

# THE TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD, CT TOWN MANAGER RECRUITMENT

## *Invitation to Qualified Candidates*

Bloomfield, CT (20,500 pop.) The Town of Bloomfield seeks a proactive, seasoned community leader to serve as its new Town Manager. The residents of Bloomfield take great pride in being a welcoming majority-minority community that respects and honors its diversity. This charming small Town was designated as an All American City in 1970 and in 2020 Reader's Digest honored Bloomfield as one of the Nicest Places in America.



The Town is financially stable, boasts substantial reserves, has an AA+ bond rating and is recognized as a desirable community for smart growth business development with a strong residential base for commuters to the metropolitan Hartford labor markets. This beautiful community is an inner ring suburb of Hartford, which was originally settled in 1640 and incorporated as the Town of Bloomfield in 1835. The community has a rich history and a strong commitment to preserving its heritage and boasts a quality of life that makes this a destination community for any public manager. In addition, Bloomfield has numerous natural and recreational amenities and offers easy access to I-91 and I-84.

Bloomfield is a full-service municipality led by a nine member Town Council and a Town Manager with an established Council-Manager form of government. The local government provides outstanding public services and excellent schools. The Manager oversees an operating budget for FY 21 of \$ 94.7M (School and Town) with 152 full-time and 58 part-time Town employees, not including Schools.

The ideal candidate will have a Master's in Public Administration or related field and a minimum of eight years of experience in public administration, with a minimum of five years in a senior management capacity or an equivalent combination of education and relevant experience. Preference will be to Town Managers/Administrators, Assistant Town Managers and Department Heads with large municipal operations and knowledge of all Town functions. Experience in labor relations is required. The Town of Bloomfield's Charter requires the Manager to reside in Bloomfield.

The Town has established a total compensation range of \$160,000 to \$180,000 with a competitive benefits package commensurate with qualifications and experience. **The Town is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse workforce and women, minorities and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply.** For additional information contact Alan Gould, President, Municipal Resources Inc., at 603-279-0352 x320.

Cover letter and resume in confidence as PDF attachment to: [recruitment@mrigov.com](mailto:recruitment@mrigov.com)

**DEADLINE: 9 AM EST; Monday, April 12, 2021.**

# TOWN MANAGER – BLOOMFIELD, CT

## ***THE IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE***

The ***Ideal*** Candidate for the position of Bloomfield Town Manager must have the following demonstrated professional strengths and personal characteristics:

A graduate degree in public administration or similarly related field is required. Related fields may include Public Finance, Human Resources, and Executive Director/President of a not-for-profit organization servicing multi-cultural populations or a senior administrator at an institution of higher learning.

At least eight years of demonstrated successful and effective senior leadership in public management or similar relevant, transferable experience in a large organization. The Town will consider a combination of education and effective professional experience in their review of candidates.

A manager who will embrace the evolving culture of the community and immerse himself/herself in Bloomfield by being visible and participatory in community activities. Be open and transparent in all interactions with the community and its leadership. Someone who understands the roles and responsibilities of the Council members and the Manager in a strong and established Council-Manager form of government.

A career record of thoughtful financial management and strategic capital planning with a proven ability to work within an already established and successful budget process.

A disciplined, collaborative and calm leader who can effectively lead by example a diverse, multicultural community who may present conflicting viewpoints on significant issues. The next Manager must be able to engage and listen to varying points of view in all deliberative exercises and empower residents to participate in the local governing process.

Ability to be intellectually challenged in solving complex issues. Should identify bold and innovative initiatives based upon acknowledged best practices for the Council's consideration and be determined to build consensus with disparate community groups.

Strong and persuasive public speaking and presentation skills. The next Manager must understand and utilize the latest social media platforms and technology to enhance communication with elected and appointed officials, Town departments and residents.

Extensive knowledge and experience in negotiations within a statutory collective bargaining environment while also maintaining the ability to establish respectful and harmonious relationships with union and non-union leadership.

Ability to listen and support, with in-house resources, the various constituencies within the local government organization particularly the many volunteer boards and committee members who help shape the direction of Bloomfield and play an important role in delivering outstanding customer service and community pride in the Town.

Committed to continuous improvement and excellence in public services with a strong emphasis in the utilization of evolving Information Technology (IT) innovations to improve communications and build added efficiencies in the service delivery systems of the community. (continued)

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Must demonstrate an ability to build a team and support staff while also holding Departments accountable in their operations and keeping all members of the team focused on the vision established by the Council for Bloomfield. A leader who will build trust and confidence between the Council, Administration, staff and the community at large.

The next Manager needs to understand the importance of sustainability in terms of economic development, energy, open space protection and environmental issues in helping to maintain a high quality of life in Bloomfield.

Proven record of nurturing and embracing an established positive culture while promoting civility and professional decorum in all public discourse.

Demonstrated ability to provide unbiased guidance to all elected officials and those appointed to a broad range of committees and commissions, as well as to an engaged and diverse citizenry.

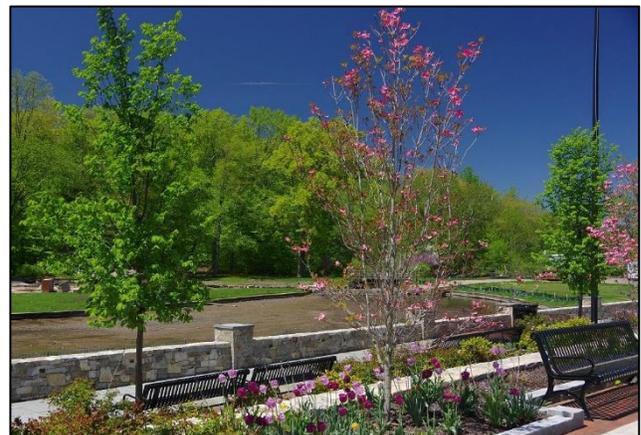
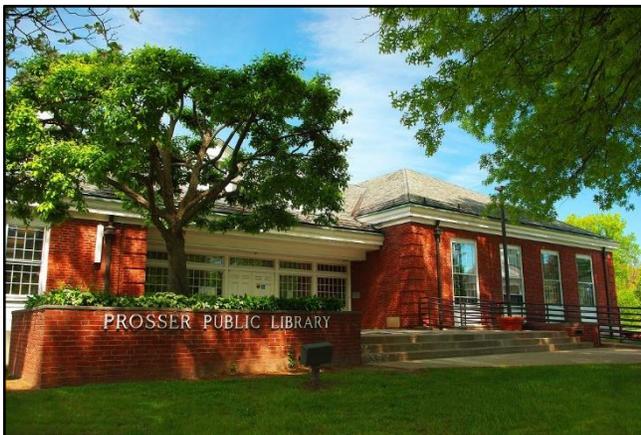
Willingness to manage Town affairs in an open, diplomatic and transparent manner.

Ability to lead, organize, inspire and manage people.

A proven skill set that allows the manager to multi-task a myriad of issues while remaining focused on Council priorities.

Skills in working collaboratively, cooperatively and building consensus including a strong emphasis on maintaining a positive, productive relationship between the school and municipal administrations.

Demonstrated career long foundation of impeccable professional and personal ethical standards, integrity, respect, honesty and accountability.



Courtesy Dennis Hubbs

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## ABOUT BLOOMFIELD

The Town of Bloomfield is located in Hartford County in north central Connecticut, just north of Hartford, 95 miles from Boston and 105 miles from New York City. Today it has a racially and ethnically diverse population of approximately 20,500 residents and 8,800 households. Its land area is approximately 26.9 square miles. The Town is an abutting suburb of Hartford with an attractive mix of neighborhoods, an active commercial Town Center, and blend of industrial and business parks. Bloomfield also has an agricultural sector with working farms.



Courtesy Dennis Hubbs

The daytime work population is estimated to be 10,000. Because of its location near I-91 and I-84, it's home to a number of well-known companies: Cigna Insurance Corp; Kaman Aerospace Corp.; World Class Distributors (Trader Joe's); Home Goods Distribution Center (TJX, Cos) and Jacob Vehicle Systems. There are several health care companies that provide additional employment opportunities. As well as being a desirable place to live, raise a family and work, Bloomfield has a number of unique features which attract families and retain seniors. The Bloomfield Public Schools are pre-K to 12 and ranked among the best in the area. There are six schools: an early childhood magnet school; two elementary schools; an intermediate school; a middle school; and the high school. The school population is approximately 2,220 students. The Town has a new Human Services Center with a full array of programming for youths, families and seniors, an attractive and busy library in the Town Center and a branch library, a recently renovated DPW Garage, as well as a municipal golf course. Running through the Town is a section of the East Coast Greenway, a 3,000 mile bike route which goes from Florida to Maine. Bloomfield is home to several recreational areas: Talcott Mountain State Park; Barbers Pond State Park; Bidwell Park; Penwood State Park; Auer Farm Scenic Preserve; and Filley Park, called the "icon of Bloomfield's identity" as well as many Town parks and playgrounds.



As stated previously, Bloomfield is a majority-minority community and its residents take great pride in its diversity, equity and inclusiveness. Its race/ethnicity demographics is approximately 70% minority. For a more complete report on Bloomfield's demographics see the [CERC Town Profile 2019 for Bloomfield](#).

The Town of Bloomfield has a Council-Manager form of government as formalized in the Town Charter which dates from 1959. Since the late 1950's there have been five Town Managers

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servicing the community. The Town Council appoints the Town Manager to be the chief executive officer and purchasing agent for the Town. The Council is composed of nine members, elected every two years. The Town Councilors run on a partisan basis with the minority party guaranteed of at least three seats. The Mayor and Council Officers are elected from the nine Councilors. The Charter requires the Manager to reside in Town during his or her tenure. The Town Charter for Bloomfield is viewable [here](#).



In 1970 Bloomfield was honored with the designation as an All American City. This award recognized Bloomfield as a community that leverages civic engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness and innovation to successfully address local issues. In 2020 Reader's Digest also honored Bloomfield as one of the Nicest Places in America because its residents do heroic things every day to make their hometown an even better place to live. In the summer of 2020 a hate crime galvanized the community to fight for justice in their Town and across the country.

### ***BLOOMFIELD'S HISTORY***

The Town of Bloomfield holds a remarkable place in our country's history. In 1660, just 40 years after the Pilgrims set foot on Cape Cod the Town was settled as a farming community as part of Windsor. In 1736 the settlement became the Parish of Wintonbury because this new Town was carved out of *Windsor*, *Farmington* and *Simsbury*. The Town of Bloomfield was formally incorporated by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1835. The early settlers found the soil suitable for farming and made their living by growing all manner of crops including grass, grain, apples, peaches, cherries, plums and vegetables. Later this region of the State became known for its shade tobacco. In the 1700's Bloomfield was the source for muskets for the revolutionaries.

Also at that time, the Brown family were coopers known for making barrels and drums of all sorts and legend has it they made the drums that were carried by the Continental Army's drummer boys in the Revolutionary War. On the Town Green there is Drummer Boy statue to honor the Brown family and the Town's place in American history. The statue was dedicated in 1976 to commemorate the country's Bicentennial. For more on Bloomfield's history visit the [Wintonbury Historical Society's website](#).



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## **BLOOMFIELD FINANCES**

Last spring during the height of the COVID pandemic and the uncertainty of what the future would hold, the Town Manager recommended a very conservative and balanced 2020-2021 Town Budget to the Town Council in terms of revenue projections and estimated operating expenses. Ultimately the Town Council adopted a budget of \$94.6M, an increase of 3% from the previous year. It provided for town services of \$41.1M, educational services of \$45.2M, debt service of \$7.8M and the sum of \$560,000 for the Capital Improvement Program. The Town Manager’s 2021-2022 Budget was recently provided to the Town Council for their review and deliberation. The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup>, where the 2021-2022 budget will be adopted. The Financial Plan and Town Manager’s Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year ’21 and ’22 is available [here](#).



Courtesy Dennis Hubbs

The Town of Bloomfield has a long history of strong financial management. One of the cornerstones of the Town fiscal stability is the unassigned General Fund balance, which averages over \$20M on an annual basis, which is over 20% of the Town’s Operating Budget. The Town follows financial policies and practices in a manner expected of municipalities with professional management and it takes a conservative approach to estimating revenues and controlling expenditures. As a result of these factors, and with a strong debt/credit capacity, both Moody’s and Standard & Poor’s have awarded the Town with very high investment grade ratings, Aa2 and AA+ respectively. Another important point about Bloomfield’s fiscal strength is that 73% of the housing is single family homes, and of that number 87% are owner occupied, according to the 2020 Housing Data prepared by the Partnership for Stronger Communities.

Also, the Town has been awarded the GFOA’s Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for over ten years. This prestigious designation comes after submitting a detailed Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, CAFR. For more financial information about Bloomfield, please consult the most recent [CAFR dated June 30, 2020](#).

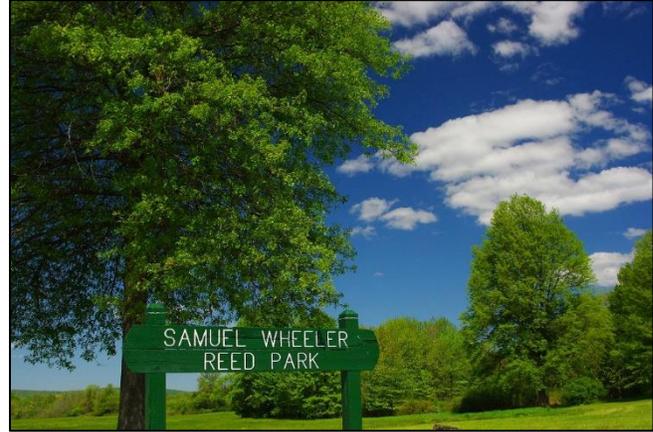


## **THE CHALLENGE**

The successful candidate for the Bloomfield Town Manager position must have a proven record of establishing positive internal as well as external relationships while holding her/himself and others to the highest standards of integrity and

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accountability. The Town Manager must also be fully committed to the concept of transparency and openness in government, ensuring those concepts are practiced throughout the organization. Nurturing positive relationships throughout this diverse community, listening to the various constituencies, and working with the Town Council, commissions and committees on a non-partisan basis will be the key to success. He or she must be unbiased, having the diplomacy and patience to seek and value input from all sides of an issue.



Courtesy Dennis Hubbs

Given Bloomfield's high expectation for quality and responsive services, the Town Manager is expected to lead, direct, mentor, and motivate a professional team of Directors that consistently deliver these exemplary core community services. The Town Manager must seek to identify and understand the vision of the community and provide professional, technical, and management support to the elected and appointed officials in their effort to efficiently and effectively provide for the collective needs of those who live and work in the community. The ideal candidate must be able to anticipate and recognize potential problems and patterns, and then work with Department Directors and staff to develop solutions. The Councilors will depend on him or her to present them with unbiased information on important matters in a relevant and meaningful way that provides the appropriate perspective.

The Town Manager plays a significant role in negotiating and administering the Town's collective bargaining agreements. There are three municipal unions in Bloomfield and he or she must be an experienced and effective negotiator with demonstrated skill and success in managing and administering fair and reasonable collective bargaining agreements while balancing the needs of the employees with the ability of the residents to pay. It will be crucial for the next Manager to have a proven record of succession planning, recruiting, selecting and grooming a high-performance team.



Courtesy Dennis Hubbs

Additionally, a challenge for the new Manager will be a personal commitment to recruitment goals that will diversify the Town's workforce to better reflect the existing demographics within Bloomfield.

The new Manager will need to lead the Town's elected, appointed officials and Department Directors in their evaluation of programs and services provided during the pandemic and the post-pandemic recovery. The continuity of government is critical in any disaster, natural or

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man-made. The valuable lessons learned during and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic will have to become part of the fabric of programs and services going forward and the contingency and continuity planning for the next disaster.

Bloomfield is a desirable community in which to live, raise a family and work and a significant part of the challenge facing the new Town Manager will be to balance the costs of providing a high level of Town and education services at an affordable tax rate. The issue of property tax increases is most acute among the less affluent residents of the community. These households are the working poor and are known as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE). The Manager must provide active and



Courtesy Dennis Hubbs

visible leadership on the important issue of keeping the community affordable for all residents. In order to achieve this, he or she will need to guide the Town in balancing the conflicting issues of additional economic development, new housing, open space preservation, traffic mitigation and pedestrian safety in both the commercial and residential areas, with the residents' stated desires to maintain an affordable community in which to reside.

The Manager must be experienced in project management, financing, and developing capital improvement plans. The Town has a significant stake in large capital improvement projects on an annual basis, some are underway now, and others in the planning stages for the next three to five years, i.e. finishing the DPW Garage project, starting a new library building project, open space/parks/recreation projects, road improvements, etc.

In January, 2021 the Town Council and the Interim Town Manager engaged in a Strategic Planning Session. In this two part retreat they were led by a professional facilitator who guided them through a SWOT analysis of the community. The facilitator reviewed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that were identified by the participants

### HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIC THEMES

- Improve Publicity, Marketing, Communication
- Increase Protecting and Promoting our Diversity
- Identify Focused Economic Development
- Stronger Board of Education Relationship

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and classified them into four high priority strategic themes and then offered his own four observations and recommendations. The summary report from this Strategic Planning Session is a valuable action plan for the next Town Manager and the Town Council. This report is an important tool and should be used by the Town Council to set their expectations of the new Town Manager and his/her administration. The report can be found [here](#).

### ***ADDITIONAL INFORMATION***

Town information is provided herein but candidates are encouraged to learn more about the Town and this position by visiting [Municipal Resources' website](#) or [www.bloomfield.gov](http://www.bloomfield.gov) Candidates can also contact Alan Gould at [agould@mrigov.com](mailto:agould@mrigov.com) or by phone at 603-279-0352 ext. 320. To apply, submit a resume and cover letter in PDF format to [recruitment@mrigov.com](mailto:recruitment@mrigov.com).

**Applications must be submitted by April 12 by 9am EST.**



Courtesy Dennis Hubbs