

Quick Facts #3 - FY2027 Proposed Operations Analyst Overview

Westford is proposing to create the position of Operations Analyst. This Quick Fact is meant to help residents understand the need for the position and how it will leverage future efficiency, cost savings and revenue.

Westford Fiscal Reality: Westford faces structural budget pressure, similar to other municipalities in Massachusetts. This is not a short-term issue; Proposition 2½ limits revenue growth to 2.5%, while costs (labor, energy, waste disposal, health insurance, others) are rising faster.

- Nearly \$500,000 in one-time funds are supporting the FY27 school budget and will run out by FY28.
- Voters rejected a Proposition 2 ½ override in FY25; near-term override support appears unlikely; we must stabilize finances within levy limits.

Strategic Plan Alignment: This position will directly support the *Responsive and Responsible Town Government* Outcome Area by focusing on cost control, operational efficiency, and responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources.

- Supports implementation of Budget Task Force recommendations including PAYT, Town-wide fee review and stronger financial modeling.

Why This Position?

Proven Return on Investment: Since the 2024 Town Managers Office reorganization (and despite elimination of two positions), with management level staff, we have generated over \$4.6 million in taxpayer benefit. We need to build on these successes and continue the momentum. Examples include:

- Recovered approximately \$130,000 through solid waste contract enforcement.
- \$3.4+ million in energy projects completed or underway with <\$100K upfront taxpayer cost; \$198,000 avoided short-term costs and \$470,000 projected future cost avoidance.
- Small-scale efficiency and revenue improvements (surplus sales \$50K+, insurance/risk management savings, process improvements) generating measurable recurring benefit.

What the Operations Analyst Will Do

Solid Waste & PAYT Oversight

- Track contract compliance and liquidated damages
- Support PAYT implementation and potential cart-based expansion
- Enhanced customer service, & improve curbside service tracking and accountability

Energy & Utility Management

- Monitor/model 116+ utility accounts and solar net metering credits
- Complete mandatory Green Communities & Large Building Energy Reporting
- Support performance contracting and solar initiatives

Financial Analysis & Cost Containment

- Fills a structural analytical gap at lower cost than management level staff time
- Conduct multi-year financial modeling and provide analytical support for town-wide fee review
- Benchmark contracts and review high-impact vendor agreements
- Support capital and debt modeling for long-term planning
- Assist with grant applications/administration and assist with special projects.

Budget Impact

- **Salary:** \$80,000
- **Benefits (variable based on enrollment):**
 - Health Insurance: \$0 to \$27,114.24
 - Medicare: ~\$920
 - Life Insurance: \$0 – \$13.44
 - Retirement: ~\$5,500
- **Estimated Average Benefits Cost:** ~ \$22,000 **Estimated Total Average Compensation:** ~\$102,000

If Not Approved

- Savings and revenue opportunities delayed or lost and energy efficiency momentum slows.
- Recycling expansion and PAYT enhancements (such as additional/larger carts) curtailed.
- Senior staff continue performing routine data work instead of strategic planning and leadership.
- Greater long-term pressure on the General Fund resulting from missed opportunities to improve.

In Summary

This position is not expansion for expansion's sake; it is a capacity investment to protect taxpayers. It aligns costs with use and improves oversight of major cost centers (energy and solid waste) and strengthens long-term financial planning helps reduce structural pressure on the property tax levy over time.