

Northeastern University
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

REPORT
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

RESULTS FOR THE TOWN OF WEST BRIDGEWATER, MA

NATIONAL
LEAGUE
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FOR RESEARCH
& INNOVATION



Northeastern University
School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs
Dukakis Center for Urban & Regional Policy

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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.

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

A robust, sustainable, and adaptable local economy 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 businesses and to grow existing ones. The *Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool* (EDSAT) is an important step that public officials can take to assess their jurisdiction's 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, West Bridgewater will not only better understand its economic development assets and challenges, but also learn to build upon strengths and overcome weaknesses. This report contains a detailed analysis of the responses provided by West Bridgewater to the EDSAT questionnaire.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since 2005, the Dukakis Center has sought to identify the "deal-breakers" impeding private investment in local municipalities. Based upon research on the resurgence of older industrial cities, the Dukakis Center has identified two of the crucial factors in economic development. First is a municipality's capability in responding to ever-changing market forces. Second is the ability of local government to work with regional agencies, business leaders, and academic institutions to work collaboratively to solve municipal weaknesses and market its 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, developers, 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 39 broad themes relevant to economic growth and development. Based on rankings by these location experts, location factors are identified as "Very Important," "Important," or "Less Important" as follows:

Very Important	Important	Less Important
Highway Access	Public Transit	Fast Track Permits
Parking	Physical Attractiveness	Citizen Participation
Traffic	Business Services	Cultural and Recreational
Infrastructure	Critical Mass Firms	Crime
Rents	Cross Marketing	Housing
Workforce Composition	Marketing Follow Up	Local Schools
Labor	Quality of Available Space	Site Amenities
Timeliness of Approvals	Land	State Incentives
	Labor Cost	Local Incentives
	Industry Sensitivity	Local Tax Rates
	Sites Available	Tax Delinquency
	Predictable Permits	
		Airports
		Rail
		Water Transportation
		Universities and Research
		Unions
		Workforce Training
		Permitting Ombudsman
		Website

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

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 applications, 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. 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.

The EDSAT analysis compares your jurisdiction's response to that of Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM), which are the municipalities that have completed the EDSAT process. 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 possesses a relative advantage in what is a Very Important location factor. However, if permit reviews take significantly longer, then your jurisdiction would 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 increasingly competitive environment.

EDSAT assigns a color code to highlight the results of your jurisdiction compared to the median response among the CGM. Colors—red, yellow, and green—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 typical; and red indicates a relative weakness.

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 or relative ranking on other location factors.
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 questions 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 redevelop these large spaces, such as a creative mixed-use complex. Thus, your jurisdiction's context is important in understanding and extracting benefit from the 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 West Bridgewater’s primary strengths and weaknesses in the realm of economic development. EDSAT does not provide an overall grade for a jurisdiction, but rather assesses a jurisdiction’s unique set of strengths, weaknesses, and economic development objectives.

With respect to strengths, the list of significant responses for each of the Very Important, Important, and Less Important location factors 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 municipality’s strengths.

The EDSAT results that identify weaknesses, however, are prioritized to emphasize the importance of their mitigation. The Dukakis Center staff prioritizes 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 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.

West Bridgewater’s Strengths or Potential “Deal-Makers”

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

Strengths among Very Important Location Factors

- **Timeliness of Approvals:** West Bridgewater is on par with the CGM regarding the time it takes to review permit applications for site plans, zoning variances, building permits, and appeals for both new and existing projects. The town is faster than the CGM when it comes to reviewing special permits.

Strengths among Important Location Factors

- **Land (space):** West Bridgewater has an advantage in its higher proportion of parcels (21-35% versus 11-20%) that are five acres or larger that are available for commercial or industrial development.
- **Industry Sensitivity:** There is a quick response team to address negative data, stories or incidents that arise in West Bridgewater.
- **Sites Available:** West Bridgewater has a plan to reclaim tax delinquent and tax title properties and there are land use regulations that protect industrial zones from incompatible land uses.
- **Citizen Participation in the Review Process:** Abutters and organized neighborhood groups do not slow the permitting process significantly in West Bridgewater. This strength may be attributed to elected officials facilitating dialogue with the community about development projects.
- **Business Incentives:** Businesses in West Bridgewater are eligible for a wide range of state tax incentives and the town actively takes advantage of these incentives.

Strengths among Less Important Location Factors

- **Permitting Ombudsman:** West Bridgewater’s chief executive (the town administrator) and other officials play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of the town’s permitting processes.
- **Website:** West Bridgewater’s website contains more information that is useful to business and developers than websites from among the CGM.

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

Despite sizable advantages, West Bridgewater has a number of apparent weaknesses, which would 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 West Bridgewater review the prioritized lists and the detailed narrative about all location factors, while keeping in mind its economic development objectives and the resources available for addressing weaknesses. The contents of this report and the EDSAT process provide an opportunity for informed dialogue among economic development stakeholders and for establishing a roadmap to turn “deal-breakers” into “deal-makers.”

Weaknesses among Very Important Location Factors

- **Infrastructure:** West Bridgewater is at a disadvantage relative to the typical CGM with respect to infrastructure capacity. The town’s capacity to provide water supply is sufficient for current needs only and its sewer and wastewater treatment capacity is inadequate for current needs; the town’s data and telecommunications systems are adequate for current needs only.
- **Rents:** Rents for office space in West Bridgewater’s central business district and highway district are 35% and 79% higher, respectively, than among the CGM. However, rent for retail space tends to be similar to the CGM and rent for manufacturing space is about 17% lower.

Weaknesses among Important Location Factors

- **Cross Marketing:** West Bridgewater collaborates with its regional planning commission to market the town, but does not work with resident firms, business organizations, or state agencies and organizations.
- **Critical Mass Firms:** The town has identified just one industry, Alternative Energy, as a target for recruitment. The town would benefit from a more comprehensive set of industries that it targets and aligning them with regional and state objectives.
- **Sites Available:** West Bridgewater does not maintain relationships with commercial real estate professionals or developers, a list of available development sites, or have a plan to redevelop vacant shopping centers.
- **Physical Attractiveness (vacant commercial space):** West Bridgewater has a higher proportion of vacant commercial space, which is a relative weakness, but could be an opportunity for West Bridgewater if its economic development strategy includes attracting firms that could capitalize on the space.
- **Tax Rates (Local):** The town levies different tax rates for commercial/industrial property and for residential property. Both rates are higher than the median rates from CGM that also have split tax rates.
- **Crime:** The rate per 100,000 residents for burglaries and auto thefts in West Bridgewater were higher than among the CGM, while robberies were about the same and homicides were lower.
- **Public Transit:** The public transit system in West Bridgewater is less far-reaching than those among the CGM. Just 1-25% of retail, manufacturing, and general office sites are within one quarter mile of a public

transit stop, while at least half of such sites are among the CGM. West Bridgewater does not have a shuttle service to the commuter rail station.

Weaknesses among Less Important Location Factors

- **Permitting Ombudsman:** The town does not have a development team that reviews major projects and supports applicants through the review process; and the local business licensing process in is longer than among the CGM by about four weeks.
- **Airport:** Logan Airport and TF Green Airport are both more than 31 miles from West Bridgewater, which is farther than among the CGM.
- **Rail:** West Bridgewater does not have freight rail, which could put them at a disadvantage in attracting businesses that rely on it for transportation of bulky or heavy goods.

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

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

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 ●

West Bridgewater has good highway access with 75% or more of the town's available retail, manufacturing, and general office sites within two miles of a major, limited access highway—Route 24. This level of highway access is similar with the comparison group municipalities (CGM). West Bridgewater imposes weight limitations on streets and access roads, while the majority of the CGM do not. This could increase transportation costs for firms that rely on truck transportation.

B. Public Transit ◀

The public transit system in West Bridgewater is less far-reaching than those among the CGM. Between 1-25% of available retail, manufacturing, and general office sites are within one quarter mile of a public transit stop in West Bridgewater, while at least half of such sites are among the CGM. West Bridgewater has a commuter rail stop within five miles of the town and would benefit from adding a shuttle service to the commuter station, giving commuters more options. The town may also benefit from including a transit oriented development strategy within its economic development plan.

C. Parking ●

West Bridgewater is on par with the CGM for all parking factors. Seventy-five percent or greater of available retail, manufacturing, and general office sites have on-site parking. Hourly, daily, and monthly parking is free. While the relative strength of this economic development factor is neutral, West Bridgewater has adequate and affordable parking. This should be highlighted in marketing materials.

D. Traffic ●

West Bridgewater is also similar to the CGM for traffic conditions. The town has access to a transportation planner through the Old Colony Planning Council, which is an active partner with its regional communities and a benefit to the town. During the typical rush hour, traffic is described as “moderately congested” and moves at an average speed of 26 to 35 miles per hour.

E. Airport ○

With the exception of access to the nearest major international airport, West Bridgewater is on par with the CGM with respect to the airport factors. West Bridgewater does not have a general aviation airport and the nearest regional airport is less than 20 miles away. Logan Airport and TF Green Airport are both more than 31 miles from West Bridgewater, which is farther than among the CGM. Travel time is between 60 and 90 minutes to Logan Airport.

F. Rail ○

Rail service is limited in West Bridgewater. The town does not have freight rail or intercity rail such as Amtrak. Most of the GGM have freight rail, which could be a disadvantage for West Bridgewater with respect to attracting industries that rely on rail to move bulky or heavy raw materials or finished products.

G. Physical Attractiveness ◀

West Bridgewater is an attractive community that “very vigorously” maintains public spaces such as sidewalks, streets, and open space near development sites and “moderately” enforces nuisance codes community wide. The town does not have a hotline for reporting code violations and no system for monitoring the timeliness of responses. This may be a service the town wants to consider adding in the short to medium term as a way to engage citizens and demonstrate accountability.

The town does not involve the arts community in designing open spaces, which could be an opportunity to merge West Bridgewater’s historic and agrarian past with current economic development goals.

West Bridgewater is on par with the CGM with respect to the proportions of open space reserved for parks, housing stock considered dilapidated, commercial buildings that are boarded up, and industrial buildings that are boarded up. However, the town has a higher proportion of vacant commercial space. While this is flagged as a relative weakness, this could be an opportunity for West Bridgewater if its economic development strategy includes attracting firms and redevelopment projects that could capitalize on the physical space.

H. Water Transportation ○

West Bridgewater does not have water transportation.

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 ◀

West Bridgewater is on par with the CGM regarding the types and availability of business support services. West Bridgewater has a “moderately” active chamber of commerce and an active economic development committee. The town has accounting and financial services firms; commercial and intellectual property law firms, and commercial banks. The town does not have firms that are specialized in working with emerging technical and scientific firms. However, these services are available regionally in the greater Boston area and should be included in marketing materials. West Bridgewater also does not have a business incubator or collaborative space. The town may consider these resources if the industries they target would benefit from their availability.

B. Critical Mass Firms ◀

West Bridgewater has a local economic development strategy and participates in a regional overall economic development plan or a comprehensive economic development strategy. However, the town does not have an industrial attraction policy. The town has identified just one industry, Alternative Energy, as a target for recruitment. The region and the Commonwealth have identified Alternative Energy plus the following as targets: Travel and Tourism, Information Technology, Financial Services, Manufacturing, and Life Sciences/Biotechnology. West Bridgewater would benefit from a more comprehensive set of industries that it targets for recruitment and aligning those targets with regional and state objectives.

Two types of inventories would help West Bridgewater with identifying target industries. The town could start with an inventory of existing companies and 1.) provide them with resources and services that will help them grow and 2.) target firms that would support or complement the growth of the local businesses. Similarly, the town could establish a list of existing development sites and match their features with those required by the target industries (see Section 5B).

C. Cross Marketing ◀

West Bridgewater collaborates with the Old Colony Planning Commission to market the town, but does not work with resident firms, business organizations, or state development agencies and organizations. This puts the town at a disadvantage because most CGMs work with business organizations and state entities. West Bridgewater is also missing the opportunity to reach a broader range of industries and more focused marketing efforts by not including these potential partners.

D. Marketing Follow-up ◀

West Bridgewater does not have any formal processes to follow up with prospective or resident businesses. While this is a neutral comparison with the CGM, the majority of which do not pursue follow up either, West Bridgewater would still benefit from implementing processes for follow up. Debriefing with firms who have decided to locate in or decided against locating in West Bridgewater would give the town real time information about why the firms made certain decisions, giving the town an opportunity to adjust its marketing strategies. Staying in touch with resident firms allows the town's economic development staff to address needs as they arise, to intervene early to address any dissatisfaction, and to develop relationships with existing business owners who can act as spokespersons for the town.

E. Proximity to Universities and Research ○

There are more four year colleges and universities within ten miles of West Bridgewater than among the CGM (three versus two). However, there are no four-year higher education institutions or community colleges in West Bridgewater. There are also no vocational-technical high schools in the town. In Massachusetts, vocational-technical high schools are regional and West Bridgewater students attend Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School in South Easton.

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 directly to operating expenses. Location experts consider the quality of available space and amount of available land for development Important factors.

A. Infrastructure ●

West Bridgewater is at a marked disadvantage relative to the typical CGM with respect to infrastructure capacity. The town's capacity for water supply meets current needs, but not for growth. The town's capacity for public sewer and wastewater treatment are inadequate even for current needs. Capacity for data and telecommunications through land lines, cellular networks, and broadband systems is adequate for current needs only. Infrastructure capacity for natural gas and electricity is sufficient for growth and is on par with the CGM. With so many of the town's infrastructure systems having no excess capacity, West Bridgewater is at a disadvantage for growing existing businesses or attracting new ones.

Retail electricity rates in the New England region tend to be the highest among other US regions due to fuel costs and transmission constraints. West Bridgewater's residential rates are slightly higher than the average retail rate in Massachusetts and the town's retail commercial and industrial rates are a little lower. West Bridgewater's per kilowatt-hour (kWh) rates are compared to other regions in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of West Bridgewater Retail Electricity Rates

Retail Customer	West Bridgewater (cents/kWh)	Massachusetts (cents/kWh)	New England (cents/kWh)	United States (cents/kWh)
Residential	16.62	17.69	18.02	13.01
Commercial	14.29	14.76	14.64	11.07
Industrial	13.02	12.60	11.37	7.38

Source: US Energy Information Administration, Average Retail Price of Electricity to Ultimate Customers by End-Use Sector, August 2014. http://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/epm_table_grapher.cfm?t=epmt_5_6_a. Accessed on October 6, 2014.

B. Rents ●

Rents in West Bridgewater for office space tend to be about 35% higher in the central business district for classes A, B, and C and about 70% higher for classes B and C in the highway district. The cost of retail space in both the central business district and the highway district are similar to the median rent among the CGM. The average rent for manufacturing space is about 17% lower in West Bridgewater. The mix of office space in West Bridgewater is fairly similar to the CGM—the town has slightly less Class A space and slightly more Class B and Class C space. West Bridgewater may want to identify the reasons for the higher rents in office space and work with owners and developers to bring rents down. However, the town has an advantage for rents in manufacturing space and may want to explore ways of matching the space with manufacturers in the Alternative Energy industry and other targeted industries that will be identified.

C. Quality of Available Space ◀

West Bridgewater has a lower proportion of brownfields than the CGM and a higher proportion of vacant or underutilized shopping centers. While the comparison to the CGM returns a relative disadvantage for the underutilized shopping center space, it may be turned into an asset if West Bridgewater can target industries that would put the space into productive use.

West Bridgewater is similar to the CGM in terms of having about one-third of available development sites be open land or greenfields. This is a favorable situation for developers because building on greenfields gives them flexibility and tends to lower risk for the project.

D. Land (space) ◀

The amount of developable land currently zoned commercial/industrial, useable warehouse space, and office space in industrial buildings is comparable to the CGM. Where West Bridgewater has an advantage is in the proportion of parcels that are five acres or larger that are available for commercial or industrial development.

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 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 do not have the as negative an impact as generally believed.

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 ◀

The range of prevailing wages in West Bridgewater for blue collar jobs and mid-level clerical jobs range from \$17.26 to \$22.25; and the prevailing annual salary for public high school teachers ranges from \$50,001 to \$60,000. These wages are all on par with the CGM. West Bridgewater does not have a living wage statute.

B. Workforce Composition ●

West Bridgewater has a similar proportion of unskilled (1%-25%), semi-skilled (26%-49%), and professional workers (1%-25%) as the typical CGM. Likewise the town has a similar proportion of workers in managerial roles (1%-25%). West Bridgewater has a lower proportion (1%-25%) of technically skilled workers than the CGM (26%-49%). To help address the lower proportion of skilled workers, the town may want to collaborate with Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School, community colleges, the workforce improvement board, and other workforce training resources to match their curricula with the skills needed by existing businesses and targeted industries once they are chosen (see Sections 2B and 4E).

C. Unions ○

The impact of unions in West Bridgewater is similar to that among the CGM. There has been no work stoppages, strikes, or major organizing drives by public or private unions in the past three years. Generally, unions have a “somewhat” significant presence in the town’s labor market.

D. Labor (Available) ●

The education level of West Bridgewater residents age 25 or older is on par with the CGM. Eighty-five percent or more of West Bridgewater residents have at least a high school diploma and between 21% and 35% of residents have earned at least a bachelor’s degree.

E. Workforce Training ○

West Bridgewater works with regional and state employment boards, area high schools and vocational-technical high schools, and human service career training centers to respond to the skill development needs of local firms. There is also an adult education program readily available in the town.

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 ◀

A strength in West Bridgewater is that the town has a quick response team that addresses negative data, stories, or incidents as they arise. This helps the town control its message and “cognitive map,” which is the image that residents and outsiders have of the town.

While most CGM also do not pursue the following, West Bridgewater can set the town apart if it develops and implements a marketing program that is based on and highlights the town’s core strengths, opportunities, and industry concentrations. The town can also engage local business owners to speak on behalf of the town, as they are most familiar with the local market conditions and can help develop relationships with prospective businesses and developers.

B. Sites Available ◀

A weakness for West Bridgewater is that the town does not maintain relationships with commercial real estate professionals and developers. Doing so would help the town better understand its commercial real estate market and learn about potential new projects earlier in the development process. Specifically, relationships with real estate professionals would benefit the town by helping staff inventory and maintain a list of available development sites

and devise a plan to reclaim vacant or underutilized shopping centers of which the town has a higher proportion (see Section 3C). The town does not currently maintain a list of available development sites or have a plan to revitalize or redevelop shopping centers.

West Bridgewater does have a plan to reclaim tax delinquent and tax title properties and there are land use regulations that protect industrial zones from incompatible land uses.

C. Timeliness of Approvals ●

West Bridgewater is on par with the CGM in terms of reviewing site plans (5-8 weeks), zoning variances (5-8 weeks), building permits (0-4 weeks), and permitting appeals (5-8 weeks) for both new and existing projects. An advantage for West Bridgewater is its review process for special permits, which is about 4 weeks faster than the CGM (5-8 weeks versus 9-12 weeks).

While West Bridgewater is on par with other communities in how long it takes for permit applications to be reviewed, the town would still benefit from looking for additional ways to streamline its review processes. The permitting process is one of the most important location factors for prospective businesses and they would prefer “a quick no” to a “long yes” because the time to market is critical for businesses. The longer they are in the permitting phase, the longer they are incurring costs and not generating revenues.

There are several avenues for West Bridgewater to consider for streamlining its permitting. The town could allow a single permit presentation to all committees, boards, and commissions that have authority over the permitting process. Each entity would deliberate individually, but a single presentation saves the applicant time and resources (see Section 5D). Expedited permitting is another alternative (see Section 5E). The town could also examine its existing processes and look for ways to shave off some time and bring West Bridgewater review times to below the median among the CGM.

D. Predictable Permits ◀

By providing informational resources and technical support materials for the permitting process makes it more transparent. West Bridgewater provides applicants a checklist of requirements but no flowcharts or development handbooks. It would be beneficial for the town to develop and disseminate these types of resources. West Bridgewater does not provide the option of a single permit presentation, which would be a proactive step towards streamlining the process (see Section 5C).

E. Fast Track Permits ◀

West Bridgewater also does not offer any fast track permitting options such as expedited permitting for given locations or land uses, pre-permitting certain districts, or overlay districts. While West Bridgewater’s permitting processes are fairly efficient, the town may want to consider fast track permitting once it has identified other industries for targeted recruiting. The fast track permitting could be tailored to types of businesses or a development location in the town.

F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process ◀

It appears as if abutters and organized neighborhood groups do not slow the permitting process significantly in West Bridgewater. This strength may be attributed to elected officials facilitating dialogue with the community more often than officials among the CGM. As West Bridgewater works to identify priority industries and develops stronger marketing efforts, town officials should engage residents to ensure their visions for economic development and for the community are incorporated.

G. Permitting Ombudsman ○

West Bridgewater’s chief executive (the town administrator) and other officials play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of the town’s permitting processes. However, the town does not have a development team that reviews major projects and supports applicants through the review process. A team can support the efforts of the town

administrator and other officials be acting as points of contact for applicants. Ideally, West Bridgewater would assign to each applicant a permitting liaison who supports the applicant from the initial inquiry to final decision. The liaison makes the permitting process more transparent and provides technical assistance for the applicant. This type of collaboration would help save time for the applicant and bring complete applications before the review boards.

The local business licensing process in West Bridgewater is longer than that among the CGM by about four weeks. The town should also look into shortening this process since all businesses need a general license and auto dealerships, bars/taverns, restaurants, and the skilled trades require additional licenses.

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

West Bridgewater matches the typical CGM in the types of cultural and recreational amenities located in and near the town. The town does not have a professional sports team, major museum, professional repertory theater, civic center, a performing arts company, or a beach and boating facility. There is a golf course in the town.

B. Crime

The rate per 100,000 residents of residential burglaries and auto thefts in West Bridgewater was higher than among the CGM, while robberies were about the same and homicides were lower. The burglary rate was about 50% higher and the auto theft rate was about 24% higher. Meanwhile, the robber rate was about the same and there were no homicides in West Bridgewater last year.

C. Housing

The cost of a single family house West Bridgewater is about same as among the CGM, but the rent for a two bedroom apartment is higher (\$1,001-\$1,250 versus \$801-\$1,000). The percentage of homes for sale in West Bridgewater is slightly higher than among the CGM and the percentage of vacancies in the rental market is about the same.

D. Local Schools

The factors describing West Bridgewater's public schools are generally on par with the CGM. Average expenditures per student is in the range of \$12,001-\$14,000, the percentage of students testing at least proficient in English and Mathematics is 66%-80%, the five year graduation rate is 95% or higher, and about half to three-quarters of graduating students attend a four year college. West Bridgewater's average SAT score last year was 1470, which is below the Massachusetts state average of 1553 and the national average of 1498.

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

When compared to the CGM, a smaller proportion of development sites in West Bridgewater have fast food restaurants and fine dining restaurants within one mile of their locations. On the other hand, West Bridgewater has more development sites that are near daycares and more sites are near retail shops.

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. Tax incentives can help close a deal, but all things equal, they rarely will generate the initial interest.

A. State ◀

Businesses in West Bridgewater are eligible for a wider range of state incentives than among the CGM and the town actively takes advantage of these tax credits, loan programs, and grants to a greater extent than the typical CGM. The following state incentives are available: investment tax credits, job training tax credits, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and workforce training grants.

B. Local ◀

West Bridgewater uses tax increment financing including for retail projects but the town does not offer any local business incentives or tax abatements to new or existing businesses. Establishing and maintaining incentive programs often requires large outlays of capital and administrative resources. For smaller towns like West Bridgewater, the town is better off participating in state and regional programs, and marketing their participation to prospective businesses and developers.

Section 9. Tax Rates

Property taxes are 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 ◀

West Bridgewater levies a property tax and a hotel room tax; the town does not collect a local sales tax, local income tax, or a meals tax. The town levies different tax rates for commercial and industrial property and for residential property, where both rates are higher than the median rate among the CGM that also have split tax rates. The commercial/industrial rate is about 72% higher (\$26.57/\$1,000 versus \$15.47/\$1,000) and the residential rate is twice as high (\$16.49/\$1,000 versus \$8.21/\$1,000). Due to the higher commercial/industrial tax rates, the tax burden on residential home owners is lower. The percentage of tax revenues from resident property is about 66% while the percentage from commercial and industrial property is around 17% for both.

B. Tax Delinquency ◀

West Bridgewater is on par with the typical CGM regarding factors around tax delinquency. Less than 3% of the town’s commercial, industrial, and residential properties are more than one year tax delinquent, amounting to fewer than 50 properties. The town auctions tax title properties within five years, but does not auction the right to foreclose on delinquent properties and does not seek tax abatements on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for a new owner.

Section 10. Access to Information

While a municipality’s website may rank as Less Important in terms of the final location decision, it can be the initial source of information that entices a location expert to probe deeper and contact a municipality’s economic development team 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 location expert may reject the municipality as a candidate, opting instead to consider others with more easily accessible data.

A. Website ○

West Bridgewater's website contains more information that is useful to business and developers than websites from among the CGM. The site contains documentation on local development policies and procedures, permitting information, applications and forms, and links to multiple state and regional economic development, planning, permitting, and workforce development agencies. The town could further improve its website by adding assessor's information about parcels such as information on ownership, abutters, features, zoning, photos, and GIS data.

NEXT STEPS

West Bridgewater is a bucolic, rural-suburban community with plenty of cultural and outdoor recreational opportunities. The town is centrally situated near the triad of Boston, Cape Cod, and Providence providing an abundance of business and recreational opportunities. From the town's agricultural history, there are large development sites and greenfields that offer flexibility to developers and there are zoning regulations in place that protect parcels from incompatible uses. One of West Bridgewater's most important strengths is the town's relatively efficient permitting process. The town can further improve its permitting by enhancing the amount of support the town provides applicants by creating a development team. Members of the development team would support applicants on procedural and technical matters from inquiry about a permitting application to the final decision. This type of support makes one of the more onerous components of starting a business or a development project more transparent and efficient for the applicant and for the town.

West Bridgewater has a master plan and an economic development plan, but would benefit from identifying additional types of businesses to target for the town. The identification process can start with working more with local businesses and business associations to determine the types of new establishments that would create stronger markets for them; or the town could pursue a more formal cluster analysis of its economy. These analyses could feed into a more focused and aggressive marketing plan for West Bridgewater that identifies the town's core strengths, investment opportunities, and industry concentrations.

West Bridgewater's most serious disadvantage is the deficient capacity of its infrastructure. The town's water infrastructure is sufficient for current needs only and its sewer and wastewater treatment capacity is inadequate for current needs. The town's broadband data and telecommunications systems are adequate for current needs only. Because upgrading infrastructure is such a costly proposition for both the town and for businesses, West Bridgewater is encouraged to devise plans for upgrading its water and wastewater systems and to forge partnership with telecommunications companies to enhance cellular and broadband infrastructure.

Recommendations
Create a development team to oversee the permitting process and act as liaisons to applicants.
Offer more technical support resources such as flowcharts, handbooks, and contacts in other agencies.
Identify additional industries to target for recruiting
Engage local businesses and business organizations
Develop a focused marketing plan
Devise plans to upgrade deficient infrastructure

COMPARISON TABLES

This section of the report presents a tabular printout of West Bridgewater's the EDSAT results. 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 West Bridgewater's responses to the EDSAT questions.
- **Group 3** is the median or majority (for yes/no questions) response among the municipalities that have completed the EDSAT questionnaire (the comparison group or CGM).
- **Group 4** is a series of green, yellow, or red blocks indicating how West Bridgewater compares to the CGM. There is a built-in function in EDSAT that allows a municipality to compare itself against a subset of the CGM by other criteria such as population, median income, or size of operating budget. For purposes of this analysis, however, West Bridgewater is compared with all the CGM.

Section 1: Access to Customers/Markets

● A. Highway Access		Comparison Group	
Report of Ludlow as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			
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?	75%+	75%+	75%+
2: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	75%+	75%+	75%+
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?	75%+	75%+	75%+
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	yes	yes	yes

Importance To Market: ● Very Important, ◐ Important, ○ Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers: ■ Strong, ■ Average, ■ Weak

Group 1 (circled area), Group 2 (arrow to '75%+' in row 2), Group 3 (arrow to 'yes' in row 4), Group 4 (arrow to yellow block in row 2)

Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool

You are logged in as:
admin [[Log Out](#)]
[\[Change Password\]](#)
 Survey for: **West Bridgewater, MA** [[Main Menu](#)] [[View Report](#)]
[\[Search Surveys\]](#)
[\[Register Users\]](#)
[\[Download Spreadsheet\]](#)

Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University and the National League of Cities Center for Research and Innovation






SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS








West Bridgewater MA

September 19, 2014

Comparison of West Bridgewater with:

Section 1: Access to Customers/Markets

 A. Highway Access			
Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions			
<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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?	75% or greater		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?	75% or greater		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?	75% or greater		75% or greater
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	yes		no

Importance To Market  Very Important  Important  Less Important	Your Performance Relative To Peers  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison
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B. Public Transit

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong









Weak

Average

No Comparison

C. Parking








Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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?	75% or greater		75% or greater
15: Does your jurisdiction offer parking facilities near development sites?	no		no
16: Have you used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking in your jurisdiction?	no		no
17: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Hourly	0		0
18: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Daily	0		0
19: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$ Monthly	0		0

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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D. Traffic






Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
20: Do you have regular access to a traffic engineer or transportation planner, such as one who is on staff or with a regional organization to which your jurisdiction is a member?	yes		no
21: Do you routinely use the services of a transportation consultant?	yes		yes
22: Do you have access to traffic count data for the major roadways in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the site? (e.g. installing traffic signals, metering flow)	yes		yes
24: How would you rate traffic into and out of your jurisdiction during a typical weekday rush hour?	Moderately congested		Moderately congested
25: What is the average speed of automobile commuter traffic during a typical weekday rush hour?	26 \diamond 35 mph		26 \diamond 35 mph
26: Do you require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	yes		yes

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important  Important  Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong  Average</p> <p> Weak  No Comparison</p>
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E. Airports





Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
27: Do you have a local (municipal/ general aviation) airport?	no		no
28: The closest regional airport is how many miles away?	11-20 miles		11-20 miles
29: The closest major/international airport is how many miles away?	31 miles or more		20-30 miles
30: Is the major/international airport accessible by public transportation?	yes		yes
31: How long does it take to drive to the major/international airport from your downtown?	61 minutes to 90 minutes		61 minutes to 90 minutes

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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F. Rail

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very Important <input type="radio"/> Important <input type="radio"/> Less Important	Your Performance Relative To Peers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> No Comparison
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G. Physical Attractiveness

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties / abandoned vehicles / trash and rubbish disposal within your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
35: To what extent does your jurisdiction maintain streets, sidewalks, parks, etc., near available development sites?	Very vigorously		Moderately
36: Is there a hotline available for reporting code violations and maintenance needs within your jurisdiction?	no		no
37: Is there a system for monitoring the timeliness and quality of responses to reported violations within your jurisdiction?	no		no
38: Do you involve the arts community in the design of open space (street furniture, murals, etc.)?	no		no
39: What percentage of the acreage within your jurisdiction is reserved for parks?	6-10%		6-10%
40: What percentage of your housing stock is considered dilapidated?	0-5%		0-5%
41: What percentage of your commercial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	0-5%		0-5%
42: What percentage of commercial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	11-15%		6-10%
43: What percentage of your industrial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	16-20%		16-20%
44: What percentage of industrial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	11-15%		11-15%

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison

H. Water Transportation

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very Important <input type="radio"/> Important <input type="radio"/> Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> No Comparison </p>
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Section 2: Agglomeration



A. Complementary/Supplemental Business Services

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Is your local chamber of commerce or business association actively involved in the economic development activities of your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
2: Does your jurisdiction have an active volunteer economic development committee or nonprofit center for economic development?	yes		yes
3: Is there an incubator or other form of cooperative and supportive space for start-up businesses in your jurisdiction?	no		no
4: Are there CPA, business advisory and financial services firms in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
5: Are there law firms in your jurisdiction specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, and patents?	yes		yes
6: Are there branches of major commercial banks in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
7: To what extent are the business services (e.g. venture capital, business planning, specialized recruiting, etc.) in your jurisdiction capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms?	No such business services exist		Moderately capable

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison



B. Critical Mass Firms

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	West Bridgewater		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?	yes		yes
9: Is your jurisdiction part of a county or regional OEDP or Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDPS)?	yes		yes
10: Does your state have a development strategy or economic development plan?	yes		yes
11: If yes, are there firms within specific industry types or sectors that are targeted in your jurisdiction's, your county's or your state's development strategy?	no		yes
12: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? (Your Municipality)	Alternative Energy		
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? Other, please specify (Your Municipality)			
14: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? (Regional/County)	Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		
15: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)			
16: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)	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?	Don't have one		Moderate

Importance To Market





Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison

 **C. Cross Marketing**

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions





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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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D. Marketing Follow-Up

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Weak



Average



No Comparison



E. Proximity to Universities & Research

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions









<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
28: How many major public or private four-year college or universities are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
29: How many major public or private four-year college or universities are located within 10 miles of your jurisdiction?	3		2
30: How many community colleges are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
31: How many vocational/technical schools are located within your jurisdiction?	0		1

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important Important Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong Average Weak No Comparison</p>
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Section 3: Cost of Land (Implicit/Explicit)

A. Infrastructure

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions


<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Are there significant limitations to any of your existing infrastructure systems? - Water Supply	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
2: Public Sewer	Inadequate capacity for current needs		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Inadequate capacity for current needs		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
4: Natural Gas	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
5: Electric Power	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
6: Data/Telecommunications - Land Lines	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
7: Data/Telecommunications - Cellular	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
8: Data/Telecommunications - Fiber optic / Cable / DSL	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
9: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Residential	16.62		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	14.29		15.20
11: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Industrial	13.02		13.03

Importance To Market  Very Important  Important  Less Important	Your Performance Relative To Peers  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison
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B. Rents

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions





<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</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)?	12.00		12.00
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	12.00		12.00
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	5.00		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	17.00		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	15.00		12.00
17: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)??: CLASS C	12.00		9.00
18: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)??: CLASS A	17.00		17.00
19: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)??: CLASS B	15.00		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	12.00		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	45		40
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	45		40

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important  Important  Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison</p>
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C. Quality of Available Space





Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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 **D. Land (space)**

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions





Question	West Bridgewater		Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	151-300 acres		151-300 acres
29: Approximately how much vacant useable industrial or warehouse space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	500,001-750,000 sq. feet		500,001-750,000 sq. feet
30: Approximately how much vacant useable office space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	250,001-500,000 sq. feet		250,001-500,000 sq. feet
31: What proportion of the parcels available for industrial development or large scale commercial development are of 5 acres or more?	21-35%		11-20%

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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Section 4: Labor

 **A. Labor Cost**







Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	West Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$17.26 - \$22.25		\$17.26 - \$22.25
2: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	\$17.26 - \$22.25		\$17.26 - \$22.25
3: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	\$50,001-\$60,000		\$50,001-\$60,000
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important  Important  Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong  Average</p> <p> Weak  No Comparison</p>
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● B. Workforce Composition




Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</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%		between 1-25% and 26-49%
7: What percentage of your workforce is Technically skilled	1-25%		26-49%
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	1-25%		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional	1-25%		1-25%
10: What percentage of your workforce are current English language learners?	0-10%		0-10%

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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C. Unions



Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
11: Have any employers in your jurisdiction had a major strike or work stoppage within the last three years?	no		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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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D. Labor (available)











Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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E. Workforce Training

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions






Question	West Bridgewater		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	no		
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	no		yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	yes		yes

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important  Important  Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong  Average</p> <p> Weak  No Comparison</p>
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Section 5: Local Process

 **A. Industry Sensitivity**

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</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?	yes		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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important  Important  Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong  Average</p> <p> Weak  No Comparison</p>
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B. Sites Available

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong











Weak

Average

No Comparison

● C. Timeliness of Approvals

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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D. Predicable Permits

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
22: Do you provide a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers?	yes		yes
23: Do you provide a flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers?	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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak





Average

No Comparison



E. Fast Track Permits

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important  Important  Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong  Average</p> <p> Weak  No Comparison</p>
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F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
30: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in your jurisdiction?	Very little		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?	yes		yes
34: Do interested parties get multiple opportunities for review and comment during the various development review processes?	yes		yes
35: Has a development proposal in your jurisdiction been stopped by abutter or neighborhood opposition in the past 5 years?	yes		yes
36: Have officials from your jurisdiction intervened to rescue a development proposal that was endangered by abutter or neighborhood opposition in the last 5 years?	no		no

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Weak






Average





No Comparison

○ **G. Permitting Ombudsman**

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
37: Does the chief executive officer of your jurisdiction play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of your local permitting process?	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?	yes		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	no		no
- Bar/Tavern	yes		no
- Beauty salon	no		no
- Child care services	no		no
- Construction contractor	no		no
- Home health care	no		no
- Massage therapist	no		no
- Real estate agent/broker	no		no
- Restaurant	yes		no

			
- Skilled Trades (electrician, plumber, etc)	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
46: other:			

Importance To Market

 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
 Weak
  No Comparison

Section 6: Quality of Life (Community)



A. Cultural and Recreational Amenities

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important Important Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong Average Weak No Comparison </p>
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B. Crime

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 last year in your jurisdiction?	442		between 288 and 295
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 last year?	114		between 91 and 93
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 last year?	29		between 32 and 33
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 last year?	0		between 2 and 3

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important Important Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong Average Weak No Comparison </p>
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C. Housing

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Weak



Average



No Comparison



D. Local Schools

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	West Bridgewater		Comparison Group
18: What is the average K-12 per pupil expenditure in your jurisdiction last year?	\$12,001-\$14,000		\$12,001-\$14,000
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?	66-80%		66-80%
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least proficient in Mathematics?	66-80%		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?	1-25%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	1470		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?			
26: What percentage of high school freshmen normally graduate within 5 years?	95% or more		95% or more
27: What is the high school drop out rate last year?	1-25%		1-25%
28: Are there any schools in your jurisdiction that are currently deemed underperforming ?	no		no
29: What percentage of high school graduates from last year's class went on to a four-year college?	50-74%		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		

Importance To Market

Very Important
 Important
 Less Important





Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison

Section 7: Quality of Life (site)

A. Amenities

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fast food restaurant	Some		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	All		Most
4: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Retail shops	Most		Most

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </p>
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Section 8: Business Incentives

A. State

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	West Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: Are businesses in your jurisdiction eligible for any of the following special state tax incentives? Check all that apply.			
- Investment tax credits	yes		no
- Job training tax credits	yes		no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	no		no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	yes		no
- Loan guarantees	yes		no
- Equity financing	no		no
- Workforce training grants	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
2: Are businesses in your jurisdiction eligible for any of the following special state tax incentives? Other, please specify			
3: To what extent does your jurisdiction actively take advantage of any special state business incentives?	Very much		Somewhat
4: Does your state allow for priority funding for distressed economic areas?	yes		yes

Importance To Market

 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important








Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
 Weak
  No Comparison



Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
5: Does your jurisdiction offer existing or new businesses property tax abatement? Existing businesses	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
6: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?		<input type="checkbox"/>	
7: Does your jurisdiction offer existing or new businesses property tax abatement? New businesses	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
8: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?		<input type="checkbox"/>	
9: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	Legislative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legislative
10: Does your jurisdiction offer any of the following incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)			
- Revolving loan fund	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Loan guarantees	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Revenue bonds	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Equity participation	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Business district group loans	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- None	yes	<input 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	no		yes

attracting and retaining businesses?			
13: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	yes		yes
14: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	yes		no
15: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	no		no
16: Do you actively try to attract local, state, and federal facilities, including post offices, to your jurisdiction?	no		no
17: Is any part of your jurisdiction in a designated Enterprise Zone?	no		no
18: Do you participate in a regional brownfield revolving loan fund or offer your own?	No brownfields funds utilized		Regional

Importance To Market

 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important


















Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
 Weak
  No Comparison

Section 9: Tax Rates

A. Local

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	West Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: What types of taxes are collected by your jurisdiction to pay for local services?			
- Property tax	yes		yes
- Local sales tax	no		no
- Local income tax	no		no
- Hotel room tax	no		no
- Meals tax	yes		no
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	11%-25%		11%-25%
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	26.57		15.47
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000	16.49		8.21
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?			
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	16.5		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	16.5		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	66		
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	no		no

Importance To Market










 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
 Weak
  No Comparison

 **B. Tax Delinquency**

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions



















<i>Question</i>	<i>West Bridgewater</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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?	no		no
19: If a tax delinquent or tax title property serves as an impediment to development, does the property receive special attention?	no		no

<p>Importance To Market</p> <p> Very Important  Important  Less Important</p>	<p>Your Performance Relative To Peers</p> <p> Strong  Average</p> <p> Weak  No Comparison</p>
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Section 10: Access to Information

A. Website

Report of West Bridgewater as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	West Bridgewater		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction's website list all local development policies and procedures?	yes		no
2: Does your website have contact information for key officials?	yes		yes
3: Does your website have general information about your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
4: How frequently is your website updated?	Weekly		Weekly
5: Does your website include an explicitly designed economic development tool aimed at businesses and developers?	no		no
6: Is there a development permit checklist or flow chart on the website?	yes		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)?	yes		no
9: Is it possible to file a permit application electronically?	no		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	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Aerial photos	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- GIS links	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
12: Other, please specify		<input type="checkbox"/>	
13: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
14: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
15: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
16: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)			
- State finance agencies	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- State permitting agencies	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional planning agencies	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional development organizations	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Workforce training organizations	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Demographic information	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
- Economic development agencies	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
17: Other, please specify		<input type="checkbox"/>	
18: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Chambers of Commerce	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
- Community development corporations	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Arts and cultural organizations	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes

- Sports and recreation venues	yes		no
- Convention and tourist organization	no		no
19: Other, please specify			
20: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	yes		yes

Importance To Market

 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
 Weak
  No Comparison

