

Northeastern University  
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

**EDSAT REPORT FOR THE TOWN OF  
WINTHROP, MASSACHUSETTS  
JANUARY 2017**

NATIONAL  
LEAGUE  
of CITIES | CENTER  
FOR RESEARCH  
& INNOVATION



Northeastern University  
*School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs  
Dukakis Center for Urban & Regional Policy*

## 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, Winthrop 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 Winthrop 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>• 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>• 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>• 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>	<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>		

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

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

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

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

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

<input type="radio"/> <b>E. Airports</b>			
Report of ██████ as compared to all jurisdictions			
<i>Question</i>	██████████		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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 Winthrop's primary strengths and weaknesses in the realm of economic development. EDSAT does not provide an overall grade for a jurisdiction, but rather assesses a jurisdiction's unique set of strengths, weaknesses, and economic development objectives.

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

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

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

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

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

**TRAFFIC:** Although Winthrop does not tap the services of a transportation consultant, traffic is managed relatively well, especially in view of the town's proximity to Boston and Logan Airport.

**PARKING:** Given that most of your available sites are concentrated in the town's dense commercial centers, where parking is free, parking performs relatively well.

#### Strengths among *Important* Location Factors

**SITE AMENITIES:** In this dense and compact town, available development sites generally are conveniently located close to fast food, fine dining establishments, and retail shops as well as daycare facilities.

**PUBLIC TRANSIT:** Winthrop's available sites of all types are largely located near public transit. Bus lines link the town to the nearby MBTA Blue Line, and transit service runs on nights and weekends. The town currently lacks a transit-oriented development strategy, however, which is a missed opportunity in this area of competitive advantage.

**PREDICTABLE PERMITS:** In contrast with the comparison group, your town provides a development handbook and permitting process flowchart in addition to the permit requirements checklist typically offered by comparison group municipalities (CGM).

**CRIME:** Your town has a lower crime rate for robberies, auto theft, and homicide than the comparison towns.

**LOCAL TAX RATES:** Your town has an advantage over the CGM in having a unified residential and commercial property tax rate, seen as an important factor among location specialists (though Winthrop's rate is slightly higher than the CGM). The town diversifies sources of public revenue by collecting local hotel and meals taxes.

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

**AIRPORTS:** Winthrop enjoys close proximity to Logan International Airport, which can be reached by car in less than 20 minutes and is accessible by public transit.

**WATER TRANSPORTATION:** Winthrop's private commuter ferry to Rowe's Wharf in Boston is potentially a positive factor for tourism as well as an attractive amenity for Winthrop residents and workers. [Note: Color code should appear green to indicate this as a strength. We regret the computer error.]

**PROXIMITY TO UNIVERSITIES:** With its location near Boston and Cambridge, Winthrop has at least 15 public and private colleges and universities nearby, a number of which are major research centers. For vocational training, the town participates in the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School district in Wakefield.

**PERMITTING OMBUDSMAN:** Your town's requirement for numerous local business licenses suggests that Winthrop ensures that high health and safety standards are maintained. In addition, the town has been a leader in clarifying regulations for private short-term rentals such as Airbnb. The local license process can be completed in a short time, and your town provides assistance with state or federal license applications. Similar to the CGM, Winthrop has a development team to review major projects and has local officials charged with ensuring efficiency of the permitting process.

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

Despite the competitive advantages listed above, Winthrop 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 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 Winthrop'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 Winthrop'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:** In most categories, the permit review process for new projects takes longer in Winthrop than in comparison cities.

**WEBSITE:** Your town does not have a dedicated webmaster or staff member overseeing its website. While website features match the comparison group in many aspects, there is ample room for improvement, including the addition of a more prominent economic development portal and more user-friendly navigation.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** Winthrop's water supply and public sewer systems have capacity for current needs only, and your town's energy costs for residential and commercial users are higher than comparison towns.

**RENTS:** Winthrop has little to no office or industrial space available for rent. Where available, rent for existing space is similar to the CGM. The town lacks a wide range of office space quality and affordability, with no existing Class A space.

**LABOR (AVAILABLE):** Winthrop's percentage of residents who are high school graduates is significantly lower than that of the CGM.

**HIGHWAY ACCESS:** None of Winthrop's available retail, manufacturing or office space sites are close to a limited-access major highway. In addition, the town imposes weight restrictions.

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

**PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS:** Maintenance of streets and sidewalks near your town’s available business sites is weaker than in comparison towns, and a slightly larger percentage of commercial buildings are vacant, closed, boarded up and/or would need renovations to open. While the town has a 311 reporting system, it lacks systems for sharing communication and work orders across departments.

**CRITICAL MASS FIRMS:** Winthrop has a development strategy, but it does not currently target specific industry types or sectors, and the town is not part of a regional OEDP or CEDS. The town lacks an industrial attraction policy and does not work to interpret the needs of desirable industry clusters.

**INDUSTRY SENSITIVITY:** Your town has no marketing programs based on existing core strengths, identified opportunities, or industry concentrations. In addition, your town does not actively engage local businesses to help market the town to potential businesses.

**CROSS-MARKETING:** Your town could do more to tap existing businesses to help attract new businesses to Winthrop and to work with regional planning organizations and the Chamber of Commerce on marketing the town to new firms.

**MARKETING FOLLOW-UP:** Winthrop does not have a formal de-briefing process with firms that choose or do not choose to locate in the town, nor a procedure for hearing from existing local firms about their level of satisfaction. Your town does not differ from the comparison group in this, but it is a critical area for improvement.

**STATE AND LOCAL BUSINESS INCENTIVES:** Winthrop takes little advantage of a variety of state tax incentive program offerings. Although your municipality offers EDIPs and BIDs for retail development and assists in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanism, it does not offer any abatements or other incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction.

**COMPLEMENTARY/SUPPLEMENTARY BUSINESS SERVICES:** Similar to comparison group municipalities, Winthrop has an active economic development committee, but its local chamber of commerce is only moderately involved in economic development activities. In addition, it lacks an incubator or other start-up space for businesses and local business services lack the capability to work with emerging technical and scientific firms, a disadvantage compared to the CGM—and a surprising one, given Winthrop’s proximity to high-priced Kendall Square and the Seaport Innovation District.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:** The influence of abutters and neighborhood groups slows the permitting process in your town and has at times blocked development proposals.

**LAND (SPACE):** Winthrop has no available vacant land zoned for commercial or industrial uses, and little vacant office or industrial space in existing structures.

**HOUSING:** Housing purchase and rental prices are higher than comparison towns. On the other hand, rental and home sales markets do not appear to be excessively tight, which likely helps keep price rises in check.

**LABOR COST:** Hourly wages are higher for mid-level clerical workers and lower for public high school teachers than in comparison towns, potentially raising questions about the value the town places on its schools.

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

**WORKFORCE TRAINING:** In contrast to the comparison group, Winthrop currently has no support for public-private partnerships to provide workforce training. Residents do not have ready access to adult education, as they do in the comparison jurisdictions. The town currently does not work with any career training centers or vocational schools to help develop skills for incoming industries. The town does, however, participate in the Wakefield Regional Vocational Technical School district, potentially enhancing local workforce readiness.

**RAIL:** The town does not have direct access to commuter rail, Amtrak, or rail freight service.

## DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

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

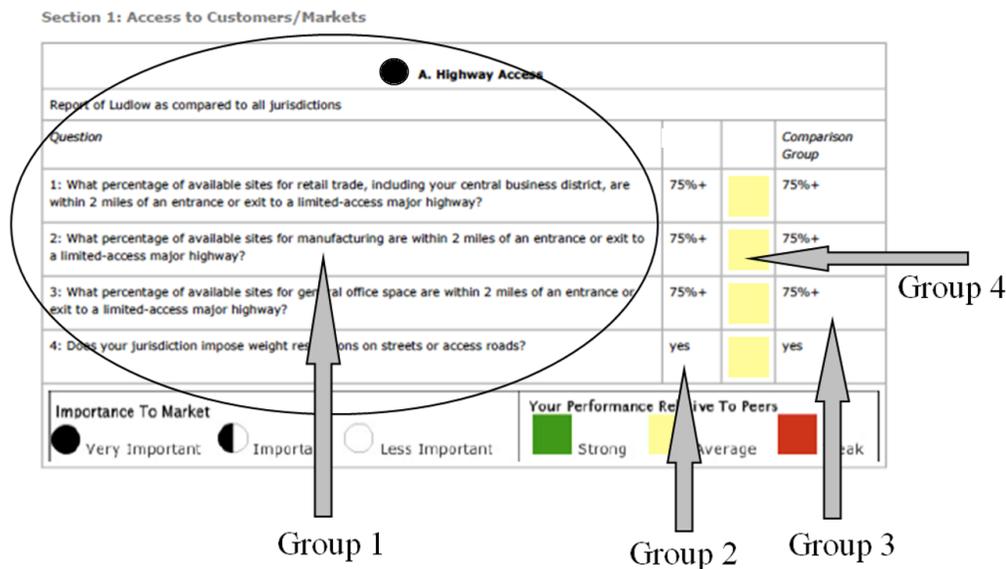
This ten-part portion of the report—its heart, really—is presented in the same order as the questions listed on the EDSAT questionnaire, with the tabular printout of Winthrop’s results appearing first, and our narrative summary and interpretation of the results appearing second. The tabular results are 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 Winthrop’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 Winthrop 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, Winthrop 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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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?	0%		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?	0%		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?	0%		75% or greater
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	yes		no

<b>B. Public Transit</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	75% or greater		50-74%
6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	75% or greater		26-49%
7: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	75% or greater		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

<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. Parking</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
12: What percentage of available sites for retail trade have on-site parking?	26-49%		75% or greater
13: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing have on-site parking?	26-49%		75% or greater
14: What percentage of available sites for general office space have on-site parking?	26-49%		75% or greater
15: Does your jurisdiction offer parking facilities near development sites?	yes		no
16: Have you used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking in your jurisdiction?	yes		no
17: How much is typically charged for parking in your central business district? \$/Hourly	0		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

<b>D. Traffic</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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?	no		yes
22: Do you have access to traffic count data for the major roadways in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the site? (e.g. installing traffic signals, metering flow)	no		yes
24: How would you rate traffic into and out of your jurisdiction during a typical weekday rush hour?	Moderately congested		Moderately congested
25: What is the average speed of automobile commuter traffic during a typical weekday rush hour?	11 - 25 mph		11 - 25 mph
26: Do you require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	yes		yes

<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   Weak              No Comparison         </p>
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**E. Airports**

Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		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?	0-5 miles		between 20-30 miles and 31 miles or more
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?	Less than 20 minutes		21 minutes to 60 minutes

**F. Rail**

Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		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

<b>G. Physical Attractiveness</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties, abandoned vehicles, trash disposal within your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
35: To what extent does your jurisdiction maintain streets, sidewalks, parks, etc., near available development sites?	Weakly		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?	no		no
38: Do you involve the arts community in the design of open space (street furniture, murals, etc.)?	no		no
39: What percentage of the acreage within your jurisdiction is reserved for parks?	6-10%		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?	6-10%		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)?	0-5%		6-10%

<b>H. Water Transportation</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
45: Do you have water based transportation facilities within your jurisdiction? Check all that apply.	Commuter ferry		None

<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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*Note:* The color code should appear green to indicate that Water Transportation is a strength. As other sections of this report make clear, the commuter ferry is an asset for Winthrop. We regret the computer error.

## 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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
1: Is your local chamber of commerce or business association actively involved in the economic development activities of your jurisdiction?	Moderately		Moderately
2: Does your jurisdiction have an active volunteer economic development committee or nonprofit center for economic development?	yes		yes
3: Is there an incubator or other form of cooperative space for start-up businesses in your jurisdiction?	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?	Not 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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		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)?	no		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?	no		yes
12: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? Other, please specify (Your Municipality)	No Targets		
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)	No Targets		
14: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)	Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		
15: Which of the following jurisdictions have development specialists to assist in interpreting the needs of these clusters? (Choose all that apply)			
- Your Municipality	no		yes
- Regional/County	yes		no
- State	yes		no
16: How aggressive is your Industrial attraction policy?	Don't have one		Moderate

### Importance To Market

 Very Important  Important  Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong  Average  
 Weak  No Comparison

<b>C. Cross Marketing</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
17: Do you actively enlist the services of firms already resident in your jurisdiction to assist in attracting new firms?	no		no
18: Do you engage local and regional business organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
19: Do you engage regional planning and development organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	no		yes
20: Do you engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes

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

<b>E. Proximity to Universities &amp; Research</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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?	15		2
27: How many community colleges are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
28: How many vocational/technical schools are located within your jurisdiction?	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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### 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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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	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	19.70		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	17.29		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	n/a		13.03

<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. Rents**

Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	12		12
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	n/a		13
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	n/a		6
15: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A	n/a		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	12		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	n/a		9.00
18: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A	n/a		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	n/a		12
20: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	n/a		9
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	0		12
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	50		between 40 and 44
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	50		40

**Importance To Market**

 Very Important  
  Important  
  Less Important

**Your Performance Relative To Peers**

 Strong  
  Average  
 Weak  
  No Comparison

<b>C. Quality of Available Space</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
24: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered contaminated or brownfield sites?	0-10%		0-10%
25: What experience does your jurisdiction have with the redevelopment of contaminated or brownfield sites?	None		Limited
26: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers?	11-20%		11-20%
27: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites?	0-10%		21-35%

<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>D. Land (space)</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	0 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?	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?	0-10%		11-20%

<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 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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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?	\$17.26-\$22.25		\$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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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%		26-49%
7: What percentage of your workforce is Technically skilled	1-25%		26-49%
8: What percentage of your workforce is Managerial	26-49%		1-25%
9: What percentage of your workforce is Professional	1-25%		1-25%
10: What percentage of your workforce are current English language learners?	0-10%		0-10%

<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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<input type="radio"/> <b>C. Unions</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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

<input checked="" type="radio"/> <b>D. Labor (available)</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
14: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a high school diploma?	35-50%		85% or greater
15: What percentage of residents age 25 or older have earned at least a bachelor's degree?	21-35%		21-35%

<input type="radio"/> <b>E. Workforce Training</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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	no		
- Area High schools	yes		
- Voc-tech schools or community colleges	no		
- Human service or nonprofit career training centers	no		
17: Do you support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	no		yes
18: Is there an adult education program readily available to residents of your jurisdiction?	no		yes

<b>Importance To Market</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very Important <input type="radio"/> Important <input type="radio"/> Less Important			<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> 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 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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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

<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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<b>B. Sites Available</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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?	no		no
8: Do you maintain an active relationship with commercial real estate brokers, developers, or agents with sites in your jurisdiction?	no		yes
9: Do your land use regulations protect land currently zoned industrial from encroachment by residential or other incompatible uses?	no		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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
12: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for new projects?: Site plan review	21-24 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	5-8 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	0-4 weeks		5-8 weeks
18: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for existing structures?: Zoning variance	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	5-8 weeks		5-8 weeks
20: What is the average time (in weeks) from application to completion of the review process for existing structures?: Building permit	9-12 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>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>D. Predicable Permits</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
<i>Question</i>	<i>Winthrop</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?	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

<b>E. Fast Track Permits</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
<i>Question</i>	<i>Winthrop</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?	yes		no
29: Do you market "fast track" permitting to potential developers or firms?	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   Weak              No Comparison         </p>
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## F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process

Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
30: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in your jurisdiction?	Very much		Somewhat
31: To what extent do organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting?	Very much		Somewhat
32: To what extent do elected officials in your jurisdiction expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups?	Somewhat		Very little
33: Do you establish a specific time frame and procedure for abutter or neighborhood response in the initial stage of the process?	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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		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?	yes		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	yes		no
- Child care services	no		no
- Construction contractor	no		no
- Home health care	no		no
- Massage therapist	yes		no
- Real estate agent/broker	no		no
- Restaurant	yes		no
- Skilled Trades (electrician, plumber, etc)	no		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

Importance To Market

Very Important Important Less Important

Your Performance Relative To Peers

Strong Average  
 Weak No Comparison

## Section 6: Quality of Life (Community)

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

 <b>A. Cultural and Recreational Amenities</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 residents last year in your jurisdiction?	319		between 256 and 265
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 residents last year?	61		between 80 and 82
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 residents last year?	16		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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## C. Housing

Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
12: What was the median sale price of a single-family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$351,000-\$450,000		\$251,000-\$350,000
13: What was the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment in your jurisdiction last year?	\$1251 or greater		\$1001-\$1250
14: What is the homeownership rate?	66-75%		66-75%
15: What is the vacancy rate for rental housing?	5-7%		3-5%
16: What percent of homes are for sale?	3-5%		Less than 3%
17: Approximately what proportion of the major officers of firms located in your jurisdiction live in the community?	Most		Some

### Importance To Market



Very Important



Important



Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 Strong

 Average

 Weak

 No Comparison

## D. Local Schools

Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		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?	66-80%		66-80%
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in Mathematics?	66-80%		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	yes		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	1-25%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	976-1050		
25: What was the average composite score (English, math, reading, and science) for the ACT last year?			
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	no		
- Non-sectarian	no		
- Boarding	no		

### Importance To Market

 Very Important  Important  Less Important

### Your Performance Relative To Peers

 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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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	All		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

<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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		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?	Very little		Somewhat
3: Does your state allow for priority funding for distressed economic areas?	yes		yes

<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   Weak              No Comparison         </p>
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**B. Local**

Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
4: Does your jurisdiction offer existing businesses property tax abatement?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
5: If yes, what proportion of existing businesses are offered abatements?	1-25%	<input type="checkbox"/>	1-25%
6: Does your jurisdiction offer new businesses property tax abatement?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
7: If yes, what proportion of new businesses are offered abatements?	1-25%	<input type="checkbox"/>	1-25%
8: Who negotiates the tax abatement?	Executive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Legislative
9: Does your jurisdiction offer any of the following incentives for businesses to locate in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)			
- Revolving loan fund	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Loan guarantees	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Revenue bonds	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Equity participation	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Business district group loans	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- None	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
- Investment tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Job training tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Research and development (R&D) tax credits	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Low (subsidized) interest loans	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Workforce training grants	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Other, please specify	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
10: Does your jurisdiction actively pursue federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
11: Does your jurisdiction use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other programs to provide tax breaks to businesses?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
12: Does your jurisdiction grant TIFs or similar programs for retail development?	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
13: Does your jurisdiction assist in securing financing for businesses with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no
14: Do you actively try to attract local, state, and federal facilities to your jurisdiction?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
15: Is any part of your jurisdiction in a designated Enterprise Zone?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
16: Do you participate in a regional brownfield revolving loan fund or offer your own?	No brownfields funds utilized	<input type="checkbox"/>	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.

					
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions					
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group		
1: What types of taxes are collected by your jurisdiction to pay for local services?					
- Property tax	yes		yes		
- Local sales tax	no		no		
- Local income tax	no		no		
- Hotel room tax	yes		no		
- Meals tax	yes		no		
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	1%-10%		1%-10%		
3: Does your jurisdiction tax property in industrial or commercial uses at a different rate than residential properties?	no		yes		
4: If yes, what is the tax rate on industrial/commercial property? \$ /\$1,000	n/a		19.68		
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000	n/a		11.29		
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?	14.44/1000		between 13.91 and 13.97		
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	0.00%				
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	6.00%				
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	93.37%				
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	no		no		
<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>Importance To Market</b>   Very Important               Important               Less Important         </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <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 Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions

Question	Winthrop		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?	0-50		0-50
15: When do you choose to auction tax title properties?	1-5 years		1-5 years
16: Do you have an organized and defined process for conducting such auctions and ensuring that they are successful?	yes		yes
17: Do you auction the "right to foreclose" on tax delinquent properties?	no		no
18: Do you seek tax abatement on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners?	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

<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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## 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.

<b>A. Website</b>			
Report of Winthrop as compared to all jurisdictions			
Question	Winthrop		Comparison Group
1: Does your jurisdiction's website list all local development policies and procedures?	yes		between yes and no
2: Does your website have contact information for key officials?	yes		yes
3: Does your website have general information about your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
4: How frequently is your website updated?	Weekly		Weekly
5: Does your website include an explicitly designed economic development tool aimed at businesses and developers?	no		no
6: Is there a development permit checklist or flow chart on the website?	yes		no
7: Are permit applications available for downloading on the website?	yes		yes
8: Are applications and other forms date certified to ensure that they are the most recent versions (i.e. the same versions that you would get in person)?	no		no
9: Is it possible to file permit applications electronically?	yes		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
- Contamination	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	no		no
- Regional development organizations	no		no
- Workforce training organizations	no		no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	no		no
- Demographic information	no		no
- Economic development agencies	no		no
- Other, please specify	yes		no
16: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	no		no
- Chambers of Commerce	yes		no
- Community development corporations	no		no
- Arts and cultural organizations	no		no
- Sports and recreation venues	no		no
- Convention and tourist organization	no		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
17: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	no		yes
<b>Importance To Market</b>  Very Important  Important  Less Important		<b>Your Performance Relative To Peers</b>  Strong  Average  Weak  No Comparison	

## NEXT STEPS

Winthrop is a small seaside municipality located just northeast of Boston on a peninsula in Boston Harbor. The densely-populated town grew up along a railroad line, and its multiple business districts emerged around former train stops. As of the 2010 census, Winthrop's population was 17,497, a slight drop from the 2000 population. Though it became technically a city when it adopted a council-manager form of government in 2006, Winthrop remains known as a town with a city form of government. It is part of Suffolk County, along with Boston, Chelsea, and Revere.

The vast majority of Winthrop's property tax revenue—about 93%—comes from residential sources, with most of the remainder derived from commercial sources. Economic development goals should aim to diversify revenue sources and build upon existing sources by encouraging and attracting new residential development and new businesses.

Existing businesses are located in a central business district and several longstanding neighborhood mini-business districts. There is no "highway business district," nor large tracts of vacant, developable land for commercial/industrial use. Town and business leaders expressed a clear preference for increasing residential population and building on the town's small business sector over working to attract large manufacturing or other industrial firms, thus helping to retain Winthrop's small-town character and capitalize on its residential and retail district density.

Planning for transit-oriented development to increase both residential and small commercial spaces, while taking advantage of public transit availability through the nearby Blue Line and the private ferry service, could increase both business and high-density residential space, making Winthrop more welcoming to new small business proprietors and residents. With its proximity to Boston, access to public transit, and already dense urban fabric, Winthrop is well-positioned to attract so-called millennials drawn to walkable urban living as they enter their childrearing years.

The Dukakis Center's Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) creates a snapshot of Winthrop's economic development efforts at a time when the town seeks to attract new businesses and residents in order to bring in greater and more diverse tax revenue and create attractive, thriving business districts. 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

With shoreline views of both the Atlantic Ocean and the Boston skyline and beach and recreation areas, yacht clubs, marinas, a golf course, and community festivals, along with easy access to Greater Boston's educational and cultural amenities, Winthrop is well-positioned to be an attractive location for both businesses and new residents.

Winthrop enjoys valuable economic development assets that can compel firms and residents to locate—or remain—in town. Chief among them are its **proximity to prominent universities** and ready access to **public transportation** and a **major international airport**. Bus service to the Blue Line—the transit gateway to the Boston core and Logan Airport—should be increased and more heavily marketed, in a dual strategy, as should the town's private **water transportation** service. The commuter ferry holds potential as an attractive amenity to draw new residents who commute to Boston and also to serve tourists enjoying the Boston Harbor and potentially taking day trips to Winthrop and people commuting into Winthrop for jobs located in the town. Examine opportunities to increase ferry service to more seasons and to partner with other communities in its operation, and explore subsidy programs to help bring down the price. At the same time, publicize and market the ferry's presence to businesses, residents, and tourists.

**Parking** and **traffic** flow are relatively untroubled. On the positive side, your town offers parking facilities near available sites and has used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking. Parking in the central business district is free — an advantage over nearby Greater Boston cities, though similar to the EDSAT comparison city group. And while local residents may consider parking difficult in Winthrop, it is relatively easy compared to larger Boston-area urban business districts. The percentage of available business sites with on-site parking is lower than in comparison group cities—but if walkability and compactness are to be highlighted, this may not be a crucial disadvantage. Traffic congestion and speed at rush hour matches the CGM, as does your town's requirement for traffic impact analyses for large-scale projects. Winthrop has an advantage over

the CGM in that it does not require developers to provide extra traffic mitigation. While your town does not routinely utilize a transportation consultant, you have access to MAPC engineers and you have a traffic safety advisory committee.

Instead of spread-out highway business districts and large tracts of vacant land, Winthrop boasts compactness and density. The best strategies will highlight and build upon the potential for walkability and natural clustering of small and medium-sized businesses. Available business sites are consistently located near important amenities such as food and retail establishments and daycare facilities.

Your town outperforms the comparison group in providing a development handbook and permitting checklist, and should continue to streamline these resources and keep them up-to-date and readily accessible to businesses looking at Winthrop as a possible location. The town has its own Chamber of Commerce, offering support and services to existing businesses. The Chamber could be tapped to assist with marketing and resources to attract additional businesses.

In addition, Winthrop offers a relatively comfortable way of life. It has a relatively low **crime** rate, although its somewhat higher residential burglary rate than the CGM suggests it would be wise to assess and prioritize potential improvements in this area. And local **recreational amenities** such as a skating rink, parks, beaches, and recreation areas all can be attractive to potential firms and new residents. The planned Belle Isle Marsh Marine Ecology Park and Marsh Walk are assets that could further enhance the attractiveness of the town and perhaps add eco-tourism to your business sector mix.

Winthrop has a fairly evenly distributed **workforce composition**, though the proportion of technically skilled workforce is lower than that of the CGM. Your town has a competitive advantage over the comparison group in its relatively high managerial and low semi-skilled workforce percentages.

## AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The **physical attractiveness** of Winthrop's central business district is a key area for improvement. Instead of waiting to make improvements until new businesses and developers show interest, the town should take a proactive approach, addressing issues of deteriorated sidewalks, boarded-up buildings, and trash, as well as initiating, encouraging, and supporting local beautification efforts. The town should work with local businesses to ensure enforcement is seen as a positive effort rather than anti-business.

The town's **website** is not as useful as it could be. Information of interest to new businesses is not readily visible. Websites often deliver businesses and developers their initial impressions of towns and cities, with the official town website likely to be among the very first items popping up in an internet search on the town name. While Winthrop's website contains some useful resources and tools, including master plan documents, a site plan review checklist, and a link to the Chamber of Commerce (which features a directory of local businesses), in general, it takes time to track down departments, information, and forms through its current system of separate drop-down lists, links that bring the user to another link before displaying the document of interest, and links that are vaguely titled (for example, "Form A").

The website could be a much more effective tool for business attraction if it featured an economic development portal prominently on the home page. Other improvements include adding an up-to-date list of available commercial sites, date-certified forms, and other key resources for businesses taking a first look at Winthrop.

In terms of **cross-marketing**, Winthrop is engaging with local business organizations and state agencies to market the town, and participates in the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism's Massvacation.com site, but it could do more to enlist firms already in town to help attract new firms and to work with regional organizations and the Chamber of Commerce to help market the town. **Marketing follow-up** could also be improved, for instance by establishing a process to debrief with businesses that choose to locate or not to locate in Winthrop. In addition, you could engage more actively in **complementary/supplemental business services**, such as moving forward with creating a business incubator and developing greater capacity to offer business services to emerging science and technology firms. With no industrial attraction policy currently in place, the town could improve its **industry sensitivity**, working to attract businesses and prepare for new industries by tailoring a marketing program that highlights the town's core strengths, addresses the needs of desired sectors,

and enlists current business people in efforts to market Winthrop’s assets—the strengths that make it a good place to do business.

**Citizen participation in the review process** can be a good thing, reflecting the care neighbors bring to their community. In Winthrop, however, abutter and neighborhood group resistance has been a significant issue, slowing the development review process and thus reducing “time to market.” As Winthrop’s efforts to attract new businesses become more vigorous and successful, you would be wise to formulate a solid plan with a time frame for citizen participation and response early in the approval process. Other towns have been able to smooth the community process by instituting by-right zoning. Your town’s establishment of overlay districts is a plus; consider also offering pre-permitting and/or fast-tracking for desired development uses. To soften ingrained resistance to change, the town, the Chamber of Commerce, and business owners might consider launching a campaign to engage current residents in marketing the town and helping to welcome new businesses and residents.

Massachusetts offers a wide array of special **tax incentives**, but Winthrop is doing less than the CGM to take advantage of them. You might do well to examine how you could better leverage state incentives. The town would be best equipped to pursue these subsidies with a vision in place: an industrial attraction policy that concentrates on both mixed-use retail and small tech firms, and aggressive transit-oriented development planning that includes more **available space** for office and light industrial work, as well as retail.

Finally, Winthrop’s water **infrastructure** could present obstacles for business development, with water supply and public sewer systems currently insufficient to support growth. Even though the town is disinclined and unequipped to bring in large commercial or industrial enterprises that would require substantial water services, a feasibility study to determine financing, engineering, and use strategies is advisable.

Recommendations	Priority
Place an immediate priority on working to maintain and improve the appearance and safety of the central business district.	High
Improve the town’s website by creating a visually prominent, crystal-clear path to resources for doing business in Winthrop.	High
Take steps to make the permitting process faster and more predictable, including looking into establishing by-right zoning to help smooth and shorten the community response phase.	High
Identify desirable businesses/sectors for Winthrop and create a targeted attraction strategy, including engaging existing local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to help market the town.	High
Establish policies, plans, and marketing strategies to spur mixed-use, transit-oriented development to increase options for attracting both residents and small and mid-sized businesses.	Medium
Conduct a feasibility study to determine how to improve Winthrop’s water system, and how to finance it.	Medium