

Northeastern University  
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

**EDSAT REPORT FOR THE TOWN OF  
HOPKINTON, 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'<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, Hopkinton 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 Hopkinton to the EDSAT questionnaire.

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

### Project Overview

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

### Methodology

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

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

## RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF EDSAT LOCATION FACTORS

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


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

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

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

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

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

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

The interaction between the importance of a location factor and your jurisdiction's relative strength yields powerful information. With respect to businesses and developers, a comparison yielding "red" for a *Very Important* factor represents the potential for a "deal-breaker," while a comparison resulting in "green" for a *Very Important* factor represents the likelihood of a "deal-maker." There are several important considerations to keep in mind when reviewing a jurisdiction's EDSAT results:

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

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

## SUMMARY OF RELATIVE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

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

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

Tasks on the weakness and "deal-breaker" lists, however, are prioritized to emphasize the importance of their mitigation. The Dukakis Center staff arranges the tasks according to feasibility, with consideration of the latitude and abilities of local, county, or regional levels of government. For example, in a jurisdiction with limited highway access, building a new highway interchange or connector would likely be cost-prohibitive, time-consuming, and an inefficient use of local resources. However, other tasks are more feasible with modest investments in time and resources. For example, streamlining the permitting process and making related development information readily accessible to both location experts and businesses could be accomplished without significant capital investments. Although location experts rank both highway access and the timeliness of permitting as *Very Important* location factors, in the prioritized list of potential "deal-breakers," the permitting process would be given a higher priority due to its feasibility in implementation.

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

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

**HIGHWAY ACCESS:** With I-495 bisecting the town and intersecting with I-90 at the town's northern edge, a large proportion of Hopkinton's available sites for retail, manufacturing, and general office space are within easy access of a major highway entrance or exit. In addition, the town is served by state routes 135 and 85. Hopkinton does not impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads, which is a plus for attracting industry.

**PARKING:** Most available sites for retail, manufacturing, or general office space have onsite parking, and parking in the central business district is free.

**TRAFFIC:** Traffic generally flows at a good pace, and is only moderately congested at rush hour and with a higher average rush hour speed than the comparison group municipalities (CGM).

**WORKFORCE COMPOSITION:** Hopkinton has higher percentages of professional, managerial, and technically skilled workers than the CGM, while lower proportions of unskilled and semi-skilled workers are similar to the CGM.

**LABOR (AVAILABLE):** A large majority of Hopkinton's adults have high school diplomas or higher, and your town has a significantly higher percentage of college graduates than comparison towns.

**WEBSITE:** The town website includes a number of features valuable to prospective firms. Hopkinton's website offers some items that often are lacking in comparison group towns, such as a development permit checklist, date-certified forms, demographic information, and links to local attractions and the Chamber of Commerce. There is significant room for website improvement, however, which this report will cover in later sections.



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

**PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS:** Hopkinton maintains streets, sidewalks, and parks moderately or vigorously and enforces codes as needed for any abandoned properties. The town involves the arts community in design of public spaces and has a higher proportion of land reserved for parks than the CGM. Few or no properties are in a boarded-up or dilapidated state.

**CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES:** For its size, Hopkinton has a wealth of arts and recreational opportunities, including a theater company, a concert hall, and a dance company. In addition, it shares some of the recreational opportunities of the comparison group, such as boating and golfing.

**LOCAL SCHOOLS:** A high percentage of Hopkinton's public school students perform well in state-required English and Math tests. High graduation and college attendance rates and low dropout rates put Hopkinton at a competitive advantage over the CGM.

**CRIME:** Hopkinton's crime rates across all categories are significantly lower than the CGM.

**COMPLEMENTARY/SUPPLEMENTARY BUSINESS SERVICES:** Your town shows competitive strengths in this category: Hopkinton has an incubator for start-up businesses, and business services in the town are highly capable of working with emerging tech/science firms. While your town lacks an active volunteer economic development committee, the local chamber of commerce is involved in the town's economic development activities.

**CROSS MARKETING:** Hopkinton has a competitive advantage in actively enlisting existing resident firms to help attract new ones. Similar to the comparison group, you engage local and state business and planning organizations to help market the town.

**INDUSTRY SENSITIVITY:** Hopkinton has a marketing program based on both industry needs and the town's core strengths.

**CRITICAL MASS FIRMS:** Similar to the comparison group, Hopkinton has an overall economic development plan and strategy, and targets firms in specific industry types and sectors. There is room for improvement, however: the town lacks a strong industrial attraction policy.

**LAND (SPACE):** Hopkinton has more commercial/industrial-zoned developable land than the comparison towns, with a higher proportion of them being large sites, and has more vacant useable office space in its commercial/industrial buildings.

**SITE AMENITIES:** Most of your town's existing development sites are located within a mile of restaurants and retail shops. In addition, all sites are near daycare options, putting your town at an advantage over comparison municipalities.

**PREDICTABLE PERMITS:** Your town provides a development handbook to prospective developers and a checklist of permitting requirements, although it could do more in this arena.

**BUSINESS INCENTIVES (STATE LEVEL):** Hopkinton and all Massachusetts towns and cities stand to benefit from state incentives such as investment and job training tax credits and workforce training grants. Similar to the comparison group, Hopkinton takes advantage of these only "somewhat."

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

**WORKFORCE TRAINING:** To meet skill development needs of local firms, Hopkinton works with many resources, such as high schools, vocational/technical schools, and nonprofit career training centers, and supports public-private partnerships to provide workforce training. An adult education program exists, though it needs greater capacity to meet existing demand. Hopkinton is served by the Joseph P. Keefe Regional Technical High School.

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

Despite many advantages, Hopkinton has several apparent weaknesses that could pose challenges to successful development. The factors in the *Very Important* group are the ones that the town should consider addressing first because they are the most

critical potential “deal-breakers.” Again, the town should next consider those in the *Important* group, and finally those the *Less Important* group.

Unlike the above itemization of 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 Hopkinton’s economic development objectives and the feasibility (economic and otherwise) of upgrading “deal-breakers” and other weaknesses.

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

**TIMELINESS OF APPROVALS:** The average project review process takes longer in Hopkinton than in the CGM for or many types and phases of development — including site plan reviews, zoning variances, and appeals for both new construction and existing structures.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** Similar to comparison towns, Hopkinton has growth capacity in its natural gas, electric power, data/telecommunications systems, but your town lacks capacity for growth in its water, sewer, and wastewater treatment systems, a competitive disadvantage in attracting industry. On the positive side, electricity costs are lower for residential, commercial, and industrial end users than in the comparison group.

**RENTS:** Rents for retail, manufacturing, and office space are higher than the CGM. In addition, your town has a somewhat lopsided balance of office space types, with the bulk of it being Class B and no Class A space.

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

**MARKETING FOLLOW-UP:** Your town does not have a formal de-briefing process for firms that choose or do not choose to locate here, nor a formal procedure for keeping in touch with existing firms about their satisfaction with Hopkinton as a location. The town lacks a procedure to intervene early in the event of negative news.

**LOCAL TAX RATES:** A single tax rate for residential, commercial and industrial uses puts Hopkinton at a competitive advantage. However, the tax rate is somewhat higher than that of comparison towns, and Hopkinton collects no extra local taxes such as sales, income or meals taxes.

**FAST-TRACK PERMITS:** Although similar to the CGM, Hopkinton offers virtually no fast-track permitting programs.

**BUSINESS INCENTIVES (LOCAL LEVEL):** Hopkinton offers little to no business incentives such as property tax abatements, similar to the CGM. It does use TIF programs, but not for retail.

**PUBLIC TRANSIT:** Few available sites for retail, manufacturing, or general office are within ¼ mile of public transit. On the positive side, Hopkinton has commuter rail within 5 miles, but the town offers no shuttle to the rail stations.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW PROCESS:** Abutters and neighborhood groups slow the permitting process somewhat, and at least one proposal has been stopped by resident resistance in the last five years. There is little involvement by elected officials to facilitate dialogue in order to smooth the process. The town has not established a specific time frame and procedure for abutters and groups to respond in the initial stage of the permitting process.

**HOUSING:** Housing purchase and rental prices are relatively high in Hopkinton, and the market is extremely tight.

**LABOR COST:** Hopkinton’s prevailing wage rates are quite a bit higher than the CGM, as is the average teacher salary, which site location specialists endorse as indicative of a municipality’s commitment to an educated workforce and high local quality of life.

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

**RAIL:** Hopkinton has little in the way of rail assets—freight, inter-city, commuter services.

## DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following is a ten-part section-by-section analysis of the EDSAT results comparing Hopkinton'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 Hopkinton'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 Hopkinton'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 Hopkinton 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, Hopkinton 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%+	75%+
2: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	75%+	75%+	75%+
3: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	75%+	75%+	75%+
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	yes	yes	yes


  
















<b>Importance To Market</b> ● Very Important   ◐ Important   ○ Less Important	<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> ■ Strong   ■ Average   ■ Weak
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------

Group 1 points to the first row of the table. Group 2 points to the first column of the table. Group 3 points to the first row of the table. Group 4 points to the first row of the table.
















## Section 1: Access to Customers/Markets

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

<div>  <b>A. Highway Access</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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

<div>  <b>B. Public Transit</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	1-25%		50-74%
6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	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?	1-25%		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?	yes		yes
10: Do you offer any shuttle services to other public commuting stations?	no		no
11: Is public transit service available on nights and weekends?	yes		yes
<div> <div> <b>Importance To Market</b> <div>  Very Important            Important            Less Important         </div> </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> <div>  Strong            Average            Weak            No Comparison         </div> </div> </div>			

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

<div>  <b>D. Traffic</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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
<div> <div> <b>Importance To Market</b> <div>  Very Important            Important            Less Important         </div> </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> <div>  Strong            Average            Weak            No Comparison         </div> </div> </div>			

☐
**E. Airports**

Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Hopkinton		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?	20-30 miles		20-30 miles
30: Is the major/international airport accessible by public transportation?	yes		yes
31: How long does it take to drive to the major/international airport from your town center?	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

☐
**F. Rail**













Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions




Question	Hopkinton		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	no		no
- Intercity/Interstate(Amtrak)	no		no
- None	yes		no





**Importance To Market**  
☒ Very Important   
 ☐ Important   
 ☐ Less Important



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










<div>  <b>G. Physical Attractiveness</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties, abandoned vehicles, trash disposal within your jurisdiction?	Vigorously		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.)?	yes		no
39: What percentage of the acreage within your jurisdiction is reserved for parks?	21% or greater		6-10%
40: What percentage of your housing stock is considered dilapidated?	0-5%		0-5%
41: What percentage of your commercial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	0-5%		0-5%
42: What percentage of commercial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	11-15%		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%

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

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









<div>  <b>H. Water Transportation</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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  
  Average  
 Weak  
  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 Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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?	yes		no
4: Are there CPA, business advisory or financial services firms in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
5: Are there law firms in your jurisdiction specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, or patents?	yes		yes
6: Are there branches of major commercial banks in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
7: To what extent are the business services (e.g. venture capital, business planning, specialized recruiting, etc.) in your jurisdiction capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms?	Highly capable		Moderately capable





 <b>B. Critical Mass Firms</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
8: Does your jurisdiction have an up-to-date development strategy, an overall economic development plan (OEDP), or an economic development plan within your community master plan?	yes		yes
9: Is your jurisdiction part of a county or regional OEDP or Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)?	yes		yes
10: Does your state have a development strategy or economic development plan?	yes		yes
11: If yes, are there firms within specific industry types or sectors that are targeted in your jurisdiction's, your county's or your state's development strategy?	yes		yes











12: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? Other, please specify (Your Municipality)	Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Healthcare; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Alternative Energy; Other, please specify				
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)	Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare; Other, please specify				
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; Other, please specify				
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	no		no		
16: How aggressive is your industrial attraction policy?	Weak		Moderate		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important              Important              Less Important         </td> <td> <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>C. Cross Marketing</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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

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

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

 <b>D. Marketing Follow-Up</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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 Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions

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

 <b>A. Infrastructure</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
1: Are there significant limitations to any of your existing infrastructure systems? - Water Supply	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
2: Public Sewer	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
4: Natural Gas	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
5: Electric Power	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
6: Data/Telecommunications - Land Lines	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
7: Data/Telecommunications - Cellular	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
8: Data/Telecommunications - Fiber optic / Cable / DSL	Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
9: What is the average retail cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Residential	10		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	11		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	11		13.03



## B. Rents

Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	18		12.00
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	22		between 13 and 14.00
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	8		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	NA		16
16: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	14		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	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	NA		15.50
19: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	16		between 12.00 and 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	11		9.00
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	0		between 10 and 12
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	67		44
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	33		35

### Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important






### Your Performance Relative To Peers




Strong





Weak






Average




No Comparison





 <b>C. Quality of Available Space</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
24: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered contaminated or brownfield sites?	0-10%		0-10%
25: What experience does your jurisdiction have with the redevelopment of contaminated or brownfield sites?	Limited		Limited
26: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers?	0-10%		11-20%
27: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites?	11-20%		21-35%

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

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






 <b>D. Land (space)</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	151-300 acres		1-150 acres
29: Approximately how much vacant useable industrial or warehouse space exists in commercial/industrial buildings in your jurisdiction?	1-250,000 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?	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 Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$22.26 or higher		\$12.26-\$17.25
2: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	\$17.26-\$22.25		\$12.26-\$17.25
3: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	\$70,001 or more		\$60,001-\$70,000
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no

**Importance To Market**




 Very Important
  Important
  Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**





 Strong  
 Weak
  Average  
 No Comparison

 <b>B. Workforce Composition</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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	50% or greater		26-49%
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	50% or greater		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional	50% or greater		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 Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Hopkinton		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

**Importance To Market**  
☒ Very Important
 ☐ Important
 ☐ Less Important

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

☒
**D. Labor (available)**

Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
14: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a high school diploma?	85% or greater		85% or greater
15: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a bachelor's degree?	51% or greater		21-35%

**Importance To Market**  
☒ Very Important
 ☐ Important
 ☐ Less Important

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









<div> <input type="radio"/> <b>E. Workforce Training</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
16: Which of the following workforce training resources do you interact with to respond to skill development needs of firms?			
- Regional employment board or state employment services department	yes		
- Area High schools	yes		
- Voc-tech schools or community colleges	yes		
- Human service or nonprofit career training centers	yes		
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	yes		yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	yes, but insufficient capacity to serve existing need		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 jurisdictions strengths and collaborate with firms already located in their town or city may have significant advantages in attracting new investment. Local firms can speak firsthand about their own experiences and market conditions to interested companies and investors. Likewise, they can advise municipal leaders about industries with which they are intimately familiar. Additionally, municipalities that have established transparent and efficient permitting processes, minimizing startup time and costs, are also ahead of the game. Among the factors examined in this section, the timeliness of approvals is *Very Important* to location experts and all but one of the remaining factors (Permitting Ombudsman) are ranked *Important*.

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

 <b>B. Sites Available</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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?	no		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 Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
12: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Site plan review	13-16 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	13-16 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	13-16 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	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		between 5-8 weeks and 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	9-12 weeks		5-8 weeks

 <b>D. Predicable Permits</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
22: Do you provide a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers?	yes		yes
23: Do you provide a flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers?	no		no
24: Do you provide a development handbook to prospective developers?	yes		no
25: Do you allow for a single presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority?	no		no

**Importance To Market**



Very Important




Important









Less Important




**Your Performance Relative To Peers**
 Strong

 Weak



 Average



 No Comparison









 <b>E. Fast Track Permits</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
26: Do you pre-permit development in certain districts?	no		no
27: Are there any publicly or cooperatively owned industrial parks in your jurisdiction that have their own expedited permitting authority?	no		no
28: Do you have an "overlay" district that allows expedited permitting of certain uses?	no		no
29: Do you market "fast track" permitting to potential developers or firms?	no		no




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

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**  



 Strong  
 Weak



 Average  
 No Comparison






 <b>F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
30: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in your jurisdiction?	Somewhat		Somewhat
31: To what extent do organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting?	Somewhat		Somewhat
32: To what extent do elected officials in your jurisdiction expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups?	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?	no		no

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

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**  









 Strong  
 Weak




 Average  
 No Comparison





<div>  <b>G. Permitting Ombudsman</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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?	no		yes
43: Do you provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit or license application process?	no		no
44: Does your jurisdiction require any local licenses for specific businesses or industries?			
- General license for all businesses	no		no
- Auto dealership	yes		no
- Barber shop	no		no
- Bar/Tavern	yes		no
- Beauty salon	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	yes		no
- Skilled Trades (electrician, plumber, etc)	yes		no
- Other, please specify	yes		no
45: Approximately how long (in weeks) is your local licensing process for businesses?	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks






## Section 6: Quality of Life (Community)

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

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







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

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

 <b>B. Crime</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 residents last year in your jurisdiction?	6.0		256
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 residents last year?	0		80
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 residents last year?	0		between 29 and 30
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 residents last year?	0		1

## C. Housing

Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
12: What was the median sale price of a single-family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$451,000 or greater		\$251,000-\$350,000
13: What was the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment in your jurisdiction last year?	\$1251 or greater		\$1001-\$1250
14: What is the homeownership rate?	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



Question	Hopkinton		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?	81% or greater		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	no		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	1-25%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	1126 or higher		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?	29		
26: What percentage of high school freshmen normally graduate within 5 years?	95% or more		81%-94%
27: What is the high school dropout rate last year?	0%		1-25%
28: Are there any schools in your jurisdiction that are currently deemed "underperforming?"	no		no
29: What percentage of high school graduates from last year's class went on to a four-year college?	75% or greater		50-74%
30: Are there any charter schools in your jurisdiction?	no		no
31: What types of private schools are there in your jurisdiction?			
- Parochial	no		
- Non-sectarian	no		
- Boarding	no		

**Importance To Market**


Very Important



Important



Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**

Strong

Weak




Average

No Comparison




## Section 7: Quality of Life (Site)

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

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

**Importance To Market**


 Very Important

 Important


 Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**

 Strong












 Average

 Weak


 No Comparison


## Section 8: Business Incentives


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

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


**Importance To Market**


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**



 Strong

 Average

 Weak



















 No Comparison

## Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions


Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
4: Does your jurisdiction offer existing businesses property tax abatement?	no		no
5: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?			
6: Does your jurisdiction offer new businesses property tax abatement?	no		no
7: If yes, what proportion of new businesses are offered abatements?			
8: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	Other, please specify		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	no		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	yes		no
10: Does your jurisdiction actively pursue federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses?	yes		yes
11: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	yes		yes
12: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	no		no
13: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	no		no
14: Do you actively try to attract local, state, and federal facilities to your jurisdiction?	no		no
15: Is any part of your jurisdiction in a designated Enterprise Zone?	no		no
16: Do you participate in a regional brownfield revolving loan fund or offer your own?	N/A		No brownfields funds utilized


## 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 Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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	no		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?	no		yes
4: If yes, what is the tax rate on industrial/commercial property? \$ /\$1,000			
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000			
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?	17.03		between 13.91 and 13.97
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	8.8%		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	3.9%		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	84%		
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	no		no


**Importance To Market**


 Very Important


 Important


 Less Important











**Your Performance Relative To Peers**

 Strong


 Average


 Weak


 No Comparison

 <b>B. Tax Delinquency</b>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		Comparison Group
11: What proportion of residential property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?	0%-3%		0%-3%
12: What proportion of commercial property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?	0%-3%		0%-3%
13: What proportion of industrial property in your jurisdiction is more than one year delinquent in taxes?	0%-3%		0%-3%
14: How many properties are tax defaulted or subject to the power of sale?	100-200		0-50
15: When do you choose to auction tax title properties?	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?	yes		no


**Importance To Market**


 Very Important


 Important


 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>  <b>A. Website</b> </div>			
Report of Hopkinton as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Hopkinton		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)?	yes		no
9: Is it possible to file permit applications electronically?	no		no
10: Is there a list of available land and building sites on the website?	no		no
11: If yes, check the types of information available about each site. (Check all that apply)			
- :Owner	no		no
- Square footage of vacant land	no		no
- Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	no		no
- Abutters	no		no
- Zoning	no		no
- Assessed value	no		no
- Tax rate	no		no
- Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	no		no

- Aerial photos	no		no
- GIS links	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
12: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	yes		yes
13: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	no		no
14: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	yes		yes
15: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)			
- State finance agencies	no		no
- State permitting agencies	no		no
- Regional planning agencies	yes		no
- Regional development organizations	no		no
- Workforce training organizations	no		no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no		no
- Demographic information	yes		no
- Economic development agencies	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
16: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	no		no
- Chambers of Commerce	yes		no
- Community development corporations	no		no
- Arts and cultural organizations	yes		no
- Sports and recreation venues	yes		no
- Convention and tourist organization	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
17: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	yes		yes
<div> <div> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important          Important          Less Important       </div> <div> <b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>   Strong   Weak          Average   No Comparison       </div> </div>			

## NEXT STEPS

Hopkinton is a rural-suburban town 26 miles west of Boston in Middlesex County. Founded in 1715, Hopkinton boasts a large number of attractive historic properties and a classic New England town common. It encompasses or has close proximity to an abundance of open space, lakes, and parks, including Whitehall State Park, Hopkinton State Park, Ashland State Park, and Lake Maspenock. Hopkinton has seen substantial population growth over recent decades. As of 2010, the town's population was 14,925, with a high percentage of family households. Hopkinton has strong name recognition as the starting point of the Boston Marathon and as the headquarters of Dell EMC.

In addition to its historic town center and residential areas, Hopkinton has ample space for a commercial/industrial district located close to I-495 in its South Street area, where large employers such as Dell EMC, Hutchinson Aerospace & Industry, and PerkinElmer's research and manufacturing center are located. The town has a historic district and some business clusters near the town center, which could be further leveraged to create a more strongly defined walkable retail district.

The vast majority of the town's property tax revenue—84%—comes from residential property owners, with 8.8% from industrial sources and just 3.9% from commercial sources. Hopkinton is a desirable place to live for employees and leaders of technology firms along I-495, and the town continues to build on its residential offerings in the form of new single-family homes and multi-family condominium and apartment buildings. At this juncture, the town is wise to seek diversification of its revenue sources by encouraging firms and industries to locate and grow here.

The Dukakis Center's Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) creates a snapshot of Hopkinton's economic development efforts at a time when the town appears to be growing and thriving, but seeks to manage growth well, attracting new businesses and industries to build and diversify tax revenue without losing its attractiveness as a good place to raise a family. The following is an overview of where your town 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

Hopkinton enjoys valuable assets that can compel firms and developers to locate—or remain—in town. Chief among them are its skilled and educated **workforce composition**, smooth **traffic** flow and easy **parking**, and proximity to **highways**. A large proportion of Hopkinton's available sites for retail, manufacturing, and general office space are within easy access of a major highway entrance or exit, and the town is served by state routes 135 and 85 in addition to I-495 and I-90. The town's **single tax rate** for residential and commercial/industrial property is an advantage, as is lower-than-average **energy cost** for residential and commercial users.

Hopkinton has an abundance of **commercial/industrial-zoned land** available for development. Development sites are convenient to **amenities** including daycare and casual and fine dining options. Two of the town's available sites are five or more acres, a scale that developers require for large projects.

Hopkinton is on the right track in many aspects of economic development. The town has a community master plan in final draft stage that includes an **economic development plan**. The town has identified **target industry types** to attract, including travel and tourism; information technology; healthcare; other life sciences, including biotech; and alternative energy. Your chamber of commerce is involved in economic development activities, and you have a competitive advantage over other towns in that you have **marketing programs based on industry needs** and on Hopkinton's core strengths. You tap your existing firms to speak on the town's behalf in efforts to attract new firms to Hopkinton, which is a particularly effective approach. The town's business services are highly capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms, which is also a real plus.

Hopkinton also offers high quality of life, with **low crime rates** and **strong local schools** that propel students on to four-year colleges. The town participates in the Joseph P. Keefe Regional Technical High School district, located nearby in Framingham, which could help maintain a skilled local workforce. The town has a high degree of **physical attractiveness**, with well-maintained parks, streets, and sidewalks, and few or no abandoned or dilapidated properties, thanks to good code enforcement. Hopkinton has involved the local arts community in designing public spaces, and **recreational and cultural opportunities** abound, from parks and lakes to the Hopkinton Center for the Arts.



The Town of Hopkinton's **website** provides a number of useful resources for interested firms and site location specialists, including a list of local development policies and procedures and relevant contact information. Your town is ahead of the game in providing a **development permit checklist** and **useful links** to regional planning agencies and the Chamber of Commerce. Applications and other key **forms are date-certified** to ensure consistency between online and print forms. The Hopkinton Chamber of Commerce's excellent new Business and Community Guide is an outstanding offering with a prominent link on the home page. The website could be an excellent tool for making a good first impression. However, its design and organization needs improvement, as discussed below.

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

While the town has an overall economic development plan and has identified target industries, several challenges and areas for improvement exist.

Although Hopkinton has comparatively low electricity rates, **infrastructure** could be an important issue for particular types of businesses, with water supply, public sewer, and wastewater treatment systems currently insufficient to support added growth. As you increase marketing follow-up activities, you could seek to identify whether certain infrastructure limitations were "deal-breakers" or among the reasons firms may have decided not to locate in your town.

**Public transit** is not a core strength for Hopkinton. As young professionals and families consider Hopkinton or any location outside dense cities, they are increasingly seeking "walkability" and options for getting around car-free. Future planning should include seeking ways to create walkable business districts and better access to public transit, perhaps a shuttle service to the two nearby commuter rail stations.

The **timeliness of approvals** leaves something to be desired in Hopkinton, lagging somewhat behind that of the comparison group municipalities, and should be enhanced to reduce business's "time to market" calculations. As abutters and neighborhood groups have slowed or stopped development in some cases, it would be wise to formulate a solid plan for abutter and neighborhood response early in the approval process, and to have city officials work to stay abreast of community reactions and facilitate dialogue with community groups. In addition, you could increase your town's business attractiveness by offering **fast-track permitting** options, such as pre-permitting or creating overlay districts, that allow expedited permitting for certain uses. These offerings have been identified by site location specialists as important to businesses.

More could be done to improve **marketing follow-up**, such as instituting a formal de-briefing process for firms that choose or do not choose to locate here and a system in place for keeping in touch with existing firms about their satisfaction with Hopkinton as a location. The Chamber of Commerce engages in such queries to an extent, but not formally. The town should strengthen its **industrial attraction policy** in ways that give shape to its marketing efforts and builds capacity for meeting the needs of target industries. In terms of **industry sensitivity** you could be more prepared to respond quickly if negative news or data were to emerge about Hopkinton or about any firms' dissatisfaction with the town.

Hopkinton has long benefitted from the presence of Dell EMC, the town's largest employer and taxpayer. With the recent buyout of EMC by Dell, Hopkinton may enjoy continued or increased revenue benefits. On the other hand, the merger could leave some uncertainty about how the company's Hopkinton presence may change, expand, or shrink in the future. As the dust settles on the merger, a wise economic development strategy will focus on attracting and retaining a strong and diverse array of new or complementary industries and firms that could help fill the gap should things change.

Massachusetts offers a wide array of special **tax incentives**, but when it comes to taking advantage of them, Hopkinton matches the comparison group in being only "somewhat" active. You would do well to look into how to better leverage state incentives.

Though chock full of resources, the town's **website** is not as user-friendly or attractive as it could be. As a source of important initial information for prospective firms and location specialists, Hopkinton's website needs some improvements in organization, appearance, and business-pertinent content. Your website is currently undergoing a redesign, so perhaps many of these deficiencies are already being addressed, but we offer the following notes and suggestions:

- The site could be a more effective tool for business attraction if it featured an **economic development portal** near the top of the home page so that site location specialists, firms, and developers don't have to hunt around for relevant pages and documents or be waylaid by announcements and listings aimed at current town residents.
- The dense cluster of icons on the home page (and secondary pages) gives it a cluttered look.
- In terms of content that developers might seek, you could benefit by adding a **flow chart of the permitting process**, a **list of pending applications**, and a **list of available development sites** with information such as owner, size of lot or buildings, zoning, assessed value, and current tax status.
- The capacity to **accept permit applications electronically** also would be a useful feature for firms and developers.

Recommendations	Priority
Make improvements to the town website to make it easier for firms and site location specialists to zero in on information pertinent to their interests.	High
Examine your permitting processes and work to remove delays wherever possible.	High
Conduct a feasibility study to analyze a full spectrum of options for improving water, sewer, and wastewater infrastructure and keep a close eye on whether infrastructure issues are important factors when firms decide not to locate in your town.	High
Continue to enhance your marketing activity by engaging local business spokespeople to promote Hopkinton, and strengthen marketing follow-up by formally de-briefing firms about why they have or have not chosen your town.	Med