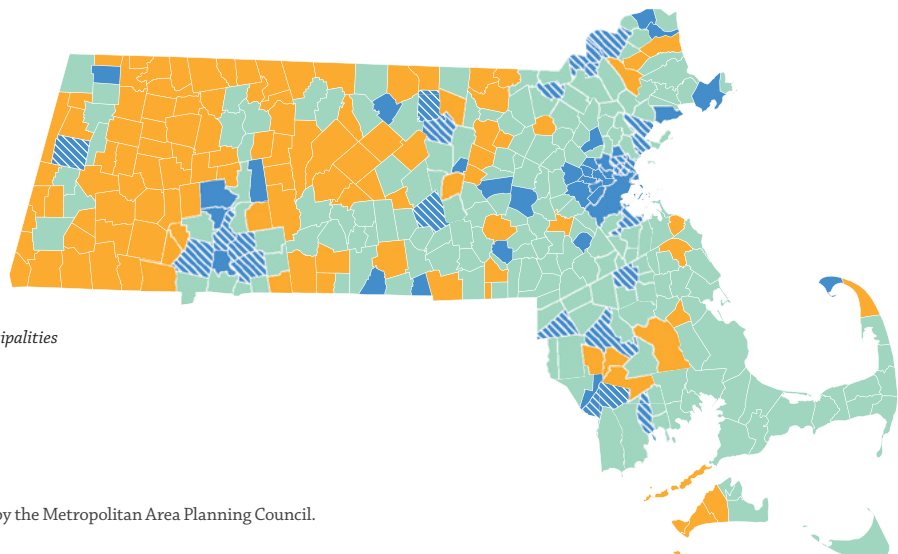
Accounting for these distinctions is essential to understanding the budgetary challenges faced by cities and towns. But having cut the data in dozens of different ways, we found that a huge amount of the underlying variation can be captured with a relatively simple collection of categories.²

- **Rural** towns, which includes a mix of more sparsely developed areas, primarily in western and central Massachusetts but also in other parts of the state.
- Mature **suburbs**, extending from greater Boston to the north shore and out to Cape Cod, as well as some areas in the central and western parts of the state.
- Inner core and **urban** areas, which combines Boston-adjacent communities with various cities around the state.
- **Gateway cities**³, which is actually a subset of the urban areas, but with some distinct characteristics.

FIGURE 3

MA Municipalities: Community Categories

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban
- Gateway (Urban subset)



Note: Gateway cities are a subset of urban municipalities

2. Adapted from a full taxonomy developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

3. See Appendix for definition.

To get a preliminary sense of the sometimes dramatic differences among these city and town types, consider Figure 4, which shows annual spending and revenue growth across a few key categories, from 2010 to 2024.

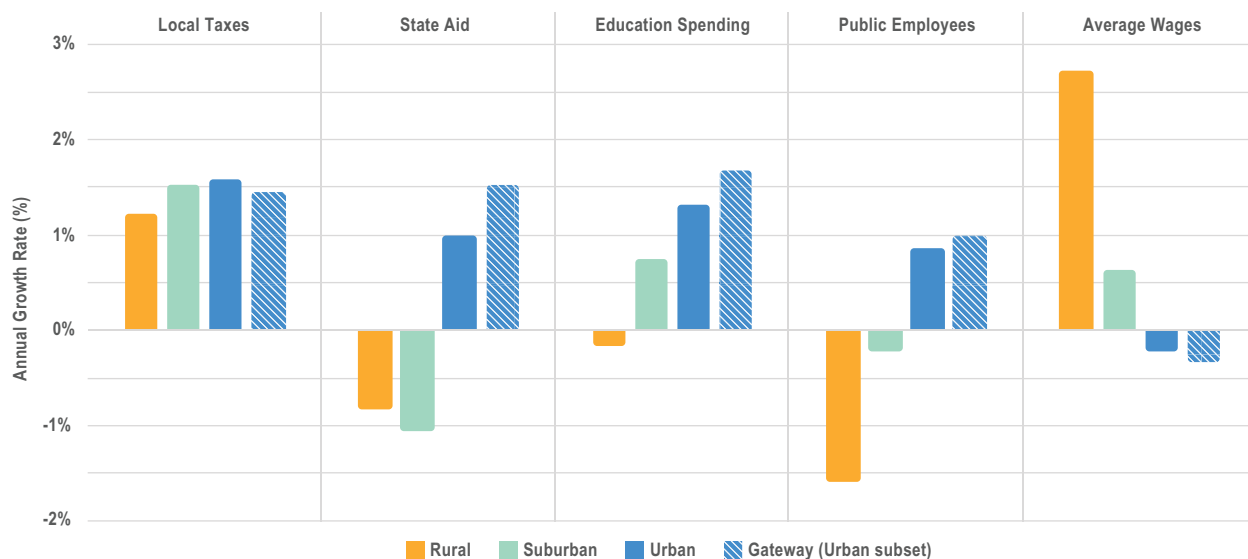
While tax collections have grown at roughly similar rates across all city and town types, huge divergences in state aid, education spending, and public employment highlight the vastly different budgetary pressures affecting rural towns, suburban enclaves, and gateway cities.

The dramatic, downward-pointing columns show rural and suburban towns have seen outright declines in real state aid, which has limited their ability to invest in education. And note how aggressively rural towns have had to raise salaries to keep their starkly shrinking public workforce from being truly hollowed out.

FIGURE 4

Budgetary Pressures Vary Dramatically Among City and Town Types

Annual growth rate, 2010–2024



Division of Local Services, CSPA calculations

There's a lot more to say about the distinct challenges facing municipalities of different sizes, and in different regions. But before we dig deeper, it's worth emphasizing the one key challenge that all Massachusetts municipalities seem to share, namely the decline in unrestricted state aid (UGGA).

A Common Need: UGGA

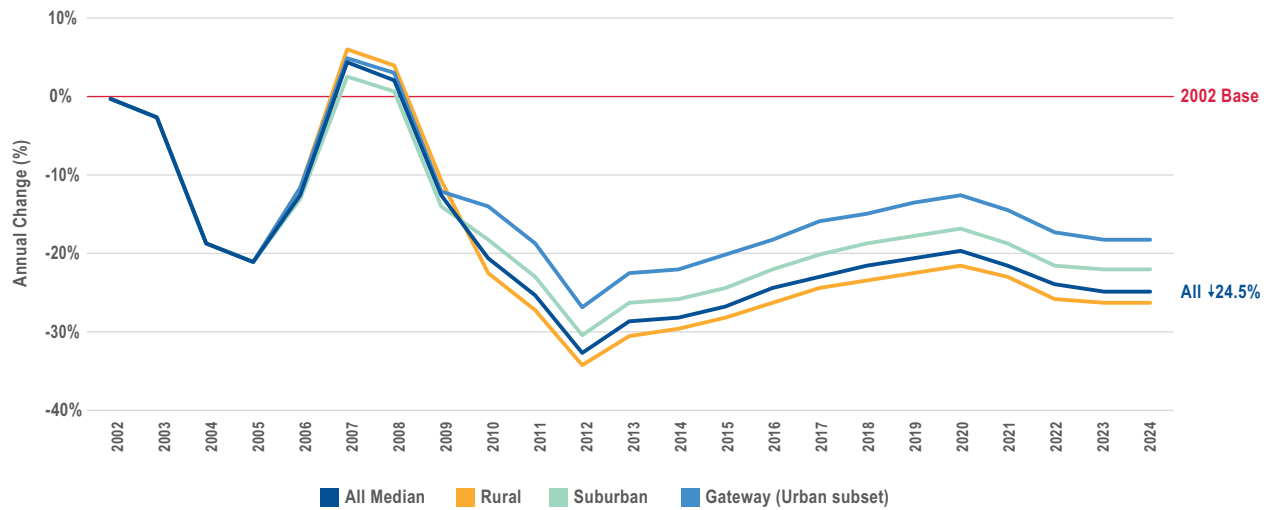
Different as they are, virtually all municipalities in Massachusetts have seen similar dropoffs in unrestricted state support. Since 2002, when adjusted for inflation, UGGA has fallen 25 percent overall, and essentially that same 20-30 percent for every type of city and town across the Commonwealth.

Since 2002, unrestricted state aid has fallen 25% overall — hitting every type of city and town across the Commonwealth.

FIGURE 5

Unrestricted Aid Has Fallen for Virtually All Municipalities

Percent change, 2002–2024



Division of Local Services; CSPA calculations

A decade after the true trough of the great recession, UGGA support has stalled at a relatively low level — despite many years of strong state revenue growth and healthy economic conditions.

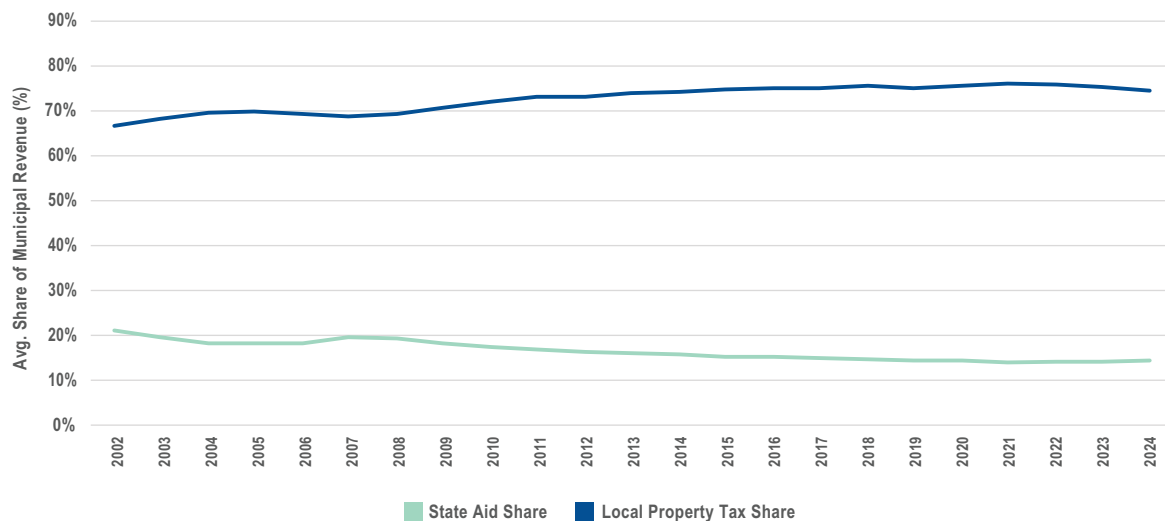
Losing UGGA dollars, in this way, is particularly difficult for stressed municipal budgets, because it's a rare stream of support that can be flexibly redirected to address evolving needs — whether that means extra road repairs after a pothole-cratering spring or additional tutoring for students struggling with pandemic learning loss.

Losing UGGA dollars hits hardest, because it's one of the few funds cities and towns can use flexibly.

FIGURE 6

State Aid vs. Property Taxes as a Portion of Municipal Budgets

Share of municipal revenue, 2002–2024



Division of Local Services

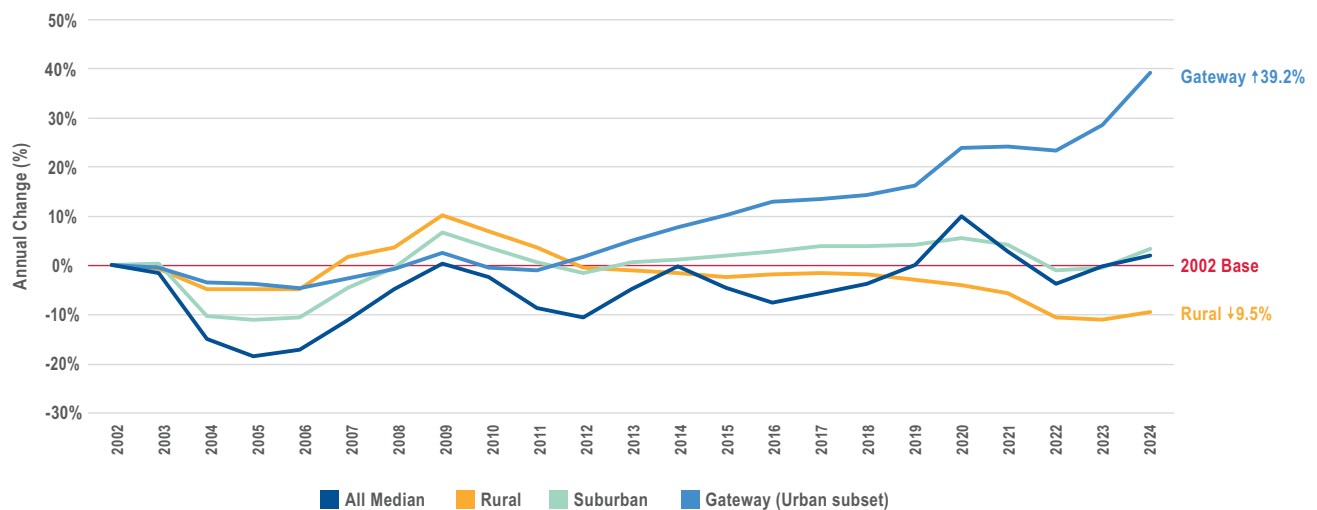
Percentages do not sum to 100% because other revenue sources (federal aid, fees, etc.) are excluded.

Unequal Education Aid

Overall aid for public education has been increasing in recent years, thanks in part to investments through the Student Opportunity Act. But it would be flatly inaccurate to assume that these infusions have compensated for declines in UGGA — or even less defensibly, that they have actually left cities and towns better off.

Increases in education aid have largely been limited to urban areas and gateway cities, as illustrated in Figure 4 (on p. 6). This is the continuation of a longstanding pattern in education funding through Chapter 70, the state’s primary program. Even before the recent acceleration, gateway cities had seen a large and relatively steady increase in education-related aid. By contrast, the average municipality has seen basically no change over this same timeframe, and rural towns have lost education support.

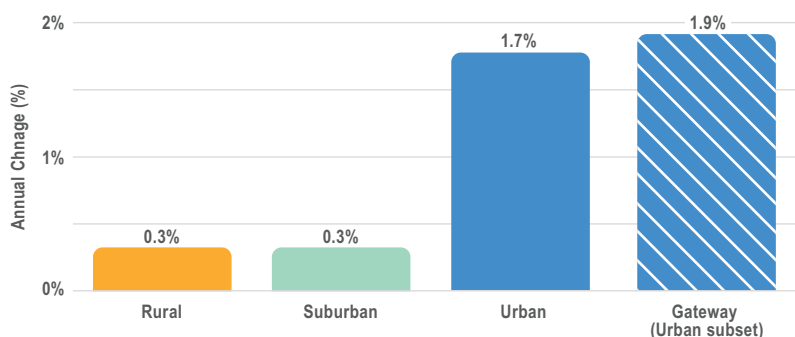
FIGURE 7
Education Aid Inconsistent Across City and Town Types
Percent change, 2002–2024



Division of Local Services; CSPA calculations

And while you might reasonably think that these gaps in education aid reflect population changes, with rural towns losing young people faster than cities, that doesn’t seem to be a key driver. Figure 8 shows persistent gaps even after adjusting for the size of the school-age population.

FIGURE 8
Aid Differentials Persist on Per-Student Basis
Annual change in Chapter 70 aid per child, 2010–2023



Division of Local Services, U.S. Census Bureau, CSPA calculations

The divergence in state aid has stark implications for local budgets.

For cities and towns, the implications of this divergence in state aid are stark, because school spending is the single biggest part of most municipal budgets.

Impediments to Raising Local Taxes

Remember that Massachusetts imposes strict limits on the ability of cities and towns to raise property taxes, with a general cap of 2.5 percent per year (plus some additional to account for new construction).

So when state aid declines, and public services are threatened, cities and towns can't simply respond by raising more local revenue.

Overrides are one potential response. They function as a kind of escape hatch from the 2.5 percent growth cap, allowing cities and towns to increase property taxes above otherwise allowed levels to meet clearly specified needs like school funding, park beautification or general operating support.

But while overrides can be powerful tools for municipalities facing hard budget choices, they are expensive, slow, short-lived, and logistically out of reach for the majority of Massachusetts municipalities.

Start with the expensive and slow part. Overrides can't be passed through the normal policy-making channels typically used by city councils or town meetings. They require explicit public approval via referendum, which means a lengthy public outreach campaign with real costs and uncertain results.

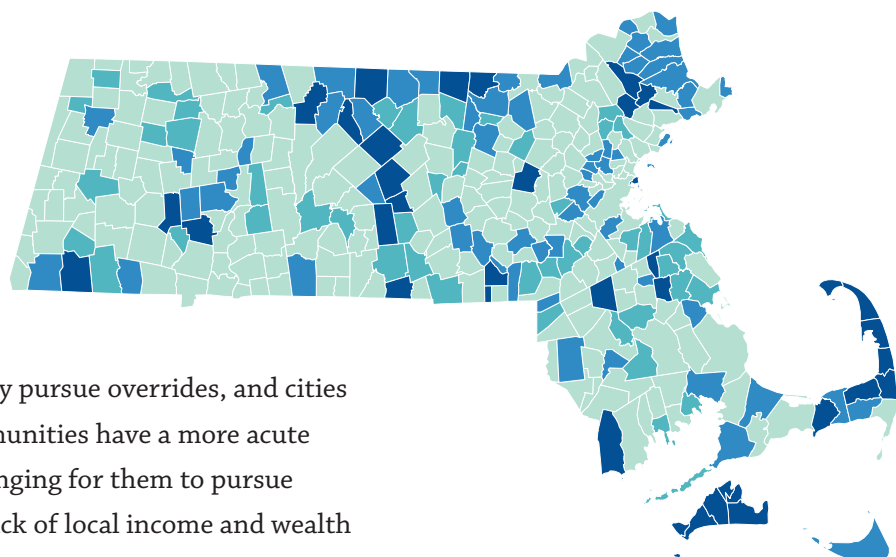
And each effort is a one-off — a short-term fix for what is often a deeper mismatch between the services residents desire and the city or town's restricted ability to raise sufficient revenue.

The bulk of cities and towns (nearly 200 out of 351) have pursued exactly zero overrides over the last 15 years, which shows how ill-suited the override process is for most municipalities.

Overwhelmingly, it's the suburban towns that have been able to pass overrides in recent years, helping them to maintain services when local needs exceed the state-imposed tax restrictions. But even among suburbs, overrides remain strangely clustered geographically, suggesting that suburbs need to build up a kind of local culture for overrides before they can be effectively used.

FIGURE 9

**MA Municipalities:
Total Override Initiatives
2010–2024**



Division of Local Services

Meanwhile, rural towns rarely pursue overrides, and cities almost never do. These communities have a more acute problem: not only is it challenging for them to pursue temporary overrides, but a lack of local income and wealth makes it difficult for them to raise local taxes at all.

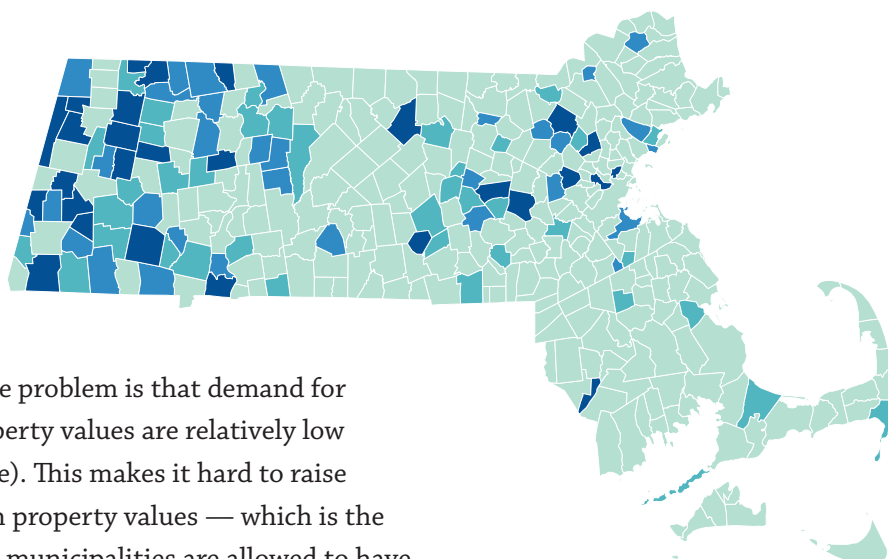
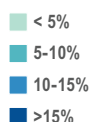
The tax cap set by Proposition 2½ is a ceiling, not a mandate. Cities and towns can always raise revenue by less than 2.5 percent if they find that more feasible. And this creates “excess levy capacity” that municipalities can make use of in future years (at least in theory).

Rural towns and gateway cities have far more of this excess levy capacity than their suburban neighbors. What this suggests is that they face local tax constraints even more severe than the already-strict 2.5 percent state rule. Figure 10 shows the nature of this constraint, which is actually quite different between rural towns and gateway cities.

FIGURE 10

**MA Municipalities:
Excess Levy Capacity**

Percentage of maximum, 2024



Division of Local Services

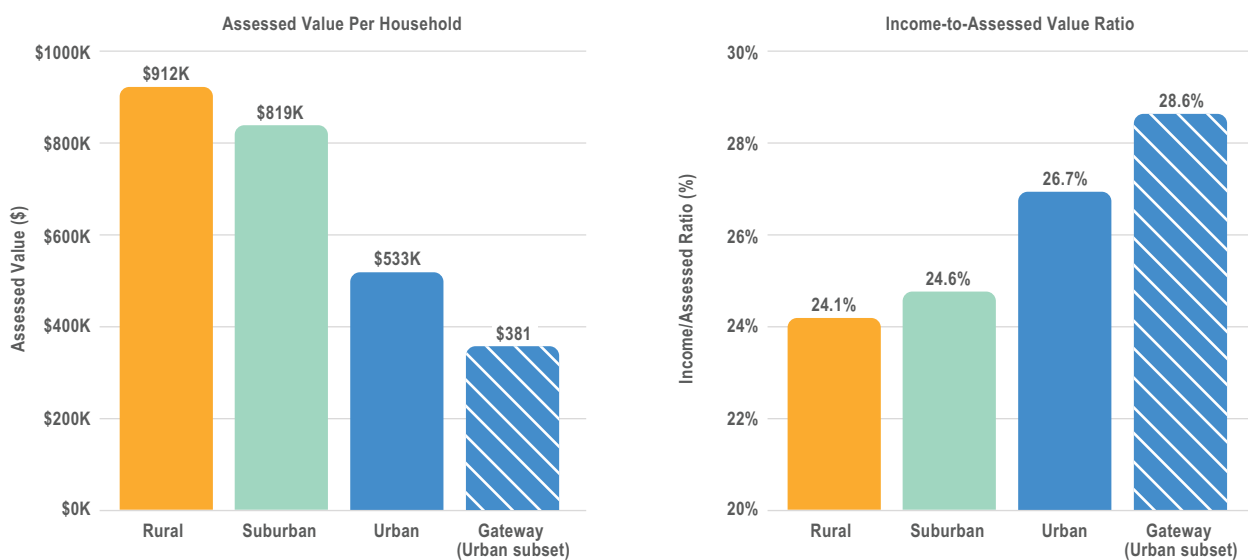
Among gateway cities, the core problem is that demand for real estate is limited, and property values are relatively low (compared to the state average). This makes it hard to raise money through a direct tax on property values — which is the only major tax Massachusetts municipalities are allowed to have.

Rural towns face a different issue. Property values in these areas are actually strong enough to make property taxes a reliable source of revenue. But rural towns tend to have older (and fewer) residents and more retirees, who don’t collect enough annual income to cover typical property tax bills. The result, again, is that rural towns struggle to raise enough local revenue to fund the kinds of services their residents want.

FIGURE 11

Rural Towns and Gateway Cities Lack Tax Capacity

Rural towns lack income; gateway cities lack land value



Division of Local Services, Census Bureau, CSPA calculations

SUMMING UP THE ISSUES

Put this all together and the true challenge of municipal finance becomes clear.

1. State aid in Massachusetts is less generous than the U.S. average.
2. Flexible state aid (through UGGA) has fallen for all cities and towns.
3. Given the 2.5 percent cap on local tax increases, the best tool for suburban towns is often an expensive and temporary override.
4. Rural towns and gateway cities lack the local income and wealth to respond at all.
5. While rising education aid has enabled substantial new investments across urban Massachusetts, it hasn't provided the same level of benefits to rural and suburban towns.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Unless otherwise noted, details about municipal spending and revenue are drawn from the Massachusetts Division of Local Services Gateway. This includes information about local spending, taxation, state aid, overrides, assessed property values, Chapter 70 support, and more. Dollar values are adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index, accessed through the St. Louis Federal Reserve's Fred platform and pegged to fiscal 2024. Results reflect unweighted (simple) averages across cities and towns, where each city and town is treated as an equal fiscal unit.

The division of municipalities into rural, suburban, and urban clusters is based on a taxonomy developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, with "country suburbs" shifted into the rural category.

Spending comparisons across U.S. states rely on data from the 2010 and 2022 Census of State and Local Government Finance, issued by the U.S. Census Bureau. During our research window, 2022 was the most recent available release. Growth of state budgetary spending reflects data from the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center's Budget Browser.

The American Community Survey provided local population numbers for our comparison of per capita education spending across cities and towns. It was also the source of data for total household income used to calculate the ratio of income to assessed value.

APPENDIX

Gateway Cities

Gateway cities are midsize urban centers that anchor regional economies and once served as centers of industry. They have been working to reinvent themselves, often in the face of economic and social challenges.

State law (Ch. 23A, Sec. 3A) defines a gateway city as a municipality with:

- Population greater than 35,000 and less than 250,000
- Median household income below the state average
- Rate of educational attainment of a bachelor's degree or above that is below the state average

There are 26 gateway cities in Massachusetts: Attleboro, Barnstable, Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Methuen, New Bedford, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Westfield, Worcester.

Proposition 2½

Approved by Massachusetts voters in 1980, Proposition 2½ limits the amount of revenue a city or town may raise, or levy, from local property taxes each year to fund municipal operations.

The law (M.G.L. Ch. 59, Sec. 21C) places two constraints on the local levy:

1. A community cannot levy more than 2.5% of the total full cash value of all taxable property in the community (called the levy ceiling).
2. A community's allowable levy for a fiscal year (called the levy limit) cannot increase by more than 2.5% of the maximum allowable limit for the prior year, plus a factor for new growth (property added to the tax rolls). The 2.5% increase limitation applies to the levy limit, and not to individual property tax bills.

Proposition 2½ allows two types of voter-approved increases in taxing authority:

Override: An override increases the amount of property tax revenue a community may raise in the year specified and in future years. An override must be approved as a ballot question by a majority of voters in a municipal election. The override must be for a set dollar amount, and the money must be spent toward the identified purposes. An override is used to provide funding for municipal expenses likely to recur or continue into the future, such as annual operating and fixed costs.

Exclusion: An exclusion increases the amount of property tax revenue a community may raise for a limited or temporary period of time in order to fund specific projects. It does not increase the community's levy limit nor become part of the base for calculating future years' levy limits. The exclusion may be used to raise additional funds only for capital purposes, such as public buildings, public works projects, land and equipment acquisitions.

It's also worth noting that state law requires municipal budgets to be balanced each year.



The Voice of Massachusetts Cities and Towns

Representing 351 municipalities and the local officials who lead them

The MMA is the nonprofit, nonpartisan trade association for the municipal officials of Massachusetts. As policy experts, advocates, and connectors, we are collaborative and responsive — bringing local leaders together to:

- Articulate a clear and united municipal message
- Develop and advance shared policy goals
- Share information and best practices
- Work collectively to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal service delivery



Massachusetts
Municipal
Association

3 Center Plaza, Suite 610
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
617.426.7272 | www.mma.org



Bridgewater Town Council

Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor
Mark Linde, Councilor
Date Introduced: 8/12/2025
First Reading: 8/12/2025
Second Reading: 10/21/2025
Amendments Adopted:
Third Reading:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-002: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter: Article IV, Section 4-1 Town Manager Term of Office

ORDERED that pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 43B; the Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in Town Council assembled vote to amend the Bridgewater Town Charter, Article IV, Section 4-1 as follows:

Replace existing language with the following:

The Town Manager shall be appointed by the Town Council for a term not to exceed three (3) years, which may be renewed for additional terms of up to three (3) years each upon a majority vote of the full Town Council, subject to the procedures for appointment and removal outlined in this Article.

Said Amendment shall only become effective and is contingent upon approval by the Town Council, the State Legislature and the voters of the Town of Bridgewater.

Explanation:

As proposed by the 2021 Charter Review Committee, the purpose of this ordinance is to amend Article IV, Section 4-1 of the Bridgewater Town Charter to establish a maximum three-year term for the Town Manager, renewable by majority vote of the Town Council, to ensure periodic performance review while maintaining administrative stability, in compliance with M.G.L. c. 43B and the Charter (Article I, Section 1-4). Pursuant to Article II, Section 2-9, this ordinance shall be published in full in at least one newspaper of general circulation within the Town of Bridgewater at least ten (10) days before its final passage by the Town Council, or, if exceeding eight octavo pages, in a municipal bulletin or printed pamphlet. The ordinance shall take effect upon approval by the Town Council, the Massachusetts State Legislature, and a majority of Bridgewater voters at a regular or special town election, per Article II, Section 2-7(a) and Article I, Section 1-4.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

REFER TO ADVERTISING

VOICE VOTE - REQUIRES MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
Town Council	8/12/25: Referred to Rules and Procedures
Rules and Procedures	9/9/25: Voted 3-0 to recommend.

Attachments: None

REFER TO ADVERTISING
VOICE VOTE - REQUIRES MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING



Bridgewater Town Council

Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor
Date Introduced: 8/12/2025
First Reading: 8/12/2025
Second Reading: 10/21/2025
Amendments Adopted:
Third Reading:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-003: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter Article VIII, Section 8-2 Citizen Referendum Petition Timeframe

ORDERED that pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 43B; the Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in Town Council assembled vote to amend the Bridgewater Town Charter, Article VIII, Section 8-2 as follows:

Replace the existing language regarding the timeframe for submitting referendum petitions with the following:

Citizen Referendum Procedures; Referendum Petition; Effect on Final Passage

If within **30 days** after the final passage of a measure, a petition signed by voters equal in number to at least 5 per cent of the total number of voters and addressed to the town council, protesting against the measure or any part thereof taking effect, is filed with the elected town clerk, the same shall thereupon and thereby be suspended from taking effect and the town council, as the case may be, shall immediately reconsider the measure or part thereof and if such measure or part thereof is not entirely rescinded, the town council shall submit the same, to a vote of the voters either at the next regular town election or at a special election which may, in its discretion, be called for the purpose and the measure or part thereof shall forthwith become null and void unless a majority of the voters voting on the same at the election vote in favor thereof.

Said Amendment shall only become effective and is contingent upon approval by the Town Council, the State Legislature and the voters of the Town of Bridgewater.

Explanation:

As proposed by the 2021 Charter Review Committee, the purpose of this ordinance is to amend Article VIII, Section 8-2 of the Bridgewater Town Charter to extend the timeframe for submitting citizen referendum petitions from 10 days to 30 days after the final passage of a measure, enhancing voter participation and access to the referendum process while maintaining compliance with the Charter and M.G.L. c. 43B. This change provides citizens with additional time to organize and gather signatures for petitions, promoting greater engagement in town governance. The ordinance requires approval by the Town Council, the

REFER TO ADVERTISING

VOICE VOTE - REQUIRES MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING

Massachusetts State Legislature, and the voters of Bridgewater, as mandated by Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
• Town Council	• 8/12/25: Referred to Rules and Procedures
• Rules and Procedures	• 9/9/25: Voted 3-0 to recommend.
•	•

Attachments: None

REFER TO ADVERTISING
VOICE VOTE - REQUIRES MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING



Bridgewater Town Council

Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor
Date Introduced: 8/12/2025
First Reading: 8/12/2025
Second Reading: 10/21/2025
Amendments Adopted:
Third Reading:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004: Amendment to Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 - Business Ethics and Conduct

ORDERED that pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 268A; the Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in Town Council assembled vote to amend the Bridgewater General Ordinances, Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1, Business Ethics and Conduct as follows:

Replace the existing language for Required Reporters with the following:

Pursuant to the provisions of Ordinance #D-FY26-004 (effective date:TBD) the Required Reporters are listed as the following:

A. Heads of the following departments:

- Board of Assessors (Principal Assessor)
- Fire and EMS (Fire Chief)
- Public Works (Director, including Roadways/Highway)
- Community and Economic Development (Director, including Building and Zoning Official/Inspector of Buildings)
- Plumbing and Gas Inspector
- Police (Police Chief)
- Sealer of Weights and Measures
- Finance (Director/Town Accountant, including Treasurer/Collector)
- Wiring Inspector/Assistant Inspector
- Human Resources (Director)
- Informational Technologies (Director)
- Hearings Officer
- Elder Affairs (Director)

REFER TO ADVERTISING

VOICE VOTE - REQUIRES MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING

- Library (Director)
- Veterans' (Director/Veterans' Agent)
- Parks and Recreation (Director)

B. The following Town officials and Town employees:

- Conservation Agent
- Health Agent and Assistant Health Agent
- Town Council (All Members)
- Town Counsel and Associate Town Counsel
- Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager

C. All members of the following Boards, Committees, or Commissions:

- Affordable Housing Trust
- Board of Assessors
- Community Preservation Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Financial Committee
- Board of Health
- Historic District Commission
- Housing Authority
- Planning Board
- Water and Sewer Board
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Explanation:

The purpose of this ordinance is to amend the Business Ethics and Conduct section of Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 of the Bridgewater General Ordinances, superseding Ordinance #D-2013-002 (effective November 15, 2013), to update the list of required reporters for the Statement of Financial Interest to promote transparency and accountability in compliance with the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter (Article I, Section 1-8) and M.G.L. c. 268A. It updates outdated references (e.g., changing "Roadways (Highway)" to "Public Works"), includes new departments formed after 2013, and expands the list to include members of boards, committees, and commissions with moderate to high risk of conflicts (e.g., those with regulatory, permitting, or fiscal authority, per M.G.L. c. 268A, Sections 19-23).

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
• Town Council	• 8/12/25: Referred to Rules and Procedures

REFER TO ADVERTISING

VOICE VOTE - REQUIRES MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING

• Rules and Procedures	• 9/9/25: Voted 3-0 to recommend with amendments.
•	•

Attachments: 1. Proposed Substitutue Ordinance 004

Proposed Ordinance

Sponsor Councilor Sean Kennedy

AMENDMENT TO BRIDGEWATER GENERAL ORDINANCES: Chapter 3 Personnel, Article II Personnel Code, Section 1 – Business Ethics and Conduct

ORDERED that pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 268A; the Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in Town Council assembled vote to amend the Bridgewater General Ordinances, Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1, Business Ethics and Conduct as follows:

Replace the existing language with the following:

The continued success of the Town is dependent upon our citizens' trust, and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. The Town will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its department heads, supervisors, and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws, and to avoid any illegal or unethical conduct.

In order to comply with the 2009 Ethics Reform Act, all public employees are required to complete an ethics training program every two years. New employees must complete the training within 30 days of becoming a public employee and every two years thereafter. All public employees must also acknowledge receipt of the Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law within 30 days of hire and annually thereafter, as required by the State Ethics Commission. For purposes of this section, "acknowledge receipt" means the employee shall complete the electronic acknowledgment through the State Ethics Commission's online portal. Records of such acknowledgments are retained at the state level, and the Town Clerk may request verification as needed.

Ethics Training website – <https://massethicstraining.skillburst.com>

In accordance with Section 9-1 of the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter, certain exempt employees are required to complete a Statement of Financial Interest. The statement is a supplement to the State Conflict of Interest Law and prohibits Town employees from making, or participating in making, any decision on any issue in which they have an economic interest, unless they comply with the State Ethics Commission's advice or rulings under the Conflict of Interest Law, G.L. c. 268A.

Required reporting employees must complete and submit the statement within seven (7) days of employment, appointment, transfer, or promotion. Any employee who does not comply with the terms of this Ordinance shall be subject to appropriate discipline including suspension or termination, consistent with the requirements of the state civil

service law and the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter, as well as to civil or criminal prosecution under any other applicable state laws.

Pursuant to the provisions of Ordinance #D-FY26-004 (effective date:) the Required Reporters are listed as the following:

A. Heads of the following departments:

- Board of Assessors (Principal Assessor)
- Fire and EMS (Fire Chief)
- Public Works (Director, including Roadways/Highway)
- Community and Economic Development (Director, including Building and Zoning Official/Inspector of Buildings)
- Plumbing and Gas Inspector
- Police (Police Chief)
- Sealer of Weights and Measures
- Finance (Director/Town Accountant, including Treasurer/Collector)
- Wiring Inspector/Assistant Inspector
- Human Resources (Director)
- Informational Technologies (Director)
- Hearings Officer
- Elder Affairs (Director)
- Library (Director)
- Veterans' (Director/Veterans' Agent)
- Parks and Recreation (Director)

B. The following Town officials and Town employees:

- Conservation Agent
- Health Agent and Assistant Health Agent
- Town Council (All Members)

- Town Counsel and Associate Town Counsel
- Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager

C. All members of the following Boards, Committees, or Commissions:

- Affordable Housing Trust
- Board of Assessors
- Community Preservation Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Financial Committee
- Board of Health
- Historic District Commission
- Housing Authority
- Planning Board
- Water and Sewer Board
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Good Judgment. In general, the use of good judgment, grounded in high ethical principles, shall guide employees with respect to acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, employees are expected to discuss the matter openly with their immediate supervisor, department head, and, if necessary, with Human Resources for advice.

Explanation:

The purpose of this ordinance is to amend and restate the *Business Ethics and Conduct* section of Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 of the Bridgewater General Ordinances, superseding Ordinance #D-2013-002 (effective November 15, 2013). The amendments modernize ethics compliance by updating the training requirements to reflect the State Ethics Commission’s online portal, eliminating outdated paper filing procedures, and adding the statutory annual acknowledgment requirement under M.G.L. c. 268A §28. The ordinance further expands the list of required reporters for Statements of Financial Interest to include additional department heads, officials, and members of boards, committees, and commissions whose responsibilities carry heightened risk of conflicts of interest. Outdated department names are corrected (e.g., “Roadways

(Highway)” to “Public Works”), and new departments and committees created since 2013 are included. Collectively, these updates promote transparency, strengthen accountability, and ensure that the Town’s ordinances remain fully aligned with the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter (Article IX, Section 9-1) and the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law.

Ordinance Comparison – Business Ethics and Conduct

1. Current Ordinance – Ordinance #D-2013-002 (Effective November 15, 2013; Codified January 2016)

- Established Business Ethics and Conduct section under Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1.
 - Stated that the Town’s success depends on citizen trust and required compliance with laws, avoiding illegal or unethical conduct.
 - Added biennial ethics training requirement under the 2009 Ethics Reform Act.
 - Required new employees to complete training within 30 days.
 - Mandated that employees print and submit a certificate to HR and file another copy with the Town Clerk.
 - Provided the then-current training website: www.muniprogram.state.ma.us.
 - Required Statement of Financial Interest under Charter Section 9-1, with a 7-day filing deadline.
 - Listed Required Reporters: included department heads such as Assessors, Fire, Roadways, Police, Treasurer/Collector, Finance Director, Wiring Inspector, etc., along with certain officials (Council, Counsel, Town Manager, Veterans Agent) and limited boards.
 - Included a “Good Judgment” clause encouraging employees to use high ethical principles and consult supervisors/HR if unsure.
-

2. Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004 (First Draft Amendment)

- Replaced the existing Required Reporters section only.
- Updated the list of Required Reporters to reflect reorganized departments and additional positions, including Public Works, IT, Elder Affairs, Library, Parks & Recreation, Community & Economic Development, Hearings Officer, and expanded boards/committees such as Affordable Housing Trust, CPC, Planning Board, Finance Committee, and ZBA.
- Explanation emphasized promoting transparency and accountability, updating outdated references, and expanding the list to include boards and commissions with regulatory or fiscal authority.

- Focus was limited to Required Reporters; training, acknowledgment, and other provisions were not revised.
-

3. Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004 (Final Draft Amendment)

- Rewrites the entire Business Ethics and Conduct section, not just the Required Reporters.
- Retains core ethical statement on citizen trust and compliance.
- Ethics Training:
 - Biennial training still required.
 - New employees must complete training within 30 days.
 - Adds statutory annual acknowledgment of the Conflict of Interest Law.
 - Defines acknowledgment as completion through the State Ethics Commission's online portal.
 - Records maintained at the state level; Clerk may request verification.
 - Updates training website to <https://massethicstraining.skillburst.com>.
- Statement of Financial Interest:
 - Still required under Charter Section 9-1, with a 7-day filing deadline.
 - Clarifies statutory authority and updates language to be gender-neutral.
- Required Reporters:
 - Same expansion and modernization as the first draft amendment.
 - Includes department heads, key officials, and members of boards/committees with regulatory or fiscal authority.
- Good Judgment:
 - Retains the guidance clause on using high ethical principles and consulting supervisors/HR if unsure, placed as a concluding section.
- Explanation:
 - Supersedes Ordinance #D-2013-002.

- Clarifies modernization of training and acknowledgment.
 - Eliminates outdated filing procedures.
 - Expands Required Reporters list.
 - Ensures compliance with Charter Article IX, Section 9-1 and M.G.L. c. 268A.
-

Summary of Evolution

- Ordinance #D-2013-002 (2013/2016): Established ethics standards, added training with paper filing, required Statement of Financial Interest, provided initial Required Reporters list, included Good Judgment clause.
- Proposed D-FY26-004 (First Draft Amendment): Focused solely on updating and expanding Required Reporters list; other provisions unchanged.
- Proposed D-FY26-004 (Final Draft Amendment): Comprehensive rewrite. Modernizes ethics training and acknowledgment, removes outdated filing, updates training website, expands Required Reporters, clarifies financial disclosure, and retains Good Judgment clause.