

Northeastern University
Dukakis Center *for* Urban & Regional Policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL (EDSAT)

REPORT
AUGUST 2014

RESULTS FOR THE TOWN OF
WINDHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
AUGUST 2014



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 innovative School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs.

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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 in cities.

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 heavily depends on officials who can lead in the formulation and implementation of an economic development strategy. A thorough strategy is developed with an understanding of local business interests, regional resource availability, and a careful assessment of the community's ability to attract new business investment and jobs. The *Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool* (EDSAT) is an important step that public officials can take to assess their jurisdictions'¹ strengths and weaknesses with respect to expanding and sustaining 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, Windham 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 Windham to the EDSAT questionnaire.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since 2005, the Dukakis Center has sought to identify the “deal-breakers” impeding private investment in local municipalities. Based upon research on the resurgence of older industrial cities, the Dukakis Center has identified two of the crucial factors in economic development. First is a municipality's capability in responding to ever-changing market forces. Second is the ability of local government to work with regional agencies, business leaders, and academic institutions to work collaboratively to solve municipal weaknesses and market the city or town's strengths. These conclusions led to the development of EDSAT as well as the creation of an analytical framework for providing practical and actionable feedback to public officials. EDSAT is the first tool that resulted from the partnership between Northeastern University's Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy (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 themes relevant to economic growth and development. Examples of themes include highway access, available workforce, and the timeliness of permit reviews. Based on rankings by these location experts, EDSAT themes are identified as “*Very Important*,” “*Important*,” or “*Less Important*” to businesses and developers.

¹ Jurisdictions are usually categorized as individual towns and/or cities. Each can be several small municipalities, a geographic region, or a county—as long as each plans and strategizes as a single entity in its economic development efforts.

EDSAT Themes

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

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



FIGURE 1: IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE LEVELS

For example, through the EDSAT analysis, officials may discover that the efficiency of the municipal permitting process is both *Very Important* to businesses and developers and that their jurisdiction is taking several months to review a permit application, rather than a few weeks as in the case of other jurisdictions. According to our location experts, this can be a serious weakness or potential “deal-breaker.” Knowing this, municipal officials may choose to hone in on the permitting process to understand where the inefficiencies lie and how the process could be improved and/or simplified. Even if a jurisdiction is quite efficient in reviewing permits, it may be worth the effort to further improve the process, as the timeliness of the process is of such significance to businesses and developers. Staff, review boards, or commissions could streamline their work or provide more technical support to applicants to streamline the process. This permitting example outlines the degree to which the EDSAT analysis provides an opportunity for revisiting and redeveloping a jurisdiction's economic development strategies and processes.



 A. Complementary/Supplemental Business Services			
Question	Windham		Comparison Group
1: Is your local chamber of commerce or business association actively involved in the economic development activities of your jurisdiction?	Vigorously		Moderately

FIGURE 2: SAMPLE RESPONSE

The EDSAT analysis compares your jurisdiction’s response to that of Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM).² With regard to the aforementioned permitting process, 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. While local and regional regulations or processes affect the review process, businesses are interested in “time-to-market” – the time it takes to get up and running in an ever-increasing 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.

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 the 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 factor. One “deal-breaker” does not mean that your jurisdiction should abandon its economic development efforts. At the same time, your jurisdiction cannot solely rely 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.

² The term Comparison Group Municipalities (CGM) is used in this report to represent jurisdictions that have completed the EDSAT.

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 AND ORGANIZATION OF RELATIVE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

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

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

Tasks on the weakness and “deal-breaker” lists, however, are prioritized to emphasize the importance of their mitigation. The Dukakis Center staff arranges the tasks according to feasibility, with consideration of the latitude and abilities of local, county, or regional levels of government. For example, in a jurisdiction with limited highway access, building a new highway interchange or connector would likely be cost-prohibitive, time-consuming, and an inefficient use of local resources. However, other tasks are more feasible with modest investments in time and resources. For example, streamlining the permitting process and making related development information readily accessible to both location experts and businesses can 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.

Windham’s Strengths or Potential “Deal-Makers”

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

Strengths among Very Important Location Factors

- **Timeliness of Approvals:** Windham processes Zoning Variances, Special Permits, and Appeals for both new and existing projects faster than the typical CGM.
- **Labor (available):** Your town features a higher percentage of residents age 25 or older with bachelor’s degrees.
- **Workforce Composition:** Your town’s workforce features higher percentages of managers and professionals.

Strengths among Important Location Factors

- **Complementary/Supplemental Business Services:** Windham’s regional chambers of commerce are vigorously active in the town’s economic development activities.
- **Cross-Marketing:** Windham actively enlists the services of resident firms to assist in attracting new firms.
- **Marketing Follow-up:** Your town utilizes formal debriefing processes with prospective firms whether or not they choose to locate in Windham. Your jurisdiction also has a formal procedure to contact existing firms about their satisfaction with doing business in the town.
- **Quality of Available Space:** Your town has a lower percentage of available sites that are contaminated or are brownfields, has a large proportion of available sites that are greenfields, and has no vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers.
- **Land:** Windham has a higher proportion of parcels that are of five acres or more.
- **Industrial Sensitivity:** Your town has a marketing program based on existing core strengths, identified opportunities, or industry concentrations; and actively engages local business spokespeople to speak on behalf of the town.
- **Crime:** Rates for residential burglary, auto theft, robbery, and homicide in Windham are low.
- **Local Schools:** The public schools are high performing. Larger proportions of your town’s students tested “proficient” in English and Math; the high school drop-out rate is zero; and at least 75% of high school students go on to attend a four-year college.
- **State Business Incentives:** Your town’s businesses are eligible for more special state tax and business incentives than those among the CGM.

Strengths among Less Important Location Factors

- **Website:** Your town’s website features more information than the typical CGM’s website.

Windham’s Weaknesses or Potential “Deal-Breakers”

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

Unlike the strengths or deal-makers, the list of weaknesses is arranged in order of priority. It is suggested that Windham review the prioritized lists and the detailed narrative about all location factors, while keeping in mind its economic development objectives and the resources available for addressing “deal-breakers” and other weaknesses. This report is an opportunity for an informed dialogue among colleagues and for establishing a roadmap to turn “deal-breakers” into “deal-makers.”

Weaknesses among Very Important Location Factors

- **Infrastructure:** Windham’s water supply, electric power, cellular, and fiber-optic/cable/DSL infrastructure provide unreliable service. Public sewer, wastewater treatment, and natural gas capacities in Windham are inadequate for current needs. Land line service capacity can meet only current needs. Inadequate infrastructure capacity is the most serious weakness in Windham.
- **Rents:** Average rents are higher in Windham’s central business district for retail space, manufacturing, and all classes of general office space. Classes B and C office space in the highway district tend to have higher rents.

Weaknesses among Important Location Factors

- **Critical Mass Firms:** Windham's industrial/commercial attraction policy is identified as "weak".
- **Predictable Permits:** Windham does not provide a checklist or flow chart of permitting requirements or a development handbook to prospective developers.
- **Sites Available:** Your jurisdiction does not have land use regulations to protect land currently zoned industrial from encroachment by residential or incompatible uses.
- **Public Transit:** Windham does not have any available sites for retail trade, manufacturing, or general office space within a quarter mile of public transit, while in the CGM, while about 50-74% of the CGMs are within such a district. Public transit service is also not available on nights and weekends.
- **Housing:** Single family homes prices and rent for two bedroom apartments in Windham tend to be higher than the typical CGM.

Weaknesses among Less Important Location Factors

- **Airport:** The nearest international airport is farther from Windham than the typical CGM.
- **Permitting Ombudsman:** Your town, unlike the CGM, does not provide technical assistance to businesses in the state or federal permit or license applications process.
- **Local Business Incentives:** Unlike the CGM, your town does not actively pursue federal and/or state programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses.

These weaknesses that surfaced in the EDSAT analysis provide guidelines to where Windham could exert more effort to improve its ability to attract business and build its tax base.

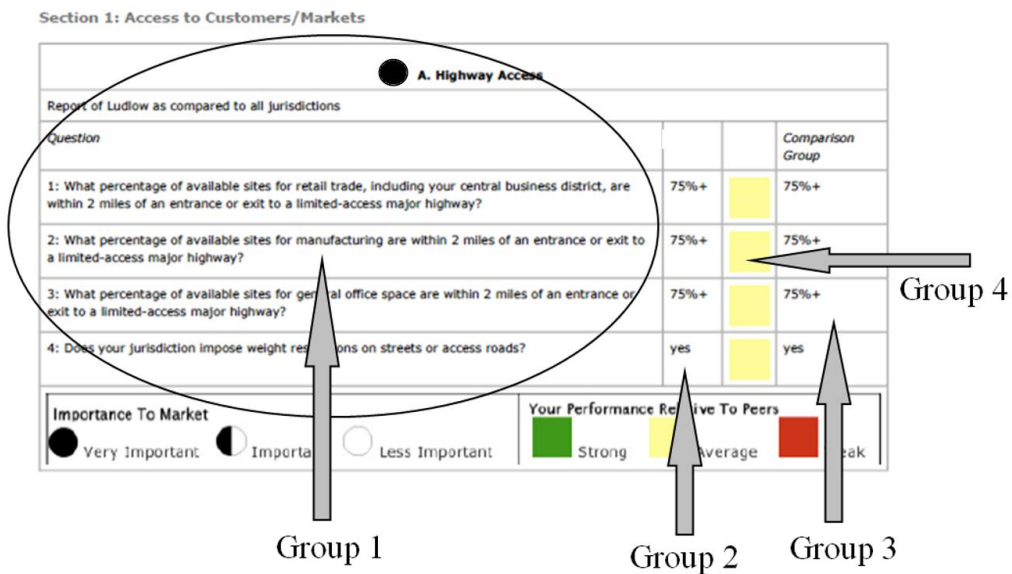
DETAILED ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following is a section-by-section analysis of the EDSAT results comparing Windham’s self-reported responses to both the overall importance of each location factor and the median response among the CGM. Within each section are several related themes, where the symbols ●, ◐, and ○ indicate the relative importance of the theme to developers and businesses, as ranked by NAIOP and CoreNet Global location experts. 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.

Importance To Market Very Important Important Less Important	Your Performance Relative To Peers Strong Average Weak No Comparison
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This section of the report presents a tabular printout from the EDSAT. The results are displayed in four primary groupings of information:

- **Group 1** identifies location themes, such as Highway Access, and questions about specific location factors related to that theme. At the top of each table is a circle that represents the relative importance of a theme to location experts and businesses. A filled circle (●) indicates “Very Important,” a half-filled circle (◐) indicates “Important,” and an unfilled circle (○) indicates “Less Important.”
- **Group 2** shows Windham’s responses to the EDSAT questions.
- **Group 3** is the median or majority (for yes/no questions) response among the municipalities that have completed the EDSAT questionnaire (the comparison group or CGM).
- **Group 4** is a series of green, yellow, or red blocks indicating how Windham compares to the CGM. There is a built-in function in EDSAT that 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, Windham 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.








A. Highway Access ●

With Interstate 93 passing through Windham, your town is on par with the level of highway access among the CGM. Seventy-five percent of your town's available sites for retail trade, manufacturing, and general office space are within two miles of an entrance or exit of I-93, matching the CGM's proportions of sites within such a distance. Also matching the CGM, your town does not impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads, thus reducing transportation costs for prospective businesses.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
1: What percentage of available sites for retail trade, including your central business district, are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	75% or greater		75% or greater
2: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	75% or greater		75% or greater
3: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 2 miles of an entrance or exit to a limited-access major highway?	75% or greater		75% or greater
4: Does your jurisdiction impose weight restrictions on streets or access roads?	no		no







B. Public Transit ◀

None of Windham's retail, manufacturing, and general office sites are within a quarter mile of public transit, while 50-74% of the typical CGM's available sites are. Your town does not have public transit service available on nights and weekends. This unavailability of public transit puts your town at a disadvantage in this category. Matching the CGM, Windham has a commuter bus stop within five miles of the town but does not offer shuttle services to other commuting stations. The town does not have a transit-oriented strategy in its economic development plans.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
5: What percentage of available sites for retail trade are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	0%		between 50-74% and 75% or greater
6: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	0%		50-74%
7: What percentage of available sites for general office space are within 1/4 mile of public bus or rail rapid transit?	0%		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?	no		yes

C. Parking ●








In regards to parking, Windham is on par with the CGM. At least 75% of your jurisdiction's available sites for retail trade, manufacturing, and general office space have on-site parking. The availability of free parking is significant, especially because your sites are not accessible via public transit (Section 1B). Like the CGM, your jurisdiction offers parking near development sites and does not charge for parking in the central business district. Representing a strength is that your town, unlike the CGM, has used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
12: What percentage of available sites for retail trade have on-site parking?	75% or greater		75% or greater
13: What percentage of available sites for manufacturing have on-site parking?	75% or greater		75% or greater
14: What percentage of available sites for general office space have on-site parking?	75% or greater		75% or greater
15: Does your jurisdiction offer parking facilities near development sites?	no		no
16: Have you used state or federal infrastructure grants to improve parking in your jurisdiction?	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

D. Traffic ●






Overall, Windham matches the CGM with respect to traffic. With the advantage of regular access to a traffic engineer or transportation planner, all other considerations are the same as in the CGM. Your town routinely utilizes a transportation consultant, has access to traffic count data for major roadways, and requires traffic impact analyses

for large-scale development or redevelopment projects. During rush hours, roads are moderately congested and the average automobile speed is 11-25 mph.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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 to which your jurisdiction is a member?	yes		no
21: Do you routinely use the services of a transportation consultant?	yes		yes
22: Do you have access to traffic count data for the major roadways in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you require firms or developers to provide traffic mitigation beyond the streets adjacent to the site? (e.g. installing traffic signals, metering flow)	yes		yes
24: How would you rate traffic into and out of your jurisdiction during a typical weekday rush hour?	Moderately congested		Moderately congested
25: What is the average speed of automobile commuter traffic during a typical weekday rush hour?	11 - 25 mph		11 - 25 mph
26: Do you require a traffic impact analysis for large-scale development or redevelopment projects?	yes		yes

E. Airport

Your town is comparable to the CGM, in terms of overall airport accessibility. Your jurisdiction’s nearest international airport, Logan International Airport, is located about 40 miles away, while the CGM’s nearest such airport is about 20-30 miles away. However, like the CGM, Windham has public transportation in the form of a commuter bus that provides service to Logan and the trip takes about 21-60 minutes. All other assessment factors match the CGM: Windham does not have a local airport, its closest regional airport, Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, is almost 20 miles away.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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?	31 miles or more		20-30 miles
30: Is the major/international airport accessible by public transportation?	yes		yes
31: How long does it take to drive to the major/international airport from your downtown?	21-60 minutes		21-60 minutes

F. Rail

Representing a slight disadvantage in this *Less Important* category is that your town does not offer rail freight service. Manufacturers having heavy or bulky raw materials or final products tend to benefit from freight rail, therefore this weakness may not prove impactful if your jurisdiction does not plan to target such manufacturers. Similar to the CGM, your town does not have regional commuter rail service or Amtrak service.












<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
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
- no	yes		yes

G. Physical Attractiveness

Windham is similar to the CGM with respect to overall physical attractiveness. However, your town weakly maintains areas near development sites, while the CGM does so moderately. Increasing efforts to maintain streets, sidewalks, and open spaces would enhance an area’s appeal to prospective developers and firms. Your town also has a relatively smaller percentage of land reserved for parks (0-5% compared to 6-10%). However, the bucolic and historic nature of the community would compensate for the lower percentage of reserved park land.


All other assessment factors match the CGM. Windham enforces codes and regulations on abandoned properties and trash as well as trash disposal moderately and 0-5% of your community’s housing stock is considered dilapidated. Zero to 5% of both commercial and industrial buildings in Windham are boarded up or closed down and 6-10% of commercial space is vacant and 0-5% industrial space is vacant.

Your jurisdiction may want to engage the local arts community to help design open space. This option can build community cohesiveness, while aesthetically enhancing an area. Windham may also want to consider creating a hotline or web form for residents and businesses to report code violations and maintenance needs in your town in conjunction with establishing a system to monitor the quality and timeliness of responses. Giving residents a means to notify the town about issues will help foster a more inclusive atmosphere, while following up on reports demonstrates accountability.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
34: To what extent do you enforce codes and regulations on abandoned properties / abandoned vehicles / trash and rubbish 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?	no		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?	0-5%		6-10%
40: What percentage of your housing stock is considered dilapidated?	0-5%		0-5%
41: What percentage of your commercial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	0-5%		0-5%
42: What percentage of commercial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	6-10%		6-10%
43: What percentage of your industrial buildings are boarded up or closed down and would need renovations to reopen?	0-5%		0-5%
44: What percentage of industrial space is presently vacant (not currently occupied)?	0-5%		0-5%

H. Water Transportation O

Windham does not have water-based transportation options.








<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
45: Do you have water based transportation facilities within your jurisdiction?			

Section 2. Concentration of Businesses (Agglomeration)

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

A. Complementary/Supplemental Business Services













Although your town does not have a local chamber of commerce, Windham has two very active regional chambers, the Greater Salem and Greater Derry-Londonderry chambers of commerce. This activity gives your town an advantage over the CGM, since the typical CGM's local chamber is only moderately active. Other considerations are on par with the CGM. Your town features the Windham Economic Development Committee (WEDC) and branches of major banks. Certified public accountants, business advisory firms, financial firms, and law firms specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, and patents are also located in Windham. Local business service firms (venture capital, specialized recruiting, business planning, etc.) are moderately capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms. Your community does not have an incubator or other form of cooperative and supportive space for startups. If such a facility can complement an industrial/commercial attraction policy (Section 2B) by fostering new and assisting startups, your town may want to encourage the creation of one.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
1: Is your local chamber of commerce or business association actively involved in the economic development activities of your jurisdiction?	Vigorously		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 and supportive space for start-up businesses in your jurisdiction?	no		no
4: Are there CPA, business advisory and financial services firms in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
5: Are there law firms in your jurisdiction specializing in commercial law, intellectual property rights, and patents?	yes		yes
6: Are there branches of major commercial banks in your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
7: To what extent are the business services (e.g. venture capital, business planning, specialized recruiting, etc.) in your jurisdiction capable of working with emerging technical and scientific firms?	Moderately capable		Moderately capable

B. Critical Mass Firms





Your town features an up-to-date economic development plan, WEDC's Strategic Plan from 2011. Windham is also part of a county or regional plan, and is in a state with a development strategy or economic development plan. Your municipality also targets specific industries, such as Information technology, Financial services, Biotechnology/Life sciences, Healthcare, and Warehousing. However, your town has a weak industrial/commercial attraction policy, while the typical CGM's is moderate. This weakness puts your jurisdiction at a disadvantage in terms of economic development strategy. Refining and strengthening this attraction policy towards target sectors would be beneficial. Your town may want to take advantage of regional/county and state resources to attract target sectors since most of Windham's targets coincide with them (Section 2C).

Windham heavily involves the local community in crafting development strategies. The 2005 Master Plan included their input. The town plans to use input from stakeholders, gathered from a visioning workshop and community survey to craft its 2015 Master Plan. This commendable level of inclusiveness helps reduce community opposition (Section 5F) to development projects because projects would be more aligned with the shared community vision. It also helps ensure that economic development efforts will better represent the needs and preferences of the community.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
8: Does your jurisdiction have an up-to-date development strategy, overall economic development plan (OEDP), or an economic development plan within your community master plan?	yes		yes
9: Is your jurisdiction part of a county or regional OEDP or Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)?	yes		yes
10: Does your state have a development strategy or economic development plan?	yes		yes
11: If yes, are there firms within specific industry types or sectors that are targeted in your jurisdiction's, your county's or your state's development strategy?	yes		yes
12: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? (Your Municipality)	Information Technology; Financial Services; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		
13: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your municipality's development strategy? Other, please specify (Your Municipality)	Warehousing		
14: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? (Regional/County)	Other, please specify; Alternative Energy; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		
15: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your region/county's development strategy? Other, please specify (Regional/County)	Warehousing		
16: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)	Other, please specify; Alternative Energy; Travel and Tourism; Information Technology; Financial Services; Traditional Manufacturing; Other Life Sciences, including Biotech; Healthcare		
17: If yes, what specific industry types or sectors are targeted by your state's development strategy? (State)			
18: Which of the following jurisdictions have development specialists to assist in interpreting the needs of these clusters? (Choose all that apply)	State; Regional/County		State; Regional/County
19: How aggressive is your industrial attraction policy?	Weak		Moderate

C. Cross Marketing





Unlike the CGM and making Windham relatively stronger in regards to cross-marketing efforts is that your town actively enlists the services of resident firms to attract new firms. Existing local firms have firsthand knowledge of the pros and cons of the market and of operating in Windham, therefore they are effective in advocating for new firms to locate in your town. Mirroring the CGM, your jurisdiction engages local and regional business organizations, regional planning and development organizations, and state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing the jurisdiction. These organizations are more likely to have deeper marketing experience and can reach a wider audience, therefore, they are valuable resources of which your jurisdiction is proactively taking advantage.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
20: Do you actively enlist the services of firms already resident in your jurisdiction to assist in attracting new firms?	yes		no
21: Do you engage local and regional business organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
22: Do you engage regional planning and development organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
23: Do you engage state agencies and organizations to participate in marketing your jurisdiction?	yes		yes

D. Marketing Follow-up





Your town has an advantage in regards to marketing follow-up. Windham has formal procedures to contact firms regarding their location decisions and satisfaction. Gathering information from firms about their location decisions and satisfaction regarding the town provides valuable insight because it can be used to refine marketing strategies (Section 5A). This proactive effort shows Windham’s inclusiveness and focus on stakeholder input.

Windham may also want to create a formal procedure to intervene when early news surfaces regarding firm dissatisfaction with your town. Addressing issues when they first arise may help alleviate them and limit negative media reports that may contribute to creating an inaccurate image of Windham.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
24: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose to locate in your jurisdiction about what made the difference?	yes		no
25: Is there a formal de-briefing process with firms that chose <u>not</u> to locate in your jurisdiction about what made the difference?	yes		no
26: Do you have a formal procedure for contacting existing local firms about their satisfaction with your jurisdiction?	yes		no
27: Do you have a formal procedure for intervening when early news surfaces about firm dissatisfaction with your jurisdiction?	no		no

E. Proximity to Universities and Research ○

Your town is generally on par with the CGM in regards to higher education. Neither the typical CGM nor Windham has a community college or major four-year college within its jurisdiction. However, Windham has two such institutions within ten miles: Rivier University and Thomas More College of Liberal Arts. Windham does not have a vocational/technical school. However, students in your jurisdiction attend the Center for Career and Technical Education of Salem High School in adjacent Salem.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
28: How many major public or private four-year college or universities are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
29: How many major public or private four-year college or universities are located within 10 miles of your jurisdiction?	2		2
30: How many community colleges are located within your jurisdiction?	0		0
31: How many vocational/technical schools are located within your jurisdiction?	0		1

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 represents significant expenses for a firm to incur. Therefore, if a municipality does not already have adequate capacity in place, a potential firm could decide to locate in another municipality with adequate capacity. Rents are *Very Important* as they contribute heavily to operating expenses. Location experts consider the quality of available space and amount of available land for development *Important* factors.

A. Infrastructure ●












Windham faces several serious infrastructure challenges related to water and wastewater, natural gas, electricity, and data and telecommunications. For water supply, the town relies on several public water systems supplied by bedrock wells and private wells on individual lots. The placement of wells must be coordinated with the placement of septic systems as the town also does not have a municipal wastewater system. The water and wastewater constraints represent significant “deal-breakers” for economic development. The cost of establishing a well and septic field can be prohibitive both financially and spatially. Valuable land within a lot would be dedicated to siting and accommodating the well and septic system rather than put to economic use. The town would greatly benefit from establishing an inventory of potential groundwater and surface water supplies, in addition to the feasibility of tying into a neighboring public water system. Likewise, the town would benefit from identifying new technologies and best practices for septic systems, especially for commercial applications; and from assessing the feasibility of joining a neighboring or regional wastewater system.

Windham’s natural gas infrastructure is inadequate for current needs and the town’s electricity infrastructure provides unreliable service. The town describes itself as being at the edge of an electricity service area, which increases the town’s susceptibility to outages and increases the waiting time to restore service during an outage. The town may want to initiate conversations with utilities to explore ways the utilities could expand or upgrade their distribution infrastructure to Windham. Electricity faces another hurdle in Windham in that retail rates are somewhat higher than among the CGM, particularly for commercial and industrial customers.

Regarding telecommunications, landlines have capacity for current needs only and cellular service is unreliable. Broadband service (i.e., fiber optic, cable, and DSL) also has unreliable service. Windham may also want to initiate

conversations with telecommunications and broadband providers on opportunities for enhancing infrastructure and service.













Windham has been proactive in identifying target industries such as Information technology, Financial services, Biotechnology/Life sciences, Healthcare, and Warehousing, however all these industries would need water, wastewater, electrical, and broadband services. Likewise, existing businesses are likely to need more capacity among these infrastructure systems as well, if they are to expand.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Are there significant limitations to any of your existing infrastructure systems? - Water Supply	Unreliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
2: Public Sewer	Inadequate capacity for current needs		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
3: Wastewater Treatment	Inadequate capacity for current needs		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
4: Natural Gas	Inadequate capacity for current needs		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
5: Electric Power	Unreliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
6: Data/Telecommunications - Land Lines	Capacity for current needs only		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
7: Data/Telecommunications - Cellular	Unreliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
8: Data/Telecommunications - Fiber optic / Cable / DSL	Unreliable service		Sufficient capacity for growth & reliable service
9: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Residential	16		16.23
10: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Commercial	18.5		15.2
11: What is the average cost in cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential, commercial, and industrial end users in your municipality? Industrial	18.5		13.03

B. Rents ●





Your jurisdiction is at a disadvantage since the majority of rents are higher than in the CGM. Average retail rents in the central and highway business districts are approximately \$6 and \$1.50 higher per square foot, and manufacturing rents are approximately \$0.50 higher. Regarding office space in the central business district, Class A space is about \$4.65 higher per square foot, Class B space is \$2.00 higher, and Class C space is \$2.25 higher. In the central business district, Class A space matches the CGM at \$15.00 per square foot, while Class B is \$3 higher and Class C is \$2 higher.

Your town has a lower proportion of Class A office space than the CGM (10% versus 15%). Adding more Class A space, through upgrading Class B and encouraging new construction, would make your town more appealing to particular industries. Specifically, your jurisdiction’s targets of informational technology, financial services, and biotech may desire Class A office space or specialized space appropriate for laboratories and research and development. Windham has more Class B office space than the typical CGM and less Class C.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
12: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	18		12
13: What is the current average square foot cost for existing retail space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?	13		between 11 and 12
14: What is the current average square foot cost for existing manufacturing space (Triple Net/Lease)?	6.5		6
15: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A	17		between 12 and 12.50
16: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	14		12
17: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your central business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	11		between 8.50 and 9
18: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS A	15		15
19: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS B	12		9
20: What is the current average square foot cost for existing general office space in your highway business district (Triple Net/Lease)?: CLASS C	9		7
21: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS A	10		15
22: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS B	60		40
23: Of all the available office space in your jurisdiction, what percentage is: CLASS C	30		40





C. Quality of Available Space

Windham is stronger relative to the CGM in regards to vacant shopping centers, undeveloped land, and contaminated land. Your community has no vacant or severely underutilized shopping centers, while 11-20% of the CGM’s are in such a state. Further, Windham has a significantly higher proportion of available sites that are considered unused open land or greenfield sites, which gives flexibility and lowers risk to developers. Windham has a significantly lower percentage of brownfield sites as compared to the CGM and correspondingly less experience with redeveloping brownfield sites.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
24: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered contaminated or brownfield sites?	1-10%		21-35%
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?	0%		11-20%
27: Approximately what percentage of available sites in your jurisdiction would be considered unused open land or greenfield sites?	51% or greater		21-35%

D. Land (space)

With a considerably higher proportion of parcels of at least five acres (51% or greater compared to 11-20%) available for industrial or commercial development, Windham is at an advantage in regards to available land. With regard to the remaining space metrics, your community matches the CGM. Windham has 301-450 acres of vacant, developable land currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses, and less than 250,000 square feet of both vacant useable office and industrial/warehouse space in commercial/industrial buildings.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
28: Approximately how much vacant developable land in your jurisdiction is currently zoned for commercial/industrial uses?	301-450 acres		301-450 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?	51% or greater		11-20%

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 municipalities with higher labor costs and stronger unions negatively impact a firm's location decision. However, if the workforce is adequately skilled, these factors are not as strong "deal-breakers" as the general belief holds.

Employers are willing to pay for the necessary skills. Workforce training resources is *Less Important* relative to other location factors. However, having a technically trained workforce whose skills align with industries a municipality wants to attract is a valuable selling point.

A. Labor Costs

Windham's labor costs are on the par with the CGM. Average prevailing hourly wages for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers is \$17.26-\$22.25 and for mid-level clerical workers it is \$12.26-\$17.25. High school teachers an average annual salary of \$50,001-\$60,000, and there is no local minimum wage or living wage statute.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
1: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for semi-skilled, blue-collar manufacturing workers?	\$17.26 - \$22.25		\$17.26 - \$22.25
2: What is the prevailing average hourly wage rate for mid-level clerical workers?	\$12.26 - \$17.25		\$12.26 - \$17.25
3: What is the prevailing average annual salary for public high school teachers?	\$50,001-\$60,000		\$50,001-\$60,000
4: Is there a local minimum or living wage statute?	no		no

B. Workforce Composition ●

In this *Very Important* category, Windham has two potential “deal-makers,” positioning your town relatively stronger in regards to workforce composition. Specifically, your community features larger proportions of both managers and professionals (26-49% versus 1-25%). These advantages, as well as your town’s larger proportion of highly educated residents (Section 4D), can make Windham quite attractive to target industries that require such employees (Section 2B). Other workforce categories match the CGM. Your jurisdiction has 1-25% of both unskilled and semi-skilled workers and 26-49% of technically skilled workers; and 0-10% of the workforce is currently English language learners.

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



C. Unions ○

Representing a slight weakness in regards to union considerations is that your jurisdiction has had a major work stoppage (i.e., Shaw’s supermarkets) in the past three years. Comparable to the CGM, however, your town has not had a major union organizing drive in the past three years and unions have only a somewhat significant presence in the local labor market.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
11: Have any employers in your jurisdiction had a major strike or work stoppage within the last three years?	yes		no
12: Has there been a major union organizing drive among public or private workers in the last 3 years?	no		no
13: Do labor unions have a significant presence in the labor market of your jurisdiction?	Somewhat		Somewhat







D. Labor (Available) ●

Windham has an advantage in regards to education and labor. Unlike the CGM, which has only 21-35% of residents age 25 or older with at least a bachelor's degree, at least 51% of your jurisdiction's residents have earned such credentials. This advantage, combined with a skilled workforce (Section 4B), helps make Windham an easier location choice than the typical CGM. With respect to your town's residents age 25 and older that have earned high school degrees, Windham matches the CGM at 85% or greater.

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

E. Workforce Training ○

Your community is at a relative disadvantage in regards to workforce training since Windham only interacts with regional or state employment services, but not with area high schools, vocational technical schools, community colleges, or nonprofit career training centers. The town also does not support public-private partnerships to provide specific workforce training. Your jurisdiction may want to facilitate collaborations between local firms and among the targeted industries (Section 2B) and workforce development resources. These collaborations can make Windham's workforce more competitive and better able to meet the needs of target industries by aligning skills, training programs and curricula.

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






Section 5. Municipal Process

The municipal process section covers several themes of marketing and permitting. When it comes to marketing themselves, jurisdictions that are aggressive and collaborate with local firms may be at an advantage in attracting new investment. Those firms can speak to interested companies and investors about first-hand experiences and market conditions, and advise municipal leaders about industries with which they are intimately familiar. Additionally, a municipality needs to establish a transparent and efficient permitting process to minimize business startup time and costs. Among the factors examined in this theme, timeliness of approvals is *Very Important* to

location experts, and the remaining themes are *Important* with the exception of the Permitting Ombudsman, which is *Less Important*.

A. Industrial Sensitivity

Your jurisdiction is relatively strong in its marketing programs. Unlike the CGM, Windham has a marketing program based on existing core strengths, identified opportunities, and industry concentrations, and engages local business representatives to speak on behalf of the town. To enhance marketing efforts, your jurisdiction may want to create a campaign or update the current one to address how Windham can meet the needs of target industries. Further, creating a formal quick response team to address negative incidents, stories, or data that make the news would be beneficial. As in Section 2D, this effort can help mitigate negative press and manage the image of Windham as a business friendly location.







Question	Windham		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?	yes		no
3: Do you have a quick response team available when negative data, stories, or incidents about your jurisdiction make the news?	no		no
4: Do you actively engage local business spokespersons to speak on behalf of your jurisdiction?	yes		no
5: Do you have a strategy for engaging your jurisdiction's racial or ethnic populations in unique businesses, festivals, etc., as a way to attract regional niche shopping?	no		no

B. Sites Available

Although neither the CGM nor Windham has a readily accessible, up-to-date list of sites available for development, creating one would greatly benefit your town. Compiling such a list and posting it to a prominent place on the website would make web-based searches easier for developers, firms, and location specialists. Prospective businesses and developers first search online for available sites, and they may simply forgo further research into a particular municipality if information and data are not easily found. Additionally, your town can reference this list to match prospective firms with relevant sites.

Overall, Windham is at a disadvantage in regards to buffers between different land uses. Unlike the CGM, your town does not have land use regulations that protect land currently zoned industrial from encroachment by residential or other incompatible uses. Incorporating such zoning will help maintain Windham's small-town charm and atmosphere, by creating a buffer between residential and other land uses.











Matching the CGM, however, Windham does maintain active relationships with commercial real estate brokers, developers, or agents. Your town does not have active strategies for reclaiming or land banking tax delinquent and tax title properties or for reclaiming vacant or underutilized shopping plazas. With so few sites entangled in tax issues and no vacant or underutilized shopping centers, your town does not currently need to dedicate resources to crafting such strategies.

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

C. Timeliness of Approvals ●





With short municipal permit processing times, Windham has a significant advantage over the CGM. This strength represents the potential for a “deal-maker” that can help persuade a firm or developer to situate in Windham. For new construction, on average and compared to the CGM, your jurisdiction processes Zoning Variances 4-5 weeks faster, Special Permits 4 weeks faster, and Appeals 4-5 weeks faster. Windham processes Building Permits within four weeks, matching the CGM. However, Site Plan Reviews take an average of four weeks longer than among the CGM. Again, as this consideration falls within the *Very Important* location factors, your town may want to investigate this process to discover the source of any bottlenecks and implement streamlining measures.

In regards to existing construction, your community processes Zoning Variances and Appeals, on average, 4-5 weeks faster than the CGM and Special Permits 4 weeks faster. Windham and the CGM both process Site Plan Reviews and Building permits within the same duration, 5-8 weeks and 0-4 weeks, respectively.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
12: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Site plan review	9-12 weeks		5-8 weeks
13: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Zoning variance	0-4 weeks		5-8 weeks
14: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Special permit	5-8 weeks		9-12 weeks
15: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Building permit	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks
16: What is the average time from application to completion of the review process for the following?: Appeals process	0-4 weeks		5-8 weeks
17: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Site plan review	5-8 weeks		5-8 weeks
18: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Zoning variance	0-4 weeks		5-8 weeks
19: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Special permit	5-8 weeks		9-12 weeks
20: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Building permit	0-4 weeks		0-4 weeks
21: What is the average time from application to completion or occupation in existing structures: Appeals process	0-4 weeks		5-8 weeks

D. Predictable Permits

As your town does not provide a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers, Windham is at a disadvantage in regards to the transparency and predictability of the permitting process. Creating such a checklist, as well as a flowchart of the process and a development handbook, would clarify the application procedure for businesses and developers. Further, posting these tools to the website would signify to prospective parties that Windham desires new business and has invested resources in making the town more business friendly. Matching the CGM, your jurisdiction does not allow for a single presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority. Such a format can further simplify the permitting process for applicants and perhaps more importantly, lower the cost of permitting for applicants. It allows an applicant to simultaneous present to all relevant boards, saving the applicant time and resources. If your town elects to allow this type of presentation, Windham may want to start by coordinating meetings between similar boards/commissions, such as conservation and planning, then coordinating meeting between all pertinent boards/commissions.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
22: Do you provide a checklist of permitting requirements to prospective developers?	no		yes
23: Do you provide a flowchart of the permitting process to prospective developers?	no		no
24: Do you provide a development handbook to prospective developers?	no		no
25: Do you allow for a single presentation of a development proposal to all review boards and commissions with relevant permit authority?	no		no

E. Fast Track Permits








Windham mirrors the CGM with respect to all fast-track permitting assessment factors. Your community does not pre-permit development in certain districts or have any local publicly- or cooperatively-owned industrial parks with expedited permitting authority. Windham also has neither an “overlay” district that allows for expedited permitting of certain uses nor markets a “fast track” permitting option to potential developers. Even with a relatively fast permitting system, Windham could still benefit from implementing some fast track permitting measures that would support future projects or targeted industries.

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

F. Citizen Participation in the Review Process

From holding a contest to choose a town slogan to conducting a community visioning workshop to help craft the forthcoming updated master plan, Windham heavily involves its residents in town affairs. This admirable effort builds community buy-in and helps align the town’s economic development activities with the residents’ preferences for their community. This helps reduce opposition to development projects in the long run.

Your town is on par with the CGM in regards to community opposition. Abutters and organized neighborhood groups slow the permitting process somewhat, and local elected officials rarely expedite development by facilitating dialogue with community groups. Interested parties get multiple opportunities for review and commenting during the various project review periods, a development proposal has been halted by opposition in the past five years, and officials have not intervened to rescue a development endangered by opposition in the past five years. Unlike the typical CGM, your town has not established a specific time frame and procedure for abutter or neighborhood response in the initial stage of the development process. Establishing such formal time frames for response may make commenting periods easier to advertise and manage.

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

G. Permitting Ombudsman ○

Windham matches the CGM for level of permitting assistance to firms and developers, except that your town does not provide technical assistance to businesses for any state or federal permit or license application processes. Offering this assistance would enhance the customer service of your town and make it more business-friendly. As they tend to be less familiar with state and federal processes, smaller firms and inexperienced entrepreneurs would especially appreciate this assistance.

All other assessment factors match the CGM. Your jurisdiction’s Town Administrator does not play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of the local permitting process, although other locals are empowered to do so. The town’s local licensing process takes from 0-4 weeks, and businesses, other than junkyard and gun sale shops, are not required to obtain local licenses. Your community has a “development cabinet” or “development team” that convenes to review major developments.

Neither Windham nor the typical CGM has an established program for development staff and boards, commissions, authorities, districts, and elected officials that regularly updates staff and officials on changes in economic conditions, policies, or regulations. Although staff and officials may be highly experienced, additional training would broaden their mindset regarding economic development and the perspective of businesses allowing them to make even more informed decisions around economic development.

Lastly, your town may want to appoint a permitting ombudsman/ambassador to serve as the point-of-contact for applicants. Having a designated point-of-contact who facilitates the permitting process and related state and federal processes benefits the applicant and helps the town develop relationships within the business community that endure after the project is completed. This also contributes to the reputation of the Windham for being a business friendly community.








<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
37: Does the chief executive officer of your jurisdiction play a significant role in ensuring the efficiency of your local permitting process?	no	yellow	no
38: Are there other local officials empowered to ensure the efficiency of your local permitting process?	yes	yellow	yes
39: Is there a "development cabinet" or "development team" that is convened to review major developments?	yes	yellow	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	yellow	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	yellow	no
42: If yes, approximately how long (in weeks) is your local licensing process for businesses?	0-4 weeks	yellow	0-4 weeks
43: Is your jurisdiction involved in the process for businesses that require state or federal permitting or licensing?	yes	yellow	yes
44: Do you provide technical assistance for businesses in the state or federal permit or license application process?	no	red	yes
45: Does your jurisdiction require any local licenses for specific businesses or industries?			
- General license for all businesses	no	yellow	no
- Auto dealership	no	yellow	no
- Barber shop	no	yellow	no
- Bar/Tavern	no	yellow	no
- Beauty salon	no	yellow	no
- Child care services	no	yellow	no
- Construction contractor	no	yellow	no
- Home health care	no	yellow	no
- Massage therapist	no	yellow	no
- Real estate agent/broker	no	yellow	no
- Restaurant	no	yellow	no
- Skilled Trades (electrician, plumber, etc)	no	yellow	no
- Other, please specify	yes	green	no
46: other:	junkyards, gun sales	yellow	

Section 6. Quality of Life (Community)

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





A. Cultural and Recreational Amenities

Windham mirrors the CGM for cultural and recreational amenities. Your town does not have a professional sports team, major museum, major concert hall, civic center, or major concert hall. Your jurisdiction also does not have a professional repertory theater company, symphony orchestra, opera, or ballet company. Adjacent Salem and nearby Nashua, Manchester, and Boston offer all these amenities. Among amenities, Windham features an 18-hole golf course at the Windham Country Club as well as Griffen Park, the Windham Rail Trail, and a town beach at Cobbets Pond with boating activities.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
1: Is there a professional sports team resident within your jurisdiction?	no		no
2: Is there a major art, science or historical museum?	no		no
3: Is there a professional repertory theater company?	no		no
4: Is there a civic center, arena or major concert hall?	no		no
5: Is there a golf course within your jurisdiction?	yes		yes
6: Is there a symphony orchestra, opera, or ballet company?	no		no
7: Are there public beaches or boating activities within 5 miles of your jurisdiction?	yes		yes







B. Crime

Windham reported that in 2013, there were 33 residential burglaries, 7 auto thefts, 2 robberies, and no homicides. Scaling these crime rates up to be equivalent to rates per 100,000 residents from the town's population of 13,592, there was an equivalence of 243 residential burglaries, 52 auto thefts, 15 robberies, and no homicides. These rates are all significantly lower than the typical CGM.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
8: What was the residential burglary rate per 100,000 last year in your jurisdiction?	243		295
9: What was the auto theft rate per 100,000 last year?	52		93
10: What was the robbery rate per 100,000 last year?	15		33
11: What was the homicide rate per 100,000 last year?	0		3

C. Housing

The median sale price of a single family house in Windham is higher than in the typical CGM, but the rate of home ownership is higher. The median rent for a two bedroom apartment was also higher, likely to be driven in part by the low vacancy rate. These higher housing costs represent a relative disadvantage for the town.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
12: What was the median sale price of a single family home in your jurisdiction last year?	\$451,000 or greater		\$251,000-\$350,000
13: What was the median rent for a two bedroom apartment in your jurisdiction last year?	\$1251 or greater		\$801-\$1000
14: What is the home ownership rate?	76% or greater		66-75%
15: What is the vacancy rate for rental housing?	Less than 3%		3-5%
16: What percent of homes are for sale?	Less than 3%		Less than 3%
17: Approximately what proportion of the major officers of firms located in your jurisdiction live in the community?	Some		Some

D. Local Schools

Your town is very strong in regards to its local schools. All factors either match or are better than the CGM. At least 81% of your town’s high school students performed “proficient” or better in English and/or math on the NECAP (New England Common Assessment Program), while only 66-80% of the typical CGM’s students tested so highly. Windham’s high school features a remarkable zero percent dropout rate, compared to the CGM’s 1-25%, and while 50-74% of the CGM’s high school students from last year’s high school class went on to four-year colleges or universities, 75% or greater from Windham went on to such institutions. The average SAT score from last year was 1629, which is 71 points higher than the average score of all New Hampshire seniors (1558), and 131 points higher than the United States average of 1498.

Other local school considerations match the CGM. Windham’s average K-12 expenditure is \$12-14,000 per pupil, 1-25% of students is eligible for free or reduced cost lunch last year, at least 95% of students graduate high school in five years, and no schools in Windham are deemed “underperforming.”





Question	Windham		Comparison Group
18: What is the average K-12 per pupil expenditure in your jurisdiction last year?	\$12,001-\$14,000		\$12,001-\$14,000
19: Does your state mandate an assessment or proficiency test as a prerequisite for high school graduation?	yes		yes
20: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in English?	81% or greater		66-80%
21: If yes, what percent of students in your jurisdiction tested at least "proficient" in Mathematics?	81% or greater		66-80%
22: If yes, are the tests used as a measure of performance within your local school district for teacher assessments or teacher evaluations?	no		no
23: What percentage of your jurisdiction's K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch last year?	1-25%		1-25%
24: What was the average combined (reading, math, and writing) SAT score last year?	1629		
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?	95% or more		95% or more
27: What is the high school drop out rate last year?	0%		1-25%
28: Are there any schools in your jurisdiction that are currently deemed "underperforming?"	no		no
29: What percentage of high school graduates from last year's class went on to a four-year college?	75% or greater		50-74%
30: Are there any charter schools in your jurisdiction?	no		no
31: What types of private schools are there in your jurisdiction?			
- Parochial	yes		
- Non-sectarian	yes		
- Boarding	no		

Section 7. Quality of Life (Site)

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

A. Amenities

With the exception of the availability of fine dining, Windham mirrors the typical CGM in terms of access to fast food restaurants, day cares, and retail shops within one mile of development sites.












Question	Windham		Comparison Group
1: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fast food restaurant	Most		Most
2: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Fine dining	Few		Some
3: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Day care	Most		Most
4: What proportion of existing development sites within your jurisdiction have the following within 1 mile?: Retail shops	Most		Most

Section 8. Business Incentives

Business incentives (e.g. tax and financial) are *Important* factors when companies are evaluating jurisdictions for location. However, contrary to conventional wisdom, these incentives are not the first factors on which an investor makes a location decision. Factors such as infrastructure, workforce composition, and timeliness of permitting have the highest levels of importance, representing “deal-breakers.” A municipality must be at least adequate in these areas before a business will advance negotiations. Therefore, investors value a broader portfolio of business incentives as possible “deal-closers,” but might not be initially attracted by them.

A. State

Although businesses in Windham only somewhat take advantage of available state incentives, they are eligible for a wider range of them than businesses in the CGM. This eligibility gives your town an advantage. Windham may want to capitalize on these incentives by including their availability in marketing materials (Section 5A) and helping firms navigate the state processes to obtain them.

Question	Windham		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	no		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	yes		no
- Workforce training grants	yes		no
- Other, please specify	no		no
2: Are businesses in your jurisdiction eligible for any of the following special state tax incentives? Other, please specify			
3: To what extent does your jurisdiction actively take advantage of any special state business incentives?	Somewhat		Somewhat
4: Does your state allow for priority funding for distressed economic areas?	yes		yes












B. Local

Your town is at a disadvantage in that it does not actively pursue state and/or federal programs designed to assist in attracting and retaining businesses. Taking advantage of these programs will allow Windham to capitalize on larger programs with experience in marketing, ability to reach target sectors, and cost efficiency. Windham does not participate in a regional brownfield revolving loan fund or offer its own, but with no contaminated or brownfield sites (Section 3C), this lack of involvement is not considered a weakness.

Windham does not offer tax abatements or any local business incentives. These incentives, including TIFs for businesses, which the typical CGM does offer, can be quite expensive for a town. However, your jurisdiction may want to consider offering them to sway a firm to locate in Windham. If a firm is considering your municipality and another, and all significant location factors are equal, a tax incentive could be the “deal-closer” that persuades a firm. However, tax incentives are rarely “deal makers” because other important factors such as efficient permitting and appropriate workforce need to be in place first.

Although only half the municipalities in the CGM assist firms in securing financing with commercial lenders or state industrial finance mechanisms, Windham may want to begin offering such assistance and listing the service in marketing materials (Section 5A). Doing so would help cultivate relationships with firms and enhance the level of business-friendliness and customer service from the town.

Your town may also want to try to recruit local, state, and federal facilities if they can complement the town’s industry/commercial attraction strategy (Section 2B).















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

Section 9. Tax Rates

A tax rate is another cost factor that has traditionally been considered a business “deal-breaker.” Municipalities often thought that if tax rates were too high, then it would have difficulty attracting businesses. However, like business incentives, the tax rate is not one of the *Very Important* location factors. If the *Very Important* factors are satisfied, a business will likely ask for a more favorable tax rate during later stage negotiations. However, negotiations are unlikely to get to that point if the *More Important* location factors have not been satisfied.

A. Local










Windham collects a property tax, but no other taxes such as local sales, income, hotel room, or meals taxes. The property tax rate of \$23.60 per \$1,000 is the same for both residential and commercial and industrial properties, but notably higher than among the CGM that also have a single tax rate. The town’s property tax revenue is comprised of 2% from industrial, 6% from commercial, and 92% from residential properties. With additional economic development, the town would be able to lower the tax burden on residential property owners.

Question	Windham		Comparison Group
1: What types of taxes are collected by your jurisdiction to pay for local services?			
- Property tax	yes		yes
- Local sales tax	no		no
- Local income tax	no		no
- Hotel room tax	no		no
- Meals tax	no		no
2: Of the potential commercial and industrial property tax revenue your jurisdiction could collect, what percent is currently abated?	0%		0%
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			between 15.22 and 15.47
5: If yes, what is the tax rate on residential property? \$ /\$1,000			between 7.80 and 8.21
6: If no, what is the tax rate on all property?	23.6		13.94
7: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Industrial %	2%		
8: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Commercial %	6%		
9: What % of your tax revenue is derived from: Residential %	92%		
10: Does your jurisdiction impose impact fees on new commercial or industrial development?	yes		no

B. Tax Delinquency

Windham mirrors the CGM in regards to tax delinquency. The percentage of residential, commercial, and industrial properties that are more than one year tax delinquent all range from 0% to 3%, while less than 50 properties are tax defaulted or subject to the power of sale. Your town chooses to auction off tax title properties after 1-5 years and has

an organized and defined process for conducting such auctions and ensuring they are successes. Windham does not auction the “right to foreclose” on tax delinquent properties or seeks tax abatements on tax title properties to allow the liens to clear for new owners. Lastly, neither the CGM nor your town pays special attention to tax delinquent or tax title properties that serve as impediments to developments. Although few such properties are in your community and thus, they are unlikely to hinder development efforts, addressing them when a firm shows interest or if they are stalling development would be beneficial. The more properties not entangled in tax issues the more options prospective firms and developers will have within the town.

Question	Windham		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?	no		no

Section 10. Access to Information






















While a municipality’s website may rank as *Less Important* in terms of decision making, it can be the initial source of information that entices a location expert to probe deeper and contact a municipality’s economic development department for further information. At that point, an appropriate municipal staff member has an opportunity to step in and develop a personal relationship with the developer or company representative. If the necessary data are not easily accessible and understandable, the researcher may reject the municipality as a candidate, opting instead to consider others with easily accessible data.

A. Website

Windham’s website is comprehensive and provides more information to users than among the CGM websites. The site features all local development policies and procedures as well as date-certified applications and other forms to ensure they are the most recent versions. Windham’s site has more links to local resources and locally based organizations than the typical CGM. Your jurisdiction also updates the website weekly and has a designated webmaster who maintains and updates the plethora of content. The website may benefit from including assessors information for parcels such as owner, square footage, abutter information, GPS coordinates, photographs, and other information listed in Question 11 in the table below.

Adding contact information for key officials, would make your town more accessible and better allow residents to resolve their issues and for prospective businesses to reach decision makers. Your town may also want to consider

adding a “For Businesses” tab with contact information, permitting information, development policies and handbooks/flowcharts (Section 5D), a list of available properties with data and photos (Section 5B), permit applications for download, and other information relevant to prospective and current firms and developers.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Windham</i>		<i>Comparison Group</i>
1: Does your jurisdiction's website list all local development policies and procedures?	yes		no
2: Does your website have contact information for key officials?	no		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?	no		no
7: Are permit applications available for downloading on the website?	yes		yes
8: Are applications and other forms date certified to ensure that they are the most recent versions (i.e. the same versions that you would get in person)?	yes		no
9: Is it possible to file a permit application electronically?	no		no
10: Is there a list of available land and building sites on the website?	no		no
11: If yes, check the types of information available about each site. (Check all that apply)			
- :Owner	no		no
- Square footage of vacant land	no		no
- Square footage and quality of existing buildings and structures	no		no
- Abutters	no		no
- Zoning	no		no
- Assessed value	no		no
- Tax rate	no		no
- Current tax status (e.g. paid up, delinquent)	no		no
- Contamination	no		no
- Aerial photos	no		no
- GIS links	no		no

12: Other, please specify		<input type="checkbox"/>	
13: Is there a posting of current hearings available on the website?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
14: Is there a posting of pending applications available on the website?	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
15: Is there a listing of current members of development review boards and staff contact information?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
16: Are there links to other local development resources? (Check all that apply)			
- State finance agencies	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- State permitting agencies	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional planning agencies	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Regional development organizations	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Workforce training organizations	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Local public or quasi-public financing resources	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Demographic information	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
- Economic development agencies	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
17: Other, please specify		<input type="checkbox"/>	
18: Are there links to other locally-based private or non-profit organizations?			
- Colleges and universities	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Chambers of Commerce	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
- Community development corporations	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Arts and cultural organizations	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes
- Sports and recreation venues	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
- Convention and tourist organization	no	<input type="checkbox"/>	no
19: Other, please specify		<input type="checkbox"/>	
20: Is there a designated webmaster or staff person responsible for maintaining the website?	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes

NEXT STEPS

Windham is an attractive New England community located in a bucolic and historic setting. The community enjoys a good public school system, a low crime rate, and open space with recreational opportunities. The town has access to two strong chambers of commerce and a local economic development committee, has identified industries in which it wants to target for recruitment (Information technology, Financial services, Biotechnology/Life sciences, Healthcare, and Warehousing), and has a highly educated and skilled workforce. Windham is already engaging in marketing and economic development activities that involve local and prospective businesses, as well as engaging residents in many strategic planning processes. The 2005 Master Plan contains public input, and the town will integrate stakeholders input from the 2014 Community Vision and Goals document into the current update of the 2005 Master Plan. One of the most important strengths in Windham is its municipal permitting process. Many permitting review processes in Windham are faster than or as fast as the typical CGM. Many communities face the challenge of needing to streamline their permitting processes, but this is not the case for Windham. However, Windham can still improve its permitting processes by finding ways to accelerate the review of new project plans, which is the one process that is relatively slower, and moving towards a single presentation process.

While Windham has some important strengths in economic development, the town faces several major “deal breakers” that revolve around infrastructure. Windham’s infrastructure for water and waste water, electricity and natural gas, land lines, and broadband service are at best adequate for current needs only. This is a significant impediment for the town because constraints exist in all major infrastructure systems and may limit even the growth of existing businesses. Addressing the limitations will be a long term and complex process for Windham. We suggest the town begin with identifying alternative solutions for each of the deficient infrastructure systems and begin planning to finance the upgrades and begin conversations with the utilities and service providers and potential partners, collaborators, and stakeholders.

There are several other weaknesses or actions that Windham should address that would put the town in a better position to compete for investment resources. Create informational resources for permit applicants and empower elected officials or staff to be ambassadors to existing businesses and prospective business owners or developers. The role of the ambassador is to establish relationships with businesses and developers to facilitate their discovery process and to focus on Windham’s strengths while finding means to address or compensate for the infrastructure constraints. Information is something the town can provide which is relatively inexpensive to assemble. For example the town should create a list of available sites and include parcel specific information and assessor’s data. This information can also be posted to the town’s website to make research easier. The table below summarizes recommended next steps for Windham.

Recommendations	Priority
Explore alternatives for water supply such as more efficient use and protection of groundwater and surface water or joining/creating a regional water system.	High
Explore alternatives for wastewater treatment, including research on new septic technologies and best practices for commercial applications and joining/creating a regional wastewater treatment system.	High
Initiate discussions with electricity and natural gas to enhance and expand distribution infrastructure.	High

Recommendations	Priority
Initiate discussions with broadband providers to upgrade and expand their infrastructure and services in Windham. Engage regional, state, and federal resources that support bringing broadband services to rural areas.	High
Create and make available supporting information for Windham’s municipal permitting processes, such as checklists, flowcharts, and handbooks.	High
Create and maintain a list of available development sites with detailed information about each parcel.	High
Continue to update the town’s website, particularly with parcel and assessor’s information.	High/Medium
Strengthen the town’s commercial and industrial attraction policy, with regard to identified target industries and the town’s current infrastructure limitations.	High/Medium
Dedicate a component of Windham’s marketing campaign to shaping the “mind map” or image people have of the town. In the face of the infrastructure constraints, the town needs a marketing campaign that focuses on the town’s strengths and opportunities.	High/Medium