



Massachusetts Working Cities Challenge Final Assessment of Round 1 Progress

PRESENTATION TO THE WCC ROUNDTABLE

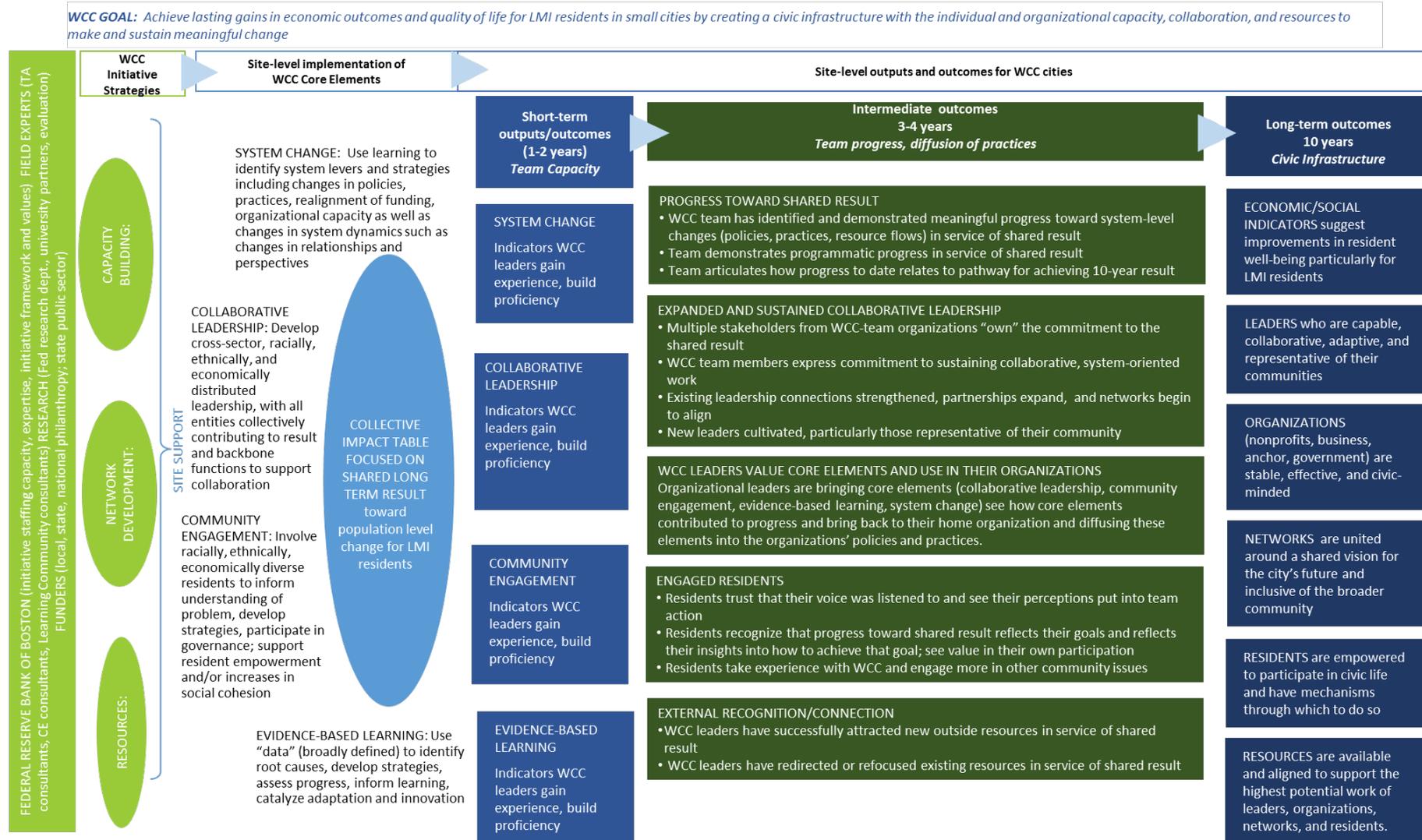
JULY 20, 2018

Agenda

1. Evaluation approach and methods
2. Progress toward shared result
3. Contribution to civic infrastructure
4. Reflections and lessons

Evaluation approach and methods

Evaluation approach: theory of change



Evaluation approach: key interim progress measures

The evaluation assessed city progress on the following measures of interim progress

Shared result

- Measurable progress
- System change
- Momentum and clear pathway to 10-year goal

Civic infrastructure

- Collaborative leadership sustained and expanded
- Use of core elements valued, deepened
- Greater resident engagement
- External recognition

Evaluation methods

- Survey of city stakeholders
- City stakeholder interviews
- Observation at governance meetings, learning communities
- Review of documents
- Interviews with select non-winning cities
- Interviews with state and national leaders from the public, business, nonprofit, and philanthropic realms

Progress toward shared result

Overview of Round 1 Cities

City	Initiative	Lead	Focus	Shared Result (2017)
Chelsea	Chelsea Thrives	The Neighborhood Developers (CDC)	Safety	Decrease crime and increase the community's perception of safety by 30%.
Fitchburg	Relmagine North of Main	Montachusets Opportunity Council (CAA)	Neighborhood improvement	Make the North of Main a neighborhood of choice whether for business, resident, or employee.
Holyoke	SPARK	Greater Holyoke Chamber Foundation	Entrepreneurship	Create 300 new businesses and increase Latino business ownership from 9% to 20%.
Lawrence	Lawrence Working Families Initiative	Lawrence CommunityWorks (CDC)	Workforce development	Increase in household income for families of students in the Lawrence Public Schools.

Overview of Round 1 City Strategies

City	Key Strategies
Chelsea Thrives	Became a “table of tables” aligned around public safety. Efforts encompassed: prevention and intervention of substance use disorder and trauma; engaging residents to increase safety; youth programming; and improved physical environment (addressing problem properties). Key WCC-supported activities: Chelsea Hub, Youth Opportunity Task Force, Community Engagement
Fitchburg Reimagine	Started with a fairly comprehensive set of neighborhood improvement strategies and eventually narrowed to Main Street redevelopment, improving neighborhood housing market, and community engagement
Holyoke Spark	Implemented programmatic activities to promote entrepreneurship, train existing and aspiring business owners, and prepare entrepreneurs to start a new business. Primary focus was 9-week class for aspiring entrepreneurs. Eventually broadened focus to address overall ecosystem and culture to support Latino and citywide entrepreneurs.
Lawrence Working Families Initiative	Implemented a system of parent engagement, coaching, job search support, referral to services and training, and to provide ESOL classes working in close partnership with the public schools. Later, collaborated with the Lawrence Partnership on a set of employer-focused strategies involving local hiring and piloting of employer-driven workforce development.

Progress on shared result: measurable progress

All cities achieved measurable progress on their shared result.

Chelsea

- Citywide violent crime index down from 10.8 in 2014 to 9.4 in 2016, target area down from 15.5 to 12.3
- Chelsea Hub reviewed 205 cases of high-risk individuals and connected 133 to services

Fitchburg

- Improved conditions on Main Street
- Project pipeline
- Improved resident perceptions of neighborhood

Holyoke

- More than 10 percent toward meeting long-term goal
- 33 new businesses, half women-owned, half Latino-owned, 82 jobs

Lawrence

- 201 LPS parents gained employment
- Parents gain skills, competencies, and certifications to be more competitive in the workplace

Progress on shared result: system change

WCC teams contributed to notable system change in service of their shared result.

Chelsea

- Hub transformed collaboration between police department, city, social service sector
- New relationships led to Justice grant
- Expanded boundaries of system focused on improved safety (healthcare, downtown revitalization)
- Brought new attention and resources for youth activities
- Policy changes around improving housing

Fitchburg

- Strong alignment of multiple stakeholders focused on revitalizing downtown
- Progress in branding neighborhood as “North of Main”
- Some policy and practice changes related to downtown and neighborhood redevelopment
- New financing tools and incentives for businesses locating downtown

Progress on shared result: system change

WCC teams contributed to notable system changes in service of their shared result.

Holyoke

- Partners added resources, expanded offerings
- Partners developed aligned programming
- Partners are collaborating to address system barriers such as limited workspace
- Increased interest in and attention to entrepreneurship throughout city

Lawrence

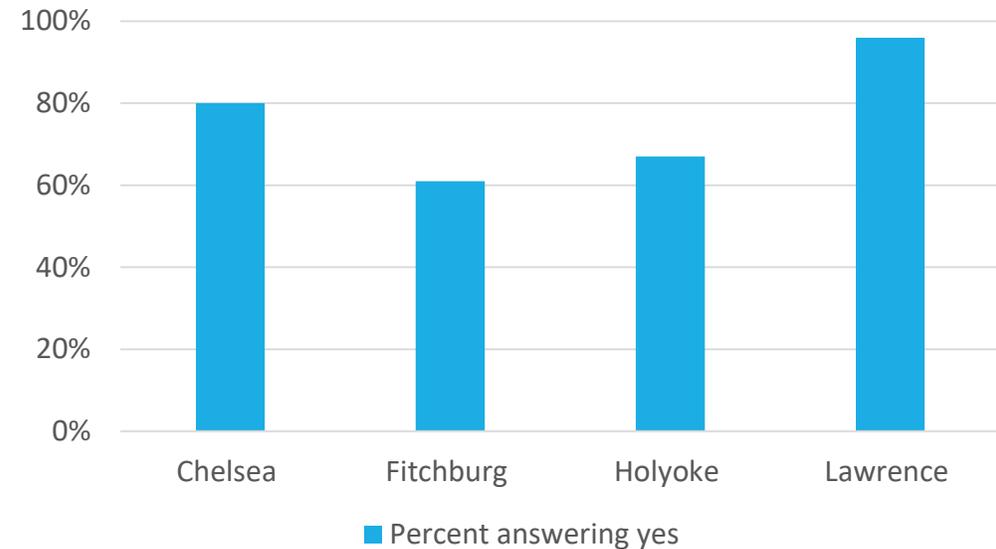
- Providers have a sharper focus on the parent population
- Stronger referral networks
- Gains in workforce development capacity
- Change in city mindset connecting economic development to jobs for low-income residents
- Partners reallocated resources to sustain activities in service of shared result

Progress on shared result: perceived impact

While only three years into a 10-year goal, the stakeholders in the four communities see an impact from the efforts for the intended beneficiaries of the work: low-income people.

76% of WCC city stakeholders believe low-income people are better off because of WCC

Are low-income people in your city better off today because of the WCC initiative?



Contribution to civic infrastructure

Expanded and sustained collaborative leadership

Most significant outcome of the initiative

- 92 percent agreed/72 percent strongly agreed, that WCC facilitated new or deeper relationships among organizations

Signs of improved collaborative leadership

- Greater cross-sector collaboration including educational institutions and businesses
- Stronger referral networks
- Less competition
- Greater alignment of municipal support
- Alignment of multiple networks

Stakeholders increasingly value and pursue collaborative approaches

Progress on civic infrastructure

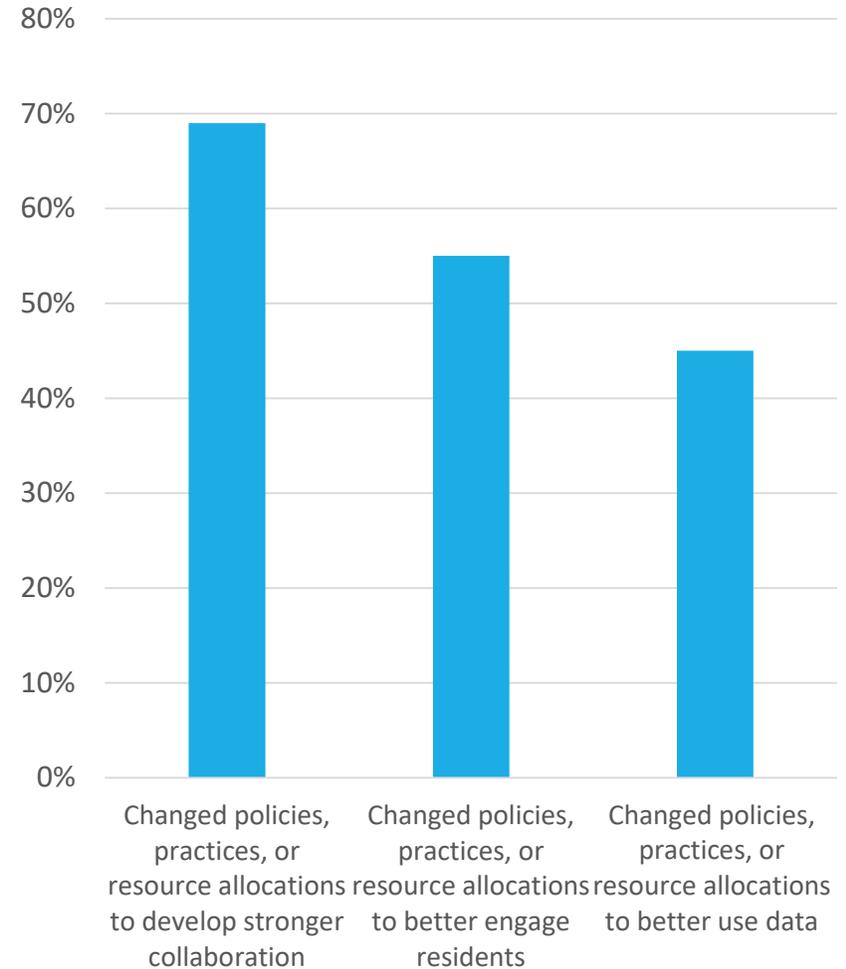
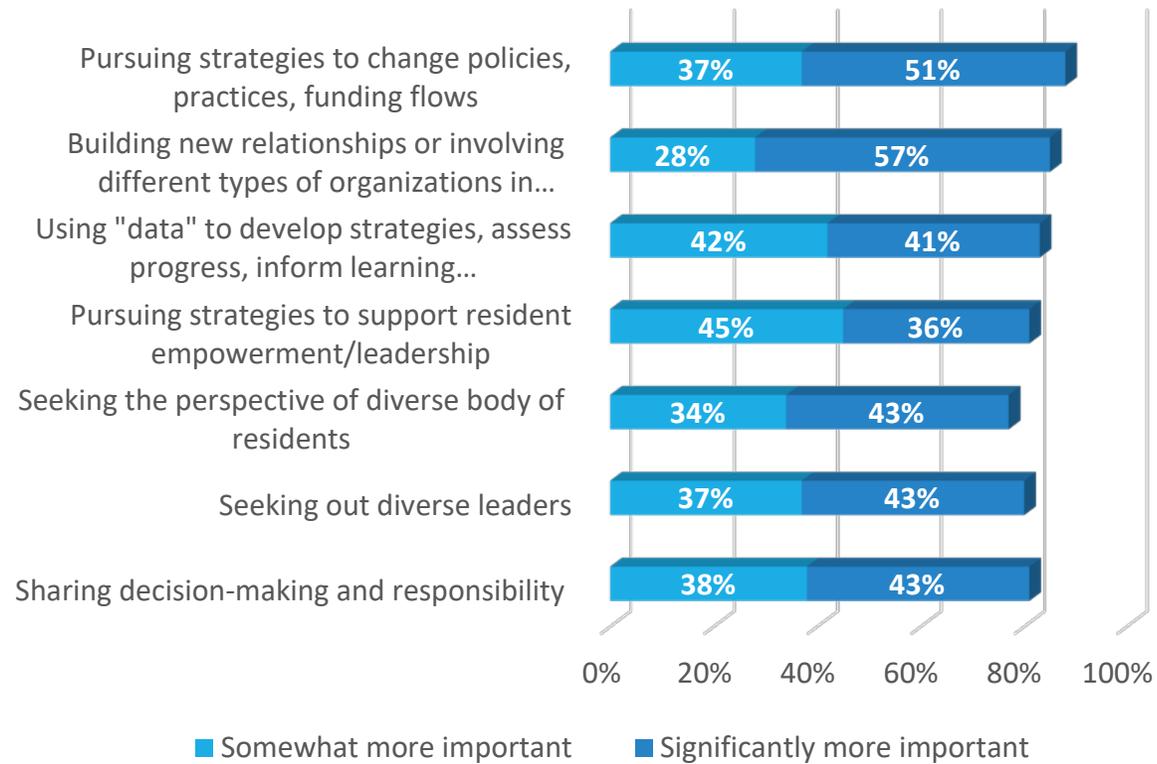
Outcomes	Indicators	Sub-Indicators	Progress	
Expanded and sustained collaborative leadership	Distributed leadership		Mostly Strong	
	Readiness for sustainability		Strong /Moderate	
	Existing leadership connections strengthened and new leaders are cultivated.	New or deeper relationships among organizations		Strong
		New partners welcomed to team		Strong
		Higher priority on working with leaders who represent cities' racial and ethnic diversity		Strong /Moderate
		Noted rising, new, talented civic leaders who reflect the diversity of their communities		Strong /Moderate
	Collaboration with other networks, other key organizations		Mostly Strong	

Progress on civic infrastructure

Outcomes	Indicators	Sub-Indicators	Progress
Value and diffusion of core elements	WCC teams see substantial contribution of core elements in progress toward shared result.	Collaborative leadership	Mostly Strong
		Community engagement	Moderate/Weak
		Use of data	Moderate/Weak
		System change	Strong /Moderate
	Leaders bring core elements back to home organizations and diffuse into practices and policies.	Partner organizations have changed systems to support stronger collaborations with other leaders or leading organizations in the cities.	Strong
		Partner organizations have changed systems to better engage residents.	Strong
		Partner organizations have changed systems to better use data.	Strong /Moderate

Diffusion of core elements

Since 2014, have there been changes in how important you personally believe the following practices are to your work making positive change in your community?(n=99)



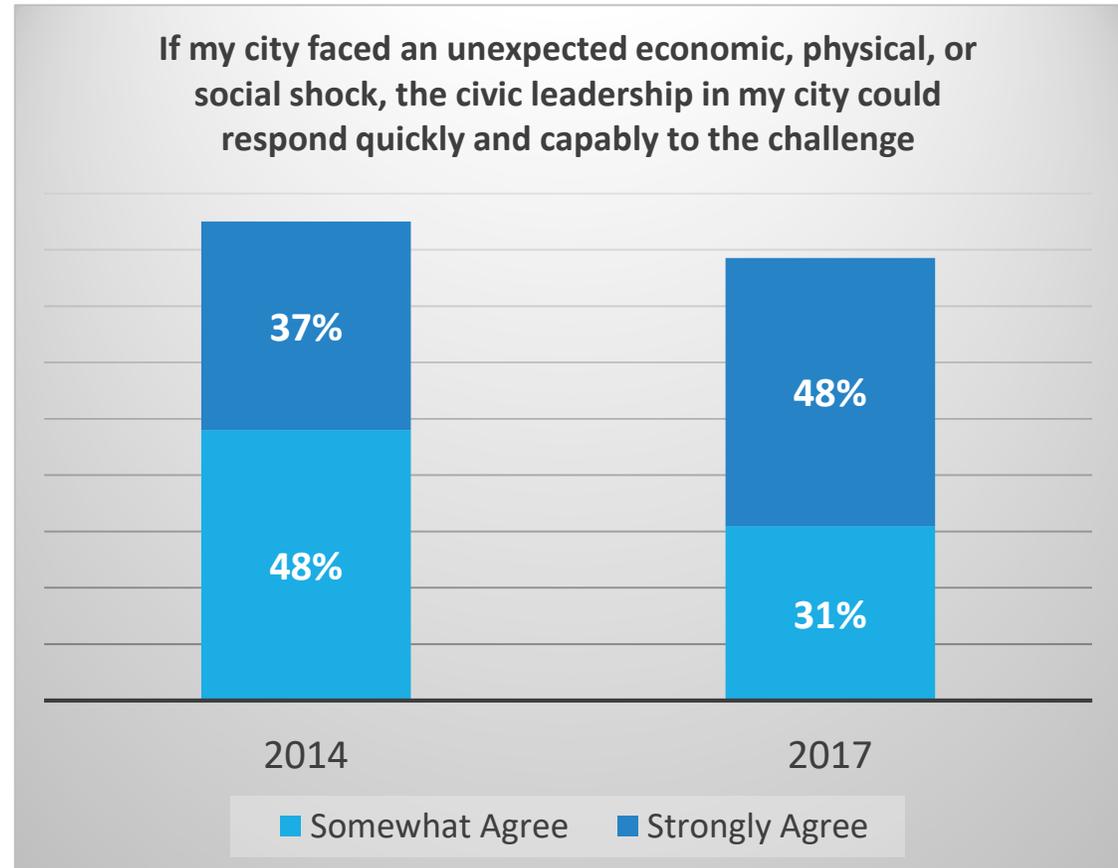
Progress on civic infrastructure

Outcomes	Indicators	Sub-Indicators	Progress
Engaged residents	WCC partners regularly sought out resident voices and insights when developing strategies.		Strong /Moderate
	WCC teams' strategies directly respond to resident insights.		Moderate
	WCC teams demonstrate accountability to residents by directly communicating progress toward shared result.		Moderate/Weak
External recognition	WCC leaders develop or improve relationships with entities outside the cities, including attracting new outside resources aligned with shared result.		Strong

Progress on civic infrastructure

Is your city better off because of the WCC initiative?

Chelsea	100%
Fitchburg	87%
Holyoke	84%
Lawrence	100%
Overall	93%



Reflections and lessons

Lessons: shared result

- Choice of a shared result impacts the progress
- Flexibility to pivot based on learning and feedback is critical
- Team's ability to attract and leverage external resources is important
- Pre-existing civic capacity accelerates progress

Lessons: collaborative leadership

- Consistent, clear WCC messaging and support on collaborative leadership reaped benefits
- Partners need specific role and task
- A strong initiative director is critical
- City support is an accelerant, but best when balanced with strength from other sectors
- Business engagement appears most likely to occur through intermediaries
- Greater collaboration among existing leaders vs. cultivating new leaders – are both a WCC priority?

Lessons: system change & community engagement

System Change

- System changes are more likely to be informal practice change emerging from partner collaboration

Community Engagement

- Backbones with deep community engagement experience accelerate team use of element
- Defining “community” – different based on city goals
- Need greater clarity on role and purpose of community engagement

Lessons: evidence-based learning

- Data use during early strategy formation most common
- Systems for sharing data can be valuable, but challenging to implement
- More sharply defined point of view and set of supports are needed
- Teams likely need dedicated, experienced capacity

Initiative reflections

- Boston Fed as the convener brings new players to the table and credibility to the cities
- WCC's learning orientation and its embrace of adaptation is a powerful model
- WCC asks the cities to embrace system change approaches, but there is no articulated statewide strategy pursued by MA WCC. Can there be a system change agenda for cross-cutting working city issues? Is there a potential role for the MA Steering Committee?
- Tension of balancing city progress on a specific shared result and improvements to civic infrastructure. What is the priority?