



# NORTHFIELD

V E R M O N T

# TOWN MANAGER

## **Community:**

Northfield is a historic, university-anchored Vermont community with 5,900 residents known for its strong civic identity, natural beauty, and dedicated municipal workforce. With a blend of small-town character and organizational complexity, Northfield offers an exceptional opportunity for a Town Manager ready to guide a community that is both deeply rooted and poised for meaningful progress.

Northfield's economic foundation is remarkably strong for a town of its size. Norwich University serves as the community's anchor institution—its largest employer, taxpayer, and a consistent partner in public services—while businesses such as Cabot Hosiery/Darn Tough, TDS, Trans Video, and Gillespie Fuels contribute to a stable and diverse local economy. The town benefits from its own water, sewer, and electric utilities, reliable public transportation, and a strategic location near Montpelier, Barre, and I-89, with easy access to Boston and Montreal.

Socially and culturally, Northfield thrives on the energy of its highly engaged volunteer base.

Residents serve on committees, commissions, and task forces with a level of commitment that strengthens every corner of civic life. The walkable, historic village center fosters a strong sense of belonging, supported by institutions such as the Brown Public Library, the Senior Center, local churches, and the University. The school system benefits from its proximity to Norwich, offering enhanced learning opportunities for local students.

The town's natural and recreational assets are equally impressive. The Dog River winds through the community, offering swimming holes, trout fishing, and peaceful riverfront access. The Town Forest, Shaw Outdoor Center, school trails, Memorial Park, and the town pool provide year-round recreation, while the FEMA-funded floodplain park and classic covered bridges highlight Northfield's quintessential Vermont landscape.





## **Successes:**

Over the past decade, Northfield has completed a wide range of significant projects. Infrastructure improvements—from major water system upgrades to stormwater separation and sidewalk enhancements—have strengthened the town’s resilience. Community planning initiatives such as Ridge & Rivers, the Paine Mountain summit purchase, Town Forest improvements, and the VCRD Community Visit have helped shape a shared vision for the future. The hiring of a full-time Economic Development Director and ongoing beautification efforts reflect a community investing in itself.

## **Challenges:**

At the same time, Northfield faces a number of challenges that call for strong, steady leadership. Recent retirements, resignations, and departmental silos have created a leadership vacuum. The Police Department requires rebuilding, the newly formed Ambulance Union needs thoughtful negotiation, and the town is replacing a very long-term Finance Director. Housing shortages, school enrollment pressures, rising emergency service costs, and long-deferred infrastructure needs add to the complexity. Community trust has been strained, and several legal matters remain unresolved.

## **Opportunities:**

Yet these challenges come with significant opportunities. Housing and economic development projects are already underway, supported by years of planning work that is ready to be implemented. Private investment—particularly from Norwich alumni—is increasing, and expanding sewer infrastructure could unlock new growth.

The community is eager for a leader who can strengthen regional partnerships, improve communication, and guide Northfield into its next era.

## **Organization:**

Northfield operates with a Town Meeting/ Select Board/Town Manager form of government much as most of Vermont. The 5 Member Select Board is elected in March with staggered two year terms. The Town Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town as per the Town Charter and the Vermont General Statutes.

The Town has a general fund budget of \$6.7 Million with an additional \$8.25 Million in utility funds (electric, water, sewer). They employ 26 full time employees with 41 FTE. There are three unions. Departments include Police, Highway, Electric, Water& Sewer, EMS, Fire (volunteer), Economic Development, Planning & Zoning, Town Clerk, and Town Manager. See <https://www.northfield-vt.gov/> for more information.

Within the municipal organization, Northfield benefits from a deeply committed staff with extensive institutional knowledge. Departments such as water/sewer, electric, finance, and highway operate efficiently, and staff consistently demonstrate accountability, collaboration, and pride in their work. Despite leadership gaps, employees have kept operations running smoothly. However, staffing shortages, outdated systems, and the need for stronger administrative support highlight the importance of a manager who can rebuild confidence and modernize internal operations.





## The Position:

The next Town Manager will need to be a leader of integrity, transparency, and strong communication. The community is seeking someone with proven leadership experience, sound judgment, and the ability to inspire and empower staff. Financial expertise is essential, along with human resources knowledge, labor relations experience, and comfort with technology. The ideal manager will be decisive yet collaborative, respectful of staff expertise, and skilled at addressing conflict and holding people accountable.

In the first year, the manager will be expected to rebuild the Police Department, stabilize the leadership team, and advance key housing and capital projects. Establishing clear communication with staff and residents, strengthening relationships across the community, and demonstrating visible, steady leadership will be critical. Early wins—such as progress in public safety, improved communication, and resolution of outstanding legal matters—will help build trust and momentum.

## Qualifications:

3-5 years or more of proven managerial experience. Municipal government experience is preferred. A Bachelor's and/or Master's Degree in public administration or comparable is desired. The Board will consider relevant experience in lieu of specific education requirements.

The Salary range is \$120,000 to \$140,000 annually commensurate with qualifications. The Town provides Medical (employer pays equivalent of 80% of MVP VT PLUS GOLD

3 QHDHP premium), HRA, Dental (100% ER paid for employee, EE cost for additional enrollments), STD/LTD/Life/ADD (100% ER pd), Paid Leave/PTO, Vermont Municipal Employee Retirement System (VMERS), Voluntary Deferred Compensation Plan, Social Security.

Northfield is ready for a Town Manager who brings energy, professionalism, and a collaborative spirit. The community is optimistic about the future and eager to partner with a leader who can communicate effectively, act decisively, and guide the town toward a resilient and vibrant next chapter.

## Process:

Applications must be submitted electronically to [bfraser@vlct.org](mailto:bfraser@vlct.org) (clearly marked Northfield) and will be accepted until Friday, March 6th.

Decisions about candidate status will be made by March 13th. First round interviews will be held remotely with Board members and the VLCT consultant. These interviews will be recorded and shared with the remaining board members. Second round interviews will be held in person in Northfield and are anticipated to occur between March 25th and April 3rd. Final candidate will undergo thorough background check.

The process is being managed by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns on behalf of the Select Board. Please direct any questions about the position or the process to Bill Fraser, VLCT Management Consultant at [bfraser@vlct.org](mailto:bfraser@vlct.org) or **802-522-5846**.