



MassGIS Data: Community Boundaries (Towns)



MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information) (/massgis)

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Visit the MassGIS website (<https://www.mass.gov/organizations/massgis-bureau-of-geographic-information>)

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MassGIS Data: Community Boundaries (Towns)

February 2014

This political boundary datalayer is a 1:25,000 scale datalayer containing the boundaries of the 351 communities (cities and towns) in Massachusetts.

Download Shapefile (<http://download.massgis.digital.mass.gov/shapefiles/state/towns.zip>)

Download ArcGIS 10 File Geodatabase (http://download.massgis.digital.mass.gov/gdbs/towns_gdb.zip)

(<http://www.mass.gov/anf/images/itd/massgis/datalayers/towns.jpg>)



MassGIS has developed a newer, more accurate layer based on surveyed town corner points, Community Boundaries (Towns) from Survey Points

(<https://docs.digital.mass.gov/dataset/massgis-data-community-boundaries-towns-survey-points>).

The seaward boundary of coastal communities has been defined at mean high water in this datalayer. Layers include:

- **TOWNS_POLY**: single-part polygons, with separate features for offshore islands.
- **TOWNS_ARC**: line feature class representing types of boundaries.
- **TOWNS_POLYM**: multi-part polygons, with one record for each of the 351 municipalities. Offshore islands are included as part of the large mainland feature. This layer may be useful in analyses using 1-to-1 joins on the TOWN_ID field.

In addition, the geodatabase version of these data includes two annotation layers:

- **TOWNS_ANNO_NAME**: located in the center of each municipality.
- **TOWNS_ANNO_BDY**: smaller text parallel to municipal boundaries.

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Other Access

The information on this page (the dataset metadata) is also available in these formats.

JSON

RDF

via the **DKAN API**

(<https://docs.getdkan.com/en/1.4/test/apis/index.html>)

Note that the 351 communities store the official municipal names, not including "villages" or other sections of towns.

The Secretary of State's office has prepared a web page listing the **Unincorporated and Unofficial Names of Massachusetts Communities** (<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisuno/unoidx.htm>).

Also see:

- **List of Town Numbers and Names** (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/itd/services/massgis/massachusetts-towns-ids-names.pdf>)
- **Towns Index Map** (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/itd/services/massgis/town-county-index.pdf>).

Production

This datalayer, except the coastline, was digitized by MassGIS from a set of stable based film prints of the 1:25,000 7.5' quadrangles purchased from the USGS by the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Works. The coastline was taken from the USGS 1:100,000 hydrography DLG database. It was selected visually and appended to the digitized town boundaries.

The TOWNS_POLYM layer was created by dissolving the 611 polygons in TOWNS_POLY on TOWN_ID, producing a multi-part polygon feature class with 351 features, one for each municipality.

Attributes

Fields in the polygon attribute tables:

<u>FIELD NAME</u>	<u>WIDTH</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>Description</u>
TOWN_ID	3	Int	MassGIS Town-ID Code (alphabetical, 1-351)
TOWN	21	Char	City or town name
FIPS_STCO	5	Int	Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) State/County Code
POP1980	10	Int	US Census Town Population: 1980
POP1990	10	Int	US Census Town Population: 1990
POP2000	10	Int	US Census Town Population: 2000
POP2010	10	Int	US Census Town Population: 2010
POPCH80_90	10	Int	Population change, 1980-1990
POPCH90_00	10	Int	Population change, 1990-2000
POPCH00_10	10	Int	Population change, 2000-2010
FOURCOLOR	1	Int	Codes (1,2,3,4) allowing shading of all towns using 4 symbols (based on four-color theorem, where no adjacent polygons have same symbol)
TYPE	2	Char	C = City, T = Town, TC = Town with City form of government, or (for AMESBURY and EASTHAMPTON) a City without wards or precincts. Source: http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cispdf/City_Town_Map.pdf (http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cispdf/City_Town_Map.pdf)
ISLAND	1	Int	Polygon is (1) / is NOT (0) an island - many towns are composed of many polygons. This field is not present in TOWNS_POLYM.

(<http://www.mass.gov/anf/images/itd/massgis/datalayers/towns2.jpg>)

The layer's arc attribute table contains an item added called OUTLINE, which enables differentiation of line type (e.g. dashed lines inside the state and solid for the outside).



OUTLINE codes are:

- 1 = Interstate boundaries
- 17 = Internal boundaries (a dashed line in the MassGIS default lineset SW16)
- 4 = Coastline

ARC/INFO Annotation has been added to the coverage. Level 1 places town names within the town boundaries while levels 2 and 3 place annotation along town boundaries.

Related Database Tables

The following tables may be joined to the Massachusetts Towns polygon layers on the TOWN_ID field:

TOWNS_POLY_AREACODE [[download dBASE file](#)

(http://wsgw.mass.gov/data/gispub/shape/state/towns_poly_areacode.exe) as self-extracting .exe] stores telephone area codes for each municipality and reflects the addition of four new "overlay" codes in Massachusetts which took effect on April 2, 2001. For more information on the Commonwealth's area codes, see [Verizon's Area Codes Lookup Web page](#) (<http://www22.verizon.com/areacodes/>).

<u>FIELD NAME</u>	<u>Contents</u>
TOWN_ID	Town ID - Relates to TOWN_ID in TOWNS_POLY and TOWNSSURVEY_POLY attribute tables
AREACODE	Town Area Code (413, 508/774, 617/857, 781/339, 978/351)

TOWNS_POP [[download dBASE file](#) (http://wsgw.mass.gov/data/gispub/shape/state/towns_pop.exe) as self-extracting .exe] stores population estimates for each city and town, as of July 1, from 2000 to 2007. Data are from the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division.

<u>FIELD NAME</u>	<u>Contents</u>
TOWN_ID	Town ID - Relates to TOWN_ID in TOWNS_POLY TOWNS_POLYM, TOWNSSURVEY_POLY and TOWNSSURVEY_POLYM attribute tables
JULY1_2000	Population estimate on July 1, 2000
JULY1_2001	Population estimate on July 1, 2001
JULY1_2002	Population estimate on July 1, 2002
JULY1_2003	Population estimate on July 1, 2003
JULY1_2004	Population estimate on July 1, 2004
JULY1_2005	Population estimate on July 1, 2005
JULY1_2006	Population estimate on July 1, 2006
JULY1_2007	Population estimate on July 1, 2007

TOWNS_POLY_UTILITIES stores providers for Cable, Electricity and Natural Gas service. See the [Public Service Utility Providers](#) (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis/datalayers/pubutil.html>) page for details and data download.

TOWNS_POLY_MWRATOWN is no longer distributed. See the new **MWRA Water/Sewer Service Areas** (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis/datalayers/mwraservice.html>) layer for this information.

Maintenance

MassGIS maintains this datalayer, although no updates are planned to the geography. For the most current municipal boundaries see the **Community Boundaries (Towns) from Survey Points** (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis/datalayers/townsurvey.html>).

The FOURCOLOR item was added to the attribute table in March 2002.

In August 2002, the TYPE item was added, based on information available from **a map on the Secretary of State's Web site** (http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cispdf/City_Town_Map.pdf). In addition, the TOWN attribute value for Gay Head was changed to "AQUINNAH" to reflect that town's name change to Aquinnah. MassGIS kept the TOWN_ID as 104 so that the existing numbering scheme will remain intact.

In October 2002, the attribute table was modified to include population figures (total and change) based on the 2000 U.S. Census. Also at this time the arcs were modified to include OUTLINE code 4 and to correct a small section of the Florida-Savoy border.

In September 2009 TYPE was changed to 'TC' for Braintree, Palmer, Randolph and Winthrop.

In February 2014 Tinker's Island was reassigned to Salem from Marblehead and Bumkin Island reassigned from Hingham to Hull, based on data from Level 3 Assessors Parcels. TYPE was changed to 'TC' for BRIDGEWATER, based on latest data from the Secretary of State's office. Also, the POP2010 and POPCH00_10 fields were added and the fields CCD_MCD, FIPS_PLACE, FIPS_MCD and FIPS_COUNTY were dropped.

Last Updated 10/24/2017

Items

shapefile **Community Boundaries (Towns) / Shapefile**



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geodatabase **Community Boundaries (Towns) / Geodatabase**



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Record Info

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List of Town Numbers and Names (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/itd/services/massgis/massachusetts-towns-ids-names.pdf>)

Towns Index Map (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/itd/services/massgis/town-county-index.pdf>)

Community Boundaries (Towns) Without Coast (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis/datalayers/community-boundaries-towns-without-coast-.html>)

Community Boundaries (Towns) from Survey Points (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis/datalayers/townsurvey.html>)