



## TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW

Town Manager's Report

October 14, 2025

Good evening:

Attached please find project reports for the weeks of September 15<sup>th</sup>, September 22<sup>nd</sup> and September 29<sup>th</sup> regarding the construction of the new high school and natatorium. The project continues to move along in an orderly fashion. The School Building Committee recently voted on a change order to address a fire sprinkler water pressure issue, but the contingency is still very healthy at this point in the project and we are still on time and on budget.

The Town welcomed author Jeff Speck to the Senior Center on September 30<sup>th</sup> to share his vision on a redesign of the East Longmeadow Rotary. For those who were unable to attend, the video of the presentation is posted on ELCAT. Thank you to Rebecca's tireless efforts to get our speaker to come to Town and thank you again to Jeff and his team at Speck Dempsey for providing a glimpse on what the future of East Longmeadow could be.

A few weeks back we filed an application for assistance from MassDEP for the soil stockpile at 70 Maple Street. We received word this week that the State Brownfields will be funding and performing the work to remove the soil from the building, at an estimated value of nearly \$300,000. Thank you to MassDEP for their assistance with this first portion of the site cleanup. We are also working diligently with representatives from the DEP, PVPC and UCONN-TAB to prepare to submit our EPA Brownfields Application this fall. We are still waiting for the final guidelines to be published, but we will have 60 days to submit once they are posted.

Paving operations began this week on Avery Street, Cooley Avenue, Harkness Avenue, Anthony Drive and West Allen Ridge. Palmer Paving Corporation will be performing this work, under the supervision of the DPW. Please use caution if you are traveling in these areas and expect traffic delays. The project will most likely be completed in about six weeks or so, but as we like to say, weather permitting and subject to change.

The sidewalk project on Westwood and Maple Street went about as good as expected and is nearing completion of its original scope. However, thanks to pricing being slightly below our estimate, Bruce suggested extending the project easterly on Westwood to James Street. This would provide a connection to that neighborhood and not require those residents to cross the street to a sidewalk. The MassDOT Complete Streets team has approved that request and the contractor will complete that work shortly.

The Town is in receipt of the Zoning Diagnostic Report from Barrett Planning Group (attached). The town received grant funding to hire a consultant to perform a comprehensive review of our Zoning Bylaw as part of the bylaw review process laid out by the Charter. The Barrett Planning Group will be presenting their findings to the Bylaw Review Committee on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

I have attached an article that was recently posted by the Massachusetts Municipal Association summarizing the difficulties facing municipalities in Massachusetts. In addition to highlighting specific budgetary challenges statewide, it also provides some foundational, "Municipal Finance 101" type narrative, that I thought might be interesting and informative for all.

Upcoming Events: Oktoberfest – October 18<sup>th</sup> at 12pm at Brown Farm

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas D. Christensen  
Town Manager

## Natatorium Building - East Longmeadow High School Weekly Report No. 040 Monday, 9-15-25 through Saturday, 9-20-25

East Longmeadow High School  
180 Maple Avenue, East Longmeadow, MA 01116

### Natatorium Building – East Longmeadow High School

#### **I. Safety:**

- a. The Project has run 235 consecutive workdays without a lost time injury through Saturday, 9-20-25.

#### **II. Average Daily Manpower (Monday - Friday):**

- a. The Project averaged eight (8) workers per day for the period of Monday, 9-15-25, through Friday, 9-19-25.
- b. Note, the Project did NOT work on Saturday, 9-20-25.

#### **III. Meetings:**

- a. There was a weekly Owner/Architect/Contractor (OAC) Meeting held on Thursday, 9-18-25.
- b. There was a weekly Proposed Change Order (PCO) Meeting held on Thursday, 9-18-25 following the OAC Meeting.

#### **IV. Testing/Inspections:**

- a. Independent Testing Lab: (Allied Materials Testing Lab)
  - Soil Compaction Testing:  
No soil compaction testing as required this week.
  - Concrete:  
No concrete testing as required this week.  
To date 579 cys of concrete have been placed at foundation walls, footings, and SOG for the pool structure.  
To date 141 cys of Shotcrete Concrete have been placed in the pool structure.
  - Masonry Mortar & Grout  
No masonry mortar & grout testing was required this week.
  - Reinforcement:  
No reinforcement testing was required this week.
  - Structural Steel:  
No structural steel inspections were necessary this past week.
- b. Town of East Longmeadow's Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Inspectors:
  - Will Cahillane was on site 9-19-25, inspecting the work progress.
- c. Inspections by the Architect, Engineers, and Consultants:
  - Dorrie Brooks (JWA) was on site 9-18-25, attending the weekly OAC/PCO meetings & inspecting the work progress.
  - Jay Williams (SMMA) was on site 9-18-25, attending the weekly OAC/PCO meetings & inspecting the work progress.

### **On-Site Activities:**

#### **Div. 1 – Construction Manager at Risk:** (Fontaine Brothers)

- a. Fontaine is responsible for coordinating and managing all onsite construction activities as well as all safety practices of their subcontractors & vendors. Fontaine also schedules the materials testing lab as needed.
- b. Fontaine continues processing and developing the following:
  - Product submittals for items needed in the building.
  - Generate/issue RFI's for unforeseen items and items in question with the drawings/specifications.

- Issue approved shop drawings through the ProCore program.
- Compiling and issuing monthly requisitions.

**Div. 3 – Concrete:** (Manafort/Precision)

- a. Building formwork for the column base diamonds in the pool building.
- b. Total yardage of concrete (579 cys) has been placed to date for footings, foundation walls & SOG.
- c. Total yardage of shotcrete (141 cys) has been placed to date for the side walls of the pool structure.

**Div. 5 – Metals (Str. Stl., Decking, Joists):** (Norgate Fabrication, Stellar Steel Erection)

- a. Fontaine has awarded the structural steel package to Norgate Fabrication Company out of Canada.
- b. Structural steel erection will be performed by Stellar Steel Erectors.

**Div. 7 – Thermal & Moisture Protection: (Foundation Wall/Brick shelve Air & Vapor Barrier):** (Superior Waterproofing)

- a. No additional AVB materials and/or primer were completed this week at the concrete foundation walls.

**Div. 13 – Specialties (Pool Construction):** (Mainline Company)

- a. No additional work was done this week.

**Div. 22 – Plumbing:** (Grasseschi Plumbing and Heating Company)

- a. Installing the under-slab drainage piping in the area between the foundation wall and actual pool structure.

**Div. 26 – Electrical: (Griffin Electric Company)**

- a. Installing under-slab conduit for the pool structure lighting and timing pads.

**Div. 31, 32 & 33 – Earthwork, Improvements & Utilities:** (Gagliarducci Construction)

- a. Backfilled the area between the foundation wall and actual pool structure.
- b. Grading and compacting the locker rooms in the southeastern end of the building.

**PHOTOS:**



**Grading and compaction for slab-on-grade in the pool building locker rooms**



**Electrical conduit for the pool structure lighting and timing system**



**Diamond formwork in the locker rooms of the pool building**



**Backfilling of the area between the pool structure and foundation walls**

## Natatorium Building - East Longmeadow High School Weekly Report No. 041 Monday, 9-22-25 through Saturday, 9-27-25

East Longmeadow High School  
180 Maple Avenue, East Longmeadow, MA 01116

### Natatorium Building – East Longmeadow High School

#### I. Safety:

- a. The Project has run 242 consecutive workdays without a lost time injury through Saturday, 9-27-25.

#### II. Average Daily Manpower (Monday - Friday):

- a. The Project averaged seven (7) workers per day for the period of Monday, 9-22-25, through Friday, 9-26-25.
- b. Note, the Project did work on Saturday, 9-27-25.

#### III. Meetings:

- a. There was a weekly Owner/Architect/Contractor (OAC) Meeting held on Thursday, 9-25-25.
- b. There was a weekly Proposed Change Order (PCO) Meeting held on Thursday, 9-25-25 following the OAC Meeting.

#### IV. Testing/Inspections:

- a. Independent Testing Lab: (Allied Materials Testing Lab)
  - Soil Compaction Testing:  
No soil compaction testing as required this week.
  - Concrete:  
No concrete testing as required this week.  
To date 579 cys of concrete have been placed at foundation walls, footings, and SOG for the pool structure.  
To date 141 cys of Shotcrete Concrete have been placed in the pool structure.
  - Masonry Mortar & Grout  
No masonry mortar & grout testing was required this week.
  - Reinforcement:  
No reinforcement testing was required this week.
  - Structural Steel:  
No structural steel inspections were necessary this past week.
- b. Town of East Longmeadow's Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Inspectors:
  - No building, electrical, plumbing, or fire inspections were necessary this past week.
- c. Inspections by the Architect, Engineers, and Consultants:
  - Aviva Galaski (JWA) was on site 9-25-25, attending the weekly OAC/PCO meetings & inspecting the work progress.
  - Jay Williams (SMMA) was on site 9-25-25, attending the weekly OAC/PCO meetings & inspecting the work progress.

### On-Site Activities:

#### Div. 1 – Construction Manager at Risk: (Fontaine Brothers)

- a. Fontaine is responsible for coordinating and managing all onsite construction activities as well as all safety practices of their subcontractors & vendors. Fontaine also schedules the materials testing lab as needed.
- b. Fontaine continues processing and developing the following:
  - Product submittals for items needed in the building.
  - Generate/issue RFI's for unforeseen items and items in question with the drawings/specifications.

- Issue approved shop drawings through the ProCore program.
- Compiling and issuing monthly requisitions.

**Div. 3 – Concrete:** (Manafort/Precision)

- a. Not on site this past week.
- b. Total yardage of concrete (579 cys) has been placed to date for footings, foundation walls & SOG.
- c. Total yardage of shotcrete (141 cys) has been placed to date for the side walls of the pool structure.

**Div. 5 – Metals (Str. Stl., Decking, Joists):** (Norgate Fabrication, Stellar Steel Erection)

- a. Fontaine has awarded the structural steel package to Norgate Fabrication Company out of Canada.
- b. Structural steel erection will be performed by Stellar Steel Erectors.

**Div. 7 – Thermal & Moisture Protection: (Foundation Wall/Brick shelf Air & Vapor Barrier):** (Superior Waterproofing)

- a. No additional AVB materials and/or primer were completed this week at the concrete foundation walls.

**Div. 13 – Specialties (Pool Construction):** (Mainline Company)

- a. Chipping away high points on the walls of the actual pool structure.
- b. Performing general clean-up in the pool structure.

**Div. 22 – Plumbing:** (Grasseschi Plumbing and Heating Company)

- a. Installing the under-slab drainage piping in the area between the foundation wall and actual pool structure.

**Div. 26 – Electrical: (Griffin Electric Company)**

- a. Installing under-slab conduit for the pool structure lighting and timing pads.

**Div. 31, 32 & 33 – Earthwork, Improvements & Utilities:** (Gagliarducci Construction)

- a. Backfilled the area between the foundation wall and actual pool structure.
- b. Grading and compacting the locker rooms in the southeastern end of the building.

**PHOTOS:**



**Grading and compacting for slab-on-grade in the locker rooms**



**Backfilling the area between the foundation wall and actual pool structure**



**Conduit for the pool structure's lighting and timing pads on the southern side**



**Drainage plumbing between the pool structure and the foundation wall**

## Natatorium Building - East Longmeadow High School Weekly Report No. 042 Monday, 9-29-25 through Saturday, 10-4-25

East Longmeadow High School  
180 Maple Avenue, East Longmeadow, MA 01116

### Natatorium Building – East Longmeadow High School

#### **I. Safety:**

- a. The Project has run 249 consecutive workdays without a lost time injury through Saturday, 10-4-25.

#### **II. Average Daily Manpower (Monday - Friday):**

- a. The Project averaged eleven (11) workers per day for the period of Monday, 9-29-25, through Friday, 10-3-25.
- b. Note, the Project did NOT work on Saturday, 10-4-25.

#### **III. Meetings:**

- a. There was a weekly Owner/Architect/Contractor (OAC) Meeting held on Thursday, 10-2-25.
- b. There was a weekly Proposed Change Order (PCO) Meeting held on Thursday, 10-2-25 following the OAC Meeting.

#### **IV. Testing/Inspections:**

##### **a. Independent Testing Lab: (Allied Materials Testing Lab)**

- Soil Compaction Testing:

No soil compaction testing as required this week.

- Concrete:

No concrete testing as required this week.

To date 579 cys of concrete have been placed at foundation walls, footings, and SOG for the pool structure.

To date 141 cys of Shotcrete Concrete have been placed in the pool structure.

- Masonry Mortar & Grout

No masonry mortar & grout testing was required this week.

- Reinforcement:

No reinforcement testing was required this week.

- Structural Steel:

No structural steel inspections were necessary this past week.

##### **b. Town of East Longmeadow's Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Inspectors:**

- Heath Dion was on site on 9-30-25, inspecting the underground drainage plumbing for the pool structure.
- Will Cahillane was on site on 10-1-25, inspecting the work progress.

##### **c. Inspections by the Architect, Engineers, and Consultants:**

- James White & Cherie Chan (SMMA) were on site 9-29-25, inspecting the work progress.
- Brian Rosenberger (TMI) was on site 9-30-25, inspecting possible areas of concern for the blower door test.
- Aviva Galaski & August Rulewich (JWA) were on site 9-30-25, attending the meeting with TMI & inspecting the work progress.
- Eric Vangsness, Camron St. Croix, and Clare O'Brine (SMMA) were on site 10-1-25, inspecting the work progress.
- Jay Williams (SMMA) was on site 10-2-25, attending the weekly OAC/PCO meetings & inspecting the work progress.
- Dorrie Brooks (JWA) was on site 10-2-25, attending the weekly OAC/PCO meetings & inspecting the work progress.

## On-Site Activities:

### **Div. 1 – Construction Manager at Risk:** (Fontaine Brothers)

- a. Fontaine is responsible for coordinating and managing all onsite construction activities as well as all safety practices of their subcontractors & vendors. Fontaine also schedules the materials testing lab as needed.
- b. Fontaine continues processing and developing the following:
  - Product submittals for items needed in the building.
  - Generate/issue RFI's for unforeseen items and items in question with the drawings/specifications.
  - Issue approved shop drawings through the ProCore program.
  - Compiling and issuing monthly requisitions.

### **Div. 3 – Concrete:** (Manafort/Precision)

- a. Not on site this past week.
- b. Total yardage of concrete (579 cys) has been placed to date for footings, foundation walls & SOG.
- c. Total yardage of shotcrete (141 cys) has been placed to date for the side walls of the pool structure.

### **Div. 5 – Metals (Str. Stl., Decking, Joists):** (Norgate Fabrication, Stellar Steel Erection)

- a. Fontaine has awarded the structural steel package to Norgate Fabrication Company out of Canada.
- b. Structural steel erection will be performed by Stellar Steel Erectors.

### **Div. 7 – Thermal & Moisture Protection: (Foundation Wall/Brick shelve Air & Vapor Barrier):** (Superior Waterproofing)

- a. No additional AVB materials and/or primer were completed this week at the concrete foundation walls.

### **Div. 13 – Specialties (Pool Construction):** (Mainline Company)

- a. Chipping away high points on the walls of the actual pool structure.
- b. Building formwork around the gutter system to protect during the building's construction.
- c. Performing general clean-up in the pool structure.

### **Div. 22 – Plumbing:** (Grasseschi Plumbing and Heating Company)

- a. Installing the under-slab drainage piping in the area between the foundation wall and actual pool structure.

### **Div. 26 – Electrical:** (Griffin Electric Company)

- a. Installing under-slab conduit for the pool structure's lighting and timing pads.

### **Div. 31, 32 & 33 – Earthwork, Improvements & Utilities:** (Gagliarducci Construction)

- a. Backfilled the area between the foundation wall and actual pool structure.
- b. Grading and compacting the locker rooms in the southeastern end of the building.

**PHOTOS:**



**Grading and compacting for Slab-on-Grade in the pool building**



**Formwork to protect the gutter system in the pool structure during the building's construction**



**Graded and compacted area between the western foundation wall and the actual pool structure**



**Graded and compacted area between the northern foundation wall and the actual pool structure**



## East Longmeadow High School Weekly Report No. 066 Monday, 9-15-25 through Saturday, 9-20-25

East Longmeadow High School  
180 Maple Avenue, East Longmeadow, MA 01116

### East Longmeadow High School Building:

#### **I. Safety:**

- a. The Project has worked 65 consecutive workdays without a lost time injury through Saturday, 9-20-25.

#### **II. Average Daily Manpower (Monday - Saturday):**

- a. The Project averaged 119 workers per day for the period of Monday, 9-08-25 through Saturday, 9-20-25.
- b. Please note a limited number of trades worked on Saturday, 9-20-25, to maintain project schedule. Fontaine has established an allowance, included in the development of the GMP, to cover these costs.

#### **III. Meetings:**

- a. A virtual meeting was held between MSBA, Town School Superintendent, and Skanska on 9-17-25 to review job progress and safety.
- b. The weekly Owner/Architect/Contractor (OAC) & Proposed Change Order (PCO) Review Meetings were held on Thursday, 9-18-25, starting at 1:00 PM.
- c. A monthly School Building Committee was held on Thursday, 9-18-25, starting at 3:00 PM.

#### **IV. Testing/Inspections:**

- a. Independent Testing Lab Services: (Allied Materials Testing Lab, Yankee - AVB Pull Testing)
  - Concrete, Reinforcement and Slab Flatness: Testing was performed on the 150 cys of concrete placed in the C and D Wings at the Kitchen area and Cafeteria on Thursday, 9-18-25.
  - Compaction Testing: Continued performing soil compaction testing at Kitchen floor area.
  - Spray-on Fireproofing Material Testing: Further testing was completed on multiple days this week in the D & E Wings.
  - Structural Steel & Decking: Inspected the galvanized steel beams & roof decking at the Concessions Building on 9-15-25
  - Light Gage/Cold-Formed Metal Framing and Misc. Metals Inspection: No further inspections completed this past week.
  - Air & Vapor Barrier Pull Testing: (Allied/Yankee): Completed additional pull testing of AVB material in the B-Wing.
  - Asphalt Paving: Completed testing of the topcoat of asphalt paving at the new tennis courts on Friday, 9-19-25.
- b. Town of East Longmeadow's Building, Water/Sewer, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Inspectors:
  - The Town's Plumbing Inspector (Heath Dion) was on site Thursday, 9-18-25 to inspect the acid neutralization piping.
  - The Town's Electrical Inspector (Andy Dutko) was on site Thursday, 9-18-25 to inspect in-wall electrical rough-in on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of D-Wing
- c. Inspections by the Architect, Engineers, and Consultants:
  - JWA/SMMA Architects (Dorrie Brooks & Jay Williams) were on site Thursday, 9-18-25 reviewing work progress, address/resolving field issues, attend the weekly OAC/PCO meetings, and tour of the overall Project.
  - CMK Leed Company (Cynthia Kaplan) was also on site Thursday, 9-18-25 to attend the weekly OAC meeting.

## On-Site Activities:

### **Div. 1 – General Conditions - Construction Manager at Risk:** (Fontaine Brothers)

- a. Fontaine continues processing product submittals, generate RFI's, issue shop drawings, develop monthly requisitions, etc.

### **Div. 3 – Concrete/Reinforcement:** (Manafort/Precision)

- a. Completed installing the poly vapor barrier, taped all joints, WWF and support chairs related to the slab-on-grade concrete placement in C and D Wings
- b. Placed 150 cys of concrete for the slab on grade in the D-Wing Kitchen Area and C-Wing Cafeteria
- c. Placed 4 cys of concrete for the electrical transformer equipment pad related to the new tennis courts.

### **Div. 4 – Masonry:** (Lighthouse)

- a. Continued installing the exterior brick veneer at the south and west sides of the D-Wing.
- b. Complete installing the polished granite veneer base at the south and east sides of the E-Wing.
- c. Continued installing the mineral wool insulation blocks and brick wall anchors at the south side of the E-Wing.
- d. Washing the brick veneer at the north and east sides of the D-Wing.
- e. Completed the exterior masonry work at the Concessions Building. Cleaning remains to be done.

### **Div. 5 – Metals (Structural Steel Framing):** (Stellar Steel Erectors)

- a. Changed-out carbon steel bolts at the Concessions Building roof structure for galvanized bolts as required.

### **Div. 5 – Metals (Cold Formed Metal Framing):** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued installing CFMF for interior drywall partitions in the A-Wing.
- b. Completing miscellaneous CFMF of minor pipe chases and closets in the D and E Wings.

### **Div. 6 – Rough Carpentry:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Maintaining work area barriers, safety railings/handrails, and floor opening covers where required.
- b. Installing wood blocking at the window openings above the Gymnasium.
- c. Installing temporary protection in exterior wall window opens in the A, B, C, D & E Wings.
- d. Installing in-wall wood blocking into drywall partitions in the D & E Wings.
- e. Installing wood blocking and roof parapet construction at the Concessions Building.

### **Div. 7 – Spray-on Fireproofing and Fire Rated Expandable Foam:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued applying spray-on fireproofing materials in the B Wing.
- b. Continued applying the foam insulation onto steel framing at misc. areas where the exterior walls have been closed up.

### **Div. 7 – Thermal & Moisture Protection: (Over Exterior Walls):** (Armani)

- a. Continued installing the air & vapor barrier (AVB) materials at exterior walls of the A & B Wings.
- b. Continued working with the testing lab (Yankee) to complete pull tests on the AVB materials at random locations.

### **Div. 7 – Roofing: (Tapered Insulation Board & Membrane):** (Silktown Roofing Company)

- a. Continue roofing installation at the low & high roof areas of the B-Wing.

### **Div. 8 – Hollow Metal Frames (Door Frames, Doors, Vision Panel):** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Receive, unload & store separate deliveries of HM door frames at the site.

**Div. 9 – Gypsum Board:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Taping installed gypsum board at the tops of drywall partitions in the corridors of the D & E Wings.
- b. Installing interior gyp board (on one side of drywall partitions) & taping on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor in the D & E Wings.
- c. Installing sound proofing fiberglass insulation at drywall partitions getting one side of gyp board.
- d. Installing mineral wool insulation at the inside of the exterior perimeter wall around the D-Wing.
- e. Fire stopping the tops of drywall partitions in the electrical closets.

**Div. 9 – Painting:** (John W. Egan Painting Co.)

- a. Not on site this week.

**Div. 21 – Fire Protection:** (Cogswell Fire Protection Company)

- a. Continued installation of the sprinkler piping system on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of D-Wing.
- b. Installing the sprinkler head flex drops on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor in the d-Wing
- c. Complete sprinkler piping mains and branch runs in the high bay area (Gym) located in the B-Wing.

**Div. 22 – Plumbing:** (Grasseschi Plumbing and Heating Company)

- a. Continued in-wall plumbing rough-in (domestic water supply and waste) in the E-Wing on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors.
- b. Continued in-wall domestic water supply & waste piping on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor in the A-Wing.
- d. Completing under slab plumbing waste piping in the Kitchen area on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor in D-Wing.
- e. Installing the acid waste piping to the neutralization concrete vault at the south side of E-Wing.
- f. Installing thermal insulation on in-wall domestic water piping in the D & E Wings.

**Div. 23 & 25 – Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC):** (Willam F. Lynch Company, CTC Controls)

- a. Continued to install ductwork on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors in the D & E Wings.
- b. Installing duct insulation wrap and refrigerant piping insulation in the ceiling of the 2nd floor in D & E Wings.
- c. Continued installing pipe and duct hangers in the A-Wing, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor level.
- d. Begin installing HVAC ductwork in the NE corner of the A-Wing.
- e. Installing HVAC control conduit and low voltage wiring in the D & E Wings

**Div. 26 – Electrical:** (Griffin Electric Company)

- a. Continued installing in-wall electrical conduit drops for lighting and power on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors in the D & E Wings.
- b. Pulling MC cabling for interior lighting and fire alarm in the D & E Wings where drywall partitions have been framed.
- c. Held an electrical in-wall inspection with the Town's inspector on Thursday, 9-18-25 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of D-Wing.
- d. Continued roughing in device back boxes into CFMF partition walls in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor levels in the D & E Wings.
- e. Complete installing site PVC conduit runs for the electrical lighting of the new tennis courts.

**Div. 31, 32 & 33 – Earthwork, Improvements & Utilities:** (Gagliarducci Construction)

- a. Rough grade the base of the east side access driveway running parallel with the Football Stadium.
- b. Installing exterior light pole concrete bases along the same east side access driveway.
- c. Completed backfill & compaction in the Kitchen area prior to floor slab placement.
- e. Continued installing the 8" dia. PVC sanitary sewer main pipeline and sanitary manhole structures, working from Norton Street heading towards the new school building.
- f. Installed traffic and parking signage in the new parking lot for the students.
- h. Installing the concrete bases for the security gate across the access driveway into the student parking lot.
- i. Completed the top/finish coat of asphalt paving at the new tennis courts.
- j. Installed the support posts for the chain link fencing around the new tennis courts.

**Photos:**



**The HVAC contractor is installing the large spiral ductwork in the ceiling space of the Gymnasium**



**Batt insulation is being installed at interior drywall partitions to help minimize sound transmission on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the D-Wing**



**View looking west into the A-Wing at the on-going installation of CFMF for drywall partitions**



**View looking east into the C-Wing 1<sup>st</sup> floor and D-Wing Kitchen area where slab-on-grade concrete was recently placed and covered**



**The rough carpentry contractor has begun building the roof parapet at the new Concessions Building**



**View looking up from the Ground Floor in the C-Spine at the temporary poly in-fills at window openings to keep out the elements**



**Looking at the site work contractor filling and rough grading for the east side new access road to the Loading Dock Area**



**View looking at the fence posts for the chain link fence being installed around the new tennis courts**

## East Longmeadow High School Weekly Report No. 067 Monday, 9-22-25 through Saturday, 9-27-25

East Longmeadow High School  
180 Maple Avenue, East Longmeadow, MA 01116

### East Longmeadow High School Building:

#### **I. Safety:**

- a. The Project has worked 71 consecutive workdays without a lost time injury through Saturday, 9-27-25.

#### **II. Average Daily Manpower (Monday - Saturday):**

- a. The Project averaged 124 workers per day for the period of Monday, 9-22-25 through Saturday, 9-27-25.
- b. Please note a number of trades worked on Saturday, 9-27-25, to maintain project schedule. Fontaine has established an allowance, included in the development of the GMP, to cover these costs.

#### **III. Meetings:**

- a. The weekly Owner/Architect/Contractor (OAC) & Proposed Change Order (PCO) Review Meetings were held on Thursday, 9-25-25, starting at 1:00 PM.

#### **IV. Testing/Inspections:**

- a. Independent Testing Lab Services: (Allied Materials Testing Lab, Yankee - AVB Pull Testing)
  - Concrete, Reinforcement and Slab Flatness: Tested the 6 cys of concrete placed at the diamond formwork bases of structural columns in the Kitchen area.
  - Compaction Testing: Continued performing soil compaction testing at the Auditorium and east side access driveway.
  - Spray-on Fireproofing Material Testing: No further testing was completed this past week.
  - Structural Steel & Decking: No additional inspections completed this past week.
  - Light Gage/Cold-Formed Metal Framing and Misc. Metals Inspection: CFMF was inspected on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of D & E Wings on Monday, 9-22-25.
  - Air & Vapor Barrier Pull Testing: (Allied/Yankee): No additional pull testing of AVB material completed this past week.
  - Asphalt Paving: No further asphalt testing was completed this past week.
  - Fire Stopping: Performed an inspection of the fire stopping systems (top-of-wall, floor penetrations) on 9-26-25.
- b. Town of East Longmeadow's Building, Water/Sewer, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Inspectors:
  - The Town's Electrical Inspector (Michael Erwin) was on site Thursday, 9-25-25 to inspect in-wall electrical rough-in on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of E-Wing.
- c. Inspections by the Architect, Engineers, and Consultants:
  - JWA/SMMA Architects (Aviva Galaski & Jay Williams) were on site Thursday, 9-25-25 reviewing work progress, address/resolving field issues, attend the weekly OAC/PCO meetings, and tour of the overall Project.

#### **On-Site Activities:**

##### **Div. 1 – General Conditions - Construction Manager at Risk:** (Fontaine Brothers)

- a. Fontaine continues processing product submittals, generate RFI's, issue shop drawings, develop monthly requisitions, etc.

**Div. 3 – Concrete/Reinforcement:** (Manafort/Precision)

- a. Placed 6 cys of concrete at the diamond formwork bases for the structural steel columns in the Kitchen area.
- b. Installing rigid insulation board, poly vapor barrier and WWF for the concrete slab-on-grade work required in the Auditorium.

**Div. 4 – Masonry:** (Lighthouse)

- a. Continued installing the exterior brick veneer at the south and west sides of the D-Wing.
- b. Complete installing the polished granite veneer base at the south and east sides of the E-Wing.
- c. Continued installing the mineral wool insulation blocks and brick wall anchors at the south side of the E-Wing.
- d. Installing the granite wall panels at the base of the exterior masonry wall at the west side of the E-Wing.

**Div. 5 – Misc. Metals (Stairs, Railings, Structural Steel Framing):** (Avid Steel Company)

- a. Installing the interior stairway S101 in the C-Wing.

**Div. 5 – Metals (Cold Formed Metal Framing):** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued installing CFMF for interior drywall partitions in the A-Wing.
- b. Return to the D-Wing 1<sup>st</sup> Floor to install HM door frames that were not available at the time of CFMF the partitions.

**Div. 6 – Rough Carpentry:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Maintaining work area barriers, safety railings/handrails, and floor opening covers where required.
- b. Installing temporary protection in exterior wall window opens in the A, B, C, D & E Wings.
- c. Installing in-wall wood blocking into drywall partitions in the D & E Wings.
- d. Continued with wood blocking and roof parapet construction at the Concessions Building.

**Div. 7 – Spray-on Fireproofing and Fire Rated Expandable Foam:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued applying spray-on fireproofing materials in the B Wing.
- b. Completing miscellaneous patching of the spray-on fireproofing materials were required around the school building.

**Div. 7 – Thermal & Moisture Protection: (Over Exterior Walls):** (Armani)

- a. Continued installing the air & vapor barrier (AVB) materials at exterior walls of the A & B Wings.
- b. Continued working with the testing lab (Yankee) to complete pull tests on the AVB materials at random locations.

**Div. 7 – Roofing: (Tapered Insulation Board & Membrane):** (Silktown Roofing Company)

- a. Completing roofing installation at the low & high roof areas of the B-Wing.

**Div. 7 – Metal Siding Panels:** (Chandler)

- a. Installing support clips and channels for the exterior metal panel siding at the A-Wing north side and also in
- b. Also, installing support clips for aluminum windows at the north side of B-Wing.

**Div. 8 – Hollow Metal Frames (Door Frames, Doors, Vision Panel):** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Receive additional deliveries of HM door frames at the site for the D & E Wings.

**Div. 9 – Gypsum Board:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued taping installed gypsum board at the tops of drywall partitions in the corridors of the D & E Wings.
- b. Installing interior gyp board (closing walls) & taping on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor in the D & E Wings.
- c. Installing sound proofing fiberglass insulation at drywall partitions getting one side of gyp board.
- d. Installing mineral wool insulation at the inside of the exterior perimeter wall around the D and E Wings.
- e. Fire stopping the tops of drywall partitions in the electrical closets.

**Div. 9 – Painting:** (John W. Egan Painting Co.)

- a. Not on site this week.

**Div. 21 – Fire Protection:** (Cogswell Fire Protection Company)

- a. Continued installation of the sprinkler piping system in the B-Wing.
- b. Installing the sprinkler head flex drops on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor in the E-Wing
- c. Installing fire protection mains in the A-Wing.

**Div. 22 – Plumbing:** (Grasseschi Plumbing and Heating Company)

- a. Continued in-wall plumbing rough-in (domestic water supply and waste) in the A-Wing.
- b. Installing the acid waste piping to the neutralization concrete vault at the south side of E-Wing.
- c. Installing thermal insulation on in-wall domestic water piping in the D & E Wings.
- d. Installed the prefabricated bank of toilet & urinal carriers and interconnected piping for the toilet rooms at the new Concessions Building.

**Div. 23 & 25 – Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC):** (William F. Lynch Company, CTC Controls)

- a. Continued to install ductwork on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors in the D & E Wings.
- b. Installing duct insulation wrap and refrigerant piping insulation in the ceiling of the 2nd floor in D & E Wings.
- c. Continued installing pipe and duct hangers in the A-Wing, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor level.
- d. Continued installing HVAC ductwork in the NE corner of the A-Wing.
- e. Continued installing HVAC control conduit and low voltage wiring in the D & E Wings

**Div. 26 – Electrical:** (Griffin Electric Company)

- a. Continued installing in-wall electrical conduit drops & back boxes for lighting and power on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors in the D & E Wings prior to “in-wall” inspection later in the week.
- b. Pulling MC cabling for interior lighting and fire alarm in the D & E Wings where drywall partitions have been framed.
- c. Conducted an electrical in-wall inspection with the Town’s inspector on Thursday, 9-18-25 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of E-Wing.
- d. Complete installing site PVC conduit runs for the electrical lighting of the new tennis courts.
- e. Completing rough-in work at the new Concessions Building.

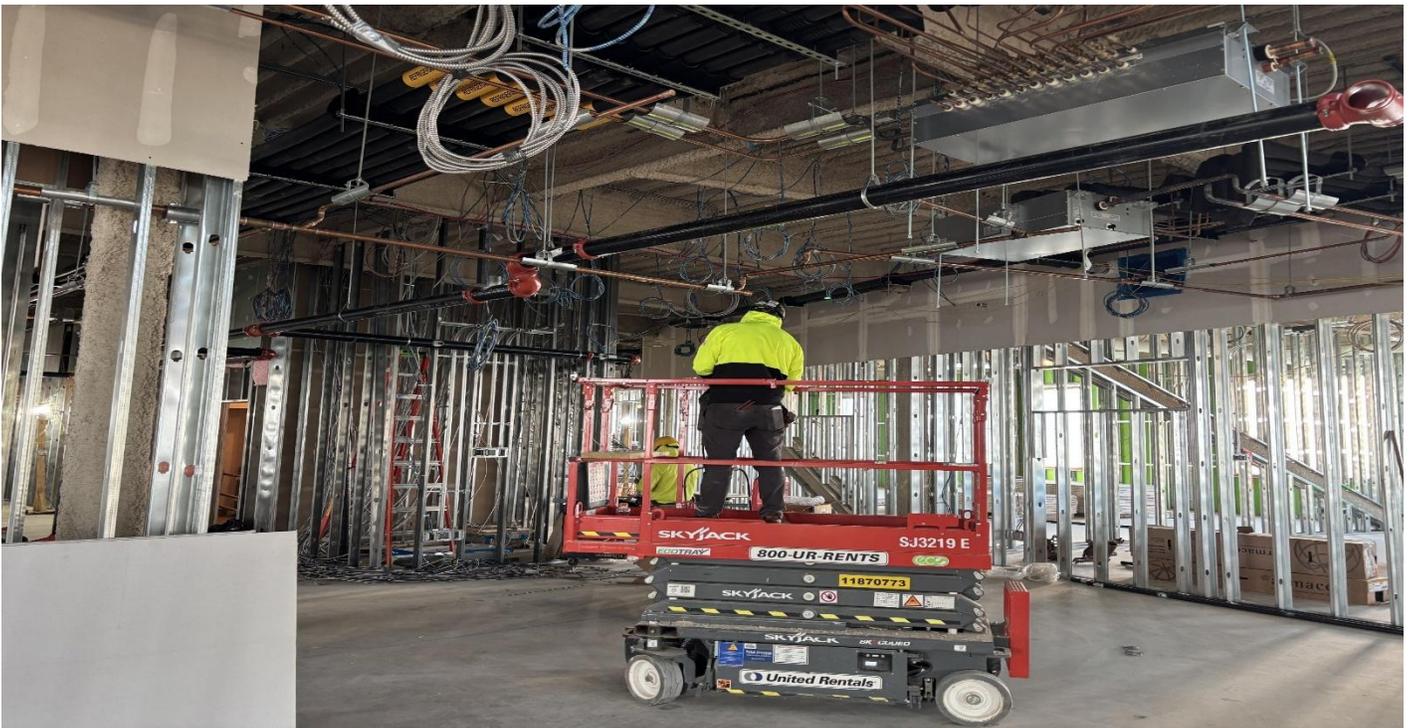
**Div. 31, 32 & 33 – Earthwork, Improvements & Utilities:** (Gagliarducci Construction)

- a. Continued installing exterior light pole concrete bases along the east side access driveway.
- b. Installing the ductile iron water main piping and concrete structures at the west side of the site off Norton Street heading east towards the new school building.
- c. Complete the concrete bases and steel posts for the security gate across the access driveway into the student parking lot.
- d. Importing material and rough grading for the sub-base in the Auditorium area at the seating area.

**Photos:**



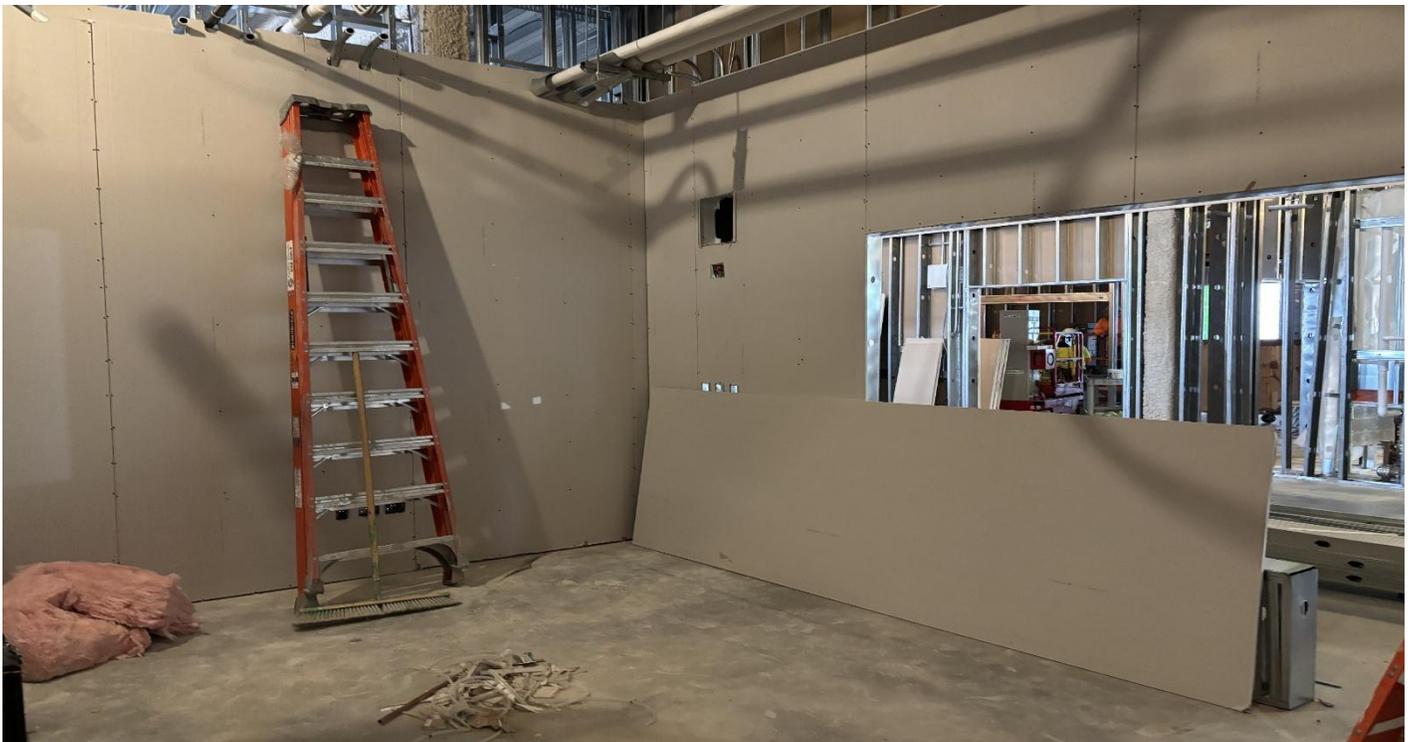
**Roof drain piping and thermal insulation are being installed in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor level of the south side of the Gymnasium**



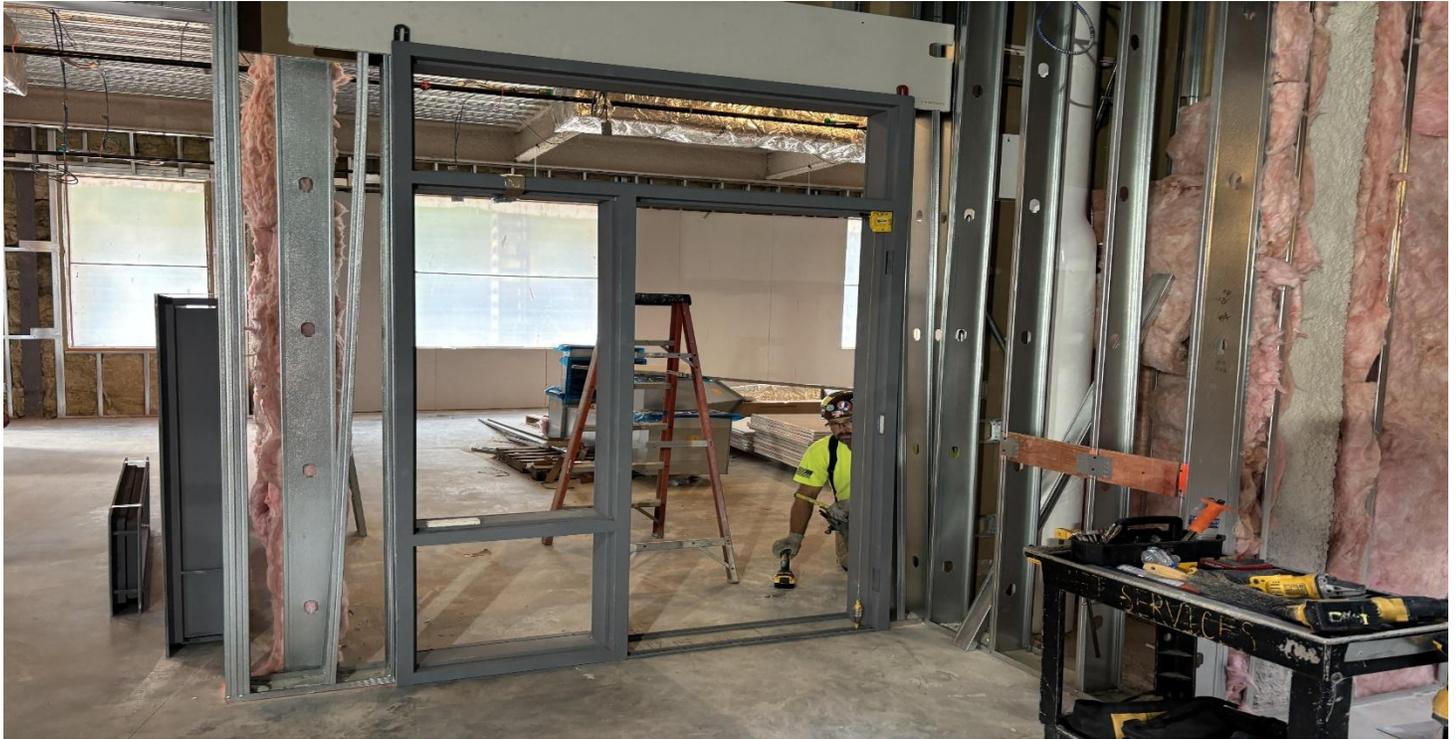
**The fire protection system contractor is installing sprinkler piping on the 2nd floor of D-Wing**



**The HVAC contractor is installing the spiral supply and return ductwork in the Gymnasium**



**The drywall contractor continues hanging gypsum board onto GFMF partitions  
on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of the E-Wing**



**The drywall contractor is installing a hollow metal door frame with a side lite into a drywall partition on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of the D-Wing**



**The site work contractor is working at the A-Wing Auditorium seating area preparing for the slab-on-grade concrete placement in front of the Stage**



**The masonry brick wall at the north side of the D-Wing is complete, the staging removed and now the brick wall is being washed down and scrubbed**



**The exterior metal panel contractor is installing support clips and track to install the decorative metal siding at the high bay area in the A-Wing**

**East Longmeadow High School**  
**Weekly Report No. 068**  
**Monday, 9-29-25 through Saturday, 10-04-25**

East Longmeadow High School  
180 Maple Avenue, East Longmeadow, MA 01116

**East Longmeadow High School Building:**

**I. Safety:**

- a. The Project has worked 77 consecutive workdays without a lost time injury through Saturday, 10-04-25.

**II. Average Daily Manpower (Monday - Saturday):**

- a. The Project averaged 143 workers per day for the period of Monday, 9-29-25 through Saturday, 10-04-25.
- b. Please note a number of trades worked on Saturday, 10-04-25, to maintain project schedule. Fontaine has established an allowance, included in the development of the GMP, to cover these costs.

**III. Meetings:**

- a. A meeting was held Tuesday, 9-30-25 to review "Blower-Door Testing" requirements including pre-test conditions, procedures, methods, etc. In attendance was Fontaine, JWA/SMMA, Thermal Moisture Imaging Company & Skanska.
- b. The weekly Owner/Architect/Contractor (OAC) & Proposed Change Order (PCO) Review Meetings were held on Thursday, 10-02-25, starting at 1:00 PM.

**IV. Testing/Inspections:**

- a. Independent Testing Lab Services: (Allied Materials Testing Lab, Yankee - AVB Pull Testing)
- Concrete, Reinforcement and Slab Flatness: Tested the 40 cys of concrete placed in the Auditorium & a section in C-Spine.
  - Compaction Testing: Continued performing soil compaction testing at the Auditorium & C-Spine areas.
  - Spray-on Fireproofing Material Testing: No further testing was completed this past week.
  - Structural Steel, Misc. Metals & Decking: Inspected then construction of interior Stair S101 in the C-Spine mid-section on Thursday, 10-02-25.
  - Light Gage/Cold-Formed Metal Framing: No further inspections were performed this week.
  - Air & Vapor Barrier Pull Testing: (Allied/Yankee): No additional pull testing of AVB material completed this past week.
  - Asphalt Paving: No further asphalt testing was completed this past week.
  - Fire Stopping: No further inspections were performed this past week.
- b. Town of East Longmeadow's Building, Water/Sewer, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Inspectors:
- The Town's Building Commissioner (Will Cahillane) was on site Wednesday, 10-01-25, to continue inspection of work in place in the D & E Wings, primarily CFMF partition walls.
  - The Town's Plumbing Inspector (Heath Dion) was on site Thursday, 10-02-25 inspecting on-going plumbing in-wall installation in the E-Wing including the acid waste processing/drainage pipe and tank.
- c. Inspections by the Architect, Engineers, and Consultants:
- JWA/SMMA Architects (Aviva Galaski & Jay Williams) were on site Tuesday, 9-30-25 to participate in the "Blower-Door Testing" discussing processes, pretest preparation, etc.
  - FST Cx Engineers (Michael Mahler) was on site Thursday, 10-02-25 to inspect HVAC installations to date and witness a duct pressurization test in the E-Wing, 1<sup>st</sup> floor level.

- FST Cx Engineers (Farzad Kian) was also on site Thursday, 10-02-25 perform AVB Pull Testing in the A & B Wings.
- JWA/SMMA Architects (Dorrie Brooks & Jay Williams) were also on site Thursday, 10-02-25 participating in the weekly OAC and PCO meetings, reviewing work progress, address/resolving field issues, and tour of the overall Project.

## **On-Site Activities:**

### **Div. 1 – General Conditions - Construction Manager at Risk:** (Fontaine Brothers)

- a. Fontaine continues processing product submittals, generate RFI's, issue shop drawings, develop monthly requisitions, etc.

### **Div. 3 – Concrete/Reinforcement:** (Manafort/Precision)

- a. Placed 40 cys of concrete in the Auditorium and a section of floor in the C-Spine.
- b. Installing rigid insulation board, poly vapor barrier and WWF for the concrete slab-on-grade work required in the Auditorium.

### **Div. 4 – Masonry:** (Lighthouse)

- a. Continued installing the exterior brick veneer at the south and west sides of the D-Wing, topping-off the walls.
- b. Continued installing the polished granite veneer base at the south and west sides of the E-Wing.
- c. Continued installing the mineral wool insulation blocks and brick wall anchors at the south side of the E-Wing.
- d. Installing interior concrete block walls at the Locker Rooms and new room for the fire protection pump in the B-Wing.

### **Div. 5 – Misc. Metals (Stairs, Railings, Structural Steel Framing):** (Avid Steel Company)

- a. Installing stairway and floor opening perimeter railings in the D & E Wings.

### **Div. 5 – Metals (Cold Formed Metal Framing):** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued installing CFMF for interior drywall partitions in the A-Wing.
- b. Continued installing door and window hollow metal frames in the D & E Wings on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor.

### **Div. 6 – Rough Carpentry:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Maintaining work area barriers, safety railings/handrails, and floor opening covers where required.
- b. Installing temporary protection in exterior wall window opens in the A, B, C, D & E Wings.
- c. Installing in-wall wood blocking into drywall partitions in the A Wings.
- d. Continued with wood blocking and roof parapet construction at the Concessions Building.

### **Div. 7 – Spray-on Fireproofing and Fire Rated Expandable Foam:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued applying spray-on fireproofing materials in the B Wing at the west end.
- b. Completing miscellaneous patch and repair of spray-on fireproofing materials were required.

### **Div. 7 – Thermal & Moisture Protection: (Over Exterior Walls):** (Armani)

- a. Completing the air & vapor barrier (AVB) materials at exterior walls of the A & B Wings.
- b. Continued working with the testing lab (Yankee) to complete pull tests on the AVB materials at random locations.

### **Div. 7 – Roofing: (Tapered Insulation Board & Membrane):** (Silktown Roofing Company)

- a. Completing roof work at the base of the metal wall panels and insulation in the B-Wing.

### **Div. 7 – Metal Siding Panels:** (Chandler)

- a. Installing support clips and channels for the exterior metal panel siding at the A-Wing north side and also in
- b. Continued installing support clips for aluminum windows at the north side of B-Wing.

**Div. 8 – Hollow Metal Frames (Door Frames, Doors, Vision Panel):** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Installing HM door and window frames in the D Wings on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor.

**Div. 9 – Gypsum Board:** (H. Carr & Sons)

- a. Continued taping installed gypsum board at the tops of drywall partitions in the corridors of the D & E Wings.
- b. Installing interior gyp board (closing walls) & taping on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor in the D & E Wings.
- c. Installing sound proofing fiberglass insulation at drywall partitions getting one side of gyp board.
- d. Installing mineral wool insulation at the inside of the exterior perimeter wall around the D and E Wings.
- e. Fire stopping the tops of drywall partitions where required in the D and E Wings.

**Div. 9 – Painting:** (John W. Egan Painting Co.)

- a. Painting electric closets in the A-Wing.

**Div. 21 – Fire Protection:** (Cogswell Fire Protection Company)

- a. Continued installation of the sprinkler piping system on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level in the D & E Wings.
- b. Installing the sprinkler head flex drops on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor in the E-Wing.

**Div. 22 – Plumbing:** (Grasseschi Plumbing and Heating Company)

- a. Continued in-wall plumbing rough-in (domestic water supply and waste) in the A-Wing.
- b. Complete installing the acid waste piping to the neutralization concrete vault at the south side of E-Wing.
- c. Installing thermal insulation on in-wall domestic water piping in the D & E Wings.
- d. Continued plumbing work in the Concessions Building & delivered the required fixtures.

**Div. 23 & 25 – Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC):** (Willam F. Lynch Company, CTC Controls)

- a. Continued to install ductwork on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors in the D & E Wings.
- b. Installing duct insulation wrap and refrigerant piping insulation in the ceiling of the 2nd floor in D & E Wings.
- c. Continued installing HVAC ductwork in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor level of the A-Wing.
- d. Performing HVAC ductwork pressurizations testing in the D-Wing, 1<sup>st</sup> floor level.
- e. Continued installing HVAC control conduit and low voltage wiring in the D & E Wings
- f. Installed the large spiral supply & return ductwork in the Gymnasium.

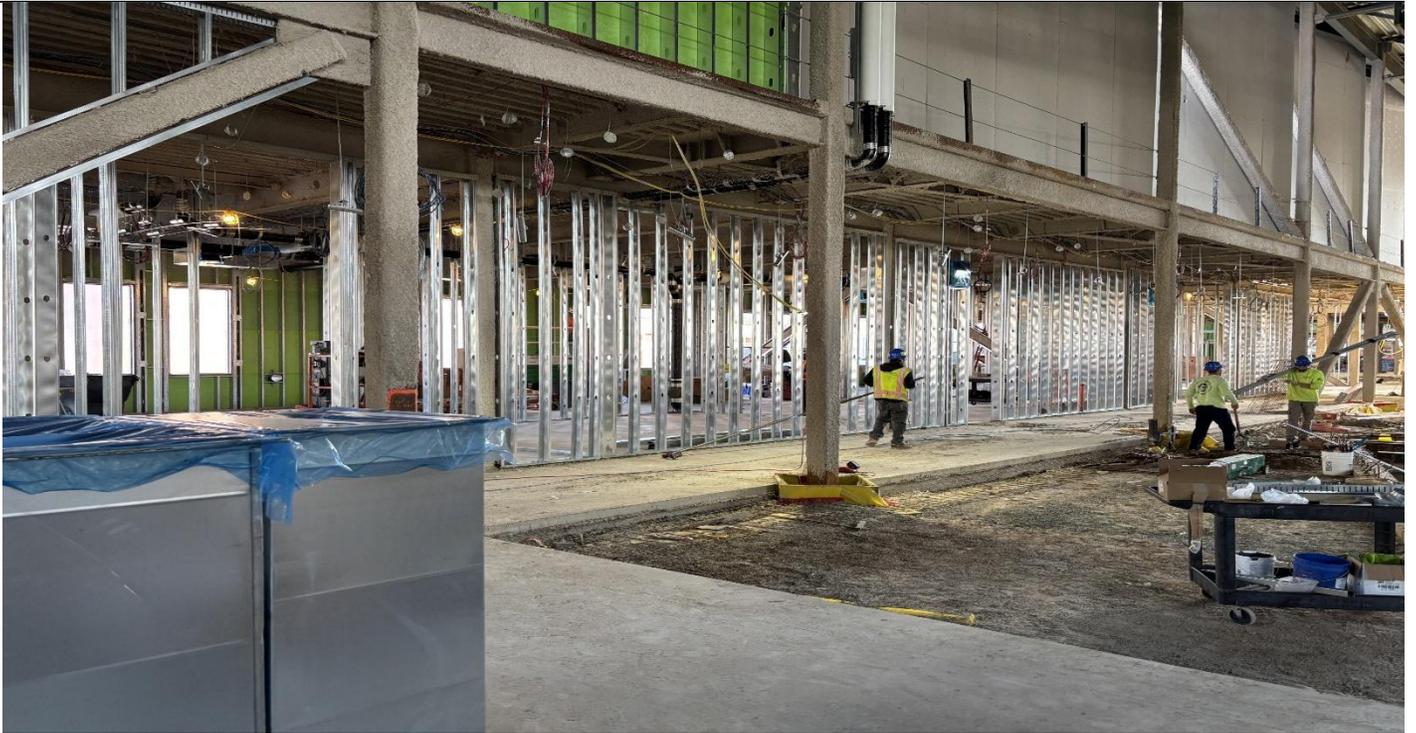
**Div. 26 – Electrical:** (Griffin Electric Company)

- a. Continued installing in-wall electrical conduit drops & back boxes for lighting and power on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors in the D & E Wings prior to “in-wall” inspection later in the week.
- b. Pulling MC cabling for interior lighting and fire alarm in the D & E Wings where drywall partitions have been framed.
- c. Complete installing site PVC conduit runs for the electrical lighting of the new tennis courts.
- d. Completing rough-in work at the new Concessions Building.

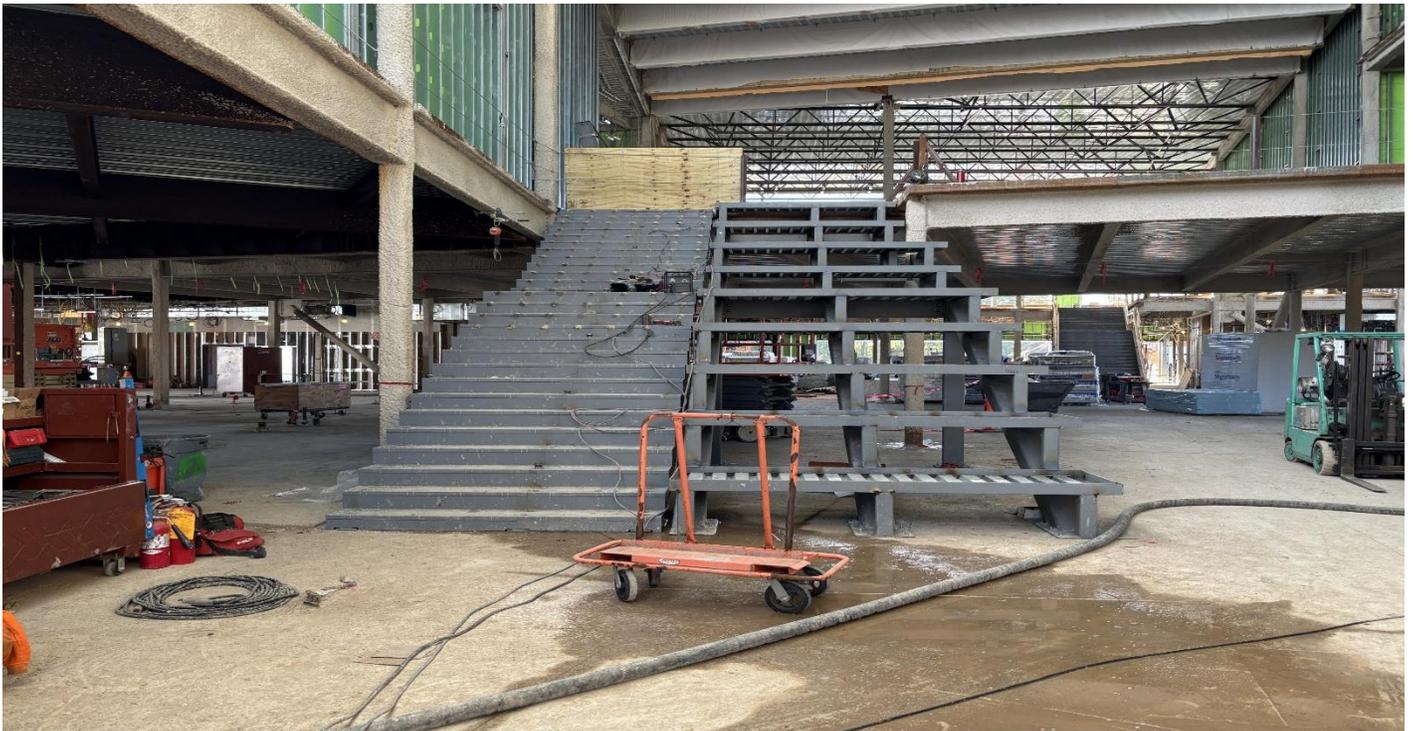
**Div. 31, 32 & 33 – Earthwork, Improvements & Utilities:** (Gagliarducci Construction)

- a. Continued installing the ductile iron water supply piping across the baseball field at the west side of the site.
- b. Completing the same for the main sewage discharge pipe running parallel with the water main.
- c. Continued rough grading and compaction for the sub-base in the Auditorium and C-Spine areas in preparation for the next concrete floor slab placement.
- d. Continued spreading loam around the east side of the site.

**Photos:**



**CFMF of interior partitions at the north side of the A-Wing continues**



**Looking at the rough installation of interior Stairway S101 in the center of the C-Spine**



**View of the mason contractor installing the concrete block walls of the locker rooms at the south side of the B-Wing**



**The mason contractor continues install the exterior brick veneer wall at the west end of the D-Wing**



**The concrete contractor is installing the rigid insulation board, poly vapor barrier, and weld wire mesh in preparation for the concrete floor slab placement at the seating area in the A-Wing Auditorium**



**Installation of the exterior brick veneer wall continues off the lift at the south side of the D-Wing**



**The misc. metals contractor is installing the handrail and guard around the opening in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level for the interior stairway at the east end of the D-Wing**



**Looking at the new Concessions Building with construction of the roof parapet now being completed prior to installing the actual roof materials**

# Town of East Longmeadow

---

# Zoning Diagnostic Report

September 2025

Submitted to:  
East Longmeadow Department of Planning & Community Development  
60 Center Square  
East Longmeadow, MA 01028



Barrett Planning Group LLC  
Robert Mitchell, FAICP  
350 Lincoln Street  
Suite 2503  
Hingham, MA 02043

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION ..... 1**

**TECHNICAL REVIEW..... 2**

    Structure and Format; Organization .....2

    Scattered and Duplicative Use and District Regulations.....3

    Table of Uses ..... 4

    Readability..... 5

    Nonconforming Uses, Structures, and Lots .....7

    Definitions .....7

    Districts..... 8

    Use Regulations..... 9

    Administration..... 12

    Miscellaneous Clarity and Consistency Issues..... 14

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS .....16**

    Districts and Use Regulations .....16

    Roles and Responsibilities ..... 17

---

## Introduction

The Town of East Longmeadow has asked Barrett Planning Group LLC to review the East Longmeadow Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) and prepare a zoning diagnostic. The diagnostic aims to conduct a comprehensive review of East Longmeadow's ZBL to identify internal and external areas of conflict and contradiction with G.L. c. 40A, redundancies, and areas of improvement. For this project, we are pleased to have Robert Mitchell, FAICP, join us, and we appreciate his contributions to our report.

A zoning diagnostic is a technical review. It involves a close reading of the text and a review of the zoning map. It is not a redline markup of the existing ZBL, or a section-by-section list of deficiencies. Instead, this diagnostic focuses on key issues with the ZBL. We supplemented our internal review with interviews with Town staff, boards and commissions, and local professionals familiar with the ZBL and development in East Longmeadow.

The diagnostic report consists of two parts. The first identifies and explains technical deficiencies that can make the ZBL difficult to use or otherwise hamper it from serving its intended purpose of creating orderly, clear land use regulations for the Town. It also identifies potential or actual conflicts with state law or judicial decisions. The second part of the report identifies policy matters for the Town's consideration.

---

## Technical Review

The technical review section of this diagnostic review focuses on barriers to using the ZBL as a working regulatory document. The analysis focuses on the clarity, organization, and structure of the ZBL and how the ZBL functions as a regulatory document to be used by people with varying experience and familiarity with the development process.

### Structure and Format; Organization

A user-friendly ZBL begins with a well-organized, clear, and consistent document organization and design. An organized ZBL with a logical, predictable structure can make it easier to update regulations in the future and make it less likely that an applicant or local officials will miss a requirement or standard that applies to a proposed project. A ZBL needs a strong 'skeleton' that clearly divides content based on specific regulatory categories or purposes and flows logically for readers. East Longmeadow's ZBL includes the following divisions:

Article I:	Purpose
Article II:	Zoning Districts
Article III:	Use Regulations
Article IV:	Floodplain Overlay District Regulations
Article V:	Special Use Regulations
Article VI:	Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers; Medical Marijuana Dispensaries
Article VII:	Administration and Enforcement
Article VIII:	Special Permits
Article IX:	Site Plan Review
Article X:	Photovoltaic Installations
Article XI:	Definitions

Attachment 1: Table 3-1 Schedule of Use Regulations

Attachment 2: Table 3-2 Dimensional Regulations

The table of contents outlined above shows that East Longmeadow's ZBL includes most sections typically found in a zoning ordinance or bylaw. However, there are several ways East Longmeadow's ZBL breaks its own internal logic. When this happens, users can find it challenging to identify the requirements for a specific use, district, or activity. When the placement of regulations is not consistent within individual articles and sections, the document becomes unwieldy, making mistakes more likely to occur. Here are some examples.

1. The inclusion of the Floodplain Overlay District, Photovoltaic Installations, Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers, and Registered Marijuana Dispensaries as article-level divisions breaks the structure of the ZBL. Other districts, such as the Mixed-Use Village District and Planned Residential District, fall within Article V, Special Regulations. Treating some districts as components of an article – i.e., a significant section covering specific regulatory purposes – and other districts as separate articles makes the ZBL difficult to navigate and means users cannot accurately predict where regulations for a specific use can be found.
2. Across the ZBL, similar sections are not consistently formatted. The use of purpose statements, the placement of text relative to section and sub-section titles, and the organization of information between sections vary significantly. Differing structures make the ZBL harder to read and relevant information harder to find.
3. Within individual sections, the subjects covered are not immediately clear based on the article or section title. For example, users cannot immediately differentiate between § 450-3.2- Dimensional and density regulations, and § 450-3.3 - Additional use, dimensional and density regulations. (Changing the title of § 450-3.2. “Dimensional and density regulations” to “Table of Dimensional and Density Regulations” could help to clarify that § 450-3.3 covers regulations that are not addressed in the table.) The division of content between Use Regulations, Special Use Regulations, and Special Permits is not clear.

## **Scattered and Duplicative Use and District Regulations**

Uses and districts are scattered throughout the ZBL. This problem tends to happen when a variety of authors amend the content of a zoning code over time. Users need to search multiple sections and appendices to understand all the rules that may apply to a single use. Forcing users to look in multiple places for regulations makes the ZBL harder to use and increases the possibility of mistakes. In addition to the unpredictable way that content is divided between articles and sections (see our comments above), there are several examples of how the ZBL scatters related regulations across multiple sections, including:

1. Similar use regulations for the same district are often included in different places in the ZBL. For example, regulations on buffers, lot coverage, and building size for the Industrial Garden District are included in § 450-3.3 Additional use, dimensional, and density regulations. However, § 450-5.0 Industrial Garden Park District includes additional dimensional regulations for the district. Scattering the regulations for one district across multiple sections makes it more likely that a user will miss a regulation, resulting in fewer complete applications and making it more likely that a user will unknowingly violate the ZBL.

2. The ZBL has two separate sections related to the special regulations for registered marijuana dispensaries, Article VI – Medical Marijuana treatment centers; Registered marijuana Dispensaries, and Article VIII – Special Permits.
3. Regulations for nonconforming uses are included both in Article III – Use Regulations in a section titled “Nonconforming structures and uses” (450-3.5) and in Article VIII – Special Permits in a section called “Nonconforming structures or uses in all districts” (450-8.13).
4. Despite having a Special Use Regulations article, East Longmeadow locates many special uses, including earth removal operations, family home daycare uses, used car lots, and others, in Article VIII—Special Permits, along with special permit procedures and special permit criteria.
5. While the use regulations for most districts are included in Article III, the regulations for some overlay districts, and some general districts, e.g., the Industrial Garden Park Districts and the Golf Recreation District, are instead included in Article V – Special Use Regulations. While most zoning codes have a section like East Longmeadow’s Special Use Regulations, it is usually called “Special Regulations,” and it contains special requirements that apply to provisions such as commercial kenneling, home occupations, or home-based trade.
6. In many sections, there does not appear to be a logical order or grouping of regulations based on a similar topic or type of regulation. For example, § 450-3.3A alternates between dimensional regulations, such as the length of cornices (450-3.3A(1)) and vision clearance (450-3.3A(3)) and use regulations, such as banning drive-throughs and where food and drink preparation is allowed (450-3.3A(4)).
7. § 430-3.1.A states that all uses not listed or permitted in a district are prohibited. § 430-3.1.B. then provides a long and detailed list of other prohibited uses. This is duplicative, as these uses are inherently prohibited under § 430-3.1.A because they are not listed as an allowed use in any district. Adding a list of explicitly prohibited uses raises questions about other uses that are not listed but are not included in the list of explicitly prohibited uses. It is unclear if the Town intends to treat unlisted uses differently from uses explicitly prohibited under § 430-3.1.B.
8. § 450-3.0.C (1) should list all uses exempt under G.L. c. 40A.

## Table of Uses

East Longmeadow’s Table of Uses contains a “Standards and Regulations” section for each use. In some cases, the Table includes a reference to another section for cross-reference. For some uses, the Table restates regulations included elsewhere in the ZBL, with or without a

citation. In other cases, the Table includes new regulations for the use not included anywhere else. The inconsistent use of this section makes the ZBL confusing and harder to use.

Additionally, the Table of Uses appears to have a duplicate page, marked “amendment.” This page restates several uses that are already listed. The inclusion of the amendment page is unnecessarily confusing and should be removed.

## Readability

To ensure consistent interpretation, a bylaw must be clearly written, with precise, easy-to-understand language, free of contradictions and overly complex language that can be easily misunderstood. In many areas, East Longmeadow’s ZBL could use improvements to make the document more readable, easy to follow, and consistent across articles and sections.

1. Many sections, such as § 450-3.5 Nonconforming Uses and Structures and Article VII Administration and Enforcement, could benefit from reorganization and the insertion of additional information to make the articles clearer and easier to understand.
2. The ZBL has inadvertently created three parallel sections with the same notation. § 450-5.3 has three sub-sections:
  - a. 450-5.3
  - b. 450-5.3A
  - c. 450-5.3B

However, because of East Longmeadow’s numbering system, there are two § 450-5.3As and 450-5.3Bs in the ZBL. This makes citation difficult and will undoubtedly lead to confusion as applicants, the building inspector, the public, and boards cannot accurately determine which section applies based on the section number.

3. The ZBL contains excessive “legalese.” For example, the word “such” appears 302 times in East Longmeadow’s zoning, and the word “said” appears 75 times. Reliance on other legal words and phrases contributes to the dense, wordy nature of the ZBL. Text deficiencies like this are easy to correct, and doing so would make the ZBL easier to read and understand.
4. In several places, the ZBL addresses the permitting process for uses that East Longmeadow no longer allows. The best example is § 450-8.7—Home-Based Trade. This section permits home-based trades but prohibits new permits after 2008. If the use is no longer allowed and has not been allowed for 17 years, the language should be removed.
5. In some areas, the ZBL contains large blocks of unbroken text. Large blocks of text make information difficult to find and encourage the reader to skim or skip over the section.

Subsection numbering or bullets to divide long text into lists can help to cure problems like these.

One example is § 450-3.4, which is only one sentence, with 166 words:

This bylaw shall not apply to buildings or structures, nor to the existing use of any buildings or structures, or of land, lawfully in existence or lawfully begun prior to the adoption of this bylaw, or to a building or special permit issued before the first publication of notice of the public hearing on such bylaw required by MGL c. 40A, § 5, but shall apply to any change or substantial extension of such use, to a building or special permit issued after the first notice of said public hearing, to any reconstruction, extension or structural change of such structure and to any alteration of a structure begun after the first notice of said public hearing to provide for its use for a substantially different purpose or for the same purpose in a substantially different manner or to a substantially greater extent, except where alteration, reconstruction, extension or structural change to a single- or two-family residential structure does not increase the nonconforming nature of said structure.

Similarly, § 450-1.0. Title; purpose, while comprised of more than one sentence, is nevertheless a large block of visually undifferentiated text (167 words):

For the purpose of promoting the health, safety, convenience, morals and welfare of its inhabitants, the Town of East Longmeadow, under the authority granted by the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, does hereby enact this bylaw to be hereafter known and designated as "The Zoning Bylaw of the Town of East Longmeadow." Further purposes of this bylaw are to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to assure maintenance of health and welfare of population; to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements; to conserve the value of lands and buildings; to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the Town; and to increase the amenities of the Town. The construction, alteration, location, use and extent of use of lands within the Town of East Longmeadow are hereby regulated as provided in this bylaw.

6. In many areas of the ZBL, sentences are missing words or phrases that create incomplete sentences or illogical statements.
7. Throughout the ZBL, some sentences are overly complex or awkwardly worded in a way that obscures a regulation's intent or makes its interpretation unnecessarily difficult. Examples include:
  - a. "Cornices may extend not more than 2 ½ feet...." § 450-3.3.A(1).

- b. "No fence more than one-quarter solid or wall greater than four feet in height shall be erected closer to the front lot line than the setback of the primary building" § 450-3.3.A(2).

## **Nonconforming Uses, Structures, and Lots**

Some reorganization, with additional language, is recommended in Article III, § 450-3.5 Nonconforming Uses and Structures. Notably:

1. The ZBL designates the Planning Board as the SPGA, but who or what board makes decisions and findings related to nonconforming uses and structures, and when does a change, alteration, or enlargement of a nonconformity require a special permit from the Planning Board?
2. Add other sections with appropriate language from G.L. 40A, § 6 to provide helpful information to users of the ZBL:
  - a. Exemptions for single- and two-family lots
  - b. Uses and structures authorized under a building permit or special permit filed before the date of the 1st public hearing notice by the Planning Board for a zoning amendment.
  - c. A variance granted by the ZBA does not create a legal nonconformity and therefore cannot use the nonconforming section to make changes to use or structure that received the variance.
3. The ZBL contains some requirements that need to be updated. For example, "period of 6 months" should be "period of 12 months" to conform with recent amendments to G.L. c. 40A.
4. In § 450-3.5A (2), the word "abandonment" should be added after the word "discontinuance".

## **Definitions**

### **Missing, overlapping, and outdated definitions**

Clear, up-to-date, consistent definitions are important for interpreting and enforcing a zoning bylaw. Since terms can mean different things to different people, having definitions that set clear expectations ensures that all parties are working under the same assumptions about what is or is not allowed. Over time, definitions can change, leading to conflicting interpretations. There are several examples of this in East Longmeadow's ZBL, including:

1. The ZBL defines a multifamily dwelling as two or more units in a structure. This is an older definition of multifamily dwelling, and it differs from the definition in the Zoning Act, i.e., three or more units in a building, or two or more buildings on the same lot with one or more units in each building.
2. The ZBL defines the term "Town House," however, in all other areas of the ZBL, the term "townhouse" is used. While the difference might seem minor, a definition that does not align with the term's actual use can create confusion. Should applicants search for the term "Townhouse" in the ZBL, they will find relevant use regulations but will not find the definition.
3. The definition of Townhouses includes regulatory language setting the maximum number of units that can be connected. However, definitions should not regulate use.
4. The current definitions for Family Home Day-Care and Large Family Home Day-Care overlap. The current definitions both include day cares of fewer than six children.
5. The ZBL defines a House Trailer as a Mobile Home. However, the ZBL treats Trailer Homes separately from Mobile Homes. § 450-3.3B(1)(b) states that a lot may have one house trailer as an accessory use so long as it is not used for living quarters. However, § 450-3.1B (2) prohibits mobile homes except as required by law. The regulations seem contradictory since the ZBL defines house trailers as mobile homes.
6. Throughout the ZBL, "setback" is used as a stand-alone term. However, it is unclear in context what setback means since the ZBL differentiates side and rear setbacks in many places. Only by reviewing the definition will the user see that "setback" refers only to the front setback. (We wonder if this is the Town's intent.) The current definition is not commonly used in planning and can cause confusion in practice.
7. The definition of sign is vague and can easily apply to things the community might not want regulated as signs. The definition of a sign as "...any letter, word, symbol, drawing, design, device, article, and object that advertises, calls attention to or indicates any premises, person or activity, whatever the nature of the material and manner of composition or construction." is so broad as to include nearly anything. Under this designation, a company car parked in a driveway, a mural, or a family name written on a mailbox could be considered a sign.

## **Districts**

### **Lack of Purpose Statements**

Purpose statements are a common element of zoning codes. By explaining each Zoning District's intent and goals, the ZBL helps users understand how the community sees a district both now and in the future. Furthermore, purpose statements can be very helpful to the

special permit granting authority (SPGA) and applicants as well. Purpose statements can also help to explain and quantify a district's character and nature. This is especially important in East Longmeadow because the ZBL frequently uses the hard-to-define term "character" of a neighborhood as a review criterion.

East Longmeadow's ZBL does not provide any purpose statements. The ZBL has several districts with overlapping use regulations, including five residential districts, two industrial districts, and several purpose-driven districts. Without clear purpose statements, it is difficult to understand the distinctions between districts and how the districts relate to each other.

### **Missing District from § 450-2.0**

§ 450-2.0 enumerates the Districts in East Longmeadow. However, the section omits the Mixed-Use Village District.

### **Zoning Map**

East Longmeadow's Zoning Map does not include the Floodplain Overlay District, the Planned Adult Residential District, or the Mixed-Village District. § 450-2.1 of the ZBL states the "...the locations and boundaries of zoning districts, except for the Floodplain Districts, shall be shown..."

The exclusion of the Mixed-Village district creates a paper zone with no defined boundaries, as the ZBL does not contain narrative district boundaries. The Floodplain Overlay District is on a different map, so users must cross-reference two maps managed by separate entities (and possibly at different scales). The legend includes the Planned Adult Residential District, but no parcel is shown as within the district, including the one parcel marked as part of the Planned Adult Residential District on the town's GIS web portal.

## **Use Regulations**

### **Internal Use Contradictions**

In many cases, the ZBL contradicts itself on where and how uses are allowed. Contradictions create confusion, make a zoning code more difficult to use, and generate uncertainty that can discourage development. Examples of contradictions in East Longmeadow's current ZBL include:

1. The Table of Uses contradicts sections of the ZBL, or itself, in several places. For example, for B (2) Multifamily dwelling, the Standards and Conditions column includes these words: "permitted in the Elderly Residential District." This implies that multifamily housing is only allowed in the Elderly Residential District. However, multifamily dwellings are also allowed in the PAR and MUV districts.

2. § 4.3.3A(3) states that lights and other illuminating devices shall not be objectionable to any residential area. The ZBL provides no explanation, criteria, or standards for what is objectionable.
3. The allowance of uses in the PUR is unclear. § 450-5.3.C reads “Uses allowed by special permit.” The Table of Uses lists the uses as allowed by right.
4. § 450.3.3A(2)(f) cites the wrong section and should instead cite 450-5.0E.
5. Despite the Table of Uses listing them separately, § 450-8.5 only relates to family home day care and does not specify large family home day care.
6. § 450-3.4 refers to “single- or two-family residential structure.” However, the ZBL does not distinguish a two-family dwelling from a multifamily building.
7. Entry c(3) in the Table of Uses states that museums and public libraries are allowed by special permit. However, § 450-5.10 states that museums and public libraries are exempt from special permit requirements.
8. Entries C (11) and C (12) of the Table of Uses state that cemeteries may only be adjacent to or an extension of an existing cemetery, and crematoriums may only be in existing cemeteries. However, there is no other reference to these requirements in the ZBL.
9. Within the Table of Uses, entry D(16) includes several citations not included elsewhere in the ZBL.
10. In entry E(19) of the Table of Uses, the citation is wrong. The standards and conditions section refers to Article X for adult uses. Article X relates to photovoltaic installations. We believe the entry intends to cite Article XI.

### **Unclear requirements**

In several places, the ZBL uses requirements or regulations that are unclear or do not establish specific criteria. Using references to ‘community character,’ ‘not objectionable,’ and other subjective terms with no guidance on how to interpret them makes the ZBL less predictable and consistent over time and leaves developers with no meaningful way to understand how they can meet the requirements to the satisfaction of the Board.

1. § 4.3.3A(3) states that lights and other illuminating devices shall not be objectionable to any residential area. It is not clear what is meant by objectionable.
2. The Table of Uses separates multiple dwellings on town property from multifamily dwellings. The difference is unclear. If “multiple dwellings” means, in fact, multifamily dwellings, the Town may be violating the uniformity provisions of G.L.c.40A, § 4, which provides, in part: “Any zoning ordinance or by-law which divides cities and towns into

districts shall be uniform within the district for each class or kind of structures or uses permitted.” Distinguishing multifamily by class of owner would be an example of a uniformity problem.

3. § 450-5.2.D(3) states that the publication Trip Generation will determine the total trips per day for a proposed use, unless the applicant can provide a credible alternative. § 450-5.1.E(4) states that a traffic study is required when Trip Generation estimates that the use will generate more than 700 trips per day. However, it is not clear whether Trip Generation is still used to determine if a traffic study is required should the Planning Board accept an alternative for calculating trips per day.
4. § 450-5.6.B(1) appears to contradict §§ 450-5.6.C and 450-5.6.D. § 450-5.6.B(1) states, “In all districts, all parking spaces located on any lot shall be restricted to the use of the business allowed on the site by its employees, customers, and other persons normally visiting the premises at any one time. There shall be no commuter parking, nor shall any business enter into any type of agreement for commuter and or/satellite parking for businesses or activities not located on the site.” However, § 450-5.6.C allows joint parking lots for sites on contiguous parcels, and § 450-5.6.D allows for off-premises parking, which seems to contradict the previous section.

### **Regulation within the Table of Uses**

The ZBL’s Table of Uses contains a section for “Standards and Conditions.” Within this section, additional information is included to reference other applicable sections of the ZBL or restate regulations already listed elsewhere. However, in some cases, the Standards and Conditions section introduces new regulations not discussed in any other part of the ZBL. This inconsistent use creates confusion and further scatters requirements across the ZBL.

In addition, the citations in the Table of Uses are incorrect in several places.

### **Inconsistency with State Law**

The Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) section of East Longmeadow’s ZBL does not conform to current state law. It provides for ADUs accessory to single-family dwellings, but the amendments to G.L. c. 40A, § 3, require ADUs to be allowed as of right in any single-family district. EOHLC’s recently promulgated ADU regulations reinforce the broad provisions in the Zoning Act and clarify that a “single-family district” is any district where single-family dwellings are allowed. As such, if a district allows single-family dwellings and other uses, it qualifies as a single-family district and ADUs must be allowed within it. This means an ADU could be accessory to a single-family dwelling, a townhouse structure, or a multifamily structure located in a single-family district.

§ 450-5.10. Churches and buildings for educational purposes raises some concerns and should be reconsidered by the Town. This provision of the ZBL lists lot coverage, setback, and

landscaped buffer requirements for uses protected under the Dover Amendment (G.L. c. 40A, § 3). While state law allows communities to establish reasonable regulations for exempt uses, we believe the Town would be hard-pressed to enforce the provisions of § 450-5.10 if challenged by a religious or educational use, especially the steeper setback requirements that would apply only to these exempt uses and not other uses in the district where the facility would be located. At the very least, there should be an additional section providing for the Planning Board to exempt a proposed religious or educational use from having to comply with requirements that would be physically impossible to meet on a given proposed site.

On a related note, the Table of Uses indicates that churches are prohibited in Planned Adult Residential District. Religious uses cannot be prohibited in any district.

## Administration

East Longmeadow's ZBL does not provide clear responsibilities for the Planning Board, and in several places, the ZBL is not clear on the responsibilities, criteria, and standards to be enforced. Clear guidance on enforcement and the responsibilities of boards and other administrative processes matter for the proper function of a zoning code. Examples of how the current ZBL makes the process unclear, inconsistent, or otherwise more challenging to administer include:

1. Building Commissioner and Zoning Enforcement Officer are used interchangeably. For example, § 450-7.1.A relates to the Building Commissioner's duties, but 450-7.1.A.3(e) states that the "Zoning Enforcement Officer" decisions may be appealed to the Board of Appeals. The Zoning Enforcement Officer is undefined in the ZBL. Still, there is a third "Zoning Enforcement Authority" defined as the Building Commissioner or their appointed designee, which is not referenced anywhere else in the ZBL. Inconsistencies like this point to the need for a cover-to-cover "clean-up" of the current ZBL.
2. Article VII - Administration and Enforcement includes the roles and responsibilities of the Zoning Board of Appeals but does not outline the role and responsibilities of the Planning Board, other than identifying the Planning Board as the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA). The ZBL should include a section about the Planning Board that is parallel in structure with the section providing for the Zoning Board of Appeals. For example, a new section should be added to Article II, substantially as shown below. We note that other sections of Article VII would need to be renumbered to accommodate the following insertion as § 450-7.1.

### 450-7.1 Planning Board

A. Membership. The Planning Board shall consist of 5 members, appointed by the Town Manager, each serving a staggered five-year term with one member

appointed each year.

B. Powers. The Planning Board shall have the following powers under this Bylaw.

- (1) Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA). This includes special permits related to Nonconforming Structures and Uses (See § 450-3.5)
- (2) Site Plan Review (SPR).
- (3) Zoning Bylaw and Zoning Map Amendments. (See § 450-7.3)

C. Quorum Requirements. Three members of the Planning Board are required to be present for a regular Planning Board meeting. Four of five members are required for a public hearing and decision for either a Special Permit or a Site Plan Review procedure.

D. Repetitive Petition. No request for a special permit that has been unfavorably acted upon by the Planning Board shall be reconsidered by the Board within two years after the date of the unfavorable action unless the Board consents to the reconsideration under the provisions of G.L. c. 40A, § 16, as amended.

E. Procedures. Special permits filed with the Planning Board shall be processed per the provisions of G.L. c. 40A, §§ 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 16, and 17. Zoning Bylaw and Map amendments shall be processed in accordance with G.L. c. 40A, § 5.

3. § 450-8.1 states that the Planning Board is the SPGA for all special permits. This information is repeated in several places throughout the ZBL. The additional citations seem unnecessary and can cause confusion when the Planning Board is not specifically cited.
4. Article VIII has extremely vague requirements, such as “in harmony with the present and probable character,” with no clear identification of what would conform. This can lead to confusion, inconsistent rulings over time, and a harder-to-enforce ZBL. It is also unreasonable to ask a developer to make their structures in line with potential future development that has not happened, and for which there is no basis to rely upon in the ZBL.
5. § 450-8.2D (2) allows the Planning Board to revoke a special permit at a regular meeting, so long as the applicant is notified of the meeting. This conflicts with previous legal rulings that the SPGA must follow the complete special permit process outlined in G.L. c. 40A to substantially revise or rescind an already approved special permit.
6. § 450-9.1 must state that the Site Plan Review process is a by-right process.

7. The ZBL explicitly exempts the Industrial Garden District from design review for reasons that are not apparent.
8. § 450-9.2E includes requirements for design standards. However, the design guidelines have inconsistent and difficult-to-quantify requirements, including:
  - a. 450-9.2E (1) lists the review standards that the project must comply with. However, § 450-9.2E (2) then lists additional requirements.
  - b. Many of the listed requirements do not have enough detail to be interpreted. For example, "Relation of buildings to the environment" does not provide any guidance to determine if an application meets this standard.
  - c. Language such as "the proposed materials and colors must be compatible with the character of the Town and the intent of the design standards," however, there is no indication of what colors or materials would be deemed "compatible".

## Miscellaneous Clarity and Consistency Issues

Outside of the general themes discussed above, there are smaller considerations that make the ZBL inconsistent, unclear, or more challenging to interpret.

### Inconsistent use of terms

The ZBL is inconsistent in its use of terms across the document. Using consistent and accurate citations to other legal documents and sections of the ZBL and other bylaws is important for clarity. Citations to state law vary throughout the document, and the Zoning Board of Appeals is called several different terms. The same is true of the Special Permit Granting Authority, which is sometimes called the SPGA, and sometimes both terms are used simultaneously. Using consistent terms throughout the ZBL is critical for clarity and readability. The ZBL should identify and use a single term for each of these terms.

1. Throughout the ZBL, reference is made to "setback" as a standalone term. However, it is not clear in context what setback is intended, since the ZBL differentiates side setback and rear setback. Only by reviewing the definition for setback will the user see that "setback" refers only to the front setback. This is not a common definition in planning and can cause confusion about what setback is meant.
2. The ZBL does not consistently cite itself. In some areas, the ZBL uses the complete citations, but in other areas, the citation is simply "Section A." Citations should be consistent across the bylaw.
3. § 450-8.8 provides a permitting process for a use that the ZBL specifically says has not been allowed since 2008.

4. § 450-3.3. E(1) refers to “Residence District,” rather than Residential District.

#### **Use of both setbacks and yards**

The ZBL uses yards and setbacks to determine where buildings and objects can be placed in a yard. The overlapping terms and the way they overlap can cause confusion about where buildings can be located and what may be allowed on different parts of a property. Using both terms, which sometimes intersect and at other points do not, can lead to misunderstandings about what structures are allowed and on what parts of a lot.

#### **Other items**

Throughout the ZBL, there are several minor issues that affect use, clarity, and overall functions, but do not fit within one of the above sections. These are often minor errors, typos, or other facts that should be addressed.

1. Within the Table of Uses, in some cases, a note is added to see Article VIII, which relates to special permits; however, not every entry that requires a special permit has a note to see the section. This should be consistent.
2. The ZBL conspicuously omits page numbers (or at least, the version we reviewed lacks page numbers).
3. § 450-3.5B (2) discusses compliance with the zoning bylaw of 1962, and ends with the phrase “the setbacks, side yard and rear yard requirements of the Zoning Bylaw shall not apply.” The ZBL must specify whether it refers to the current requirements or the requirements of the 1962 Zoning Bylaw.
4. The ZBL is not consistent in the use of numbers as Arabic numerals and as written words.
5. The ZBL does not use consistent terminology. For example, the terms Zoning Board of Appeals and Board of Appeals appear in various places throughout the ZBL. The Town should choose one term and use it consistently.
6. § 450-0.I references “section B”, but § 450-5.0B does not relate to the information discussed at 450-5.0.I.
7. §§ 450-8.6 and 450-8.7D use the terms “congregate elderly and handicapped housing,” “housing for the aged,” and “institutions for the sick, handicapped, or feeble.” These are old terms with discriminatory language that should be updated.
8. § 450-0.I refers to “section B”, but § 450-5.0B does not relate to the information discussed at 450-5.0.I.
9. The General description of the Mixed-use Village District at § 450-5.3B is identical to the definition of Mixed-Use Village development provided at § 450-11.2. There seems to be

similar confusion in the provisions for Planned Unit Residential Development and Planned Business Development, for these terms appear in Special Use Regulations as well as the list of districts and in district column headings in the Table of Uses.

---

## Policy Considerations

### Districts and Use Regulations

#### Residential uses and district regulations

East Longmeadow is very limited in the types of housing it allows. Single-family homes are the only housing types allowed as of right in all residential districts, and the allowances for multifamily homes and mixed-use housing are extremely limited. Manufactured housing is prohibited throughout the town. These restrictions can limit East Longmeadow's ability to provide a range of housing options for the community, especially low and moderate-income residents, homes for young households, and homes for senior households looking for downsizing options. Ways that the current ZBL limits housing include:

1. Multifamily housing is not permitted in any of the designated residential districts. It is only allowed in the Planned Unit Residential District, Planned Adult Residential District, and the Mixed-Use Village District. None of these districts allows the construction of individual buildings on individual lots, raising the cost of any multifamily projects. Additionally, of these three districts where multifamily dwellings are allowed, one is a paper zone with no designated area, and the other two districts consist of one already built-out parcel each.
2. Manufactured homes are banned on individual lots and in parks. The ZBL explicitly states that manufactured homes are only allowed where explicitly required by law. This regulation almost entirely bans an entire housing type from the Town, a housing type that disproportionately benefits lower-income individuals and households and is almost indistinguishable from stick-built single-family homes from a use and public safety standpoint.
3. The Elderly Residential District requires that all tenants be over the age of 62. Typically, this is limited to at least one resident, or the head of household, as required in the Adult Residential District. Requiring all tenants to be over 62 limits eligible households. If the goal is to create assisted living or continuing care in this district, then the district should more clearly state it. We understand that some subsidy programs impose a 62-and-over age limit, but it is not necessary to include in a zoning code.

4. § 450-3.3.B(3) does not allow any building to occupy more than 25 percent of the lot it is located on. This creates nonconformities in historically built-out lots and makes development on smaller lots closer to the town center difficult to build.
5. The Elderly Residential District requires a minimum tract size of five acres. Previous iterations of state laws relating to elderly housing required a minimum of five acres, but that has not been the case for many years. Reducing the minimum would allow for more flexibility in the creation of elderly housing.

### **Use and Dimensional Restrictions for Commercial and Industrial Uses**

East Longmeadow's ZBL also imposes several restrictions and challenges to commercial and industrial uses.

1. § 450-3.3.A(5) appears to forbid outdoor seating for restaurants. The section states that "The preparation and/or service of food and drink in any manner is expressly prohibited, with the exception of those establishments in which the entire process of service takes place within the primary building." This would prohibit food service to tables on a patio, deck, or other outdoor area.
2. In many areas, the ZBL is unusually prescriptive about dimensional requirements, imposing highly controlled dimensional regulations even for nonconforming lots. These prescriptive requirements can be burdensome, difficult to administer, and limiting for potential developers.
3. East Longmeadow's ZBL contains some provisions that raise Fair Housing concerns. For example, the Town requires a minimum of one parking space for a single-family dwelling. However, in the Mixed-Use Village District, the Town requires a minimum of one parking space per bedroom. In planned unit residential developments and planned adult residential developments, the Town requires a minimum of two parking spaces per unit. The residential use most likely to have multiple occupants – a single-family dwelling – has a much lower parking requirement than other types of housing.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Issuance and Duration of Special Permits**

East Longmeadow's ZBL is in several places stricter than state law requires regarding permit approvals and Board voting rules. While towns are allowed to impose stricter regulations than those required by the state, the limits imposed can impede the development process and leave a shorter window of time for approved projects to begin.

1. § 450-8.2A(3) requires that a permit will expire if not exercised within 1 year. G.L. c. 40A allows for up to 3 years for applicants to exercise a permit.

2. § 450-8.2A(3) states that only members of the Planning Board who attended the public hearing may vote on an application. G.L. c.39, Sec.23D, The Mullin Rule, allows members of a board of commission to continue participating and voting if they missed a hearing, so long as they review the evidence from the missed session. We do not know if the Town has adopted the Mullin Rule. If not, we recommend doing so.
3. The Site Plan Review has a significant design review process that could benefit from an illustrative design guidebook.

### **Site Plan Review; Design Review**

East Longmeadow imposes a very burdensome Site Plan Review (SPR) requirement, which slows the application process and imposes higher compliance costs upon developers than in other similar communities. This can discourage development of all types, especially commercial and large-scale projects, which could benefit the town and add new commercial, business, mixed-use, and multifamily developments for which there appears to be demand.

1. The current Site Plan Review process almost entirely duplicates the special permit process for the Town, which is better suited for a discretionary permit. The Town could consider revising the process to align with how other towns have expedited the by-right process by including shorter periods for the public hearing, and a shorter duration for issuing a determination. It would benefit the Town to begin working on this now because a bill is making its way through the legislature to codify Site Plan Review within the Zoning Act.
2. § 450-9.6A, Administration, includes language about the Planning Board's ability to deny a SPR application. In Massachusetts, the courts have determined the two reasons on which a board can deny a SPR application. Those two reasons should be added to the language of this section so every reader will understand the limitations on denying a SPR.
3. In § 450-9.6B Administration, the ZBL provides that the Planning Board may require the posting of security to assure plan compliance with the approval and any conditions with the approval. That language is perfectly acceptable. However, language in this section also authorizes the Planning Board to "suspend any permit or license." There is no legal authority for a board to suspend any permit or license. First, the Planning Board does not issue any licenses, so it has no authority to suspend a license. Second, if there is a violation of a site plan approval or a condition of that approval, it is the Building Commissioner's responsibility to take action, e.g., by issuing a stop work (Note: § 450-7.1(2) gives explicit authority for the Building Commissioner to enforce the zoning bylaw as well as any permits granted under the bylaw or to use the noncriminal complaint process.)

4. Every zoning ordinance or bylaw with a site plan review section should include a subsection regarding the appeal process for a SPR decision. There is no equivalent language in East Longmeadow's Article IX. The usual appeal process for site plan review references G.L. c. 40A, § 17, to state that appeals of a Planning Board site plan decision shall follow the provisions of G.L. c. 40A, § 17. This should be added to Article IX.
5. The Site Plan Review has a significant design review process. It would benefit from an illustrative design guidebook.
6. It is unclear why the Town exempts activity in the Industrial Garden District from design review.
7. In § 450-9.2E Design Standards, the ZBL provides the following: "The Design Review Committee shall review the project for conformance with the following design review standards:" The ZBL lists several standards. However, some of the "standards" listed are not actually a standard. For example: E(1)(g) "Relation of buildings to the environment". What is the standard used here to define whether a building meets this goal? There is no specific benchmark or measurement that defines a standard.
8. Some of the "standards" are vague. For example: E(1): "The proposed materials and colors must be compatible with the character of the Town and the intent of the design standards." Is there a list of colors that the existing buildings in Town have used on their exteriors that would only be acceptable on new buildings? What colors are compatible with the character of the Town? What specifically is the character of the Town?



# 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.<sup>1</sup> 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).

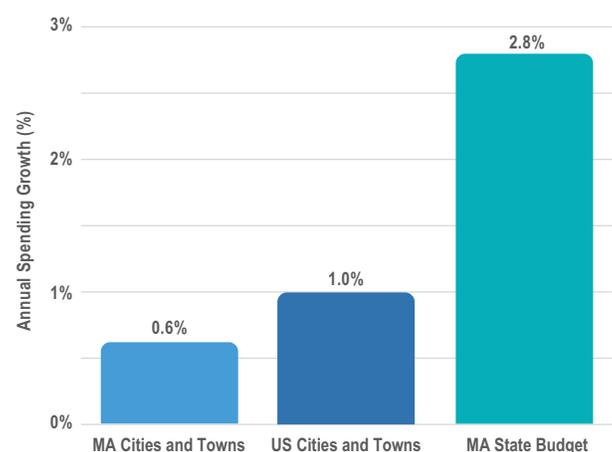
There is a limited exception, where a city or town can raise property taxes by more than 2.5 percent in a given year to fund vital investments in things like new school buildings or to fill short-term budget shortfalls. But the relief is temporary and it requires a costly and uncertain public referendum.

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.

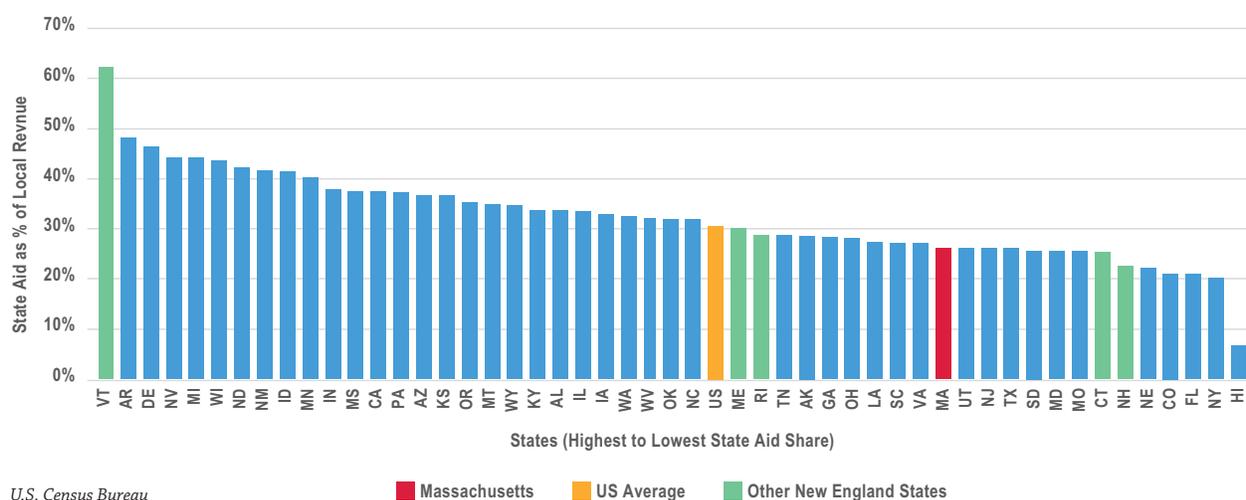
State aid has been a lifeline for cities and towns. But it’s also true that, compared to other states, state aid in Massachusetts doesn’t stand out as particularly generous.

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



U.S. Census Bureau

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.

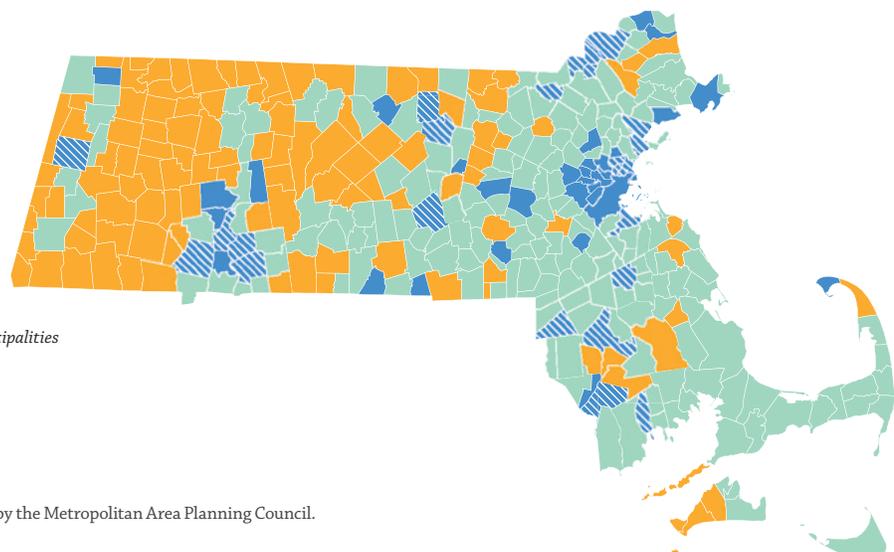
Accounting for these distinctions is essential to understanding the budgetary challenges faced by cities and towns. But having cut the data in dozens of different ways, we found that a huge amount of the underlying variation can be captured with a relatively simple collection of categories.<sup>2</sup>

- **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**<sup>3</sup>, 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).

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

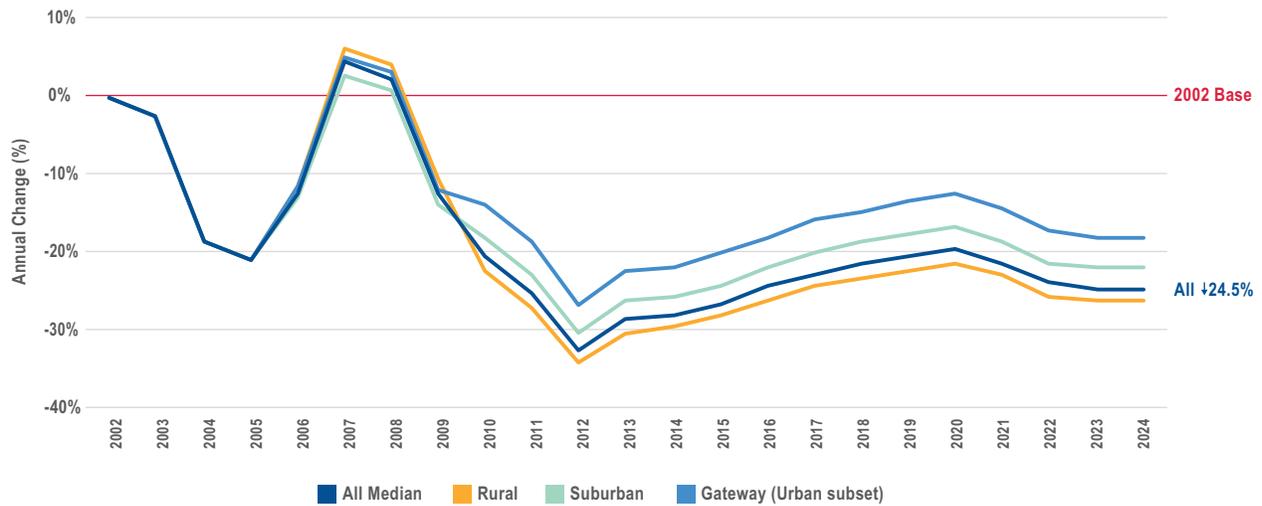
### A Common Need: UGGA

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.

**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.

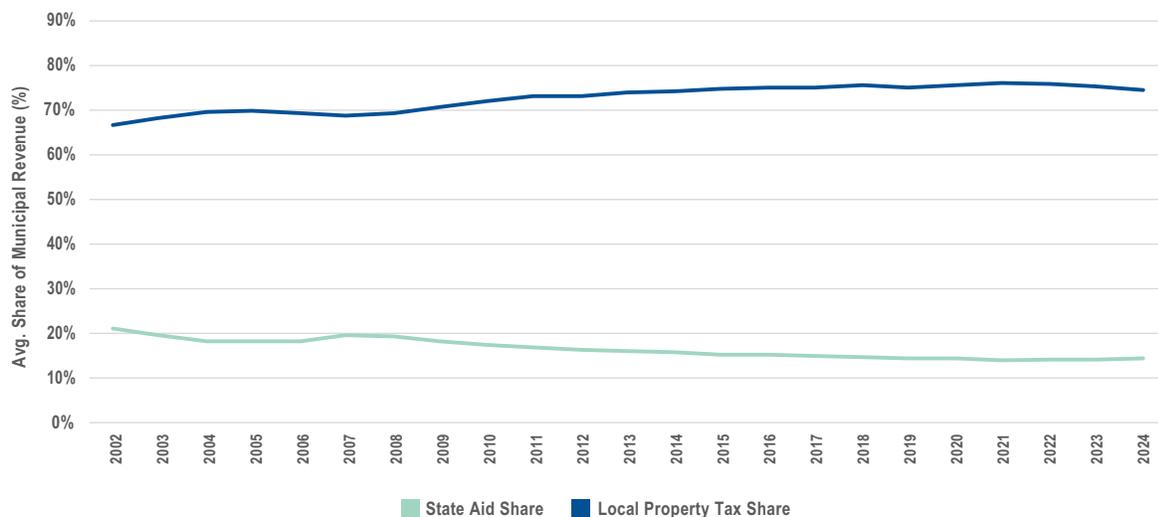
Losing UGGA dollars, in this way, is particularly difficult for stressed municipal budgets, because it’s a rare stream of support that can be flexibly redirected to address evolving needs — whether that means extra road repairs after a pothole-cratering spring or additional tutoring for students struggling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

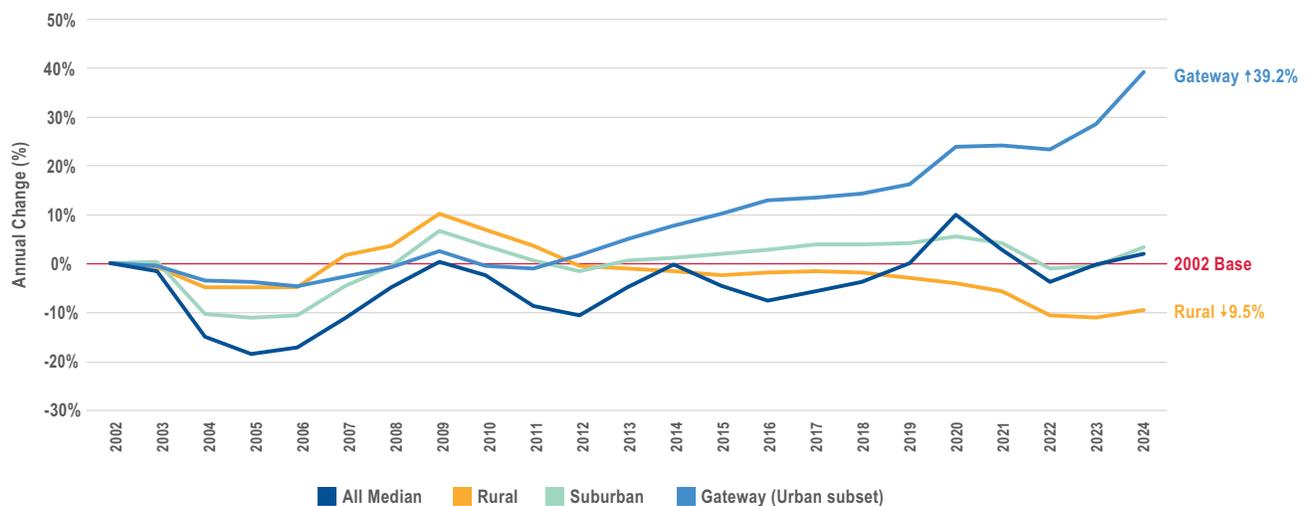
## Unequal Education Aid

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

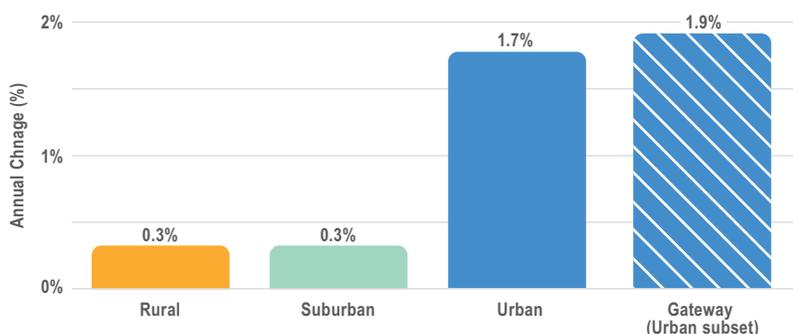


Division of Local Services; CSPA calculations

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.

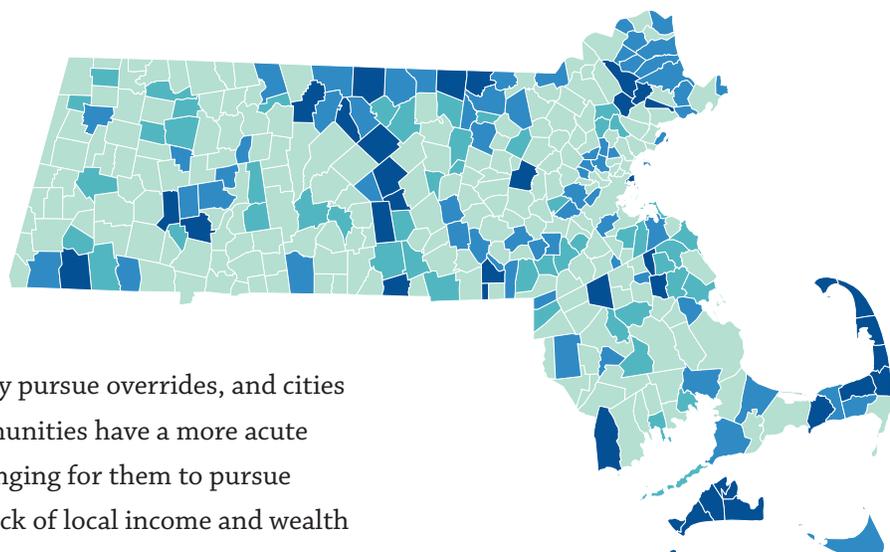
And each effort is a one-off — a short-term fix for what is often a deeper mismatch between the services residents desire and the city or town's restricted ability to raise sufficient revenue.

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).

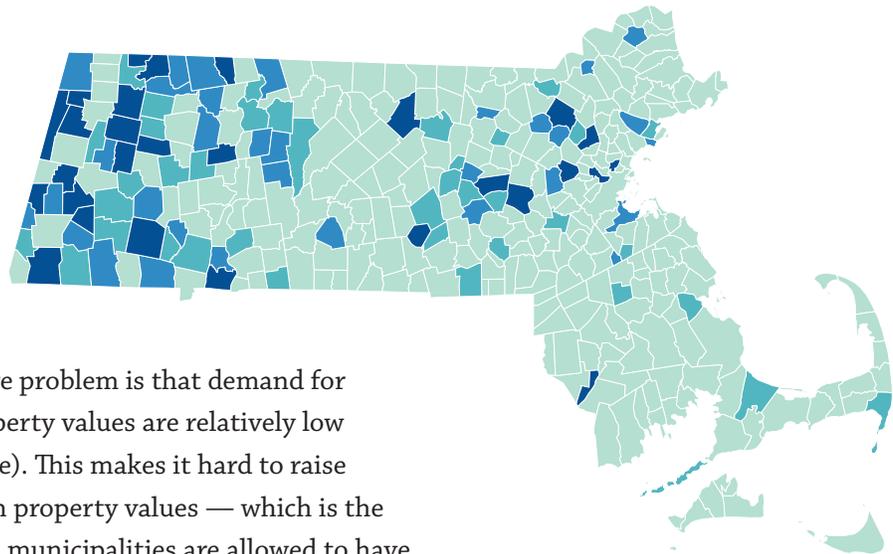
Rural towns and gateway cities have far more of this excess levy capacity than their suburban neighbors. What this suggests is that they face local tax constraints even more severe than the already-strict 2.5 percent state rule. Figure 10 shows the nature of this constraint, which is actually quite different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

**FIGURE 10**

**MA Municipalities:  
Excess Levy Capacity**

Percentage of maximum, 2024

- < 5%
- 5-10%
- 10-15%
- >15%



*Division of Local Services*

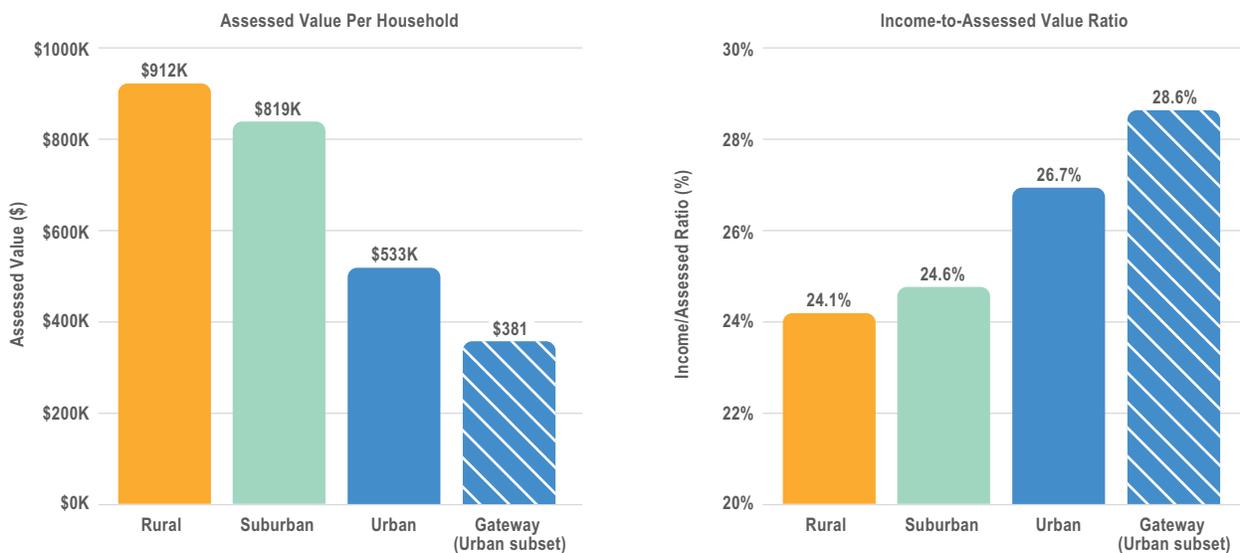
Among gateway cities, the core problem is that demand for real estate is limited, and property values are relatively low (compared to the state average). This makes it hard to raise money through a direct tax on property values — which is the only major tax Massachusetts municipalities are allowed to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