

Northeastern University  
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 2014

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

RESULTS FOR THE TOWN OF  
**BRIDGEWATER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
SEPTEMBER 2014

NATIONAL  
LEAGUE  
of CITIES | CENTER  
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Northeastern University  
*School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs*  
*Dukakis Center for Urban & Regional Policy*

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The Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University conducts interdisciplinary research, in collaboration with civic leaders and scholars both within and beyond Northeastern University, to identify and implement real solutions to the critical challenges facing urban areas throughout Greater Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the nation. Founded in 1999 as a “think and do” tank, the Dukakis Center’s collaborative research and problem-solving model applies powerful data analysis, a bevy of multidisciplinary research and evaluation techniques, and a policy-driven perspective to address a wide range of issues facing cities and towns. These issues include affordable housing, local economic development, workforce development, transportation, public finance, and environmental sustainability. The staff of the Dukakis Center works to catalyze broad-based efforts to solve urban problems, acting as both a convener and a trusted and committed partner to local, state, and national agencies and organizations. The Dukakis Center is housed within Northeastern University’s innovative School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs.

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The National League of Cities is the nation’s oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership, and governance. NLC is a resource and advocate for more than 1,600 member cities and the 49 state municipal leagues, representing 19,000 cities and towns and more than 218 million Americans. Through its Center for Research and Innovation, NLC provides research and analysis on key topics and trends important to cities, creative solutions to improve the quality of life in communities, inspiration and ideas for local officials to use in tackling tough issues and opportunities for city leaders to connect with peers, share experiences, and learn about innovative approaches in cities.

For additional information about the Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT), please visit <http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/econdev/edsat> or contact:

#### **Nancy S. Lee, Ph.D.**

Northeastern University  
Dukakis Center for Urban & Regional Policy  
310 Renaissance Park  
360 Huntington Avenue  
Boston, MA 02115  
617-373-7868 (v)  
617-373-7905 (f)  
[n.lee@neu.edu](mailto:n.lee@neu.edu)

#### **Christiana McFarland**

Center for Research and Innovation  
National League of Cities  
1301 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 550  
Washington, DC 20004  
202-626-3036 (v)  
[mcfarland@nlc.org](mailto:mcfarland@nlc.org)

Report Authors: Nancy S. Lee, Ph.D., Adam R. Katz, M.S., and Tracy Corley

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## INTRODUCTION

A robust, sustainable, and adaptable local economy heavily depends on officials who can lead in the formulation and implementation of an economic development strategy. A thorough strategy is developed with an understanding of local business interests, regional resource availability, and a careful assessment of the community's ability to attract new business investment and jobs. The *Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool* (EDSAT) is an important step that public officials can take to assess their jurisdictions'<sup>1</sup> strengths and weaknesses with respect to expanding and sustaining economic growth. Through EDSAT, public officials and business leaders collaborate as a team, assessing each of their roles in creating a business-friendly climate.

By participating in this self-assessment, Bridgewater will not simply better understand its economic development assets and challenges, but learn to build upon strengths and overcome weaknesses. This report contains a thorough analysis of the responses provided by Bridgewater to the EDSAT questionnaire.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since 2005, the Dukakis Center has sought to identify the “deal-breakers” impeding private investment in local municipalities. Based upon research on the resurgence of older industrial cities, the Dukakis Center has identified two of the crucial factors in economic development. First is a municipality's capability in responding to ever-changing market forces. Second is the ability of local government to work with regional agencies, business leaders, and academic institutions to work collaboratively to solve municipal weaknesses and market the city or town's strengths. These conclusions led to the development of EDSAT as well as the creation of an analytical framework for providing practical and actionable feedback to public officials. EDSAT is the first tool that resulted from the partnership between Northeastern University's Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy (Dukakis Center) and the National League of Cities (NLC).

### Methodology

The foundation for the 200-plus questions that make up the EDSAT questionnaire was established when the Dukakis Center surveyed more than 240 members of the *National Association of Industrial and Office Properties*, now known as *NAIOP* and *CoreNet Global*. These leading professional associations represent site and location experts, whose members research new sites for businesses and other institutions. Members were asked to identify those factors that are most important to businesses and developers when evaluating locations. This process generated a set of 38 broad themes relevant to economic growth and development. Examples of themes include highway access, available workforce, and the timeliness of permit reviews. Based on rankings by these location experts, EDSAT themes are identified as “*Very Important*,” “*Important*,” or “*Less Important*” to businesses and developers.

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<sup>1</sup> Jurisdictions are usually categorized as individual towns and/or cities. Each can be several small municipalities, a geographic region, or a county—as long as each plans and strategizes as a single entity in its economic development efforts.

## EDSAT Themes

<p><b>Very Important ●</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highway Access</li> <li>Parking</li> <li>Traffic</li> <li>Infrastructure</li> <li>Rents</li> <li>Workforce Composition</li> <li>Labor</li> <li>Timeliness of Approvals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing Follow-Up</li> <li>Quality of Available Space</li> <li>Land</li> <li>Labor Cost</li> <li>Industry Sensitivity</li> <li>Sites Available</li> <li>Predictable Permits</li> <li>Fast Track Permits</li> <li>Citizen Participation in the Review Process</li> <li>Cultural and Recreational Amenities</li> <li>Crime</li> <li>Housing</li> <li>Local Schools</li> <li>Amenities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Business Incentives</li> <li>Local Business Incentives</li> <li>Local Tax Rates</li> <li>Tax Delinquency</li> </ul> <p><b>Less Important ○</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Airports</li> <li>Rail</li> <li>Water Transportation</li> <li>Proximities to Universities &amp; Research</li> <li>Unions</li> <li>Workforce Training</li> <li>Permitting Ombudsman</li> <li>Jurisdiction's Website</li> </ul>
<p><b>Important ◐</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Transit</li> <li>Physical Attractiveness</li> <li>Complementary/ Supplemental Business Services</li> <li>Critical Mass Firms</li> <li>Cross Marketing</li> </ul>		

Each question in EDSAT addresses a particular location factor and provides three ways to interpret that factor relative to the response in your own community:

1. The level of importance businesses and developers place on that location factor
2. How other jurisdictions participating in EDSAT have typically responded to that question
3. How your jurisdiction's response compares to the typical response and the importance of the location factor



FIGURE 1: IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE LEVELS

For example, through the EDSAT analysis, officials may discover that the efficiency of the municipal permitting process is both *Very Important* to businesses and developers and that their jurisdiction is taking several months to review a permit application, rather than a few weeks as in the case of other jurisdictions. According to our location experts, this can be a serious weakness or potential “deal-breaker.” Knowing this, municipal officials may choose to hone in on the permitting process to understand where the inefficiencies lie and how the process could be improved and/or simplified. Even if a jurisdiction is quite efficient in reviewing permits, it may be worth the effort to further improve the process, as the timeliness of the process is of such significance to businesses and developers. Staff, review boards, or commissions could streamline their work or provide more technical support to applicants to streamline the process. This permitting example outlines the degree to which the EDSAT analysis provides an opportunity for revisiting and redeveloping a jurisdiction's economic development strategies and processes.



 <b>D. Traffic</b>			
Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
20: Do you have regular access to a traffic engineer or transportation planner, such as one who is on staff or with a regional organization to which your jurisdiction is a member?	yes		no

FIGURE 2: SAMPLE RESPONSE

The EDSAT analysis compares your jurisdiction’s response to that of Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM).<sup>2</sup> With regard to the aforementioned permitting process, your jurisdiction may offer significantly shorter review times than the CGM. In this case, the EDSAT analysis suggests that on this measure your jurisdiction may possess a relative advantage in what is a *Very Important* location factor. However, if permit reviews take significantly longer, then your jurisdiction may be at a disadvantage. While local and regional regulations or processes affect the review process, businesses are interested in “time-to-market” – the time it takes to get up and running in an ever-increasing competitive environment.

EDSAT assigns a color code to highlight the results of your jurisdiction compared to the median response among the CGM. Colors—green, yellow, and red—indicate a municipality’s relative strength on each specific location factor. Green indicates that your jurisdiction is quantitatively or qualitatively stronger than the CGM response; yellow indicates that your jurisdiction is average or typical; and red indicates a relative deficiency.

The interaction between the importance of a location factor and your jurisdiction’s relative strength yields powerful information. With respect to businesses and developers, a comparison yielding “red” for a *Very Important* factor represents the potential for a “deal-breaker,” while a comparison resulting in “green” for a *Very Important* factor represents the likelihood of a “deal-maker.” There are several important considerations to keep in mind when reviewing a jurisdiction’s EDSAT results:

1. If your jurisdiction is at a disadvantage in certain *Very Important* location factors, such as possessing a slow permitting process, a workforce that lacks the necessary skills, and infrastructure that lacks the capacity to support growth, it is considered to have three distinct “deal-breakers,” regardless of its geographic location.
2. Your jurisdiction should look at its EDSAT results as an overview, and not focus on a particular factor. One “deal-breaker” does not mean that your jurisdiction should abandon its economic development efforts. At the same time, your jurisdiction cannot solely rely on one or two “deal-makers.” Economic development is a dynamic process and should be managed in such a way that a community continually responds to the changing needs of local and prospective businesses.
3. The interpretation of comparisons and color assignments depends on your jurisdiction’s context in answering the question and its objectives for economic development. For example, if there are significantly

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<sup>2</sup> The term Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM) is used in this report to represent jurisdictions that have completed the EDSAT.

more square feet of vacant commercial space than the CGM median, EDSAT assigns “red” because large amounts of space may indicate outdated facilities in a stagnant local economy. However, the empty space may actually be an asset if your jurisdiction is focusing on attracting businesses that would benefit from large spaces, such as a creative mixed-use complex. Thus, your jurisdiction’s context is important in understanding EDSAT results.

For some questions, the red and green color assignments serve to highlight the response for further consideration within the context of your jurisdiction’s objectives and circumstances. Several questions have no comparison at all. They tend to be lists of potential incentives, resources, or regulations associated with the municipality and will be discussed in corresponding sections of the report.

## SUMMARY AND ORGANIZATION OF RELATIVE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

This section highlights Bridgewater’s primary strengths and weaknesses in the realm of economic development. EDSAT does not provide an overall grade for a jurisdiction, but rather assesses a jurisdiction’s unique set of strengths, weaknesses, and economic development objectives.

The Dukakis Center staff creates a list of significant or notable responses for each of the *Very Important*, *Important*, and *Less Important* location factors, emphasizing strengths and “deal-makers,” which are not organized in any particular order of importance. Dukakis Center staff suggests that your municipality review these lists and use them to highlight, enhance, and market your town’s strengths.

Tasks on the weakness and “deal-breaker” lists, however, are prioritized to emphasize the importance of their mitigation. The Dukakis Center staff arranges the tasks according to feasibility, with consideration of the latitude and abilities of local, county, or regional levels of government. For example, in a jurisdiction with limited highway access, building a new highway interchange or connector would likely be cost-prohibitive, time-consuming, and an inefficient use of local resources. However, other tasks are more feasible with modest investments in time and resources. For example, streamlining the permitting process and making related development information readily accessible to both location experts and businesses can be accomplished without significant capital investments. Although location experts rank both highway access and the timeliness of permitting as *Very Important* location factors, in the prioritized list of potential “deal-breakers,” the permitting process is given a higher priority due to its feasibility in implementation.

### **Bridgewater’s Strengths or Potential “Deal-Makers”**

The following lists of Bridgewater’s strengths are its powerful economic development assets. The town should build upon these assets and promote them to prospective businesses and developers. Bridgewater should first consider those in the *Very Important* group, then the *Important*, and finally the *Less Important* group. Please note that strengths are **not listed in any particular order** within the three lists.

#### **Strengths among Very Important Location Factors**

Bridgewater did not have any apparent “Deal-Makers.”



### Strengths among Important Location Factors

- **Quality of Available Space:** Bridgewater has relatively small proportions of contaminated or brownfield sites and vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers.
- **Sites Available:** Unlike the CGM, Bridgewater features an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties.
- **Predictable Permits:** Bridgewater provides both a flowchart of the permitting process and development handbook to prospective developers.
- **Fast Track Permits:** Your town features an “overlay” district that allows expedited permitting for certain uses.
- **Crime:** Bridgewater’s crime rates are very low.

### Strengths among Less Important Location Factors

- **Rail:** Your town features a commuter rail station.
- **Proximity to Universities and Research:** Bridgewater features Bridgewater State University, a major public four-year university.
- **Website:** Your town’s website features date-certified forms and applications as well as the ability to electronically file permits.

## Bridgewater’s Weaknesses or Potential “Deal-Breakers”

Despite sizable advantages, Bridgewater has a number of apparent weaknesses which can pose a challenge to successful development. The factors in the *Very Important* group are the ones that the town should consider addressing first because they are the most critical potential “deal-breakers.” Again, the town should next consider those in the *Important* group, and finally the *Less Important* group.

Unlike the strengths or deal-makers, the list of weaknesses is **arranged in order of priority**. It is suggested that Bridgewater review the prioritized lists and the detailed narrative about all location factors, while keeping in mind its economic development objectives and the resources available for addressing “deal-breakers” and other weaknesses. This report is an opportunity for an informed dialogue among colleagues and for establishing a roadmap to turn “deal-breakers” into “deal-makers.”

### Weaknesses among Very Important Location Factors

- **Timeliness of Approvals:** Compared to the CGM, Bridgewater takes an average of eight weeks longer to process Site Plan Reviews, Zoning Variances, and Appeals, and takes an average of four weeks longer to process Special Permits.
- **Infrastructure:** Regarding water supply, public sewer, wastewater treatment, natural gas, cellular service, and fiber-optic/cable/DSL, Bridgewater’s capacity can meet only current needs, and for electric power, capacity is inadequate for current needs - the CGM’s capacity for all infrastructure is sufficient for growth and reliable service.
- **Parking:** A small percentage of Bridgewater’s available sites for retail trade have on-site parking.

- **Traffic:** Traffic in your town is rated at 'extremely congested,' while in the CGM it is rated at 'moderately congested.'
- **Rents:** Rents for manufacturing space, existing retail space in the Bridgewater's highway business district, and Classes B and C in both the central and highway business districts are generally higher than in the CGM. Your town also does not offer any Class A office space, and has half the Class B and double the Class C office space of the typical CGM.
- **Highway Access:** Only 1-25% of available sites for retail trade, and 26-49% for both manufacturing and general office space, are within two miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway, compared to at least 75% of the CGM's sites.

#### Weaknesses among Important Location Factors

- **Critical Mass Firms:** Your jurisdiction does not have an up-to-date development strategy, overall economic development plan, economic development plan within its master plan, or an industrial attraction policy.
- **Cross Marketing:** Unlike the CGM, Bridgewater does not engage local or regional business organizations, regional planning or development organizations, or state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing the town.
- **Physical Attractiveness:** While the CGM 'moderately' maintains streets, sidewalks, parks, etc., near development sites, your municipality does so only 'weakly.' Also, your town has slightly higher proportions of dilapidated housing stock and boarded up or closed down commercial buildings.
- **Public Transit:** Compared to the CGM, a considerably smaller proportion of Bridgewater's available sites for retail trade, manufacturing, and general office space are within a quarter mile of a public transit.

#### Weaknesses among Less Important Location Factors

- **Permitting Ombudsman:** Bridgewater does not have a "development cabinet" or "development team" that convenes to review major developments. Also, the local licensing process takes an average of nearly five weeks longer than in the CGM.

These weaknesses that surfaced in the EDSAT analysis provide guidelines to where Bridgewater could exert more effort to improve its ability to attract business and build its tax base.

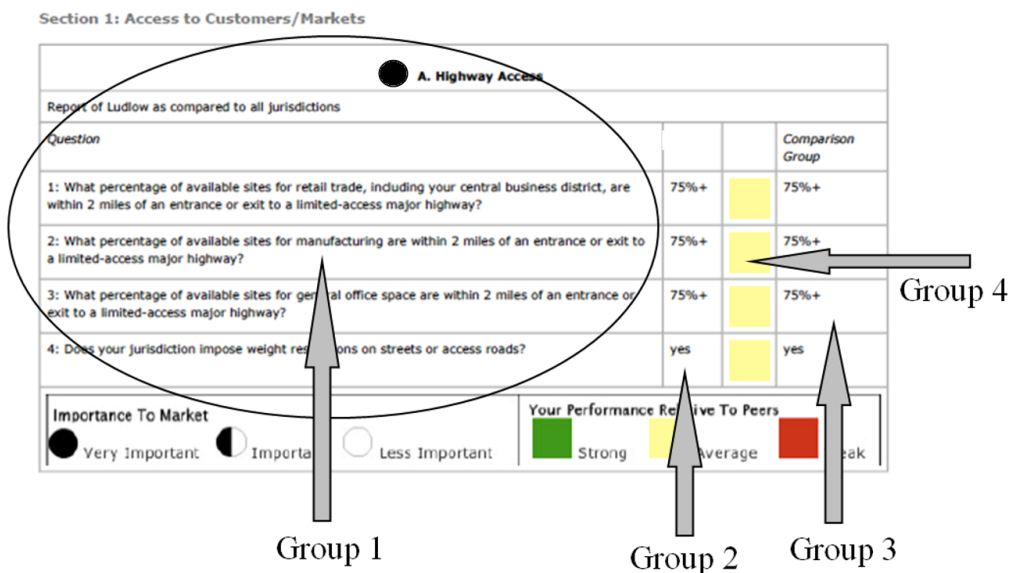
## DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following is a section-by-section analysis of the EDSAT results comparing Bridgewater’s self-reported responses to both the overall importance of each location factor and the median response among the CGM. Within each section are several related themes, where the symbols ●, ◐, and ○ indicate the relative importance of the theme to developers and businesses, as ranked by NAIOP and CoreNet Global location experts. The shaded circle (●) denotes a *Very Important* factor, the half-shaded circle (◐) denotes an *Important* factor, and the unshaded circle (○) denotes a *Less Important* factor.

<b>Importance To Market</b> <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: black; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Very Important <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: black; border-radius: 50%; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Important <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: green; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Strong <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Average <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Weak <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: gray; margin-right: 5px;"></span> No Comparison
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This section of the report presents a tabular printout from the EDSAT. The results are displayed in four primary groupings of information:

- **Group 1** identifies location themes, such as Highway Access, and questions about specific location factors related to that theme. At the top of each table is a circle that represents the relative importance of a theme to location experts and businesses. A filled circle (●) indicates “Very Important,” a half-filled circle (◐) indicates “Important,” and an unfilled circle (○) indicates “Less Important.”
- **Group 2** shows Bridgewater’s responses to the EDSAT questions.
- **Group 3** is the median or majority (for yes/no questions) response among the municipalities that have completed the EDSAT questionnaire (the comparison group or CGM).
- **Group 4** is a series of green, yellow, or red blocks indicating how Bridgewater compares to the CGM. There is a built-in function in EDSAT that allows a municipality to compare itself against a subset of the CGM by other criteria such as population, median income, or size of operating budget. For purposes of this analysis, however, Bridgewater is compared with all the CGM.







## Section 1. Access to Customers/Markets

In order to minimize transportation costs and time-to-market, businesses want adequate access to uncongested transportation corridors for their shipping needs, customers, and employees. Highway access, congestion, and parking are *Very Important* factors in location decisions. Public transportation is *Important*, while proximity to airports, rail, and water transport are *Less Important*. The overall physical attractiveness of public spaces, enforcement of codes, and condition of housing and commercial real estate are *Important*, as they are indications of general economic health and quality of life in a community.

### A. Highway Access ●

Your town is strategically located, featuring the intersection of two major highways, Routes 24 and 495. However, Bridgewater is at a disadvantage in this *Very Important* category since its available sites for retail trade, manufacturing, and general office space are further from highways than the CGM's available sites. Specifically, in your jurisdiction, only 1-25% of available sites for retail trade and 26-49% for both manufacturing and general office space are within two miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway, compared to at least 75% of the CGM's sites. Last, as Bridgewater does not impose weight restrictions on roads, firms in industries that need to transport goods will save on relevant costs.








Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: What percentage of available sites for retail trade, including your central business district, are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	1-25%		75% or greater
2: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	26-49%		75% or greater
3: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	26-49%		75% or greater
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	no		no

### B. Public Transit ◀

Overall, your municipality is at a heavy disadvantage in regards to public transit. About 75% of the CGM's available sites for retail trade are within a quarter mile of public transit, while 1-25% of Bridgewater's such sites are within that distance. Further, none of Bridgewater's available sites for manufacturing or general office space are within a quarter mile of public transit, compared to 50-74% of such sites in the CGM. Unlike the CGM, Bridgewater also does not offer night and weekend public commuting options.







Your jurisdiction does not feature a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) strategy. With a commuter rail stop in Bridgewater, your town may want to take full advantage of it by crafting a TOD strategy around the commuter rail station. Such a policy can include new housing developments, restaurants, stores, and parking – all factors that attract people to live, work, and shop in the surrounding area.



Last, your jurisdiction may want to encourage the Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT) to synchronize its relevant bus schedule with the commuter rail schedule and to add more frequent rush hour buses. These enhanced services will enable easier commutes for Bridgewater residents working in Boston while also reducing traffic congestion (Section 1D).

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	1-25%		between 50-74% and 75% or greater
6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	0%		50-74%
7: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	0%		50-74%
8: Is there a transit-oriented development strategy in your plans for attracting new firms?	no		no
9: Is there a commuter rail or bus stop within 5 miles of your jurisdiction's boundaries?	yes		yes
10: Do you offer any shuttle services to other public commuting stations?	no		no
11: Is public transit service available on nights and weekends?	no		yes

### C. Parking ●

Your town matches the CGM on most parking considerations. At least 75% of available sites for both manufacturing and general office space have on-site parking, there are no parking facilities near development sites, and downtown parking is free. However, only 50-74% of Bridgewater's available sites for retail trade have on-site parking, while at least 75% of the CGM's such sites have on-site parking. To alleviate your town's relative parking weakness, Bridgewater may want to encourage development of on-site parking at available retail sites as well as to ensure that parking is an important component in the forthcoming economic development plan (Section 2B).








<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
12: What percentage of available sites for retail trade have on-site parking?	50-74%		75% or greater
13: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing have on-site parking?	75% or greater		75% or greater
14: What percentage of available sites for general office space have on-site parking?	75% or greater		75% or greater
15: Does your jurisdiction offer parking facilities near development sites?	no		no
16: Have you used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking in your jurisdiction?	no		no
17: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Hourly	0		0

18: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Daily	0		0
19: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Monthly	0		0

#### D. Traffic ●

Although average rush hour automobile speed matches the CGM at 11-25 mph, Bridgewater's roads are extremely congested during rush hours, while the CGM's roads are only moderately congested. This weakness puts your jurisdiction at a traffic disadvantage. Therefore, your municipality may want to address particularly congested intersections, work with BAT on enhancing commuter rail bus service (Section 1B), further utilize Old Colony Planning Council's transportation resources, and/or bring in a transportation consultant. Bridgewater may also want to complement its traffic reduction activities through encouraging residents to carpool to both work and Bridgewater Station. Free carpooling services are facilitated by MassRIDES, a program available through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. MassRIDES staff will visit your town to promote its program, add employees and residents in Bridgewater to its online carpooling database, and coordinate carpools.

Representing a strength for your town is that through the Old Colony Planning Council, your jurisdiction has access to a transportation planner. Unlike the CGM, Bridgewater does not routinely use a transportation consultant. However, it is contracting with Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates to help craft its downtown master plan, and therefore may want to ensure that traffic alleviation is an important component of the plan. Matching the CGM, your town has access to traffic count data for major roadways and requires traffic mitigation and impact analyses by developers.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
20: Do you have regular access to a traffic engineer or transportation planner, such as one who is on staff or with a regional organization to which your jurisdiction is a member?	yes		no
21: Do you routinely use the services of a transportation consultant?	no		yes
22: Do you have access to traffic count data for the major roadways in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the site? (e.g. installing traffic signals, metering flow)	yes		yes
24: How would you rate traffic into and out of your jurisdiction during a typical weekday rush hour?	Extremely congested		Moderately congested
25: What is the average speed of automobile commuter traffic during a typical weekday rush hour?	11-25 mph		11-25 mph
26: Do you require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	yes		yes





### E. Airport ○

Bridgewater is on par with the CGM regarding all airport considerations. There is no local airport, and the nearest regional airport, Taunton Municipal Airport, is 11-20 miles away. Also, the closest major/international airport, Logan International Airport, is 20-30 miles away, the drive takes 21-60 minutes, and it is accessible via public transportation.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
27: Do you have a local (municipal/ general aviation) airport?	no		no
28: The closest regional airport is how many miles away?	11-20 miles		11-20 miles
29: The closest major/international airport is how many miles away?	20-30 miles		20-30 miles
30: Is the major/international airport accessible by public transportation?	yes		yes
31: How long does it take to drive to the major/international airport from your downtown?	21 minutes to 60 minutes		21 minutes to 60 minutes

### F. Rail ○

Giving Bridgewater an advantage in the rail category is that, unlike the CGM, your town features commuter rail service to Boston. Additionally, with the availability of rail freight service, certain manufacturers will be able to locate in Bridgewater without the added expense and logistical challenges of transporting heavy goods or bulky raw materials by truck.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
32: Do you have rail freight service available?	yes		yes
33: Do you have intercity passenger rail service? Check all that apply.			
- Commuter	yes		no
- Intercity/Interstate(Amtrak)	no		no
- no	no		yes












### G. Physical Attractiveness ●

With both state and town forests, conservations areas, and wetlands, Bridgewater has a natural aesthetic appeal. Your town reserves 11-15% of its land for parks, while the CGM reserves only 6-10%. Although the town does moderately enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties/vehicles/trash and rubbish disposal, the codes themselves are weak. Your jurisdiction may want to adopt stronger codes to help promote an even more visually appealing community. Further, unlike the CGM, which maintains streets, sidewalks, parks, etc. near development sites at a moderate level, Bridgewater does so only at a weak level. Town administrators may want to more

vigorously maintain these sites since doing so may create a better first impression when prospective businesses and developers conduct site visits.

Compared to the CGM, a larger percentage of Bridgewater’s housing stock is considered dilapidated (6-10% versus 0-5%). Additionally, 6-10% of your town’s commercial buildings are boarded up or closed down and need renovations to open, while only 0-5% of the CGM’s properties are in such condition. Last, only 6-10% of both the CGM’s and Bridgewater’s commercial space is vacant, and Bridgewater does not have any industrial space or buildings. These factors, as well as your town’s low maintenance levels, puts Bridgewater at a disadvantage in the physical attractiveness location category.

If Bridgewater decides to create a hotline or webform to report code violations and maintenance needs, it would put your town in a stronger competitive position. Such a service, as well as monitoring responses, would not only help better maintain Bridgewater, but would make residents feel they are playing a role in municipal operations. This involvement will help build community buy-in and boost residents’ sense of pride in Bridgewater.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties / abandoned vehicles / trash and rubbish disposal within your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
35: To what extent does your jurisdiction maintain streets, sidewalks, parks, etc., near available development sites?	Weakly		Moderately
36: Is there a hotline available for reporting code violations and maintenance needs within your jurisdiction?	no		no
37: Is there a system for monitoring the timeliness and quality of responses to reported violations within your jurisdiction?	no		no
38: Do you involve the arts community in the design of open space (street furniture, murals, etc.)?	no		no
39: What percentage of the acreage within your jurisdiction is reserved for parks?	11-15%		6-10%
40: What percentage of your housing stock is considered dilapidated?	6-10%		0-5%
41: What percentage of your commercial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	6-10%		0-5%
42: What percentage of commercial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	6-10%		6-10%
43: What percentage of your industrial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	0-5%		0-5%
44: What percentage of industrial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	0-5%		0-5%

## H. Water Transportation

Bridgewater does not have any water-based transportation facilities.



<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
45: Do you have water based transportation facilities within your jurisdiction? Check all that apply.			

## Section 2. Concentration of Businesses (Agglomeration)



Agglomeration refers to the number of complementary and supplemental services and related firms—including academic institutions—that are available within a jurisdiction to support new or existing companies. A concentration of similar or supporting companies creates a critical mass of businesses within an industry, making it easier for that industry to thrive in the local community, regionally, or on the state level. The scale of agglomeration within a jurisdiction can be enhanced by the intensity of its efforts to attract companies, its coordination of marketing plans with regional or state efforts, cross marketing among stakeholder organizations, and follow-up with existing and potential businesses.

### A. Complementary/Supplemental Business Services

Bridgewater is on par with the CGM with respect to business services available in the town. Although your jurisdiction does not have a local chamber of commerce, it does feature a local business association, the Bridgewater Business Association (BBA). The BBA is involved in charitable activities and community-based endeavors, creates networking opportunities, represents business interests and promotes them, but is not directly involved in economic development. Your town, in particular its subcommittee on economic development, may want to formally collaborate with the BBA and encourage them to engage in more economic development activities. Further, Bridgewater does have a moderately active regional chamber, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, as well as a volunteer/regional business group. This group meets monthly and develops an annual economic development plan for the region.

Bridgewater does not have an incubator or other form of cooperative/supportive space for startups. Your town does, however, have CPA, business advisory, and financial services firms as well as specialized laws firms and branches of major banks. Both the business services firms (venture capital, business planning, etc.) in Bridgewater and the CGM are moderately capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Is your local chamber of commerce or business association actively involved in the economic development activities of your jurisdiction?	Not at all		Moderately
2: Does your jurisdiction have an active volunteer economic development committee or nonprofit center for economic development?	no		yes
3: Is there an incubator or other form of cooperative and supportive space for start-up businesses in your jurisdiction?	no		no
4: Are there CPA, business advisory and financial services firms in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
5: Are there law firms in your jurisdiction specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, and patents?	yes		yes







6: Are there branches of major commercial banks in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
7: To what extent are the business services (e.g. venture capital, business planning, specialized recruiting, etc.) in your jurisdiction capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms?	Moderately capable		Moderately capable







## B. Critical Mass Firms ◀

Bridgewater does not have an up-to-date development strategy, overall economic development plan (OEDP), or an economic development plan within the community's development plan. This lack of a guiding document, which the CGM does have, puts Bridgewater at a considerable disadvantage. Your town, however, just received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and some of those funds will be dedicated to crafting an OEDP. With implementation of such a plan, your town's economic development efforts will be more coordinated and comprehensive.

Further, within the OEDP, your jurisdiction may want to include a commercial/industrial attraction policy that bolsters current and attracts new industry. Such a policy may help create jobs, generate tax revenue, and diversify the local economy, helping protect your community during economic downturns. With such a policy in place, your town will be in a better position to secure relevant grants and take advantage of state and regional recruiting and marketing efforts. The first steps to developing such a policy would be to inventory local businesses and search for industry clusters already in Bridgewater. Your town may want to then choose targets by both considering regional and state targets as well as target sectors that will complement existing industries.

As Bridgewater currently has neither an economic development strategy nor an industrial/commercial attraction policy, your jurisdiction is significantly weaker than the CGM in terms of economic strategy.




<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
8: Does your jurisdiction have an up-to-date development strategy, overall economic development plan (OEDP), or an economic development plan within your community master plan?	no		yes
9: Is your jurisdiction part of a county or regional OEDP or Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)?	yes		yes
10: Does your state have a development strategy or economic development plan?	yes		yes
11: If yes, are there firms within specific industry types or sectors that are targeted in your jurisdiction's, your county's or your state's development strategy?	no		yes
12: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? (Your Municipality)			
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? Other, please specify (Your Municipality)			

14: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? (Regional/County)	Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		
15: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)			
16: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)	Healthcare; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Traditional Manufacturing; Financial Services; Information Technology; Travel and Tourism; Alternative Energy		
17: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)			
18: Which of the following jurisdictions have development specialists to assist in interpreting the needs of these clusters? (Choose all that apply)	State; Regional/County		State; Regional/County
19: How aggressive is your industrial attraction policy?	Don't have one		Moderate

**C. Cross Marketing**

Cross-marketing is a weakness in Bridgewater since your town does not participate in any collaborative marketing activities. Engaging the Bridgewater Business Association, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, regional planning and development organizations, and state agencies can be quite advantageous. These entities may have a wide reach of potential investors, large pools of resources, and extensive marketing experience – all factors that can help a town enhance its marketing efforts and attract new business.





Further, actively enlisting resident firms to attract new firms can prove quite advantageous. These firms are rooted and invested in the community and are knowledgeable about their respective industries. Thus, they should be amenable to sharing their insights about local market needs, available resources, and the business climate as well as collaborating with the town to develop both marketing campaigns and methods to recruit and bolster local businesses.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
20: Do you actively enlist the services of firms already resident in your jurisdiction to assist in attracting new firms?	no		no
21: Do you engage local and regional business organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	no		yes
22: Do you engage regional planning and development organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	no		yes
23: Do you engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	no		yes

**D. Marketing Follow-up ◀**

Your town matches the CGM with respect to all marketing follow-up considerations. Bridgewater neither has a formal de-briefing procedure with firms that chose to locate in or outside the town nor a formal procedure for contacting resident firms about their satisfaction levels. Developing and implementing such procedures would help Bridgewater continuously assess its desirability to businesses. Through meetings, focus groups, surveys, and other means, Bridgewater can gather a valuable list of factors that influenced firms’ location decisions, then build upon strengths and mitigate weaknesses. Additionally, your town can use this information to improve marketing campaigns, brand the town if necessary (Section 5A), attract new firms (Section 2B), streamline municipal operations, and enhance customer service.

Also like the CGM, your jurisdiction does not have a formal procedure for intervening when early news surfaces about firm dissatisfaction with the town. Creating a procedure to do so may allow your town to act more decisively and quickly to resolve issues and limit negative public relations, while building a relationship with the involved business or stakeholder. This type of activity also sends a message to the business community that Bridgewater is business-friendly and wants its firms to succeed.





<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
24: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose to locate in your jurisdiction about what made the difference?	no		no
25: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose <u>not</u> to locate in your jurisdiction about what made the difference?	no		no
26: Do you have a formal procedure for contacting existing local firms about their satisfaction with your jurisdiction?	no		no
27: Do you have a formal procedure for intervening when early news surfaces about firm dissatisfaction with your jurisdiction?	no		no

**E. Proximity to Universities and Research ○**

Giving Bridgewater an overall advantage in this category is that your town features Bridgewater State University. Additionally, with Stonehill College in Easton, Bridgewater and the CGM have an equal number of four-year

institutions within ten miles. Neither your jurisdiction nor the CGM has a community college within its borders. However, Massasoit Community College is located less than ten miles away in Brockton.

Bridgewater does not have a vocational/technical school, but in Massachusetts these types of schools are regional, so many municipalities do not have one. Bridgewater students attend the Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
28: How many major public or private four-year college or universities are located within your jurisdiction?	1		0
29: How many major public or private four-year college or universities are located within 10 miles of your jurisdiction?	2		2
30: How many community colleges are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
31: How many vocational/technical schools are located within your jurisdiction?	0		1

### Section 3. Cost of Land (Implicit/Explicit)

The cost of land to a firm includes two *Very Important* factors: Infrastructure and Rent. Updating civil, utility, and telecommunications infrastructure represents significant expenses for a firm to incur. Therefore, if a municipality does not already have adequate capacity in place, a potential firm could decide to locate in another municipality with adequate capacity. Rents are *Very Important* as they contribute to operating expenses. Location experts consider the quality of available space and amount of available land for development *Important* factors.












#### A. Infrastructure ●

Bridgewater has some serious infrastructure capacity constraints leading to an overall infrastructure weakness. These constraints represent the potential for “deal-breakers” and may strongly dissuade businesses and developers from situating and investing in your municipality.

Regarding electric power, there is inadequate capacity even for current needs, and therefore your town may want to consider addressing this shortfall. Additionally, water supplies and wastewater treatment capacities are only suitable to serve current needs. Your town reports that they may be reaching or exceeding the limit of its state permit to withdraw groundwater, and conveyance for water and wastewater is constrained in certain parts of town. For example, some sites on Elm Street and Routes 18 and 24 can connect to water and wastewater pipes at main intersections, but developers and businesses must pay the costs to tie into the trunk lines. Therefore, Bridgewater would benefit from developing a plan to upgrade all its water infrastructure as well as power, natural gas, cellular, and fiber optic/cable/DSL capacities. Enhancing these capabilities would enable Bridgewater to better compete with the CGM and make it more affordable for a business or developer to locate in your jurisdiction.

Due to transmission chokepoints and the need to import fuels, electricity rates in New England tend to be higher than in other regions. However, residential rates in Bridgewater are 14¢ per kilowatt hour, which is 2.3¢ lower than the CGM. In regards to average rates in Massachusetts, in June of 2014, they were 17.23¢ for residential users, 14.45¢ for commercial users, and 12.86¢ for industrial users. For the same time period, in New England, rates were 17.70¢,

14.68¢, and 12.11¢, and throughout country, average rates were 12.27¢, 10.60¢, and 6.98¢ for the same groups, respectively. Although rates cannot be reduced, Bridgewater can help offset the state's high industrial and commercial rates by cultivating a business-friendly atmosphere, streamlining the startup process, and building on the town's advantages.













<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Are there significant limitations to any of your existing infrastructure systems? - Water Supply	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
2: Public Sewer	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
4: Natural Gas	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
5: Electric Power	Inadequate capacity for current needs		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
6: Data/Telecommunications - Land Lines	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
7: Data/Telecommunications - Cellular	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
8: Data/Telecommunications - Fiber optic / Cable / DSL	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
9: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Residential	14		16.23
10: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Commercial			15.2
11: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Industrial			13.03

## B. Rents ●

Rents in Bridgewater tend to be higher than in the CGM, representing the potential for “deal-breakers” and making your jurisdiction relatively weak in this category. Average rents for existing retail space in the central business district match the CGM at \$12/sq. ft., but in the highway business district, they are \$3-4 higher. Average town manufacturing rents are \$1 higher. Classes B and C general office space rents in the central business district average

\$3.30 and \$4.40-4.90 higher, respectively. In the highway business district, Classes B and C are \$9.10 and \$8.30 higher, respectively. In regards to overall proportions office space classes, your town does not offer any Class A space, compared to the CGM's 15%, a large disadvantage if target industries require high quality space (Section 2B). Bridgewater is also relatively weak in its offerings of Class B space with half the CGM's amount (20% versus 40%) and double the Class C space (80% versus 40% in the CGM).

To attract certain industries, incorporating methods to gain Class A office space in the forthcoming OEDP would be advantageous (Section 2B). One method is to encourage developers to both upgrade some of the Class B space and buildings to Class A as well as to construct new Class A space. Further, Bridgewater may want to consider focusing Class A space efforts in particular districts, such as the downtown, highway, or central business districts.





Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	12		12
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	15		between 11 and 12
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	7		6
15: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A			
16: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	15.3		12
17: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	13.4		between 8.50 and 9
18: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A			
19: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	18.1		9
20: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	15.3		7
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	0		15
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	20		40
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	80		40

### C. Quality of Available Space

Bridgewater is at an overall advantage in this category. Your jurisdiction has a significantly smaller proportion of available sites that are considered contaminated or brownfields than the CGM (1-10% compared to 21-35%) as well as more experience with redevelopment of such sites. Your town is also at an advantage in that only 1-10% of available sites are considered vacant or severely underutilized, while 11-20% of the CGM's are designated as such. Bridgewater does have a minor weakness with only 11-20% of available sites considered unused open land or





greenfield sites, compared to 21-35% of the CGM's sites. This low percentage, however, can help direct Bridgewater in choosing to target developments and industries that require other types of land.

If your municipality requires assistance with the redevelopment of brownfield or contaminated sites, it may contact the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP) or the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
24: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered contaminated or brownfield sites?	1-10%		21-35%
25: What experience does your jurisdiction have with the redevelopment of contaminated or brownfield sites?	Moderate		Limited
26: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers?	1-10%		11-20%
27: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites?	11-20%		21-35%

#### D. Land (space) ◀

Your jurisdiction matches the CGM for all considerations in this category. Bridgewater has 151-300 acres of vacant developable land zoned for commercial/industrial uses and 1-250,000 sq. ft. of both vacant, usable industrial or warehouse space and office space in commercial/industrial buildings. Also, 11-20% of the town's parcels available for industrial development or large-scale commercial development are on at least five acres of land. This space and availability can help direct officials in crafting its economic development strategy and industrial/commercial attraction policy (Section 2B), just as in Section 2C.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	151-300 acres		151-300 acres
29: Approximately how much vacant useable industrial or warehouse space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	1-250,000 sq. feet		1-250,000 sq. feet
30: Approximately how much vacant useable office space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	1-250,000 sq. feet		1-250,000 sq. feet
31: What proportion of the parcels available for industrial development or large scale commercial development are of 5 acres or more?	11-20%		11-20%

## Section 4. Labor

The effect of labor factors on location decisions runs somewhat contrary to popular belief. An available labor force that is adequately trained (Workforce Composition) is a *Very Important* factor, while the cost of labor is *Important* and the presence of strong unions is *Less Important*. Conventional wisdom often holds that municipalities with



higher labor costs and stronger unions negatively impact a firm’s location decision. However, if the workforce is adequately skilled, these factors are not as strong “deal-breakers” as the general belief holds.

Employers are willing to pay for the necessary skills. Workforce training resources is *Less Important* relative to other location factors. However, having a technically trained workforce whose skills align with industries a municipality wants to attract is a valuable selling point.

**A. Labor Costs**

All labor costs in Bridgewater match the CGM. The average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar, manufacturing, and mid-level clerical workers falls in the range of \$7.25-\$12.25. Public high school teachers average \$60,000-\$70,000 salaries, and there is no local minimum or living wage.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$7.25 - \$12.25		\$7.25 - \$12.25
2: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	\$7.25 - \$12.25		\$7.25 - \$12.25
3: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	\$60,001-\$70,000		\$60,001-\$70,000
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no

**B. Workforce Composition**

Although Bridgewater’s workforce composition is close to the CGM’s, it has a smaller proportion of technically-skilled workers (1-25% compared to 26-49%). This weakness puts your town at a relative workforce disadvantage, especially since some of your municipality’s target industries require technically-skilled employees (Section 2B). All other percentages of workers, including unskilled, semi-skilled, managers, and professionals are 1-25%, matching the CGM.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of your workforce is Unskilled?	1-25%		1-25%
6: What percentage of your workforce is Semi-skilled	1-25%		1-25%
7: What percentage of your workforce is Technically skilled	1-25%		26-49%
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	1-25%		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional	1-25%		1-25%
10: What percentage of your workforce are current English language learners?	0-10%		0-10%

**C. Unions ○**

Bridgewater, like the CGM, has not had any major strikes, work stoppages, or major union organizing drives within the past three years. Also, labor unions have only a “somewhat” significant presence in the labor market.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
11: Have any employers in your jurisdiction had a major strike or work stoppage within the last three years?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
12: Has there been a major union organizing drive among public or private workers in the last 3 years?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
13: Do labor unions have a significant presence in the labor market of your jurisdiction?	Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat

**D. Labor (Available) ●**

Bridgewater’s residents age 25 or older match those in the CGM in terms of educational attainment. 85% or more have earned at least a high school degree and 21-35% have earned at least a bachelor’s degree.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
14: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a high school diploma?	85% or greater	<input type="checkbox"/>	85% or greater
15: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a bachelor’s degree?	21-35%	<input type="checkbox"/>	21-35%

**E. Workforce Training ○**

To develop skills needed by local firms, Bridgewater interacts with vocational/technical schools or community colleges and human service or nonprofit career training centers. Your town may want to nurture these types of relationships and cultivate others to help meet the educational and training needs of target industries (Section 2B). Further coordinating workforce development resources with the needs of firms, supporting public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training, and encouraging the development of an adult education program for town residents would be beneficial. These efforts can enhance the competitiveness and marketability of Bridgewater’s workforce to new businesses and industries, particularly if the training were aligned with existing and targeted industries. As the CGM both supports these public-private partnerships and has such an adult education program, your jurisdiction is at a disadvantage in regards to workforce training.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
16: Which of the following workforce training resources do you interact with to respond to skill development needs of firms?			
- Regional employment board or state employment services department	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Area High schools	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Voc-tech schools or community colleges	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	

- Human service or nonprofit career training centers	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	yes

## Section 5. Municipal Process

The municipal process section covers several themes of marketing and permitting. When it comes to marketing themselves, jurisdictions that are aggressive and collaborate with local firms may be at an advantage in attracting new investment. Those firms can speak to interested companies and investors about first-hand experiences and market conditions, and advise municipal leaders about industries with which they are intimately familiar.

Additionally, a municipality needs to establish a transparent and efficient permitting process to minimize business startup time and costs. Among the factors examined in this theme, timeliness of approvals is *Very Important* to location experts, and the remaining themes are *Important* with the exception of the Permitting Ombudsman, which is *Less Important*.



### A. Industrial Sensitivity

Neither Bridgewater nor the CGM have marketing programs based core strengths, opportunities, or needs identified by location specialists. Bridgewater may want to consider crafting a campaign based on these factors and highlighting the ways your town can meet the needs of target industries (Section 2B). Your municipality may want to include in its marketing strategy local business spokespersons to represent Bridgewater as well as methods to engage local racial or ethnic populations.

Bridgewater does have a staff member in the Town Manager’s office that responds when negative data, stories, or incidents surface in the news. Creating a formal “team” to respond when such information makes the news would be more beneficial. Having a formalized procedure and team would ensure that town responses are consistent, aligned with marketing strategies, and will continue when staff members change positions.

If necessary, Bridgewater may want to use this marketing plan to rebrand the town, enhance its image, or update prospective firms’ “mental/cognitive maps” of Bridgewater. These “maps” may contain misconceptions and inaccurate or outdated data about your jurisdiction, negatively affecting potential firms’ location decisions. A thorough marketing plan would help make Bridgewater more attractive to prospective parties.







Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on the needs identified by industrial or office location specialists?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
2: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on existing core strengths, identified opportunities, or industry concentrations?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
3: Do you have a quick response team available when negative data, stories, or incidents about your jurisdiction make the news?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no

4: Do you actively engage local business spokespersons to speak on behalf of your jurisdiction?	no		no
5: Do you have a strategy for engaging your jurisdiction's racial or ethnic populations in unique businesses, festivals, etc., as a way to attract regional niche shopping?	no		no

## B. Sites Available

Bridgewater is on par with the CGM in this category. Your jurisdiction, like the CGM, does not have a list of available properties. Your town may want to compile such a list then post it online. Doing so would show prospective parties that their business is welcome in Bridgewater. As locations specialists and potential businesses first look online for municipal information and site locations, an easily found list will further enhance your jurisdiction's competitiveness. This list may also be used as a reference for municipal representation to help match prospective businesses and developers with sites.

Giving Bridgewater an advantage is that it features an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties. Matching the CGM, Bridgewater does maintain active relationships with commercial real estate brokers, developers, or agents, and does not have an active strategy for reclaiming vacant or underutilized shopping centers. Also like the CGM, your town features land use regulations that protect land currently zoned for industrial uses from encroachment by residential or other incompatible uses. These regulations send the message to prospective developers that Bridgewater has taken steps to lower the odds of incompatible uses stalling their developments. Unlike the CGM, however, Bridgewater does not own sites it is currently marketing for development.











<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
6: Does your jurisdiction own sites that it is currently marketing for development?	no		yes
7: Is there a readily accessible, up-to-date, complete list of sites that are available for development in your jurisdiction?	no		no
8: Do you maintain an active relationship with commercial real estate brokers, developers, or agents with sites in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
9: Do your land use regulations protect land currently zoned industrial from encroachment by residential or other incompatible uses?	yes		yes
10: Do you have an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties?	yes		no
11: Do you have an active strategy for reclaiming vacant or underutilized shopping plazas?	no		no

## C. Timeliness of Approvals

Although the time it takes for a firm or developer to obtain a Building Permit in Bridgewater matches the CGM at 0-4 weeks, other permit processing times take significantly longer. These weaknesses represent the potential for “deal-breakers” and put your town at a significant disadvantage in regards to permitting. For both new and existing structures, processing review comparisons to the CGM are as follows:

- **Site Plan Reviews** take an average of eight weeks longer
- **Zoning Variances** take an average of eight weeks longer
- **Special Permit** reviews take an average of four weeks longer
- **Appeals** reviews take an average of eight weeks longer

Firms would rather hear a quick answer to their permit applications, whether an approval or denial, than wait a long time for an approval. These review durations help shape prospective entrepreneurs’ and developers’ “mental/cognitive maps” of Bridgewater (Section 5A), which they tend to share with their colleagues and other prospective investors. Since startup time to firms is quite costly, a prolonged review duration can be enough impetus for a prospective firm to simply look to another municipality with quicker review times. Therefore, your town may want to consider investigating these processes and speaking with permitting board members and applicants to discover bottlenecks, communication inefficiencies, or patterns of delay and sluggishness. Decreasing review durations would improve the competitiveness of Bridgewater, enhancing its attraction to businesses.





<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
12: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Site plan review	13-16 weeks		5-8 weeks
13: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Zoning variance	13-16 weeks		5-8 weeks
14: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Special permit	13-16 weeks		9-12 weeks
15: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Building permit	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks
16: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Appeals process	13-16 weeks		5-8 weeks
17: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Site plan review	13-16 weeks		5-8 weeks
18: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Zoning variance	13-16 weeks		5-8 weeks
19: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Special permit	13-16 weeks		9-12 weeks
20: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Building permit	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks
21: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Appeals process	13-16 weeks		5-8 weeks

#### D. Predictable Permits

Bridgewater has a strong advantage in regards to the predictability of permits. Unlike the CGM, your town’s Department of Inspectional Services provides a development handbook and flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers. Also, your jurisdiction offers a checklist of permitting requirements and facilitates pre-meetings with applicants before official reviews. These resources send a powerful message to prospective parties that Bridgewater is a business-friendly, customer service-oriented municipality that desires new business and developments. Additionally, the collaboration between the Departments of Planning and Inspectional Services to





streamline permitting processes is a solid example of best practices. This admiral level of collaboration can markedly improve the efficiency of town operations as well as conserve resources.

To further enhance this message and to save firms preparation time and resources, Bridgewater may want to consider integrating a single presentation format for development proposals. Smaller and inexperienced firms would especially appreciate such a service. With this format, firms would simultaneously present their application materials to all relevant commissions and review boards. Bringing similar committees together, such as conservation and planning, may be a first step to introducing such a format.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
22: Do you provide a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers?	yes		yes
23: Do you provide a flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers?	yes		no
24: Do you provide a development handbook to prospective developers?	yes		no
25: Do you allow for a single presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority?	no		no

## E. Fast Track Permits








Bridgewater features an “overlay” district that allows for expedited permitting, which puts your jurisdiction at a relative advantage in this category. Your town also features two Chapter 40B affordable housing projects, which allowed for expedited permitting. On par with the CGM, Bridgewater does not pre-permit development in certain districts, feature any publicly or cooperatively owned-industrial parks that have their own expedited permitting authority, or market “fast-track” permitting to potential developers or firms. If slow permitting reviews (Section 5C) are a result of a backlog, a fast-track permitting option may temporarily reduce review durations. Therefore, your town may want to create this option for businesses or developments that fall in target sectors (Section 2B). This benefit can be highlighted in a marketing campaign (Section 5A), sending the message to prospective firms and developers that Bridgewater invests in making starting or situating a business in its town as simple as possible.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
26: Do you pre-permit development in certain districts?	no		no
27: Are there any publicly or cooperatively owned industrial parks in your jurisdiction that have their own expedited permitting authority?	no		no
28: Do you have an "overlay" district that allows expedited permitting of certain uses?	yes		no
29: Do you market "fast track" permitting to potential developers or firms?	no		no

## F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process

In general, citizen participation in Bridgewater matches the CGM. Citizens in Bridgewater are generally involved in the review process at the same level as those in the CGM. In particular, abutters and organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting process “somewhat” and a development proposal has been halted by abutter or neighborhood opposition in the past five years. Bridgewater’s elected officials expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups at a “very little” level and they have not intervened to rescue a development from opposition in the past five years.

Just as in the CGM, interested parties do get multiple opportunities to review and comment during the permitting process, but unlike the CGM, Bridgewater has not established a specific timeframe and procedure for response during the initial stage of the process. Establishing such a timeframe may help your municipality more easily manage overall opposition. Further, gathering input from the community and involving them in the economic development planning process may lead to a more collaborative town vision (Section 2B), lessening the chances for opposition.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
30: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in your jurisdiction?	Somewhat		Somewhat
31: To what extent do organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting process?	Somewhat		Somewhat
32: To what extent do elected officials in your jurisdiction expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups?	Very little		Very little
33: Do you establish a specific time frame and procedure for abutter or neighborhood response in the initial stage of the process?	no		yes
34: Do interested parties get multiple opportunities for review and comment during the various development review processes?	yes		yes
35: Has a development proposal in your jurisdiction been stopped by abutter or neighborhood opposition in the past 5 years?	yes		yes
36: Have officials from your jurisdiction intervened to rescue a development proposal that was endangered by abutter or neighborhood opposition in the last 5 years?	no		no

## G. Permitting Ombudsman

Matching the CGM, the Town Manager of Bridgewater does not play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of the local permitting process. However, other local officials, specifically the Town Planner and staff of the Department of Inspectional Services, are empowered to oversee it. Your town may want to devote more staff resources to bolster the efforts of the Departments of Inspectional Services and Planning in regards to permitting improvements.

Unlike the CGM, there is not a “development cabinet” or “team” that convenes to review major developments. Such a team could be dedicated to providing business owners and developers with assistance throughout the entire development procedure, from streamlining the permitting process to business expansion. Small businesses and developers undertaking large projects would especially benefit from this resource, and offering it would enhance Bridgewater’s business-friendliness.












While Bridgewater’s staff, officials, committees, and boards have much experience and expertise in the field of economic development, they would still benefit from additional, relevant training. Such training can include methods to approach economic development and permitting from a business perspective as well as a focus on the challenges of managing a business in changing and growing markets. These types of training resources are available through the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA).

Bridgewater’s Department of Inspectional Services is involved in the process to help firms obtain state and federal permits as well as provides them with technical assistance. Firms, especially those without relevant experience, appreciate such assistance as it saves them time and resources.

Your town’s local licensing process, on average, takes 4-5 weeks longer than in the CGM. Since this process is generally straightforward, your municipality may want to review it to discover the source of the congestion.

To oversee these aforementioned permitting enhancements, your town may want to appoint a permitting ombudsman. This person can be the primary point-of-contact for businesses and developers. Having a dedicated contact in the town that provides technical and other support would make applicants feel recruited and build relationships with them.

Overall, permitting assistance to businesses in Bridgewater is slightly weaker than in the CGM.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
37: Does the chief executive officer of your jurisdiction play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of your local permitting process?	no		no
38: Are there other local officials empowered to ensure the efficiency of your local permitting process?	yes		yes
39: Is there a "development cabinet" or "development team" that is convened to review major developments?	no		yes
40: Do you have an established training program for development staff that regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	no		no
41: Do you have an established training program for boards, commissions, authorities, districts, and elected officials that regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	no		no
42: If yes, approximately how long (in weeks) is your local licensing process for businesses?	5-8 weeks		0-4 weeks
43: Is your jurisdiction involved in the process for businesses that require state or federal permitting or licensing?	yes		yes
44: Do you provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit or license application process?	yes		yes
45: Does your jurisdiction require any local licenses for specific businesses or industries?			
- General license for all businesses	yes		no
- Auto dealership	yes		no
- Barber shop	no		no
- Bar/Tavern	yes		no



- Beauty salon	no		no
- Child care services	no		no
- Construction contractor	no		no
- Home health care	no		no
- Massage therapist	no		no
- Real estate agent/broker	no		no
- Restaurant	yes		no
- Skilled Trades (electrician, plumber, etc)	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
46: other:			

## Section 6. Quality of Life (Community)

The quality of life within the community is an *Important* location factor because companies want to be able to offer employees a safe community with affordable housing, good schools, and a rich selection of cultural and recreational opportunities.





### A. Cultural and Recreational Amenities

Bridgewater mirrors the CGM for all cultural and recreational amenities. Your town does not feature a professional sports team, major museum or hall, professional repertory theater, or an orchestra, opera, or ballet company. In addition to a golf course, public beaches or boating activities within five miles, your jurisdiction features several natural amenities including town and state forests, the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area, a number of ponds, and Lake Nippenicket.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Is there a professional sports team resident within your jurisdiction?	no		no
2: Is there a major art, science or historical museum?	no		no
3: Is there a professional repertory theater company?	no		no
4: Is there a civic center, arena or major concert hall?	no		no
5: Is there a golf course within your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
6: Is there a symphony orchestra, opera, or ballet company?	no		no
7: Are there public beaches or boating activities within 5 miles of your jurisdiction?	yes		yes







## B. Crime

Criminal activity in Bridgewater, as reported by the Bridgewater Police Department, is notably lower than in the CGM. Last year, per 100,000 residents, there were zero homicides, 67 auto thefts (33% less than the CGM), and 11 robberies (71% less than the CGM). Your town's residential burglary rate was reported to be zero, which is unusually low for any municipality.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 last year in your jurisdiction?	0		between 300 and 306
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 last year?	67		100
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 last year?	11		between 38 and 39
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 last year?	0		3

## C. Housing

















Although your town's homeownership rate is relatively high (76% versus 66-75%), a higher percentage of homes are for sale than in the CGM (3-5% vs. less than 3%) and median rent in a two bedroom apartment in Bridgewater is high (\$1,251+ versus \$801-\$1000). These weaknesses put your town at a disadvantage in terms of housing. Regarding other considerations, Bridgewater matches the CGM: The range of median sale prices of single family homes is \$251,000 - \$350,000; the vacancy rate is 3-5%; and, "some" of the major officers of resident firms live in town.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
12: What was the median sale price of a single family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$251,000-\$350,000		\$251,000-\$350,000
13: What was the median rent for a two bedroom apartment in your jurisdiction last year?	\$1251 or greater		\$801-\$1000
14: What is the home ownership rate?	76% or greater		66-75%
15: What is the vacancy rate for rental housing?	3-5%		3-5%
16: What percent of homes are for sale?	3-5%		Less than 3%
17: Approximately what proportion of the major officers of firms located in your jurisdiction live in the community?	Some		Some

## D. Local Schools

Bridgewater has higher proportions of students testing "proficient" in both math and English on the MCAS than students in the CGM (81% or greater versus 66-80%). A lower proportion, however, of last year's high school graduates went on to attend four-year colleges than in the CGM (26-49% versus 50-74%). Matching the CGM, at least 95% of high school freshman graduate within four years, the high school dropout rate is 1-25%, and no schools

in Bridgewater are underperforming. Although Bridgewater's average SAT scores at 1528 are 25 points lower than the state average score of 1553, they are thirty points higher than the country's average of 1498. Overall your jurisdiction's local schools' performance is comparable to the CGM.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
18: What is the average K-12 per pupil expenditure in your jurisdiction last year?	\$10,001-\$12,000		\$10,001-\$12,000
19: Does your state mandate an assessment or proficiency test as a prerequisite for high school graduation?	yes		yes
20: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in English?	81% or greater		66-80%
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in Mathematics?	81% or greater		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	no		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	1-25%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	1528		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?	N/A		
26: What percentage of high school freshmen normally graduate within 5 years?	95% or more		95% or more
27: What is the high school drop out rate last year?	1-25%		1-25%
28: Are there any schools in your jurisdiction that are currently deemed "underperforming?"	no		no
29: What percentage of high school graduates from last year's class went on to a four-year college?	26-49%		50-74%
30: Are there any charter schools in your jurisdiction?	no		no
31: What types of private schools are there in your jurisdiction?			
- Parochial	yes		
- Non-sectarian	no		
- Boarding	no		

## Section 7. Quality of Life (Site)

This section reviews the amenities and services available within one mile of existing development sites. Having a variety of amenities, restaurants, stores, and services near employment centers enhances the location, adds convenience, and allows employees more social opportunities.

## A. Amenities

Matching the CGM, most of Bridgewater’s existing development sites are within one mile of fast food restaurants and retail shops, and some are within one mile of day care facilities. However, putting the town at a slight disadvantage in this category is that only “few” sites have fine dining within one mile, while “some” of the CGM’s sites have such an amenity within one mile.






Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fast food restaurant	Most		Most
2: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fine dining	Few		Some
3: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Day care	Some		between Most and Some
4: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Retail shops	Most		Most







## Section 8. Business Incentives

Business incentives (e.g. tax and financial) are *important* factors when companies are evaluating jurisdictions for location. However, contrary to conventional wisdom, these incentives are not the first factors on which an investor makes a location decision. Factors such as infrastructure, workforce composition, and timeliness of permitting have the highest levels of importance, representing “deal-breakers.” A municipality must be at least adequate in these areas before a business will advance negotiations. Therefore, investors value a broader portfolio of business incentives as possible “deal-closers,” but might not be initially attracted by them.

### A. State

Businesses in Bridgewater are eligible for more special state tax incentives than those in the CGM, making your town relatively strong with respect to state business incentives. However, these businesses actively take advantage of them at a “very little” level, while in the CGM they do so at a “somewhat” level. To encourage their utilization, your town may want to advertise them through its marketing campaign (Section 5A). Further, providing guidance to firms in obtaining them may help more businesses start up and succeed.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: Are businesses in your jurisdiction eligible for any of the following special state tax incentives? Check all that apply.			
- Investment tax credits	yes		no
- Job training tax credits	yes		no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	yes		no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	yes		no
- Loan guarantees	yes		no






- Equity financing	no		no
- Workforce training grants	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
2: Are businesses in your jurisdiction eligible for any of the following special state tax incentives? Other, please specify			
3: To what extent does your jurisdiction actively take advantage of any special state business incentives?	Very little		Somewhat
4: Does your state allow for priority funding for distressed economic areas?	yes		yes

**B. Local**

Bridgewater may want to begin assisting firms to secure financing with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms. This activity will help enhance the business-friendliness and customer service of the town government. It will also build relationships with the firms. Further, there are federal and state programs that assist municipalities in attracting and retaining business, and as they are more cost-efficient and have the ability to advertise to targeted markets, Bridgewater may want to consider utilizing them.

Similar to the CGM, your jurisdiction does not offer tax abatements to businesses, any other local business incentives, or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or similar programs to retail businesses. Unlike the CGM, your town does not provide TIFs or similar programs to other businesses. If a firm is considering situating in several municipalities and all other location factors are equal, a municipality that offers these types of incentives will be in a stronger competitive position. However, these incentives are costly to a municipality, so if Bridgewater decides to offer them, it would serve your town better to do so near the end of negotiations and if necessary to close a deal.

Your jurisdiction does not participate in a revolving loan fund, but since Bridgewater has a small proportion of contaminated or brownfield sites, this may be only a very slight weakness (Section 3C). Last, if local, state, and federal facilities can bolster Bridgewater's economic development strategy and commercial attraction policy (Section 2B), your town may want to begin actively recruiting such establishments.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
5: Does your jurisdiction offer existing or new businesses property tax abatement? Existing businesses	no		no
6: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?			
7: Does your jurisdiction offer existing or new businesses property tax abatement? New businesses	no		no
8: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?			
9: Who negotiates the tax abatement?			















10: Does your jurisdiction offer any of the following incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)			
- Revolving loan fund	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Loan guarantees	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Revenue bonds	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Equity participation	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Business district group loans	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- None	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Investment tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Job training tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Workforce training grants	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Other, please specify	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
11: other:		<input type="checkbox"/>	
12: Does your jurisdiction actively pursue federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses?	no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	yes
13: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	yes
14: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
15: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	yes
16: Do you actively try to attract local, state, and federal facilities, including post offices, to your jurisdiction?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
17: Is any part of your jurisdiction in a designated Enterprise Zone?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
18: Do you participate in a regional brownfield revolving loan fund or offer your own?	No brownfields funds utilized	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regional

### Section 9. Tax Rates

A tax rate is another cost factor that has traditionally been considered a business “deal-breaker.” Municipalities often thought that if tax rates were too high, then it would have difficulty attracting businesses. However, like business incentives, the tax rate is not one of the *Very Important* location factors. If the *Very Important* factors are satisfied, a business will likely ask for a more favorable tax rate during later stage negotiations. However, negotiations are unlikely to get to that point if the *More Important* location factors have not been satisfied.



## A. Local

Both Bridgewater and the CGM collect a property tax but no local sales, local income, or hotel room tax. Your town collects a meals tax, unlike the CGM. Bridgewater taxes industrial and commercial properties at the same rate as residential. This taxing method is usually preferred by businesses since it generally offers more favorable industrial and commercial rates than the split tax method. Bridgewater's current tax rate is \$15.83 per \$1,000, and 87% of total tax revenue is derived from residential property, 7% from commercial property, and 3% from industrial property. Last, like the CGM, your jurisdiction does not impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial developments.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: What types of taxes are collected by your jurisdiction to pay for local services?			
- Property tax	yes		yes
- Local sales tax	no		no
- Local income tax	no		no
- Hotel room tax	no		no
- Meals tax	yes		no
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	0%		0%
3: Does your jurisdiction tax property in industrial or commercial uses at a different rate than residential properties?	no		yes
4: If yes, what is the tax rate on industrial/commercial property? \$ /\$1,000			between 15.22 and 15.47
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000			between 7.80 and 8.21
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?	15.83		
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	3.06		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	7.46		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	86.77		
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	no		no

## B. Tax Delinquency

Bridgewater has not yet provided this data.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
11: What proportion of residential property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?			
12: What proportion of commercial property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?			

13: What proportion of industrial property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?			
14: How many properties are tax defaulted or subject to the power of sale?			
15: When do you choose to auction tax title properties?			
16: Do you have an organized and defined process for conducting such auctions and ensuring that they are successful?			
17: Do you auction the "right to foreclose" on tax delinquent properties?			
18: Do you seek tax abatement on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners?			
19: If a tax delinquent or tax title property serves as an impediment to development, does the property receive special attention?			

## Section 10. Access to Information

While a municipality's website may rank as *Less Important* in terms of decision making, it can be the initial source of information that entices a location expert to probe deeper and contact a municipality's economic development department for further information. At that point, an appropriate municipal staff member has an opportunity to step in and develop a personal relationship with the developer or company representative. If the necessary data are not easily accessible and understandable, the researcher may reject the municipality as a candidate, opting instead to consider others with easily accessible data.

### A. Website ○














Your town's website is very clean and user-friendly. Since the website features date-certified forms and applications as well as the ability to electronically file permits, Bridgewater's website is relatively strong. Adding all local development policies and procedures, a development permit checklist or flowchart (Section 5D), and a list of available properties (Section 5B) with all associated data would better serve prospective businesses and developers.

Bridgewater's website features certain economic development information as well as some links to development resources not provided by the CGM's website. Posting as much economic development information as possible, such as demographic data, links to local development resources and organizations, training resources, and business services would be beneficial. Bridgewater has a designated webmaster and updates the website on a weekly basis, which helps ensure that prospective parties can access the most up-to-date data.

Question	Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction's website list all local development policies and procedures?	no		no
2: Does your website have contact information for key officials?	yes		yes
3: Does your website have general information about your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
4: How frequently is your website updated?	Weekly		Weekly
5: Does your website include an explicitly designed economic development tool aimed at businesses and developers?	no		no



6: Is there a development permit checklist or flow chart on the website?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
7: Are permit applications available for downloading on the website?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
8: Are applications and other forms date certified to ensure that they are the most recent versions (i.e. the same versions that you would get in person)?	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
9: Is it possible to file a permit application electronically?	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
10: Is there a list of available land and building sites on the website?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
11: If yes, check the types of information available about each site. (Check all that apply)			
- :Owner	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Square footage of vacant land	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Abutters	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Zoning	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Assessed value	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Tax rate	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Contamination	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Aerial photos	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- GIS links	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
12: Other, please specify		<input type="checkbox"/>	between Planned developments, projects permitted or under review are posted in the Business, Nonprofit & Community Guide. And
13: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
14: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
15: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
16: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)			
- State finance agencies	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- State permitting agencies	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional planning agencies	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional development organizations	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no

- Workforce training organizations	no		no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no		no
- Demographic information	no		yes
- Economic development agencies	no		no
17: Other, please specify			
18: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	yes		no
- Chambers of Commerce	no		yes
- Community development corporations	no		no
- Arts and cultural organizations	no		yes
- Sports and recreation venues	yes		no
- Convention and tourist organization	no		no
19: Other, please specify			
20: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	yes		yes

## NEXT STEPS

Bridgewater has a number of solid strategies and processes in place that help enhance its competitiveness, however, your town does not have any “deal makers.” One of the most important strengths is that your jurisdiction helps make the permitting process much less daunting and easier to manage for applicants. Specifically, in addition to providing a development handbook and flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers, Bridgewater has enhanced the town website to include advanced permitting features.

Representing another significant strength for your town is that Bridgewater’s Departments of Planning and Inspectional Services have worked together to streamline the permitting process. This level of departmental collaboration sets an example for other departments to follow; it can have effective, wide-reaching influences on the town’s efficiency and level of attractiveness to potential business owners, developers, and investors.

Additionally, your community has other appealing features, such as a wealth of recreational activities, Bridgewater State University, and the intersection of two major highways.

Although Bridgewater has some advantages, it has some significant weaknesses. Many of them can be alleviated to enhance the competitiveness of your jurisdiction in regards to business attraction and retention.

Your municipality has already recognized its most significant weakness: lack of an economic development strategy. Crafting such a strategy would be an extremely efficient use of Bridgewater's resources as would earmarking some of the CDBG funds for such a strategy, as is planned. With your town following such a strategic document, Bridgewater will ensure that economic development activities are coordinated and aligned with a town vision, especially if this vision is collaborative and includes the input of stakeholders.

In this economic development strategy, your town may want to incorporate a strong commercial/industrial attraction policy. Focusing on particular industries would allow Bridgewater to dedicate economic development resources more efficiently and thoughtfully. Considering your municipality's strengths, business inventory, and town vision would be a natural starting point for devising such a policy. Further, Bridgewater features a commuter rail station. This advantage, in addition to making Boston easily accessible, can be a catalyst for a Transit-Oriented Development strategy (TOD). Encouraging the development of retail, housing, shopping, restaurants, etc. could help turn the area surrounding the station into a destination, rather than solely a transit station.

As time-to-market is an influential factor to prospective firms, as well as in firms' decisions to expand, your jurisdiction should reduce permit processing times. Begin by examining the approval process of Site Plans, Zoning Variances, Appeals, and Special Permits for bottlenecks or patterns of sluggishness. Involve permitting board members as well as applicants because they may be able to provide insight as to the causes of delays in processing and will be able to help craft alternative processes that are more efficient.

Since it can attract significant new investment, Bridgewater should craft a well-rounded marketing campaign. Just as a business must advertise to grow its customer base and set the perception of its image, your town should do the same to encourage entrepreneurs, firms, and developers to situate in Bridgewater. To create the most persuasive campaign, collaboration is essential with local firms and regional and state agencies to inform prospective investors of your town's most marketable strengths.

All businesses and developments require sufficient infrastructure capacity for startup and growth. Bridgewater's capacity for water supply, public sewer, wastewater treatment, natural gas, cellular reception, and fiber-optic/cable/DSL can only meet current needs, and the capacity for electric power is inadequate for current needs. These limitations strongly dissuade prospective parties from situating in your town. Therefore, your jurisdiction should immediately begin to research methods and best practices as well as begin to identify partnerships that will allow Bridgewater to increase capacity and to fund such upgrades.

Next, your municipality may want to compile and post a list of available, local sites to the website. Location specialists and prospective firms first look to a town's website for such information. Thus, having such a list will not only portray your town as looking for new business investments, but will make research on potential sites in Bridgewater easier.

Last, as traffic is a significant factor in a firm's decision to locate in a particular community, Bridgewater may want to alleviate the extreme traffic congestion of its roads during rush hour. To do so, your jurisdiction may want to ensure that when crafting the new downtown master plan with the consultant, traffic mitigation is a major consideration. Further, other methods may also be helpful, such as addressing problem intersections and working with BAT to enhance shuttle schedules.

Recommendations	Priority
Craft a comprehensive economic development strategy with both commercial/industrial attraction and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) policies, using input from stakeholders.	High
Examine permitting procedures and reduce slow processing times for Site Plan Reviews, Zoning Variances, Appeals, and Special Permits.	High
Create a marketing campaign with assistance from existing firms and available economic development resources.	High
Research best practices to upgrade and fund infrastructure enhancements for electricity, water supply, public sewer, wastewater treatment, natural gas, cellular reception, and fiber-optic/cable/DSL.	High
Compile and share an available properties list.	Medium
Reduce traffic congestion through using consultants, addressing problem intersections, and working with BAT.	Medium