

## **Dukakis Center Assists City of Lynn in an Economic Development Self Assessment**

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On June 27, Barry Bluestone, Director of the Dukakis Center, and two members of the Dukakis Center staff, Nancy Lee and Daniel Spiess, assisted the City of Lynn in facilitating the city's participation in the Economic Development Self Assessment Tool (EDSAT). The EDSAT is an online questionnaire of over 200 questions developed by the Dukakis Center to help cities and towns identify their strengths and weaknesses for attracting new businesses and growing existing ones. Local Economic Development is one of six Focus Areas in which the Dukakis Center conducts interdisciplinary research, in collaboration with civic leaders and scholars to identify and implement real solutions to the critical challenges facing urban areas throughout Greater Boston, the Commonwealth, and the nation.



### **Success with the City of Lynn**

Bluestone led the 4-hour facilitation that resulted in a candid and rich discussion among the participants that included Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy and over 25 business and civic leaders from the community. Lynn's participation in EDSAT was driven and co-sponsored by the Lynn Area Chamber of Commerce (LACC), the City of Lynn, and the Lynn Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC). Leslie Gould, Executive Director of the LACC, requested Bluestone and his team facilitate the self-assessment so that Lynn could get the most out of the process. "The process went beautifully. The participants were engaged and I could see them making connections about the many aspects of what it takes to bring new businesses to Lynn," says Bluestone. "Not only was it a successful meeting for the City of Lynn, this was the first time my team and I have seen this process in action. We advise municipalities to convene a group such as this and based on what we've seen and heard here, we will continue refine and improve the EDSAT process."

### **Results**

The results of Lynn's self-assessment will be finalized in a few weeks. Bluestone and his team will return to Lynn and present the results to the same group of participants and assist them in devising realistic strategies to focus on creating a robust and resilient local economy.

### **EDSAT and a Partnership with the National League of Cities**

The Dukakis Center and the National League of Cities (NLC) formed a close working partnership in March 2010 to rollout the EDSAT nationwide. At the time, use of the self-assessment was concentrated in the Northeast, but its functions are not limited by geography. Bluestone explains, "The location factors that are important to businesses are the same regardless of geography. One example is time-to-market. In a global economy, businesses want to locate in a municipality that allows them to get their products to market as soon as possible." For additional information about EDSAT please click [here](#).