

Northeastern University
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

REPORT
OCTOBER 2014

RESULTS FOR THE CITY OF
BROCKTON, MASSACHUSETTS
OCTOBER 2014



The Partners

About the Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy

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.

About the National League of Cities

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:

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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'¹ 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, Brockton 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 Brockton 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.

¹ 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>Very Important ●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway Access Parking Traffic Infrastructure Rents Workforce Composition Labor Timeliness of Approvals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Follow-Up Quality of Available Space Land Labor Cost Industry Sensitivity Sites Available Predictable Permits Fast Track Permits Citizen Participation in the Review Process Cultural and Recreational Amenities Crime Housing Local Schools Amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Business Incentives Local Business Incentives Local Tax Rates Tax Delinquency <p>Less Important ○</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airports Rail Water Transportation Proximities to Universities & Research Unions Workforce Training Permitting Ombudsman Jurisdiction's Website
<p>Important ◐</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Transit Physical Attractiveness Complementary/ Supplemental Business Services Critical Mass Firms Cross Marketing 		

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.



 D. Traffic			
Question	Brockton		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)**.² 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 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

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

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 Brockton’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 city’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.

Brockton’s Strengths or Potential “Deal-Makers”

The following lists of Brockton’s strengths are its powerful economic development assets. The city should build upon these assets and promote them to prospective businesses and developers. Brockton 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

- **Rents:** Overall, rents in Brockton’s central business district are 18% lower than in the median CGM’s such district.
- **Parking:** Parking meets or exceeds the CGM for retail, manufacturing, and development sites. The rates charged for parking in the central business district are in line with a municipality of Brockton’s size, and the relatively low parking threshold near general office space is consistent with the city’s TOD policies.

Strengths among Important Location Factors

- **Public Transit:** Your city has a Transit-Oriented Development strategy and is relatively well-served by both rail and bus public transit, and shuttle services.

- **Complementary/Supplemental Business Services:** The Metro South Chamber of Commerce is vigorously active in Brockton, and the city features three local business associations. Also, firms in Brockton have access to an incubator or similar space for startups.
- **Sites Available:** Your jurisdiction has a readily accessible, up-to-date list of sites available for development.
- **Fast Track Permits:** Brockton features an “overlay” district that issues expedited permits for particular uses.
- **Housing:** Although rents are comparatively high, so too is the level of home ownership. Further, home prices are relatively low.
- **Cultural and Recreational Amenities:** Brockton features a relatively higher number of cultural amenities, such as the Fuller Craft Museum and the Brockton Symphony Orchestra.

Strengths among Less Important Location Factors

- **Rail:** Brockton has three commuter rail stops with service to Boston.
- **Proximity to Universities and Research:** Massasoit Community College is located in your municipality, and your city has two major colleges and one university within ten miles. Brockton is also served by three vocational/technical programs.

Brockton’s Weaknesses or Potential “Deal-Breakers”

Despite sizable advantages, Brockton 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 city should consider addressing first because they are the most critical potential “deal-breakers.” Again, the city 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 Brockton 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

Needs research

Need to attract Higher Educated workers

Cant do anything about these two.

- **Timeliness of Approvals:** Brockton’s site plan and zoning variance permitting review process for new construction, and site plan review for existing construction take somewhat longer than the CGM. This location factor is listed first not because the delays are egregious but because they are the most feasible to address.
- **Workforce Composition:** Brockton’s workforce is relatively weaker. It has high proportions of semi-skilled workers and English language learners as well as a low proportion of technically-skilled workers.
- **Labor (available):** Brockton has relatively small percentages of residents with high school and college degrees.
- **Rents:** On average, rents in the highway business district are 49% higher than in the median CGM’s such district. Throughout the city, manufacturing rents are also relatively high.
- **Highway Access:** Very low proportions of Brockton’s available development sites for retail trade, manufacturing, and office space are within two miles of a major highway.

Weaknesses among Important Location Factors

- **Critical Mass Firms:** Brockton lacks a current economic development strategy and has a weak commercial/industrial attraction policy. **Food cluster, healthcare cluster, Life Science**
- **Cross-Marketing:** Your city does not engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing efforts.
- **Physical Attractiveness:** Your city has relatively higher percentages of dilapidated housing stock, vacant commercial space, and commercial buildings that are boarded up and need renovations to open.
- **Citizen Participation in the Review Process:** Abutters in Brockton slow the review process very much.
- **Amenities:** Your city has relatively smaller proportions of fine dining restaurants and day care facilities within one mile of available development sites.
- **Local Tax Rates:** Brockton's split property tax rates are both more than double that of the typical CGM's.
- **Crime:** Brockton's crime rates - burglary, auto theft, robbery, and homicide - are all relatively higher.

Weaknesses among Less Important Location Factors

- **Permitting Ombudsman:** Your city does not have a "development team" that convenes to review developments before official reviews.
- **Workforce training:** Adult education courses do not adequately meet demand.

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

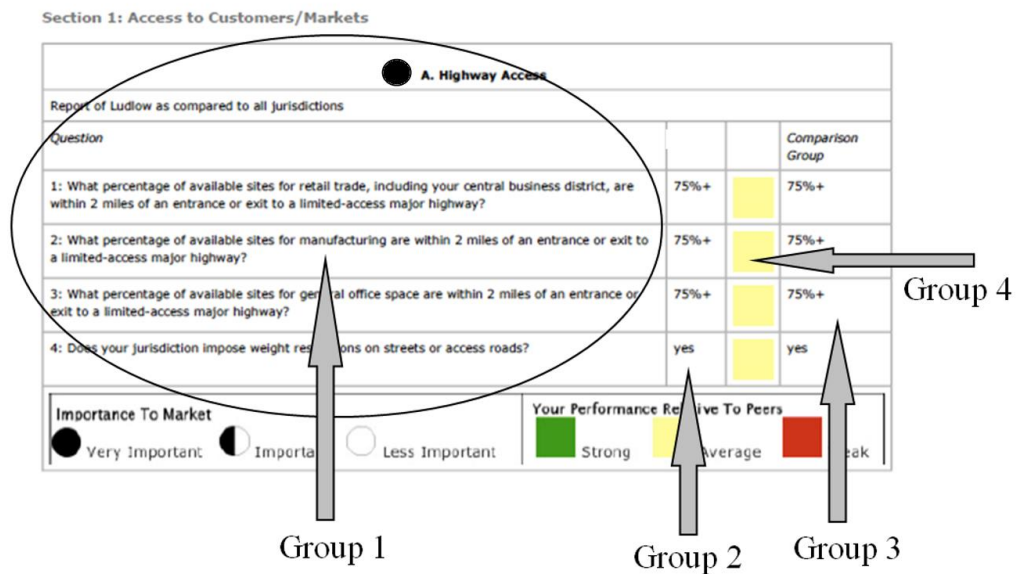
DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following is a section-by-section analysis of the EDSAT results comparing Brockton’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.

Importance To Market ● Very Important ◐ Important ○ Less Important	Your Performance Relative To Peers Strong Average Weak 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 Brockton’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 Brockton 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, Brockton 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 ●

In regards to highways, Brockton is very weak compared to the typical CGM. Only 26-49% of Brockton’s available sites for retail trade, manufacturing, and general office are within two miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway. These weaknesses represent the potential for “deal-breakers” for prospective firms and developers since they desire easy and quick drives for their suppliers, shippers, customers, employees, and shoppers. Long distances to highways may prolong and complicate commutes, increasing the cost of doing business in Brockton.

Although it helps to preserve road structure, imposing weight restrictions is viewed negatively by firms that ship goods and raw materials. It will require their trucks to take indirect routes to their destinations, increasing fuel costs and adding to the extra transport time due to the lack of proximity to highways.









Question	Brockton		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?	26-49%		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?	yes		no

B. Public Transit ◀

Exceeding the CGM, at least 75% of Brockton’s available sites for retail trade are within a quarter mile of public bus service. On par with the CGM, 50-74% of both available sites for manufacturing and office space are commutable by bus. Brockton’s bus service is also available on nights and weekends. Although 95% of Brockton is covered by Brockton Area Transit (BAT) bus routes, service at the edges of the city is limited. Brockton employers generally agree that it is difficult for their staff to commute to work via public transit.

Brockton has an advantage in that it uses Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) strategies to attract new firms. Public commuting stations, especially Brockton’s three commuter rail stations and public bus hubs, are consistent strengths, so building off them can be catalysts for sustainable growth. A well-rounded TOD strategy should include methods to attract residences, shops, restaurants, and entertainment to encourage people to live, work, and play in the neighborhood.





Representing another strength is that Brockton offers shuttle services to public commuting stations. This activity makes commutes to Boston easier as well as reduces traffic congestion by eliminating the need to drive to stations. Combined with the TOD, this strength gives your city a slight overall advantage in regards to public transit.




 B. Public Transit			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	75% or greater		50-74%
6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	50-74%		between 26-49% and 50-74%
7: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	50-74%		50-74%
8: Is there a transit-oriented development strategy in your plans for attracting new firms?	yes		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?	yes No		no
11: Is public transit service available on nights and weekends?	yes		yes

C. Parking ●

Your city has an advantage in that it features parking facilities near development sites. With parking as a *Very Important* location factor, this availability makes these sites more attractive to prospective developers. Accessible on-site parking at available manufacturing and retail sites is neutral at 75% or greater. However, for general office space, Brockton is weaker with only 50-74% having on-site parking.

Brockton is relatively strong in that it has used grants to fund parking improvements. Typical of a city Brockton's size, the city charges for parking in its central business district, although rates may not be high enough to deter people from patronizing stores, restaurants, and service providers. However, these rates may be high enough to dissuade employees at nearby firms from taking up spots all day, leaving more spots available for patrons of other establishments.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
12: What percentage of available sites for retail trade have on-site parking?	75% or greater		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?	50-74%		75% or greater
15: Does your jurisdiction offer parking facilities near development sites?	yes		no
16: Have you used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking in your jurisdiction?	yes		no

17: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Hourly	1.5		0
18: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Daily	10		0
19: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Monthly	35		0








D. Traffic ●

Moderate traffic congestion and 11-25 mph average vehicle speed during rush hours put your city on par with jurisdictions among the CGM. These factors heavily affect quality of life and may help sway firms and developers to situate in Brockton over municipalities where traffic is an issue.

Although your jurisdiction does not routinely use a transportation consultant, it does have regular access to one through the Old Colony Planning Council, which tends to be very engaged with its member municipalities.

Lastly, your city does not require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to their sites, which may save firms the time and resources to devise and implement such strategies.

Overall, your city has a slight advantage over municipalities among the CGM regarding traffic considerations.

Question	Brockton		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
21: Do you routinely use the services of a transportation consultant?	no Sometimes		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)	no Sometimes		yes
24: How would you rate traffic into and out of your jurisdiction during a typical weekday rush hour?	Moderately 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. Airports ○

Brockton is overall neutral in regards to airports as compared to communities among the CGM. Your city does not feature a local airport and is 20-30 minutes away from the nearest major/international airport, Logan International Airport. It is accessible via public transportation and the vehicle trip takes 61-90 minutes. Representing a minor weakness for your city is that it is almost 35 miles away from New Bedford Regional Airport, its closest regional airport.

E. Airports			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
27: Do you have a local (municipal/ general aviation) airport?	no		no
28: The closest regional airport is how many miles away?	31 miles or more		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 town center?	61 minutes to 90 minutes	Under 60	21 minutes to 60 minutes

F. Rail

Your city has a stronger relative advantage with three commuter rail stations, Brockton, Montello, and Campello Commuter Rail Stations. This strength simplifies the commute from Brockton to Boston, makes your city more accessible, and reduces Brockton's traffic.

Although highway access and weight restrictions can increase transport costs for some firms (Section 1A), the availability of rail freight may be able to compensate for that weakness. Additionally, with this service, Brockton can recruit manufacturers that would benefit from freight rail to transport extremely heavy, large, or bulky goods.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
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			yes

G. Physical Attractiveness

Although the proportion of Brockton's distressed housing stock has decreased by more than 50% from last year, your community still has a high proportion of distressed properties.³ It is likely that the vast majority of these properties are in poor physical condition, resulting in 11-15% of Brockton's housing stock considered dilapidated. Additionally, 6-10% of your city's commercial buildings are boarded up or closed down and need renovations to open. Municipalities in the CGM tend to have only 0-5% of their properties in such condition. Eleven to 15% of Brockton's industrial buildings are boarded up or closed down and need renovations to open, and the same percentage of industrial space is currently vacant. These two proportions are also higher than those of the typical CGM. Brockton is also relatively weak in that 16-20% of its commercial space is vacant. This proportion will ensure there is ample space for firms to settle in Brockton. However, combined with the quality of properties, these

³ http://www.mhp.net/vision/resources.php?page_function=detail&resource_id=616












disadvantages reduce prospective firms' confidence in the economic stability of your city, leading to an overall disadvantage due to the visual impact of certain aspects of your cityscape.

Your municipality may want to address its high proportion of vacant commercial space (16-20% vs. 6-10%) by ensuring the space is on an available site list (Section 5B) as well as working with property owners, stakeholders, and other entities to repair and aggressively market them to potential firms.

Representing a considerable strength is that Brockton has a hotline for reporting code violations and maintenance needs. This resource helps residents feel they are contributing to the city while helping to ensure a safer and cleaner community. Your city may want to create a system to monitor the timeliness and quality of responses to reported violations. When residents are aware their reports are being acted upon, they are more likely to continue reporting.

Brockton enforces codes and regulations on abandoned properties/vehicles and trash disposal moderately. It also maintains areas near development sites moderately. Your city's efforts to maintain the cleanliness of the community can help build prospective firms' confidence in the city. They will see that Brockton invests resources in caring for its community and that its operations run smoothly enough to do so. Strengthening efforts even further would help compensate for the overall disadvantage in this category.

Your city features a relatively larger percentage of land reserved for parks (11-15% versus 6-10%). To beautify your city, formally and consistently involving the local arts community in the design of open space (street furniture, murals, etc.) could be beneficial. Utilizing them may be an effective use of resources; managing such programs are generally low cost, can enhance an area with historically or culturally relevant art, and can help build community cohesiveness.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
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?	Moderately		Moderately
36: Is there a hotline available for reporting code violations and maintenance needs within your jurisdiction?	yes		no
37: Is there a system for monitoring the timeliness and quality of responses to reported violations within your jurisdiction?	no Yes		no
38: Do you involve the arts community in the design of open space (street furniture, murals, etc.)?	no Yes		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?	11-15%		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)?	16-20%		6-10%
43: What percentage of your industrial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	11-15%		11-15%
44: What percentage of industrial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	11-15%		11-15%

H. Water Transportation ○

Brockton does not have any water-based transportation facilities.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
45: Do you have water based transportation facilities within your jurisdiction? Check all that apply.	No		

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 ●

Your city has the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, a vigorously active regional chamber, in Brockton. Among other activities, it is heavily involved in marketing/branding Brockton to investors and other potential stakeholders. Marketing is an *Important* location factor because just a business needs to advertise to attract customers, a city needs to advertise to attract firms and developers (Section 5A).








Additionally, your jurisdiction has three reasonably active local business associations: the Campello, Downtown Brockton, and Montello Business Associations. Brockton also features Brockton 21st Century Corporation (B21). It is a private non-profit that recently hired a Main Street Manger who will organize activities between the three business associations, foster collaboration, and increase their economic development involvement. B21 works to boost local businesses, encourages investment in the city and recruits firms, and develops recommendations to strategically coordinate public and private economic development activities.

Brockton contracts with the Brockton Redevelopment Authority (BRA), which mainly focuses on low- and moderate income households and areas. It works on a strategic economic development vision for the city, mostly through affordable housing, social programs, and other development efforts.

The BRA, B21, the three business associations, and Metro South provide a healthy array of services for the city. Their services as well as their collaboration with the city and among themselves, especially with Metro South's president on the board of B21, can provide several economic development benefits. These organizations can build cohesiveness and networks among businesses, support city efforts, and implement their own economic development strategies.

Your city has CPA, business advisory, and financial service firms as well as law firms specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, and patents. Brockton also has branches of major commercial banks. All these firms help facilitate the success of Brockton's businesses. However, your community does not have business service firms, such as venture capital, business planning, or specialized recruiting firms that are capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms. As biotech is a Brockton target (Section 2B) and your city has achieved a Massachusetts BioReady Gold community rating, it may be worthwhile to attract business service firms to help support and encourage biotech startups. Brockton does have an advantage with access to a business incubator though Metro South, although it is not well utilized. All these business services are also offered regionally. Your city may to

promote this regional and local availability as well as Brockton’s BioReady status in marketing materials (Section 5A) to help better attract biotech firms.









<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</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?	Vigorously		Moderately
2: Does your jurisdiction have an active volunteer economic development committee or nonprofit center for economic development?	yes No		yes
3: Is there an incubator or other form of cooperative and supportive space for start-up businesses in your jurisdiction?	yes 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?	No such business services exist		Moderately capable

B. Critical Mass Firms

Since Brockton does not have an economic development strategy, it is at a major relative disadvantage. Such a strategy, especially if your city hires a planner and associated staff, can provide numerous benefits for your city. It can consolidate economic development activities, align them with a city vision, and better utilize and work on projects with stakeholder organizations, such as Brockton 21st Century, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, and the local business associations. These organizations are heavily engaged with your city, and therefore nurturing relationships with them could yield powerful results.

Additionally, collaboration with stakeholders is of the utmost importance. Garnering input from residents, business owners, and other stakeholders will help create economic development strategies and a city vision that is inclusive and best serves the entire community’s needs. Doing so may also help alleviate the high level of abutter opposition. If stakeholders are able to help shape the strategy, economic development activities may be more likely to meet their needs and they may be less likely to oppose developments (Section 5F).

Your city should also improve upon its weak commercial/industrial attraction policy. To do so, Brockton may need to better understand the needs of its targets industries. Speaking with local firms within target industries as well as relevant regional and state specialists may yield this information. These specialists may also help Brockton obtain incentives, take part in ongoing initiatives, and be added to state and regional marketing efforts. Additionally, your city may want to update the marketing campaign from Metro South to include information to attract targets.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
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		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?	yes		yes
12: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? (Your Municipality)	Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare; Travel and Tourism; Advanced Manufacturing		
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? Other, please specify (Your Municipality)	Retail ?		
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; 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)	Advanced Manufacturing		

16: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)	Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		
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)	Regional/County; State		Regional/County; ::State
19: How aggressive is your industrial attraction policy?	Weak		Moderate

C. Cross Marketing

Brockton engages local and regional business organizations as well as regional planning and development organizations to participate in marketing the city. Your jurisdiction does not, however, actively enlist the services of resident firms to assist in attracting firms. Since resident firms may recognize that if the city grow, they will grow, they will likely be interested in helping Brockton’s marketing efforts. With their knowledge of the local marketplace, their insights may be able to help sway prospective firms to locate in Brockton.

Brockton is relatively weaker because it does not engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing. These entities may be more experienced, have a wider network of investors, and have a larger pool of resources. Collaborating with them can be a cost-efficient marketing activity that can reach a broader set of prospective new firms in a range of sectors.

Question	Brockton		
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?	yes		yes
22: Do you engage regional planning and development organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	no		yes

D. Marketing Follow-up

Neither Brockton nor municipalities in the CGM tend to conduct any formal outreach with firms to learn their reasons for their location decisions. Implementing formal processes to do so, whether firms located in Brockton or not, would yield valuable information about the city’s desirability to businesses and developers. These insights can help your city refine marketing campaigns (Section 5A), improve customer service, and enhance other municipal operations or services as needed. Through gathering this information, especially if done in person through meetings, focus groups, surveys, or interviews, Brockton will cultivate relationships with its firms and better understand the private sector perspective.

Additionally, Brockton may want to establish a formal procedure for intervening when early news surfaces regarding firm dissatisfaction with your city. A formal procedure could help keep city responses consistent with communication strategies and limit negative public relations. This type of intervention could achieve the same results as conducting outreach.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
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

Brockton is relatively neutral in relation to the typical CGM with respect to number of major public or private four-year colleges or universities in the city. However, it does feature three such institutions, Stonehill and Fisher colleges as well as Bridgewater State University, within ten miles. Your jurisdiction is also relatively stronger with Massasoit Community College located within city boundaries. These strengths make your city more appealing than those among the CGM because employers will have better access to educated and skilled employees, training opportunities, and research labs.

Lastly, Brockton does not have a vocational/technical school, but in Massachusetts, these schools are regional. Brockton’s youth attend Southeastern Regional Vocational-Technical School.

<input type="radio"/> E. Proximity to Universities & Research			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
25: How many public or private four-year college or universities are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
26: How many public or private four-year college or universities are located within 10 miles of your jurisdiction?	3		2
27: How many community colleges are located within your jurisdiction?	1		0
28: How many vocational/technical schools are located within your jurisdiction?	3		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 heavily to operating expenses. Location experts consider the quality of available space and amount of available land for development *Important* factors.

A. Infrastructure ●

All of Brockton’s infrastructure, including water supply, public sewer, wastewater treatment, natural gas, electric power, cellular and land line communications, and fiber optic/cable/DSL have sufficient capacity to support growth and reliable service. Although this capacity is not technically an advantage relative to the typical CGM, it will help ensure that firms and developers can locate in your jurisdiction without the deterrent of infrastructure constraints or associated costly investments. This strength makes Brockton very attractive compared to municipalities with insufficient capacity.

Relative to most other states and regions, electricity rates in Massachusetts and New England are higher. These expenses increase the cost of doing business, which depending on the electricity needs of the industry, can dissuade firms from locating in your city. Specific rates (cents per kilowatt-hour) are listed in the table below.⁴ To help alleviate the negative impacts of these costs, your city may want to make startup and operation of a business as smooth as possible, cultivate relationships with business-owners, and in general, foster a more business-friendly atmosphere that makes firms feel welcome.

	Residential	Commercial	Industrial
Massachusetts	17.07	14.48	12.82
New England	17.62	14.63	12.03
United States	12.39	10.69	7.06

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Are there significant limitations to any of your existing infrastructure systems? - Water Supply	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
2: Public Sewer	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
4: Natural Gas	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service

⁴ Rates were obtained from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) and are July 2014, the most recent available data.











5: Electric Power	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		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	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
8: Data/Telecommunications - Fiber optic / Cable / DSL	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		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			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 Brockton’s central business district are significantly lower than the median CGM. Firms looking for these types of space will find the central business district appealing. In the highway business district, Brockton is quite higher than the median CGM for retail and all classes of office space. Manufacturing rents throughout Brockton are 17% higher, which is not extreme. But since many manufacturers need larger spaces, this proportion may influence their location decisions.



On average, space in the central business district costs 18% less than in the median CGM, representing a potential “deal-maker.” However, in the highway business district, rents are overall 49% higher, representing the potential for a “deal-breaker.”

In regard to proportions of types of available office space, Brockton has 33% less Class A space, 50% more Class B space, and 25% less Class C space. A lower proportion of Class A space is a weakness that your city may want to alleviate since certain target industries desire high quality space with modern amenities. Without much vacant land zoned for commercial/industrial uses (Section 3D), Brockton may want to capitalize on its advantage of a high proportion of Class B space. Your city may want to consider collaborating with owners of vacant Class B buildings to upgrade them Class A, especially if the city decides to target certain industries. The upgrades can be coordinated with the needs of that industry.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	8		12
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	18		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	12		between 12 and 12.50
16: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	10		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	7		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	18		18
19: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	15		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	12		7
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	10		15
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	60		40
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	30		40

C. Quality of Available Space






In general, Brockton is on par in this category. As with the CGM, a low proportion of the city's available sites are considered contaminated or brownfields, and 11-20% of your city's sites are considered vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers. A very low percentage of Brockton's available sites are considered unused open land or greenfield sites. This can actually help guide Brockton to focus an industrial/commercial attraction policy on redevelopment of existing sites.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</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?	Limited		Limited
26: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers?	11-20%		11-20%
27: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites?	1-10%		21-35%

D. Land (space)

Brockton has a disproportionately large amount of vacant industrial or warehouse space and a comparatively small amount of large parcels available for large-scale commercial or industrial development. Similar to Section 3C,

Brockton can use this information to devise a commercial/attraction policy that focuses on redevelopment of existing properties to meet the needs of targets industries.

 D. Land (space)			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	1-150 acres		1-150 acres
29: Approximately how much vacant useable industrial or warehouse space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	250,001-500,000 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?	0-10%		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

Brockton’s wage considerations either mirror or are less expensive than those in the CGM. The prevailing, average annual salary for public high school teachers is \$60,001-\$70,000 and prevailing, average hourly wages for semi-skilled, blue-collar, and manufacturing workers is \$7.25 to \$12.25. Wages for mid-level clerical workers is \$12.26 to \$17.25.







 A. Labor Cost			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$7.25-\$12.25		\$12.26-\$17.25
2: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	\$12.26-\$17.25		\$12.26-\$17.25
3: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	\$60,001-\$70,000		\$70,001 or more
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no

B. Workforce Composition ●

Proportions of Brockton’s workforce that are unskilled, managerial, and professional, at 1-25% each, match those in the typical CGM. However, overall, Brockton’s workforce is a relative weakness. Your municipality has a larger proportion of semi-skilled workers (26-49% compared to 1-25%) and a smaller proportion of technically skilled workers (1-25% compared to 26-49%).




As your jurisdiction is targeting some industries that require educated and/or skilled employees, such as biotech and manufacturing, Brockton’s lower percentages of technically-skilled workers and educated residents (Section 4B) represent weaknesses that can dissuade prospective firms from locating in Brockton. Your jurisdiction may want to consider enhancing workforce training opportunities, through collaboration with educational and workforce resources, to make Brockton more attractive to firms (Section 4E). However, this weakness is mitigated slightly since you jurisdiction is targeting a mix of industries, including ones that do not require employees with highly specialized skills, such as retail. Your city may want to keep its workforce composition in mind when expanding its commercial/industrial attraction policy (Section 2B).

Representing a weakness for Brockton is that a relatively higher proportion of its workforce are English language learners. Although these workers may be skilled, the language barrier could hinder their employability. To bring out their potential, which will also enhance Brockton’s relative attractiveness, your city may want to collaborate with educational resources to provide more and affordable English courses.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
5: What percentage of your workforce is Unskilled?	1-25%		1-25%
6: What percentage of your workforce is Semi-skilled	26-49%		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?	11-20%		0-10%

C. Unions ○

Unions do not play a major role in Brockton’s labor market. Neither the unions nor any group of employees have had a major strike or work stoppage in the past three years.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</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		no
12: Has there been a major union organizing drive among public or private workers in the last 3 years?	no		no
13: Do labor unions have a significant presence in the labor market of your jurisdiction?	Somewhat		Somewhat

D. Labor (Available) ●

Brockton’s available labor has relatively lower levels of attained education, signifying the potential for a “deal-breaker” and making the city’s labor force a comparative weakness. A smaller proportion of Brockton’s residents aged 25 or older have earned high school degrees (66-84% versus 85% or greater) and bachelor’s degrees (11-20% versus 21-35%). These weaknesses may dissuade firms in particular industries that require such credentials from situating in your city. Collaborating more with workforce and training resources, as well as Massasoit Community College, can help upgrade the skillset of Brockton’s residents to meet the demands of firms (Section 4E).

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
14: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a high school diploma?	66-84%		85% or greater
15: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a bachelor's degree?	11-20%		21-35%

E. Workforce Training ○

Brockton already utilizes workforce training resources to respond to the skill development needs of firms as well as supports public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training. These activities can help mitigate the workforce’s education and training levels (Sections 4B and 4D). Nurturing relationships with these institutions and aligning curriculums with needs of firms, especially at Southeastern Regional Vocational-Technical School and Massasoit Community College, can be beneficial. Your city may also want to include such relationships in marketing materials (Section 5A). Lastly, Brockton may want to bolster its adult education program since it has insufficient capacity to meet current needs.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
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	yes		
- Area High schools	yes		
- Voc-tech schools or community colleges	yes		
- Human service or nonprofit career training centers	yes		
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	yes		yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	yes, but insufficient capacity to serve existing need		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

Brockton, like municipalities among the CGM, does not itself have any marketing programs. However, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce has created a marketing/branding program for your city. If necessary, Brockton may want to collaborate with Metro South to refine such programs to include the following: core strengths, opportunities for firms, ways Brockton can meet target industry needs, industry clusters in the city, available incentives (Section 8A), and other reasons Brockton is a desirable place in which to open a business. A persuasive marketing/branding program, including local businesspersons to speak on Brockton’s behalf, can be an effective way to attract firms, developers, and investors, just as a strong advertising campaign can draw in new customers for businesses. A campaign can also help update the “mental maps” of prospective investors, which is their perceived view of Brockton. These maps may be incorrect or outdated and thus, dissuade firms from situating in you city.








Your jurisdiction may also want to compile a team to quickly respond when negative news regarding Brockton surfaces. Just like a formal procedure to address negative news (Section 2D), a quick response team can solve problems before they escalate. Quickly addressing issues will help minimize negative publicity, cultivate relationships with involved stakeholders, and make firms feel Brockton supports them.

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

Representing a substantial advantage for Brockton is that your city offers a current list of available development sites. Such a list allows developers and businesses to find sites quicker than in other municipalities, which makes Brockton more attractive. Posting this list to your city’s website would be advantageous, since it would allow easy access to it. Additionally, Brockton 21st Century Corporation works with prospective firms on site selection and encourages investment in underutilized areas. These activities help foster a more business-friendly atmosphere and send the message to prospective parties that Brockton welcomes new businesses and investments. Brockton also maintains active relationships with local commercial real estate brokers, developers, or agents, which will help keep the available site list up-to-date.

Your jurisdiction has not active strategy for reclaiming delinquent properties—an effort that would help return properties to the market. I should also consider enacting land use regulations that protect land currently zoned industrial from encroachment by residential or incompatible uses. These regulations help convey to prospective firms that Brockton works to protect private investments.











			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
6: Does your jurisdiction own sites that it is currently marketing for development?	yes		no
7: Is there a readily accessible, up-to-date, complete list of sites that are available for development in your jurisdiction?	yes		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?	no		yes
10: Do you have an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties?	no		no
11: Do you have an active strategy for reclaiming vacant or underutilized shopping plazas?	no		no

C. Timeliness of Approvals ●

Brockton’s site plan and zoning variance permitting review process for new construction, and site plan review for existing construction take somewhat longer than the CGM. It would be in the best interest of your city to examine its permitting processes in these areas for bottlenecks, congestion, or other inefficiencies.

Brockton may also want to create a fast track permitting option for target industries or development districts. Highlighting this option in marketing campaigns would help to more quickly update mental maps (Section 5A).

Additionally, if an application for an Appeal is initially rejected, the applicant is required to change the project in order to be reconsidered for such a permit. This procedure may prolong the review process, and therefore, your city may want to evaluate the structure of this procedure.

● C. Timeliness of Approvals			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
12: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Site plan review	9-12 weeks		5-8 weeks
13: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Zoning variance	9-12 weeks		5-8 weeks
14: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Special permit	9-12 weeks		9-12 weeks
15: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Building permit	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks
16: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Appeals process	5-8 weeks		5-8 weeks
17: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for existing structures?: Site plan review	9-12 weeks		5-8 weeks
18: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for existing structures?: Zoning variance	5-8 weeks		5-8 weeks
19: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for existing structures?: Special permit	5-8 weeks		9-12 weeks
20: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for existing structures?: Building permit	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks
21: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for existing structures?: Appeals process	5-8 weeks		5-8 weeks

D. Predictable Permits ●

Brockton is on par with communities among the CGM in this category. Your jurisdiction provides a checklist of permitting requirements but not a flowchart of the permitting process or development handbook to prospective developers. Providing this flowchart as well as updating and formalizing the handbook will make the permitting process easier, more efficient, and less daunting for prospective developers. Translating these resources into predominant languages in Brockton will also help remove the language barrier that generally prevents non-English speaking immigrants from opening businesses. These resources will convey the message that your city is business-friendly and welcomes new business.

Your jurisdiction does not allow for a single, simultaneous presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority. Such a format would help reduce permitting-related preparation time and costs for developers and firms. If your city elects to allow for this format, it may want to initiate it by bringing related boards, such as conservation and planning, together to review proposals, and then ultimately bringing all boards together.

Your city may want to formally offer pre-meetings with applicants prior to permit submission through use of a “development team” (Section 5G). Doing so would help ensure that all application materials are complete before submission, enhancing the likelihood of faster decisions on applications and sending the message to firms that your city welcomes new businesses and supports the growth of existing businesses.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</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?	no		no
24: Do you provide a development handbook to prospective developers?	no		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

Representing a relative strength for Brockton is that your city takes advantage, through pre-permitting, of state 40R smart growth zoning overlay districts. Otherwise, your city is comparatively neutral; it does not formalize pre-permitting in other districts, feature any public or cooperatively owned industrial parks with expediting permitting authority, or market any “fast-track” permitting options. Offering and marketing fast track options to targeted industries (Section 2B) would help encourage investment in your community.








<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</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

Overall, Brockton’s community slows the permitting process at a relatively higher level. Specifically, abutters slow the process very much in your jurisdiction, while they do so only somewhat in municipalities among the CGM. If prospective firms expect abutters to hinder development, they may decide to locate elsewhere. Just as in permitting reviews (Section 2C), this factor can extend startup times, which are costly. Your city may want to alleviate this weakness by establishing a particular timeframe and procedure for community response during the initial stage of the review process. This procedure could make opposition more manageable, and doing so early on could help resolve issues before developers invest much money in their projects. Additionally, your city may want to involve the community in the economic development visioning process (Section 2B). A shared vision could help align developments the city tries to attract with the desires of the community, which may lesson opposition.

Elected officials already expedite developments by facilitating dialogue with community groups at a relatively higher level, and they have rescued a development endangered by opposition in the past five years. Your city may want to build on these two advantages by facilitating more dialogue with the community during reviews to reduce opposition.

Matching the tendency of jurisdictions among CGM, organized neighborhood groups in Brockton slow the permitting process somewhat, interested parties get opportunities for review and comment during various review processes, and a development proposal has been stopped by opposition in the past five years.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
30: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in your jurisdiction?	Very much		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?	Somewhat		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?	yes		no

G. Permitting Ombudsman ○

Your city is at an overall comparative disadvantage in regards to permitting assistance. Creating activities to simplify and expedite Brockton’s permitting process could help compensate for and reduce slow processing times (Section 5C), which can deter developments in Brockton. Appointing “permitting ambassadors” to institute and manage all permitting-related improvements would be beneficial. Having formalized responsibilities for each ambassador can allow for efforts and outreach to be centralized as well as more easily managed in line with a permitting improvement strategy. Additionally, these ambassadors can be the points-of-contact for prospective firms, which would make firms feel supported and cultivate relationships with them.

This improvement strategy should include instituting a “development team” to review major developments prior to reviews, something that the typical CGM currently offers. This team could help firms ensure application materials are organized and meet necessary technical guidelines. During this process, firms may realize their developments are not ready for review and decide to submit their applications only when ready. Since fewer incomplete applications may be submitted, boards would then only be reviewing complete applications, saving them time, which may reduce backlogs and the duration of the review process. Additionally, through these meetings, your city will build relationships with firms and better understand their needs.


















Your city is neutral compared to those municipalities among the CGM with respect to a lack of economic development training for development staff, boards, officials, and others involved in the development process. The permitting improvement strategy should also include this training. It will give them the perspective of businesses and a fuller understanding of the challenges firms face. City representation’s permitting and other related decisions will then be more aligned with business needs. The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) offers such training.

Brockton is relatively stronger in that the city’s mayor plays a major role in ensuring the efficiency of the permitting process, and your city is on par in that other local officials are also empowered to do so. Prospective firms like to see that leadership is invested in the economic development process, and even more involvement would offset the disadvantage of the relatively slow permit review durations.

Brockton’s local licensing process take 4-5 longer than the typical CGM, and since it is generally a straightforward process, your city and ambassadors may want to investigate and mitigate the delay. Any additional time added to the startup process can reduce Brockton’s attractiveness to firms.

Brockton is comparatively weak in that your city neither offers technical nor other assistance to firms trying to obtain state and federal licenses. Any assistance offered to firms will show them that your city wants them to succeed, and this type, specifically, will help them with an often intimidating and complex process.

These activities with the permitting improvement strategy will help elevate the level of customer service within Brockton, cultivate relationships with firms, and streamline the process of opening a business. Prospective firms will recognize that Brockton tries to facilitate firms’ succeed, which will make your city more attractive.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</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?	yes		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?	no		yes
44: Do you provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit or license application process?	no		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	yes		no
- Bar/Tavern	yes		no
- Beauty salon	yes		no
- Child care services	yes		no
- Construction contractor	no		no
- Home health care	yes		no
- Massage therapist	yes		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

Brockton has a relatively higher number of cultural activities. Your community is home to the Fuller Craft Museum and the Brockton Symphony Orchestra. Although your city does not feature a professional sports team, it does have a summer college baseball team, the Brockton Rox. Brockton does not have a professional repertory theater company, a civic center, arena, or major concert hall, but does have a number of golf courses. Since Brockton is located close to Boston, residents have easy access via car or commuter rail service to its cultural, artistic, and entertainment venues. Representing a weakness is that Brockton does not have any public beaches or boating activities within five miles.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
1: Is there a professional sports team resident within your jurisdiction?	no		no
2: Is there a major art, science or historical museum?	yes		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?	yes		no
7: Are there public beaches or boating activities within 5 miles of your jurisdiction?	no		yes







B. Crime

Brockton's level of crime is a relative weakness. Compared to the median crime rates among municipalities in the CGM, the burglary rate is 2.8 times higher, the auto theft rate is 2.3 times higher, the robbery rate is 6.9 times higher, and the homicides rate is twice as high.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 last year in your jurisdiction?	815		295
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 last year?	210		93
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 last year?	225		33
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 last year?	6		3

C. Housing

Overall, housing is comparatively neutral with the typical CGM. In Brockton, the range of median prices for a single family home is relatively lower (\$151,000-\$250,000 compared to \$251,000-\$350,000), and is likely a partial result of the high proportion of homes for sale (5-7% compared to less than 3%). Brockton’s homeownership rate is at least 76% while in the typical CGM it is only 66-76%. Regarding rentals, the range for median rents for a two-bedroom apartment is higher (\$1001-\$1250 vs. \$801-\$1000), and the overall rental vacancy rate is on par at 3-5%. Lastly, only few of officers of Brockton’s firms live in your city, while some in the typical CGM live in their respective communities. This factor can indicate the desirability of your community to executives.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
12: What was the median sale price of a single family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$151,000-\$250,000		\$251,000-\$350,000
13: What was the median rent for a two bedroom apartment in your jurisdiction last year?	\$1001-\$1250		\$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?	5-7%		Less than 3%
17: Approximately what proportion of the major officers of firms located in your jurisdiction live in the community?	Few		Some

D. Local Schools

Brockton’s school system has had remarkable improvement in recent years. Over ten years ago, Brockton High School had a one in three dropout rate, but since then, the school has dedicated itself to improvement.¹ Efforts were quite successful: the school spends more per student than the CGM, and the current drop-out rate now matches the typical CGM at 1-25%. The city also boasts a relatively larger proportion of students testing “proficient” in English on the MCAS (81% or greater versus 66-80%), and a five year graduate rate in the range of the typical CGM (66-80%).

However, with a least one underperforming school, a lower proportion of students testing “proficient” in math on the MCAS, graduating after five years, and going on to four-year colleges after graduation, Brockton is at a slight disadvantage with regard to the CGM. Additionally, your city’s average overall SAT score last year was 1290, while the average score in Massachusetts was 1553. In Brockton, the average composite ACT score of last years’ students was 20.9, which is below the state average of 24.1, but matching the national average of 20.9.

These educational factors affect prospective firms’ “mental maps” of Brockton and may deter them from opening a business in your city. However, with the national fame that Brockton has attained for its recent, educational improvements, these firms may be reassured that the city is addressing this overall weakness.

 D. Local Schools			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
18: What is the average K-12 per pupil expenditure in your jurisdiction last year?	\$12,001-\$14,000		\$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?	51-65%		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?	yes		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	75% or greater		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	1290		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?	20.9		
26: What percentage of high school freshmen normally graduate within 5 years?	66%-80%		81%-94%
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?"	yes		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

Compared to municipalities among the CGM, Brockton is weaker in regards to the proportions of amenities within one mile of existing development sites. Although your city has comparable proportions of fast food restaurants and retail shops near such sites, proportions of fine dining and day care facilities are lower. Few sites have fine dining within one mile and some sites have day care within one mile. Brockton may want to fast track permitting for them to encourage their startup, then promote this option in marketing materials (Section 5A).












Question	Brockton		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		Most
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





Your jurisdiction’s businesses are eligible for a wider array of special state tax incentives than those businesses in communities among the CGM, representing an overall strength in this category. Your city may want to encourage more utilization of these incentives through promotion in marketing materials (Section 5A) and offering guidance to help firms obtain them. Offering assistance may help firms succeed, build relationships with businesses, and elevate the city’s level of customer service.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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	yes		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?	Somewhat		Somewhat
4: Does your state allow for priority funding for distressed economic areas?	yes		yes

B. Local

Your city does not automatically offer existing or new businesses property tax abatements. However, businesses in Brockton are eligible to apply for them and city staff negotiates them. An advantage for Brockton is that your city grants TIFs or similar programs to provide tax breaks for retail development. Additionally, through the South Eastern Economic Development Corporation (SEED), Brockton’s small businesses have access to a revolving micro-loan fund.

Mirroring those municipalities among the CGM, Brockton actively pursues federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses as well as helps firms secure financing. Your jurisdiction is neither part of a designated Enterprise Zone nor actively tries to attract local, state, or federal facilities. If these facilities can complement Brockton’s economic development strategy, it may be worthwhile to try to attract them to act as anchors for a district or project.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</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			
8: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?			

9: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	Staff Function	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Legislative
10: Does your jurisdiction offer any of the following incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)		<input type="checkbox"/>	
- 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 checked="" 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?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
13: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
14: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
15: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	between yes and no
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?	Regional	<input 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

Brockton's property tax rates, relatively, are significantly higher. Industrial/commercial and residential rates are each over 220% higher than the median CGM rates. High tax rates may not prove a considerable disadvantage if other *Very Important* location factors, such as the workforce, infrastructure, permitting, parking, etc. are in place. Brockton may want to improve upon these factors by appointing permitting ambassadors (Section 5G), promoting strengths (Section 5A), preparing the workforce for target industries (Sections 4B and 4D), and making Brockton more business-friendly. Additionally, with taxes going towards enhancing municipal services, Brockton is building a city that will better serve businesses and residents in the long run. Your city abates 1-10% of taxes it can collect on commercial and/or industrial properties, whereas the average CGM doesn't forfeit revenue through abatements. Last, 5% of all tax revenue is derived from industrial property, 26% from commercial property, and 64% from residential property. Your city also collects local income taxes and hotel room taxes.

A. Local			
Report of as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			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	yes		no
- Meals tax	yes		no
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	1-10%		0%
3: Does your jurisdiction tax property in industrial or commercial uses at a different rate than residential properties?	yes		yes
4: If yes, what is the tax rate on industrial/commercial property? \$ /\$1,000	33.96		21.4
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000	18.13		11.37
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?			between 13.91 and 13.97
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	4.74		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	25.92		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	64.12		
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	no		no

B. Tax Delinquency

Brockton seeks tax abatements on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners, helping to ensure fewer properties are unavailable due to tax issues. For other considerations, your city mirrors those among the CGM in regards tax delinquency. Brockton has 0-3% of residential, commercial, and industrial properties one year delinquent in taxes and has 0-5% of properties tax defaulted or subject to the power of sale. Additionally, your city auctions tax title properties in 1-5 years and has a specific process for management of auctions. Neither Brockton nor the typical CGM auction the “right to foreclose” on tax delinquent properties or pay special attention to properties that are serve as impediments to development.

Question	Brockton		Comparison Group
11: What proportion of residential property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?	0%-3%		0%-3%
12: What proportion of commercial property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?	0%-3%		0%-3%
13: What proportion of industrial property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?	0%-3%		0%-3%
14: How many properties are tax defaulted or subject to the power of sale?	0-50		0-50
15: When do you choose to auction tax title properties?	1-5 years		1-5 years
16: Do you have an organized and defined process for conducting such auctions and ensuring that they are successful?	yes		yes
17: Do you auction the "right to foreclose" on tax delinquent properties?	no		no
18: Do you seek tax abatement on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners?	yes		no
19: If a tax delinquent or tax title property serves as an impediment to development, does the property receive special attention?	no		no

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

As of the time of the EDSAT workshop, Brockton’s new website was not yet live. At that point, Brockton’s website was stronger than that of the typical CGM. It had the advantage of allowing potential firms and developers to file permit applications. Additionally, the website featured more links to development resources and local organizations. Brockton may want to add as much information as possible, and make that information available under the ‘Businesses’ tab. It would be especially advantageous if your city posts general information, all local development policies and procedures, date certified forms and applications, and a development permit checklist and/or flowchart (Section 5D). Additionally, your city may want to include its list of available land and buildings (Section 5B) with detailed data, such as square footage, zoning information, assessed value, tax rates, and GIS links, for each available property.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Brockton</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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?	no		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		no
7: Are permit applications available for downloading on the website?	yes		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)?	no		no
9: Is it possible to file a permit application electronically?	yes		no
10: Is there a list of available land and building sites on the website?	no		no
11: If yes, check the types of information available about each site. (Check all that apply)			
- :Owner	no		no
- Square footage of vacant land	no		no
- Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	no		no
- Abutters	no		no
- Zoning	no		no
- Assessed value	no		no
- Tax rate	no		no
- Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	no		no
- Contamination	no		no
- Aerial photos	no		no
- GIS links	no		no
12: Other, please specify			

13: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	yes		yes
14: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	no		no
15: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	yes		yes
16: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)			
- State finance agencies	no		no
- State permitting agencies	no		no
- Regional planning agencies	yes		no
- Regional development organizations	yes		no
- Workforce training organizations	yes		no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no		no
- Demographic information	no		yes
- Economic development agencies	yes		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	yes		yes
- Community development corporations	yes		no
- Arts and cultural organizations	yes		yes
- Sports and recreation venues	yes		no
- Convention and tourist organization	yes		no
19: Other, please specify			
20: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	yes		yes

NEXT STEPS

Brockton is a community with a strong economic development toolkit that makes it quite attractive to entrepreneurs, investors, and developers. One of the most powerful elements is the **level of collaboration** within your city. The current and planned levels of collaboration among the city, Brockton 21st Century Corporation, Brockton Redevelopment Authority, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, and the three business associations is an example of **best practices that other municipalities should follow**.

Your city also has an accessible **list of available development sites**, and all **infrastructure types have sufficient capacity** to handle increased usage. These two factors make situating in Brockton easier than in other municipalities since firms will not be hindered by limited infrastructure and difficult site research. Additionally, since **Massasoit Community College** is local, firms can collaborate with it to align curriculums with their needs, resulting in students graduating with skills needed by local firms.

With a **Transit-Oriented Development strategy**, Brockton capitalizes on its public transit stations. Such a strategy can revitalize a neighborhood by bringing in businesses as well as residences, all accessible with public transit. Providing cultural and recreational opportunities for residents in the city, Brockton features the **Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton Symphony Orchestra**, and the **Brockton Rox**. To help keep the city attractive for residents and businesses as well as giving them a sense of **community buy-in**, Brockton features a **hotline for reporting code violations and maintenance needs**.

Brockton also has an unusually **informative, well-maintained website**, which has become increasingly important to location specialists in recent years.

Although your city has several advantages, it does have **some major relative weaknesses** that hinder economic development efforts and that can deter businesses and developers from situating in your city. Many of these weaknesses can be resolved or alleviated, which will make your municipality more **business-friendly** and **customer service oriented**.

Lack of an **economic development strategy** is the most significant disadvantage. Such a strategy could merge all current efforts, include **collaborative activities** with complementary/supplemental business service organizations, and help Brockton work towards a community vision. Involving stakeholders, including residents, in creating a **collective city vision** will help produce the most inclusive strategy that meets the **needs of the community**.

Within this strategy, Brockton should include an **expansion of its commercial/industrial attraction policy**. Doing so can create jobs, generate additional tax revenue, and help protect Brockton during recessions. To expand it, Brockton may want to **collaborate with local firms** in target industries as well as with regional and state specialists, take advantage of available resources, and, in Metro South's marketing plan, include ways your city can meet the **needs of target industries**.

To **advertise to prospective firms**, Brockton should further **enhance marketing efforts** through building on Metro South's efforts. Your jurisdiction may want to enlist the services of resident firms in attracting new firms, conduct **formal outreach** to businesses to learn reasons for location decisions, and capitalize on regional and state marketing efforts.

Brockton's **three slow permitting reviews** can delay startup durations, increase costs for businesses, and thus dissuade firms from locating in Brockton. Your city should begin to reduce these permit review durations by **examining the process for congestion and inefficiencies**. Creating a **fast-track permit option for target industries** may help to temporarily reduce startup time and costs until Brockton finds a more sustainable solution.

Your city may want to post the available properties list to the city’s website to give easy access to it to prospective firms and developers. Brockton may also want to create a flowchart of the permitting process and development handbook for prospective developers, which will make the permitting process less intimidating and show firms that Brockton **desires new businesses**.

The aforementioned collective city vision may help also meet needs of abutters, which may reduce their likelihood of stalling development projects. Additionally, implementing a timeframe and procedure for opposition response during the beginning of the permitting process would better help **manage opposition** and create a more **welcoming atmosphere for businesses**.

Recommendations	Priority
Create an economic development strategy with a commercial/industrial attraction policy, using input from stakeholders	High
Enhance marketing efforts through collaboration with Metro South Chamber of Commerce, resident firms, and regional and state specialists	High
Investigate three permitting processes for bottlenecks or other issues	Med
Post available properties list to the city’s website	Med
Create a flowchart of the permitting process and handbook of the development process to support applicants	Med
Create a procedure to reduce community opposition to developments	Low