

Here are the latest data and recommendations for the "Ten Towns" for FY2019

I've been able to update the information in some categories

Population – July 1, 2015 (US Census) [Geeky note: *]
Per Capita Income – 2014 (DOR)
Total Budget – FY2017 (DOR from recap sheets)
Average Single Family Value – FY2017 (DOR)
Residential Percentage of Assessed Values – FY2017 (DOR)

[*It used to be that the US Census came out with an annual estimate of population for July 1. Last November, the July 1, 2015 number was available. I expected the July 1, 2016 number available now. Instead, the estimates appear to rely on a different data set from the American Community Survey. I don't think that the change should be that material, but I'm not going to use it for this year. However, if this continues, I'll switch to that as the best possible data that exists. For now, I'm staying with July 1, 2015.]

Using the criteria from last year:

Distance: within 50 miles
Population: 5,000 to 12,500
Operating budget: 5M to 35M
Income per capita 26K to 38K (adjusted for a more even spread as Halifax is now at 32K)
Average single family value: 247K to 347K (adjusted again as the average in Halifax is at 297K)
Percentage of residentially zoned valuation: 80% to 100%

Setting aside distance for the moment....

Of the 351 cities and towns...

94 are between 5,000 and 12,500 in population
Of those, 68 have budgets between \$5M and \$35M
Of those, 32 have per capita income between \$26K and \$38K
Of those, there are 21 communities with an average single family value from \$247K to \$347K.
Of those, 16 communities have a residential valuation percentage between 80% and 100%.

In Bristol and Plymouth Counties, those are:

Freetown
Dighton
Lakeville
Halifax
Acushnet

Hanson
Berkley

Some nominees for the other three in Bristol and Plymouth are:

West Bridgewater (slightly higher commercial valuation percentage,
larger budget due to non-regional high school)
Rochester (just over the \$38K per capita and \$347K house value)
Rehoboth (higher per capita and valuation, more so than Rochester)
Carver (larger budget due to non-regional high school)
Whitman (larger community with a larger budget despite regional
school)
East Bridgewater (larger community, larger budget (no regional school))

[There are a barrel of Worcester County communities that are closer in
similarity to Halifax than these six, but the Board of Selectmen and
Finance Committee have not been interested in "going abroad". Norfolk
County offers a couple of choices, but these are not as similar to
Halifax as the Worcester County possibilities.]

I'd add West Bridgewater, Rochester, and Carver (this instead of
Rehoboth; I think that more people "relate" to Carver).

That would make a list of:

Acushnet
Berkley
Carver
Dighton
Freetown
Halifax
Hanson
Lakeville
Rochester
West Bridgewater

The only change from FY2018 to FY2019 would be to replace Whitman with
West Bridgewater.

I'll talk with you about this at future FinCom meetings.

The full data set is attached.

Thanks,

Charlie