

2018



SOMERVILLE TALENT EQUITY

PLAYBOOK



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Talent Equity Playbook

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Introduction

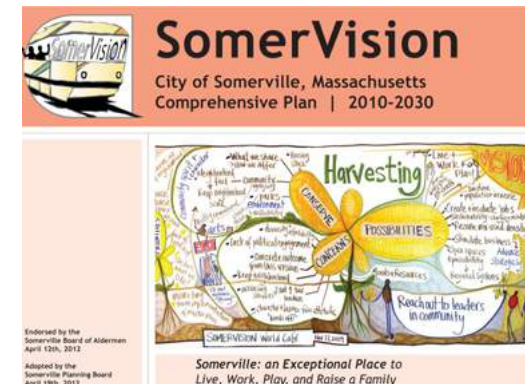
30,000 new jobs in Somerville by the year 2030. This is the ambitious job creation goal the community articulated in the 2012 SomerVision: 2010-2030 Comprehensive Plan.

While Somerville is on track to achieve this number, a “build it and they will come” strategy is not sufficient to connect city residents to incoming businesses and the jobs they bring. Since the publication of SomerVision the City of Somerville and its partners have worked hard to become a part of Massachusetts’ workforce development ecosystem and to provide training and employment opportunities to residents in a variety of industries and groups from manufacturing to the food industry to youth employment.

In December 2017, the Board of Aldermen adopted a zoning amendment creating a linkage fee on commercial development to go toward job training. With the potential for a significant and sustained funding source independent of federal workforce requirements and statewide goals that eclipse the fine-grained local needs of Somerville, the City saw the need to create a strategic plan to guide investments in the local workforce and to create a model for municipalities to take a leading role in preparing residents for the employment opportunities of the future.

Starting in September 2017, city leaders embarked on a six-month inclusive, community-driven research and planning process that resulted in the Talent Equity Playbook. These strategies seek to build a resilient and prosperous Somerville where residents are empowered to remain close to the technological curve, find meaning in employment and pursue their passions, and provide for their material needs. Like SomerVision before it, the Talent Equity Playbook helps the City of Somerville, its partners, and Somerville residents continue to shape their destinies.

The City of Somerville, Mt. Auburn Associates, and FutureWorks would like to thank the many Somerville residents, business leaders, and local education and training providers who participated in the development of this strategy, in particular the Steering Committee.



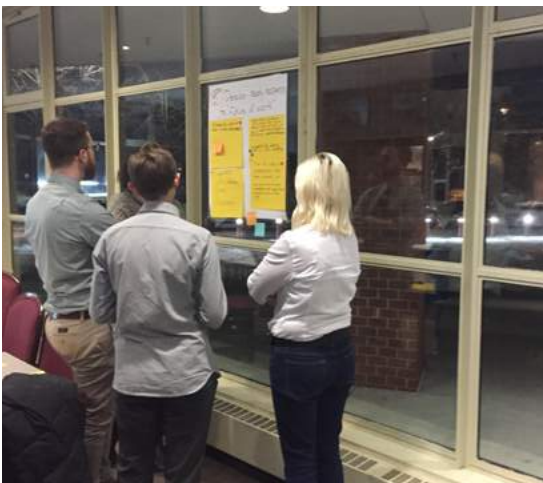
The 2012 SomerVision: 2010-2030 Comprehensive Plan sets the goal of 30,000 new jobs in Somerville by the year 2030.

Methodology

With a commitment to developing a strategic plan that is reflective of and responsive to the needs of Somerville as a whole – its residents, businesses, education and training providers, and civic leaders – the City’s Office of Economic Development engaged with many different interests between November 2017 and February 2018. The Economic Development Office and the project’s consulting team from Mt. Auburn Associates and FutureWorks led the following efforts to engage the community:

- organized and facilitated a 22-person community-led Steering Committee that provided guidance, feedback, and input on the research and strategies;
- administered a multilingual resident survey focused on jobs, work, and training that generated 298 responses from Somerville residents;
- completed interviews with training and service providers, educational institutions, business-civic groups, employers, public agencies and departments, and community groups;
- convened focus groups and meetings with local businesses; and
- partnered with Somerville Community Corporation to gather input from a focus group with training and job seeker participants.

The Steering Committee met twice in the fall and winter of 2017 and 2018 to guide community priorities.



In addition to this engagement, the City’s consulting team generated a baseline of data and analysis on the local jobs environment, city labor force, and trends in the future of work. The resulting analysis formed a common understanding of the labor market in Somerville. It also helped generate dialogue on how the City and its partners should respond to current realities and future opportunities for work.

The groups and individuals from across Somerville and the region voiced thoughtful, productive insight about the variety of opportunities and challenges that students, workers, businesses, and educators face when trying to prepare for work, keep a job, provide good jobs, or progress in a career. Many individuals also voiced feedback on areas of strategy – where the City of Somerville and its partners should focus their efforts and build even better methods for residents and busi-

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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nesses in Somerville to thrive and prosper in Somerville and Greater Boston's dynamic labor market.

The result is the Talent Equity Playbook. This Playbook begins with an overview of Somerville's jobs environment, labor market, workforce development resources, and community priorities. It then states a vision and goals, and specifies strategies and actions to achieve the goals. It includes an appendix at the end of the document with references to further data and information that supplement the analysis and strategy.

Somerville's Current and Future Jobs Environment and Labor Market

CURRENT VIEW OF THE LABOR FORCE

High Participation, Low Unemployment

There is much to be excited about in Somerville. Resident unemployment is at historic lows, and labor force participation is up. At the end of 2016, 2.4 percent of Somerville's 50,400 residents in the labor force were unemployed – the city's lowest rate since 2000. Moreover, 75 percent of the city's working age population is employed or actively looking for work – a participation rate that is higher than the state and most of Somerville's neighbors, including Boston and Cambridge.

Labor Force Participation Rate–2015	
75.1%	Somerville
68.8%	Cambridge
68.4%	Middlesex County
67.5%	Massachusetts
Unemployment Rate–2016	
2.4%	Somerville
2.4%	Cambridge
3.0%	Middlesex County
3.5%	Massachusetts

Source: Massachusetts EOLWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau.

Connected to the Region

The city's residents have a deep connection with the persistently strong regional economy. About nine out of 10 of Somerville's working residents commute to jobs in businesses located in Boston, Cambridge, and in the cities and towns that surround the Somerville. That means that only about 10 percent of Somerville's working residents work for businesses located in Somerville.

Talented and Diverse

What marks Somerville as unique is its talented and diverse labor force. A high proportion of city residents over age 25 have earned some form of college or postsecondary credential. Eighty-two percent of all city residents in the labor force (residents who are working or looking for work) have earned a postsecondary credential. This is higher than most communities that are part of the corridor that extends from Boston and north of the city.



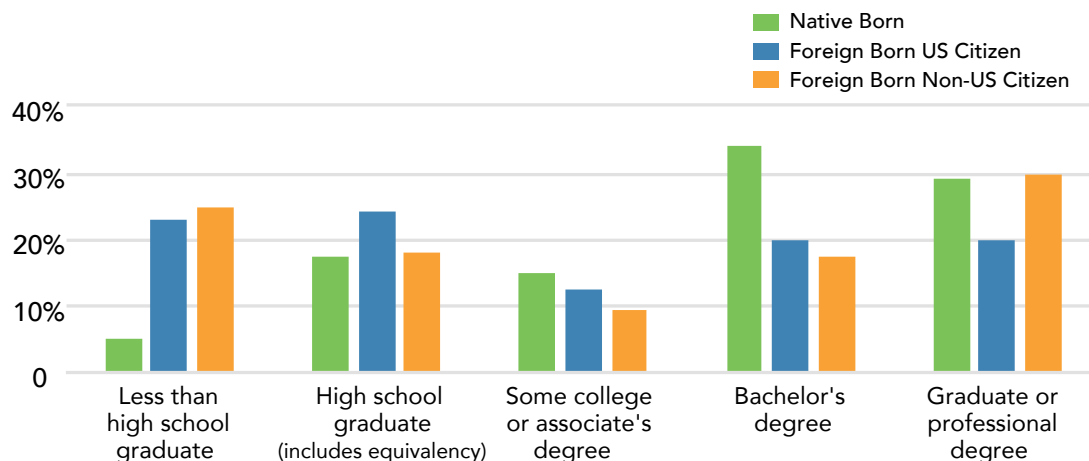
**+ 8,000
NEW JOBS**

As more new businesses choose to locate in Somerville, over 8,000 jobs have been added to the local economy since 2005.

Residents identified their ideal job title in the city-wide survey.



Educational Attainment of Population by Native and Foreign Born, 25 years and over, 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Additionally, Somerville has always been a city of immigrants. Today, more than 25 percent of the Somerville labor force, or 13,200 residents, are foreign born. Thirty percent of Somerville residents speak a language other than English and a high proportion of non-US citizen foreign-born residents (30 percent) have a professional or postgraduate degree beyond a bachelor's degree. (See chart.)

Uneven Opportunity

Despite these attributes and strengths, and the optimism that comes with a diverse and talented labor force, many Somerville residents remain economically vulnerable. For example, there are still approximately 1,200 Somerville residents who are unemployed and another estimated 250 to 800 residents who are no longer in the labor force but want to work — so called “discouraged” workers. Moreover, there are roughly 1,000 disconnected youth in Somerville. These are young adult residents ages 16 to 24 who neither are in school nor employed.

There are also groups of Somerville residents who have jobs but still earn low-incomes. While an annual living wage for one adult living in Somerville is approximately \$30,000, roughly 3,400 residents of Somerville who work full-time, year-round still do not earn that much. Data show that

90% of the city's working residents commute to jobs in businesses outside of Somerville. 66% of respondents to the resident survey indicated that access to Greater Boston jobs and public transportation to those jobs was important or very important.

Source: Massachusetts EOLWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics 2016 using ratios from U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2002-2015.

23,540
Non-residents
Working in Somerville
Businesses

commute IN

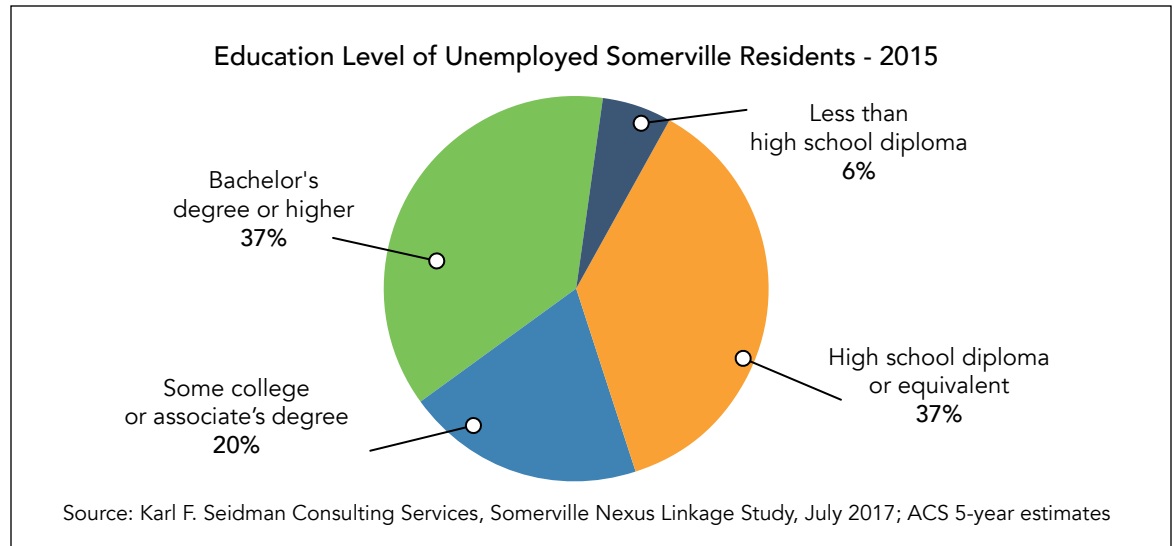
4,324
City Residents
Working in Somerville
Businesses

Live & Work
in Somerville

44,875
Residents Working
in Businesses
Outside Somerville

commute OUT

43% of unemployed Somerville residents do not have any form of postsecondary credential or degree.



earners who fit this profile live disproportionately in the Winter Hill, Ten Hills, and East Somerville neighborhoods.

Moreover, a disproportionate share of Somerville's economically vulnerable workers have low educational attainment and/or are linguistic minorities. Among city residents who are unemployed, 43 percent have no more than a high school education. (See chart.) The recent Somerville Nexus Linkage Study shows that 9 percent of the total Somerville labor force needs English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services and a disproportionate share of the 2,500 residents without a high school degree do not speak English well. And, while there is a high concentration of highly educated foreign-born residents, there is an equally high concentration of foreign-born residents in the labor force without a high school degree (between 23 and 25 percent). Among the 815 unemployed job seekers who received services at the local career centers, 72 percent have a high school education or less and 45 percent were linguistic minorities.

Anchor employers are large businesses and organizations linked to their location because they own sizable amounts of real estate, have grown a local, specialized talent base, or have built large physical assets that they cannot move easily.

CURRENT VIEW OF THE JOBS ENVIRONMENT

Growing, Dynamic Job Base

There are 2,000 businesses located in Somerville that employ 26,700 workers. These city-based businesses have been adding workers. Over the last five years, city jobs have grown by more than 5,000, from 21,000 jobs in 2009 to 26,700 jobs in 2016 – and that is not counting the very recent addition of 4,000 plus jobs from Partners HealthCare and other new businesses that moved to Somerville or grew in the last year.

A Few Large Anchors and Scores of Small Businesses

Among the 2,000 Somerville-based businesses are three large, stable “anchor” employers, with the rest of the city’s business base made up of small business. The three large anchor businesses — Tufts University, Partners HealthCare, and Cambridge Health Alliance — together employ upwards of 7,600 workers. Each of these anchors employs more than 1,500 workers (Partners employs approximately 4,700 workers). In addition to these three employers, the City of Somerville is one of the largest employers in the city with 2,000 employees. There are also a few private companies that each employs roughly 500 employees in the city.

Following these larger employers is a group of 60-70 small- to mid-sized employers, each with 50 to 250 jobs. The diversity of this group is wide, ranging from a number of professional and technological services offices to industrial and manufacturing firms to social service and healthcare offices.

The remainder of the 1,900 businesses in Somerville are small and micro-employers. This includes more than 500 smaller restaurant, retail, and storefront service businesses spread throughout Somerville’s business districts. There are also scores of 1 to 5 employee microbusinesses, sole-proprietors, and contract workers that span the city, each offering specialized services to markets within and outside of Somerville.

Emerging Innovation Companies

Crossing many of these categories, but also characterizing the city’s innovation, start-up ethos, is a group of smaller emerging clusters of businesses. These are relatively fast-growing businesses that span and intersect multiple classes of product and services focused in technology, biosciences, food, and creative enterprises.

EMERGING INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

► Start up, innovation



► Artisan food and drink



► Creative (designers, artists, publishers)



Tech Executives Say Top Challenge is Finding Talent

Top executives from Somerville's newer, mid-sized technology-based businesses identified hiring workers and finding more space as the top two challenges to growing and staying in Somerville.

High Demand for Workers in the Region

There are more than 1.6 million jobs in businesses stretching across Greater Boston, from jobs in an array of innovation and tech-based industries to local service, financial, hospitality, and health-care industries. The range of occupations associated with these businesses is extremely diverse, as is the demand for skills, positions, and jobs in them. Much research and study has gone into understanding this demand, most recently through the Somerville Nexus Linkage Study and Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet's 2017 Greater Boston Regional Data Package. One study completed for the Massachusetts higher education system notes that in Greater Boston annually there are more than 23,000 open positions that require some type of postsecondary credential, from a one-year industry certificate to a college degree. What is common across these reports and what the interviews and research for this project have surfaced is the intense employer competition and demand for workers of all kinds, in the city and across Greater Boston, from highly educated technical professionals to frontline service workers to construction and maintenance workers. Businesses repeatedly state, and the data support their claims, that they cannot find enough of the right workers, regardless of position.

Common Workforce Challenges

In addition to these issues of demand, the interviews and research for this project identified a handful of common employer workforce challenges in Somerville.

- Job retention is a critical issue. Many small businesses in Somerville, such as restaurants, smaller retailers, and startup companies, have a challenge creating stability among their workforce.
- New and expanding businesses in Somerville are having difficulty finding and keeping workers. Tight labor market conditions in the city and region have led to increased mobility among workers looking for career advancement, which leads to workers jumping from one company to the next.
- Somerville businesses are interested in promoting more internships, job shadowing, and other workplace experiences for students. Many employers see this as a way to prime the pump for candidates.
- Somerville businesses still want workers who can read and write critically, solve problems, and communicate together in teams. These are all skills that they want education to deliver.
- Businesses believe that one cause of not being able to find the right candidates is due to limited career awareness, especially among students with false impressions of manufacturing or among women with limited opportunities in science and technology.

Small Businesses Cite Turnover Challenges

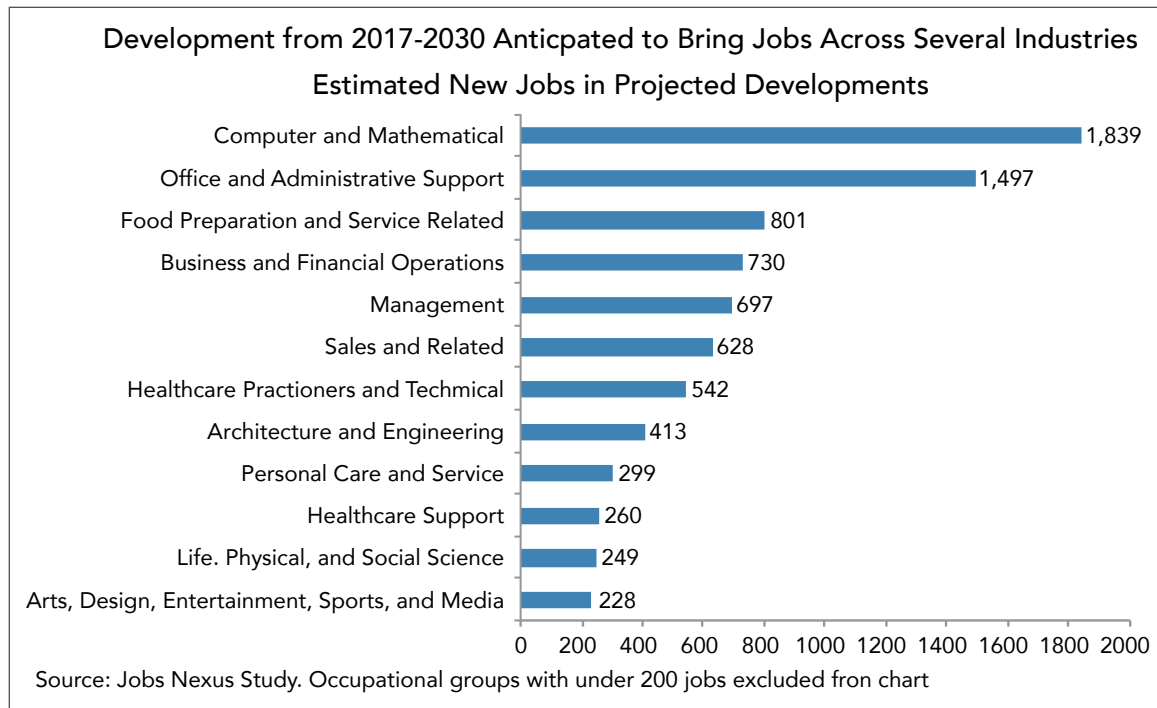
Union Square merchants uniformly cited worker turnover and limited human resource capacity as big challenges for their businesses during a recent monthly meeting of the Union Square Main Street organization.

AN EYE TO THE FUTURE

Local, regional, and global factors will shape the future of Somerville's labor market and jobs environment. These factors will determine who will make up Somerville's labor force, what skills will be important, what type of jobs will be available, and how we will learn to succeed in future jobs and careers. Some of these factors will be hyper-local, like the business growth projected in the next decade in Somerville and the region. Others will be global, like the rise of alternative forms of work. Research for this project identified six factors that likely will shape how Somerville prepares its residents and supports its businesses moving forward.

Diverse Pipeline

Embracing its history as a welcoming city to immigrants and newcomers, Somerville's future workforce will likely follow global trends and represent a more diverse country. As of 2017, students in Somerville's school district were already a majority non-white, a trend that has accelerated over the last 10 years. The largest ethnic group among the 5,000 students in the district is Hispanic or Latino (42.8 percent). Half of the student body (49.7 percent) speak a first language other than English and just about one in five (18 percent) are English language learners. The likelihood of the city's student body maintaining its diversity further underpins the commitment to build a strong K-12 system as part of Somerville's workforce development strategy.



Approximately 77% of resident survey respondents agreed that job opportunities would improve if the City of Somerville provided additional support for employers that embrace diversity.



Partners in Career and Workforce Development is an eight week program that prepares individuals for entry-level employment in Partners HealthCare member institutions.

Continued Business Growth and Diverse Job Opportunities

The Somerville Nexus Study estimates that projected new development of 2.21 million square feet in the city over the next 10 years will generate 8,899 new jobs. These are future jobs that Somerville residents could prepare for — about half will be in high-skilled positions (computer technology, business and finance operations, and management) and the other half will be in low- to middle-skilled positions (office and administrative support, food preparation and serving, and retail sales). Likewise, a recent report completed by the Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet projects in the next 5 to 10 years that there will be significant new middle-skill career opportunities throughout Greater Boston in information technology, accounting, nursing, construction, and hospitality.

Rise of Alternative Forms of Work

There is a significant rise in alternative work arrangements outside of the traditional worker-employer relationship in the labor market. These freelancing, temporary, or contract-based positions are part of the 1099 or gig economy. One estimate by economists Krueger and Katz shows that 23 million Americans derived income from work arrangements like this in 2015, or 16 percent of the employed workforce. And, projections are that this proportion will rise dramatically, to as high as 26 percent in the next 10 years. In Somerville, that means that the estimated 7,800 residents who currently are freelancers or part of the gig economy will rise to 12,800 residents by 2025. This rise already has implications as to how workers build job security. There is also an increasing concern about who benefits and who does not from this trend, with particular concern about destabilizing worker-employer relationships.

Jobs Impacted by Automation

In the coming years, economists forecast a decline in routine intensive occupations. These are occupations in which computers, algorithms, and artificial intelligence can take the place of employees. The McKinsey Global Institute predicts that 60 percent of all occupations could have 30 percent or more of their activities automated in this way. (See graphic.) And, as automation becomes more present in the workplace, there will be a skills premium on creativity, problem-solving, and social intelligence. Demand will increase for positions that are more difficult to automate, such as those that require a higher degree of flexibility and physical adaptability. While automation will impact all jobs, some of the greatest demands for retraining will be among workers who are in middle-skilled routine jobs.

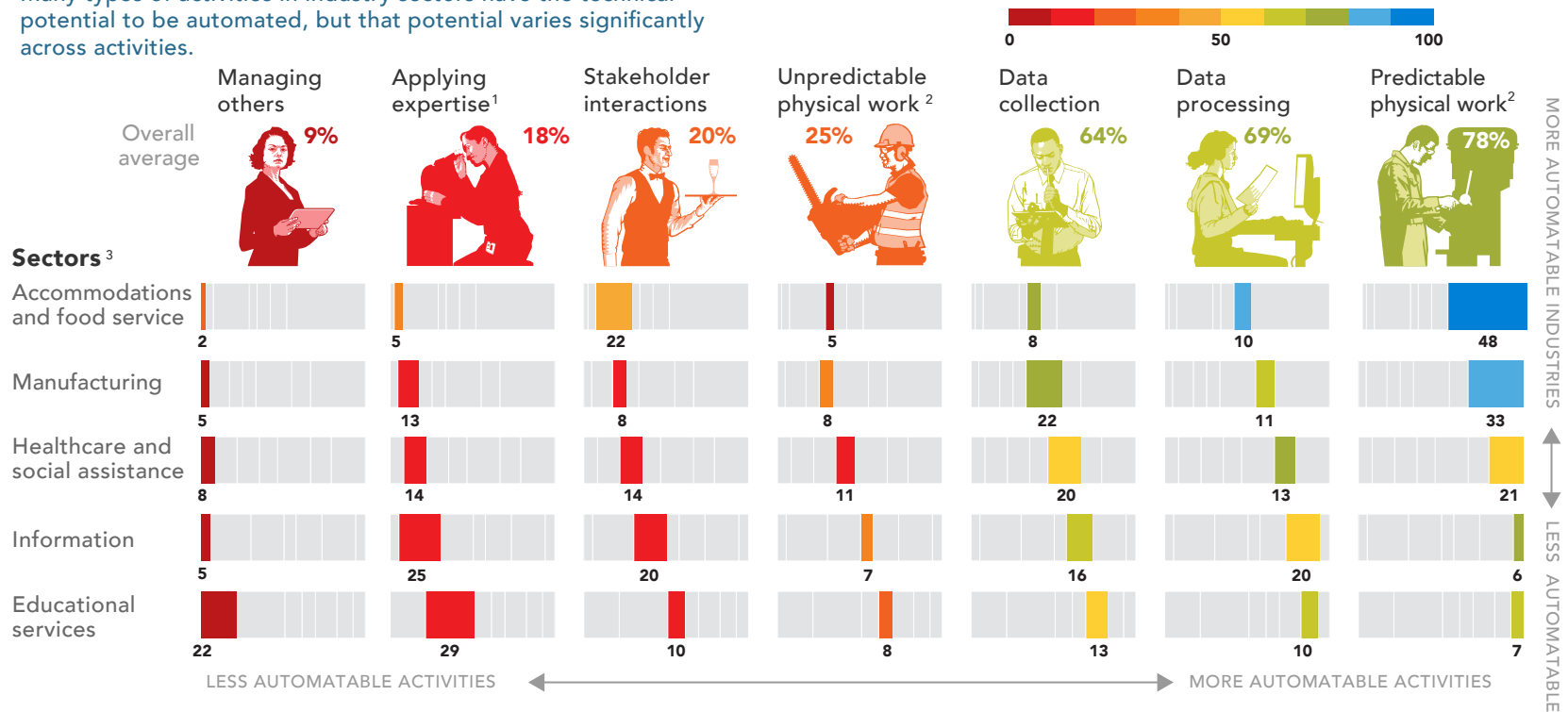
Demand for Cross-functional Skills

Employers and educators point to a skillset that spans multiple occupations and industries that is important to future competitiveness and worker mobility. This includes cross-functional cognitive

The technical potential for automation in the US

Many types of activities in industry sectors have the technical potential to be automated, but that potential varies significantly across activities.

Technical feasibility: % of time spent on activities that can be automated by adapting currently demonstrated technology



Source: McKinsey & Company

¹ Applying expertise to decision making, planning and creative tasks.

² Unpredictable physical work (physical activities and the operation of machinery) is performed in unpredictable environments, while in predictable physical work, the environments are predictable

skills like design mindset, computational thinking, and product development. There are also non-cognitive skills that are just as important, such as social intelligence, global orientation, and cultural competency. Businesses as well as education and training institutions will increasingly look to programs of study that prepare students in these areas.

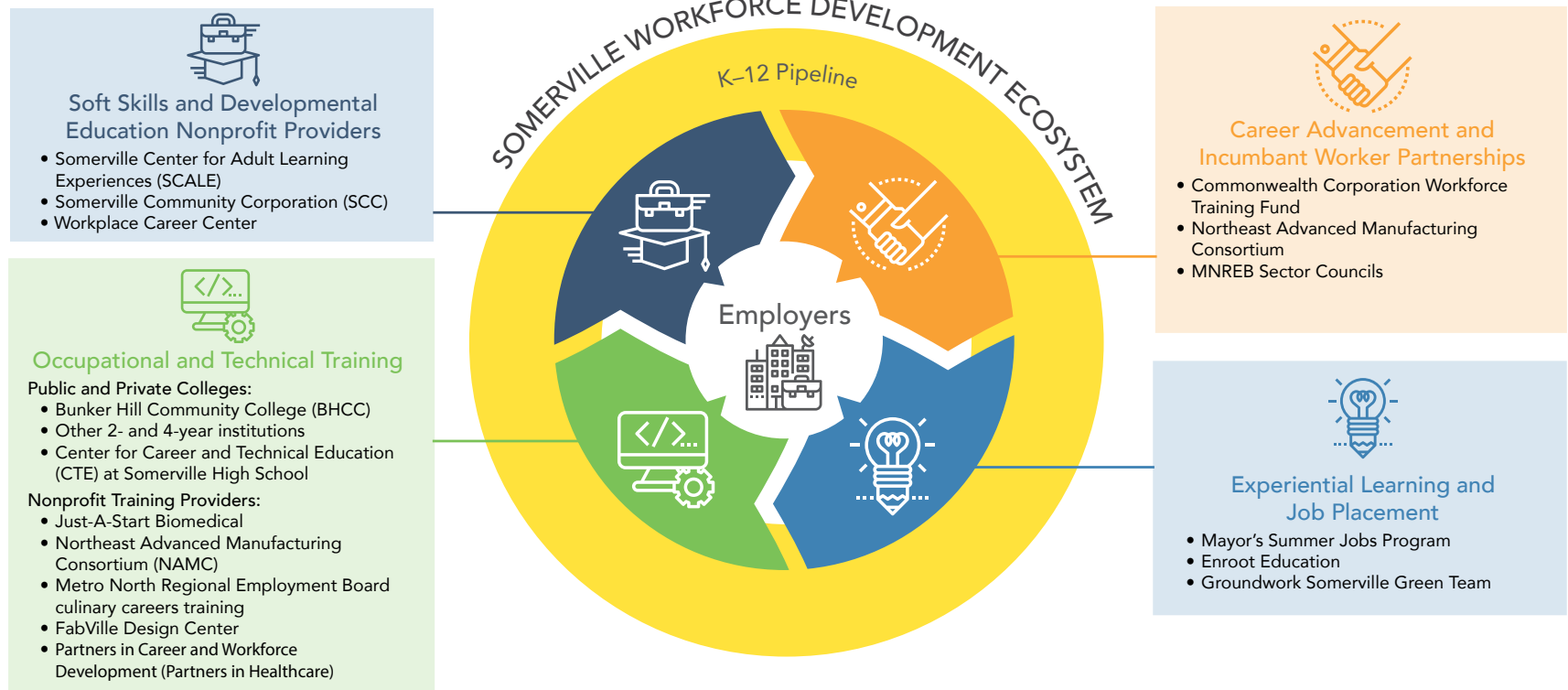
New Ways of Learning and Hiring

Few educational institutions across the secondary or postsecondary spectrum can quickly develop and deliver curricula or programs responding to rapid change. Related, there is a growing emphasis on

bringing learning out of the classroom and into the community and workplace. Workers and employers will need new forms of "learning delivery" that help students quickly learn at work and adapt to rapid change in jobs and career paths and that can happen anywhere, whether it be at home, in the workplace, or at school. New learning technology coupled with time-tested methods of learning, like experiential learning, will be important to help both businesses and individuals gain access to skills when and where they need them. Likewise, there is growing pressure to shift away from simply evaluating job hires through post-secondary degrees and more to hiring based on demonstrated competencies gained through experience.

Workforce Development Resources

TALENT EQUITY IS A SET OF LOCAL STRATEGIES that falls within and complements the larger regional workforce development ecosystem, which includes Somerville-based as well as regional secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, training providers, community groups, service agencies, and public entities all working to build economic opportunity and careers for residents and fuel business competitiveness through talent retention and productivity.





What is **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?**

Students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting, including internships, apprenticeships, work-based learning projects, and service learning projects.



The FabVille Design Center at Somerville High School is a public fabrication laboratory that teaches residents digital fabrication and design tools.

Findings from interviews with city and regional stakeholders and from analysis of Somerville resident enrollment and completion statistics point to a number of opportunities and challenges to the local workforce development ecosystem.

Strong Network and Emerging Capacity

There is a relatively strong and sophisticated network of postsecondary degree programs, sector-based occupational training, and soft skill and developmental education supports that serve Somerville workers and businesses.

Included in this network are a number of successful and emerging smaller scale sector-based training partnerships in and in close proximity to Somerville. These include programs in culinary arts, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, and gaming. Partners advancing these sector programs are the City of Somerville, Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), Somerville Community Corporation (SCC), Just-A-Start, Metro North Regional Employment Board, Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium, and others.

Somerville Community Corporation has emerging capacity and the desire to become a strong bridge between training, work, and key Somerville populations who are financially insecure and linguistic minorities. SCC has piloted its First Source Jobs program that provides one-on-one services that help participants improve their skills as a job seeker.

The Job Creation and Retention Trust, estimated in the Nexus Study to receive between \$400,000 and \$500,000 a year in jobs linkage fees, represents a new source of City controlled funding for City and partner run programs.

Challenges for Language Learners

Somerville's adult education provider, SCALE, has demand that far outstrips capacity for its ESOL programming. SCALE's waiting list for ESOL is consistently above 500 students each semester. Policy changes from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will require ESOL services to demonstrate workplace contextualization, a significant change for SCALE to absorb.

Scaling Experiential Learning

Somerville High School is at a pivot point with its new high school under construction. Part of the school district's planning is a curriculum redesign that has the goal of providing every high school student with at least one substantial credit-bearing opportunity in experiential learning before graduation.

There are a number of other citywide initiatives focused on providing Somerville students with internships and experiential learning opportunities. These include the Mayor's Summer Jobs Program, Enroot Education, and the Somerville Promise Alliance (SomerPromise) career launch pilot program. Together, these internship programs are not able to reach the scale they want or need.

Premier Career and Technical Education

Somerville High School's Center for Career and Technical Education (CTE) is highly regarded among local employers. About half of Somerville High School students, or 600 students, enroll in CTE career pathways each year. Most students in a CTE career pathway program, somewhere between 40 to 50 percent, engage in an internship over four years. Educators, businesses, and city officials note CTE's strong relationships with employers in a range of pathways, including allied health careers, dental assisting technology, and culinary.

Better Utilization of Existing Resources

There is an opportunity to strengthen Somerville's utilization of key regional education and training resources. The regional career centers in Chelsea and Cambridge are under new operation. Previously, about 815 Somerville residents utilized the career centers each year. BHCC is the area's largest education training provider with thousands of matriculated students from across the region. In 2015-2016, 94 Somerville residents completed a credential from BHCC.

Leveraging Anchor Employers

The three largest private sector employers in Somerville (Tufts University, Partners Healthcare, and Cambridge Health Alliance) each has multiple workforce, hiring, and training efforts from which Somerville residents can benefit. Although there is no one vehicle in the city that identifies and coordinates these multiple efforts, each of these large anchor employers is committed to building the Somerville pipeline.

Support of Employees of Small Business

Somerville's smaller businesses often face multiple challenges to employee training and retention services. Most small businesses have limited human resource capacity to expend the appropriate resources and support to their employees in these areas.



Somerville employers include a vibrant mix of businesses large and small.

Community Priorities

IN ADDITION TO THE OVERVIEW OF SOMERVILLE’S JOBS ENVIRONMENT, labor market, and workforce development resources, Somerville stakeholders gave voice to their priorities through the steering committee, a resident survey, focus groups of employers and residents, and one-on-one interviews with community leaders. These workforce development priorities, expressed in the summarized themes below, further shape the vision, goals, and strategy for the Talent Equity Playbook.

City residents, business leaders, and officials and partners want:

- **CITY/REGIONAL SYSTEM INTEGRATION** Leverage existing education and training resources in the city and region and, where appropriate, find ways to strengthen, fill gaps, and scale solutions.
- **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING** Build more work-based learning opportunities for students and residents through internships, apprenticeships, externships, etc. (outside of a traditional academic setting).
- **CAREER LITERACY FOR RESIDENTS** Increase resident understanding of what job opportunities are in the labor market, how employers are hiring, and what the “future of work” holds.
- **EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT** Support the workforce needs of companies in Somerville that offer work flexibility, are motivated to retain employees, and provide good jobs. (See graphic on employee empowerment practices.)
- **EMPHASIS ON VULNERABLE GROUPS** Place emphasis on supporting and advancing:
 - » youth and adult residents who are English Language Learners, with low educational attainment, and who are financially insecure or in low-wage jobs;
 - » businesses in Somerville that offer quality jobs;
 - » future businesses and industries that will be moving to Somerville and are in alignment with the Office of Economic Development’s priorities.

The most common challenge survey respondents reported was finding a quality job. Nearly 80% of surveyed residents agreed that job opportunities would improve if the City of Somerville prioritized support to employers that offer employees quality jobs.

③ Position Somerville as
leader in "quality jobs"
Practices

OUTREACH TO STAKEHOLDERS

- 22 Member Steering Committee
- 3 Focus Groups
- 27 One-on-Ones
- 298 Resident Surveys
- 7 Best Place to Work Nominees
- 4 Small Business Tours

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES PLAYBOOK

Improve employee performance, and thus company performance, through a series of management choices that empower and value employees

PREDICTIVE SCHEDULING

Finding ways to allow employees to build schedules that enable employee planning and set upfront expectations for work

CROSS TRAINING

Enabling employees to be familiar with a full scope of products, be busy with different roles in company, and understand their part in company performance

DE-STANDARDIZING TASKS

Promoting opportunities for employees to participate in continuous improvement to improve customer experience and service

SUPERVISOR TRAINING

Working with supervisors to support career choices and training among front line employees

RETENTION SERVICES

Deploying employee assistance programs that help navigate workplace conflict, address employee health and wellness, and offer childcare, transportation and financial literacy solutions that get in the way of retention

SKILLS AND BENEFITS ACQUISITION

Finding creative ways to promote employee participation in credential attainment (tuition assistance, workplace sponsored learning) and benefits that build employee security (living wage, healthcare, family leave)

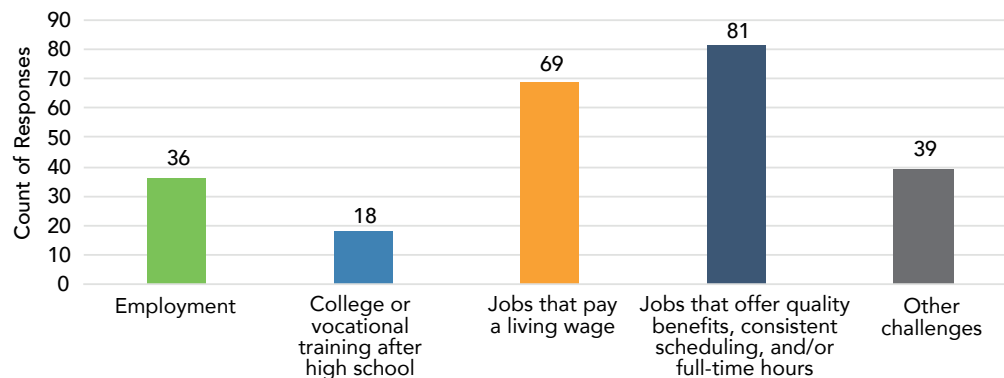
SOMERVILLE RESIDENT SURVEY, SUMMARY

As part of its commitment to build a resident-responsive plan, the City's Economic Development office administered a survey to Somerville residents that asked questions about jobs and employment aspirations. 298 city residents completed the survey. The survey was translated into Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese.

Key highlights from the survey include:

- Survey respondents greatly value jobs that pay a living wage and are convenient to get to by public transportation.
- The most significant challenge reported by survey respondents was finding “quality jobs” – jobs that offer quality benefits, consistent scheduling and/or full-time hours. Finding jobs that pay a living wage was second. (see chart.)
- When asked how the City of Somerville could improve job opportunities for residents, respondents gave high importance to supporting employers who offer quality jobs and employers who embrace diversity.
- While most survey results did not differ by respondent demographics, respondents who identified themselves as Latino/Hispanic, having less than a Bachelor's degree, and/or having a first language other than English gave much higher importance to their ideal job being located in Somerville. For all other respondents, there was no difference in importance if their job is located in Somerville versus another community in the region.

Do you or other members of your household have challenges in accessing the following?
(Check all that apply.)



LEGEND

City of Somerville Roles



Facilitator Helps bring together the city's many partners and interests around a common agenda or focus area to implement or move a strategy forward.



Investor Spurs new ideas or advances a new strategy with these partners.



Operator Leads a project or an initiative where it can create change or impact on its own.

Implementation Partners



City



Education and Training



Businesses



Community-based
Organizations

Talent Equity Strategy

STRATEGY 1: Build a coordinated system of education and training services that ensures Somerville youth and adults achieve their career goals, with a particular emphasis on meeting the needs of residents who are English Language Learners, with low educational attainment, and/or who are financially insecure.

a. Develop infrastructure needed to support the coordination of education and workforce services in Somerville.

- i. ACTION:** Build social capital by developing professional networking systems that bring together residents to share, learn, and connect with one another around skills, jobs, and careers. Partner with the Somerville Public Library to build new networks among residents and integrate these networks with workforce development efforts in the city.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s):  

- ii. ACTION:** Undertake a feasibility study to co-locate career center and training services in Somerville. Convene a meeting between Somerville Community Corporation, Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences, Metro North Regional Employment Board, The Work-Place Career Center, BHCC, and other partners in Somerville to explore interest in a co-located facility in Somerville. If there is interest, invest in a business feasibility plan to determine the co-location model that addresses target populations, partners, services, shared tracking, an integrated database of resources, location, and financial resources needed.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s):   

EXAMPLE: Springfield Works SkillsSmart portal engages a group of 20 large- and mid-sized businesses in Springfield, Massachusetts, to curate choice job postings that have career potential and good pay, and then uses technology to post the jobs and link job seekers to requisite education, training, services, and supports that will help residents get hired.

SOMERVILLE TALENT EQUITY PLAYBOOK

VISION:

Empower Somerville residents to thrive in an ever-changing world and workplace.

GOALS:

1. Build economic opportunity for all Somerville youth and adults and make sure they have the skills and knowledge to succeed in meaningful careers.
2. Make sure current and future Somerville businesses can hire quality local talent and retain and develop their workers.

STRATEGIES:

STRATEGY 1:

Build a coordinated system of education and training services that ensures Somerville youth and adults achieve their career goals

STRATEGY 2:

Position Somerville as a national leader in employee engagement practices

STRATEGY 3:

Build full suite of experiential learning opportunities for Somerville youth and adults

STRATEGY 4:

Develop resiliency responses to the "future of work"

PRINCIPLES FOR ACTION:

- Take a Systems Approach
- Leverage and Maximize City Resources
- Catalyze New Ideas and Innovation

b. Increase the scale and benefits of Somerville resident participation in jobs and their links to opportunities with anchor businesses, linkage employers, and key sector programs.

i. ACTION: Allocate staff and identify technology solutions to curate the varied job openings and workforce efforts at Somerville’s existing anchor businesses and future linkage employers. Work with anchor employers, such as Tufts University, Cambridge Health Alliance, and Partners Healthcare, as well as incoming linkage employers, to gather the varied job openings and workforce programs they currently offer the community and ensure connections exist to maximize the benefits to Somerville residents and the employers.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

ii. ACTION: Partner with intermediaries to support training tied to priorities of Somerville linkage employers and priority industries and occupations. Based on needs of linkage employers and sector priorities of the city, engage with existing intermediaries and build new capacity with other groups to provide education and training that meet demand for open positions and careers.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

EXAMPLE: Greentown Labs, BosLab, Nibble, and The Loop Lab are all emerging, near-by industry labs and incubators that could be partners for development of new industry-based training opportunities supporting Somerville’s emerging food, creative, and tech-based sectors.

iii. ACTION: Form a standing business-civic advisory group to provide ongoing input and feedback on workforce development issues in the city. In consultation with local business-civic groups, such as the Somerville Chamber of Commerce and Main Street programs in the city, develop the best way to provide ongoing employer-driven input and guidance on city-based workforce development issues.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

iv. ACTION: Build closer ties to the Metro North Regional Employment Board sector councils. Identify which sector councils are a priority for Somerville and better tie into their functions to help identify skills and in-demand competencies, career paths, and funding available for Somerville priority sector training programs.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 



Somerville Arts Council Nibble entrepreneurship program

c. Leverage Somerville High School’s space and resources as a platform to boost lifelong learning opportunities for all Somerville residents.

v. ACTION: Encourage Somerville High School’s redesign efforts to identify ways that Somerville adults can benefit even more from high school space and resources. Build more adult access to existing afterschool programs such as the Fabville Fabrication Laboratory and advanced manufacturing training program.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

EXAMPLE: Somerville High School houses the Fabville Fabrication Laboratory. It provides space, tools, and resources to students and residents for hands-on, creative learning with a focus on building digital design process and prototyping skills for the innovation economy. Fabville’s vocational programming includes 3D printing, laser cutting, electronics, and coding.




Computer Numerical Controlled (CNC) machining class at the Somerville High School’s Center for Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.

STRATEGY 2: Position Somerville as a national leader in employee engagement practices.

a. Help motivated businesses in Somerville improve their employee engagement practices.

i. ACTION: Provide motivated businesses with tools and supports to improve employee engagement practices. Allocate technical assistance funding to provide enhanced human resource and employee assistance services (with a focus on employee engagement practices) to small businesses and explore replication of national models in Somerville.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

EXAMPLE: WorkLab Innovations is a national model that has demonstrated increased employee retention, attendance, and benefit utilization by serving groups of small businesses through the provision of outsourced retention, human resource, and employee benefit supports. Sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, the national model is looking for “discovery members” that receive one year of assessment and learning to test if they might be a fit for local replication.

City Role: Investor , Facilitator , Operator 

Partner(s): City , Business 
Education , Community Org 

- ii. **ACTION:** Convene a series of business-to-business (B2B) panels and connect to local expertise on employee engagement practices. Invite local companies and local experts who can participate in a series of workshops and educational forums that distribute, build, and inspire quality job practices among more Somerville businesses.

City of Somerville Role: 💡

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 🏢

EXAMPLE: National experts in the quality jobs field with local ties are Zeynep Ton, an MIT Sloan faculty member and author of *The Good Jobs Strategy: How the Smartest Companies Invest in Employees to Lower Costs and Boost Profits*, Steven Dawson, author of the *The Pinkerton Papers: Job Quality Series*, and Barbara Dyer of the Good Companies, Good Jobs Initiative at Institute for Work and Employment Research at MIT.

b. Brand Somerville as a leader in employee engagement practices

- i. **ACTION:** Build rewards, recognition, and marketing for Somerville businesses offering employee engagement practices. Build criteria for quality jobs that is based on national best practice; work with the city communications staff to write, publish, and market vignettes that highlight local businesses deploying quality jobs practices; and host and market a series of events and competitions that reward and recognize businesses that meet the criteria.

City of Somerville Role: 💡

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 🏢

EXAMPLE: The City of Somerville's "Best Places to Work Award" already highlights and rewards city businesses that commit to employee fulfillment and involve employees in daily management, give employees the skills and support needed to succeed and develop, and encourages collaboration between employees and local companies and organizations.

- ii. **ACTION:** Include an employee engagement statement as part of core values expressed in economic development documents and marketing material. Integrate quality jobs statements into business recruitment criteria, request for qualifications, and other documents carried forth by the City of Somerville related to business development.

City of Somerville Role: 💡

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 🏠



The Best Places to Work contest was an employee-nominated process to highlight Somerville businesses that exemplify employee engagement practices.


STRATEGY 3: Build a full suite of experiential learning opportunities for Somerville youth and adults.

a. Support and expand existing city-based efforts to ensure all youth and adults receive as many substantial experiential learning opportunities as possible.

i. ACTION: Partner with and support the Somerville Public School’s goal to give students at least one significant credit-bearing out-of-school learning experience before they graduate. Work with the Planning Committee for the public school’s two-year Barr Foundation grant and develop shared staffing and resources around community partnerships to support their efforts to build a new learning ecosystem that includes more substantive out-of-school experiential learning opportunities for each Somerville High School student.


City of Somerville Role:  Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

ii. ACTION: Establish a campaign to increase private sector summer jobs over the next three years through the City of Somerville Mayor’s Summer Jobs Program. Work with the Mayor’s office and Health and Human Services to announce a campaign to secure as many paid private sector jobs with structured learning rubrics for Somerville youth as there are paid public jobs in the next three years, which will give more Somerville students and young adults summer income, substantive learning experiences, and expand their career exposure with private sector jobs in professional settings.

City of Somerville Role:  Lead Implementation Partner(s):  

EXAMPLE: The City of Boston Mayor’s Summer Jobs Program organizes more than 200 city businesses through a Private Sector Campaign to hire over 3,000 Boston Public School students in paid positions each summer.

iii. ACTION: Incorporate experiential learning programs into appropriate city-funded workforce development programs. As the city funds existing or new programs intended to build the skills and careers of residents, work to integrate experiential learning opportunities into program curriculum.

City of Somerville Role:  Lead Implementation Partner(s): 



Rendering of the new Somerville High School which will play a major role in the City’s workforce development strategies.

City Role: Investor , Facilitator , Operator 

Partner(s): City , Business 
Education , Community Org 

Red Teaming is the practice of investigating and challenging current assumptions and conventional wisdom in order to plan for hypothetical scenarios. Red Teams are typically used in the public sector for national security and in the private sector for business intelligence.

b. Increase the number of local businesses offering experiential learning opportunities.

- i. ACTION:** Sponsor a series of citywide internship open houses and job shadow days. Organize citywide events that recruit local businesses to give students and residents tours of their business, expose them to career opportunities, and talk about internship and work opportunities. Organize the open houses by theme, such as splitting up the days by large, small, or emerging business type, by industry sector, or by private for-profit or nonprofit employers.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

- ii. ACTION:** Build a technology platform to facilitate the matching of experiential learning opportunities among businesses, educators, area programs, and adults and students. Invest in a citywide “hub” that houses a database of participating businesses with internship and project-based learning opportunities; identifies good matches among adults, students, teachers, and companies for internships and project-based learning opportunities; pairs business people with classrooms to engage in online or in-person mentoring and guest lecturing; and contains guides, tools, processes, and standards that facilitate business participation.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s):    

EXAMPLE: The Baton Rouge Area Chamber’s Virtual Schoolhouse uses a technology platform from Nepris to pair local businesses with classrooms to engage in online mentoring, guest speaking, and internships related to school curriculum.

EXAMPLE: Indiana INTERNet is a free internship-matching program managed by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce that links 7,000 employers to students, high schools, colleges, and universities. It is a dynamic, searchable database, matching and reporting system coupled with personal assistance—including a hotline to answer questions and provide internship guidance and resource materials to businesses interested in starting and managing an internship.

STRATEGY 4: Develop resiliency responses to the “future of work.”

a. Build citywide capacity to understand, simulate, and prepare responses to future employment and economic scenarios.

- i. ACTION:** Create a city “Red Team” to help plan for future employment and economic scenarios. Bring together a core team of City of Somerville staff and other interested researchers, educators, businesses, and civic leaders to plan for economic resiliency responses that consider threats and shocks to work and the economy, and other exogenous events that may affect it.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s):    

ii. ACTION: Capitalize an “Experimental Innovation Fund” that catalyzes new responses and solutions to emerging challenges and opportunities in the labor market. Use the fund for small seed grants and support to pilot experimental research and creative programming that addresses critical issues that will help Somerville residents and businesses adjust and prepare for new challenges and opportunities occurring in the labor market.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s):  

b. Support city education and training partners integrate “skill resilience” into career preparation.

i. ACTION: Develop research to identify emerging transferrable skills and competencies within occupations and industry sectors. Work with local research partners, such as BHCC, Tufts University, and Metro North Regional Employment Board, to research emerging skillsets applicable to growth industries, such as eldercare in the healthcare industry, and incentivize workforce partners in the city to integrate these skills and competencies into future education and training.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s):  

ii. ACTION: Identify intermediaries to support transdisciplinary skills that are critical to the future of work and that are foundational across varied industries and occupations. Partner with training providers to expand or develop programs that incorporate skills and competencies that are foundational to jobs and careers across industries and occupations, such as digital literacy, social-emotional skills, computational thinking, and cross-cultural competency.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s):  

EXAMPLE: The City has an emerging partnership with Tech Goes Home to equip Somerville residents with the tools and know-how to advance their digital literacy skills.

EXAMPLE: The City has launched a digital badging program called “Skill Up Somerville” to coordinate and credential the many digital literacy programs operating in the city.

iii. ACTION: Work with Somerville Public Schools to develop a digital literacy and computer science framework. Align outside digital literacy programs, such as Fabville, with the framework and standards Somerville Public Schools and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education are developing.

City of Somerville Role: 

Lead Implementation Partner(s): 

Cross-cultural Competency

Businesses increasingly see diversity as a driver of innovation and want employees who can communicate and operate in different cultural settings and seize opportunities in new, globally connected markets.

City Role: Investor , Facilitator , Operator 

Partner(s): City , Business , Education , Community Org 

Measuring Our Progress

Consistent with the City of Somerville's commitment to data driven-action, the city has developed metrics to measure progress for implementation of the Talent Equity Playbook strategies.

STRATEGY 1: Build a coordinated system of education and training services that ensures Somerville youth and adults achieve their career goals, with a particular emphasis on meeting the needs of residents who are English Language Learners, with low educational attainment, and/or who are financially insecure.

Outcome Metrics

- Number of target population completing education and training services.
- Number of target population received services from career centers.
- Number of target population achieving job placements with anchor and linkage employers.
- Number of Somerville businesses on Metro North Regional Employment Board Sector Councils.
- Number of peer mentors or professional networking opportunities.
- Number of new collaborative partnerships created among community-based organizations in Somerville.

STRATEGY 2: Position Somerville as a national leader in employee engagement practices.

Outcome Metrics

- Number of events and initiatives involving the City of Somerville that emphasize employee engagement as a priority.
- Number of Best Place to Work nominees identifying employee engagement practices in their applications.
- Number of Somerville-based businesses reporting higher than industry average employee retention.
- Number of jobs by industry that offer a livable wage.
- Number of jobs by industry that include employee benefits.

The background of the page features a large, multi-story brick building with arched windows and a red door. In the foreground, there are green trees and a grassy area. At the top left, two flags are visible: a white flag with a blue emblem and a black flag with a white emblem. The sky is blue with some clouds.

STRATEGY 3: Build a full suite of experiential learning opportunities for Somerville youth and adults.

Outcome Metrics

- Number of Somerville High School students completing at least one substantive experiential learning opportunity by graduation.
- Number of Somerville businesses offering experiential learning opportunities to residents.
- Number of Somerville working age adults who participate in internships or learning opportunities provided by a Somerville business.
- Number of disengaged youth in Somerville who participate in an internship or learning opportunity provided by a Somerville business.
- Number of apprenticeship hours completed by Somerville adults.

STRATEGY 4: Develop resiliency responses to the “future of work.”

Outcome Metrics

- Number of Somerville residents receiving training from pilot programs that are incorporating skills related to the future of work.
- Number of Somerville High School guidance counselors who are receiving curriculum content related to the future of work.
- Number of training programs funded that incorporate industry crossing skillsets and competencies.
- Number of digital badges claimed by residents through the Skill Up Somerville platform.
- Rate of city-wide digital literacy.



Appendix of Sources

Somerville Labor Force (residents age 16+) - Source: Massachusetts EOLWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics; U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Labor Force Participation Rate - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Unemployment Rate - Source: Massachusetts EOLWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Discouraged Workers (Estimate of Residents Not in Labor Force but Want a Job) - Source: BLS, Labor Force Statistics national data applied to ACS Residents not in the Labor Force

Commuting Patterns (Inflow Outflow of Somerville's Employed Residents) - Source: Massachusetts EOLWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics 2016 using ratios from U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2015)

Unemployed Somerville Residents - Source: Massachusetts EOLWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Educational Attainment Level of Unemployed Residents - Source: Karl F. Seidman Consulting Services, Somerville Nexus Linkage Study, July 2017; ACS 5-year estimates

Educational Attainment of Population by Native Foreign Born 25 years and over – Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Occupations, Primary Language, Education of Unemployed Jobs Seekers from The Career Place - Source: Metro North Regional Employment Board, Career Place Job Seeker Statistics, 2014-2016 3-year averages

Foreign Born Residents in Labor Force by Citizenship and Native Born - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Earnings for Full-time, Year-round Employed Residents - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Living Wage Calculations – Source: Glassmeier and Nadeau, MIT Living Wage Calculator for Middlesex County, 2016, <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/25017>

Low-Wage Earners in Somerville by Geographic Location – Source: Policy Map, Average amount of salary and wages on income tax returns in 2015, <https://www.policymap.com/>

Somerville Disconnected Youth Age 16-24 (residents 16-24 years who are neither in school nor employed) - Source: Estimate of 7.5% applied to the 13,418 residents 16-24 years in Somerville from ACS 1-year estimates, 2016; Disconnected youth percent from Boston's Youth Employment and Education Indicators January 2017

Wages and Salary, Educational Attainment, Non-English Speaking Residents, and Workers who are Hispanic by Location – Source: Policy Map, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Salary and Wages, IRS Tax Returns, 2015; LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) data, version 7, 2015.

Occupation and Industry of Employed Residents - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Somerville Businesses by Type – Source: Mass Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Largest 100 Employers in Somerville, Infogroup; City of Somerville Business Stat Presentation, February 16, 2016

Somerville Jobs by Industry - US Bureau of Labor Statistics, QCEW, EMSI - 2017.2

Greater Boston Jobs by Sector - Source: Greater Boston Regional Data Package, Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet 2017, DUA/BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2016.

Greater Boston Top 10 Occupations by Education Requirements - Source: Source: Greater Boston Regional Data Package, Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet 2017, DUA/BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2016.

Somerville School District and High School Demographics, Graduation Plans, Programs – Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, District Profiles and Somerville School District.

Somerville Linkage Employers - Source: Karl F. Seidman Consulting Services, Somerville Nexus Linkage Study, July 2017.

Greater Boston Projected High Demand, High Wage Occupations – Source: Greater Boston Regional Data Package, Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet 2017, Occupational Employment Statistics, 2017 Projections and 2024 Projections, OES Wages, Conference Board Help Wanted On-line, Greater Boston Regional Data Package, Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet, 2017.

Greater Boston Projected Job Openings – Source: Strategic Framework for Massachusetts Public Higher Education, Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance, 2017.

Greater Boston Projected Career Pathways – Source: Greater Boston Regional Data Package, Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet 2017. Occupational Employment Statistics, 2014-2024 Projections, 2015 Wages.

Alternative Forms of Work as Class of Worker of Employed Residents -- Source: Alan Krueger and Lawrence Katz, "The Rise and Nature of Alternative Work Arrangements in the United States, 1995-2015" estimate of 16% of employed workforce in alternative work arrangements (defined as temporary help agency workers, on-call workers, contract workers and independent contractors or freelancers) applied to Somerville Employed Residents, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2016.

Future of Work – Sources: Carl Frey and Michael Osborne, “The Future of Employment: How Susceptible Are Jobs to Computerization,” 2013.; James Manyika, et. al. “Harnessing automation for a future that works,” McKinsey Global Institute, 2017.; “Where Machines Could Replace Humans” McKinsey Global Institute; 2017.; “Future Forces: Reshaping the Way We Work, Learn, and Live,” Institute for the Future, ACT Foundation, 2017.; Carol Rogers, “Future of work 101,” Indiana Business Research Center, Indiana University Kelley School of Business, 2017; Mark Muro, et. al. “Digitalization and the American Workforce,” Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institution, Washington DC 2017.; “The Promise of Opportunity and the Future of Work,” The Aspen Institute, Washington DC, 2016.; Alan Krueger and Lawrence Katz, “The Rise and Nature of Alternative Work Arrangements in the United States, 1995-2015”; 2016.; “Freelancing in America: 2017,” Edelman Intelligence, 2017.; “Independent Work: Choice, Necessity, and the Gig Economy,” McKinsey Global Institute, 2016.; “Future Work Skills 2020,” Institute for the Future, ACT Foundation, 2011.

