

Community Profile - Athol

Information for Businesses

According to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development five of the largest 200 employers in the Franklin-Hampshire Workforce Investment Area are in Athol. Their names, estimated total work force by firm name, and NAICS codes can be found below in Table A.

Table A
Largest Businesses in Athol

Company Name	Number of Employees	NAICS Code
L.S. Starrett Co.	500-999	3322
Athol Memorial Hospital	250-499	6221
Alzheimer Center-Quabbin Valley	100-249	6213
Hannaford Supermarket	100-249	4451
Pexco	100-249	3261

Source: http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/Top_employer_list.asp?gstfips=25&areatype=15&gCountyCode=000002

Property taxes

Single tax classification
EQV \$719,709,200
Tax rate: Athol \$15.48

Employment and wages

Employers: 259
Employer sales: 186,124,000
Annual payroll: \$81,638,000
Employers in Manufacturing: 3.9%
Employers In retail: 15.5%

Source: US Census 2010/2007-2011 ACS

Patents

From 2008 through 2013 the number of patents filed/awarded was 13
Source: www.city-data.com

Labor force

July 2013 - Labor force, employment and unemployment rates

Labor force available (16+): 5,249
Employment: 4,686 (10.7%)
Unemployment (Athol): 10.7%
Unemployment (Massachusetts): 7.2%

Physical infrastructure

Transportation assets and links

State Routes 2, 2A, 32 and 202

Transit

Pan Am Railway (freight)
Community Transit Services (CTS), Athol provides both bus ("fixed routes") and curb-to-curb ("para transit") services to qualified persons
Montachusett Area Regional Transit Authority (MART), Fitchburg provides both bus ("fixed routes") and curb-to-curb ("para transit") services to qualified persons
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA or the "T") provides commuter rail service to Fitchburg (soon to be Wachusett Station, Westminster by 2014/15) from North Station, Boston

Commuting to work

Average commute is 27.9 minutes for an Athol resident according to the 2007 ACS estimates.

Utilities

Municipal water: Yes
Municipal Wastewater: Yes
Private well water: Yes
Private wastewater treatment: Yes
Electricity: National Grid

High speed data communications infrastructure is being installed in the North Quabbin region.

Source: <http://broadband.masstech.org/>
September 3, 2013

Housing costs

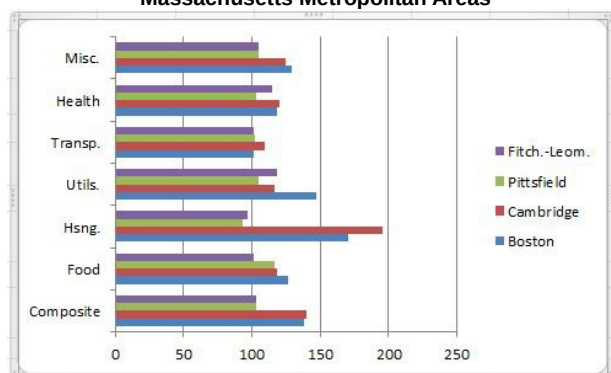
The median price for a home in Athol in July of 2013 was \$107,000 which is affordable especially when compared to the median sale price of the United States which was \$213,500 that same month

Cost of Living Index (COLI)

Overall, costs for housing, food, etc. in the Fitchburg-Leominster Metro area are as cheap as those in Pittsfield and approximately 25% cheaper than those in eastern Massachusetts (Boston/Cambridge). Figure 1, below, displays COLI costs compared in health, transportation, utilities, housing and a composite of all costs, by the four reporting metropolitan districts in the Commonwealth.

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Figure 1
Cost of Living Index by Cohort by Four Reporting
Massachusetts Metropolitan Areas



Source:

http://www.fitchburgstate.edu/uploads/files/REDI/COLI_Q2_Media_Release_2013.pdf

The Community

Community history

Athol is a small manufacturing town located an hour drive from Worcester, MA. In 2010 it was designated a Green Community by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources.

Density

347 people per square mile (11,584 / 33.4 - population by total area)

Land and water coverage

Total area: 33.4 square miles
Land area: 32.58 square miles

County, Labor Market Area, tourism, local and regional development agencies, chamber of commerce

Demographics

	US	Massachusetts	Worcester County	Franklin County	Athol
Percent HS graduate or higher	85.4%	88.9%	88.7%	91.2%	85.5%

Source: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml
2010 US Census.

Athol is in Worcester County

Athol, and all of the nine towns in the North Quabbin Region, are included within the Franklin-Hampshire Workforce Investment Area

For many years Athol has been in both the territories of the Worcester Convention Center and Visitors Bureau and the Johnny Appleseed Visitor Association region; recently funding has been awarded for the creation of a visitors association for the North Quabbin Region

The Athol Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) is the local, public land development and redevelopment organization; the community is also serviced by the Montachusett Enterprise Center, Inc., RCAP Solutions, and the North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation

The North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce is co-located on Main Street with the North Quabbin Community Coalition

Local, State and Federal Governments

Local government

Chief elected officials - Board of Selectmen (5 members)

Town Manager form of government - Michael Szlosek

Town Meeting - Open form of government (versus "representative town meeting")

Streamlined Permitting-friendly-Community for commercial and industrial developments and Expansions

Athol adopted MGL Chapter 43D, Part of Greater Northern Worcester County Economic Target Area (ETA) and regularly approves economic opportunity areas (EOA) and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreements between community and businesses

State Government

Athol is a part of the Worcester County District in the Senate (Stephen Brewer) and second Franklin District in the House of Representatives (Denise Andrews).

