

Northeastern University
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

**EDSAT REPORT FOR THE TOWN OF
WEYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS
APRIL 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'¹ strengths and weaknesses for the purpose of planning for viable, long-term economic growth. Through EDSAT, public officials and business leaders collaborate as a team, assessing each of their roles in creating a business-friendly climate.

By participating in this self-assessment, Weymouth will not only 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 Weymouth to the EDSAT questionnaire.

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

Project Overview

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

Methodology

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

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

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF EDSAT LOCATION FACTORS

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


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

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

The EDSAT analysis compares your jurisdiction's responses with those of Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM)—that is, all of the jurisdictions that have completed the EDSAT questionnaire. With regard to the Permitting Process, for example, your jurisdiction may offer significantly shorter review times than the CGM. In this case, the EDSAT analysis suggests that on this measure your jurisdiction may possess a relative advantage in what is a *Very Important* location factor. However, if permit reviews take significantly longer, then your jurisdiction may be at a disadvantage, because businesses are interested in "time-to-market"—the time it takes to get up and running in an ever-increasingly competitive environment.

EDSAT assigns a color code to highlight the results of your jurisdiction compared to the median response among the CGM. Colors—green, yellow, and red—indicate a municipality's relative strength on each specific location factor. Green indicates that your jurisdiction is quantitatively or qualitatively stronger than the CGM response; yellow indicates that your jurisdiction is average or typical; and red indicates a relative deficiency.

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

<input type="radio"/> 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 Weymouth's primary strengths and weaknesses in the realm of economic development. EDSAT does not provide an overall grade for a jurisdiction, but rather assesses a jurisdiction's unique set of strengths, weaknesses, and economic development objectives.

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

Weymouth's Strengths and Potential "Deal-Makers"

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

PARKING: Weymouth offers parking facilities near development sites and utilizes state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking throughout the town. While a slightly smaller proportion of sites for retail trade have available on-site parking, Weymouth is at parity with the CGM on the percentage of available sites for manufacturing and general office space that have on-site parking.

Strengths among *Important* Location Factors

PUBLIC TRANSIT: Weymouth has two commuter rail stops in town, and a third nearby, as well as public bus transit—which of which offers evening and weekend service. Although less than half of available retail and office sites are within a quarter mile from public transit stops, Weymouth officials have wisely adopted and begun implementing a transit-oriented development strategy..

PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS: Weymouth reserves a sizeable percentage of acreage for parks (11 to 15%), a direct result of the town's Five-year Open Space Plan. Local officials maintain the town's physical attractiveness through the use of a hotline for reporting code violations and maintenance needs, which ensures prompt action and follow-through as evidenced by the low percentages of dilapidated housing and commercial structures.

LAND (SPACE): There is ample space to develop on a large scale in Weymouth; approximately a quarter to half a million square feet of vacant useable office space in commercial/industrial buildings is reported. Further, 51 percent or more of the parcels available for industrial or large scale commercial development are of 5 acres or more. Most notable is the Union Point redevelopment project, which could serve as a launch pad for a more aggressive industrial attraction policy to Weymouth.

SITES AVAILABLE: Weymouth has an advantage over the CGM in maintaining an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties and underutilized shopping plazas.

PREDICTABLE & FAST TRACK PERMITS: On the whole, Weymouth is proactive in its permitting processes. The town provides a checklist and flowchart of the process to prospective developers, and it allows for single presentation of development proposals to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority. Further, the town is home to an industrial park with expedited permitting, and itself offers fast-track permitting on occasion.

CRIME: While the robbery rate in Weymouth is slightly higher than the CGM, most crime indicators are much lower than the comparison group (i.e. residential burglary, auto theft, and homicide).

SITE AMENITIES: Most of Weymouth's existing development sites are within one mile of retail, fast food, child care, and even fine dining amenities.

STATE & LOCAL TAX INCENTIVES: Because Weymouth is located in Massachusetts, it has a robust portfolio of eligible state tax incentives—although the town could take greater advantage of them. Weymouth also offers its own investment tax credits and workforce training grants, an added benefit to interested firms. Should the town offer tax abatements, it empowers the mayor to negotiate them, a preference among site location specialists.

Strengths among *Less Important* Location Factors

AIRPORT & RAIL: Weymouth is geographically close to Logan International Airport (about 17 miles), which is accessible via bus and rail public transit, by the Logan Express, and by car—a one-hour drive at most. Commuter rail service located within the town and surrounding communities makes commuting in and out of Boston relatively simple.

PROXIMITY TO UNIVERSITIES & RESEARCH: Similarly, while Weymouth itself does not have any educational institutions within its jurisdiction, the robust network of over 37 educational institutions in the Boston area are within a commuter rail ride to Weymouth.

PERMITTING OMBUDSMAN: Weymouth can be proud of its network of strong executive leadership. Weymouth's elected officials play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of the local permitting process (although the processes remain relatively slow). This leadership is also evident in Weymouth's ability to provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit and license application process.

Weymouth's Weaknesses and Potential "Deal-Breakers"

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

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

Weaknesses among *Very Important* Location Factors

TIMELINESS OF APPROVALS: For existing projects in Weymouth, zoning variances, special permits, building permits, and appeals take longer to process than the CGM. For existing structures, zoning variances and appeals have a longer-than-average wait time. On a positive note, site plan reviews for both new and existing structures are much faster than the CGM.

WEBSITE: Your town's website scores comparatively well. It is highly populated, regularly maintained, and includes a homepage portal for business interests. However, it is too "busy," and the business portal is not prominently featured or

comprehensively populated. Usually site locators' first encounter with a town, Weymouth's website is in need of a redesign, with improved ease of use.

FIBER OPTIC / CABLE / DSL INFRASTRUCTURE: While Weymouth has sufficient capacity for growth and reliable service on most infrastructure needs, fiber optic, cable, and DSL functionality is inadequate capacity for current needs or future growth. This is a potential deterrent to developers.

RENTS: Weymouth's rents are comparatively high for nearly all grades of office space. While the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space is in line with the comparison group (\$6.00 / square foot), rates for retail space in both the central business district and the highway business district are higher than the CGM.

HIGHWAY ACCESS: The proportion of available sites for retail trade, manufacturing, and general office space that are within 2 miles of a limited-access major highway is lower than the comparison group, making sites for development less accessible.

Weaknesses among *Important* Location Factors

COMPLEMENTARY / SUPPLEMENTAL BUSINESS SERVICES: While Weymouth's local Chamber of Commerce is reported to be "moderately" involved in the economic development activities of the jurisdiction, it does not have an active volunteer economic development committee or nonprofit center for economic development (outside of regional economic development associations like MAPC). Weymouth does not have an up-to-date development strategy or overall economic development plan within the community master plan. Relatedly, the town's industrial attraction policy is weak to nonexistent.

CRITICAL MASS FIRMS: Although Weymouth is included in MAPC's economy development strategy, the town has neither an economic development plan nor an industrial attraction policy of its own.

CROSS MARKETING: Weymouth does not currently engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction. Although the CGM share this deficiency, it is worth stressing that the town doesn't encourage local firms to participate in marketing Weymouth as a good place to do business.

MARKETING FOLLOW-UP: Weymouth is at par with the CGM in conducting marketing follow-up. In other words, your town is inactive in this regard, leaving much room for improvement.

INDUSTRY SENSITIVITY: As with your marketing follow-up performance, Weymouth is at par with the CGM in not demonstrating industry sensitivity—also a marketing category. This weakness could be turned into a strength if town officials worked more closely with local firms to market the town and to respond quickly to negative publicity.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW PROCESS: While debate over the review process is healthy and welcomed by Weymouth's officials, abutter and/or neighborhood groups slowing the permitting process could be considered a deterrent to interested firms. Weymouth's officials clearly play an important role in mediating discussions between developers and citizens, and should continue to do so.

HOUSING: The housing market is tight in Weymouth, like many other Massachusetts towns: the homeownership rate is 66-75 percent, the vacancy rate for rental housing is between 3 and 5 percent, and the percent of homes for sale sits at less than 3 percent. Unsurprisingly given such tight margins, the median sales prices and median rents are higher than the comparison group.

LOCAL TAX RATES: Weymouth's residential property taxes are higher than the CGM (\$12.81 per \$1,000 compared to \$11.37-11.38 per \$1,000), and the town imposes impact fees on new development. These detriments are partially offset, however, by having a unitary tax structure and by charging meal taxes, providing an additional source of revenue.

Weaknesses among *Less Important* Location Factors

WORKFORCE TRAINING: Unlike others in the comparison group, Weymouth does not currently support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training, despite there being an adult education program readily available to residents.

UNIONS: Public and private unions play a significant role in Weymouth, both economically and culturally, and many of the town’s union members supported the Verizon strike of 2016. Site location specialists see this as a “less important” site location factor, one that is not a deal-breaker for most employers but that might require an extra measure of diplomacy among town officials.

****SEE SPECIAL NOTE ON INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS IN “NEXT STEPS” SECTION***

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following is a ten-part section-by-section analysis of the EDSAT results comparing Weymouth’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 Weymouth’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 Weymouth’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 Weymouth 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, Weymouth 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

☒ Very Important
 ☐ Important
 ☐ Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

☒ 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.

 A. Highway Access			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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?	50-74%		75% or greater
3: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	26-49%		75% or greater
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	no		no

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

B. Public Transit

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market

Very Important

Important

Less Important








Your Performance Relative To Peers




Strong

Average



Weak



No Comparison









<div>  C. Parking </div>			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
12: What percentage of available sites for retail trade have on-site parking?	50-74%		75% or greater
13: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing have on-site parking?	75% or greater		75% or greater
14: What percentage of available sites for general office space have on-site parking?	75% or greater		75% or greater
15: Does your jurisdiction offer parking facilities near development sites?	yes		no
16: Have you used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking in your jurisdiction?	yes		no
17: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$/Hourly	0		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

Importance To Market
 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
 Weak

 Average
 No Comparison

<div>  D. Traffic </div>			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
20: Do you have regular access to a traffic engineer or transportation planner, such as one who is on staff or with a regional organization of which your jurisdiction is a member?	yes		yes
21: Do you routinely use the services of a transportation consultant?	yes		yes
22: Do you have access to traffic count data for the major roadways in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the site? (e.g. installing traffic signals, metering flow)	yes		yes
24: How would you rate traffic into and out of your jurisdiction during a typical weekday rush hour?	Extremely congested		Moderately congested
25: What is the average speed of automobile commuter traffic during a typical weekday rush hour?	11 - 25 mph		11 - 25 mph
26: Do you require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	yes		yes

<input type="radio"/> E. Airports			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
27: Do you have a local (municipal/ general aviation) airport?	no		no
28: The closest regional airport is how many miles away?	11-20 miles		11-20 miles
29: The closest major/international airport is how many miles away?	11-20 miles		20-30 miles
30: Is the major/international airport accessible by public transportation?	yes		yes
31: How long does it take to drive to the major/international airport from your town center?	21 minutes to 60 minutes		21 minutes to 60 minutes

Importance To Market
 Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong Average
 Weak No Comparison

<input type="radio"/> F. Rail			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
32: Do you have rail freight service available?	no		yes
33: Do you have intercity passenger rail service? Check all that apply.			
- Commuter	yes		no
- Intercity/Interstate(Amtrak)	no		no
- None	no		no

Importance To Market
 Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong Average
 Weak No Comparison



G. Physical Attractiveness

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties, abandoned vehicles, trash disposal within your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
35: To what extent does your jurisdiction maintain streets, sidewalks, parks, etc., near available development sites?	Moderately		Moderately
36: Is there a hotline available for reporting code violations and maintenance needs within your jurisdiction?	yes		no
37: Is there a system for monitoring the timeliness and quality of responses to reported violations within your jurisdiction?	yes		no
38: Do you involve the arts community in the design of open space (street furniture, murals, etc.)?	N/A		no
39: What percentage of the acreage within your jurisdiction is reserved for parks?	11-15%		6-10%
40: What percentage of your housing stock is considered dilapidated?	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)?	0-5%		6-10%

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison



H. Water Transportation

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong









Weak

Average


No Comparison


Section 2: Concentration of Businesses (Agglomeration)


Agglomeration refers to the number of complementary and supplemental services and related firms—including academic institutions—that are available within a jurisdiction to support new or existing companies. A concentration of similar or supporting companies creates a critical mass of businesses within an industry, making it easier for that industry to thrive in the local community, regionally, or on the state level. The scale of agglomeration within a jurisdiction can be enhanced by the intensity of its efforts to attract companies, its coordination of marketing plans with regional or state efforts, cross marketing among stakeholder organizations, and follow-up with existing and potential businesses.

 A. Complementary/Supplemental Business Services			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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?	no		yes
3: Is there an incubator or other form of cooperative space for start-up businesses in your jurisdiction?	no		no
4: Are there CPA, business advisory or financial services firms in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
5: Are there law firms in your jurisdiction specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, or patents?	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?	Moderately capable		Moderately capable


Importance To Market


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important












Your Performance Relative To Peers





 Strong

 Average


 Weak


 No Comparison


 B. Critical Mass Firms			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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?	no		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)	Other, please specify; Alternative Energy; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Healthcare		
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)	Healthcare; Information Technology		
14: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)	Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		

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


Importance To Market


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Average


 Weak

 No Comparison





 **C. Cross Marketing**

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions


Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
17: Do you actively enlist the services of firms already resident in your jurisdiction to assist in attracting new firms?	no		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?	no		yes


 **D. Marketing Follow-Up**


Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

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


Importance To Market


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Average

 Weak

 No Comparison



E. Proximity to Universities & Research

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		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?	37		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.

 A. Infrastructure			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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	Inadequate capacity for current needs		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	13.13		16.23
10: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Commercial	7.38		15.20
11: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Industrial	5.14		13.03



B. Rents

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	16.50		12
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	18.50		13
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	6.00		6
15: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A	18.00		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	16.00		12
17: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	13.00		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	19.50		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	17.50		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	15.00		9.00
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	50		10
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	40		between 40 and 44
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	10		between 35 and 40

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison



C. Quality of Available Space

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		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?	Moderate		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 Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	1-150 acres		1-150 acres
29: Approximately how much vacant useable industrial or warehouse space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	250,001-500,000 sq. feet		1-250,000 sq. feet
30: Approximately how much vacant useable office space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	250,001-500,000 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?	51% or greater		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 Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$17.26-\$22.25		\$12.26-\$17.25
2: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	\$12.26-\$17.25		\$12.26-\$17.25
3: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	\$60,001-\$70,000		\$60,001-\$70,000
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no


Importance To Market


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Average

 Weak

 No Comparison



B. Workforce Composition

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of your workforce is Unskilled?	26-49%		1-25%
6: What percentage of your workforce is Semi-skilled	1-25%		1-25%
7: What percentage of your workforce is Technically skilled	26-49%		26-49%
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	1-25%		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional	1-25%		1-25%
10: What percentage of your workforce are current English language learners?	0-10%		0-10%

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison



C. Unions

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison

D. Labor (available)

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

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

Importance To Market
 Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison

E. Workforce Training

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions







Question	Weymouth		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	no		
- Voc-tech schools or community colleges	no		
- Human service or nonprofit career training centers	no		
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	no		yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	yes		yes




Importance To Market
 Very Important
 Important
 Less Important





Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison








Section 5: Municipal Process












The municipal process section covers several themes relating to marketing and permitting. Public officials who aggressively market their jurisdiction's 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 Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on the needs identified by industrial or office location specialists?	no		no
2: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on existing core strengths, identified opportunities, or industry concentrations?	no		no
3: Do you have a quick response team available when negative data, stories, or incidents about your jurisdiction make the news?	no		no
4: Do you actively engage local business spokespersons to speak on behalf of your jurisdiction?	no		no
5: Do you have a strategy for engaging your jurisdiction's racial or ethnic populations in unique businesses, festivals, etc., as a way to attract regional niche shopping?	no		no

Importance To Market
 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong
  Average
 Weak
  No Comparison

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

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

D. Predicable Permits

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		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?	no		no
25: Do you allow for a single presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority?	yes		no

Importance To Market
 Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison
















E. Fast Track Permits

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions


Question	Weymouth		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?	yes		no
28: Do you have an "overlay" district that allows expedited permitting of certain uses?	no		no
29: Do you market "fast track" permitting to potential developers or firms?	yes		no








Importance To Market
 Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers
 Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison

 F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
30: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in your jurisdiction?	Very much		Somewhat
31: To what extent do organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting?	Very much		Somewhat
32: To what extent do elected officials in your jurisdiction expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups?	Somewhat		Very little
33: Do you establish a specific time frame and procedure for abutter or neighborhood response in the initial stage of the process?	yes		yes
34: Do interested parties get multiple opportunities for review and comment during the various development review processes?	yes		yes
35: Has a development proposal in your jurisdiction been stopped by abutter or neighborhood opposition in the past 5 years?	yes		yes
36: Have officials from your jurisdiction intervened to rescue a development proposal that was endangered by abutter or neighborhood opposition in the last 5 years?	yes		no
<div> <div> Importance To Market  Very Important  Important  Less Important </div> <div> Your Performance Relative To Peers  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison </div> </div>			









<div> <div></div> G. Permitting Ombudsman </div>			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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	<div></div>	no
38: Are there other local officials empowered to ensure the efficiency of your local permitting process?	yes	<div></div>	yes
39: Is there a "development cabinet" or "development team" that is convened to review major developments?	yes	<div></div>	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	<div></div>	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	<div></div>	no
42: Is your jurisdiction involved in the process for businesses that require state or federal permitting or licensing?	yes	<div></div>	yes
43: Do you provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit or license application process?	yes	<div></div>	no
44: Does your jurisdiction require any local licenses for specific businesses or industries?			
- General license for all businesses	no	<div></div>	no
- Auto dealership	yes	<div></div>	no
- Barber shop	no	<div></div>	no
- Bar/Tavern	yes	<div></div>	no
- Beauty salon	yes	<div></div>	no
- Child care services	yes	<div></div>	no
- Construction contractor	no	<div></div>	no
- Home health care	no	<div></div>	no
- Massage therapist	yes	<div></div>	no
- Real estate agent/broker	no	<div></div>	no
- Restaurant	yes	<div></div>	no
- Skilled Trades (electrician, plumber, etc)	no	<div></div>	no






45: Approximately how long (in weeks) is your local licensing process for businesses?	5-8 weeks		0-4 weeks
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Importance To Market  Very Important  Important  Less Important			Your Performance Relative To Peers <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>  Strong  Weak </div> <div>  Average  No Comparison </div> </div>	
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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 Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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 Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 residents last year in your jurisdiction?	152		256
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 residents last year?	54.5		between 78 and 80
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 residents last year?	34.5		29
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 residents last year?	0		1

C. Housing

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		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?	66-75%		66-75%
15: What is the vacancy rate for rental housing?	3-5%		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?	Some		Some

Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers



Strong



Weak
























Average















No Comparison

Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
18: What is the average K-12 per pupil expenditure in your jurisdiction last year?	\$12,001 - \$14,000		\$12,001 - \$14,000
19: Does your state mandate an assessment or proficiency test as a prerequisite for high school graduation?	yes		yes
20: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in English?	81% or greater		81% or greater
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in Mathematics?	66-80%		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	yes		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	1-25%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	1126 or higher		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?	22.1		
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?"	yes		no
29: What percentage of high school graduates from last year's class went on to a four-year college?	50-74%		50-74%
30: Are there any charter schools in your jurisdiction?	no		no
31: What types of private schools are there in your jurisdiction?			
- Parochial	yes		
- Non-sectarian	yes		
- Boarding	no		


Section 7: Quality of Life (Site)

This section reviews the amenities and services available within one mile of existing development sites. Having a variety of amenities, restaurants, stores, and services near employment centers enhances the location, adds convenience, and allows employees more social opportunities.


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

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 Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Job training tax credits	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Loan guarantees	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Equity financing	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Workforce training grants	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Other, please specify	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
2: To what extent does your jurisdiction actively take advantage of any special state business incentives?	Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat
3: Does your state allow for priority funding for distressed economic areas?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes

Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
4: Does your jurisdiction offer existing businesses property tax abatement?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
5: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?		<input type="checkbox"/>	
6: Does your jurisdiction offer new businesses property tax abatement?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
7: If yes, what proportion of new businesses are offered abatements?		<input type="checkbox"/>	
8: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	Executive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Loan guarantees	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Revenue bonds	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Equity participation	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Business district group loans	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- None	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Investment tax credits	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Job training tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Workforce training grants	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Other, please specify	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no

10: Does your jurisdiction actively pursue federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses?	yes		yes
11: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	yes		yes
12: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	no		no
13: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	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 Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
1: What types of taxes are collected by your jurisdiction to pay for local services?			
- Property tax	yes		yes
- Local sales tax	no		no
- Local income tax	no		no
- Hotel room tax	no		no
- Meals tax	yes		no
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	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	20.20		between 19.89 and 20.20
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000	12.81		between 11.37 and 11.38
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?			
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	5.7449		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	13.2674		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	77.9826		
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	yes		no


Importance To Market


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important











Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong


 Average


 Weak


 No Comparison

 B. Tax Delinquency			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		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?	300 or more		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?	yes		no
18: Do you seek tax abatement on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners?	no		no
19: If a tax delinquent or tax title property serves as an impediment to development, does the property receive special attention?	no		no


Importance To Market



 Very Important



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

 Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers


 Strong













 Average


 Weak


 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>  A. Website </div>			
Report of Weymouth as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Weymouth		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction's website list all local development policies and procedures?	yes		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?	Weekly		Weekly
5: Does your website include an explicitly designed economic development tool aimed at businesses and developers?	no		no
6: Is there a development permit checklist or flow chart on the website?	yes		no
7: Are permit applications available for downloading on the website?	yes		yes
8: Are applications and other forms date certified to ensure that they are the most recent versions (i.e. the same versions that you would get in person)?	no		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?	no		no

11: If yes, check the types of information available about each site. (Check all that apply)			
- :Owner	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Square footage of vacant land	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Abutters	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Zoning	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Assessed value	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Tax rate	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Contamination	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Aerial photos	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- GIS links	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Other, please specify	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
12: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
13: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
14: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes

15: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)					
- State finance agencies	no		no		
- State permitting agencies	yes		no		
- Regional planning agencies	yes		no		
- Regional development organizations	yes		no		
- Workforce training organizations	no		no		
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no		no		
- Demographic information	yes		no		
- Economic development agencies	no		no		
- Other, please specify	no		no		
16: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?					
- Colleges and universities	no		no		
- Chambers of Commerce	yes		no		
- Community development corporations	no		no		
- Arts and cultural organizations	no		no		
- Sports and recreation venues	no		no		
- Convention and tourist organization	no		no		
- Other, please specify	no		no		
17: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	yes		yes		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td> Importance To Market Very Important Important Less Important </td> <td> Your Performance Relative To Peers Strong Average Weak No Comparison </td> </tr> </table>				Importance To Market Very Important Important Less Important	Your Performance Relative To Peers Strong Average Weak No Comparison
Importance To Market Very Important Important Less Important	Your Performance Relative To Peers Strong Average Weak No Comparison				

NEXT STEPS

Weymouth is a historic and civically engaged South Shore city of just under 56,000 residents bordered by the towns of Braintree, Quincy, Hingham and others in Norfolk County, Massachusetts. The town is located approximately 15 miles from downtown Boston and is conveniently triangulated by three commuter rail stops, two within Weymouth proper. Route 3 – Pilgrim’s Highway – offers relatively easy access to Boston and beyond, and bisects the “town” of Weymouth.

Weymouth has considerable strengths typically associated with a tight-knit, mature suburban community. Strong political leadership and a demonstrated interest in engaging the existing business community in future economic development efforts often leads to sustainable economic development success, and Weymouth generally performs well in this regard—particularly with its ongoing collaboration with the South Shore Economic Development Corporation via the Housing Production Plan, and the ongoing redevelopment of Weymouth Point, Union Point, and the Weymouth Commercial Corridor.

Despite a robust (and growing) commercial corridor, 78 percent of Weymouth’s tax revenues are derived from homeowners. This, in conjunction with ample square footage of useable office space in commercial / industrial buildings in your jurisdictions presents a challenge and an opportunity for Weymouth to continue to develop its local economy while keeping focus on the needs of what is a predominantly residential community.

The Dukakis Center’s Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) creates a snapshot of Weymouth’s economic development and planning efforts at a critical moment in the town’s development history. The following is an overview of where Weymouth 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

Weymouth has some valuable strengths that can persuade firms and developers to locate – or remain – in town. Among Weymouth’s greatest strengths are in its ample **parking** near development sites and its competitive **infrastructure costs** (particularly for residential, commercial, and industrial electrical uses). Through the lens of economic development, Weymouth is a **physically attractive** town. While Weymouth “moderately” enforces codes and regulations on abandoned properties, vehicles, or trash disposal and “moderately” maintains streets, sidewalks, parks, and the like near development sites, it is strong in its communication with its constituents on code violations and maintenance needs. Weymouth provides the benefit of a hotline and monitoring system for ensuring the timeliness and quality of responses to reported maintenance needs, which is a tremendous asset in helping residents feel connected to and engaged in the development of *their* town. Thanks to a Five-year Open Space Plan in the town, 11 to 15 percent of the acreage in Weymouth’s jurisdiction is reserved for parks.

In addition to attentive maintenance policies, Weymouth exceeds the CGM in most other “quality of life” indicators like crime, transportation access, and proximity to universities. **Crime** is low in Weymouth; nearly each measure (residential burglary, auto theft, and homicide) is significantly lower than the CGM. Commuter rail and relatively close proximity to Logan International Airport make Weymouth a highly accessible town (despite reported morning traffic and congestion).

An oft-overlooked resource for economic development is a city or town’s network of **universities and research centers**. Although location specialists once regarded such assets as “less important,” companies considering expansion or relocation, as well as small-business start-ups, are increasingly looking at their potential as economic collaborators in terms of both the proximity and size of their pool of local talent and the availability of high-quality education for employees’ families. Weymouth’s proximity to Boston allows for direct access to the city’s world-class universities and research institutions.

A rich network of economic development resources is already present in the town of Weymouth. Ongoing development at Weymouth Point, Union Point, and the Weymouth Commercial Corridor are all testament to the town’s success in attracting commercial development. The presence of an active strategy for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent, tax title, and vacant properties is an advantage over your jurisdiction’s peers. Weymouth makes the **permitting process** easier for prospective developers by providing a checklist and flowchart of permitting requirements of **fast-track permitting** to potential developers or firms is an advantage over the CGM. A strong mayor and town planner act in ombudsmen capacity, ensuring the

efficiency of local permitting processes, as well as directing the town to provide technical assistance to businesses in need of state or federal permits or licenses application.

This is a strong network of resources available to potential developers in Weymouth, and surely these are strengths. These strengths, however, are at present disparately coordinated elements of what should be a cohesive economic development strategy. Institutionalizing these resources through a comprehensive economic development plan will bolster both the existing strengths mentioned above, and increase Weymouth's ability to attract new firms.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

While Weymouth provides fast-track permitting and limited use of an overlay district (via the Union Point project), the **timeliness of approvals** could improve in some areas. For existing projects in Weymouth, zoning variances, special permits, building permits, and appeals take longer to process than the CGM. For existing structures, zoning variances and appeals have a longer-than-average wait time. On a positive note, site plan reviews for both new and existing structures are much faster than the CGM. Weymouth should consider re-coordinating these efforts via the permitting ombudsman or Town Planner in order to cut down lead times on permitting. In addition, extending the use of overlay districts to development beyond just Union Point may draw interested firms to Weymouth.

While Weymouth's local Chamber of Commerce is reported to be "moderately" involved in the economic development activities of the jurisdiction, it does not have an active volunteer **economic development committee or nonprofit center**. The establishment of an active economic development committee, working with local firms and the regional planning agencies at its disposal: Metropolitan Area Planning Council and the South Shore Economic Development Corporation. A more active economic development committee (and more aggressive chamber of commerce) could also assist agglomeration efforts, or developing complementary and supplemental services and related firms that support new companies or enhance existing ones. Above all, Weymouth should work on crafting an **industrial attraction policy** that articulates targeted industries for development, and organizes incentives, land-use, workforce development, and marketing programs around its implementation. Building on Weymouth's targeted industries (robotics, alternative energy, information technology, financial services, traditional manufacturing, and healthcare), an industrial attraction policy will operate as a signal to interested firms that your jurisdiction is open for business.

Weymouth has at its disposal a tremendous amount of space for commercial development, a large proportion of which is of 5 acres or more. This is a tremendous asset to Weymouth, particularly if the town were to establish an industrial attraction policy via a more robust economic development council or organization. Still, **citizen participation in the review process** appears to be healthy, though slowing to the development process. A clearly articulated, transparent review and community engagement strategy for development projects will be a critical component to your jurisdiction's economic development plan. An update to your jurisdiction's **website** can play a positive role in connecting residents to municipal processes and provide a constructive avenue for public comment.

While Weymouth's **homeownership rate** is on par with its peers at 66 to 75 percent, fewer than 3 percent of single-family homes are on the market, and the vacancy rate for rental housing is also low. Thus, home prices and rents are higher than the comparison group, and are likely to continue their upward march. Planners are advised to keep an especially attentive eye on the town's rental stock, which will likely be further pressed as baby boomers grow out of their single-family homes and enter the rental market.

Despite its proximity to Route 3, 74 percent or less of available office, retail, or manufacturing space in Weymouth are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway. The absence of **highway access** to available sites will shape the town's economic development strategy, and could ward off industries that rely on heavy transportation. This limitation might lend itself to policies that encourage mixed-use development, where a variety of small-scale retail businesses line up in a more pedestrian-friendly town center.

SPECIAL NOTE ON INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS: As reported, the average retail costs for residential, commercial, and industrial electricity in Weymouth are far lower than the CGM. However, these numbers (if accurate) presumably reflect supply costs only and do not include transmission or distribution costs, which skews the comparison too

favorably. When you are able to get accurate numbers, you might want to compare them with statewide end-use averages as of February 2017, which are more current than those provided by EDSAT:

Residential: \$19.86
Commercial: \$15.41
Industrial: \$13.32

Source: US EIA https://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/epm_table_grapher.cfm?t=epmt_5_6_a

Otherwise, your infrastructure performance compares very well, although Weymouth's cable, fiber-optic, and DSL capacity do not meet current needs and should be upgraded.

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

Recommendations	Priority
In conjunction with the South Shore Economic Development Corporation and Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), establish an economic development committee to assist in coordinating the town's existing and future economic development and planning resources.	High
Craft an industrial attraction policy that targets specific types (or a type) of industry, and organizes incentives, land-use, workforce development, and marketing programs around its implementation.	High
Re-coordinate permitting processes via town officials acting as permitting ombudsmen in order to cut down lead times in permitting processes.	Medium
Expand the "overlay district" to cover more than Union Point redevelopment in order to expedite and streamline development.	Medium
Update Weymouth town website for design and ease of use.	Medium
Move to automate the town's hotline for reporting code violations and maintenance needs.	Low

