

Northeastern University  
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

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



## THE PARTNERS

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

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

### **About the National League of Cities**

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

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

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Project Overview .....	1
Methodology .....	1
SUMMARY OF RELATIVE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES .....	4
Westfield’s Strengths and Potential “Deal-Makers” .....	4
Westfield’s Weaknesses and Potential “Deal-Breakers” .....	5
DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS.....	7
Section 1: Access to Customers/Markets .....	8
Section 2: Concentration of Businesses (Agglomeration) .....	12
Section 3: Cost of Land (Implicit/Explicit) .....	16
Section 4: Labor .....	19
Section 5: Municipal Process .....	21
Section 6: Quality of Life (Community) .....	25
Section 7: Quality of Life (Site) .....	28
Section 8: Business Incentives .....	29
Section 9: Tax Rates.....	32
Section 10: Access to Information.....	34
NEXT STEPS.....	37

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A robust, sustainable, and adaptable local economy depends heavily on public officials who can lead in forming and implementing an economic development strategy. A thorough strategy is developed with an understanding of local business interests and regional resource availability, and a careful assessment of the community's ability to attract new business investment and jobs. Participating in the Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) is an important step public officials can take to assess their jurisdictions'<sup>1</sup> strengths and weaknesses for the purpose of planning for viable, long-term economic growth. Through EDSAT, public officials and business leaders collaborate as a team, assessing each of their roles in creating a business-friendly climate.

By participating in this self-assessment, Westfield will not simply better understand its economic development assets and challenges, but learn to build upon strengths and overcome weaknesses. This report contains a thorough analysis of the responses provided by Westfield to the EDSAT questionnaire.

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

### Project Overview

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

### Methodology

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

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

## RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF EDSAT LOCATION FACTORS

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


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

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

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

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

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

E. Airports			
Report of [REDACTED] as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	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 Westfield’s primary strengths and weaknesses in the realm of economic development. EDSAT does not provide an overall grade for a jurisdiction, but rather assesses a jurisdiction’s unique set of strengths, weaknesses, and economic development objectives.

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

### Westfield’s Strengths and Potential “Deal-Makers”

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

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

**WEBSITE:** Updated weekly by a designated staff member, Westfield’s website provides a wealth of information and resources useful to both current and prospective businesses.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** Westfield has sufficient capacity for growth and reliable service across all business-relevant utilities, although recent long-term drought conditions threw the city’s water supply into shortage for a time and may require further attention. Where Westfield shines is in its energy cost schedule, which is lower than the comparison group.

**HIGHWAY ACCESS:** On par with the CGM, Westfield has excellent highway access, with all retail, office, and manufacturing sites no more than two miles from a major limited-access highway.

**TRAFFIC:** With both a transportation planner on staff and access to a traffic consultant, Westfield manages its traffic so well that rush hour speeds are faster than the comparison groups’.

#### Strengths among *Important* Location Factors

**QUALITY OF AVAILABLE SPACE:** Westfield has relatively few brownfield sites available for development, owing to previous mitigation and restoration efforts several decades ago. As a result, Westfield also leads the comparison group in its experience in redeveloping brownfield sites.

**LAND:** Westfield boasts a much higher volume of vacant, developable space zoned for commercial/industrial uses than the CGM. The city also has a larger proportion of 5+-acre parcels available for large-scale development.

**CROSS-MARKETING:** Westfield engages state, regional, and local business and planning organizations in marketing the city to business developers, and exceeds the CGM in enlisting local firms to help attract new businesses to the community.



**SITES AVAILABLE:** Westfield owns sites that it is currently marketing for development, an effort aided by including up-to-date listings and information about these sites on city’s website. In addition, the city is ahead of the comparison group in having an active strategy for reclaiming tax delinquent properties.

**PREDICABLE PERMITS:** Westfield not only provides a checklist of permitting requirements to developers, the city also includes a flowchart to guide developers through the permitting process.

**CRIME:** Westfield has low crime rates relative to the comparison group, which is attractive to potential residents, businesses, and developers alike.

**HOUSING:** Westfield has relatively low rents and home prices compared to the comparison group. The city also has a relatively high homeownership rate and a low rental and single-family home vacancy rates. Though this is attractive to developers looking for sites where their employees can live affordably, the city should monitor these low vacancy rates as they can lead to large rent and homeownership cost increases if they get too low.

**STATE TAX INCENTIVES:** Westfield, as a Massachusetts community, is able to take advantage of generous state incentives. More important, the city takes greater advantage of these economic development programs than the CGM.

**LOCAL TAX INCENTIVES:** Westfield offers property tax abatements to existing businesses, which is not common among the comparison group. Westfield also grants TIFs for retail development, actively tries to secure financing for its business community, and seeks to attract municipal, state and federal facilities in order to improve the business climate.

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

**AIRPORTS:** Westfield has great airport access, with its own regional airport, Hartford’s Bradley International less than an hour’s drive away, and Albany International just a little further.

**PROXIMITY TO UNIVERSITIES & RESEARCH:** Westfield State University, which offers a mix of undergraduate and graduate programs, is located in the city and appears to take a great interest Westfield’s economic development. Two more colleges are within 10 miles of the city—Our Lady of the Elms and American International—and, taken together, all three can contribute to an educated, skilled workforce, while WSU can do far more as an anchor institution and source of innovation.

## **Westfield’s Weaknesses and Potential “Deal-Breakers”**

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

Unlike the above itemization of Westfield’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 Westfield’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:** Westfield is on par with the comparison group for the timeliness of approvals on zoning variances, building permits, and special permits, but where the city falls behind the comparison group is in the timeliness of site plan reviews. This could potentially halt initial development and render timeliness of other permits inapplicable to a firm’s decision to develop a site. On a positive note, this deficiency should be relatively easy to address.

**RENTS:** Although Westfield has lower commercial rents in its central business district and for its manufacturing space, the city has higher than average commercial rents along its highway business district and for nearly all of its office space. Furthermore, the city has a higher than average percentage of Class C office space.

**WORKFORCE COMPOSITION:** Though Westfield has a higher than average percentage of professionally skilled workers, the city does not boast as many technically skilled workers, and the percentage of English language learners in the workforce is higher than the comparison group.

**PARKING:** On-site parking infrastructure for Westfield’s available retail and general office space compares unfavorably with the CGM. To its credit, the city offers parking facilities near some development sites, although it charges a monthly fee in the central business district.

**Weaknesses among Important Location Factors**

**CRITICAL MASS FIRMS:** Westfield has neither an up-to-date economic development strategy nor an industrial attraction policy, rendering the city much less proactive on its own behalf than it could be.

**MARKETING FOLLOW-UP:** On par with the CGM, Westfield does not formally monitor the satisfaction levels of local firms, nor attempt to learn why firms decided to locate or expand in the city, or to look elsewhere.

**LOCAL SCHOOLS:** Westfield spends the same amount per pupil as the comparison group, which is an asset, but the city falls behind the comparison group in its lower-than-average English and mathematics proficiencies. Additionally, Westfield has a higher than average number of children eligible for reduced-cost school lunches, a metric for poverty levels that can potentially deter business development.

**PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS:** Westfield benefits from having an active online portal for citizens to report issues with public infrastructure and has a system to monitoring this portal. However, the town does not have a lot of land reserved for public parks and codes are weakly enforced, leading to further degradation of the landscape. Though they are confined to certain neighborhoods and geographic areas, the city has a higher than average rate of vacant houses and commercial space.

**SITE AMENITIES:** Although Westfield leads the comparison group in its development sites’ proximity to fast food, proximity to fine dining and daycare facilities is lacking.

**LOCAL TAX RATES:** Although none of Westfield’s commercial and industrial property taxes are in abatement and the city charges meal and hotel taxes, the tax rate on both industrial/commercial and residential properties is much higher than the CGM, and the city does not have a unitary tax structure—which is generally preferred by firms.

**TAX DELINQUENCY:** Westfield has a relatively large number of properties that are tax defaulted or subject to the power of sale. In addition, the city takes at least twice as long as the comparison group to choose to auction tax title properties.

**PUBLIC TRANSIT:** Westfield lacks good access to public transit. Most sites are more than one-quarter of a mile from any form of transit, and the city is not within 5 miles of a commuter rail or bus stop.

**Weaknesses among Less Important Location Factors**

**WORKFORCE TRAINING:** Although Westfield works with a number of partners on workforce training, and is home to Westfield Technical Academy, the city’s adult education programs do not meet existing need—which is of great concern, especially in view of the city’s refugee resettlement policies.

## DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

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

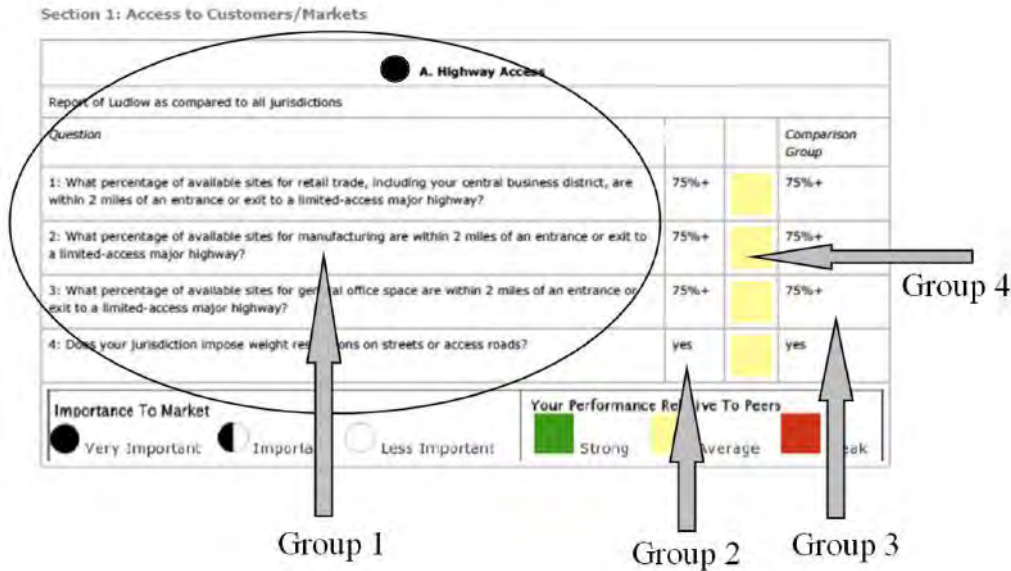
This ten-part portion of the report—its heart, really—is presented in the same order as the questions listed on the EDSAT questionnaire, with the tabular printout of Westfield’s results appearing first, and our narrative summary and interpretation of the results appearing second. The tabular results 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 City has already answered.

**Group 2** shows Westfield’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 Westfield 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, Westfield is compared with all the CGM.










## Section 1: Access to Customers/Markets

In order to minimize transportation costs and time-to-market, businesses want adequate access to uncongested transportation corridors for their shipping needs, customers, and employees. Highway access, congestion, and parking are *Very Important* factors in location decisions. Public transportation is *Important*, while proximity to airports, rail, and water transport are *Less Important*. The overall physical attractiveness of public spaces, enforcement of codes, and condition of housing and commercial real estate are *Important*, as they are indications of general economic health and quality of life in a community.

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

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

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

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		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?	50-74%		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?	no		no
17: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$/Hourly	0		between 0 and \$1/hour
18: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$/Daily	0		0
19: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$/Monthly	10		0

## D. Traffic

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions






Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
20: Do you have regular access to a traffic engineer or transportation planner, such as one who is on staff or with a regional organization of which your jurisdiction is a member?	yes		yes
21: Do you routinely use the services of a transportation consultant?	yes		yes
22: Do you have access to traffic count data for the major roadways in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the site? (e.g. installing traffic signals, metering flow)	yes		yes
24: How would you rate traffic into and out of your jurisdiction during a typical weekday rush hour?	Moderately congested		Moderately congested
25: What is the average speed of automobile commuter traffic during a typical weekday rush hour?	26 - 35 mph		11 - 25 mph
26: Do you require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	yes		yes





### Importance To Market








Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong
 Average
 Weak
 No Comparison

<b>E. Airports</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
27: Do you have a local (municipal/ general aviation) airport?	yes		no
28: The closest regional airport is how many miles away?	0-5 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?	no		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

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

<b>Importance To Market:</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison
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### G. Physical Attractiveness

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties, abandoned vehicles, trash disposal within your jurisdiction?	Weakly		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.)?	no		no
39: What percentage of the acreage within your jurisdiction is reserved for parks?	0-5%		6-10%
40: What percentage of your housing stock is considered dilapidated?	6-10%		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)?	16-20%		6-10%
43: What percentage of your industrial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	0-5%		0-5%
44: What percentage of industrial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	6-10%		6-10%



### H. Water Transportation

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

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

#### Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

#### Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong

Weak

Average

No Comparison



## Section 2: Concentration of Businesses (Agglomeration)

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

<b>A. Complementary/Supplemental Business Services</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
<i>Question</i>	<i>Westfield</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Is your local chamber of commerce or business association actively involved in the economic development activities of your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
2: Does your jurisdiction have an active volunteer economic development committee or nonprofit center for economic development?	yes		yes
3: Is there an incubator or other form of cooperative 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









  

<b>Importance To Market</b> Very Important             Important             Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> Strong             Average Weak             No Comparison
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## B. Critical Mass Firms

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		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)	Higher Ed		
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)	Other, please specify; Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		

### Importance To Market



Very Important



Important





Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Weak

 Average

 No Comparison

<p>14: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)</p>	<p>Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare; Alternative Energy; Other, please specify</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>15: Which of the following jurisdictions have development specialists to assist in interpreting the needs of these clusters? (Choose all that apply)</p>					
<p>- Your Municipality</p>	<p>no</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>yes</p>		
<p>- Regional/County</p>	<p>yes</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>no</p>		
<p>- State</p>	<p>yes</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>no</p>		
<p>16: How aggressive is your industrial attraction policy?</p>	<p>Don't have one</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Moderate</p>		
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Importance To Market</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very Important             <input type="radio"/> Important             <input type="radio"/> Less Important         </p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong             <input type="checkbox"/> Average             <input type="checkbox"/> No Comparison  <input type="checkbox"/> Weak         </p> </td> </tr> </table>				<p><b>Importance To Market</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very Important             <input type="radio"/> Important             <input type="radio"/> Less Important         </p>	<p><b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong             <input type="checkbox"/> Average             <input type="checkbox"/> No Comparison  <input type="checkbox"/> Weak         </p>
<p><b>Importance To Market</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very Important             <input type="radio"/> Important             <input type="radio"/> Less Important         </p>	<p><b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong             <input type="checkbox"/> Average             <input type="checkbox"/> No Comparison  <input type="checkbox"/> Weak         </p>				





### C. Cross Marketing

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

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



### D. Marketing Follow-Up

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		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

### E. Proximity to Universities & Research

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions













Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
25: How many public or private four-year college or universities are located within your jurisdiction?	1		0
26: How many public or private four-year college or universities are located within 10 miles of your jurisdiction?	3		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   
 Average  
 Weak   
 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.

 <b>A. Infrastructure</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
1: Are there significant limitations to any of your existing infrastructure systems? - Water Supply	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
2: Public Sewer	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
4: Natural Gas	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
5: Electric Power	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
6: Data/Telecommunications - Land Lines	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
7: Data/Telecommunications - Cellular	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
8: Data/Telecommunications - Fiber optic / Cable / DSL	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
9: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Residential	13.045		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	13.667		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	10.723		13.03






## B. Rents

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	9		12
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	18		13
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	5		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	21		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	12		12.00
17: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	10		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	18		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	14		12.50
20: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	12		9,00
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	10		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	50		between 35 and 40

### Importance To Market

 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong
  Average
  Weak
  No Comparison

## C. Quality of Available Space

Report of Westfield 2017 as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield 2017		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?	21-35%		21-35%

### Importance To Market

Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong
 Average  
 Weak
 No Comparison

## D. Land (space)

Report of Westfield 2017 as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield 2017		Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	301-450 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?	1-250,000 sq. feet		1-250,000 sq. feet
31: What proportion of the parcels available for industrial development or large scale commercial development are of 5 acres or more?	36-50%		11-20%

### Importance To Market

Very Important
 Important
 Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong
 Average  
 Weak
 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.

<b>A. Labor Cost</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$12.26-\$17.25		\$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?	\$50,001-\$60,000		\$60,001-\$70,000
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no

<b>B. Workforce Composition</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of your workforce is Unskilled?	1-25%		1-25%
6: What percentage of your workforce is Semi-skilled	1-25%		1-25%
7: What percentage of your workforce is Technically skilled	1-25%		26-49%
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	1-25%		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional	26-49%		1-25%
10: What percentage of your workforce are current English language learners?	11-20%		0-10%

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

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

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

**D. Labor (available)**

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		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%

**E. Workforce Training**

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
16: Which of the following workforce training resources do you interact with to respond to skill development needs of firms?			
- Regional employment board or state employment services department	yes		
- Area High schools	yes		
- Voc-tech schools or community colleges	yes		
- Human service or nonprofit career training centers	no		
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	yes		yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	yes, but insufficient capacity to serve existing need		yes

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

The municipal process section covers several themes relating to marketing and permitting. Public officials who aggressively market their jurisdictions strengths and collaborate with firms already located in their City 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*.

<b>A. Industry Sensitivity</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on the needs identified by industrial or office location specialists?	no		no
2: Does your jurisdiction have a marketing program based on existing core strengths, identified opportunities, or industry concentrations?	no		no
3: Do you have a quick response team available when negative data, stories, or incidents about your jurisdiction make the news?	yes		no
4: Do you actively engage local business spokespersons to speak on behalf of your jurisdiction?	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

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



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

<b>D. Predicable Permits</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
<i>Question</i>	<i>Westfield</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
22: Do you provide a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers?	yes		yes
23: Do you provide a flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers?	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?	no		no

<p><b>Importance To Market</b></p> <p> Very Important     Important     Less Important</p>	<p><b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b></p> <p> Strong     Average</p> <p> Weak     No Comparison</p>
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## E. Fast Track Permits

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

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

## F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

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

### Importance To Market

 Very Important  Important  Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong  Average  
 Weak  No Comparison



## G. Permitting Ombudsman

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
37: Does the chief executive officer of your jurisdiction play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of your local permitting process?	no		no
38: Are there other local officials empowered to ensure the efficiency of your local permitting process?	yes		yes
39: Is there a "development cabinet" or "development team" that is convened to review major developments?	yes		yes
40: Do you have an established training program for development staff that regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	no		no
41: Do you have an established training program for boards, commissions, authorities, districts, and elected officials that regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	no		no
42: Is your jurisdiction involved in the process for businesses that require state or federal permitting or licensing?	yes		yes
43: Do you provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit or license application process?	no		no
44: Does your jurisdiction require any local licenses for specific businesses or industries?			
- General license for all businesses	yes		no
- Auto dealership	yes		no
- Barber shop	no		no
- Bar/Tavern	yes		no
- Beauty salon	no		no
- Child care services	no		no
- Construction contractor	no		no
- Home health care	no		no
- Massage therapist	no		no
- Real estate agent/broker	no		no
- Restaurant	no		no
- Skilled Trades (electrician, plumber, etc)	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
45: Approximately how long (in weeks) is your local licensing process for businesses?	5-8 weeks		0-4 weeks

## Section 6: Quality of Life (Community)

The quality of life within the community is an *Important* location factor because companies want to be able to offer employees a safe community with affordable housing, good schools, and a rich selection of cultural and recreational opportunities.

<b>A. Cultural and Recreational Amenities</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		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>B. Crime</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 residents last year in your jurisdiction?	256		256
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 residents last year?	62		between 78 and 80
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 residents last year?	26		29
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 residents last year?	0		1

































<b>Importance To Market</b> Very Important             Important             Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> Strong             Average Weak             No Comparison
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<b>C. Housing</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
12: What was the median sale price of a single-family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$151,000-\$250,000		\$251,000-\$350,000
13: What was the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment in your jurisdiction last year?	\$801-\$1000		\$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?	Most		Some

<b>D. Local Schools</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		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?	51-65%		81% or greater
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in Mathematics?	51-65%		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	no		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	26-49%		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?			

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



26: What percentage of high school freshmen normally graduate within 5 years?	81%-94%		81%-94%					
27: What is the high school dropout rate last year?	1-25%		1-25%					
28: Are there any schools in your jurisdiction that are currently deemed "underperforming?"	no		no					
29: What percentage of high school graduates from last year's class went on to a four-year college?	50-74%		50-74%					
30: Are there any charter schools in your jurisdiction?	no		no					
31: What types of private schools are there in your jurisdiction?								
- Parochial	yes							
- Non-sectarian	yes							
- Boarding	no							
<table border="1" data-bbox="203 955 1409 1054"> <tr> <td colspan="3"> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important    Important    Less Important </td> <td colspan="2"> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>   Strong    Average   Weak    No Comparison </td> </tr> </table>				<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important			<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison	
<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important			<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison					

## Section 7: Quality of Life (Site)

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

<b>A. Amenities</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
1: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fast food restaurant	All		Most
2: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fine dining	Few		Some
3: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Day care	Some		Most
4: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Retail shops	Most		Most

<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison
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## 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 Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
1: Are businesses in your jurisdiction eligible for any of the following special state tax incentives? Check all that apply.			
- Investment tax credits	yes		no
- Job training tax credits	yes		no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	yes		no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	no		no
- Loan guarantees	yes		no
- Equity financing	no		no
- Workforce training grants	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
2: To what extent does your jurisdiction actively take advantage of any special state business incentives?	Very much		Somewhat
3: Does your state allow for priority funding for distressed economic areas?	yes		yes




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

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		Comparison Group
4: Does your jurisdiction offer existing businesses property tax abatement?	yes		no
5: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?	1-25%		1-25%
6: Does your jurisdiction offer new businesses property tax abatement?	yes		no
7: If yes, what proportion of new businesses are offered abatements?	1-25%		1-25%
8: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	Executive		Legislative
9: Does your jurisdiction offer any of the following incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)			
- Revolving loan fund	no		no
- Loan guarantees	no		no
- Revenue bonds	no		no
- Equity participation	no		no
- Business district group loans	no		no
- None	yes		no
- Investment tax credits	no		no
- Job training tax credits	no		no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	no		no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	no		no
- Workforce training grants	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no








**Importance To Market**

 Very Important  Important  Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**








































 Strong  Average  
 Weak  No Comparison

10: Does your jurisdiction actively pursue federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses?	yes		yes
11: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	yes		yes
12: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	yes		no
13: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	yes		no
14: Do you actively try to attract local, state, and federal facilities to your jurisdiction?	yes		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?	Regional		No brownfields funds utilized

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

 <b>A. Local</b>					
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions					
Question	Westfield		Comparison Group		
1: What types of taxes are collected by your jurisdiction to pay for local services?					
- Property tax	yes		yes		
- Local sales tax	no		no		
- Local income tax	no		no		
- Hotel room tax	yes		no		
- Meals tax	yes		no		
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	0%		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	37.08		between 19.89 and 20.20		
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000	19.42		between 11.37 and 11.38		
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?			between 13.91 and 13.97		
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	6.78				
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	16.59				
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	72.58				
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	no		no		
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important               Important               Less Important         </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>   Strong               Average   Weak               No Comparison         </td> </tr> </table>				<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison
<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison				



## B. Tax Delinquency

Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Westfield		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?	200-300		0-50
15: When do you choose to auction tax title properties?	5-10 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



Important





Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong












 Weak

 Average






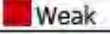
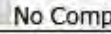
 No Comparison

## Section 10: Access to Information

A city'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 city as a potential location without further consideration. While a city's website may rank *Most 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.








 <b>A. Website</b>			
Report of Westfield as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Westfield		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?	yes		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?	yes		no

<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison
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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	yes	<input checked="" 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	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- State permitting agencies	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional planning agencies	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional development organizations	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Workforce training organizations	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Demographic information	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Economic development agencies	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Other, please specify	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no

16: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	yes		no
- Chambers of Commerce	yes		no
- Community development corporations	yes		no
- Arts and cultural organizations	yes		no
- Sports and recreation venues	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

<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Weak  Average  No Comparison
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Nestled in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains along the Westfield River, a tributary to the mighty Connecticut, Westfield sits amid rich farmland and beautiful natural features. A small city of approximately 41,500, it grew steadily since its founding in 1660, becoming a mill town and industrial center in the 19th century producing a variety of goods. Many firms employed precision metalworkers for which the area is still well-known. With the regional flight of textiles and manufacturing, population growth began to trickle in the 1980s, although the city did not suffer the devastating losses from which the so-called Rust Belt is still recovering. A 2015 median household income of approximately \$62,000 reflects a prosperous middle-class community. Also notable is Westfield's economic diversity, ranging from construction, manufacturing, and agriculture to higher education and health care.

Westfield is part of the Springfield metropolitan area, and the Five-College cluster that includes UMass Amherst and Smith, Amherst, Mount Holyoke, and Hampshire Colleges lies within 30 miles of the town center. Combined with the city's own Westfield State University, whose students comprise 15 percent of the city's population, Westfield is blessed with abundant access to the colleges and universities of the Pioneer Valley—although EDSAT's 10-mile metric does not take that asset into account.

While the City of Westfield has attracted large commercial development along Route 20, it has also tended to the urban fabric of its central business district, preserving its older architecture, revitalizing its town common, attracting small businesses to its storefronts, and, at present, developing PVTA transit pavilion and adjacent parking structure along the densely settled Elm Street corridor. Here, too, the city appears to strive for diversification, as it does in its program for settling a community of refugees.

The Dukakis Center's Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) creates a snapshot of Westfield's economic development efforts at a time when the city seeks to attract new businesses and industries in order to bring in greater and more diverse tax revenue and create a more vibrant business community. The following is an overview of where your city is getting it right, and where improvements can be made. Outlined below are the top recommendations and their respective levels of priority for your economic development efforts.

### CORE STRENGTHS

Westfield enjoys many valuable assets that can compel firms and developers to locate—or remain—in the city. One of Westfield's greatest assets is its large volume of **available sites** with good mix of land use types, which make it more attractive to a wider array of firms and industries. Much of the city's available **land** is zoned for commercial and industrial uses, and a comparatively high proportion of available parcels is larger than five acres, which would be of interest to developers of large commercial and/or residential projects.

Westfield's **infrastructure** meets current demand and could support even more should the need arise. That said, the city should take care to address recent concerns about aquifer contamination, which blocked access to secondary water supply during the recent drought, causing the local university to close for several days. The drought was particularly severe and long-lasting, and there is only so much municipalities can do to mitigate acts of nature. But the controversy should be settled, perhaps by commissioning a civil engineering report with help from the state.

Westfield has excellent **highway access** and **traffic** management, which is all the more important given the city's automotive dependence. The Mass Pike (I-90) passes through the municipality, connecting the city to the larger urban centers of Boston, Providence, Springfield, and Albany, NY. Likewise, in addition to having nearby access to Bradley International Airport in Hartford, the city is less than two hours away from four additional international **airports** located in those cities, and owns a municipal-regional airport that serves both the public and the military.

As already discussed, Westfield has decent access to **universities and research** within a thirty mile drive. Westfield State University is located in the city, and brings in a younger population to patronize the city's small businesses. The university, whose president is interested in collaborating with the city in economic development, can serve as a resource for cultivating an educated electorate and workforce and a source of research for commercial innovation.

The city's **housing** is also in good order, with strong homeownership numbers and lower than average residential rents. Along with lower-than-average **crime** rates, Westfield's housing situation contributes to high quality of life, which is reflected in the fact that

most firms' senior leadership choose to settle in the city. Westfield should monitor the vacancy rates for rental units and single-family homes, however, as they are hovering around the tipping point in which prices begin to shoot upward. This acts as an incentive for firms to develop in Westfield because of the housing opportunities for their workers. While current homeowners would benefit from this, it could adversely affect workforce housing, displacing renters and putting housing for first-time homebuyers out of reach.

Administratively, the city exceeds the comparison group in furthering economic development, taking advantage of **state tax incentives** and offering several **local incentives** of its own. Westfield also excels at **cross-marketing**, engaging both local firms and state and regional planning organizations in making the business case for the city.

Finally, the **website** is well-designed and well-populated with information valuable to businesses and developers, both current and prospective. The importance of an easily navigated, attractive website to site location specialists cannot be stressed enough, as it is often their first encounter with a city or town. Westfield's website could be even better if the "economic development" page's content were included in the home page "business" portal, making for one-stop access, and the "business" portal were featured rather than listed as one of five menu items.

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

While Westfield is actively working to attract businesses, it also faces some obstacles and challenges. Above all, **commercial rents** in Westfield's central business district and highway districts are much higher than those in the CGM. This can be a significant deal-breaker especially if potential business developers can get the same amenities as Westfield from a neighboring municipality with lower rents. The city should survey commercial land lords to learn the reasons for such high rents and negotiate measures to bring them down to more competitive levels.

The city of Westfield could also do much more to cultivate a **critical mass of firms**, and perhaps participation in EDSAT is a first step in that direction. While the city participates in state and regional economic development programs, it would be wise to develop Westfield's own economic development plan and industrial attraction policy.

**Site amenities**, specifically fine dining restaurants and day care services, are almost completely lacking within one mile of Westfield's available development sites. This could act as a deterrent to prospective businesses looking for areas where their employees can have access to these amenities without significant travel. Encouraging such development, through zoning changes and/or tax incentives is advisable.

Although traffic is well-managed in Westfield, the city has a lower percentage of available retail and office space sites with on-site **parking**, suggesting that either many of these sites are in the central business district or that parking could well be inadequate. A survey of parking capacity at available sites is in order here, especially since Westfield is not gifted with good **public transit**. Bus service to Northampton, a transit node to the Five-College area, should also be explored as a way of better integrating the city with the surrounding region and its institutions of higher learning.

Furthermore, **local commercial tax rates** are higher than the comparison group and could act as a deterrent to firms developing sites in Westfield when they could do so in neighboring municipalities with lower rates. The city also needs to act more aggressively on **vacant residential and commercial properties** within the city, which are more numerous than in other municipalities.

In addition, the city should address the relatively low rate of English and mathematics proficiency in the **local schools**. Some may say that this relatively poor performance has to do with an influx of refugees into the city and its school system, but that is not going to matter to a firm looking to develop in a town with competent students. The city should look into bolstering the capacity of its English-as-a-second-language classes, which were reported to be unable to meet current demand. The city also pays teachers less than the CGM, a **labor cost** deficiency that might be addressed. Although the CGM might well reflect the higher cost of living in Eastern Massachusetts, where a good number of EDSAT communities are located, site location specialists favor paying teachers well, and it would make sense to ensure that Westfield's teacher salary structure is in line with nearby communities in Western Mass.

Though Westfield is mostly on par with the CGM in its **timeliness of approvals**, the extra four weeks it takes the city to approve site plan reviews and business licenses should be addressed—a feasible goal since neither gap is extreme.

Recommendations	Priority
Develop a local economic development plan and an industrial attraction policy.	High
Develop strategies for increasing English and math proficiency in the public schools (as well as ESL adult continuing education), in part by considering raising teachers' salaries.	High
Address the causes for higher-than-average-commercial rents, and work with commercial landlords to help drive down firms' rental costs.	High
Explore ways of bringing down commercial tax rates.	Medium
Expedite the time it takes to review site plans and to issue business licenses.	Medium