

Joint Business Council – North West Plenary
April 14 & 15, 2010

The Middle Cities Initiative



A data-driven approach to revitalize
mid-sized urban areas in Massachusetts



PIONEER INSTITUTE
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH



Taking a look at the Middle Cities

Name	Local Government	Population*	Location	Name	Local Government	Population*	Location
Worcester	Mayor, City Council**	175,454	Central Mass.	Cork	City Council	119,418	Republic of Ireland
Springfield	Mayor, City Council	151,176	Western Mass.	Tallaght	Town	92,300	Republic of Ireland
Lowell	Mayor, City Council**	103,229	North Mass.	Derry	City Council	83,652	Northern Ireland
Brockton	Mayor, City Council	94,191	South Mass.	Paisley	Town	74,170	Scotland
New Bedford	Mayor, City Council	92,538	South Mass.	Galway	City Council	72,414	Republic of Ireland
Fall River	Mayor, City Council	91,474	South Mass.	Lisburn	City Council	71,465	Northern Ireland
Lynn	Mayor, City Council	87,991	North Mass.	Limerick	City Council	52,539	Republic of Ireland
Lawrence	Mayor, City Council	70,662	South Mass.	Hamilton	Town	49,451	Scotland
Taunton	Mayor, City Council	56,074	South Mass.	Ayr	Town	46,431	Scotland
Chicopee	Mayor, City Council	54,428	Western Mass.	Clydebank	Town	46,011	Scotland
Pittsfield	Mayor, City Council	43,497	Western Mass.	Waterford	City Council	45,775	Republic of Ireland
Leominster	Mayor, City Council	41,549	Central Mass.	Greenock	Town	45,467	Scotland
Fitchburg	Mayor, City Council	40,050	Central Mass.	Kilmarnock	Town	44,170	Scotland
Holyoke	Mayor, City Council	39,765	Western Mass.	Irvine	Town	39,527	Scotland

**Data from US census 2006 - ** City Manager as well*

**(Data from census 2001 for Northern Ireland and Scotland, 2006 for the Republic of Ireland) - Suburbs not included in population*





Why “Middle” Cities?

- Older industrial cities politically and economically in limbo between the capital and the suburbs
- Cities caught between their former industrial role and their newer market function
- No political cohesion, and no cohesive strategy at the state level to make the cities once again self-sustaining economic engines





Middle Cities Characteristics

- Criteria for selection of these 14 cities
 - Populations greater than 40,000
 - Income per capita of less than \$20,000
 - EQV per capita of less than \$80,000
- Geographic balance
- Socio-economic profile
 - Declining population
 - Unemployment rate between 9% and 16.5% in 2009
 - Median manufacturing employment rate of 20%
- Historically thriving industrial centers, with difficulty to attract or retain businesses





Middle Cities Challenges

- Special interests/“political machines”
 - Immigrant population vs. local officials = no buy in
- Old infrastructure, inefficient delivery of services
- Parochialism vs. Regionalism
- Poor performance in key service areas and on metrics of economic prosperity
- Poor performance comes notwithstanding with substantial state aid



The Middle Cities Initiative: Approach

- Data-driven approach, for benchmarking:
 - Tying funds to agreed upon results
- Focus on four core areas:
 - Education
 - Economic development
 - Fiscal management
 - Public safety
- Active Involvement of citizens and decision makers

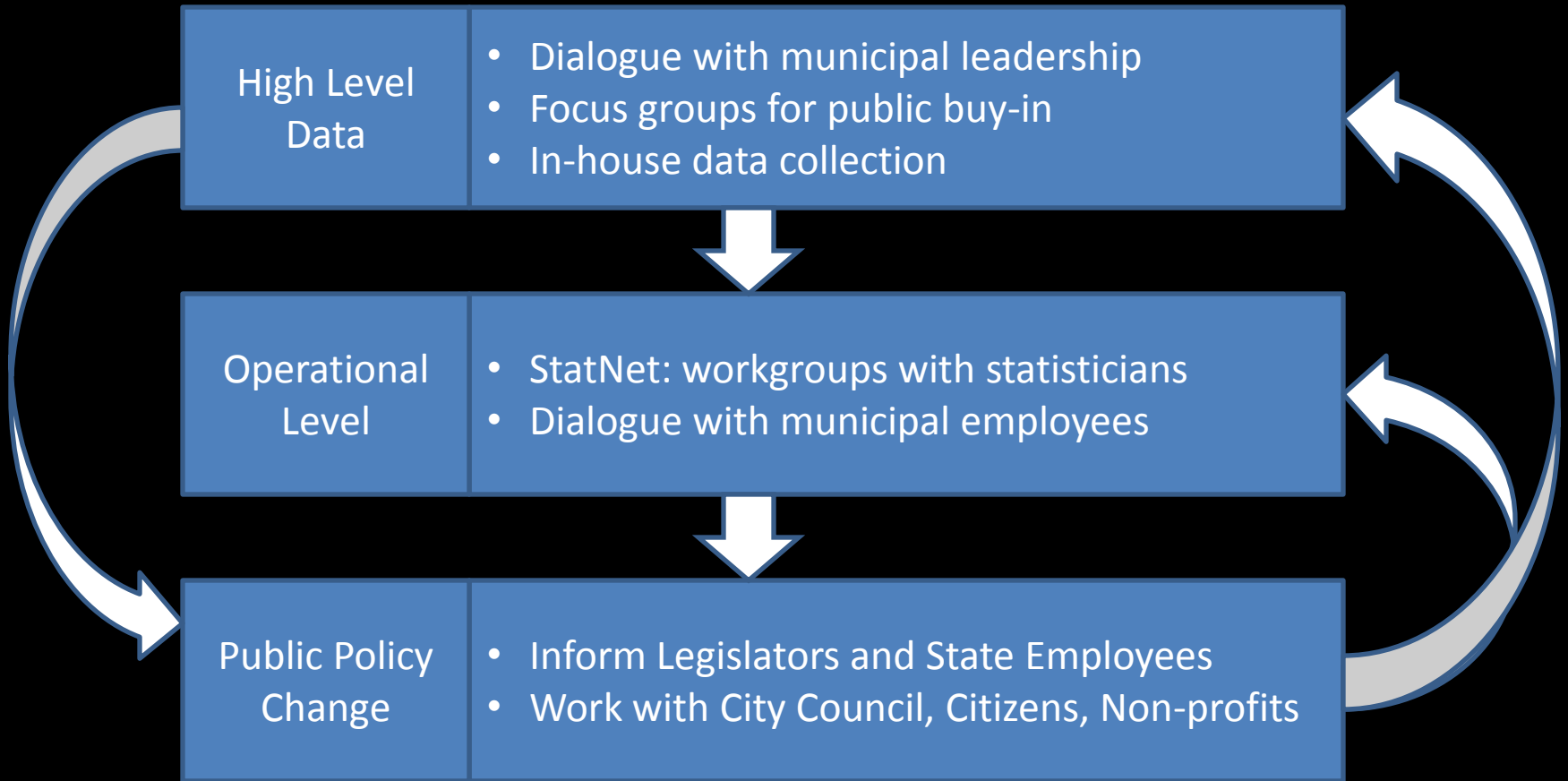
OUR GOAL

Effective coordination of state public expenditure

Increase competitiveness as a region by promoting best practices



The Middle Cities Initiative: Model





The Middle Cities Initiative: MassCityStats

MassCityStats

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MassCityStats is a website that gives you access to municipal data for 14 Middle Cities across Massachusetts.

Click on the map to get data for your city or select an option from the following menu:

All Middle Cities

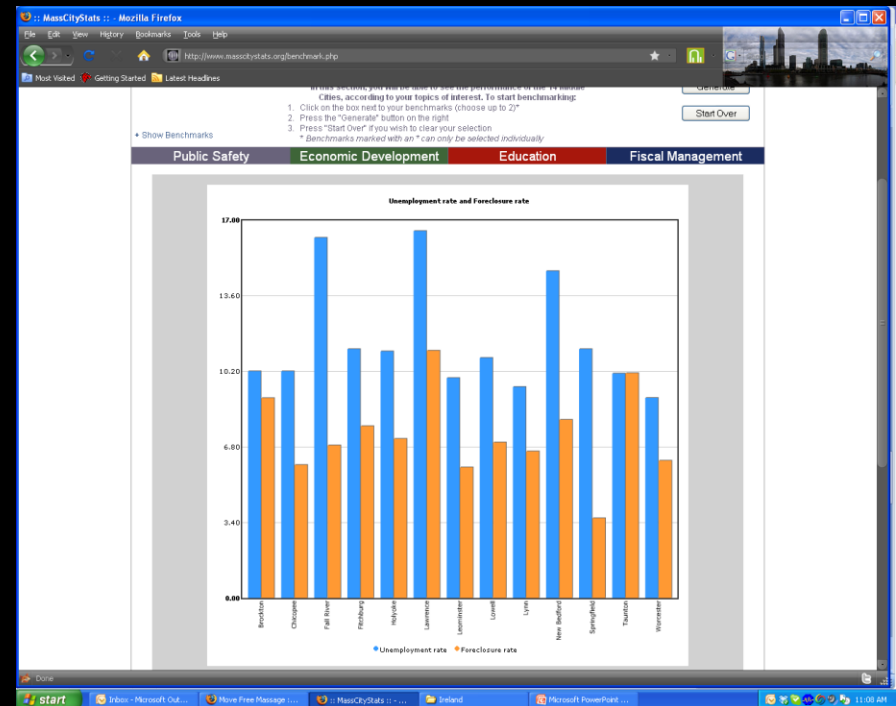
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Welcome to MassCityStats!

As more and more people in the United States and Massachusetts live in cities, it is imperative that our urban areas thrive. To ensure this, constant attention to municipal core services such as education, public safety, economic development and financial management is essential. By focusing on basic services, the Commonwealth will attract and retain individuals and families of various incomes and backgrounds, so businesses can prosper and jobs are available for all citizens.

How do we get there? We must start with high-quality, up-to-date, factual information to help foster a rich discussion of where our cities are thriving, and where work is needed. We also have to ask how all of our mid-sized cities are doing and to learn from those who are doing well, as well as those who are not. How does a city stack up to others in terms of the quality of its core services? Is the city's economy growing? Is a school district doing a good job at educating your kids? The answers to these questions will not only shine light on current challenges, but also lay the foundation for future public policies.

Since 2008, Pioneer Institute has worked with 14 cities from across Massachusetts by asking over 160 community members and municipal leaders those same questions. We also asked them just how we could measure performance in these critical core service areas. They came up with over 600 suggestions! Please click here to read full report on community process.



A free online tool to promote transparency, accountability and citizen engagement



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