Self-Assessment Survey Results

City of Springfield, Massachusetts

The Center for Urban and Regional Policy

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Center for Urban and Regional Policy Northeastern UNIVERSITY

Introduction

In this report you will find: (a) a summary of Springfield's responses to the self-assessment questionnaire, (b) a peer analysis that highlights how Springfield's responses compare to those from the eleven other Massachusetts cities that participated in this phase of the project, and (c) insights from the development community to help you begin thinking about these issues in a concrete, actionable way. We look forward to reviewing this report with you at your earliest convenience. As promised, all individual results will be kept strictly confidential.

Project Overview

The self-assessment questionnaire and accompanying analysis are part of an ongoing collaboration between the Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University, the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP), the NAIOP Foundation, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, and twelve cities in Massachusetts with the support of NSTAR, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, and the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission. From its inception in 2003, the team has aggressively sought to identify the "deal breakers" impeding private investment in older industrial cities. We explored and identified what cities could do to respond to changing market forces, and highlighted strategic opportunities for other key actors, including state government, the private sector, academic institutions, and regional agencies. Our focus in recent months has been the development of the self-assessment questionnaire and the creation of an analytical framework for providing feedback to Springfield and the other participating cities. From this base we will develop a series of seminars to help you build on your strengths and address areas of concern.

Methodology

The self-assessment questionnaire is the product of a rigorous and interactive process involving the research team, our partners in the development community (including NAIOP and CoreNet Global), and the twelve cities in the study. That process generated a set of 36 broad themes – representing a total of 190 specific questions – relevant to economic growth and development.
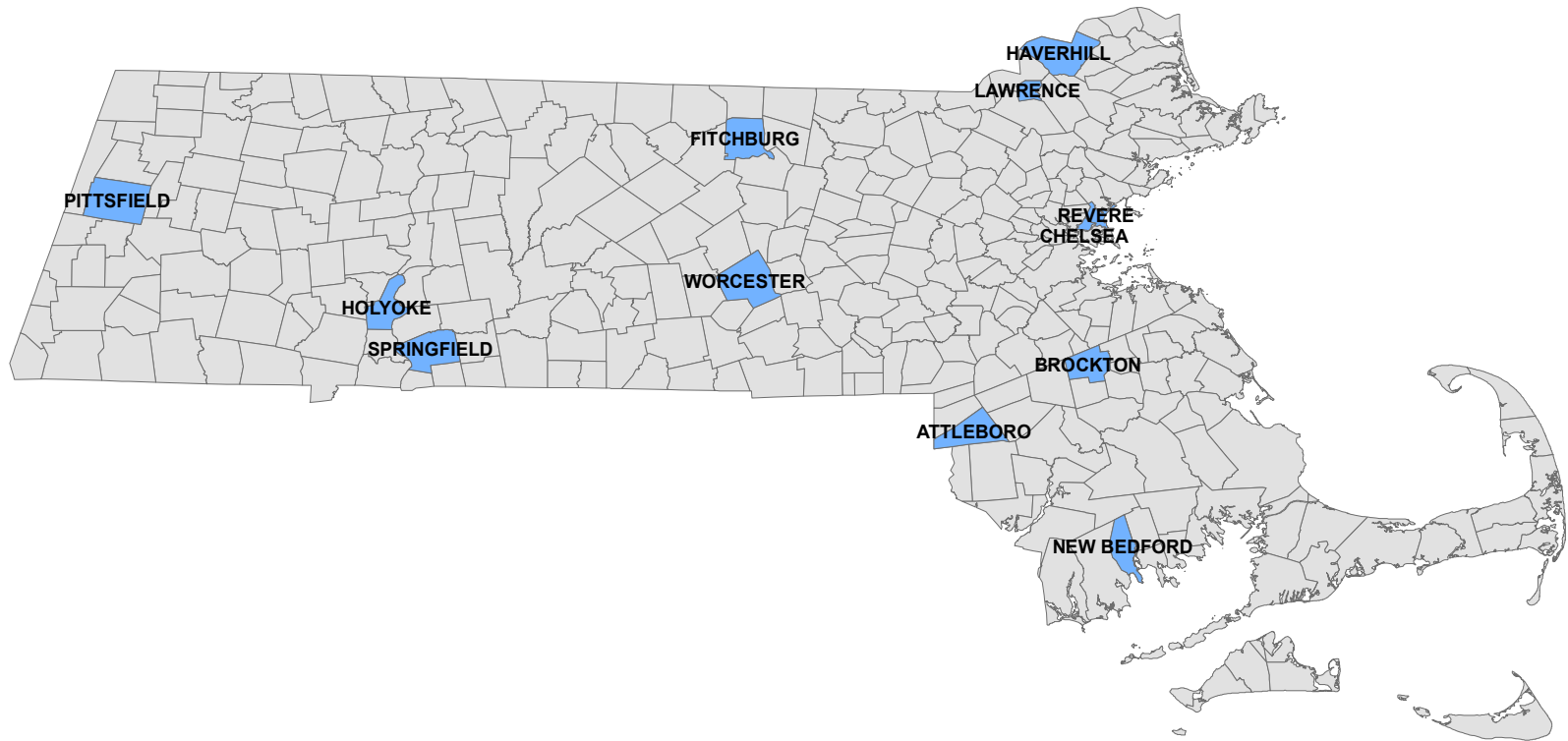
At the same time, we surveyed a large group of NAIOP and CoreNet Global members and asked them to tell us which of those broad themes – e.g., highway access, amenities, the timeliness of approvals and appeals, etc. – were most important to firms and their advisors in the location decision. Their insights are intended to help you determine where to focus time and resources going forward.

The data in this report are presented in four columns:

- The first column lists Springfield's individual responses to the questionnaire. We've color coded the data in this column to indicate how Springfield's responses compare to those of the other cities that completed the questionnaire: Green means Springfield is doing well relative to its peers; Yellow means Springfield is on par with its peers; Red suggests Springfield may be at a disadvantage.
- The second column provides the summary data for all twelve cities so you can identify the size of the gap between Springfield and its peers on each measure.
- The third column shows how important the development community believes each broad factor is to the location decision. While *all* of the items contained in the self-assessment tool *do* play a role in the development process, the industry told us that certain factors are absolutely critical, while others are less crucial in the overall mix. A full (black) circle indicates high importance; a half (black and white) circle indicates moderate importance; a blank (white) circle indicates the factor is less important relative to the others.
- Finally, the fourth column provides commentary in those places where additional information might facilitate the interpretation of the results. For example, certain criteria are more important in industrial development (e.g. rail access) than in retail or office park development.

Note that we have not provided an overall grade for Springfield. Each of the twelve cities has its own unique set of strengths and weaknesses, thus we believe it would not be instructive to assign arbitrary grades. Rather, we hope that this detailed breakdown of your relative performance will provide a solid base for further self-assessment, an opportunity for informed dialogue with your colleagues, and a roadmap for action.

Massachusetts Comparison Cities
Cities Participating in the Beta Version of
the Self-Assesmet Tool

HAVERHILL

LAWRENCE

FITCHBURG

PITTSFIELD

REVERE
CHELSEA

WORCESTER

HOLYOKE

SPRINGFIELD

BROCKTON

ATTLEBORO

NEW BEDFORD

Strengths

*In our analysis of factors that are deemed " **very important"** and **"important"** in our survey of developers and site location specialists, the city of Springfield does very well, **relative to its peers** in the following areas:*

1. The city does not require off site traffic mitigation for development. The city has access to inter-city Amtrak service but unlike most of the other cities in the study, it has no commuter rail. While some cities have better air service, access to Bradley International Airport is a strong asset.

2. The city has excellent colleges and universities. These institutions could to be integrated into the city's overall industrial attraction and retention strategy, the way other cities in the study have done.

3. The rents for properties in the city are well below average, compared to the other cities. This is a great strength for an overall marketing strategy. Unlike other cities in the study, the city also appears to be protecting these sites from encroachment and re-zoning. Much of the office space appears to be Class B (over 60%), which is high compared to other cities in the study.

In other factors, less important to market actors, Springfield also does very well, compared to other cities in the study. These include:

4. Springfield has a system for monitoring maintenance of physical attractiveness, which few other cities take into consideration.

5. The city's housing prices are less than half of their peer cities.

6. Unlike other cities, Springfield does seek abatement on tax title properties.

7. The city's overall website, when compared to the other cities, has important information necessary for attracting firms. However, there are weaknesses that need to be addressed quickly (contact information for city officials including phone numbers and e-mail, links to the Chamber of Commerce and arts and cultural organizations). It also needs aggressive management to keep it timely, fresh, and up-to-date.

Concerns

*In our analysis of factors that are deemed **"very important"** and **"important"** to developers and site location specialists, the city of Springfield does not do as well, relative to its peers, in the following areas:*

1. Parking is limited near development sites and fees for existing parking are significantly higher than averages in other cities. Springfield currently has no strategy to use sites near transit for transit oriented development.

2. The city has a higher than average percentage of vacant commercial and industrial space. Further, unlike other cities in the study, the city does not maintain an active relationship with commercial and real estate brokers with sites in the city. Also the city does not appear to be taking advantage of state tax incentives for attracting firms the way many of the other cities do.

3. While Springfield performs at or above average in most permitting approvals, the length of the appeals process is significantly higher than peer cities. The city does not have a checklist of permitting requirements to give to prospective firms.

4. The city has a high prevailing wage rate for blue-collar manufacturing workers. Although there is a reputation for being a strong union community, the market actors are no longer as concerned about this issue as in the past. While the city has an adult education program, it is over-subscribed.

5. The city has higher than average rates of crime for burglary, auto theft, robbery, and homicide.

6. A lower percentage of Springfield 10th graders tested as proficient or advanced on the 2004 MCAS and the city has a lower than average graduation rate for high school seniors.

In other factors, less important to market actors, Springfield also does not do as well as other cities in the study. These include:

7. The city appears to have a limited response to developing economic development strategies around clusters of existing industries, a technique used successfully by the other cities. There a number of colleges and universities and a large scale medical facility close by. There is a strong potential for using these assets as a strategy for attracting and expanding businesses. More significantly, the city has a weak response to marketing itself in order to attract industry. Other cities in the peer group do a much better job in this area.

8. The city's crime rate is more than 3 times the average among the peers for residential burglary, auto theft, and robbery and double the rate for homicide.

9. The city's public school students are below average, among the cities in the study, in MCAS performance and high school graduation rates.

10. Lack of amenities (fine dining, day care, and retail) is a problem in Springfield, compared to the other cities, particularly for attracting and retaining a high end work force.

11. Property tax rates are much higher than average among the peer cities.

Section 1. Access to Customers/ Markets

Results: Responses to the self-assessment survey

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 1. Access to Customers/Markets			
A. Highhway Access			⚫
Question 1: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	50-74%	50-74%	Distribution businesses require close/ immediate access to interstate.
Question 2: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	50-74%	50-74%	
Question 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?	50-74%	50-74%	
Question 4: Are there truck restrictions on city streets or access roads?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	⚫	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 1. Access to Customers/ Markets

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
B. Public Transit			◐	Of particular importance for existing workforce dependent on public transit.
Question 5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	75+%	75+%		
Question 6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	50-74%	75+%		
Question 7: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	50-74%	75+%		
Question 8: Is there a transit-oriented development strategy in the city's plan for attracting new firms?	No	Yes 8 of 12		
Question 9: Is there a commuter rail or bus stop within 5 miles of your municipality?	Yes	Yes 11 of 12		
Question 10: Does your municipality offer any shuttle services to other public commuting stations?	No	No 8 of 12		
Question 11: Is public transit service available on nights and weekends?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12		

City's Performance Relative to Peers			
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak	

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 1. Access to Customers/ Markets

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
C. Parking			●	
Question 12: What percentage of available sites for retail trade have on-site parking?	50-74%	50-74%		
Question 13: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing have on-site parking?	75+%	75+%		
Question 14: What percentage of available sites for general office space have on-site parking?	50-74%	Btw 50-74 & 75+%		Of particular importance to 24/7 operations.
Question 15: Has the city offered structured parking or satellite parking near development sites?	No	Yes 8 of 10		
Question 16: Has the city offered tax abatements to employers to provide off-site parking?	No	No 10 of 11		
Question 17: Has the city used state infrastructure grants to improve parking in the city?	Yes	Yes 10 of 12		
Question 18-1: How much is typically charged for parking in the downtown area? $ Hourly?	1.5	$0.45		
Question 18-2: How much is typically charged for parking in the downtown area? $ Daily	12	$7.75		
Question 18-3: How much is typically charged for parking in the downtown area? $ Monthly	85	$27.70		

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
▉ Strong	▉ Average	▉ Weak

Importance to Market		
Very Important ●	Important ◑	Less Important ○

Section 1. Access to Customers/ Markets

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
D. Traffic			●	
Question 19: Does the city have a traffic engineer or consultant on retainer?	Yes	Yes=6/ No=6		
Question 20: Does the city require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the site? (E.g. traffic signals nearby, metering flow.)	No	Yes 7 of 12		
Question 21: Does the city require firms or developers to provide traffic personnel to control employee arrival and departure flows?	No	No 11 of 11		
Question 22: How would you rate traffic into and out of your city during a typical weekday rush hour?	Moderately congested	Moderately congested		
Question 23: Does the city require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12		
E. Airports			○	
Question 24: Does the city have a municipal airport?	No	No 7 of 12		
Question 25: The closest regional airport is how many miles away?	11-20 miles	Btw 6-10 and 11-20		
Question 26: The closest major/international airport is how many miles away?	31+ miles	Btw 21-30 and 31+		Of particular importance to headquarters and consulting operations.

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 1. Access to Customers/ Markets

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
F. Rail		⚪	
Question 27: Does the city have rail freight service available?	Yes	Yes 11 of 12	Many manufacturers and distributors require spur to building.
Question 28: Does the city have intercity passenger rail service? (Check all that apply.)			
Question 28: Commuter	No	Yes 8 of 12	
Question 28: Inter-city/interstate (Amtrak)	Yes	No 8 of 12	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	⚪

Section 1. Access to Customers/ Markets

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
G. Physical Attractiveness			◑	
Question 29: To what extent does the city enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties/abandoned vehicles/trash and rubbish disposal in areas being marketed for development?	Moderately	Vigorously		
Question 30: To what extent does the city maintain streets, sidewalks, parks, city-owned lots, etc. near available development sites?	Moderately	Moderately		Of particular importance to retail.
Question 31: Is there a municipal hotline available for reporting code violations and maintenance needs?	No	Yes=6/ No=6		
Question 32: Is there a system for monitoring the timeliness and quality of responses?	Yes	No 9 of 12		
Question 33: What percentage of the acreage in the municipality is reserved for parks?	11-15%	11-15%		
Question 34: What percentage of your housing stock is considered dilapidated?	6-10%	6-10%		
Question 35: What percentage of your commercial buildings are boarded up or closed down?	0-5%	0-5%		
Question 36: What percentage of commercial and industrial space is presently vacant?	16-20%	Btw 6-10 & 11-15%		

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
▇ Strong	▇ Average	▇ Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 2. Agglomeration

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 2. Agglomeration			Specialized industries (Bio Tech, Nano tech) seek services that support clusters.
A. Complementary/ Supplemental Business Services			◑
Question 37: Are there branches of major accounting firms in the city?	No	No 8 of 12	
Question 38: Are there law firms in the city specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, and patents?	Yes	Yes=6/ No=6	
Question 39: Are there branches of major commercial banks in the city?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

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Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 2. Agglomeration

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
B. Critical Mass of Firms		◐	
Question 40: To what extent are the business services (e.g. venture capital, business planning, specialized recruiting, etc.) in the city capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms?	Moderately capable	Moderately capable	
Question 41: Are there firms within specific industry "clusters" that are targeted in the city's development strategy?	No	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 42: Does the city have development specialists available to assist in interpreting the needs of these clusters?	No	Yes 9 of 12	Working relations with state and regional specialists are important.
Question 43: Are any of these clusters among those identified in the state's development strategy? (Check all that apply)			
Question 43: Health care	No	Yes=6/No=6	
Question 43: Other life sciences, including bio-tech	No	Yes 8 of 12	
Question 43: Traditional manufacturing	No	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 43: Financial services	No	No 8 of 12	
Question 43: Information technology	No	No 8 of 12	
Question 43: Travel and tourism	No	Yes=6/No=6	
Question 44: Does the city have development specialists available to assist in interpreting the needs of one of the state's development clusters?	No	Yes 10 of 12	
Question 45: How aggressive is the city's industrial attraction policy?	Weak	Moderate	Strong outreach to industry is a competitive advantage.

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

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Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 2. Agglomeration

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
C. Cross Marketing			◐
Question 46: Does the city actively enlist the services of firms already resident in the city to assist in attracting new firms to the city?	No	Yes 7 of 12	
Question 47: Does the city engage local and regional business organizations to participate in marketing the city?	No	Yes 11 of 12	
Question 48: Does the city engage regional planning and development organizations to participate in marketing the city?	No	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 49: Does the city engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing the city?	No	Yes 10 of 12	
D. Marketing Follow-Up			◐
Question 50: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose to locate in the city about what made the difference?	No	No 11 of 12	
Question 51: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose not to locate in the city about what made the difference?	No	No 11 of 12	
Question 52: Does the city have a formal procedure for contacting current firms about their satisfaction with the city?	No	No 10 of 12	
Question 53: Does the city have a formal procedure for intervening when early news surfaces about firm dissatisfaction with the city?	No	No 7 of 12	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 2. Agglomeration

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
E. Proximity to Universities and Research			⭕
Question 54: Is there a major public or private four-year college or university within the city?	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 54: If yes, how many?	3		
Question 55: Is there a major public or private four-year college or university within 10 miles of the city?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12	
Question 55: If yes, how many?	2	2	
Question 56: Is there a community college within the city?	Yes	Yes 10 of 12	Important for manufacturing
Question 56: If yes, how many?	One	1	
Question 57: Is there a vocational/technical school within the city?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12	Important for manufacturing
Question 57: If yes, how many?	Two	1	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	⭕

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 3. Cost of Land (Implicit/ Explicit)			
A. Infrastructure			●
Question 58: Are there major limitations on any of the following existing infrastructure of the city? (Check all that apply)			
Question 58: Public Water	No	No 12 of 12	
Question 58: Public Sewer	No	No 11 of 12	
Question 58: Gas	No	No 12 of 12	
Question 58: Electric	No	No 12 of 12	
Question 58: Telecommunications Land Line	No	No 12 of 12	
Question 58: Telecommunications Fiber Optic/Cable/DSL	No	No 12 of 12	

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 3. Cost of Land

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
B. Rents			⬤
Question 59: What is the current average monthly square foot cost for existing retail space in the city?	$1.00	$11.63	
Question 60: What is the current average monthly square foot cost for existing manufacturing space in the city?	$0.35	$5.50	More important for small and medium sized businesses.
Question 61-1: Square foot cost for CLASS A	$16	$15.00	
Question 61-2: Square foot cost for CLASS B	$12	$12.00	
Question 61-3: Square foot cost for CLASS C	$8.50	$8.27	
Question 62-1: Of the available office space, what % is CLASS A	8%	22.5%	
Question 62-2: Of the available office space, what % is CLASS B	63%	25%	
Question 62-3: Of the available office space, what % is CLASS C	29%	50%	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	⬤	Important	◑	Less Important	◯

Section 3. Cost of Land

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
C. Quality of Available Space			◐
Question 63: Approximately what percentage of the available sites in your municipality would be considered contaminated redevelopment (brownfield) sites?	11-20%	11-20%	End users have minimal interest in developing brownfields sites.
Question 64: Approximately what percentage of the available sites in your municipality would be considered abandoned or underutilized shopping centers?	0-10%	0-10%	Back offices and call centers are interested.
Question 65: Approximately what percentage of the available sites in your municipality would be considered unused open land/greenfield sites?	0-10%	0-10%	
D. Land			◐
Question 66: Is there land in the city, currently zoned for other uses, that is currently under serious consideration for rezoning for commercial/industrial development?	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 66: If yes, how much?	Negligible		
Question 67: Is there land in the city, currently zoned for industrial development, that is currently under consideration for rezoning to non-industrial use?	No	Yes 8 of 12	
Question 68: What proportion of the parcels available for industrial development or large scale commercial development in the city is of 5 acres or more?	11-20%	Btw 0-10 and 11-20%	Large businesses seek 25+ acres.

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 4. Labor

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 4. Labor			
A. Labor Cost			◑
Question 69: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	$12.51 - $20	$7.51-$12.50	Major concern for manufacturers.
Question 70: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	$7.51 - $12.50	$7.51-$12.50	
Question 71: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	$45,000-$54,000	$45,000-$54,000	
Question 72: is there a local minimum/living wage statute?	No	No 11 of 11	
B. Workforce Composition			● Target area up to 25 mile radius.
Question 73: What percentage of the workforce in your city is:			
Question 73: Unskilled	1-25%	1-25%	
Question 73: Semi-skilled	1-25%	1-25%	
Question 73: Technically skilled	26-49%	1-25%	
Question 73: Managerial	1-25%	1-25%	
Question 73: Professional	1-25%	1-25%	
Question 74: What percentage of the city's workforce uses English as a second language?	21-35%	21-35%	

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 4. Labor

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment	
C. Unions			⚪	
Question 75: Has there been a major strike or work stoppage among the public or private workforce in the city in the last 3 years?	No	No 9 of 12		
Question 76: Has there been a major union organizing drive among public or private workers in the city in the last 3 years?	No	No 9 of 12		
Question 77: To what extent is your community considered a strong "union town"?	Very much	Somewhat		
D. Labor Force Education			⚫	
Question 78: What percentage of residents age 25+ have earned at least a high school diploma?	66-84%	51-65%		
Question 79: What percentage of residents age 25+ have earned at least a bachelor's degree?	11-20%	11-20%		

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	⚫	Important	◑	Less Important	⚪

Section 4. Labor

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment	
E. Workforce Training			⚪	
Question 80: Does the city interact with the following workforce training resources to respond to skill development needs of firms?				
Question 80: Regional employment board	Yes	Yes 9 of 10		
Question 80: High schools	Yes	Yes 8 of 11		
Question 80: Voc-tech schools	Yes	Yes 9 of 11		
Question 80: Community college	Yes	Yes 9 of 11		
Question 80: Career centers	Yes	Yes 9 of 11		
Question 81: Does the city support public/private partnerships to provide specific workforce training?	Yes	Yes 11 of 12		
Question 82: Does the city have an adult education program?	Yes	Yes 10 of 12		
Question 83: If "yes" is this program at capacity and/or is there a long waiting list to access it?	Yes	No 6 of 10		

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City's Performance Relative to Peers					
🟩	Strong	🟨	Average	🟥	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	⚪

Section 5. Municipal Process

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 5. Municipal Process			Courting prospects is crucial.
A. Industry Sensitivity		◑	
Question 84: Does the city have a marketing program based on the needs identified by firm location specialists?	No	No 9 of 12	
Question 85: Does the city have a quick response team when negative data/stories/incidents make the newspaper or other media markets?	No	No 7 of 12	
Question 86: Does the city actively engage other spokespersons to speak on behalf of the city?	No	Yes 6 of 11	
Question 87: Does the city have a strategy for engaging its racial or ethnic populations in unique businesses, festivals, etc. as a way to attract regional niche shopping?	No	Yes=6/No=6	
Question 88: Does the city have a strategy for taking locally developed products and bringing them into regional markets?	No	No 9 of 12	
B. Sites Available		◑	
Question 89: Does the city own sites that it is currently marketing for development?	Yes	Yes 8 of 12	
Question 90: Does the city maintain a complete list of sites that are available for development in the city?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12	Comprehensive site listing is important.
Question 91: Does the city maintain an active relationship with commercial real estate brokers/developers/agents with sites in the city?	No	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 92: Does the city protect land currently zoned industrial from encroachment for other uses?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 93: Does the city have special status (priority investment) with state and federal environmental agencies vis-à-vis brownfields management?	Yes	No 7 of 12	
Question 94: Does the city have an active strategy for reclaiming tax delinquent and tax title properties?	Yes	Yes 10 of 12	
Question 95: Does the city have an active strategy for reclaiming abandoned or underutilized shopping plazas?	No	No 10 of 12	

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market		
Very Important ●	Important ◑	Less Important ○

Section 5. Municipal Process

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment	
C. Timeliness of Approvals			●	Meeting aggressive timetable is critical.
Question 96: What is the average time from application to completion for new construction?	Weeks	Weeks		
Question 96: Site plan review	0-4	5-8		
Question 96: Zoning variance	5-8	5-8		
Question 96: Special permit	5-8	5-8 to 9-12		
Question 96: Building permit	0-4	0-4		
Question 96: Appeals process	13-16	5-8		
Question 97: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures?				
Question 97: Site plan review	0-4	0-4		
Question 97: Zoning variance	5-8	5-8		
Question 97: Special permit	5-8	5-8		
Question 97: Building permit	0-4	0-4		
Question 97: Appeals process	9-12	5-8		

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 5. Municipal Process

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
D. Predictability of Permits			◗	
Question 98: Does the city provide a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers?	No	Yes 7 of 12		
Question 99: Does the city provide a flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers?	No	No 8 of 12		
Question 100: Does the city provide a development handbook to prospective developers?	No	No 8 of 12		
Question 101: Does the city allow for a single presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with jurisdiction?	No	No 9 of 12		
E. Fast Track Permits			◗	
Question 102: Does the city pre-permit development in certain districts?	No	No 10 of 12		
Question 103: Does the city have a municipal industrial park that has expedited permitting?	No	No 9 of 12		
Question 104: Does the city have an "overlay" district that allows expedited permitting of certain uses?	No	No 7 of 12		
Question 105: Does the city market "fast track" permitting to potential developers or firms?	No	Yes=6/No=6		
F. Zoning by Right			◗	
Question 106: Does the zoning in industrial districts allow certain uses "by right"?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12		
Question 107: Does the zoning in commercial districts allow certain uses "by right"?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12		
Question 108: Does the zoning in retail districts allow certain uses "by right"?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12		
Question 109: Does the zoning in mixed use districts allow certain uses "by right"?	Yes	Yes 10 of 11		

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◗	Less Important	○

Section 5. Municipal Process

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
G. Neighborhood Organizations			◑	
Question 110: To what extent do abutters slow the permitting process in the city?	Somewhat	Somewhat		
Question 111: To what extent do organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting process in the city?	Somewhat	Somewhat		
Question 112: To what extent do "ward councilors" expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups?	Very little	Very little		
Question 113: Does the city establish a specific time frame and procedure for community response in the initial stage of the process?	No	Yes=6/No=6		
Question 114: Do citizen groups get multiple "bites at the apple" during the review process?	Yes	Yes 11 of 12		
Question 115: Has a development proposal been stopped by community opposition in the past 5 years?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12		
Question 116: Has the city intervened to salvage a development proposal which engendered community opposition in the last 5 years?	No	Yes 7 of 12		
Question 117: Are city development sites located in state designated "environmental justice" areas?	Yes	Yes=6/No=6		
H. Permitting Ombudsman			○	
Question 118: Does the mayor/city manager play a substantial role in the permitting process, or is there a city official empowered to do so?	No	Yes=6/No=6		
Question 119: Is there a "development cabinet" that is convened to review major developments?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12		
Question 120: Does the city have an established training program for development staff which regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	No	No 11 of 12		
Question 121: Does the city have an established training program for boards, commissions, authorities, districts, and city councilors which regularly identifies critical adjustments in policy or regulation to accommodate changing needs of firms?	No	No 11 of 12		

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 6. Quality of Life (city)

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 6. Quality of Life (city)			Major factors for headquarters and high-end workforce.
A. Good to Live			◑
Question 122: Does your city have a professional sports team?	Yes	No 9 of 12	
Question 123: Does your city have a major art or historical museum?	Yes	Yes 8 of 12	
Question 124: Is there a professional repertory theater company in the city?	No	No 9 of 12	
Question 125: Is there a civic center or major concert hall in the city?	Yes	No 7 of 12	
Question 126: Is there a public/private golf course in the city?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 127: Is there a professional orchestra, opera, or ballet company in the city?	Yes	Yes 7 of 12	
Question 128: Are there public beaches or boating activities within five miles of the city?	Yes	Yes 10 of 12	
B. Crime			◑
Question 129: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 in the city last year?	1,412	688	
Question 130: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 in the city last year?	1,517	655	
Question 131: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 in the city last year?	454	191	
Question 132: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 in the city last year?	11	6.3	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market		
Very Important ●	Important ◑	Less Important ○

Section 6. Quality of Life (city)

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
C. Housing			◑	
Question 133: What was the median sale price of a single family home in the city last year?	Less than $150,000	$251,000-$350,000		
Question 134: What was the median rent for a two bedroom apartment in the city last year?	$601- $800	$801-$1000		
Question 135: What is the home ownership rate in the city?	34-50%	34-50%		
Question 136: What is the vacancy rate for rental housing?	3-5%	3-5% to 5-7%		
Question 137: What is the vacancy rate for homeowners? (percent of homes for sale)	Less than 3%	3-5%		
Question 138: What proportion of the major officers of firms located in the city live in the city?	Few	Few		

City's Performance Relative to Peers					
🟩	Strong	🟨	Average	🟥	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 6. Quality of Life (city)

Question	Springfield	All Cities		Comment
D. Schools			◑	Regional concern
Question 139: What is the average K-12 per pupil expenditure in the city?	$7,501-$8,500	$7,501-$8,500		
Question 140: What percentage of the 10th grade students in the city tested as Proficient or Advanced level in English on the 2004 MCAS?	31-50%	51-65%		
Question 141: What percentage of 10th grade students in the city tested as Proficient or Advanced level in Mathematics on the 2004 MCAS?	1-30%	31-50%		
Question 142: What percentage of the city's K-12 students are eligible for a free or reduced-cost lunch?	75%+	50-74%		
Question 143: What is the average combined SAT score (Verbal and Math) for college-bound seniors?	901-975	901-975		
Question 144: What is the high school graduation rate for the city?	50-74%	75%+		
Question 145: What is the high school drop out rate for the city?	1-25%	1-25%		
Question 146: Have any of the schools in the municipality been deemed "underachieving" according to the MCAS standards?	Yes	Yes 7 of 9		
Question 147: What percentage of high school seniors go on to a four-year college?	26-49%	26-49%		
Question 148: Are there any charter schools in the city?	Yes	Yes 8 of 12		
Question 149: What types of private schools are there in the city?				
Question 149: Parochial	Yes	Yes 12 of 12		
Question 149: Non-sectarian	Yes	No 7 of 12		
Question 149: Boarding	Yes	No 10 of 12		

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market		
Very Important ●	Important ◑	Less Important ○

Section 7. Quality of Life (site)

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 7. Quality of Life (site)			High-end workforce concerns.
A. Amenities			◑
Question 150: What proportion of current development sites have the following within 1 mile?			
Question 150: Fast food restaurant	Most	Most	
Question 150: Fine dining	Some	Most	
Question 150: Day care	Some	Most	
Question 150: Retail Shops	Some	Most	

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 8. Tax Incentives

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 8. Tax Incentives			Important for manufacturing and R&D.
A. State			◑
Question 151: Is the city eligible for any special state tax incentives for firms?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12	
Question 152: To what extent does the city actively take advantage of any special state tax incentives?	Very little	A lot	
Question 153: Is it a designated ETA?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12	

City's Performance Relative to Peers			33	Importance to Market		
■ Strong	■ Average	■ Weak		Very Important ●	Important ◑	Less Important ○

Section 8. Tax Incentives

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
B. Local		◐	
Question 154: Does the city provide additional local tax incentives to firms?	Yes	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 155: Does the city actively pursue federal and state programs designated to assist in attracting and retaining firms?	Yes	Yes 10 of 12	
Question 156: Does the city use the existing Economic Development Incentive Program/Tax Increment Financing (TIF) program to provide tax breaks to firms?	Yes	Yes 11 of 12	
Question 157: Does the city grant TIFs for retail development?	No	Yes 9 of 12	
Question 158: Has the city negotiated a District Improvement Financing (DIF) agreement under the new program?	No	No 11 of 12	
Question 159: Does the city assist in securing financing for firms with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms?	Yes	Yes 10 of 12	
Question 160: Does the city actively pursue locating municipal, state, and federal facilities, including post offices, to stimulate the creation of amenities and other attractions to spur private sector commercial and industrial development?	Yes	Yes 8 of 11	
Question 161: Does the city participate in a regional brownfield revolving loan fund or offer its own?			
Question 161: Regional	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 161: City	No	Yes 8 of 12	
Question 161: No brownfields funds utilized	No	No 11 of 12	

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City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	○

Section 9. Tax Rate

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 9. Tax Rates			
A. Local			◑
Question 162: Does the city have a different tax rate for industrial/commercial property than residential property?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12	
Question 163: What is the tax rate on industrial/commercial property? ($/$1,000)	33.36	$23.17	
Question 164: What is the tax rate on residential property? ($/$1,000)	17.51	$10.99	
Question 165: If no differential tax rate, what is the tax rate on property? ($ /$1,000)		n/a	
Question 166-1: What % of the city's tax revenue is derived from Industrial? %	6.6	9%	
Question 166-2: what % of the city's tax revenue is derived from Commercial %	26	20%	
Question 166-3: what % of the city's tax revenue is derived from Residential %	67.4	68.5%	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	○

Section 9. Tax Rate

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
B. Tax Delinquency			◑
Question 167: How many properties are delinquent in their taxes for more than 1 year?	300+	300+	
Question 168: How many properties are in tax title?	300+	300+	
Question 169: When does the city choose to auction tax title properties?	1-5 years	1-5 years	
Question 170: Does the city have an organized and defined process for conducting such auctions and ensuring that they are successful/effective?	Yes	Yes 7 of 10	
Question 171: Does the city auction the "right to foreclose" on tax delinquent properties?	No	No 10 of 11	
Question 172: Does the city seek tax abatement on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners?	Yes	No 6 of 11	
Question 173: If a tax delinquent/tax title property serves as an impediment to development, do the properties receive special attention?	Yes	Yes 10 of 11	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market		
Very Important ●	Important ◑	Less Important ○

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
Section 10. Access to Information			Website needs link to human contact.
A. Website			◯
Question 174: Does your municipal website list all local development policies and procedures?	No	No 9 of 11	
Question 175: Does your website have contact information for key officials?	No	Yes 11 of 12	
Question 176: Does your website have general information on the municipality?	Yes	Yes 12 of 12	
Question 177: How frequently is your website updated?	Rarely	Monthly	
Question 178: Does the city's website include an explicitly designed economic development tool aimed at businesses and developers?	No	No 7 of 12	
Question 179: Is there a development permit checklist/flow chart on the website?	No	No 10 of 12	
Question 180: Are permit applications available for downloading on the website?	Yes	Yes=6/No=6	
Question 181: Are they date certified to ensure that they are the most recent version (i.e. the same version that you would get in person)?	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 182: Is it possible to file a permit application electronically?	No	No 10 of 11	
Question 183: Is there a list of available land and building sites on the website?	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 184: If yes, check the types of information available about each site. (Check all that apply):			

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
Strong	Average	Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	◯

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
A. Website (Continued)			◯
Question 184: Owner	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 184: Square footage of vacant land	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 184: Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	Yes	No 8 of 12	
Question 184: Abutters	Yes	No 11 of 12	
Question 184: Zoning	Yes	No 9 of 12	
Question 184: Assessed Value	Yes	No 9 of 12	
Question 184: Tax Rate	Yes	No 9 of 12	
Question 184: Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	Yes	No 11 of 12	
Question 184: Contamination	No	No 12 of 12	
Question 184: Aerial photo	Yes	No 9 of 12	
Question 184: GIS link	Yes	No 9 of 12	
Question 184: Other, Please Specify		1 (utility info)	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◖	Less Important	◯

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
A. Website (Continued)			◯
Question 185: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	Yes	Yes 7 of 12	
Question 186: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	No	No 10 of 11	
Question 187: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	Yes	Yes 6 of 11	
Question 188: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)			
Question 188: State finance agencies	No	No 9 of 12	
Question 188: State permitting agencies	No	No 9 of 12	
Question 188: Regional planning agencies	No	No 7 of 12	
Question 188: Regional development organizations	No	Yes=6/No=6	
Question 188: Workforce training organizations	No	No 8 of 12	
Question 188: Local public/quasi-public financing resources	No	No 8 of 12	
Question 188: Demographic information	Yes	Yes 7 of 12	
Question 188: Economic Development Agencies	No	No 8 of 12	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

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Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◐	Less Important	◯

Question	Springfield	All Cities	Comment
			◯
Question 188: Other, Please Specify		1 (Individual business)	
Question 189: Are there links to other city-based private/non-profit organizations? (Check all that apply)			
Question 189: Colleges & Universities	No	No 7 of 12	
Question 189: Chambers of Commerce	No	Yes 7 of 12	
Question 189: Community Development Corporations	No	No 7 of 12	
Question 189: Arts and cultural organizations	No	Yes 8 of 12	
Question 189: Sports and recreation venues	No	No 9 of 12	
Question 189: Convention and tourist organizations	Yes	Yes 7 of 12	
Question 190: Is there a designated webmaster/appointed person who is responsible for maintaining the website?	No	Yes 8 of 12	

City's Performance Relative to Peers		
🟩 Strong	🟨 Average	🟥 Weak

Importance to Market					
Very Important	●	Important	◑	Less Important	◯