The Role of the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative

To have a **regional** and **statewide** impact on the quality of life in urban areas through:

- Research, analysis, and technical assistance in areas of policy review and implementation
- Development of a team of research associates and research assistants to develop projects
- Integration and utilization of the skills and expertise of UMD faculty
- Partnerships with municipalities, non-profit organizations, professional associations, and other research organizations
To create new partnerships and foster regional development by investing in Massachusetts’ older, urban communities

- Coordinated by MassINC and the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative
The 11 Gateway Cities are defined by their common industrial past, their struggle to reinvent themselves, and their location outside of Greater Boston.

They include:

- Fall River
- Brockton
- Fitchburg
- Lawrence
- Springfield
- Pittsfield
- New Bedford
- Worcester
- Lowell
- Haverhill
- Holyoke
In February 2007, MassINC & the Brookings Institution released a report entitled *Reconnecting Massachusetts’ Gateway Cities*.

Among the findings:

- **Massachusetts’ high-paying, knowledge-based economy continues to concentrate in Greater Boston.**

- **The Gateway Cities continue to struggle with persistent job losses, low education levels, and limited traction in the knowledge economy.**

- **The income gap between the Gateway Cities and Greater Boston continues to expand.**
Massachusetts’ high-paying, knowledge-based economy continues to concentrate in Greater Boston.

• Between 1970 and 2005, while Greater Boston added 467,000 jobs to grow by 51 percent, the Gateway Cities as a group lost more than 11,000 jobs, or 3 percent of their job base.

• Twenty-eight percent of Greater Boston’s jobs and 43 percent of its payroll falls within four high-value, high-pay “knowledge” clusters:
  1. Financial services
  2. Health care
  3. Information technology
  4. Knowledge creation

Meanwhile, only 20 percent of jobs in Gateway Cities lie in these knowledge clusters, generating only 27 percent of the cities’ payroll.

• While Greater Boston increased its share of the state’s 4,000-plus high-technology firms between 1991 and 2004 from 53 to 60 percent, the share in the Gateway Cities dropped from 8.1 to 6.3 percent, and the share in Gateway regions fell from 28.6 to 26.6 percent.
The Gateway Cities continue to struggle with persistent job losses, low education levels, and limited traction in the knowledge economy.

• The 11 Gateway Cities’ combined loss of 134,000 manufacturing jobs since 1960 accounts for more than one-third of the state’s total decline in such industries.

• Just 16.5 percent of Gateway City residents and 24.6 percent of Gateway region residents now possess a four-year college degree, compared with the 42 percent Greater Boston mark.
The income gap between the Gateway Cities and Greater Boston continues to expand.

- Greater Boston contains 40 percent of the state’s population and 50 percent of its private jobs but generates 60 percent of the state’s total payroll. Conversely, the Gateway Cities contain 15 percent of the state’s population and 13 percent of the state’s jobs but generate less than 10 percent of the state’s payroll.

- Greater Boston contains 52 percent of the state’s college graduates and about 70 percent of its knowledge-industry employment. As a result, these 75 towns enjoy per-capita incomes 74 percent higher than the Gateway Cities and a median household income 68 percent higher.

- Between 1980 and 2000, the gap in per-capita income between Greater Boston and the rest of the state increased from 18 percent to 28 percent.
The 11 Gateway Cities are home to 30 percent of all state residents living below the poverty line, even though they account for only 15 percent of the state’s population.
MassINC & the UMass-Dartmouth Urban Initiative have formed a partnership to work with and support the leadership in Gateway Cities to accomplish the following:

1. Committing to a compact uniting Gateway Cities in an effort to achieve a common set of goals relative to gaining additional state attention and focus, while offering the state opportunities that enhance regional development.
MassINC & the UMass-Dartmouth Urban Initiative have formed a partnership to work with and support the leadership in Gateway Cities to accomplish the following:

2. Defining a broad, new urban agenda for the Commonwealth, which outlines the opportunities and policy solutions to be achieved.
MassINC & the UMass-Dartmouth Urban Initiative have formed a partnership to work with and support the leadership in Gateway Cities to accomplish the following:

3. Securing commitment on a range of development and financial initiatives and investments that improve the quality of life in Gateway Cities, thus ensuring the Commonwealth’s future health.
A New Urban Agenda of Investments, Opportunities and Policy Solutions

• Fix the Basics

• Build the middle class workforce of tomorrow

• Create new economic connections for the 21st Century
Fix the basics:

- Massachusetts should assure the Gateway Cities a more consistent flow of local aid dollars in exchange for increased accountability, transparency, and efficiency in local expenditures and service provision.

- Turn “deal breakers” in the real-estate development regulatory process into “deal makers” through state, local, and private sector collaboration.
Build the middle-class workforce of tomorrow

• Step up education and training efforts in the Gateway Cities
• Redouble efforts at urban school reform
• Boost education and language skills of the adult workforce
• Bolster family assets to generate community wealth
Create new economic connections for the 21st Century

• Connections—whether the physical links of rail, the electronic links of the Internet, or the intergovernmental links of cross-boundary collaboration—should be developed to foster improved economic competitiveness among regions

• The state and the Gateway Cities should harness Gateway City colleges to spark local economic development, such as the UMass Dartmouth Urban Initiative
Immediate Goals / Next Steps

In addition to:

• Educating the public and policy makers about the importance of re-investing in Gateway Cities

• Gaining agreement amongst Gateway City leadership on broad principles of collaboration

• Getting commitment from state officials to a new, statewide urban agenda
Near-Term Goals:

• Remove cap on state’s Historic Tax Credit Program and/or earmark for projects in Gateway Cities

• Enhance TIF program, increasing state Invest Tax Credit to 10% for eligible Gateway City projects

• Tax credits for Market-Rate Housing
- State assistance for off-street parking
- Targeted Investments in Downtown/Designated Areas
- Loan Forgiveness for job-creating businesses
Other Needs Include:

• Additional ABE/Workforce Funding

• Public Safety Investments

• Marketing of Quality of Life Initiatives
To create a new understanding of the role Gateway Cities can play in the Commonwealth’s renewal as places that provide a great quality of life for residents in livable, vibrant communities, that allow Massachusetts to retain population, and provide a catalyst for regional development across the state.
Reconnecting Massachusetts' Gateway Cities
A Plan For Renewal

• To create new partnerships and foster regional development by investing in Massachusetts’ older, urban communities

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