

Northeastern University  
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

**EDSAT REPORT FOR THE CITY OF  
MARLBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS  
MAY 2017**



## 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'<sup>1</sup> 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, Marlborough 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 Marlborough 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*.

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<sup>1</sup> 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

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


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

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

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 Marlborough'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.

### Marlborough's Strengths and Potential "Deal-Makers"

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

**TRAFFIC:** During rush hour, traffic congestion is only moderate, and rush hour traffic speed is higher than in the comparison group. Your city has regular access to traffic engineers and transportation consultants, and has recently done a traffic study. Marlborough does not require firms to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the development site, another plus in the eyes of location specialists.

**PARKING:** Most sites available for retail, manufacturing, and office space have on-site parking, and parking is free in the central business district.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** Marlborough has capacity for growth and reliable service in water, sewer, wastewater treatment, natural gas, electric power, and data/communications infrastructure.

**LABOR (AVAILABLE):** A large majority of Marlborough's adults have at least a high school diploma and a relatively high proportion of residents have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

**TIMELINESS OF APPROVALS:** Marlborough stands out from the comparison group municipalities (CGM) in review process speed for both new projects and development of existing structures. In particular, your reported processing times are shorter for zoning variances, special permits, and appeals for new projects and site plan review, zoning variance, special permits, and appeals for existing structure development. In no category are your review process times longer than the CGM.

**WEBSITE:** Marlborough's official city website provides information useful to prospective firms and developers, including a list of available land and building sites, contact information for key officials, and links to numerous local and regional business organizations, agencies, and resources. Applications and other key forms are date-certified to ensure consistency between online and print forms. In addition, an economic development link brings users to the Marlborough Economic Development



Corporation's highly usable and attractive website, which provides an additional wealth of information about the city, its key industries, business incentives, and the development process.

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

**PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS:** Marlborough vigorously maintains streets, sidewalks, and parks near available development sites and has a higher percentage of land reserved for parks than the comparison group. Your city places a strong emphasis on keeping an attractive downtown area and you have few or no issues with abandoned, dilapidated, or boarded-up properties.

**CRIME:** Marlborough has a substantially lower crime rate than the comparison towns.

**PREDICTABLE PERMITS:** Your city makes things easy for prospective developers by providing a permitting checklist and flow chart of the development process, as well as a development handbook.

**FAST TRACK PERMITS:** Your city actively markets fast track permitting and has overlay districts and 43D sites that can allow expedited permitting.

**PERMITTING OMBUDSMAN:** Your mayor plays a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of the permitting process and you provide technical assistance to businesses in permit and license application processes.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW PROCESS:** Marlborough has had very little abutter resistance to development. In cases where abutters have had concerns, for instance the large Apex development, the city has worked successfully to smooth out problems. Officials play a role to help in abutter communication or intervention when needed.

**INDUSTRY SENSITIVITY:** Your city has strengths across the board in this category! With the help of MEDC, your city has a marketing program based on industry needs and the city's core strengths, and you engage local businesspeople to speak on the city's behalf. In addition, you are ready to jump in and respond in the event of negative news or data about the city.

**CRITICAL MASS FIRMS:** Your strong industrial attraction policy puts your city at a competitive advantage over the comparison group, and in addition, you have development specialists at the municipal, regional, and state level to assist in interpreting the needs of the sectors you intend to attract.

**CROSS MARKETING:** You enlist existing businesses in your city to help attract new ones, as well as engaging local and regional business and planning organizations in marketing Marlborough.

**MARKETING FOLLOW-UP:** Your city has competitive advantage in this area, as you have a formal de-briefing process to find out why firms chose to locate in Marlborough and have procedures for keeping in touch with firms about their satisfaction with the city. Also, there is a procedure in place for acting quickly if news comes out about company dissatisfaction with your jurisdiction.

**COMPLEMENTARY/SUPPLEMENTAL BUSINESS SERVICES:** The city's business services are highly capable of working with emerging tech/science firms and the city has WorkTable to provide co-working space for start-up businesses. MEDC is vigorously involved and the Chamber of Commerce is moderately involved in economic development.

**BUSINESS INCENTIVES (STATE LEVEL):** Massachusetts offers a number of state tax incentives such as investment and job training tax credits and workforce training grants. Your city actively takes advantage of these available incentives, giving you an edge over the comparison group.

**BUSINESS INCENTIVES (LOCAL LEVEL):** Marlborough offers a many local business incentives, including investment tax credits, a revolving loan fund, workforce training grants, and TIFs, including for retail development. Your city has an assembled committee of bankers that assists businesses in securing financing.

**SITES AVAILABLE:** Your city keeps an up-to-date and complete list of sites that are available for developers, and you keep active relationships with commercial brokers with sites in your jurisdiction. Marlborough's industrial-zoned land is protected from encroachment by other uses. You have a strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties.

**TAX RATES:** Although property and commercial tax rates are comparatively on the high side, your city has a well-balanced property tax revenue, with a healthy mix of commercial, industrial, and residential sources. In addition, Marlborough adds to its revenue with local hotel and meals taxes.

**TAX DELINQUENCY:** Marlborough is attentive to its tax delinquent and tax title properties. If the city has more such properties than the CGM, it can be attributed to its larger population than that of the average participating community.

**LABOR COST:** Prevailing hourly wages for blue-color, semi-skilled manufacturing workers is relatively low, and mid-level clerical worker wages are similar to the comparison group.

**WORKFORCE TRAINING:** Marlborough supports public-private partnerships to provide workforce training and has adult education programs readily available to local residents. Your city engages with many resources for workforce training, including Marlborough-based Partnerships for a Skilled Workforce as well as area high schools and vocational technical school, human service or nonprofit career training centers, and regional or state employment services departments.

### **Strengths among *Less Important* Location Factors**

Marlborough has no strengths in the less important category.

## **Marlborough's Weaknesses and Potential "Deal-Breakers"**

Along with its many advantages, Marlborough has some possible weaknesses that could pose challenges 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, you should next consider those in the *Important* group, and finally those the *Less Important* group.

Unlike the above itemization of Marlborough'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 Marlborough's economic development objectives and the feasibility (economic and otherwise) of upgrading "deal-breakers" and other weaknesses.

### **Weaknesses among *Very Important* Location Factors**

**WORKFORCE COMPOSITION:** The percentage of English language learners in Marlborough's workforce is higher than the comparison group. While the city has a relatively high proportion of managerial workers, please note that this report cannot assess your city's balance of workforce types (semi-skilled, professional, etc.) fully because of incomplete questionnaire data.

**RENTS:** Rents for manufacturing space and for class A, B, and C office space in the highway business district are higher than in the comparison group municipalities. On the positive side, rents for retail space in the highway business district, and for office space in the central business district, appear to be relatively low.

**HIGHWAY ACCESS:** While a portion of your city is easily reached by two access ramps off I-495, the city's east side has less access. Only 50–74 % of the city's available office space sites and fewer than half of its available retail and manufacturing sites are within two miles of a major limited-access highway entrance or exit. In addition, Marlborough imposes weight restrictions.

### **Weaknesses among *Important* Location Factors**

**PUBLIC TRANSIT:** Few or no available sites for retail, manufacturing, or general office are within ¼-mile of public transit. On the positive side, Marlborough is within five miles of the Southborough commuter rail station and has MetroWest Regional Transit Authority bus and shuttle services, and the city has a transit-oriented development strategy in its plans.

**SITE AMENITIES:** Among available development sites, only some are within one mile of day care and fast food or fine dining options. On the positive side, most are near retail shops.

**HOUSING:** Marlborough's housing prices for purchasing and renting are high. Its home ownership rate is lower than comparison group towns. Few major officers of the firms located in your town live in Marlborough.

### **Weaknesses among *Less Important* Location Factors**

**AIRPORTS:** While Marlborough currently has a municipal airport, regional and major airports are some distance away. The closest major international airport is Logan in Boston, about an hour away by car (without traffic). Airports are not accessible from Marlborough by public transportation.

**PROXIMITY TO UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH:** Marlborough does not have close proximity to colleges and universities. On the positive side, the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School is located in Marlborough. The tech school offers a licensed practical nursing program and many other adult education classes, and hosts satellite classes of Worcester-based Quinsigamond Community College.

**RAIL ACCESS:** While Marlborough has access to freight rail, which could appeal to manufacturing and logistics firms, the city lacks commuter rail and Amtrak.

## DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following is a ten-part section-by-section analysis of the EDSAT results comparing Marlborough'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 Marlborough'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 Marlborough'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 Marlborough 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, Marlborough is compared with all the CGM.

Section 1: Access to Customers/Markets

● A. Highway Access			
Report of Ludlow as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question			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%+		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%+
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%+
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	yes		yes

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

Group 1




Group 2








Group 3

Group 4

## 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.

● <b>A. Highway Access</b>			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
1: What percentage of available sites for retail trade, including your central business district, are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	26-49%		75% or greater
2: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	26-49%		75% or greater
3: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	50-74%		75% or greater
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	yes		no

● <b>B. Public Transit</b>			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	1-25%		50-74%
6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	0%		26-49%
7: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	1-25%		50-74%
8: Is there a transit-oriented development strategy in your plans for attracting new firms?	yes		no
9: Is there a commuter rail or bus stop within 5 miles of your jurisdiction's boundaries?	yes		yes
10: Do you offer any shuttle services to other public commuting stations?	yes		no
11: Is public transit service available on nights and weekends?	yes		yes

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



## C. Parking

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	no		no
16: Have you used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking in your jurisdiction?	no		no
17: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$/Hourly	0		between 0 and \$1/hour
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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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)	no		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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important

Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong


Average

Weak

No Comparison

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

**Importance To Market**



Very Important



Important



Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**



Strong







Average




Weak




No Comparison

F. Rail			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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	no		no
- Intercity/Interstate(Amtrak)	no		no
- None	yes		no


**Importance To Market**



Very Important




Important




Less Important


**Your Performance Relative To Peers**




Strong



Average














Weak



No Comparison


## G. Physical Attractiveness

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	Very vigorously		Moderately
36: Is there a hotline available for reporting code violations and maintenance needs within your jurisdiction?	no		no
37: Is there a system for monitoring the timeliness and quality of responses to reported violations within your jurisdiction?	no		no
38: Do you involve the arts community in the design of open space (street furniture, murals, etc.)?	no		no
39: What percentage of the acreage within your jurisdiction is reserved for parks?	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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions








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

<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Weak  Average  No Comparison
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




## 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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
1: Is your local chamber of commerce or business association actively involved in the economic development activities of your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
2: Does your jurisdiction have an active volunteer economic development committee or nonprofit center for economic development?	yes		yes
3: Is there an incubator or other form of cooperative space for start-up businesses in your jurisdiction?	yes		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?	yes		yes
6: Are there branches of major commercial banks in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
7: To what extent are the business services (e.g. venture capital, business planning, specialized recruiting, etc.) in your jurisdiction capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms?	Highly capable		Moderately capable

<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important		<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison	
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B. Critical Mass Firms			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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)	Information Technology; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Travel and Tourism		
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; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech		
14: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)	Information Technology; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Travel and Tourism		
15: Which of the following jurisdictions have development specialists to assist in interpreting the needs of these clusters? (Choose all that apply)			
- Your Municipality	yes		yes
- Regional/County	yes		no
- State	yes		no
16: How aggressive is your industrial attraction policy?	Vigorous		Moderate

**Importance To Market**

Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**

Strong
  Average
  No Comparison

 Weak





## C. Cross Marketing

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
21: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose to locate in your jurisdiction about what made the difference?	yes		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

## E. Proximity to Universities & Research

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	0		2
27: How many community colleges are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
28: How many vocational/technical schools are located within your jurisdiction?	1		1

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Weak

Average















No Comparison





### 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>  <b>A. Infrastructure</b> </div>			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
4: Natural Gas	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
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: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Commercial			
11: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Industrial			

**Importance To Market**  
 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important





**Your Performance Relative To Peers**  
 Strong  
 Weak  
 Average  
 No Comparison

<div>  <b>B. Rents</b> </div>			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	12		12
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	11		13
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	18		6
15: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)? CLASS A	N/A		between 15 and 16.00
16: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)? CLASS B	10		12.00
17: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)? CLASS C	9		9
18: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)? CLASS A	19		between 15.50 and 16
19: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)? CLASS B	17		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	12		9.00
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	15%		10
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	19%		between 40 and 44
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	5%		between 35 and 40
<div> <div> <b>Importance To Market</b> <div>  Very Important            Important            Less Important         </div> </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> <div>  Strong            Average            Weak            No Comparison         </div> </div> </div>			

*NOTE: As the figures for percentages of class A, B, and C do not add up to 100%, your city's office space balance has not been assessed as a strength or weakness and is not addressed in the Next Steps section.*

## C. Quality of Available Space

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	None		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%

### Importance To Market



Very Important




Important




Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong





 Weak

 Average

 No Comparison

## D. Land (space)

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	750,001-1,000,000 sq. feet		1-250,000 sq. feet
31: What proportion of the parcels available for industrial development or large scale commercial development are of 5 acres or more?	0-10%		11-20%

### Importance To Market



Very Important



Important





Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Weak





 Average







 No Comparison










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

B. Workforce Composition			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of your workforce is Unskilled?	1-25%		1-25%
6: What percentage of your workforce is Semi-skilled			
7: What percentage of your workforce is Technically skilled			
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	26-49%		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional			
10: What percentage of your workforce are current English language learners?	21-35%		0-10%

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



### C. Unions

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

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











### D. Labor (available)

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	36-50%		21-35%

### E. Workforce Training

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important




Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Weak












 Average

 No Comparison



## 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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on the needs identified by industrial or office location specialists?	yes		no
2: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on existing core strengths, identified opportunities, or industry concentrations?	yes		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?	yes		no
<div> <div> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important            Important            Less Important         </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>   Strong            Average            No Comparison            Weak         </div> </div>			











## B. Sites Available

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	yes		no
8: Do you maintain an active relationship with commercial real estate brokers, developers, or agents with sites in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
9: Do your land use regulations protect land currently zoned industrial from encroachment by residential or other incompatible uses?	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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
12: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Site plan review	5-8 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	0-4 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	5-8 weeks		9-12 weeks
15: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Building permit	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks
16: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Appeals process	0-4 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	0-4 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	0-4 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	0-4 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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	yes		no
24: Do you provide a development handbook to prospective developers?	yes		no
25: Do you allow for a single presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority?	no		no

### Importance To Market





 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
  No Comparison

## E. Fast Track Permits

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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
  Average
  No Comparison



## F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

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

### Importance To Market



Very Important



Important




Less Important






















### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong


 Weak


 Average


 No Comparison

G. Permitting Ombudsman			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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?	no		yes
40: Do you have an established training program for development staff that regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	no		no
41: Do you have an established training program for boards, commissions, authorities, districts, and elected officials that regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	no		no
42: 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?	yes		no
44: Does your jurisdiction require any local licenses for specific businesses or industries?			
- General license for all businesses	yes		no
- Auto dealership	no		no
- Barber shop	no		no
- Bar/Tavern	no		no
- Beauty salon	no		no
- Child care services	no		no
- Construction contractor	no		no
- Home health care	no		no
- Massage therapist	no		no
- Real estate agent/broker	no		no
- Restaurant	no		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


**Importance To Market**


  
 Very Important


  
 Important


  
 Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**

  
 Strong







  
 Average

  
 Weak

  
 No Comparison

## 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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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?	no		no
4: Is there a civic center, arena or major concert hall?	no		no
5: Is there a golf course within your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
6: Is there a symphony orchestra, opera, or ballet company?	no		no
7: Are there public beaches or boating activities within 5 miles of your jurisdiction?	yes		yes







B. Crime			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 residents last year in your jurisdiction?	62		256
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 residents last year?	20		between 78 and 80
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 residents last year?	14		29
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 residents last year?	0		1

**Importance To Market**  
 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**  
 Strong  
 Weak
  Average  
 No Comparison

## C. Housing

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
12: What was the median sale price of a single-family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$351,000-\$450,000		\$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?	51-65%		66-75%
15: What is the vacancy rate for rental housing?	5-7%		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

### Importance To Market



Very Important




Important



Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers





























 Strong

 Average

 Weak

 No Comparison



D. Local Schools			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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?	51-65%		81% or greater
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in Mathematics?	51-65%		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	no		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	50-74%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	976-1050		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?	MPS students take the PSAT and SAT		
26: What percentage of high school freshmen normally graduate within 5 years?	81%-94%		81%-94%
27: What is the high school dropout rate last year?	1-25%		1-25%
28: Are there any schools in your jurisdiction that are currently deemed "underperforming?"	no		no
29: What percentage of high school graduates from last year's class went on to a four-year college?	50-74%		50-74%
30: Are there any charter schools in your jurisdiction?	yes		no
31: What types of private schools are there in your jurisdiction?			
- Parochial	yes		
- Non-sectarian	yes		
- Boarding	yes		
<div> <div> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important            Important            Less Important         </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>   Strong   Weak            Average   No Comparison         </div> </div>			



## 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.

 <b>A. Amenities</b>			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
1: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fast food restaurant	Some		Most
2: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fine dining	Some		Some
3: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Day care	Some		Most
4: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Retail shops	Most		Most
<div> <div> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important            Important            Less Important         </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>   Strong   Weak   Average   No Comparison         </div> </div>			

## 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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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	yes		no
2: To what extent does your jurisdiction actively take advantage of any special state business incentives?	Very much		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



Average



Weak



No Comparison

## B. Local

Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	1-25%		1-25%
6: Does your jurisdiction offer new businesses property tax abatement?	no		no
7: If yes, what proportion of new businesses are offered abatements?	1-25%		1-25%
8: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	Executive		Legislative
9: Does your jurisdiction offer any of the following incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)			
- Revolving loan fund	yes		no
- Loan guarantees	no		no
- Revenue bonds	no		no
- Equity participation	no		no
- Business district group loans	no		no
- None	no		no
- Investment tax credits	yes		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	yes		no
- Other, please specify	yes		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?	yes		no
13: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	yes		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?	No brownfields funds utilized		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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		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	25.69		between 19.89 and 20.20
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000	15.34		between 11.37 and 11.38
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?	N/A		between 13.91 and 13.97
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	12.08		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	26.29		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	54.84		
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 Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Marlborough		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?	100-200		0-50
15: When do you choose to auction tax title properties?	1-5 years		1-5 years
16: Do you have an organized and defined process for conducting such auctions and ensuring that they are successful?	yes		yes
17: Do you auction the "right to foreclose" on tax delinquent properties?	no		no
18: Do you seek tax abatement on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners?	yes		no
19: If a tax delinquent or tax title property serves as an impediment to development, does the property receive special attention?	yes		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.

<div>  <b>A. Website</b> </div>			
Report of Marlborough as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Marlborough		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction's website list all local development policies and procedures?	no		yes
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?	Monthly		Weekly
5: Does your website include an explicitly designed economic development tool aimed at businesses and developers?	yes		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?	no		no
10: Is there a list of available land and building sites on the website?	yes		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	yes		no
- Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	yes		no
- Abutters	no		no
- Zoning	yes		no
- Assessed value	yes		no
- Tax rate	yes		no
- Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	no		no
- Contamination	no		no

- Aerial photos	yes		no
- GIS links	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		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	yes		no
- State permitting agencies	yes		no
- Regional planning agencies	yes		no
- Regional development organizations	yes		no
- Workforce training organizations	yes		no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	yes		no
- Demographic information	yes		no
- Economic development agencies	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
16: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	yes		no
- Chambers of Commerce	yes		no
- Community development corporations	yes		no
- Arts and cultural organizations	yes		no
- Sports and recreation venues	yes		no
- Convention and tourist organization	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
17: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	no		yes
<div> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important          Important          Less Important       </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>   Strong   Weak   Average   No Comparison       </div>			

## NEXT STEPS

Marlborough is a city of approximately 40,000 people located 30 miles west of Boston in Middlesex County. The city recently celebrated its 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Its economy was formerly dominated by manufacturing, particularly shoe and boot manufacturing, but Marlborough today contains a rich mix of sectors, from traditional and advanced manufacturing to high technology, life sciences, service, retail, banking, and health care. Many of Marlborough's existing businesses are located in industrial parks near I-495; additional clusters include the 5-acre mixed-use "Marlborough Village" district downtown and many retail establishments on the city's east side. Marlborough is the home or regional headquarters of many prominent corporations, including TJX Companies, Raytheon, Boston Scientific, Quest Diagnostics, SanDisk, and Hologic, as well as numerous small and local companies, including the 50-year-old Universal Window and Door, whose products are designed and manufactured in its facility in central Marlborough.

The Dukakis Center's Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) creates a snapshot of Marlborough's economic development efforts at a time when the town is working actively to attract and retain businesses and industries. The following is an overview of where your city 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

Marlborough enjoys valuable assets that can compel firms and developers to locate—or remain—in town. Chief among them are ample developable sites, a smooth and rapid permitting process, and vigorous marketing and industrial attraction efforts led by the city's strong and active economic development corporation with the support and involvement of a long-serving business-friendly mayor who stays involved in communication with potential and existing firms. All this, combined with low citizen/abutter resistance to development, puts your city ahead of the game in economic development compared to most other EDSAT municipalities.

Marlborough scores very well on most of EDSAT's "very important" location factors. The city's location at the intersection of highways I-495, I-290 and not far from I-90 and State Route 9 make travel into and out of Marlborough easy and certainly can help attract multiple industry types and firms large and small. This report corrects for EDSAT's failure to acknowledge Marlborough's excellent **highway access**, due to the city's larger scale than most other participating communities. **Parking** is abundant and free, and **traffic** flow is generally smooth. Your city stays on top of potential traffic problems and solutions, utilizing MAPC and the 128 Business Council to study traffic and transportation needs. **Infrastructure** is a strength, with water supply and sewer, wastewater treatment, natural gas, electric power, and data/communications infrastructure sufficient to support growth. Marlborough's participation in a municipal aggregation program likely helps keeps electricity supply costs relatively low, though as previously discussed, your survey responses did not include kWh costs, so this survey does not assess whether electricity rates are high or low compared to other municipalities.

Marlborough also stands out from the comparison group in **timeliness of approvals** for both new projects and development of existing structures. In particular, your reported processing times are shorter than the CGM for zoning variances, special permits, and appeals for new projects; and site plan review, zoning variances, special permits, and appeals for existing structures. In no category is your approval process longer than the comparison group. The city's economic development team is already working to market **fast-track permitting** to potential developers, giving Marlborough an advantage over some other municipalities.

The City of Marlborough's **website**—another "very important" location factor, since it usually gives a municipality's first impression—provides useful resources and tools for potential firms and developers. These include a list of available land and building sites (which is rare), and links to numerous local development resources such as regional planning agencies and the Chamber of Commerce. In addition, an up-to-date development permit checklist and flowchart are provided on the MEDC site. Applications and other key forms are date-certified to ensure consistency between online and print forms. The MEDC site in particular is user-friendly and rich with valuable, clearly presented information about the city, its major industries and firms, business incentives, and available sites, and highlights the city's 43D priority development sites. A set of testimonials by industry leaders regarding the ease of doing business in Marlborough is one of many marketing efforts evident on MEDC's



website. In addition, an “economic development toolbox” offers resources for small business owners and entrepreneurs starting or expanding their businesses in the city.

Although the website is a strength, there is room for improvement here. Viewing Marlborough’s official **website** through a potential developer’s or location specialist’s eyes, the home page is crowded with links targeted to current residents and unrelated to economic development. The city’s site could benefit from a more streamlined design. At the very least, the economic development portal should be prominently located in the upper part of the home page so the link is immediately visible. The city’s site is updated only monthly, and while the MEDC’s website has a dedicated webmaster, the city’s does not. Moreover, having dual websites dedicated to economic development could easily confuse prospective developers and firms. For instance, the development flowchart and permitting checklist are found on the MEDC site, but users must return to the city site to access actual permit forms from the Site Plan Review Committee page. Even after finding the “Forms” button, the relevant applications and checklists are fairly far down the page. The GIS mapping application that links quickly to Google Maps street view looks like a useful tool, but it does not seem user-friendly. We recommend that you look into ways to modernize the city’s site, to visually feature a “Doing Business” (or some other term) portal, and to unify the economic development resources and developer information to avoid potential duplication of effort, confusion, or missed information.

With an abundance of **vacant land** and useable space currently zoned for commercial and industrial use, the city and the Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) have been aggressive in maintaining industrial and commercial zoning, keeping the permitting process streamlined, and marketing the city to attract and retain firms. The city’s vigorous industrial attraction policy targets industry sectors, including traditional manufacturing, information technology, travel and tourism, and life sciences, including biotech. Further, your city, region, and state have development specialists to help interpret the needs of these desired industries, and both the city and the MEDC make ample use of them.

Your city has clear strengths in **industry sensitivity**. With the help of MEDC, your city has a marketing program based on industry needs and the city’s core strengths, you engage local businesspeople to speak on the city’s behalf, you are ready to jump in and respond if negative news or data about the city reach the news. The city works to engage its diverse populations in festivals such as the Heritage Festival, which could set the stage for attracting niche shopping. Your mayor plays a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of the permitting process, and you provide technical assistance to businesses in permit and license application processes.

Marlborough engages many resources to provide **workforce training**, and the city and the MEDC team up to conduct periodic job fairs to link Marlborough area employers with entry- and mid-level jobseekers.

Unlike many traditionally rural or “bedroom” communities that rely on homeowners for the vast majority of tax revenue, Marlborough enjoys a relatively well-balanced property tax revenue stream, with 55% coming from residential, 26% from commercial, and 12% from industrial sources. The city also enjoys substantial added revenue from local hotels and meals taxes.

Marlborough takes advantage of the state’s wide array of special **business incentives** as well as offering incentives on the municipal level such as TIFs, investment tax credits, workforce training grants, and assistance with securing financing.

Marlborough has a very **low crime rate**. Its **local schools** have high graduation rates and propel students on to four-year colleges, similar to the comparison group municipalities. You report that no schools deemed underperforming, and Marlborough’s per-pupil expenditure is higher than the comparison group, suggesting the city is placing a priority on its schools. In addition, your city has a range of school choices, from traditional public schools to a charter school and private parochial, non-sectarian, and boarding schools.

Overall this community possesses a high degree of **physical attractiveness**. Marlborough has a higher percentage of land reserved for parks than the comparison group. You place a strong emphasis on keeping an attractive downtown area, and the city vigorously maintains streets, sidewalks, and parks near available development sites. You have few or no issues with abandoned, dilapidated, or boarded-up properties. Marlborough’s “Downtown Village” has been named a cultural district by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the district is the site of many of the city’s significant annual events, including the Heritage Festival and Taste of Marlborough.

Along with these many strengths, we see some areas that should receive greater attention.

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Marlborough is doing things right in many categories that location specialists find important. A few obstacles and challenges may still exist, suggesting some room for enhancement of your already-strong economic development strategies and practices.

While your city is not plagued with contamination or brownfield sites, or with vacant or severely utilized shopping centers, in terms of **quality of available space**, it may be a slight competitive disadvantage that your city has little open land or greenfield space available for development.

In the **physical attractiveness** category, while maintenance is vigorous and likely wards off deterioration or trash issues, you might consider implementing a 24/7-attended hotline or app for citizens to report issues and violations. Your city does not strongly involve the arts community in open space design, and should consider more active inclusion of local artists and arts organizations in open space and cultural event planning.

While your city's **marketing follow-up** efforts are strong and your mayor is involved and "pre-emptive" about any problems that might surface with any existing companies, you could seek to de-brief with firms that decide *not* to locate in your town, in order to formulate as complete a picture as possible of reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Under the category of **permitting ombudsman**, your city does not have an established training program to regularly identify adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate the changing needs of firms. Perhaps with the MEDC working so actively to attract businesses and the mayor helping to keep the city business-friendly, this training has not been needed. Even so, you might consider developing standards and training for staff, boards, commissions, and elected officials to keep everyone on the same page in accommodating changing needs of firms as time goes on.

Marlborough has a range of housing options, but the city currently lacks available mid-priced **housing**, possibly discouraging mid-level professional workers from taking up residence in the city. Future economic development planning should examine ways to increase the supply of housing suitable for employees of the new firms it seeks to attract, along their families.

Marlborough is not endowed with good **public transit**—another very important location factor. While traffic issues are not paramount at the moment, the city could benefit by making more "last mile" and alternative transportation available, perhaps including car- and bike-sharing services. We recommend exploring how and where to add these transportation amenities, as well as bolstering access to the Southborough commuter rail station and improving and/or promoting the available MWRTA bus and shuttle services.

Regarding **workforce composition**, Marlborough's percentage of English language learners in the workforce is somewhat higher than the comparison group. We recommend continuing to monitor and respond to the needs of immigrants and English language learners whose children are enrolled in your city's schools or who seek or hold jobs in Marlborough. As your English language learner population grows and matures, you might look for ways to tap into this diversity, for example by expanding the Heritage Festival's reach and keeping an eye out for opportunities to market niche shopping in Marlborough neighborhoods.

Finally, although Marlborough spends more than the CGM on its **local schools**, despite the strengths listed above, EDSAT indicates that students' proficiency in math and especially English is quite a bit lower than the comparison group. Combined with the significant percentage of students eligible for subsidized lunches, this performance suggests that the schools and the community might improve their remedial programs for the immigrant working poor—targeting pre-K, students, and parents.

Recommendations	Priority
Work to unify the information and user experience between your dual websites to create a better “one-stop shopping” experience for potential firms and location consultants. If possible, dedicate a staff member to maintaining and improving the City of Marlborough website.	High
Work to add transportation amenities and promote use of the MWRTA bus and shuttle services to help increase the city’s walkability and encourage alternatives to car use.	Med
Examine ways to increase the city’s supply of quality mid-priced housing.	Med
Continue and strengthen the city’s efforts to engage and assist English language learning students, families and workers, and examine strategies to capitalize on cultural diversity with the Heritage Festival and promotion of diverse shopping or dining districts.	Med