



**Northeastern University**

*School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs*



**Massachusetts  
Housing Partnership**

Moving affordable housing forward

**Assessing Affordable Housing Availability and its  
Effects on Employers' Ability to Recruit and Retain  
Employees in Greater Boston**

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# Executive Summary

Despite a successful and sustained recovery since the Great Recession, many Greater Boston residents are experiencing economic stagnation in the midst of increasing income inequality. Combined with this reality is a growing monetary burden for residents who wish to either own or rent a home in the region. While the allure of Greater Boston's professional and cultural offerings is substantial, the cost of housing is an omnipresent barrier for current and potential residents alike.

With these conditions in mind, this report sought to analyze whether housing affordability and supply have an impact on an employer's ability to attract and/or retain desired talent in the Greater Boston area. Through an online survey and in-depth phone interviews, we were able to develop a holistic understanding of the experiences, expertise, and challenges of Greater Boston businesses. Through these methods, we were able to quantify overall levels of concern while mapping out targeted collaborative solutions.

Of the survey's 87 respondents, **over 72% of companies say they have found it “Extremely or Somewhat Difficult” to recruit and/or retain talent in the past five years. In addition, over 67% claim home prices and rental costs have affected their ability to recruit qualified candidates.** When presented with a list of nine potential barriers to recruitment and retention, housing cost was ranked third overall. Businesses with ten or more full-time employees expressed greater levels of concern than their smaller business counterparts.

Phone interviews conducted with non-profit, financial, and education institutions produced varied results. The non-profit respondents struggled to recruit talented individuals for all facets of their organization and have been unable to increase salaries in accordance with rising housing costs. Conversely, prominent financial and educational institutions have had little difficulty recruiting and retaining talent due to prestige and brand popularity.

Informed by the findings, the following are recommendations that could address this issue:

- Develop a state program to encourage and assist employers to offer commuter/housing benefits, such as a tax break or incentive.
- Establish a convening led by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership that gives

employers the opportunity to ideate and innovate new solutions. Use leading innovation experts or business/industry organizations to facilitate solution formulation.

- Develop a tech tool to match employers to housing resources for employee-specific needs, such as finding roommates or accessing housing/commuting benefits.
- Develop a shareable metric for determining "actual cost of living" for Boston residents, which includes rising housing costs, that employers can use to calculate cost of living salary increases.

# I. Project Narrative

As companies and businesses continue to expand in the Greater Boston area, both private and public entities alike must work together to not only ensure steady job growth, but also explore possible looming causes of economic stagnation. In 2009, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) published findings documenting the impact that housing supply can have on job growth. The report stated that housing supply may have more of an impact than housing cost in regards to job growth.<sup>1</sup> A lack of housing, combined with high demand due to the increasing number of students and potential employees who live in the metro area, are increasing housing costs. Industries are continuing to flourish in Greater Boston due to a workforce pipeline of educated graduates across the region. Without appropriate housing conditions, that workforce may slowly erode as individuals are unable to find adequate living arrangements. In addition, qualified applicants may find themselves reluctant to relocate to a region where housing cost is becoming prohibitive.<sup>2</sup>

In light of these observations, the following analysis explores the concept of whether housing affordability and supply have an impact on an employer's ability to attract and/or retain desired talent in the Greater Boston area. The goal of this research was to better understand a) the current opinions of Greater Boston business establishments as it pertains to the recruitment and retention of employees, b) the nature of the Greater Boston housing market as a barrier to recruitment and retention for those establishments, and c) possible solutions moving forward to facilitate cooperation between public and private entities to address these concerns. We hope this research can contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the priorities and actions of the various stakeholders moving forward.

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<sup>1</sup> Moscovitch, E. (2009, January). *Recipe for Growth*(Rep.). Retrieved [http://www.massgrowth.net/writable/resources/document/recipe\\_for\\_growth\\_report.pdf](http://www.massgrowth.net/writable/resources/document/recipe_for_growth_report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

## II. Background

### The Greater Boston Housing Market

Since the tail-end of the Great Recession in 2009, Massachusetts has consistently outperformed national economic trends. In total, the Commonwealth has increased its number of jobs by 338,000.<sup>3</sup> This places the March 2017 unemployment rate at 3.4%, which many economists consider to be “full employment”.<sup>4</sup> Much of this success can be attributed to the five-county Greater Boston region, which has increased its employment total by over 260,000 jobs. That is a 12.2% increase since the end of the recession.<sup>5</sup> Backed by the large employment sectors of universities and medical centers, Greater Boston is seen as “one of the more stable markets in the country” that is “able to withstand economic events much better than many other markets”.<sup>6</sup>

Despite a growing economy, median household incomes for home-owners have stagnated recently, with an insignificant increase of 0.4% from 2010 to 2014. The median income of renters has seen a similar minute uptick of 0.6% since 2010. However, this followed a decade of declining income for this demographic, with renter median income dropping 8.9% from 2000 to 2010.<sup>7</sup> According to an analysis done by the Donahue Institute, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Area Planning Council (MAPC), this has led to a tectonic shift in the distribution of wealth across Greater Boston. From 1990 to 2014, the number of households considered “low-income” grew at a rate of 40%, while households defined as “high-income” rose by 33%.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Mass.gov, Labor and Workforce Development, Current Employment Statistics  
<http://www.mass.gov/lwd/economic-data/employment-jobs/>

<sup>4</sup> Fernandes, D. (2016, December), The Boston Globe, Retrieved from.  
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2016/12/15/mass-unemployment-rate-plummets-percent/T7vlyvynAM4ako0Co9rWcWP/story.html>

<sup>5</sup> Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy. The Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2016: The Trouble With Growth, November, 2016. [http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Housing-Report\\_R2.pdf](http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Housing-Report_R2.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Logan, T. (2016, January) The Boston Globe, Retrieved from  
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2016/01/07/think-boston-housing-expensive-now-wait-five-years/6qTjKdarDT2AdZkpqrJWaJ/story.html>

<sup>7</sup> Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy. The Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2016: The Trouble With Growth, November, 2016. [http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Housing-Report\\_R2.pdf](http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Housing-Report_R2.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Reardon, T. et. al. *Beyond “Workforce Housing”: The Past, Present and Future Needs of Metro Boston’s Working Households*, MassBenchmarks: Volume 18, Issue 2, 2016.  
<http://www.massbenchmarks.org/publications/issues/vol18i2/4.pdf>

This pronounced economic realignment, combined with steady population growth throughout Greater Boston, has coincided with staggering levels of increasing expense in the housing market. As Table 1 shows, housing has become more expensive according to all critical housing metrics since the year 2000.

**Table 1. Greater Boston Housing Median Price Increases Since 2000-2016**

<b>Housing Metric</b>	<b>% Increase in Median Price, 2000-2016</b>
Single-family Home	63%
Condominium	120%
“Triple-decker” Apartments	120%
Rental Prices	50%

Source: Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy. The Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2016: The Trouble With Growth, November, 2016. [http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Housing-Report\\_R2.pdf](http://www.northeastern.edu/dukakiscenter/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-Housing-Report_R2.pdf)

The amount of housing production in Greater Boston has consistently lagged behind its increase in population, possibly exacerbating rising costs. Part of this lag has been an aversion across the Commonwealth to the development of multifamily housing units. The state issued 22,642 permits for such development from 2011 through 2014.<sup>9</sup> This permitting output pales in comparison on a per resident basis when compared to states such as Texas, Colorado, Washington, and North Carolina — regions directly competing with Massachusetts to attract similar workforces centered around technology and the innovation economy.<sup>10</sup> From 2010 to 2013, the city of Boston itself added 250% fewer units of housing than Denver, and 300% fewer housing units than Seattle. This is despite the fact that all three cities experienced similar levels of population growth during that time period.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Clark, C. (2015, December) Mass Housing Partnership. Retrieved from

[http://www.massgrowth.net/blog/83-other\\_states\\_permitting\\_more\\_multifamily\\_housing/view](http://www.massgrowth.net/blog/83-other_states_permitting_more_multifamily_housing/view)

<sup>10</sup> Lewis, A. (2015, April) Unlock the Commonwealth, Retrieved from [http://www.massgrowth.net/blog/78-worker\\_migration\\_shows\\_strengths\\_vulnerabilities\\_of/view](http://www.massgrowth.net/blog/78-worker_migration_shows_strengths_vulnerabilities_of/view)

<sup>11</sup> Shaffer, B. (2015) Kennedy School Review. Retrieved from

[http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.neu.edu/ps/i.do?&id=GALE|A414840776&v=2.1&u=milin\\_b\\_northeast&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.neu.edu/ps/i.do?&id=GALE|A414840776&v=2.1&u=milin_b_northeast&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w)



## A. Employer Responses to Housing Costs

Employers offer benefits ranging from health insurance, life insurance, gym membership reimbursements, and in some instances paid relocation expenses or reimbursement. As housing demand and cost continue to increase, qualified applicants may find themselves hesitant to relocate due to these factors. Employers have learned the importance of offering benefits, such as Employer Assisted Housing (EAH), to keep a low turnover rate. These include programs such as “shared appreciation mortgages”, or assisting employees to rent apartments at below market rates. Establishments may also offer company-owned apartments that are subsidized, or offer to assist in rental payments for an apartment of the employee’s choosing.

Employers like CVS/Caremark, Northrop Grumman, University of Southern California, and many more participate in some form of employee assisted housing.<sup>12</sup> These programs are innovative techniques to both retain current employees while recruiting qualified applicants. These tactics can ultimately ensure increased savings for all involved parties, enhancing the competitive standing of participating establishments.

A report published by the Homes for Working Families and the Metropolitan Planning Council highlights both the need for EAH programs, and the successful implementation of them through a variety of employers. This bevy of potential offerings include homebuyer assistance, rental assistance, homeownership education and counseling services, and investment in the construction of new homes, or the renovation of current employee-owned units. The Homes for Working Families and Metropolitan Planning Council’s report highlighted the disparity between median income acquired, and the income necessary to afford a home. In Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, and Seattle, the income needed to afford a home ranged anywhere from 1.1 to 2.8 times the median household income.<sup>13</sup> An employee at Northrop Grumman states that EAH “is a tool for attracting new talent, but it’s also a tool for retaining established employees. It’s a means of strengthening our firm, and in doing so, benefiting everyone at Northrop Grumman.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Lubell, J. (2014, February). The New York Times Company. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/02/24/alternative-forms-of-compensation/employers-should-help-employees-afford-housing>

<sup>13</sup> *Understanding Employer-Assisted Housing*(Rep.). (n.d.). Retrieved <https://www.metroplanning.org/uploads/cms/documents/hwfeahfinal.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*

Traditional employee benefit packages offer health care, retirement, and other variety of benefits. Including employer-assisted housing (EAH) programs makes these packages more attractive to potential employees and help in retaining current employees. Transportation benefits, especially those that provide assistance for public transit are increasingly attractive due to long commute times, a push for "green living," and the cost of gas and maintaining a vehicle. Companies in areas with expensive housing markets may look into implementing housing assistance programs to help offset some of the housing costs, as well make their brand more attractive for recruitment and retention. Raising salaries is an option, but offering EAH benefits could yield a greater outcome in the long run.

## B. City Responses to Housing Costs

Three case studies were chosen based on comparable diverse populations and business interests to analyze policy responses to local housing crises: San Francisco, CA, New York, NY, and Portland, OR.

### **San Francisco, CA**

Housing affordability and overall housing shortages are an increasing problem in the Bay Area. Zoning laws from the 1960s restricted the construction of new buildings higher than 40 feet.<sup>15</sup> Laws were also passed that made it easier to block developments.<sup>16</sup> The number of issued housing permits would not be able to meet the demand of the rapidly growing population.<sup>17</sup> This is partially due to an unexpected boom of technological start-ups that the area now houses.

The city attempted to combat the crisis, but each planned initiative was not well received by residents. Two ballot propositions were rejected that would have provided a solution for some of the symptoms of the housing shortage. The first (Proposition F) was to limit the number of Airbnb rentals in the city.<sup>18</sup> Airbnb has proved to be a market force contributing to an increase in rental prices and a shortage of vacant rental units in both San Francisco and Los Angeles.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Smith, Matt (August 18, 1999). "Welcome Home." SF Weekly.

<sup>16</sup> Russel, Kyle (April 8, 2014). "This One Intersection Explains Why Housing Is So Expensive In San Francisco." *Business Insider*.

<sup>17</sup> Weinberg, Cory (Apr 13, 2015). "Did your city fail the Bay Area's housing supply test? Probably." San Francisco Business Times.

<sup>18</sup> Khan, Naureen (November 4, 2015). "After failed propositions, San Francisco housing crisis still festering." *Al Jazeera America*.

<sup>19</sup> Yaffe, Gideon. (May 13, 2016). "Activists say Airbnb drives up rents. But is that actually true? L.A.

Airbnb is not the primary cause of the increase of rental prices or the lack of available units, but is potentially a contributing factor. Yet, citizens rejected this proposition to restrict Airbnb rentals.<sup>20</sup>

Another housing proposition (Proposition I) would have halted luxury housing developments in the San Francisco's Mission District for eighteen months, while a plan would be formulated to keep working-class residents in the neighborhood.<sup>21</sup> This was also rejected, and neither Proposition I or F had the backing of the mayor.<sup>22</sup> Residents did approve one proposition that was advocated for by the mayor, Proposition A. This proposition allowed the issuance of a \$310 bond for the development of below-market-rate housing.<sup>23</sup>

### **New York, NY**

In 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio and his administration launched "Housing New York" - the most aggressive plan in the nation to tackle the shortage of affordable housing. The city's objective is to create "over 200,000 high-quality, affordable residences over ten years for almost a half-million people."<sup>24</sup> The plan lists the following steps to achieve its set objective:

- 1) Fostering diverse and livable neighborhoods
- 2) Preserving the affordability and quality of housing stock
- 3) Building new affordable housing for all New Yorkers
- 4) Promoting decreased homelessness, and increased senior, supportive, and accessible housing

Two major takeaways of the plan are the introduction of the mandatory inclusionary housing (MIH) program and the overall holistic nature of the "Housing New York" plan.

MIH, signed into law in March 2016, requires that a share of housing developments in medium to high-density areas be permanently affordable. As of January 2017, 1,500 permanently

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needs to find out." *Los Angeles Times*.

<sup>20</sup> Khan, Naureen (November 4, 2015). "After failed propositions, San Francisco housing crisis still festering." *Al Jazeera America*.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> "California Election Watch 2014: Bay Area Measures We're Following." KQED News. November 5, 2015.

<sup>24</sup> "Housing New York: Three Years of Progress". The Administration of Mayor Billy de Blasio. January 2017.

affordable units would be built because of MIH project approvals.<sup>25</sup> The city council has the authority to define affordability in the MIH program based on the provided options and directed by the Area Median Income (AMI).

The plan also incorporated minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WOE), nonprofits, and local organizations in city-supported affordable housing developments. It created a path where M/WOE and low-income workers can connect.<sup>26</sup> To engage and prepare business, especially M/WOE, New York's Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) department launched a training program known as "Building Opportunity." As of January 2017, the multi-programs created to meet this holistic goal of building affordable housing, empowering M/WOE, and employing low-income workers had already created 1,024 permanent jobs and 53,102 temporary jobs.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to "Housing New York," there is also much innovation happening to present solutions for the housing shortage. The Citizen Housing and Planning Council (CHPC) in New York City issued a report proposing for the conversion of the city's basements into livable housing that would provide much-needed unit vacancies. After thorough analysis, the CHPC found that this program could potentially generate 10,000 to 38,000 new apartments<sup>28</sup>- as demonstrated in Figure 1. Although, this will be legally and regulatory challenging, the scalability of it is attractive. The CHPC promises to share more analysis on this proposal.

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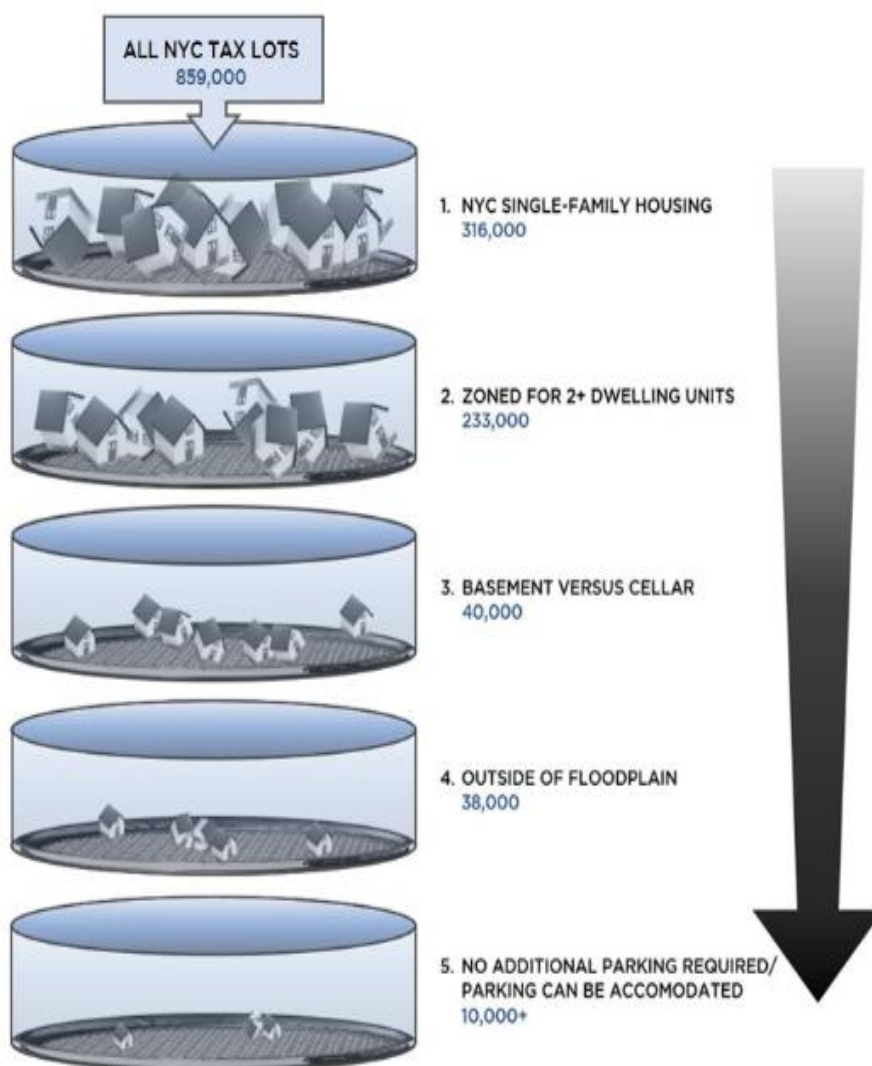
<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> "Housing New York: Three Years of Progress". The Administration of Mayor Billy de Blasio. January 2017.

<sup>28</sup> "Hidden Housing." NYC Citizen Housing and Planning Council. 2016.

Figure 1. **Hidden Housing Graphic**



“Hidden Housing.” NYC Citizen Housing and Planning Council. 2016.

### **Portland, OR**

Portland’s 2016 local elections were concerned with one major issue: housing. From 2000 to 2014, median home prices in Portland increased by 51%, while median income remains relatively stagnant with a slight decrease.<sup>29</sup> In one of the nation’s fastest growing cities, renters are being pushed to the outskirts and suburbs of Portland. Joined by powerful business

<sup>29</sup> “State of Housing in Portland.” Portland Housing Bureau.” December 2016.

interests residents demanded solutions in the 2016 local elections.<sup>30</sup> Voters also approved a \$258 million bond for affordable housing. Portland residents unseated a seasoned city commissioner for an incumbent with no political experience but ran primarily on the promise of housing solutions.<sup>31</sup>

The Portland Housing Bureau issued its annual report on the “State of Housing in Portland.” Beyond the voter-approved housing grant, the report listed multiple solutions. One that is estimated to create \$100 million in tax revenue over the next 20 years to fund affordable housing was the newly adopted excise tax on commercial and residential construction. Another enforced a renter protection provision which would mandate a 90-day notice for tenancy termination without cause and for rent increases of 5% or more over a period of twelve months.<sup>32</sup> The city also commissioned the creation of the Joint Office of Homelessness Services. In his opening letter in the report, Dan Saltzman, the City Commissioner promises a continuing focus on tenant protection and new interventions for landlord-tenant affairs.<sup>33</sup>

### **Case Studies: Final Thoughts**

The primary solutions coming from the government sector include the raising of a specific tax, issuing of city Bonds, and the distribution of funds to affordable housing developments. These are not necessarily groundbreaking, and the magnitude of this problem in some of the most technologically advanced cities requires more extensive innovation in policy interventions.

## **III. Research Methodology**

This study was conducted using a mixed methods approach, gathering qualitative and quantitative data from businesses in the Greater Boston area.

Qualitative data was gathered through individual interviews with Human Resource representatives from six organizations in the Greater Boston area. The organizations are in the non-profit, higher education, and financial sectors. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and featured a variety of questions regarding pre-specified research topics. These

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<sup>30</sup> Njus, Elliot. (30 December 2016). “Housing crisis took center stage in 2016, will keep it in 2017.”

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> “State of Housing in Portland.” Portland Housing Bureau.” December 2016.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

interview protocols can be found in the Appendix. Qualitative sources were culled through a combination of the researcher's personal networks, and the members of three professional business organizations.

In addition to the qualitative interviews, we collected quantitative data through the development of a survey instrument. Through the use of existing relationships at Northeastern University, researchers were put in touch with both the Alliance for Business Leadership (ABL) and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce (GBCOC). Both organizations agreed to send direct emails to their membership lists, with a provided cover letter from researchers. However, the request to participate in the survey came directly from the organization, with no mention of Northeastern University or the Massachusetts Housing Partnership. To ensure a strong data set from a variety of employers, we additionally consulted the membership of a local association - the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network (YNPN).

The survey sample included a varied set of industries throughout the region. Nearly 30% self-identified as either being in the sectors of education or science and technology. Other prominent groupings include finance, healthcare, and real estate. Approximately 30% of respondents self-identified as "other" when provided the traditional industry options as listed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Initially, the online survey instrument presented itself as only a recruitment and retention study. No mention was made of housing as a primary focus until later sections. This was done to ensure unbiased responses regarding the appropriate rating of housing as a recruitment and retention barrier.

The responses were entirely anonymous and did not require any form of identification. Researchers received responses from 87 company representatives. These representatives were Human Resource managers, Owners/CEOs, or have a stake in their company's hiring and retention practices.

## IV. Findings

### A. Qualitative Data Analysis - Interviews

#### **Biggest Takeaways Overall**

- Rental costs and commuting times have become a huge burden for Greater Boston employers.
- If and how housing plays role in recruitment and retention varies on the level of the employee (i.e.: entry versus mid-management).
- Despite the cost of housing, many employers still find the city to be an attractive hub to attract and retain desired talent.

The common issue raised with respondents was rental and commuting costs. Many employers have increased their salaries to meet the needs of the housing markets. Others recognize that this might be a necessity, but due to budget constraints are unable to increase salaries.

Employers also shared the difficulty of retaining entry-level staff due to the housing market.

Others observed that while the city's amenities and culture still aid in recruitment, employees have to live in the surrounding cities and must commute to work.

Depending on the type of the organization and the level of the employee, barriers to recruitment and retention varied greatly. Some employers shared that for junior and entry level employees, housing plays a significant role to barrier and recruitment. For middle managers, salary and type of benefits offered are more of a challenge. One employer mentioned that for "niche technical positions," the challenge is not housing, but H1B visa sponsorship for potential employees.

A trend noticed in the qualitative data from the survey and interviews is that employers are increasingly using telecommuting to alleviate long commutes and unaffordability of housing within the city. Yet for some employers with a strong brand, the housing market is not believed to be a variable that is affecting their ability to recruit and retain desired talent. The city is a hub of talent and service as a cultural and progressive mecca, making it easier to attract young talent. Even if those hired must move further from the city, the attraction of the Greater Boston area seems to outweigh housing costs for those particular employers.



## 1. Nonprofit Sector

### **Biggest Takeaways from Nonprofit Organizations:**

- Organizations find it challenging to recruit volunteers, board members, and fellows to work in the Greater Boston area.
- Organizations are finding it increasingly difficult to increase salaries to meet the needs of the housing market because of funding constraints.
- All organizations interviewed offer commuter benefits to their employees but have found this to be a double-edged sword. They must then tolerate long commutes and potential loss of productivity.

Of the 650 members of the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network (MNN), approximately 56% or 364 are located in the Greater Boston area.<sup>34</sup> The MNN memberships employ more than 529,000 people earning a total of over \$30 billion in salaries.<sup>35</sup> Their services range from human services to the arts, and many contract with the city, county, and state governments to carry out public services.

We interviewed three nonprofits representing three distinct subsectors, including Human Service, Finance and Consulting, and Social Services. A national organization that has operations across the country, stated that the stipend in which its employees get in Boston has not been enough to cover the housing needs of its fellows. These fellows partner with public schools across Greater Boston and provide essential after school programming for Greater Boston youth. The organizations also expressed frustration with not being able to locate any resources available to employers in the city and want an online platform that allows for aggregated information regarding housing for employers. This information could include local information for finding roommates, affordable housing, and other resources. They already offer commuting benefits for their fellows.

Although one organization was able to pay its employees' competitive wages, the HR representative did express long-term concerns with the organization's ability to keep increasing

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<sup>34</sup> Massachusetts Nonprofit Network. Nonprofit Members. Retrieved from <http://massnonprofitnet.org/mnn-members/>.

<sup>35</sup> Norton, M. (May 10, 2016). "Report: Mass. nonprofits employ more than half a million people." *Boston Business Journal*.

wages to keep up with the housing market. This concern was also expressed, especially for young people who move from other parts of the country to work for this reputable organization.

Finally, the human service organization had concerns around the role of housing in the organization's ability to recruit and retain volunteers. They expressed that many volunteers, who have full-time jobs, were priced out of the housing market in Boston, and moved to northern or southern suburbs. This decreases the likelihood of retaining that volunteer since now they have to make an expensive and time-consuming commute into the city.

## 2. Private Sector: Financial Sector

### **Biggest Takeaways from Financial Institution:**

- Housing was not found to be barrier to recruitment and retention.
  - Although there was a complaint about increasingly longer commute times, as employees have moved further away.
- As far as retention is concerned, attrition is seen to be the highest for millennials, and those in junior roles.

The company representing the private sector provides financial planning and retirement investments across the globe, including Boston, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Texas, London, Hong Kong, and Tokyo. Retention rates are very poor among millennials and those in junior level roles, so the firm is now implementing a new program in the HR department: an entry level rotational program in various roles. This new program was implemented to provide junior employees with more varied experiences, and to help keep their employees engaged. Once through the rotational program, the company is able to place them in the department that best fits the employee's interests, as well as the company's needs.

They believe that their brand is sufficient to help recruit and retain their employees despite high housing costs. Additionally, the bulk of the employees they recruit are from institutions in the Northeast and California, so a number of their potential employees already live in the area or are coming from another high-cost region. The company does offer relocation benefits, but only for senior positions or roles that are tough to fill. They are planning to move away from offering these benefits. They do not offer the option to work from home and because they are constrained by bankers' hours (8am-5pm), so flexible schedules are not an option. They do offer

commuting reimbursements in their benefits package but no other explicit housing benefits.

Although their employees or potential recruits have not complained about the cost of housing, some employees have made comments about their longer commutes as they move further away from the city.

### 3. Higher Education

#### **Biggest Takeaways from Higher Education Institutions:**

- Housing was not a barrier to recruitment and retention although many institutions do offer housing benefits.
- Many institutions relied on their reputation and brand for effective recruitment and retention.
- The higher education environment allows for junior and entry-level positions to find roommates easily.

The city's reputation as a "mecca" of higher education has attracted top talent to the colleges and universities in Greater Boston. Many of the prestigious universities have an incredible amount of resources and offer their employees housing benefits.

We interviewed two higher education institutions of very different sizes. One was a large research university and the other was a small career-oriented college. Neither one expressed housing to be a great concern. Both credit the reputation of their institute as an effective recruitment tool. They did share that the cost of housing could be a burden for junior administrative staff, but it was often easy to find roommates in the higher education environment to offset the cost of housing.

At the medical school of a larger research university, it was stated that the institution's name was what attracted employees most. They have not had a problem recruiting and retaining employees. Although they have had some recruits express sticker shock at the price of housing in the area, it has not stopped them from coming to work for the university. They do not have a housing allowance, but, depending on the position, may offer a signing bonus, to help offset the moving and initial housing costs.

## B. Quantitative Data Analysis - Survey Results

### 1. Sample Characteristics

As displayed in Table 2, over 60% of company representatives that participated in the survey either identified themselves as the “CEO/owner” or “human resources/hiring manager”. The other 39% identified themselves as holding a myriad of other positions, including “executive director”, “general manager”, “vice president”, and “director of operations”.

As a percentage of establishments, the survey under sampled small businesses and oversampled large business. For example, according to the Massachusetts Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), establishments with zero to ten employees account for 60% of the workforce across the Greater Boston area, compared to only 26.4% of the survey sample. On the other hand, businesses with 51 to 500 employees comprised 38% of the survey sample but less than 20% of Greater Boston businesses according to EOLWD.<sup>36</sup> In contrast, the survey sample nearly matches the state’s share of businesses with 11 to 50 employees at 26.4% compared to 20% as calculated by EOLWD.

Table 2. **Descriptive Statistics of Key Survey Variables (n=87)**

Characteristic	N	% of Respondents
<b>Respondent is:</b>		
CEO/Owner	27	31%
Human Resources/Hiring Manager	26	29.9%
Other	34	39.1%
<b>Industry:</b>		
Construction	3	3.5%
Retail Trade	3	3.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	1	1.1%
Information	3	3.5%

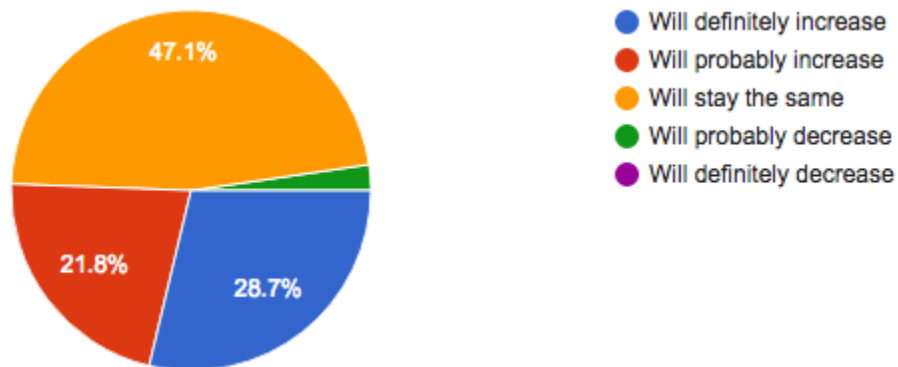
<sup>36</sup> Establishments and Employment by Size. (2013, February 07). Retrieved from <http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/sizeclass.asp>

Finance & Insurance	7	8.0%
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	6	6.9%
Professional, Scientific or Technical Services	16	18.4%
Educational Services	9	10.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	6	6.9%
Arts Entertainment & Recreation	2	2.3%
Accommodation & Food Services	2	2.3%
Public Administration	1	1.1%
Other	28	31.1%
<b>Number of Full-time Employees:</b>		
0 to 10	23	26.4%
11 to 50	23	26.4%
51 to 100	11	12.6%
101 to 500	22	25.3%
501 to 1,000	1	1.1%
1,001 to 5,000	6	6.9%
Greater than 5,000	1	1.1%
<b>Number of Part-Time Employees:</b>		
0 to 10	51	59.3%
11 to 50	18	20.9%
51 to 100	10	11.6%
101 to 500	3	3.5%
501 to 1,000	2	2.3%
1,001 to 5,000	2	2.3%
Greater than 5,000	0	0%

## 2. Overall Economic Conditions and Challenges to Recruitment and/or Retention

Survey responses reflected the state's strong labor market which posted an unemployment rate at 3.4% as of February 2017.<sup>37</sup> Over 87% of respondents believe their total number of employees will either increase or remain the same over the next six months (Figure 2). While 69% of establishments currently have positions open for hire, there was considerable heterogeneity by firm size. (Figure 3). Only 17% of firms with only zero to ten full-time employees claimed to have open positions, compared to 87.5% of all other respondents. This is statistically significant at  $p > .01$  although as noted above, the survey undersampled small business so it is difficult to say with certainty whether these differences by firm size are truly representative. And positions are filled quickly according to respondents. Over 74% of firms report finding a suitable applicant in less than 60 days (Figure 4).

Figure 2. **How do you expect employment in your organization will change over the next six months within your Greater Boston operations? (n=87)**



<sup>37</sup>Labor Market Information. (n.d.). Retrieved from [http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/News\\_release\\_state.asp](http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/News_release_state.asp)

Figure 3. Do you currently have any open-for-hire positions in Greater Boston? (n=87)

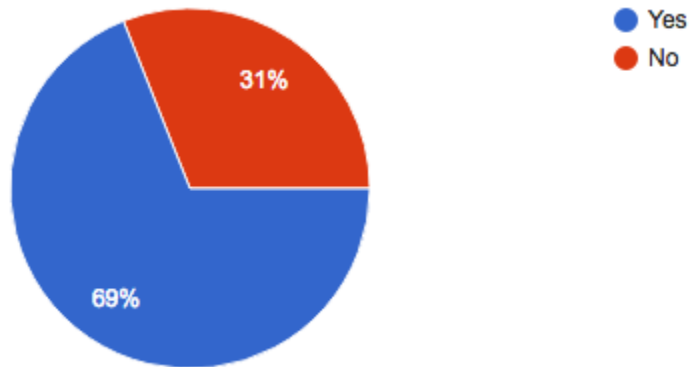
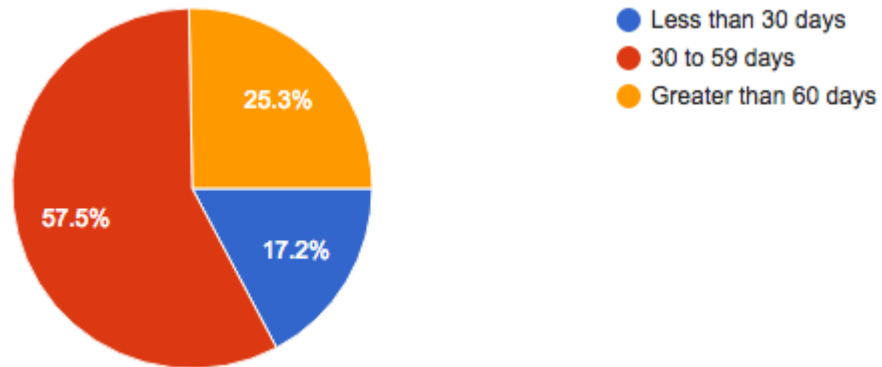


Figure 4. In general, how long does a job vacancy remain open for positions in Greater Boston before it is filled? (n=87)



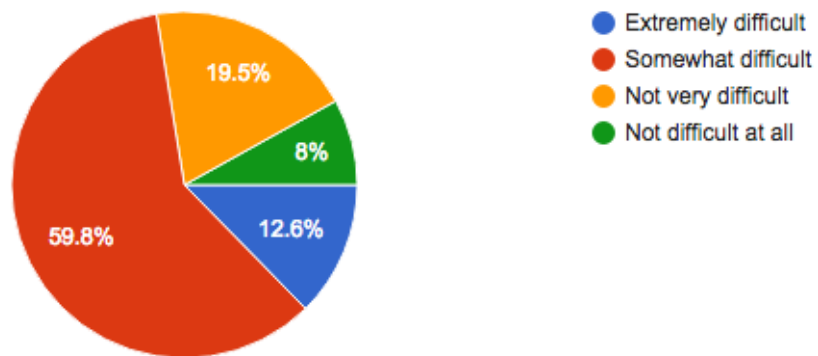
The next question in our survey instrument ascertained whether the employer had any difficulty in recruitment and/or retention and was used as a cut-off point. Any respondent who answered “Not difficult at all” to the question “Over the past five years, have you found it difficult to recruit and/or retain talent in the Greater Boston area?” was not allowed to continue the survey. Only seven respondents chose this option, meaning that 92% of firms responded that recruitment and/or retention was difficult to some degree. That makes the total sample size for all remaining questions 80 respondents, as opposed to the full sample of 87 employers.

It is worth noting that of the seven establishments who had no difficulty recruiting or retaining talent, six have ten or less total full-time employees. This is consistent with the finding that

establishments with more than ten employees appear to be the ones experiencing greater difficulty with talent recruitment and/or retention.

**Over 72% of respondents say they have found it “Extremely or Somewhat Difficult” to recruit and/or retain talent in the past five years.** We once again see a marked difference between establishments with zero to ten full-time employees and the rest of the sample. Only 48% of those small businesses said it was either “Extremely or Somewhat Difficult”, compared to 81% of all other respondents. This is statistically significant at  $p > .05$ .

**Figure 5. Over the past five years, have you found it difficult to recruit and/or retain talent in the Greater Boston area? (n=87))**



### 3. Barriers to Recruitment and Retention

Respondents were asked to rate a proposed total of nine possible barriers to recruitment and retention of talent in the Greater Boston area from a scale of one (non-barrier) to five (extreme barrier). As seen in Table 3, “Employees Unable to Find Housing at Adequate Cost” was ranked the third highest barrier at an average of 3.05, placing it just behind “Lack of Qualified Candidates” and “Salary” and only slightly ahead of “Cost of Living, other than Housing.” Although it should be noted that “Salary” could be indirectly related to the high costs of housing if candidates reject job offers with salaries that they perceive are too low relative to what would be needed to rent an apartment or buy a house. There were no statistically significant differences found in the rating based on the size of the establishment.



Table 3. Respondent Rating of Recruitment and Retention Barriers (n=80)

Recruitment and Retention Barrier	Average Rating on 1 (non-barrier) to 5 (extreme barrier) scale
Lack of Qualified Candidates	3.31
Salary	3.29
Employees Unable to Find Housing at Adequate Cost	3.05
Cost of Living, Other than Housing	2.9
Commute Time	2.72
Position's Potential for Advancement	2.7
Benefit's Package	2.11
Lack of Job Security	1.71
Lack of Local Amenities	1.31

As shown in figure six, **over 67% of respondents claimed specifically that the cost of housing has had an effect on their ability to recruit and/or retain talent in the Greater Boston area.** Nearly 70% of businesses with over ten employees claimed to be affected, compared to 58% of businesses with less than ten employees. This is statistically significant at  $p > .01$ .

Figure 6. **Over the past five years, have home prices and/or rental costs affected your company's ability to recruit qualified employees in Greater Boston? (n=80)**

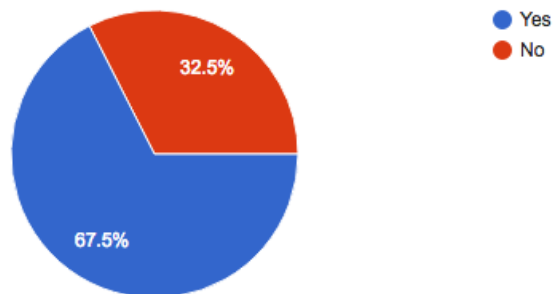
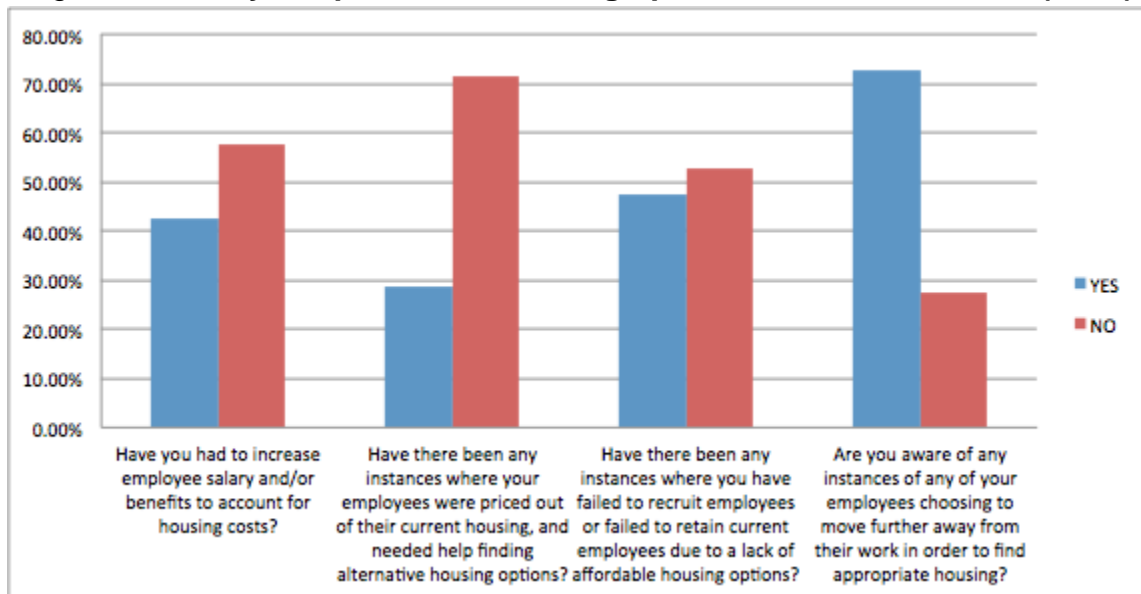


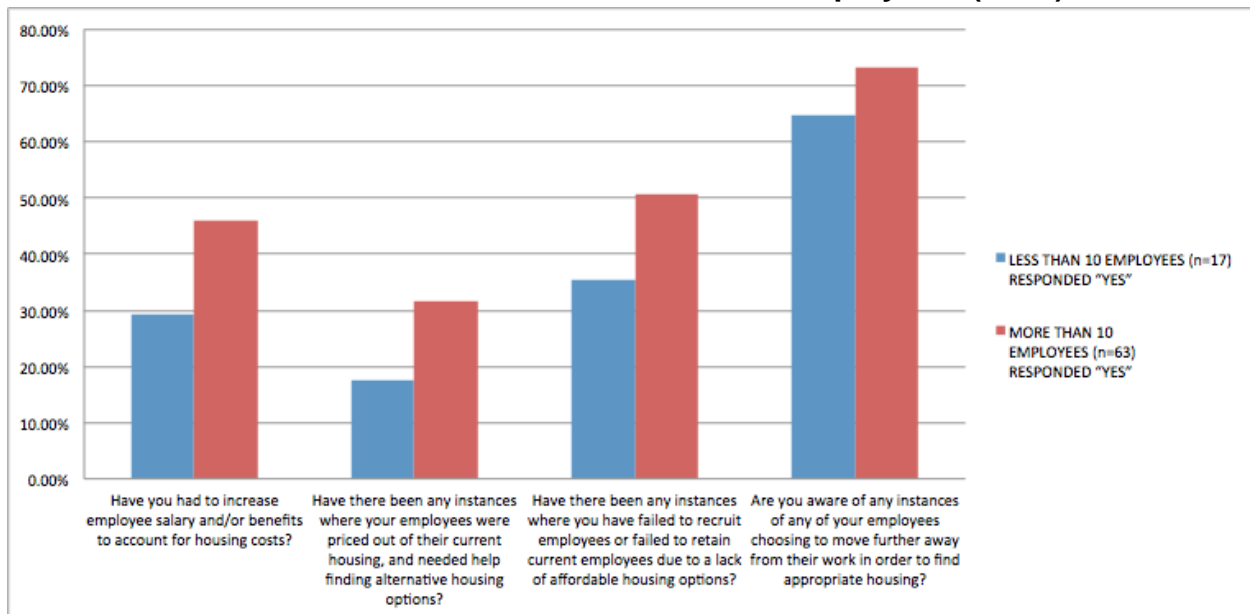
Figure 7 shows the four barrier questions related specifically to housing that were asked of the 80 remaining respondents. While fewer than 30 percent of respondents reported instances where their employees were priced out of their current housing, roughly 40 percent indicated that they had to increase salary or benefits to account for housing costs. More striking, nearly half of employers reported instances where they failed to recruit or retain employees and over 70 percent acknowledge that employees have chosen to move further away from work to find appropriate housing.

**Figure 7. Survey Responses to Housing-specific Barrier Questions (n=80)**



Again, our survey revealed statistically significant differences by firm size. Figure 8 illustrates the diversion seen based on total number of employees, with percentages displayed of respondents who answered affirmatively within each respective grouping. In each case, a higher share of large versus small firms reported housing-specific barriers and all differences were statistically significant at  $p > .01$ .

Figure 8. Comparison of “YES” Responses to Housing-specific Barrier Questions Based on More or Less than Ten Total Employees (n=80)



#### 4. Housing Benefits

We found that although firms report housing affects recruitment and retention of employees in the Greater Boston area, businesses are currently doing little in the way of offering housing benefits for current employees or forms of assistance for new employees relocating to the area. **Nearly 74% of respondents said they do not offer any housing benefits to current employees, while over 62% do not provide any specific forms of assistance for newly located employees.** For current employees, 26.3% of establishments offer the ability to work from home, an incentive for those who live some distance from their place of employment. Additionally, 31.3% of establishments offer a relocation bonus for new employees. No other potential benefits or offerings, including employer sponsored loans, rental assistance, home buying assistance, or corporate sponsored housing, eclipsed 8%.

### V. Possible Methodological Limitations

To ensure the integrity of our data, we have listed the following limitations to the data gathered:

- Sample Representation – Our sample primarily included the membership of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Alliance for Business Leadership, and the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network. Therefore, our data was limited to those sources.

- Self-Reported Data – The data collected relied on the employer’s representative responses to the survey and interviews questions. Like most self-reported data, this data cannot be independently verified.
- Recruitment and Retention – Many employers see retention and recruitment as not parallel and are affected by very different variables. To keep the survey to a reasonable limit, we did not separate questions by recruitment and retention. Therefore, there is no way for us to “cut” the data based on recruitment and retention independently.
- Survey Answer Options - Some of our questions that asked for a company’s characteristics did not include an “other” or “I don’t know” option. This could have “pigeon-holed” the respondent in choosing one of the available options, and not necessarily the most representative answer.

Moving forward, if this study is replicated, we recommend that some adjustments be made to the survey instrument. Question 2 asks what industry the organizations are in, and gave an “Other” option. Because the listed options were so extensive, it is possible to remove the “Other” option. Additionally, for a greater response rate, it may require leaving the survey open for a longer period of time, and sending out multiple requests to complete the survey to numerous professional networks’ members list.

## VI. Recommendations

Drawing on our previous knowledge, MHP's vast experience, and data from prior studies, we developed a lengthy list of approximately 15 recommendations. We then narrowed this list based on the following criteria:

- Is this recommendation validated by the qualitative and quantitative data collected?
- Has this recommendation been proposed before? If so, has it failed to garner support?
- How would employers view this recommendation?
- Is this recommendation innovative?
- Would this recommendation face any policy and/or legal obstacles that would make it infeasible?

Applying these criteria, we are left with the following list of recommendations for MHP:

- Develop a state program to incentivize employers to offer commuter/housing benefits such as a tax break or incentive.

- o Our survey data suggests that few employers in the Boston area offer housing benefits. Our hypothesis is that this occurs for one or more of the following reasons:
  - Not enough assets and resources to implement such benefits.
  - Employees do not see housing benefits as necessary.
  - Employers do not have the right information and resources to implement such benefits.
  - Employers do not see an incentive for offering such benefits. They see an incentive for offering 401(K)s and are mandated to offer medical benefits.
- o A state program that incentivizes employers to offer housing and commuter benefits through a tax break or other subsidy may encourage employers on the margin to offer such benefits. This would not only help employers recruit and retain employees but also help the state provide housing relief to lower-income residents and also potentially alleviate traffic congestion. In addition, our survey data shows that housing could be a more significant barrier to recruitment and retention for employers with more than 10 employees. As a result, firm size may provide a sound foundational criterion for determining eligibility for the tax credit although perhaps not politically feasible.
- Establish a convening led by MHP that gives employers the opportunity to ideate and innovate new solutions. Use leading innovation experts to facilitate solution formulation.
  - o Employers first presented this idea to us through our interviews. A policy convening of this nature can increase collaboration and foster ideation. Such tactics have proven successful for many organizations.
  - o This allows for MHP to hear the employer’s perspective firsthand and educate the employer about MHP’s perspective with the aims of formulating an impactful solution agreed upon by multiple stakeholders.
  - o Some recommended facilitators that have proven knowledge in running ideation and innovation sessions represent organizations such as Synectics, ThinkWrong, and IDEO.
- Develop a tech tool to match employers to housing resources for employee's specific needs such as finding roommates/housing/commuting benefits.
  - o Organizations with multiple locations—especially those with HR departments

- headquartered outside of Boston—wanted access to a type of tool that aggregated resources in one place. This tech tool could be a collection of already existing resources that MHP aggregates in one platform. For example, one employer interviewed had expressed a willingness to pay an administrative fee for such a tool because access to such information was nonexistent, without the assistance of a consultant. The target audience for this tool would include two segments:
- Large organizations with an HR department overseeing multiple locations with no tool and very little Boston specific-resources.
  - Small organizations with either a very small HR department or without an HR department that do not have the internal resources to guide their employees to housing and housing-related benefits.
- o The development of such a tool has the potential to involve from other organizations or state agencies making this effort a more collaborative approach.
- Develop a sharable metric for determining the amount or share of "cost of living" that is driven by housing for Boston residents, which employers can use to calculate cost of living salary increases.
    - o Employers could use this type of metric to automatically adjust their salaries to the cost of living. Although many provide annual increases to meet the general increase in inflation, housing costs are actually rising much faster than other factors. Generating an annual housing cost of living index would encourage employers to keep their employee's wages in line with the housing market and make them representative of these costs which affect all employees.
    - o For example, the American Institute for Economic Research has created a cost of living calculator, which can calculate past, present, and future cost of living using research that examines economic trends.<sup>38</sup> MHP could develop a similar calculator that employers and employees can access to calculate the cost of living in Boston.
    - o There are localized “cost of living” calculators, but MHP would need to develop a more holistic one that encompasses housing and rental expenses. This should be representative of the actual cost of living in the city.
    - o MHP could also potentially use an already existing calculator and tailor it further to be more inclusive of housing.

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<sup>38</sup> AIER. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.aier.org/cost-living-calculator>

## VII. Conclusions and Next Steps

The region's strong economic performance over the last decade has brought with it greater prosperity for the region but also rising housing costs coupled with greater levels of income inequality. For many companies across the Commonwealth, these conditions are making it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees.

This report assessed the concerns of business establishments across the region as it relates to housing as a factor for labor recruitment and retention. The results are clear. A large majority of our survey sample is not only struggling to recruit and retain talented employees, but see the increasing economic burden of housing as an important barrier to sustaining a qualified and educated workforce. Nearly half of survey respondents reported either having to increase employee salaries or failing to recruit/retain qualified employees due to rising housing costs. Companies with ten or more full-time employees responded with greater concern to these issues, especially establishments that lack national prestige. Younger and lesser known companies are finding it more difficult to maintain their organizational structure due to external economic factors, which negatively impacts these companies' ability to recruit and retain talented employees.

We have presented four targeted recommendations that are meant to be both feasible in their execution and narrow in their objectives. Much research has shown that the most effective way to address the issue of rising housing costs is to simply increase supply to meet the rising demand. Our analysis does not dispute that assertion, nor does it attempt to provide a path forward in accomplishing that end. Instead, our recommendations are based on the accumulation of data to inform actions that can be taken immediately to relieve the concerns of the Greater Boston business community.

The creation of innovative tax expenditures that incentivize companies to offer housing and commuting benefits is a feasible action that can benefit both employers and employees. While likely effective, any implementation would require government action. Our other recommendations emphasize the collaboration of vested stakeholders as a means to assisting businesses without relying on direct government action. To encourage collaboration, we

recommend that business leaders, MHP, and innovation experts convene in a professionally facilitated session to ignite ideation. The convening would have the ultimate objective of developing a solution that can be employed by business leaders. The goal of this solution would be to alleviate the negative impacts on recruitment and retention that are caused by housing. Having the support of MHP would attract a variety of employers representing multiple industries.

We also recommend the development of an application that can match available housing benefits with employee needs is an effortless way to strengthen and utilize existing resources while easing bureaucratic stress. Lastly, the development and widespread dissemination of an annual “cost of housing” metric would not only assist employers, but could also be a powerful tool utilized when advocating for housing reform policies.

Moving forward, MHP should reach out to local establishments and further develop existing relationships to foster these collaborative recommendations. Additionally, MHP can work with the ABL, YNPN and the GBCOC to expand their outreach. These partnerships can create a base of political and technical support for any newly developed policy solutions, thus strengthening efforts to alleviate the high cost of housing in the future.



## VIII. Resources

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# IX. Appendix

## A. Qualitative Interview Questions

### Interview Questions with HR Directors/Small Business Owners

1. When hiring, what do you think employees find most attractive about your company?
2. At which level of the organization do you find recruitment and retention to be the most challenging? Are there specific positions that are vacant for long periods of time?
3. What, if any, roadblocks do you face when attempting to hire new employees? Can you describe those barriers?
4. Have these potential roadblocks been specific to a certain demographic?
5. What problems do you think are unique to hiring and retaining employees in the Boston area? Are there any actions that city or state leaders could take to help businesses?
6. Generally, there are different challenges that employees face based on age and experience. Based on your experience at this organization, what major challenges have you witnessed and what demographics do they affect most?
7. Do you think the location of your company helps or hurts your ability to hire and retain employees?
8. What is the average commute for your employees? What percent of your employees live nearby?
9. Do you provide transportation or parking benefits?
10. How often does housing come up as an issue when recruiting and retaining employees?
11. If it is seen as a problem, what exact housing issues are often cited by employees? Is it a problem for junior/associate, middle, or senior level staff?
12. Have any employees or potential employees cited housing costs from prohibiting them living near their office? Has this affected decisions regarding salaries?
13. Do you offer flexible schedules and/or working from home?
14. How often do you assist employees with or speak to about housing options, including relocation, local moving, and government housing programs?

### General Demographic questions:

1. How many people are employed at this company?
2. What is the average age of employees at this company?
3. How long does the average employee stay at this company?
4. What percentage of positions at the company require a bachelor's degree at minimum?
5. What fraction are full-time versus part-time?
6. How long has the company been in business?
7. Do you have any other locations? Do you face similar or different recruiting challenges in other locations?

## B. Survey Instrument

### Survey Questions

#### ***Individual Characteristics:***

1. What is your title?
  - a. Human Resources/Hiring Manager
  - b. CEO/Owner
  - c. Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### ***Company Characteristics:***

2. Which industry best describes your company?
  - a. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
  - b. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
  - c. Utilities
  - d. Construction
  - e. Manufacturing
  - f. Wholesale Trade
  - g. Retail Trade
  - h. Transportation and Warehousing
  - i. Information
  - j. Finance and Insurance
  - k. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
  - l. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
  - m. Management of Companies and Enterprises
  - n. Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
  - o. Educational Services
  - p. Health Care and Social Assistance
  - q. Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
  - r. Accommodation and Food Services
  - s. Other Services (except Public Administration)
  - t. Public Administration
  - u. Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many full-time employees, excluding contractors, work at your organization at a location somewhere in Greater Boston?
  - a. 0 to 10
  - b. 11 to 49
  - c. 51 to 100
  - d. 101 to 500
  - e. 501 to 1000
  - f. 1000-5000
  - g. 5000 or more
4. How many part-time employees, excluding contractors, work at your organization at a

location somewhere in Greater Boston?

- a. 0 to 10
  - b. 11 to 49
  - c. 51 to 100
  - d. 101 to 500
  - e. 501 to 1000
  - f. 1000-5000
  - g. 5000 or more
5. How do you expect employment in your organization will change over the next six months within your Greater Boston operations?
- a. Will definitely increase
  - b. Will probably increase
  - c. Will stay the same
  - d. Will probably decrease
  - e. Will definitely decrease
6. Do you currently have any open-for-hire positions in Greater Boston?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
7. In general, how long does a job vacancy remain open for positions within your company in Greater Boston before it is filled?
- a. Less than 30 days
  - b. 30-59 days
  - c. 60+ days
8. Over the past five years, have you found it difficult to recruit and/or retain desired talent?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

**If answered "Yes" to either question 7 or 8, continue the survey. If "No" survey stops.**

#### **Barriers to Recruitment and Retention**

9. At which salary range(s) do you find recruitment and/or retention to be the most challenging?(check all that apply)
- a. \$0 to \$25,000
  - b. \$25,000 to \$50,000
  - c. \$50,000 to \$100,000
  - d. \$100,000 to \$250,000
  - e. Greater than \$250,000
10. What are the most significant barriers to retaining and/or recruiting your employees?  
PLEASE RATE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5, with 1 being a non-barrier and 5 being an extreme barrier.
- a. Lack of qualified candidates
  - b. Salary

- c. Benefit packages
  - d. Position's potential for advancement
  - e. Employees unable to find adequate housing at reasonable costs
  - f. Lack of job security
  - g. Lack of Local Amenities (culture, schools, recreation)
  - h. Commute time
  - i. Cost of living other than housing
11. If you'd like, please elaborate on the reasons for your ratings above:
- 

**Housing as a Recruitment and Retention Barrier**

12. Over the past five years, have home prices and/or rental costs affected your company's ability to recruit qualified employees in Greater Boston?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
13. Do you provide housing assistance for your employees?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
14. What type of housing benefits do you offer? (check all that apply)
- a. Don't offer housing benefits
  - b. Ability to work remotely
  - c. Employer-sponsored loans
  - d. Rental assistance
  - e. Home buying assistance
  - f. Corporate sponsored housing
  - g. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Have you had to increase employee salary and/or benefits to account for housing costs?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
16. If you'd like, please elaborate on your answer above:
- 

17. At which following salary range has housing been the greatest barrier for recruiting and retaining desired talent? (check all that apply)
- a. \$0 to \$25,000
  - b. \$25,000 to \$50,000
  - c. \$50,000 to \$100,000
  - d. \$100,000 to \$250,000
  - e. Greater than \$250,000
18. Have there been any instances where your employees were priced out of their current housing, and needed help finding alternative housing options?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
19. Have there been any instances where you have failed to recruit employees or failed to

retain current employees due to a lack of affordable housing options?

- a. Yes
- b. No

20. Do you provide any of the following for those who relocate to work for your organization from other regions or countries? (check all that apply)

- a. Help in finding affordable housing
- b. Help in finding roommates
- c. Corporate sponsored housing
- d. Relocation bonus
- e. None
- f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Are you aware of any instances of any of your employees choosing to move further away from their work in order to find appropriate housing?

- a. Yes
- b. No

22. In what city or town in the Greater Boston area is your organization located \_\_\_\_\_.

23. Is there anything else you would like to share with us on how the cost and availability of housing in the Greater Boston area has affected the recruitment and/or retention of your employees? \_\_\_\_\_.