

Northeastern University
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

**EDSAT REPORT FOR THE TOWN OF
LITTLETON, MASSACHUSETTS
APRIL 2016**



THE PARTNERS

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

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

About the National League of Cities

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

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 heavily on public officials who can lead in forming and implementing an economic development strategy. A thorough strategy is developed with an understanding of local business interests and regional resource availability, and a careful assessment of the community's ability to attract new business investment and jobs. Participating in the Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) is an important step public officials can take to assess their jurisdictions'¹ strengths and weaknesses for the purpose of planning for viable, long-term 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, Littleton will not simply better understand its economic development assets and challenges, but learn to build upon strengths and overcome weaknesses. This report contains a thorough analysis of the responses provided by Littleton to the EDSAT questionnaire.

The Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy will keep all individual-municipality results in this report strictly confidential.

Project Overview

Since 2005, Northeastern University's Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (Dukakis Center) has sought to identify the "deal-breakers" that impede private investment in local municipalities. Based upon research on the resurgence of older industrial cities, the Dukakis Center has identified two crucial elements in economic development. First is a municipality's ability to respond opportunely to ever-changing market forces. Second is local government's skill in working collaboratively with regional agencies, business leaders, and academic institutions to lessen municipal weaknesses and market the city or town's strengths. These conclusions led to the development of EDSAT, an analytical framework for providing practical, actionable feedback to public officials. In its current form, EDSAT resulted from a partnership between the Dukakis Center and the National League of Cities (NLC).

Methodology

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

¹ Jurisdictions are usually categorized as individual towns and/or cities. A "jurisdiction" can also consist of several small municipalities, a geographic region, or a county—as long as each plans and strategizes its economic development efforts as a single entity.

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF EDSAT LOCATION FACTORS

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


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

The EDSAT analysis compares your jurisdiction's responses with those of Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM)—that is, all of the jurisdictions that have completed the EDSAT questionnaire. With regard to the Permitting Process, for example, your jurisdiction may offer significantly shorter review times than the CGM. In this case, the EDSAT analysis suggests that on this measure your jurisdiction may possess a relative advantage in what is a *Very Important* location factor. However, if permit reviews take significantly longer, then your jurisdiction may be at a disadvantage, because 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—green, yellow, and red—indicate a municipality's relative strength on each specific location factor. Green indicates that your jurisdiction is quantitatively or qualitatively stronger than the CGM response; yellow indicates that your jurisdiction is average or typical; and red indicates a relative deficiency.

SAMPLE RESULT, DRAWN FROM SECTION 1: ACCESS TO MARKETS/CUSTOMERS

E. Airports			
Report of [REDACTED] as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			Comparison Group
27: Do you have a local (municipal/ general aviation) airport?	yes		no

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 necessary skills, and infrastructure that lacks the capacity to support growth, it is considered to have three distinct "deal-breakers," regardless of its geographic location.
2. Your jurisdiction should look at its EDSAT results as an overview, and not focus on a particular location factor. One "deal-breaker" does not mean that your jurisdiction should abandon its economic development efforts. At the same time, your jurisdiction cannot rely solely on one or two "deal-makers." Economic development is a dynamic process and should be managed in such a way that a community continually responds to the changing needs of local and prospective businesses.
3. The interpretation of comparisons and color assignments depends on your jurisdiction's context in answering the question and its objectives for economic development. For example, if there are significantly more square feet of vacant commercial space than the CGM median, EDSAT assigns "red" because large amounts of space may indicate outdated facilities in a stagnant local economy. However, the empty space may actually be an asset if your jurisdiction is focusing on attracting businesses that would benefit from large spaces, such as a creative mixed-use complex. Thus, your jurisdiction's context is important in understanding EDSAT results.

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

SUMMARY OF RELATIVE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

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

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

Tasks on the weakness and "deal-breaker" lists, however, are prioritized to emphasize the importance of their mitigation. The Dukakis Center staff arranges the tasks according to feasibility, with consideration of the latitude and abilities of local, county, or regional levels of government. For example, in a jurisdiction with limited highway access, building a new highway interchange or connector would likely be cost-prohibitive, time-consuming, and an inefficient use of local resources. However, other tasks are more feasible with modest investments in time and resources. For example, streamlining the permitting process and making related development information readily accessible to both location experts and businesses could 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.

Littleton's Strengths and Potential "Deal-Makers"

The following three lists of Littleton's strengths are its powerful economic development assets. The town should build upon these assets and promote them to prospective businesses and developers. Littleton 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 each list.

Strengths among *Very Important* Location Factors

WEBSITE: Littleton's website site is updated weekly, provides updated versions of applications and forms, and contains links to regional planning agencies, local chambers of commerce, and state permitting agencies.

HIGHWAY ACCESS: Most of Littleton's available sites for manufacturing, retail, and general office space are within two miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway. That said, the town imposes weight restrictions on nearby streets and access roads, which might ward off industries that rely on heavy transportation.

PARKING: Littleton offers as many parking advantages as the CGM, with most available sites for office, retail, and manufacturing use featuring on-site parking. The town has also made use of state infrastructure grants to build parking near the commute line, which is rare.

TRAFFIC: In comparison with the CGM, Littleton's commuter traffic flows reasonably well, with the town experiencing higher traffic speeds during rush hour congestion. Littleton also uses the services of a private transportation consultant and has regular access to transportation planning staff members from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION: The proportion of Littleton's professional workforce and technically skilled workforce is high, and its entirety is well-balanced.

LABOR AVAILABLE: Outperforming the CGM, the majority of Littleton's residents have earned at least a bachelor's degree.

Strengths among *Important Location Factors*

PUBLIC TRANSIT: Littleton has a transit-oriented development strategy in place, which can help in attracting new firms searching for towns that value the growing importance of linking employment centers with transit. Overall, Littleton does relatively well in this category, and has the capacity to expand bus and rail services.

PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS: Littleton does relatively well in maintaining well-kept streets, sidewalks, parks, etc. near development sites, and 21% or more of the acreage in Littleton is reserved for parks in comparison with the CGM's 6-10%.

LAND: Littleton currently has a large proportion of vacant developable land that is zoned for commercial and industrial uses. In addition, a large proportion of the parcels are of 5 acres or more.

COMPLEMENTARY BUSINESS SERVICES: Littleton's economic development committee and its local business association are actively involved in the economic development activities of the town. However, the town is not capable of providing business services (e.g. venture capital, business planning, specialized recruiting) for emerging technical and scientific firms.

CROSS MARKETING: The jurisdiction actively enlists the services of firms already resident in the community to assist in attracting new firms.

MARKETING FOLLOW UP: Littleton has a formal procedure in place for contacting existing local firms about their satisfaction with the town and for intervening when early news surfaces about firm dissatisfaction. The town should however consider creating a formal de-briefing process to contact firms that chose not to locate in the town with the aim of learning what made the difference.

PREDICTABLE PERMITS: Your town provides a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers.

FAST TRACK PERMITS: Littleton has marketed "fast track" permitting to potential developers and firms in The Point, a commercial complex in Littleton Common. The town has also implemented a Chapter 43D "overlay" district, which allows expedited permitting of certain uses

QUALITY OF AVAILABLE SPACE: While only a small portion of Littleton's available sites would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites, the town does not have any vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers.

LABOR COST: Although the town's wage rate for semi-skilled manufacturing workers and mid-level clerical workers is higher than the CGM, salaries for public high school teachers are also high, and reflect how much the community values an educated workforce. Clearly, this is a community that takes care of its workforce.

CRIME RATES: Across all categories, crime rates for Littleton are extremely low in comparison with the CGM.

Site AMENITIES: *All* of Littleton's existing development sites are within 1 mile of amenities important to location specialists, including fast food restaurants, fine dining, retail shops, and day care services.

LOCAL SCHOOLS: Littleton's commitment to high performing local schools is reflected in its high average K-12 per pupil expenditure. In addition, the town has a large portion of high school and four-year college graduates.

INDUSTRY SENSITIVITY: Littleton engages local businesspersons to represent the town to help attract new businesses. The town also enlists the services of a public relations firm to respond to negative stories about the town that make the news.

SITES AVAILABLE: Littleton maintains an active relationship with commercial real estate brokers, developers, and agents with sites in the jurisdiction. In addition, it implements an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties.

STATE AND LOCAL BUSINESS INCENTIVES: Littleton is eligible for state investment tax credits, job training tax credits, research and development tax credits, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and work-force training grants, and does relatively

well to take advantage of them. As for local business incentives, the town offers TIF arrangements for commercial/industrial development.

LOCAL TAX RATES: While your town does not maintain a unified property tax rate, which is much preferred by businesses, it derives a portion of its revenue base from taxes levied on hotel rooms and meals—taking some of the pressure off other types of firms.

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES: Littleton has a number of cultural and recreational amenities that can attract residents and businesses including Indian Hill Music, a regional center for music education, performance, and outreach.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: Location specialists consider it a positive attribute that organized neighborhood groups slow permitting very little in Littleton. Town officials expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups and have established a clear and concise procedure for abutters in the initial stage of the review process.

Strengths among *Less Important* Location Factors

PERMITTING OMBUDSMAN: The town administrator along with other local officials helps to expedite the permitting process, and the town requires local licenses for specific businesses, including auto dealerships, bars and taverns, beauty salons, and restaurants.

RAIL: Littleton possesses commuter intercity passenger rail service.

Littleton's Weaknesses and Potential "Deal-Breakers"

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

Unlike the above itemization of Littleton's strengths, this three-part list of weaknesses is **arranged in order of priority**. We suggest that, while reviewing this prioritized list of challenges, participants keep in mind Littleton's economic development objectives and the feasibility (economic and otherwise) of upgrading "deal-breakers" and other weaknesses.

Weaknesses among *Very Important* Location Factors

TIMELINESS OF APPROVALS: The time required from application to completion of the review process for new and existing site plans and zoning variances takes considerably longer than the CGM. Building permits for new projects are time consuming while zoning variances for existing structures take significantly longer than the CGM, 17-20 weeks vs. 5-8 weeks.

RENTS: Rents across all three types of industry space, and Class B and C office space, are much higher than the CGM. Littleton also has a small share of Class A and Class B office space, which could be a real disadvantage when it comes to attracting national or regional business headquarters.

INFRASTRUCTURE: Littleton does not have a public sewer, which can limit the number and types of industries it can attract to its jurisdiction. In addition, the town does not have sufficient capacity for growth for wastewater treatment. On a positive note, the average retail cost of electricity per kWh in the municipality for residential, commercial and industrial end users is less expensive than the CGM—thanks to municipal ownership, which should further benefit the town in the years ahead.

Weaknesses among *Important* Location Factors

CRITICAL MASS FIRMS: Littleton does not have an industrial attraction policy and it doesn't help to interpret the needs of existing or emerging clusters.

HOUSING: The median sale and rental price for a single-family home and two-bedroom apartment in Littleton is considerably higher than the CGM average. In addition, only a small proportion of the officers of major firms located in Littleton live in the community.

Weaknesses among *Less Important* Location Factors

AIRPORTS: Littleton's closest regional and international airports—Manchester and Logan—are farther from the town center than the CGM average and travel time is much longer. Logan is, however, accessible by public transport via the commuter line, which runs from Littleton to North Station.

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following is a ten-part section-by-section analysis of the EDSAT results comparing Littleton's self-reported responses with the median response among the CGM. Each location factor is ranked with three possible symbols: 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.

This ten-part portion of the report—its heart, really—is presented in the same order as the questions listed on the EDSAT questionnaire, with the tabular printout of Littleton's results appearing first, and our narrative summary and interpretation of the results appearing second. The tabular results are displayed in four primary groupings of information:

Group 1 identifies a location factor (such as Highway Access), a circle indicating the relative importance of the location factor, and questions related to the factor that your town has already answered.

Group 2 shows Littleton's responses to the EDSAT questions.

Group 3 is the median (or majority, for yes/no questions) response among the "comparison group municipalities" (or CGM) that have completed the EDSAT questionnaire.

Group 4 is a series of green, yellow, or red blocks indicating how Littleton compares to the CGM. A built-in function in EDSAT 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, Littleton is compared with all the CGM.

Section 1: Access to Customers/Markets

● A. Highway Access		Report of Ludlow as compared to all Jurisdictions		Comparison Group
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
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Group 1 points to the first column of questions. Group 2 points to the second column of responses. Group 3 points to the third column of comparison group responses. Group 4 points to the fourth column of performance relative to peers.

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.

<div>  A. Highway Access </div>			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
1: What percentage of available sites for retail trade, including your central business district, are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	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

<div>  B. Public Transit </div>			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	75% or greater		50-74%
6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	26-49%		26-49%
7: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	50-74%		50-74%
8: Is there a transit-oriented development strategy in your plans for attracting new firms?	yes		no
9: Is there a commuter rail or bus stop within 5 miles of your jurisdiction's boundaries?	yes		yes
10: Do you offer any shuttle services to other public commuting stations?	no		no
11: Is public transit service available on nights and weekends?	yes		yes
<div> <div> Importance To Market <div>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </div> </div> <div> Your Performance Relative To Peers <div>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </div> </div> </div>			



C. Parking

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

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



D. Traffic

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
20: Do you have regular access to a traffic engineer or transportation planner, such as one who is on staff or with a regional organization of which your jurisdiction is a member?	yes		yes
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 - 35 mph		11 - 25 mph
26: Do you require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	yes		yes





E. Airports

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
27: Do you have a local (municipal/ general aviation) airport?	no		no
28: The closest regional airport is how many miles away?	20-30 miles		11-20 miles
29: The closest major/international airport is how many miles away?	20-30 miles		20-30 miles
30: Is the major/international airport accessible by public transportation?	yes		yes
31: How long does it take to drive to the major/international airport from your town center?	61 minutes to 90 minutes		21 minutes to 60 minutes

F. Rail

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
32: Do you have rail freight service available?	yes		yes
33: Do you have intercity passenger rail service? Check all that apply.			
- Commuter	yes		no
- Intercity/Interstate(Amtrak)	no		no
- None	no		no

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important




Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong












 Weak

 Average

 No Comparison


G. Physical Attractiveness

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties, abandoned vehicles, trash disposal within your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
35: To what extent does your jurisdiction maintain streets, sidewalks, parks, etc., near available development sites?	Moderately		Moderately
36: Is there a hotline available for reporting code violations and maintenance needs within your jurisdiction?	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?	21% or greater		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)?	6-10%		6-10%
43: What percentage of your industrial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	0-5%		0-5%
44: What percentage of industrial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	6-10%		6-10%

H. Water Transportation

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
45: Do you have water based transportation facilities within your jurisdiction? Check all that apply.	None		None

Importance To Market



Very Important




Important





Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong









 Weak

 Average


 No Comparison


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


Importance To Market


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Average

 Weak

 No Comparison



B. Critical Mass Firms

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
8: Does your jurisdiction have an up-to-date development strategy, an 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 (CEDS)?	yes		yes
10: Does your state have a development strategy or economic development plan?	yes		yes
11: If yes, are there firms within specific industry types or sectors that are targeted in your jurisdiction's, your county's or your state's development strategy?	yes		yes
12: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? Other, please specify (Your Municipality)	Agriculture		
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)	Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		

14: 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		
15: Which of the following jurisdictions have development specialists to assist in interpreting the needs of these clusters? (Choose all that apply)			
- Your Municipality	no		yes
- Regional/County	yes		no
- State	yes		no
16: How aggressive is your industrial attraction policy?	Weak; Weak		Moderate

Importance To Market

Very Important

Important

Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison



C. Cross Marketing

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
17: Do you actively enlist the services of firms already resident in your jurisdiction to assist in attracting new firms?	yes		no
18: Do you engage local and regional business organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
19: Do you engage regional planning and development organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
20: Do you engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes



D. Marketing Follow-Up

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
21: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose to locate in your jurisdiction about what made the difference?	no		no
22: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose not to locate in your jurisdiction about what made the difference?	no		no
23: Do you have a formal procedure for contacting existing local firms about their satisfaction with your jurisdiction?	yes		no
24: Do you have a formal procedure for intervening when early news surfaces about firm dissatisfaction with your jurisdiction?	yes		no

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Average

Weak

No Comparison






















E. Proximity to Universities & Research

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
25: How many public or private four-year college or universities are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
26: How many public or private four-year college or universities are located within 10 miles of your jurisdiction?	2		2
27: How many community colleges are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
28: How many vocational/technical schools are located within your jurisdiction?	0		1

Section 3: Cost of Land (Implicit/Explicit)













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








<div>  A. Infrastructure </div>			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
1: Are there significant limitations to any of your existing infrastructure systems? - Water Supply	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
2: Public Sewer	N/A		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Capacity for current needs only		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	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
7: Data/Telecommunications - Cellular	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
8: Data/Telecommunications - Fiber optic / Cable / DSL	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
9: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Residential	10.90		16.23
10: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Commercial	12.80		15.20
11: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Industrial	12.60		13.03
<div> <div> Importance To Market <div>  Very Important  Important  Less Important </div> </div> <div> Your Performance Relative To Peers <div>  Strong  Average  No Comparison  Weak </div> </div> </div>			

Electricity Rates (cents per kilowatt hour)

Location	Type of Space		
	Residential	Commercial	Industrial
Littleton	10.90	12.80	12.60
Median CGM	16.23	15.20	13.03
Massachusetts	17.99	17.30	14.03
New England	18.06	14.87	11.98
United States	12.93	10.90	7.32

[State, Region, and U.S. rates are those available as of January 2016 and were obtained from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). Littleton rates do not include demand charges, which fluctuate.]

<div>  B. Rents </div>			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	14		12.00
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	14		14
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	7		6.00
15: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A	16		16
16: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	16		12
17: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	16		9
18: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A	16		16.00
19: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	16		12.50
20: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	16		9.00
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	8		15
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	69		40
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	23		40

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

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
24: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered contaminated or brownfield sites?	0-10%		0-10%
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?	0-10%		11-20%
27: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites?	0-10%		21-35%



D. Land (space)






Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions








Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	151-300 acres		1-150 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		1-250,000 sq. feet
30: Approximately how much vacant useable office space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	1-250,000 sq. feet		1-250,000 sq. feet
31: What proportion of the parcels available for industrial development or large scale commercial development are of 5 acres or more?	36-50%		11-20%







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

The effect of labor factors on location decisions runs somewhat contrary to popular belief. An available labor force that is adequately trained (Workforce Composition) is a Very Important factor, while the cost of labor is Important and the presence of strong unions is Less Important. Conventional wisdom often holds that higher labor costs and strong unions negatively affect a firm's location decision. However, if the workforce is adequately skilled, these factors are not as detrimental as the conventional rule of thumb suggests. Workforce training resources is Less Important relative to other location factors. However, having a technically trained workforce whose skills align with the industries a municipality wants to attract is a valuable selling point.

 A. Labor Cost			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$17.26-\$22.25		\$12.26-\$17.25
2: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	\$17.26-\$22.25		\$12.26-\$17.25
3: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	\$70,001 or more		\$60,001-\$70,000
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no

 B. Workforce Composition			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of your workforce is Unskilled?	1-25%		1-25%
6: What percentage of your workforce is Semi-skilled	1-25%		26-49%
7: What percentage of your workforce is Technically skilled	50% or greater		26-49%
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	1-25%		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional	26-49%		1-25%
10: What percentage of your workforce are current English language learners?	0-10%		0-10%

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

☐ **C. Unions**

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
11: Have any employers in your jurisdiction had a major strike or work stoppage within the last three years?	yes		no
12: Has there been a major union organizing drive among public or private workers in the last three years?	no		no
13: Do labor unions have a significant presence in the labor market of your jurisdiction?	Somewhat		Somewhat

Importance To Market

Very Important

Important

Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Average

Weak

No Comparison

☒ **D. Labor (available)**

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		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?	51% or greater		21-35%







☐ **E. Workforce Training**








Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
16: Which of the following workforce training resources do you interact with to respond to skill development needs of firms?			
- Regional employment board or state employment services department	yes		
- Area High schools	yes		
- Voc-tech schools or community colleges	yes		
- Human service or nonprofit career training centers	yes		
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	yes		yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	yes		yes

Section 5: Municipal Process

The municipal process section covers several themes relating to marketing and permitting. Public officials who aggressively market their jurisdictions strengths and collaborate with firms already located in their town or city may have significant advantages in attracting new investment. Local firms can speak firsthand about their own experiences and market conditions to interested companies and investors. Likewise, they can advise municipal leaders about industries with which they are intimately familiar. Additionally, municipalities that have established transparent and efficient permitting processes, minimizing startup time and costs, are also ahead of the game. Among the factors examined in this section, the timeliness of approvals is *Very Important* to location experts and all but one of the remaining factors (Permitting Ombudsman) are ranked *Important*.

 A. Industry Sensitivity			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
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?	yes		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

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

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

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



C. Timeliness of Approvals

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Weak



Average



No Comparison



D. Predicable Permits

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

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



E. Fast Track Permits

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Weak

Average

No Comparison



F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
30: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in your jurisdiction?	Somewhat		Somewhat
31: To what extent do organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting?	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?	no		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

<div> G. Permitting Ombudsman </div>			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
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?	yes		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: Is your jurisdiction involved in the process for businesses that require state or federal permitting or licensing?	yes		yes
43: Do you provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit or license application process?	no		no

44: Does your jurisdiction require any local licenses for specific businesses or industries?

- General license for all businesses	no		no
- Auto dealership	yes		no
- Barber shop	no		no
- Bar/Tavern	yes		no
- Beauty salon	yes		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
45: Approximately how long (in weeks) is your local licensing process for businesses?	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks



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








B. Crime			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 residents last year in your jurisdiction?	54		between 277 and 288
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 residents last year?	21		between 84 and 86
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 residents last year?	11		32
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 residents last year?	0		2

Importance To Market
 Very Important
 Important
 Less Important



Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison

C. Housing			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
12: What was the median sale price of a single-family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$451,000 or greater		\$251,000-\$350,000
13: What was the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment in your jurisdiction last year?	\$1251 or greater		\$1001-\$1250
14: What is the homeownership rate?	76% or greater		66-75%
15: What is the vacancy rate for rental housing?	Less than 3%		3-5%
16: What percent of homes are for sale?	Less than 3%		Less than 3%
17: Approximately what proportion of the major officers of firms located in your jurisdiction live in the community?	Few		Some

Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
18: What is the average K-12 per pupil expenditure in your jurisdiction last year?	\$14,001 or greater		\$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?	81% or greater		66-80%
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in Mathematics?	81% or greater		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	no		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	1-25%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	1126 or higher		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?	N/A		
26: What percentage of high school freshmen normally graduate within 5 years?	95% or more		81%-94%
27: What is the high school dropout rate last year?	0%		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?	75% or greater		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	no		
- Non-sectarian	yes		
- Boarding	no		

Importance To Market

 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
  No Comparison

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			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
1: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fast food restaurant	Most		Most
2: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fine dining	Some		Some
3: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Day care	Most		Most
4: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Retail shops	Most		Most

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Average







Weak



No Comparison


Section 8: Business Incentives


When companies are evaluating various jurisdictions for site location, business incentives (mainly subsidies and tax credits) are *Important* considerations. However, contrary to conventional wisdom, these incentives are not the first factors on which an investor makes a location decision—nor are they decisive. Factors such as infrastructure, workforce composition, and timeliness of permitting are of the utmost importance and can all too easily become “deal-breakers.” A municipality must be at least adequate in these areas before a company will advance negotiations. While investors value a broad portfolio of business incentives as possible “deal-closers,” they might not initially attract them.

 A. State			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
1: Are businesses in your jurisdiction eligible for any of the following special state tax incentives? Check all that apply.			
- Investment tax credits	yes		no
- Job training tax credits	yes		no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	yes		no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	yes		no
- Loan guarantees	yes		no
- Equity financing	no		no
- Workforce training grants	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
2: To what extent does your jurisdiction actively take advantage of any special state business incentives?	Somewhat		Somewhat
3: 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
 Weak

 Average
 No Comparison

			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
4: Does your jurisdiction offer existing businesses property tax abatement?	no		no
5: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?			
6: Does your jurisdiction offer new businesses property tax abatement?	no		no
7: If yes, what proportion of new businesses are offered abatements?			
8: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	N/A		board of selectmen
9: Does your jurisdiction offer any of the following incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)			
- Revolving loan fund	no		no
- Loan guarantees	no		no
- Revenue bonds	no		no
- Equity participation	no		no
- Business district group loans	no		no
- None	yes		no
- Investment tax credits	no		no
- Job training tax credits	no		no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	no		no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	no		no
- Workforce training grants	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
10: Does your jurisdiction actively pursue federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses?	yes		yes
11: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	yes		yes
12: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	no		no
13: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	no		no
14: Do you actively try to attract local, state, and federal facilities to your jurisdiction?	no		no
15: Is any part of your jurisdiction in a designated Enterprise Zone?	no		no
16: Do you participate in a regional brownfield revolving loan fund or offer your own?	N/A		No brownfields funds utilized

Importance To Market

Very Important

Important

Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong



















Average

Weak


No Comparison


Section 9: Tax Rates


Municipalities often think that if tax rates are too high, they will have a hard time attracting businesses—that high taxes are a “deal-breaker.” Like financial incentives, however, the tax rate is not one of the *Very Important* location factors. If the *Very Important* factors are satisfied, then a business will likely request a more favorable tax rate during later-stage negotiations. Yet negotiations are unlikely to get to that point if the *More Important* location factors have not been satisfied.

 A. Local			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
1: What types of taxes are collected by your jurisdiction to pay for local services?			
- Property tax	yes		yes
- Local sales tax	no		no
- Local income tax	no		no
- Hotel room tax	yes		no
- Meals tax	yes		no
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	1%-10%		1%-10%
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	28.04		20.42
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000	17.69		11.38
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?	N/A		13.97
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	17.5143%		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	7.8462%		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	70.1079%		
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

 No Comparison

 Weak



B. Tax Delinquency

Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong















Weak

























Average

No Comparison

Section 10: Access to Information


A town's website could offer a business location expert his or her first impression of what the area has to offer. In today's digital age, a location expert could use a municipality's website to gather initial information, and if it is not available, easy to find, and easy to understand, the researcher may reject the town as a potential location without further consideration. While a town's website may rank *Less Important* as a factor in decision making, it can be this initial source of information that entices a location expert to probe deeper and to contact a municipality to seek additional information. At that point, the municipality's economic development leader or permitting ombudsman has an opportunity to step in and develop one-on-one rapport with the developer or company representative.

 A. Website			
Report of Littleton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Littleton		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction's website list all local development policies and procedures?	no		no
2: Does your website have contact information for key officials?	yes		yes
3: Does your website have general information about your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
4: How frequently is your website updated?	Weekly		Weekly
5: Does your website include an explicitly designed economic development tool aimed at businesses and developers?	no		no
6: Is there a development permit checklist or flow chart on the website?	no		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 permit applications electronically?	yes		no
10: Is there a list of available land and building sites on the website?	no		no
11: If yes, check the types of information available about each site. (Check all that apply)			
- :Owner	no		no
- Square footage of vacant land	no		no
- Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	no		no

- Abutters	no		no
- Zoning	no		no
- Assessed value	no		no
- Tax rate	no		no
- Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	no		no
- Contamination	no		no
- Aerial photos	no		no
- GIS links	no		no
- Other, please specify	yes		no
12: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	yes		yes
13: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	no		no
14: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	yes		yes
15: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)			
- State finance agencies	no		no
- State permitting agencies	yes		no
- Regional planning agencies	yes		no
- Regional development organizations	no		no
- Workforce training organizations	no		no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no		no
- Demographic information	no		no
- Economic development agencies	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
16: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	no		no
- Chambers of Commerce	yes		no
- Community development corporations	no		no
- Arts and cultural organizations	yes		no
- Sports and recreation venues	yes		no
- Convention and tourist organization	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
17: 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

NEXT STEPS

Littleton is an attractive small town of approximately 8,924 people, with a well-educated workforce, strong schools, and an active economic development committee. Once a rural town with an agricultural base, Littleton is now a growing community that offers easy access to regional employment centers and markets. This has led to the town becoming a convenient place to live for families and an attractive place for businesses to locate. Littleton is the chosen location for tech giant IBM, where its campus houses the company's largest software development laboratory in North America. Businesses are mainly clustered along the two highways running through Littleton (I-495 and State Route 119), including a recently developed mixed-use commercial complex—The Point—which provides shopping, restaurants, grocery, hotel, and entertainment options. In its final phase of construction, The Point represents a major economic development focal point, if one that is automobile-dependent. As current residents advance in age, Littleton must also find ways of attracting younger generations, and would be wise to incorporate into its economic development strategy walkable urbanist design in the older town center—near housing and small businesses—that reflects millennial living preferences.

The road to development poses a unique set of challenges to Littleton. Although the town has a balanced mix of commercial and industrial sectors with potential for growth, its high home prices, limited infrastructure capacities, and absent industrial attraction policy exacerbate the need for new robust, innovative, and sustainable policies that encourage economic development. Building on existing assets is of critical importance, and the town's strong public-private sector working relationships, its transit-oriented development strategy, and the availability of amenities important for businesses presents various opportunities to support the local community. The town does, however, need to reduce barriers and streamline development and establish an industrial attraction policy to help meet its economic, social, and environmental objectives. Littleton's municipal leadership is currently in the process of updating the master plan, and forging an industrial attraction policy and an updated economic development marketing strategy can help foster a common vision among residents, businesses, and local officials.

The Dukakis Center's Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) creates a snapshot of Littleton's economic revitalization efforts at a critical moment in the town's development history. The following is an overview of where Littleton is getting it right, and where improvements can be made. Outlined below are the top recommendations and their respective levels of priority for your economic development efforts.

CORE STRENGTHS

Littleton has many valuable strengths that can persuade firms and developers to locate—or remain—in town. One of the most significant, and a potential “deal-maker,” is its great **highway access** (to Routes 2 and 495) and good management of **traffic**, which is reflected in its relatively high average automobile speeds during weekday rush hour commutes. Littleton has a transit-oriented development strategy in place, which can help in attracting new firms searching for towns that value the growing importance of linking employment centers with **public transit**. On a related note, Littleton is also attentive to **parking**—among location specialists' most important considerations.

Perhaps Littleton's greatest strength is the decent quality of life it offers its residents, as reflected in its relatively low **crime rates** and **physical attractiveness**, with a large proportion of acreage reserved for parks. The town's **education** attainment level and the **composition of the workforce** are also assets, with a high proportion of well-educated professional and technically skilled workers. This is of critical importance to the town's as-of-yet undeveloped industrial attraction policy, and provides a solid foundation to support future economic development services and initiatives. While the **cost of labor** reveals higher wage rates for semi-skilled manufacturing workers and mid-level clerical workers in comparison with the CGM, the town offers its public school teachers comparatively high salaries, which reflects how much the community values an educated workforce.

The need for a strong and easily navigable **website** is more important than ever, and Littleton's certainly meets standards. The website is updated weekly, with a staff person responsible for its maintenance. It provides updated versions of applications and forms, makes it possible to file permit applications electronically, and contains links to regional planning agencies, local chambers of commerce, and state permitting agencies. Nevertheless, there is much room for improvement. With so many towns competing for a limited number of development projects, Littleton must adopt a more aggressive marketing approach and the website is a chance to make a good first impression on potential developers and investors. Given the fact that a

municipality's website is often the first result when someone searches for the name of that town, it can be a powerful driver of economic development. As such, providing easy to find, up-to-date, and thorough information is crucial for showcasing what your town has to offer. One possible improvement could involve enhancing the economic development page targeting businesses and developers by making permit checklists or flow charts available, displaying a list of all of the town's local development procedures, and showcasing available commercial and industrial properties.

Littleton's economic development committee and its local business association are actively involved in the economic development activities of the town. Currently in the process of updating the town's master plan, the committee has the opportunity to create an industrial attraction policy and an economic development marketing plan that builds on the town's assets. The town supports efforts to attract companies by facilitating **cross marketing** among town officials and current business owners and organizations, and also conducts **marketing follow-up** with existing and potential businesses to gauge their level of satisfaction with the town. In efforts to foster a business environment that is conducive to private sector investment, Littleton provides **predictable permitting** so as to reduce businesses' "time-to-market." While your town provides a checklist, flowchart, or handbook on permitting processes it should take measures to make them available on the town's website. Your jurisdiction should also consider allowing for a single presentation of development proposals to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority.

Although not paramount, **state and local business incentives** are important to location specialists, and Littleton has done relatively well in taking advantage of state programs that assist new and existing businesses. While your town does not offer property tax abatements it does offer TIFs for commercial/industrial development. On a related note, Littleton offers tax rates that are reasonably attractive to location specialists. Although your town does not maintain a unified property tax rate, which is much preferred by business concerns, it derives a portion of its base from taxes levied on meals and hotel rooms—taking some of the revenue pressure off of other types of firms. On a related note, the town's relatively large vacant developable **land** including its high proportion of available parcels that are five acres or more could benefit from a stronger commercial/industrial attraction policy.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Littleton has several weaknesses that may hinder its ability to attract prospective firms or developers. The most pressing area for improvement (and the most feasible to address) lies in the permitting review process, which represents the potential for a "deal-breaker" to prospective firms. Despite a faster than the average review process for special permits for existing structures, site plan reviews for both new and existing projects and building permits for new projects take almost 4 weeks longer than the median CGM. In addition, various stakeholders voiced their concerns on the length of time it takes to get through the preliminary processes leading up to the submission of applications. All other things being equal, a business will usually choose to locate in a municipality with relatively quicker review durations to reduce "time to market." As such, your town should appoint a team to investigate all permitting processes for inefficiencies, as well as speak with permitting board members and applicants to learn their perspectives.

Littleton should address its weaknesses with agglomeration, which refers to the number of complementary and supplemental services and related firms that are available within a jurisdiction to support new companies or enhance existing ones. With that in mind, Littleton should work on crafting **an industrial attraction policy** that targets specific types (or a type) of industry, and organize incentives, land-use, workforce development, business incubators, and marketing programs around its implementation. In addition, your jurisdiction should work with regional development specialists from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to assist in interpreting the needs of regional business clusters.

Other areas in need for improvement include the need to address the town's rapidly increasing **housing** costs. Although home prices are high throughout Greater Boston, Littleton should reconsider its current housing policies and assess whether zoning restrictions—particularly on multifamily mixed-use structures—are making it unaffordable. It is also important to note that the majority of officers of major firms located in Littleton, including IBM, do not live in the community, preferring instead to take up residence in nearby towns such as Brookline, Lexington, and Cambridge. Retaining and attracting new residents is important not only for sustaining Littleton's tax base but also for attracting firms drawn to areas with high human capital.

Commercial **rents** in your jurisdiction are, on average, much higher than the CGM average. The average square foot costs of existing retail space in the central business district is 17%. The average square foot cost of existing general office space in your central business district for class B and Class C space is also higher than that of your peers, with figures 33% and 77% higher respectively. Rents are a very important location factor, and can make or break a firm's decision to locate in your jurisdiction. For this reason the town should do everything it can to bring down commercial rents, including (but not limited to) lowering taxes on such properties.

In spite of its commendably low electricity rates, Littleton has notable **infrastructure** limitations. The town's limited sewer capacity could pose serious obstacles to certain types of businesses. While many communities invest in sewer facilities to encourage economic growth by facilitating the expansion of existing businesses as well as attracting new ones, the cost of expanding sewer infrastructure is often too expensive for small communities. We recommend conducting a feasibility study, with input from civic and business leaders as well as local and regional agencies and organizations, to analyze the full spectrum of investment options and the direct and indirect impacts of each type of investment. In addition, findings from a marketing follow-up with firms could help identify whether certain infrastructure limitations were among the reasons why firms decide not to locate in your town.

The decision to rely on sewer or septic systems will have a significant impact on Littleton's land use patterns, growth management, public finance, water quality, and public health. It will also affect the types of industrial and manufacturing businesses that you can attract; processing plants, industrial parks, shopping centers, and commercial/office buildings are some of the most common direct beneficiaries of expanded sewer capacities.

Outlined below are our top recommendations and their respective levels of priority for your economic development efforts.

Recommendations	Priority
Expedite review and permitting approvals processes, appointing a team to oversee improvements	High
Craft a more aggressive commercial/industrial attraction policy and a comprehensive cross-marketing strategy.	High
Develop a strategy for reducing high retail and office rents. Consider ways to increase the development of Class A and Class B office space as part of a more direct commercial/industrial attraction policy.	Medium
Conduct a detailed assessment of the financial implications of investing or failing to invest in a sewer system	Medium



Northeastern University
Dukakis Center For Urban and Regional Policy

Littleton, Massachusetts

A Look at Economic Development

Barry Bluestone • 2016

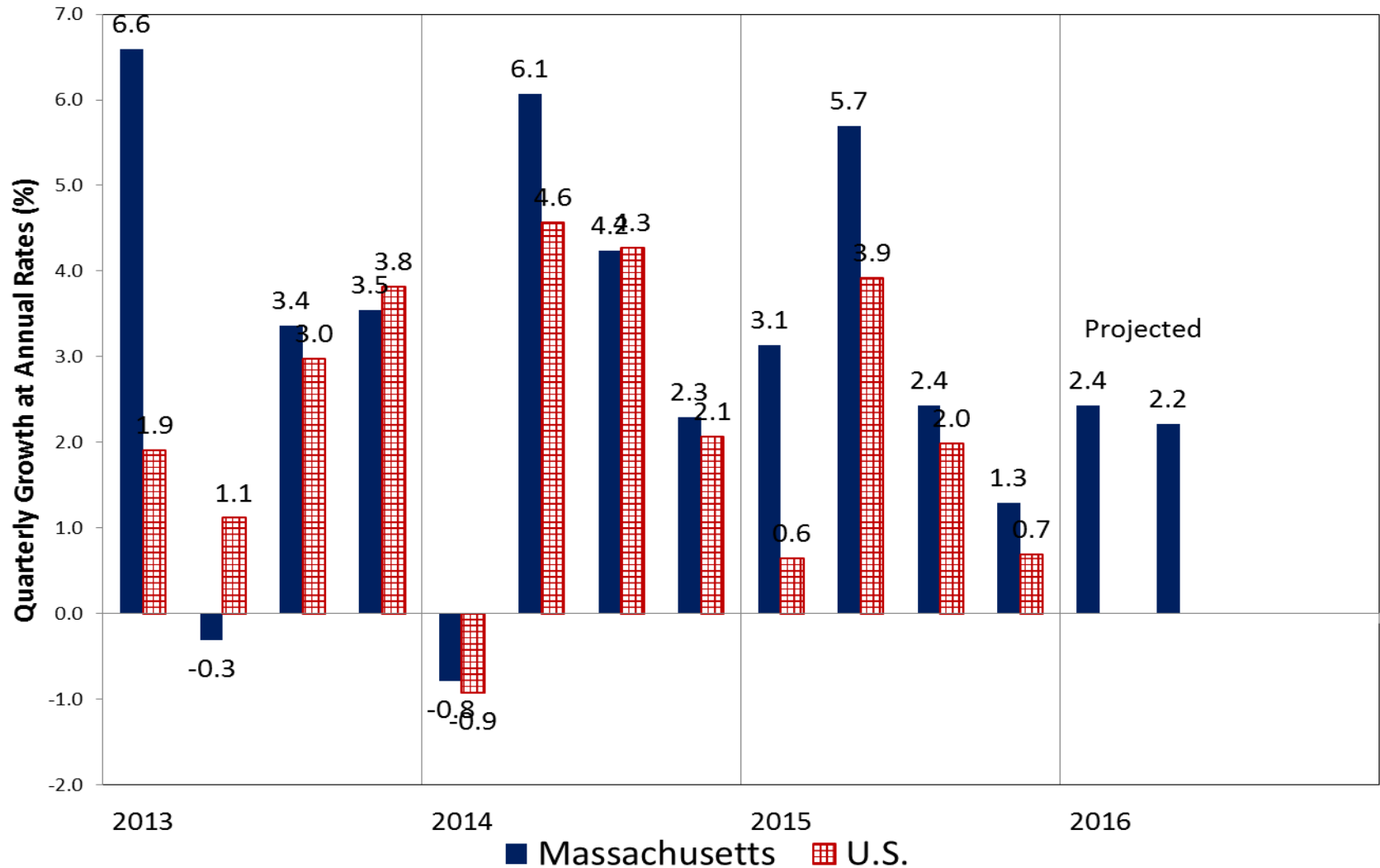
Dukakis Center For Urban and Regional Policy
Northeastern University
School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs
www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter

A “Think and Do” Tank

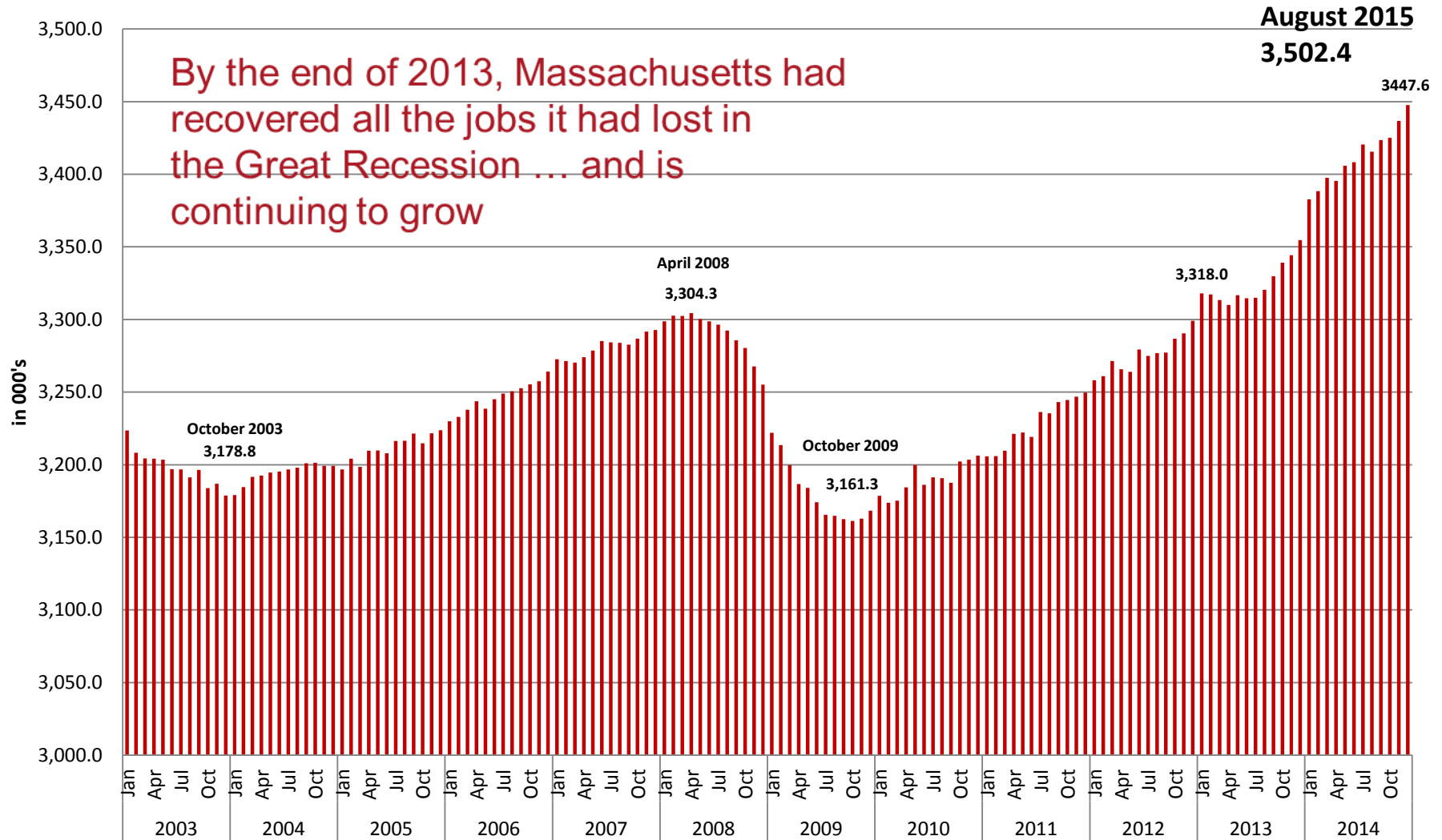
**First, a look at the Massachusetts
economy:**

Growth in Real Product, Massachusetts vs. U.S.

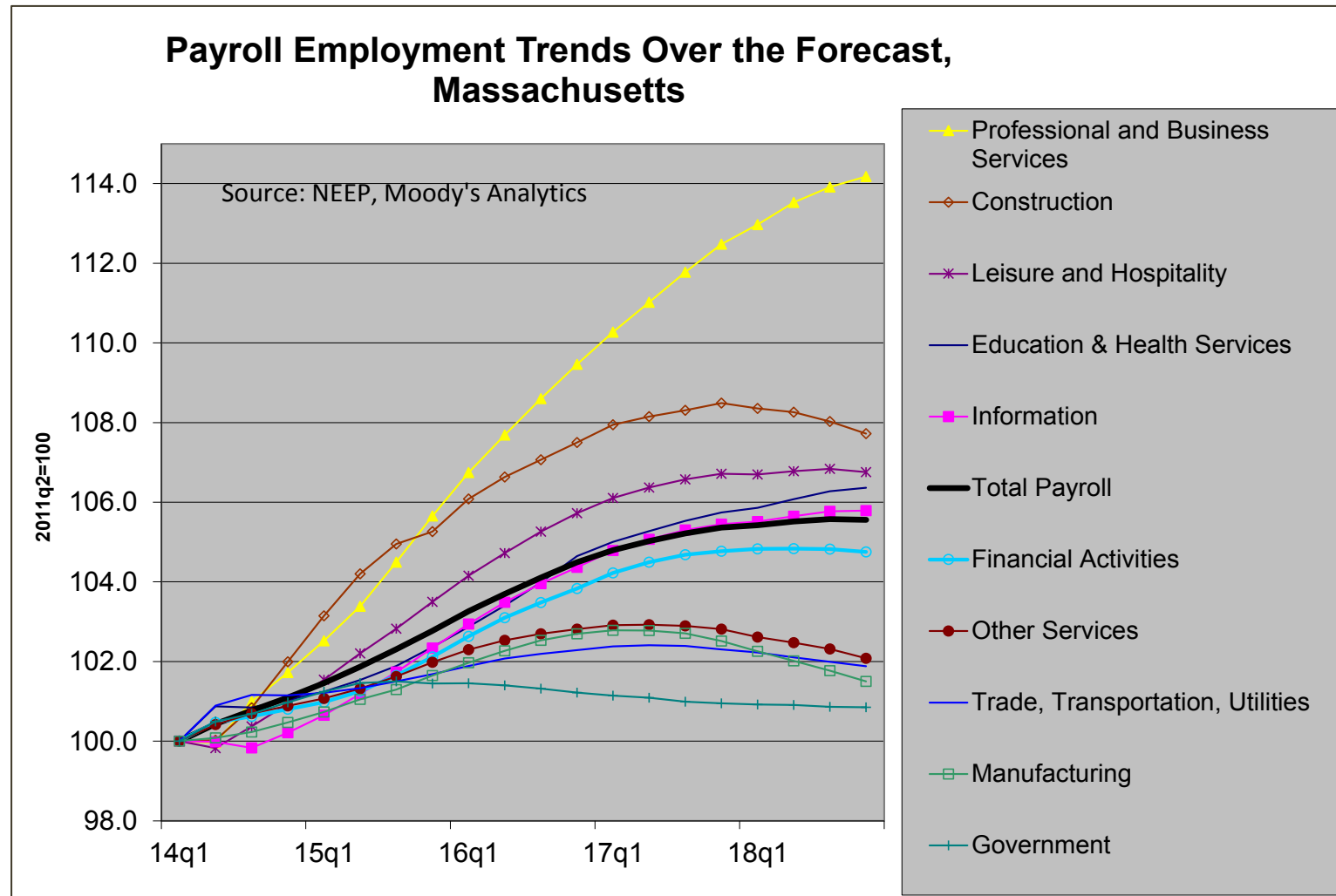
Source: U.S., Bureau of Economic Analysis; Massachusetts: MassBenchmarks



Total Non-Farm Employment: Seasonally-Adjusted Massachusetts 2003-2014

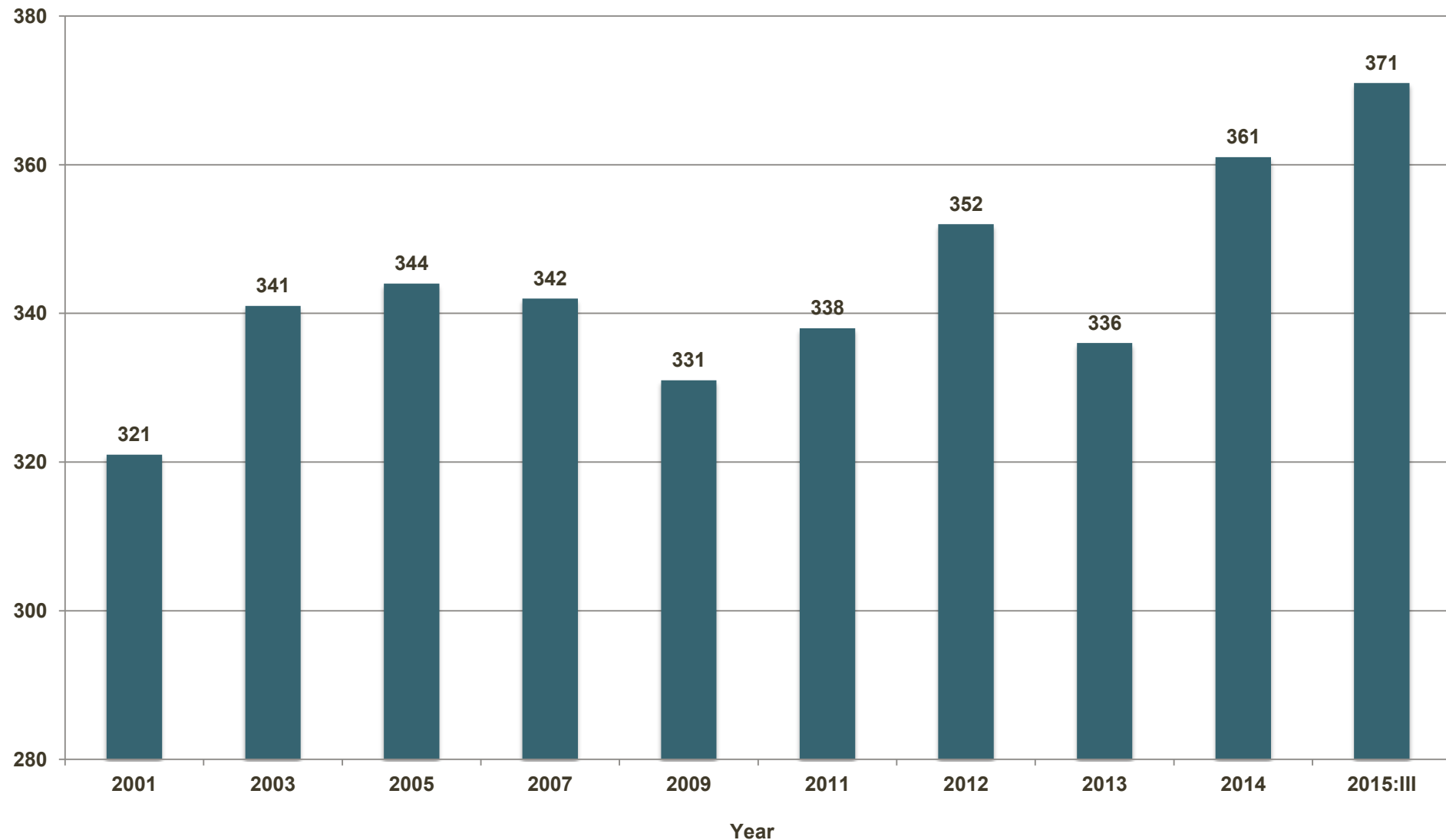


Projected Employment by Sector: 2014-2018

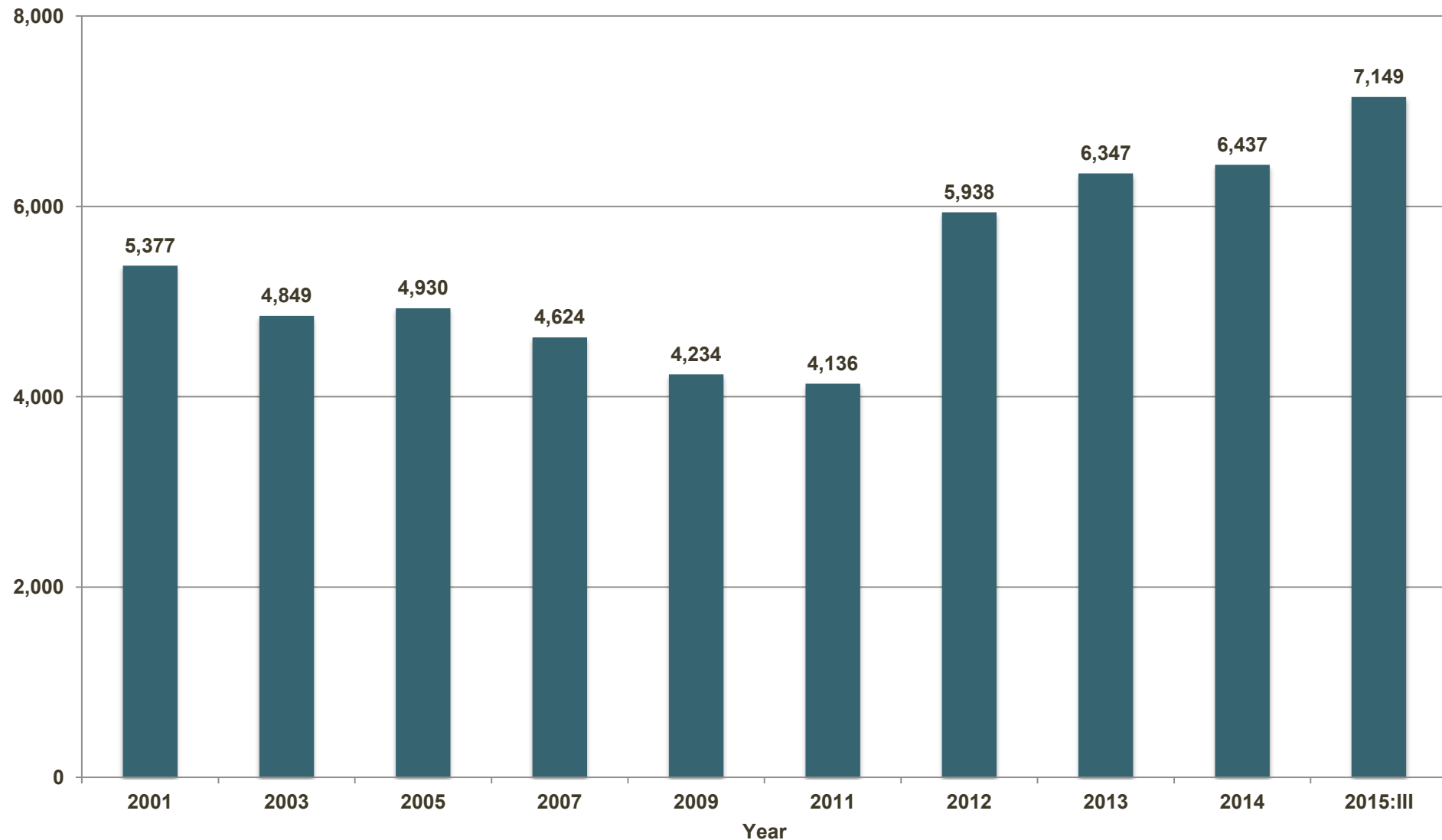


Town of Littleton: Employment

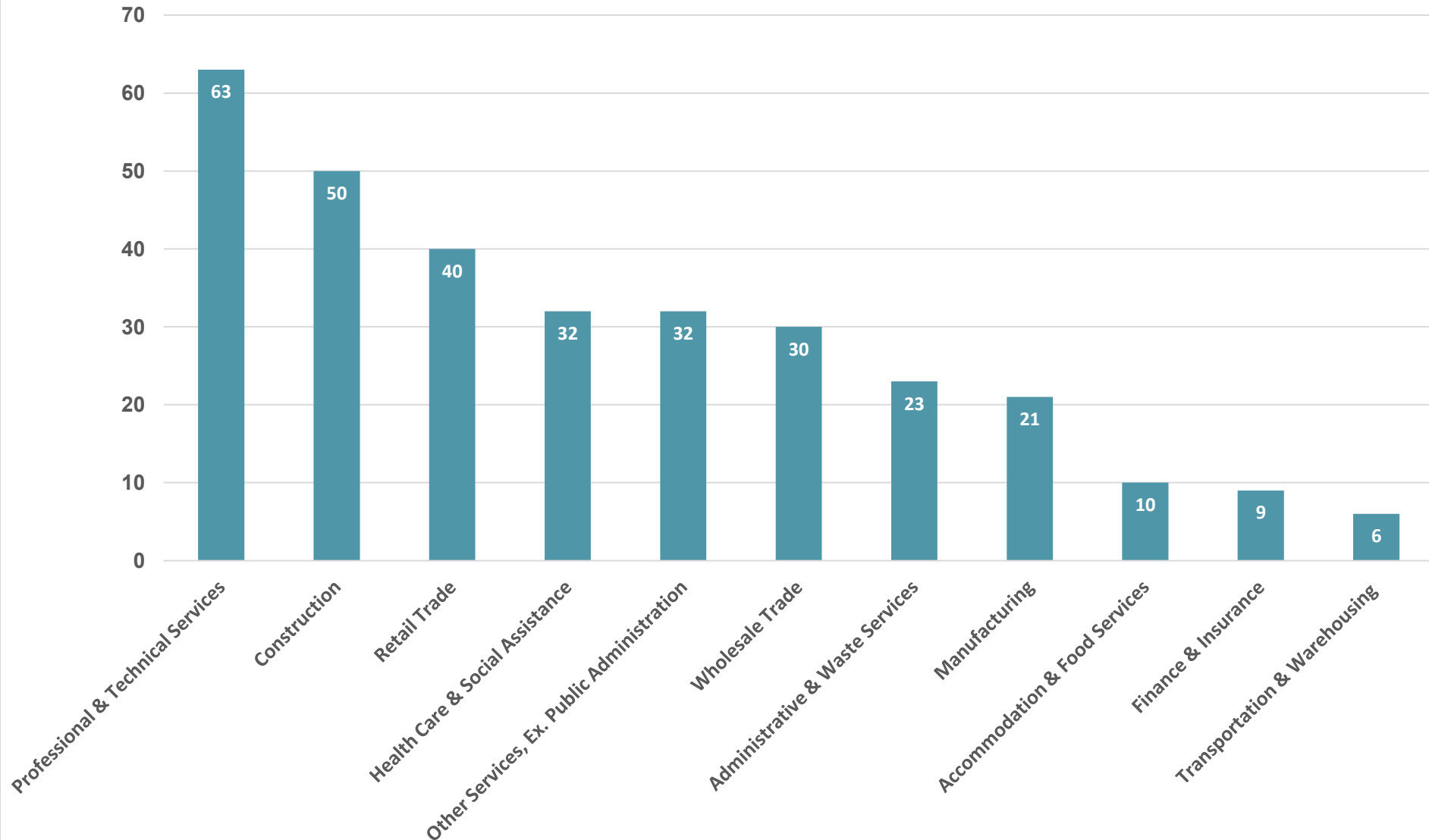
Town of Littleton Number of Private Industry Establishments 2001 - 2015: III



Town of Littleton Average Monthly Employment (Private Industry) 2001-2015: III



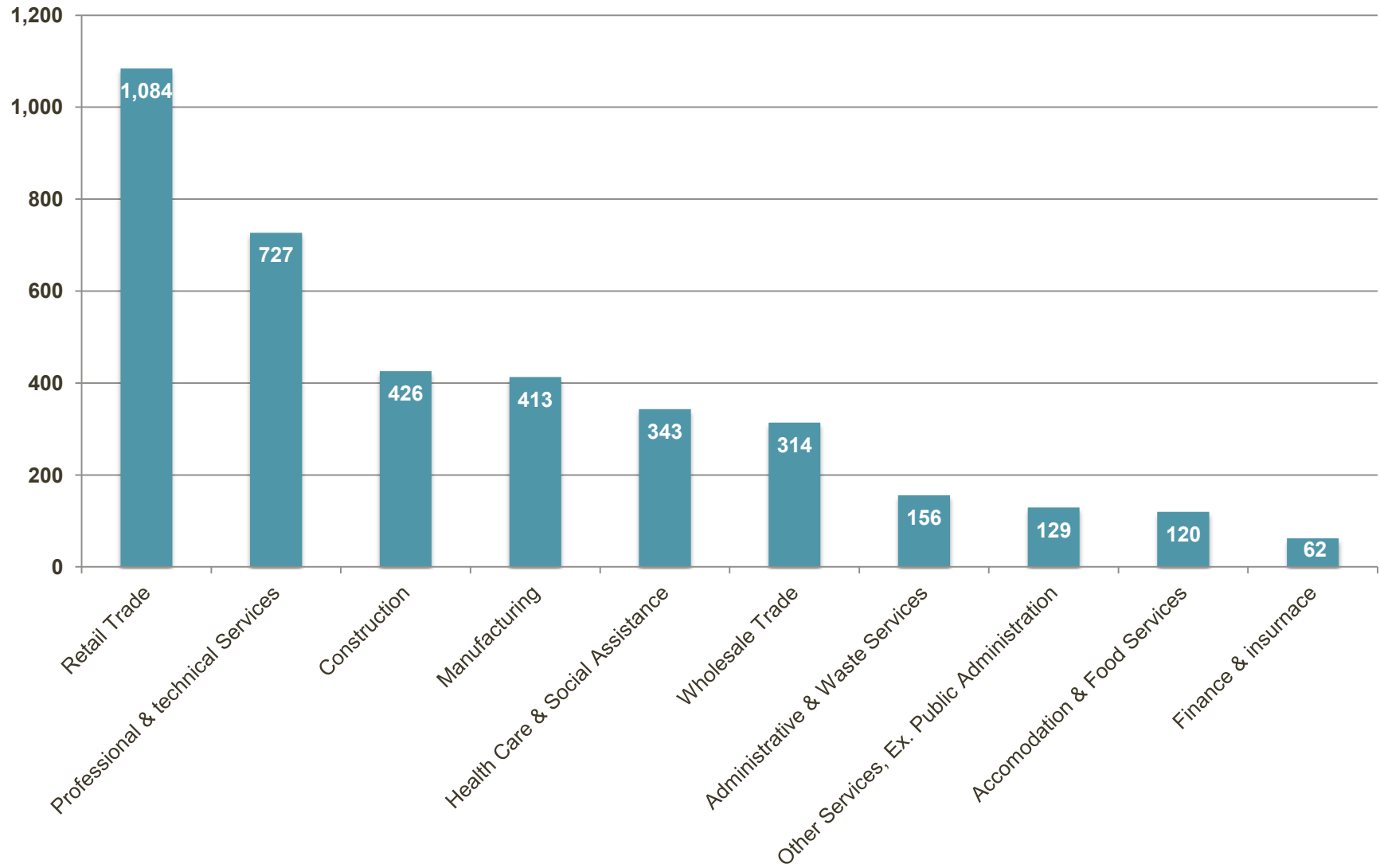
Town of Littleton Leading Industries by Number of Establishments 2015: III



Town of Littleton

Average Monthly Employment by Leading Industries

2015: III



Promoting Economic Development in Littleton: Practical Strategies to Attract and Retain Economic Investment through EDSAT



Northeastern University
Dukakis Center For Urban and Regional Policy

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Economic Development Overview

- Economic development is a **collaborative** process that builds strong, adaptive economies and requires leadership
- Companies move to **municipalities**, not states
- Municipal officials must play a critical role in attracting business investment, jobs, and a strong tax base



Local Communities on their Own...

- With rising federal deficits and a bipartisan drive to cut federal debt, and at the same time calling for tax cuts, there will be **little additional aid to communities** from the federal government.



States in Crisis

- With states facing **structural budget deficits**, local aid from state governments will be in short supply in many states



Local Economic Development

- In this new environment of fiscal constraint, local communities will prosper only if they are successful in finding new sources of revenue
- The best way to do this is to **attract business enterprise** to town



Be the CEO for Economic Development

- Municipal leaders must initiate and support the development process
- Begin by assessing your municipality's strengths and weaknesses
- Change what you have **control** over
- Collaborate with others on what you can **influence**



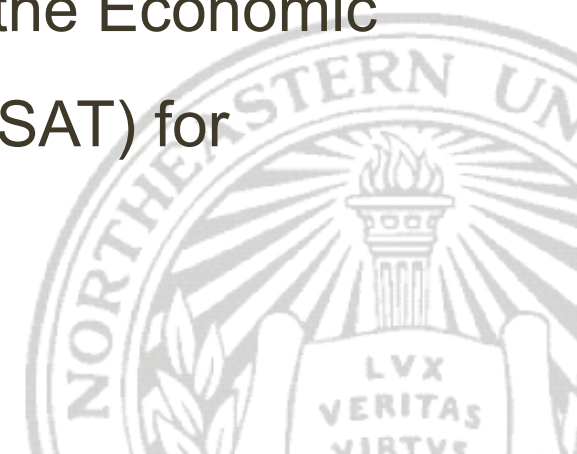
Fundamental Proposition

- *Cities and towns have the ability to create their own destinies, and they can benefit from having sophisticated partners who can help them develop tools and information to compete successfully*



Development of EDSAT

- Dukakis Center staff surveyed corporate real estate and development professionals on location decisions
- **NAIOP:** National & Massachusetts Chapter
- **CoreNet Global**
- Based on the NAIOP / CoreNet Survey, the Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) for municipal leaders was created



NAIOP/CoreNET Sample

Project Type Selected	NAIOP	%	<u>CoreNet</u>	%
	General Industrial	40.0	Office / Headquarters	68.5
	Commercial / Professional	38.8	Manufacturing	10.4
	Mixed-Use	8.8	Retail	10.4
	R&D Facility	5.0	Mixed-Use	5.7
	Retail	5.0	R&D Facility	2.8
	Manufacturing	2.5	Distribution / Warehouse	1.9
Where Work is Done	NAIOP	%	<u>CoreNet</u>	%
	Pacific	18.9	International	38.3
	Middle Atlantic	18.9	<u>Pacific</u>	32.7
	South Atlantic	18.9	Middle Atlantic	28.0
	East North Central	8.8	West South Central	21.4
	International	7.6	East North Central	20.5
	East South Central	6.3	South Atlantic	19.6
	West North Central	6.3	New England	19.6
	New England	5.0	West North Central	15.8
	West South Central	5.0	East South Central	15.8
	Mountain	3.8	Mountain	11.2

Deal-Breakers Overview

DEAL-BREAKERS



CITY SELF-ASSESSMENT



CITY ACTION



DEAL-MAKERS



Deal-Breakers, continued

- Ignorance of changing market conditions: “Time to Market”
- Uncorrected “cognitive maps”
- Too little attention to site deficiencies
- Slow municipal processes
- Too much reliance on tax breaks



NAIOP / CoreNet Survey Categories

- Permitting Processes
- Labor
- Development and Operating Costs
- Business Environment
- Transportation and Access
- Quality of Life / Social Environment



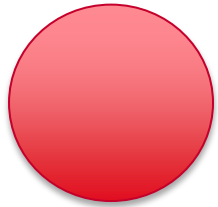
The Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT)

The self-assessment tool consists of ten sections:

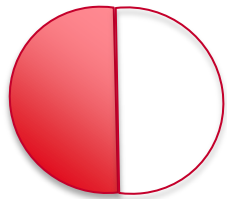
1. Access to Customers / Markets
2. Concentration of Businesses & Services (Agglomeration)
3. Cost of Land (Implicit / Explicit)
4. Labor
5. Municipal Process
6. Quality of Life (Community)
7. Quality of Life (Site Amenities)
8. Business Incentives
9. Tax Rates
10. Access to Information



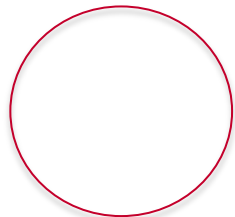
NAIOP/CoreNet Global Ranking of Critical Location Factors



Very Important Factor



Important Factor



Less Important Factor



Key EDSAT Results for Littleton

How does Littleton fare on the EDSAT questions relative to Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM)?

Littleton's Strengths and “Deal-Makers”

Strengths Among *Very Important* Location Factors:

HIGHWAY ACCESS: Most of Littleton's available sites for manufacturing, retail, and general office space are within two miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway.

PARKING: Littleton offers as many parking advantages as the CGM, with most available sites for office, retail, and manufacturing use featuring on-site parking. The town has also made use of state infrastructure grants to build parking near the commuter line, which is rare.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Very Important* Location Factors: (cont'd)

TRAFFIC: In comparison with the CGM, Littleton's commuter traffic flows reasonably well, with the town experiencing higher traffic speeds during rush hour congestion.

WEBSITE: Littleton's website is updated weekly, provides updated versions of applications and forms, and contains links to regional planning agencies, local chambers of commerce, and state permitting agencies.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Very Important* Location Factors: (cont'd)

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION: The proportion of Littleton's professional workforce and technically skilled workforce is high, and its entirety is well-balanced.

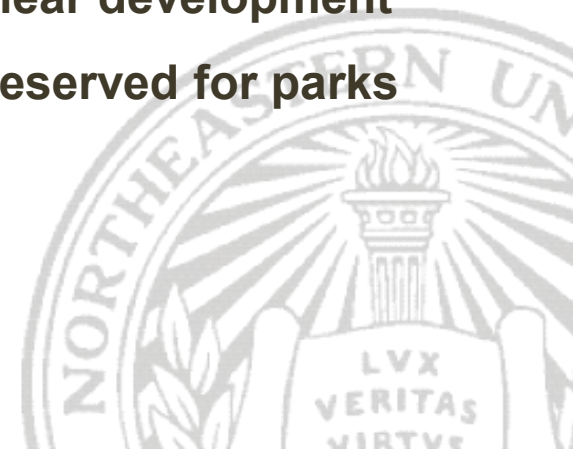
LABOR AVAILABLE: Outperforming the CGM, the majority of Littleton's residents have earned at least a bachelor's degree.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

PUBLIC TRANSIT: Littleton has a transit-oriented development strategy in place, which can help in attracting new firms searching for towns that value the growing importance of linking employment centers with transit.

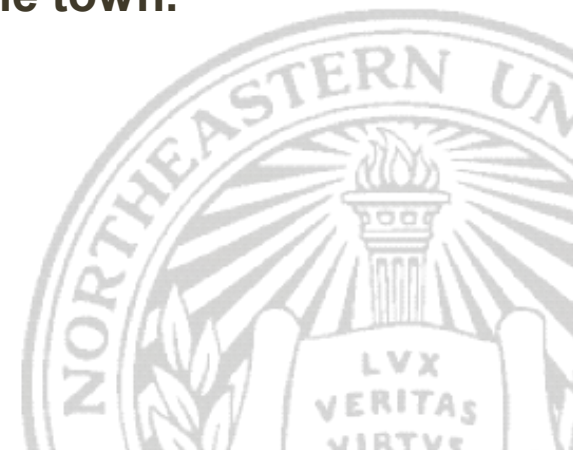
PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS: Littleton does relatively well in maintaining well-kept streets, sidewalks, parks, etc. near development sites, and 21% or more of the acreage in Littleton is reserved for parks in comparison with the CGM's 6-10%.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

LAND: Littleton currently has a large proportion of vacant developable land that is zoned for commercial and industrial uses. In addition, a large proportion of the parcels are of 5 acres or more.

COMPLEMENTARY BUSINESS SERVICES: Littleton's economic development committee and its local business association are actively involved in the economic development activities of the town.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

CROSS MARKETING: The jurisdiction actively enlists the services of firms already resident in the community to assist in attracting new firms.

MARKETING FOLLOW UP: Littleton has a formal procedure in place for contacting existing local firms about their satisfaction with the town and for intervening when early news surfaces about firm dissatisfaction.

PREDICTABLE PERMITS: Your town provides a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers.

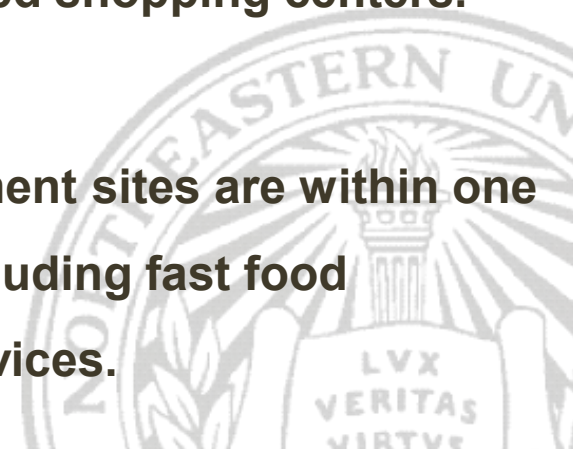


Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

FAST TRACK PERMITS: Littleton has marketed “fast track” permitting to potential developers and firms in The Point, a commercial complex in Littleton Common. The town has also implemented a Chapter 43D “overlay” district, which allows expedited permitting of certain uses

QUALITY OF AVAILABLE SPACE: While only a small portion of Littleton's available sites would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites, the town does not have any vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers.

SITE AMENITIES: *Most* of Littleton's existing development sites are within one mile of amenities important to location specialists, including fast food restaurants, fine dining, retail shops, and day care services.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

LABOR COST: Although the town's wage rate for semi-skilled manufacturing workers and mid-level clerical workers is higher than the CGM, salaries for public high school teachers are also high, and reflect how much the community values an educated workforce.

CRIME RATES: Across all categories, crime rates for Littleton are extremely low in comparison with the CGM.

LOCAL SCHOOLS: Littleton's commitment to high performing local schools is reflected in its high average K-12 per pupil expenditure.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

INDUSTRY SENSITIVITY: Littleton engages local businesspersons to represent the town to help attract new businesses. The town also enlists the services of a public relations firm to respond to negative stories about the town that make the news.

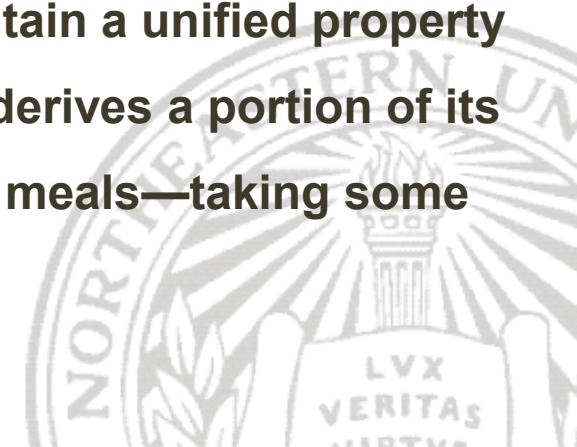
SITES AVAILABLE: Littleton maintains an active relationship with commercial real estate brokers, developers, and agents with sites in the jurisdiction. In addition, it implements an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

STATE AND LOCAL BUSINESS INCENTIVES: Littleton is eligible for state investment tax credits, job training tax credits, research and development tax credits, low interest loans, loan guarantees, and workforce training grants, and does relatively well to take advantage of them. As for local business incentives, the town offers TIF arrangements for commercial and industrial development.

LOCAL TAX RATES: While your town does not maintain a unified property tax rate, which is much preferred by businesses, it derives a portion of its revenue base from taxes levied on hotel rooms and meals—taking some of the pressure off other types of firms.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Important* Location Factors

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES: Littleton has a number of cultural and recreational amenities that can attract residents and businesses including Indian Hill Music, a regional center for music education, performance, and outreach.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: Town officials expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups and have established a clear and concise procedure for abutters in the initial stage of the review process.



Littleton's Strengths Among *Less Important* Location Factors

PERMITTING OMBUDSMAN: The town administrator along with other local officials helps to expedite the permitting process, and the town requires local licenses for specific businesses, including auto dealerships, bars and taverns, beauty salons, and restaurants.

RAIL: Littleton possesses commuter intercity passenger rail service.



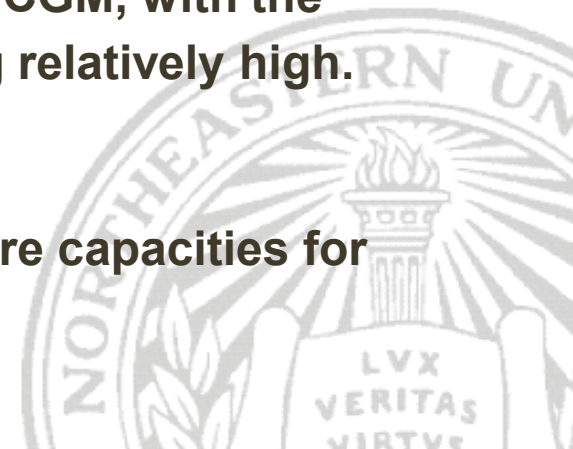
Weaknesses and “Deal-Breakers”:

Littleton's Weaknesses Among *Very Important* Location Factors:

TIMELINESS OF APPROVALS: Littleton’s times for reviewing new and existing site plans and zoning variances are excessive in comparison to the CGM. Since approvals in Littleton take a considerable amount of time permitting is slowed down—and so is “time to market.”

RENTS: Littleton’s rents are higher than those of the CGM, with the cost of existing retail space and office space running relatively high.

INFRASTRUCTURE: Littleton has limited infrastructure capacities for public sewer and wastewater treatment.



Littleton's Weaknesses Among *Important* Location Factors:

CRITICAL MASS FIRMS: Littleton does not have an industrial attraction policy and it doesn't offer a program to interpret the needs of existing or emerging clusters.

HOUSING: The median sale and rental price for a single-family home and two-bedroom apartment in Littleton is considerably higher than the CGM average. In addition, only a small proportion of the officers of major firms located in Littleton live in the community.



Littleton's Weaknesses Among *Less Important* Location Factors:

AIRPORTS: Littleton's closest regional and international airports—Manchester and Logan—are farther from the town center than the CGM average and travel time is much longer. Logan is, however, accessible by public transport via the commuter line, which runs from Littleton to North Station.



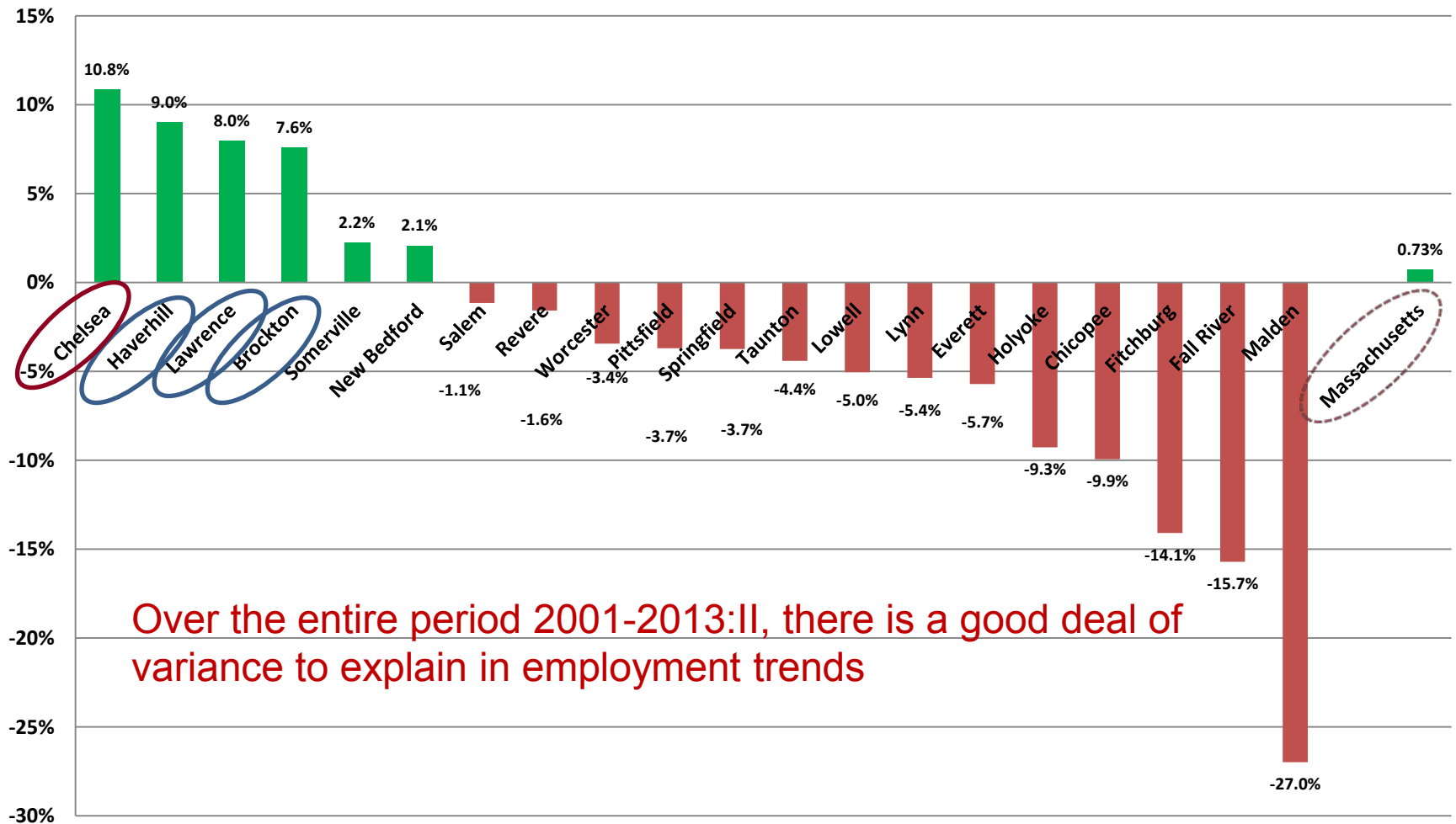
But What Really Matters?

Massachusetts Working Cities



Employment Trends, 2001 - 2013

**Working Cities
Percentage Change in Employment
All Private Sector Industries
2001-2013:II**



EDSAT Correlation Analysis

What factors are most highly correlated with employment growth?

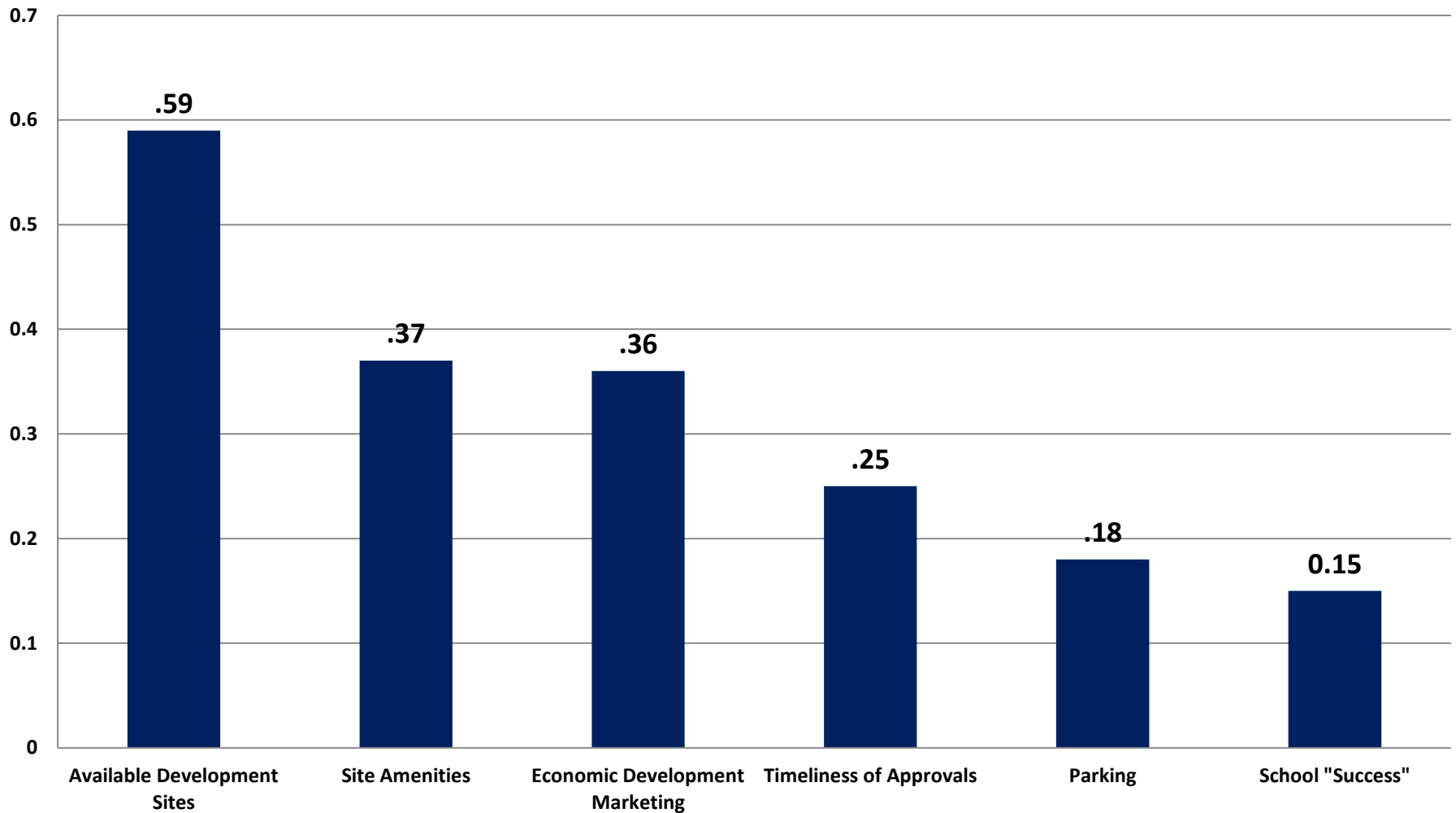
EDSAT Measures – 26 in All

Highway Access	Labor Cost
Parking Availability	Formal Economic Development Strategy
Traffic Congestion	Available Development Sites
Infrastructure Limitations	Predictable Permitting
Commercial/Industrial Rents	Fast Track Permitting
Labor Force Skills	Citizen Participation in Development Process
Timeliness of Approvals	Cultural and Recreational Amenities
Public Transit Availability	Crime Rates
Physical Attractiveness of Municipality	Housing Cost
Complementary Business Services	School Success Measures
Critical Mass of Firms – Local Supply Chain Firms	Amenities near Available Development Sites
Cross Marketing by Municipality and Business Community	Local Tax Rate Environment
Marketing Follow-up with Locating/Relocating Firms	
Quality of Available Development Parcels	

What Factors are Correlated with Greater Employment Growth?

Correlations between employment growth and EDSAT variables, 2001-2013:II

Working Cities
Factors Most Highly Correlated with Percentage Change in Employment All Private Sector
Industries
2001-2013:II



Control Variables

Corr. % Chg Emp. 2001-2013/Proximity to Boston

+.16 Slight positive correlation

Corr. % Chg Emp. 2001-2013/Higher Poverty Rate

+.17 Slight positive correlation

Corr. % Chg Emp. 2001-2013/Larger Manufacturing Base

+0.13 Weak positive correlation

Key Factors **NOT** Highly Correlated with Employment Growth ... or Inversely Correlated

Complementary Business Services (+.07)

Low Crime Rate (+.07)

Public Transit (+.04)

Highway Access (-.03)

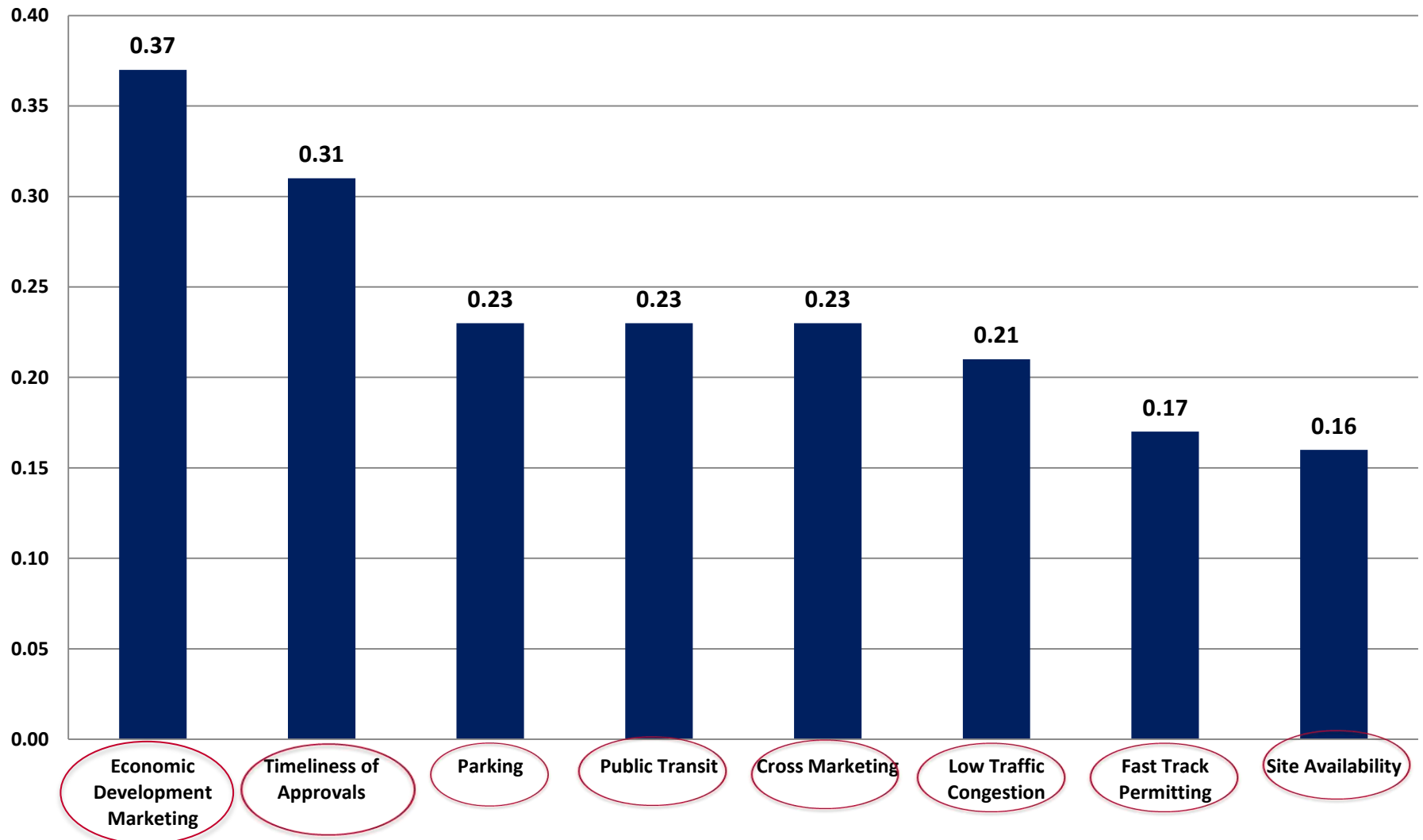
Commercial/Industrial Rents (-.08)

Cultural & Recreational Amenities (-.12)

Low Local Tax Rates (-.27)

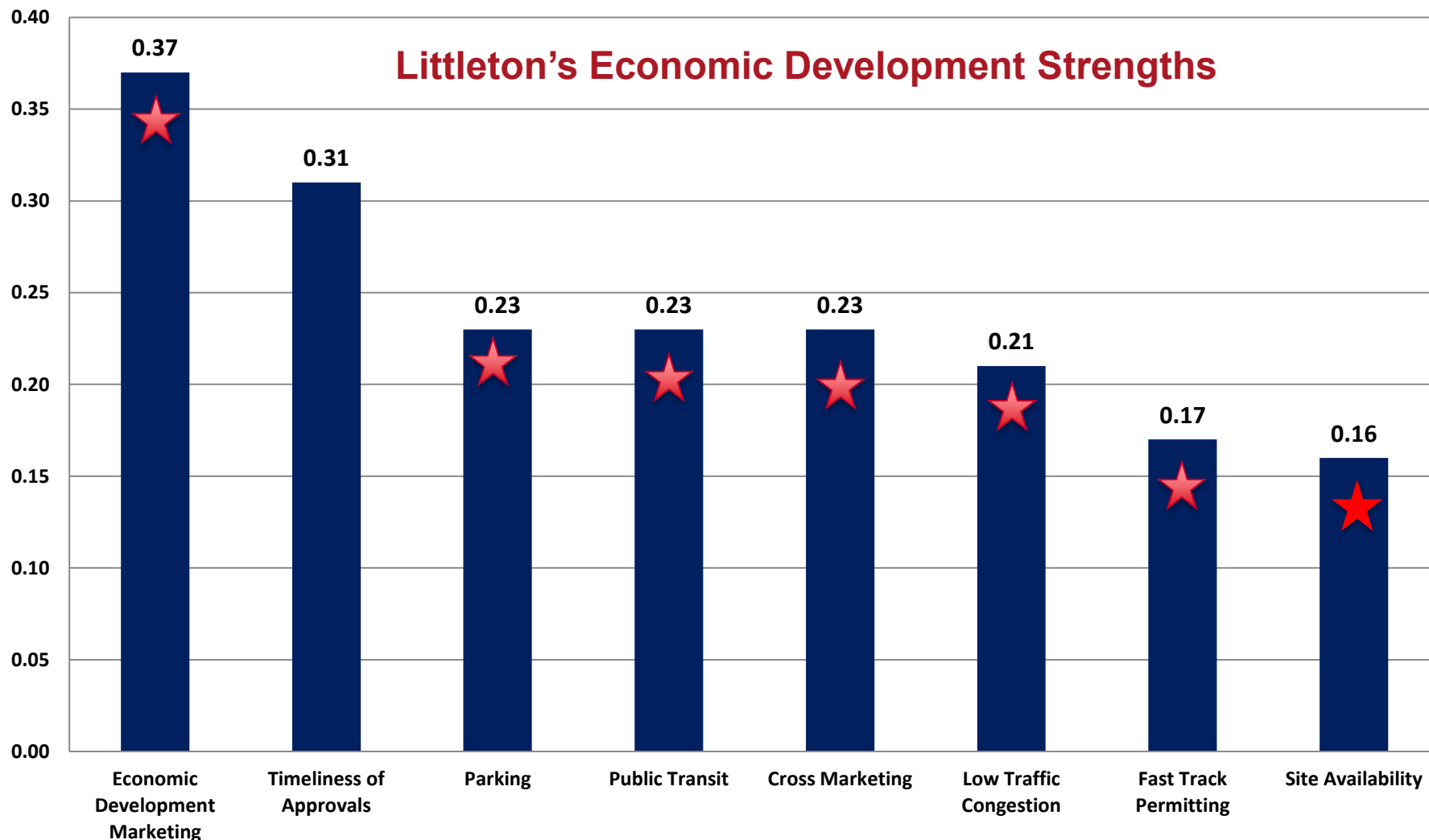
Physical Attractiveness of City (-.35)

50 Massachusetts Municipalities - Factors Most Highly Correlated with Increase in Establishments 2001-2011

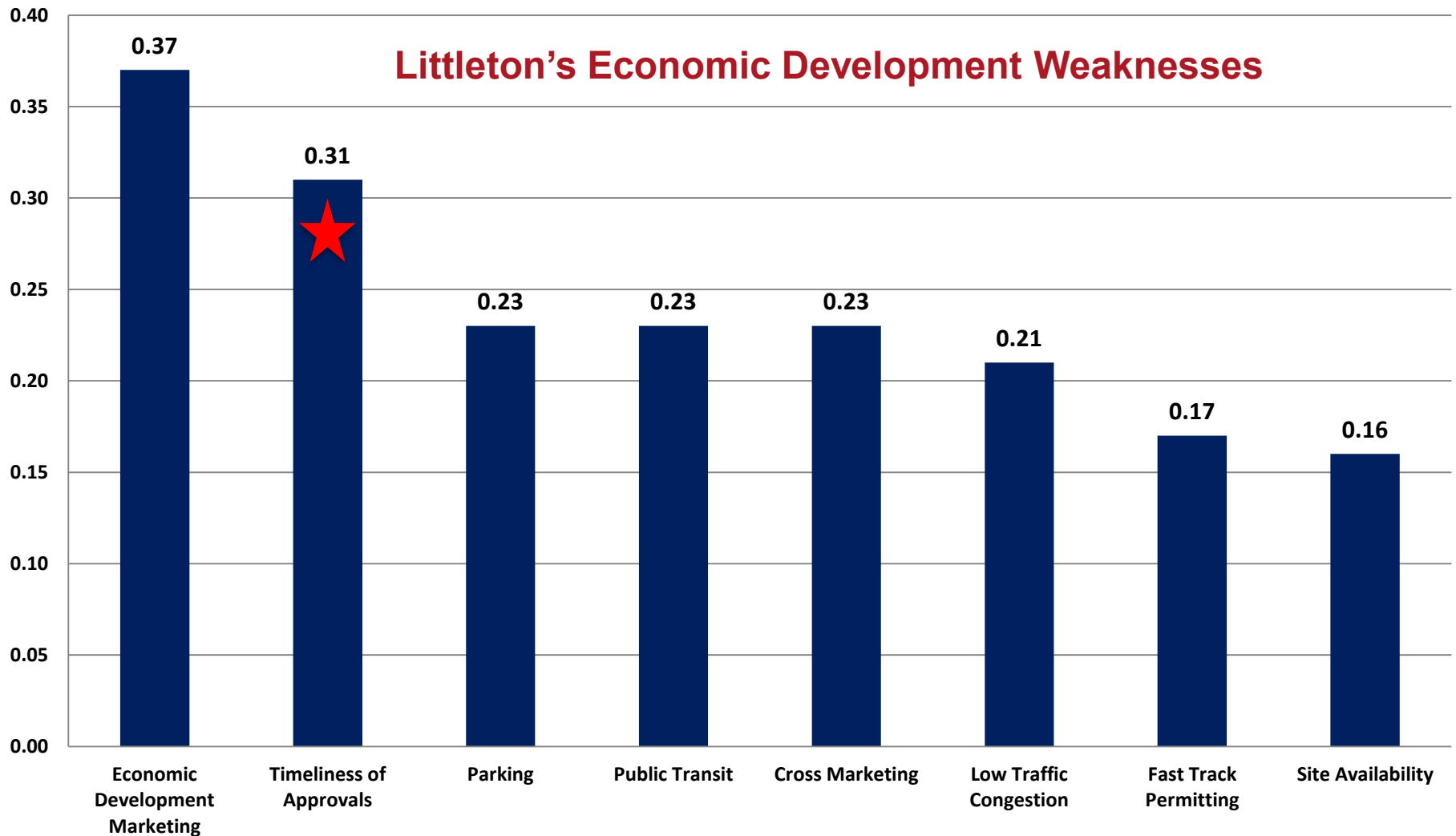


50 Massachusetts Municipalities - Factors Most Highly Correlated with Increase in Establishments 2001-2011

Littleton's Economic Development Strengths



50 Massachusetts Municipalities - Factors Most Highly Correlated with
Increase in Establishments
2001-2011



Conclusions

Things to Think About

- **Approval process** – Littleton's process for approving site plan reviews and zoning variances is slow for existing and current projects. Your jurisdiction could gain an advantage if it helped reduce the “time to market” by expediting the review and permitting approvals process.
- **Commercial/Industrial Attraction and Marketing Policy**– Your town should craft a more aggressive commercial/industrial attraction policy and a comprehensive cross marketing strategy.
- **Littleton has many good things going for it:**
 - Relatively **low traffic congestion** and an **abundance of parking**
 - A large proportion of **vacant developable land that is zoned for commercial and industrial uses**
 - A well-educated and **skilled workforce**
 - A well-designed, informative, and well-maintained **website**
- **But you could be better positioned to attract business investment and jobs by:**
 - Streamlining **permitting review processes**
 - Decreasing **the cost of business rents**
 - Conducting a detailed assessment of **the financial implications of investing or failing to invest in a sewer system**





Northeastern University
Dukakis Center For Urban and Regional Policy

Thank you!

Dukakis Center For Urban and Regional Policy
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A “Think and Do” Tank