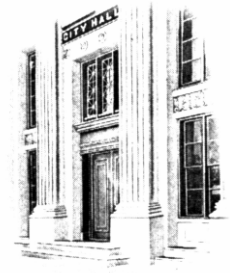




City of Quincy

City Hall
1305 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169



Thomas P. Koch
Mayor

Office of Municipal Finance
Telephone: (617) 376-2706

Mark J. Cavanagh
Director

Introduction:

This City of Quincy is pleased to present a summary of the goals and systems in place within the City as a result of the Community Compact signed on the 10th of September 2015. We want to express our gratitude to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, as well as the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development for their ongoing support not just through this endeavor, but the various collaborations in the City of Quincy.

Quincy chose the best practices of Competitiveness and Job Creation and Retention, with a combined goal of analyzing both the commercial and consumer advantages of the City. We determined the best approach would be to acquire various software packages that would fit into a three-tiered system of increased efficiency:

1. Increased Analytical Scopes

The City employees a full-time economic analyst and by giving the position an array of additional software, there has been a dramatic increase in the scope, both in depth and subject matter of local economic indicators. These indicators, which include demographic, occupational, housing, income, and population data, have been used across multiple reports from budgetary to informative.

2. Localized Data Gathering

The City recognizes being able to acquire data directly from citizens is a vital process needed to track the success of any program or initiative. Using survey software, the City has collected information directly from over 1000 citizens covering topics from proposed Ferry Service, Transportation, Tourism, and other concerns. Giving citizens a platform to voice their thoughts that also allows for systematic analysis has proven to be an invaluable tool.

3. Collaboration

Shortly after launching and adopting the new software packages, the City began hosting Economic Planning Meeting with various economic agents, such as the local Chambers of Commerce, Colleges, the local Workforce Development Board, the Local Career Center, and additional members. The group has invited local banks and regional Chambers of Commerce to discuss ways to entice businesses and workers to the area. The group does plan on continuing quarterly meetings to establish a forum for the major economic agents in the City to actively collaborate.

Outside of the three-tiered approach was an effort to bring State, Local, and Private resources directly to small businesses. The City, using a grant provided under the Community Compact from the EOHED, partnered with MAPC to have a small business tour of one of the oldest business districts in the City. The Mayor, State Officials, both elected and appointed, and well as representatives from the

United States Small Business Administration, along with almost two dozen private sector representatives, visited a dozen small businesses.

All these techniques and approaches were funded, graciously, by a \$20,000 dollar technical assistance grant from the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

The City also used funds from the EOHEd grant to purchase software that would allow for digital distribution of the findings from the data analyses and surveys conducted. By having the ability to show the citizens of the City the results of local economic indicator studies, we feel there is a dramatic increase in the value of the work.

A more thorough explanation of the Small Business Tour and Software acquired under the community compact can be found in the next section.

Acquisitions:

Social Explorer:

Social Explorer is a GIS (Geographic Information System) from Oxford University that pulls over two hundred years of data into one interactive map. This software allows the City to track changes overtime on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis. Everything from primary language spoken to income level to health statistics can be displayed and compared over time. This software also allows for back-door access to tables and figure in relation to these statistical categories, allowing for further econometric analysis.

Since the adoption of this software, over a two dozen users have come online under the city's software license. The use has ranged from grant applications to neighborhood revitalizations. The ability to pull crucial demographic data from areas of the city has proven to be a strong tool in addressing community needs. The mapping ability of the software has, along with the ability to collaborate on projects, allowed certain departments to share information instantaneously.

Moving forward, this software will both strongly support the goals of Job Creation and Retention and Competitiveness by allowing the city to see, in an economic sense, what areas of the city are improving and how the city as a whole is doing compared to other municipalities. By knowing where the city stands in reference to the myriad of issues this software's database covers, we can make better decisions and have a better understanding of how our decisions will affect the city's goals of Job Creation and Retention and Competitiveness.

QuestionPro:

QuestionPro is software that allows for the construction and analysis of surveys, custom designed for the City. It is being used for a wide-array of economic goals from tourism to economic development. One of the major advantages of this system has been the support in creating multi-lingual editions of the same survey. The ability to generate surveys that can be taken on even ground across the dozens of languages spoken by the people of Quincy means every voice can be heard.

Additionally, this software allows for research grade data collection. Good insight can only come from good data. With this software, the city will be able to gain strong insight.

This program will be open and available across multiple departments. The cross reference ability in this program package will allow for the quick dispersion of knowledge gained from other departments' surveys.

Adobe:

Adobe is the largest and most universal editing software available. One of the largest advantages of having Adobe suites available to various people in the city is this asset gives the City the facilities to generate everything from digital information conversation to outreach material.

One of the best functions of this package is the ability to quick analyze and project data given in reports. All cities are inundated with dozens of reports from financials to Treasury documents to planning. Most of these reports come in formats that require large amounts of hours to convert into usable data. Using Adobe, the City was able to drastically cut this conversion software by digitally converting tables in reports into Excel books that can then be analyzed. All this time saved is more time the data can be analyzed, and the longer the time for analysis the better the insights will be. In terms of economic developments, the better the insights between city metrics and economic progression the better the results.

Moreover, this package has been used in tourism focused projects. By combining the multiple tools in the suite the city is able to directly stimulate job creation and retention based efforts. Tourism is one of Eastern Massachusetts' biggest economic drivers; Adobe has allowed the City to increase the effectiveness of this important industry.

Boris FX:

Boris FX is a company that specializes in digital visual editing and effects. The City has recently launched a major initiative called Quincy 400, which is a massive undertaking that is coupling with Quincy's tourism arm, Discover Quincy. The main goal of Quincy 400 is to promote the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Quincy. Using this software package, the city will be able to develop a platform to display and inform residents of the events taking place. Additionally, it is also focused on an external presentation as a way to attract tourism, with the goal of driving economic, revenue, and job growth.

Microsoft Office:

A small portion of this grant has been to replacing Microsoft Office suites on city computers that need to be updated systems to properly manage the export data from previously mentioned software. In addition, this software allowed for the faster generation of presentation material for the public.

MAPC Small Business Tour:

Using financial assistance through the Community Compact, the City and MAPC teamed up to host a small business tour in North Quincy. The tour highlights an eclectic area of the city that spans the gauntlet for recently immigrated Southeast Asian proprietors to businesses that have been in the area for over 50 years. The tour, which took place on July 14th, was attended by about 40 members whose backgrounds included public, private, and non-profit. The U.S. Small Business Administration had a representative at the event, which connected with many businesses.

The event featured a group discussion at the conclusion where the attendees gave valuable insights in how the City could help the local businesses. Some of the biggest take-aways were: the need for quality help in the businesses and desire for more information from state and federal agencies, such as the Small Business Administration. As a direct result of this event and need, our economic development arm has begun coordinating events with the Small Business Administration to engage with business not just in North Quincy, but in the City as a whole. Additionally, many businesses that expressed the need for quality help were put in touch with the local Workforce Investment Board.

Overall, the result of this program was opening up a dialogue with the North Quincy business district that revolved around specific needs of business, rather than needs of the area as a whole, which is something that City has been successfully addressing for years. This new channel of communication over individual firm issues is already strengthening the business districts; many business owners were able to meet their neighbors for the first time.

The lasting goal of this program will be the connections set-up and nurtured with the owners of this diverse and historic business district. This nurturing will come through the implementation of efforts to connect these businesses to the myriad of state and national resources that can help spur their business. This project helped us advance past the first, and highest, hurdle, which is getting the owners to open up about needs. Now that we have heard what issues they have we can help address them.

Major Projects:

Over the last year, since receiving the technical assistance grant from EOHEd and acquiring the expanded software capabilities, the City of Quincy has used these new tools in a myriad of projects. Below is a summarization of some of the larger projects that have implemented the new software:

Quincy 400 Survey

To quote the planning committee for Quincy 400

“In 2025, Quincy will celebrate its 400th anniversary of its settlement. To mark this historic year, Mayor Koch is leading an unprecedented community planning effort entitled “Quincy 400.” The endeavor will touch on a wide range of subjects from schools to transportation to economic development, the arts and culture, and neighborhoods. It all revolves around a simple question ‘Where do we want Quincy to be in 2025?’”

In order to reach out to the community, using QuestionPro the City design and launched a survey that allows citizens to voice their concerns and pleasures about the current and future plans of the City. This has allowed us to partially fulfill one of the largest requirements of the Community Compact best practice of Competitiveness, by having the ability to compare ourselves to other communities from a citizen perspective.

By further combining the data of QuestionPro with Adobe, Microsoft Office Suites, and Boris FX the City is able to not only record and analyze incredibly valuable data but also present the data in a consumable manner to the public in a way that represents the desires of the community. By in-housing this operation and using these software packages the City is able to continually provide up to date and accurate information at a fraction of the cost that an outside vendor would have charged Housing/Commercial Demand Analysis

Coupling with the citizen input side of the Quincy 400 Survey with the data derived from the launch of Social Explorer, Quincy has been able to successfully fulfill the goal of Competitiveness by being able to calculate many economic indicators that were not previously able to be monitored. The expanded metrics include the natural rate of unemployment, the housing demand curve, industrial sector growth (by occupation), and other economic indicators. By then indexing these metrics going back to 2000, Quincy has developed the ability to track and understand how it is performing and trending when compared to communities in a queen continuum and in similar size regardless of location.

To further vindicate this approach, when the housing demand curve was compared to the Housing Production Plan being developed by the City in collaboration with MAPC, the population to units demanded formula fell in concert with the independent analysis. Continued study into the composition and changes in the local economy gives the City of Quincy the ability to be compared to other communities in terms of attractiveness for commercial development, and housing expansion. Success was also seen through the increased performance metrics that are able to be calculated through the adoption of better analytical systems. Quincy has performed internal multiple comparative studies, both longitudinal and cross-sectional. By using these new tools, a computational model that showed that 27.5% of each dollar spent on construction in the City of Quincy stays within the local economy for about 3 years; this is a prime example of the cutting edge analyses that can now be performed by the City

On the commercial side, the City was able to capture proxy macroeconomic labor data, such as aggregate wages paid and marginal impact of shocks, through the use of partially autoregressive hedonic modeling. For example, by indexing the amount of Quincy citizens employed in the restaurant industry against the Consumer Price Index for food in the Boston Metropolitan Statistical Area, with comparison to the previous period data and generating a Boolean Indicator for various construction events going on in the City; the City gains the ability to estimate the effects of construction and new commercial additions to the City on the local labor force. This style of analysis was and can be used for virtually any industry sector.
Economic Planning Group

A standing goal of the Economic Planning group is to finalize an internal report that will highlight ways to leverages local economic sector strengths, regional assets, and encourages innovation and entrepreneurship. As outlined previously, the group brings together not just educational institutions, but also local and regional organization with the goal of creating a better understanding of the local needs of the economy. The group brings additional value by creating a platform where groups with a common objective, laid out in the mission statement of the group:

“The objective of the economic planning process is to create a plan that will reflect the input of the various economic agents, and the City as a whole, with the intent of helping to unify efforts to a shared economic goal.”

This group will continue to meet Quarterly.

Outcomes and Next Steps:

The City is continuing all initiatives started under the Community Compact and has appropriated funds in the FY 2018 budget to maintain all software subscription and services. Quincy will continue to conduct expanded analyses of local economic indicators through the use of the new

software systems. Additionally, the City plans to continually host the quarterly Economic Planning meetings with various stakeholders in the Quincy economy. By continuing the implementation of cutting-edge analyses and listening to the economic stakeholders of the area the City of Quincy will position itself in a prime position to fulfill the goals of its selected best practices.

The lasting outcomes and benefit of the adoption of the City's best practices will be felt primarily in the continued initiatives to conduct more in-depth analysis of the various economic indicators within the City's border and the products that will come from the continued meetings of the Economic Planning group.