



Massachusetts Municipal Association

## MMA BEST PRACTICES SERIES

*Recommendations for Effective Local Government Administration and Management from MMA Policy Committees*

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### **MMA Policy Committee on Municipal and Regional Administration Best Practice Recommendation: Economic Development Strategies**

**BEST PRACTICE:** Proactively engage in economic development efforts to market and make municipalities attractive to investors, including: 1) taking steps to develop a municipal identity or brand that can be used as part of a strategic marketing plan; 2) participating in a variety of state and regional marketing programs (both public and private); 3) considering ways to improve the local permitting process to make the process quicker and easier to navigate; 4) and making use of incentives when consistent with local planning and financial goals.

While the above best practices are straightforward, many communities have not yet engaged in branding, marketing or other economic development initiatives. Localities are encouraged to research the potential opportunities for branding, especially if tourism is an anchor for economic activity. Economic development offices should contact the state's Executive Office for Housing and Economic Development to pursue state-aided marketing activities, and should also review options for local tax-incentive financing programs to attract investors and development. Cities and towns should also review the advantages of Chapter 43D of the Massachusetts General Laws, a local-option statute that dozens of communities have adopted for scores of development areas.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) suggests that cities and towns create a policy for using economic incentives, including goals and objectives, a description of possible incentives and rules on how they would be used, and provisions for oversight and administration.

#### **Resources**

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA):

[www.gfoa.org/developing-economic-development-incentive-policy](http://www.gfoa.org/developing-economic-development-incentive-policy)

[www.gfoa.org/evaluating-and-managing-economic-development-incentives](http://www.gfoa.org/evaluating-and-managing-economic-development-incentives)

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development:

[www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/pro/zoning-and-permitting/43d/chapter-43d-local-expedited-permitting.html](http://www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/pro/zoning-and-permitting/43d/chapter-43d-local-expedited-permitting.html)

[www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/pro/zoning-and-permitting/43d/chapter-43d-communities.html](http://www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/pro/zoning-and-permitting/43d/chapter-43d-communities.html)