

# City of Somerville

## Consolidated Plan 2008 - 2013



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### INTRODUCTION:

The City of Somerville's Five-Year Consolidated Plan ("Consolidated Plan") for the time period of April 1, 2008 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2013 has been prepared to meet requirements issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Consolidated Plan is a comprehensive analysis of community needs eligible for HUD funding as well as a summary of strategies to address those needs. Its focus is on low- and moderate-income individuals, families, and areas of the city in alignment with the goals of HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership, and Emergency Shelter Grant programs. The City's Consolidated Plan is designed to serve as a resource for all City Departments, local and regional organizations, and Somerville residents as they plan for the future. In addition, the plan will assist the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) as it formulates Annual Action Plans that identify how the HUD funds included in the Consolidated Plan will be spent over the upcoming program year.

The development of the Consolidated Plan was an intensive collaborative planning process begun in the summer of 2007. During the summer months, City staff initiated data analysis of the 2000 census and identified trends relevant to its long-range planning efforts. Over the course of the fall, the City hosted three public hearings (located in East Somerville, Union Square, and West Somerville) where OSPCD staff shared findings from the census data, highlighted accomplishments from the 2003-2007 Consolidated Plan and listened as the community identified additional trends and needs. The City then hosted focus groups in the areas of housing, economic development, transportation, parks, historic preservation, and public services to coordinate efforts with local leaders and stakeholders and develop priorities.

Over the next five years, the City anticipates receiving an estimated \$24.7 million from HUD through the combination of Community Development Block Grants, HOME Funds, and Emergency Shelter Grants. Through the community-driven planning process of public hearings, focus groups, and collaborations with area agencies, the City has established a unified vision for the allocation of these resources over the next five years.

### SOMERVILLE: PAST AND PRESENT

Somerville is a city located in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, just two miles north of Boston's financial and commercial districts and 3.5 miles from Logan International Airport. Occupying slightly over 4 square miles, its population of 77,478 (as of the 2000 census) makes Somerville the most densely populated community in New England. The City shares its southern border with Cambridge and the MBTA Red Line connects Davis Square to Cambridge and Boston.

Somerville was first settled in 1630 as a part of Charlestown. When it was established as an independent township in 1842, Somerville was still largely rural. Somerville's web of streets developed at a time when land travel was by horse or on foot encouraging close spacing of residential, retail and business areas. Trolley lines developed in the 1870s and reached their peak capacity in 1917. The introduction of streetcar lines had by far the greatest impact on early residential and commercial development. The population increased six-fold between 1870 and 1915 with almost half of the residential construction taking place between 1890 and 1950 (most of it in the Davis Square, Powder House and West Somerville areas). This intense development and



subdivision pattern resulted in Somerville's exceptionally dense population patterns<sup>1</sup>, and left the City with little remaining available land for public parks.

The introduction of the private automobile created a need for expanded capacity on roads leading through Somerville to Boston and the City's rail lines were eventually supplanted by autos and bus service. The Alewife Brook and Fells Parkways, originally conceived in the 1890's as a means for city residents to reach the metropolitan parks, evolved into commuter routes for suburban drivers, greatly diminishing the opportunity for Somerville residents to enjoy the parklands.

During the Early Modern Period (1915-1930), Somerville's industries consolidated rather than expanded and the period's most important enterprises were meatpacking, dairy processing, ice and food distribution, and car assembly. Somerville's location adjacent to Boston and its proximity to rail and road transportation made it an ideal location for distribution facilities. These industries flourished for quite some time. However, during the mid-1980's to the late 1990's, like many U.S. cities, industrial and manufacturing companies left the area to be replaced by service and business uses.

Today, Somerville is a diverse, dense, walkable, community that offers comparatively affordable housing. Given the City's convenient location near numerous educational institutions, including three of the nation's leading institutions of higher learning, Tufts, Harvard, and MIT, it comes as no surprise that college students make up roughly 15% of the population. The city is also home to many recent immigrants. In fact, roughly 14% of all Somerville residents entered the U.S. in 1990 or later. The creative class – designers, artists, architects, software engineers – has become an important aspect of the growing economy in Somerville, as has the new immigrant class, with a strong entrepreneurial vision that produces new retail and service businesses. The enhancement and encouragement of these two groups, as well as the support of the traditional neighborhood districts that they service will all play important roles in the creation and growth of a robust economy for the residents of Somerville in the future.

Several major regional arterials and four regional rail lines also transect Somerville. This infrastructure provides substantial access to Boston from north and east, but the corridors isolate many neighborhoods within Somerville from the rest of the community. Parks and open space in some areas of the city stand separate from their nearest residential neighbors – isolated by heavy rail lines or limited access highways. In other parts of the city, however, significant progress has been made in the effort to reconnect previously isolated neighborhoods and to enhance recreational corridors for the city as a whole.

#### **TRENDS OF THE FUTURE:**

The Consolidated Planning process provided an opportunity for comprehensive review of census data and collaboration with the community in order to identify anticipated future trends. Some of these trends are already apparent today and are likely to become even more important in years to come. In order to meet Somerville's evolving needs, these future trends must be acknowledged and incorporated into the long range planning process. They, and the strategies required to fulfill them, have been carefully woven into the Consolidated Plan document.

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<sup>1</sup> 29.45 people/acre; 2000 U.S. Census

## **1. CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS**

In order for the City to provide high quality services to a rapidly evolving community, a successful consolidated Plan must identify anticipated changes in municipal demographics. Census data can point to some, but by no means all, of these trends: community input is also critical to understanding these trends – and the opportunities and challenges they may present.

The “graying” of the U.S. population is a well-documented national trend. According to the Administration of Aging<sup>2</sup>, as of the year 2000, individuals sixty-five and above represented 12.4% of the population. However, by the year 2030 this group is projected to grow to approximately 20% of the total population. This trend has obvious implications on municipal strategies related to housing, workforce development, and transportation to name a few. Due to the large number of students and young professionals in Somerville, the local demographic trend is not anticipated to be as dramatic as that of the national level. Still, this is an important trend and the City is committed to continue to provide a high level of support and service to our aging population. As the aging population expands, this will likely be reflected in a growth of the disabled community. While the City has always had a sharp focus on issues related to the disabled community, the demand for these services is anticipated to increase.

A well established and growing demographic group in Somerville is the immigrant community. Somerville has long been a gateway community for newcomers to the U.S. In fact, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, 29% of Somerville residents were born in a foreign country, and nearly 36% speak a language other than English. Among these households, it is estimated that more than 50 languages are spoken citywide. This is a tremendous asset to the community and adds to the rich diversity of which Somerville is so justly proud.

## **2. AFFORDABLE HOUSING / FORECLOSURE PREVENTION**

The average price of homes in Somerville peaked in 2005 at \$435,000 and has been on the decline since then. These recent market conditions and a surge in predatory lending practices have contributed to a troubling nationwide trend of increased home foreclosure rates. While Somerville has not seen home foreclosures at rates as high as the rest of the nation, it is not immune to this problem either. The City has seen a rise in the number of requests for Home Rehabilitation Loans, suggesting that some homeowners are choosing to stay in their current homes longer. For others, unmanageable home loans dictate foreclosure as the only option.

At the same time, however, these market conditions have resulted in an increased number of affordable home ownership options, particularly in East Somerville: as some housing prices drop, more homes move into a price range that meets the guidelines of affordable housing. Yet even with this additional affordable housing, the cost of housing in Somerville continues to be a concern. As of the 2000 census, 32% of Somerville households indicated that they expend more than 30% of their income on housing and 15% spend more than 50% of their income on housing. It is clear that supply of affordable housing remains significantly below the demand and is of critical importance to the future of the city.

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<sup>2</sup> Administration on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services; Web Site: <http://www.aoa.gov/prof/Statistics/statistics.asp>

### **3. TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT**

Today in Davis Square – the site of an existing Red Line rapid transit station and bus node – over 40% of residents travel to work by public transit. This tremendous level of ridership reduces pollution and congestion, promotes an active healthy community, and improves the economic vitality of the surrounding area. Over the next decade, tens of thousands of Somerville residents will experience the opening of a new Green Line light rail or Orange Line rapid transit stop within walking distance of their homes. This transformation will spread these benefits throughout the entire city and change the way that people in Somerville live, work, and play. In addition, it will provide a tremendous opportunity for the City to create vibrant transit oriented developments that will increase ridership, promote healthy lifestyles and add to the city's tax base.

This vision of a revived rail and transit network in Somerville received a major boost in the fall of 2007 when Governor Deval Patrick announced that his administration would fulfill, and even accelerate, a commitment made in 2006 by outgoing Governor Mitt Romney to complete the Green Line Extension by no later than 2014. With this commitment came a promise of \$700 million to complete the design and construction of the Green Line Extension. In response, the City has proposed to expand the Union Square Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) to include more of the anticipated Green Line stations. This will allow the City more flexibility to program HUD resources towards the focused planning of areas that will be close to future Green Line stops.

The new Orange Line station at Assembly Square is also on track for design and construction over the next decade. The estimated \$40 million project will be paid for using the combined resources of a \$25 million set-aside in federal ISTEA funds secured by Congressman Michael Capuano, and a \$15 million contribution made jointly by Federal Realty Investment Trust and IKEA. The Orange Line station at Assembly Square is the linchpin of a new 66.5 acre mixed-use development along the banks of the Mystic River that is a regional showcase of Smart Growth techniques. When complete, the new development will include a riverfront park, 2100 residential units, 1.75 million square feet of office and 1,150,800 square feet of retail space (including the existing Marketplace and a proposed IKEA store), and a 200-room hotel. This project is anticipated to be built out by 2019.

These future developments are well aligned with the City's "Shape up Somerville" (SUS) initiative. "Shape up Somerville" is a city-wide campaign to increase daily physical activity and healthy eating through programming, physical infrastructure improvements, and policy work. SUS and planning efforts around the new T-stops will work hand-in-hand to promote a stronger healthier Somerville.

### **4. SUSTAINABILITY**

With rising costs of energy, improvements in clean technology and a shift in public consciousness, sustainability is now at the forefront of economic development as well as an enhanced quality of life in urban neighborhoods. The City of Somerville has already taken significant steps to build these trends into its long- and mid-term planning. In April of 2007, the City's Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) published its first "Environmental Strategic Plan." This plan outlines strategies related to resource conservation, environmental protection, transportation & infrastructure, land use & open space, economic development, and community education. The Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development works in collaboration with OSE to educate developers and promote sustainable development throughout the city.



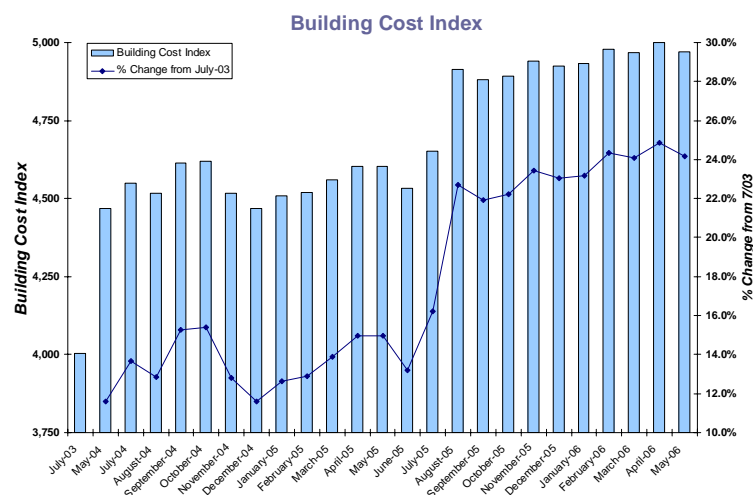
The proposed IKEA store in Assembly Square, scheduled to open in the fall of 2009, is one example of the type of sustainable development techniques the city would like to promote. The IKEA building will include a 2 acre green roof, dramatically reducing storm runoff volume and peak flow rates and conserving energy by moderating temperature on the roof and surrounding areas. In addition, IKEA has committed to fulfilling the requirements to become LEED certified by the US Green Building Council.

As developers increasingly agree that the long-term economic benefits of sustainable developments outweigh the associated costs, the City expects this trend to accelerate at a rapid pace. Private sector adoption of new sustainability standards and strategies should be further enhanced by the rapidly increasing demand for green buildings from the consumer market.

## 5. RISING COSTS OF CONSTRUCTION

Rising construction costs have had an undeniably negative impact on public construction projects across the nation during the past several years. Skanska, an internationally recognized construction firm, breaks down the cost of inflation into eleven different construction categories and predicts overall construction inflation to be 10% in 2006 alone.<sup>3</sup> Below is a table that demonstrates that rising cost of construction inflation using the Engineering News Record statistics from July 2003 to May 2006.

These rising costs adversely affect a variety of initiatives at the municipal level, including parks reconstruction projects, affordable housing projects, municipal building improvements, and transportation improvements (to name only a few).



## ORGANIZATION OF THIS DOCUMENT:

This document contains ten major sections. Sections 1-6 provide detailed information about specific disciplines within the City's community development team. These include:

1. Housing
2. Economic Development & Long Range Planning
3. Parks & Open Space
4. Transportation & Infrastructure
5. Historic Preservation
6. Public Services

<sup>3</sup> "Pricing Trends and Alerts." Skanska. January 9, 2006 issue.

For each of these topics, these sections provide:

- A review of the previous Consolidated Plan goals;
- A needs and gap analysis;
- Identification of obstacles to meeting underserved needs;
- Proposed goals and strategies for the next five years; and
- Identification of priorities during that same time period.

Sections 7-8 focus on the City's two Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs). Section 7 contains information describing the East Somerville NRSA, and section 8 contains information about the Union Square NRSA. These sections include:

- Boundary maps of each area;
- A review of accomplishments in these areas over the last five years, and
- Proposed goals and priorities.

The last two sections of the Consolidated Plan, sections 9-10, present two independent action plans. Section nine is an anti-poverty strategy that summarizes the City's goals and strategies for reducing poverty within Somerville over the next five years. Section ten is a public participation plan that outlines the strategies the City will use to engage the community as the Consolidated Plan is implemented over the next five years. The appendices provide a variety of useful maps, data, and background information for reference.

#### **GOALS:**

##### ***Section One: Housing***

1. Maintain and Improve Housing Stock.
2. Create New Affordable Housing.
3. Increase Affordability of Rental Housing.
4. Increase Affordable Homeownership.
5. Prevent and End Homelessness.
6. Remove Barriers to Housing.

##### ***Section Two: Economic and Community Development:***

1. Encourage investment and development in underutilized areas of the City.
2. Enhance vitality of existing commercial districts through support of existing businesses and attraction of others to support a healthy business mix.
3. Increase local job opportunities.
4. Enhance skills and abilities of Somerville residents.
5. Build a partnership between City Hall and community members to encourage public participation in economic development initiatives.

##### ***Section Three: Transportation and Infrastructure***

1. Improve rail transit service to improve connectivity throughout the region for residents and businesses.
2. Improve bus service within Somerville and connecting to surrounding communities.
3. Enhance streetscapes, road and intersections to increase vitality in identified commercial districts.
4. Reduce barriers dividing neighborhoods and districts in Somerville.
5. Improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility in the City to support active transportation alternatives.

6. Improve infrastructure to comply with ADA requirements.
7. Increase Somerville's role in regional transportation planning.
8. Improve basic utility infrastructure within Somerville.

#### ***Section Four: Parks and Open Space***

1. Renovate existing parks and open spaces to improve condition of Somerville's recreational areas and ensure attractive, safe, and accessible public lands.
2. Secure more land to expand Somerville's total open space acreage and ensure access to open space in every neighborhood.
3. Analyze and improve access for persons with disabilities to parks and open space, as part of ongoing ADA compliance.
4. Increase tree canopy and green spaces to promote urban health and sustainability, and reduce the heat island effect.
5. Increase Off-Leash Recreational Area (OLRA) opportunities throughout the city.
6. Raise the bar for sustainable design and building practices in city parks and open space projects.
7. Reduce brownfields and convert to more desirable uses.
8. Improve accountability and set departmental vision through a series of strategic planning documents.

#### ***Section Five: Public Services***

1. Provide opportunities for residents to improve their economic, social and political situation.
2. Provide children with the best opportunities to live healthy and productive lives.
3. Provide education and leadership opportunities for youth to become involved in the community.
4. Provide comprehensive programs for low-income individuals and families who are having difficulty meeting their basic needs.
5. Prevent homelessness by providing interpersonal and systematic supports to undermine the causes of homelessness.
6. Provide services to support the elderly and persons with disabilities of all ages.

#### ***Section Six: Historic Preservation***

1. Inventory and document existing historically and architecturally significant resources.
2. Ensure that City policies, regulations, and procedures support the maintenance of significant resources.
3. Develop and implement programs that encourage the improvement of significant resources.
4. Stabilize and support the character of individual neighborhoods.
5. Highlight Somerville's unique assets to its residents, businesses, and outside visitors.

#### ***Section Seven: East Somerville NRSA***

1. Increase supply of permanently affordable housing stock.
2. Increase economic opportunities for East Somerville residents and businesses.
3. Increase recreational opportunities for East Somerville residents.
4. Increase attractiveness of East Somerville places.
5. Improve access to and from East Somerville without impairing quality of life for residents.

#### ***Section Eight: Union Square NRSA***

1. Increase permanently affordable housing stock.
2. Increase economic opportunities in Union Square residents and businesses.
3. Increase recreational opportunities for Union Square residents.



4. Increase attractiveness of Union Square places.
5. Improve Union Square infrastructure, including transportation, utilities, parking, etc. without impairing quality of life for residents.
6. Improve status of historic areas.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Over the course of the next five years, the City of Somerville faces a variety of exciting opportunities and challenging issues. Even with its many geographic, cultural, social and workforce advantages, one of the City's greatest challenges will be to respond at a pace fast enough to capture all of the economic opportunities available. The City of Somerville strives to be at the forefront of municipal innovation and best practices. In fact, Somerville recently received national recognition as a model of innovation and efficiency for the implementation of a 311 constituent service telephone and Internet help center for city residents and the implementation of a data-driven performance management system called "Somerstat". Somerville was the first city in the country to employ both a 311 service line *and* Connect-CTY mass notification (high-speed reverse 911) technology. With these innovative programs and the City's aggressive search for new, mixed-use development projects, Somerville has been recognized by the *Boston Globe Magazine* as "the best run city in the Commonwealth."<sup>4</sup> Over the next five years, Somerville will continue this tradition of innovation and creativity as the cornerstone of its ongoing effort to ensure that this dynamic and fast-evolving community remains a great place to live, work and play for generations to come.

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<sup>4</sup> "The Model City", Boston Globe, May 14, 2006 issue.

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**SECTION ONE:**

**HOUSING**

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## **Introduction**

### ***a. Historical Context/Overview***

Somerville has an extremely rich and historic housing stock. In fact, the first Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Governor John Winthrop, lived in Somerville in the early 1600s and owned over 600 acres of land between what is currently Broadway and the Mystic River. At that time, Somerville's housing stock consisted mostly of large farmhouses and mansions. In 1775, Somerville had only thirty houses and roughly 250 residents. By 1842, there were still only 200 dwelling units and 1,000 residents in Somerville.<sup>1</sup>

With the establishment of streetcar lines in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Somerville quickly became a desirable housing location and residential building boomed. Over 80% of the Somerville's current housing stock was built prior to 1920, predominantly consisting of triple-decker and two-family homes. Somerville's population surged in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, exceeding 100,000 at one point and increasing until it peaked during World War II at over 105,000. With only 4.1 square miles of land area, Somerville became the most densely populated community in New England. While the population has decreased since World War II, with 77,478 people living in Somerville in 2000, it remains the most densely populated city in New England. While the population may continue to decline, the household size in Somerville also continues to decrease, meaning that more housing units are required to house the same number of people.

Somerville has historically been a city of renters. While the rest of the nation has homeownership rates around 60-65%, Somerville is the opposite with roughly 66% of its population renting. Somerville remains an ideal location for renters because of its close proximity to the Greater Boston area's academic institutions. Tufts, Harvard, and MIT are all within walking distance and many undergraduate and graduate students make Somerville their home.

Somerville has historically been an affordable place to live, with convenient access to Boston. As the Greater Boston area, and Massachusetts as a whole, have begun experiencing increased housing costs, so has Somerville. Since 2000, single-family homes have increased in price by 90% and condominiums have increased by 46%, making Somerville unaffordable to many residents.

In the late 1980s, the City of Somerville began committing additional resources to ensure that the housing stock remained affordable and accessible. The City created an Affordable Housing Trust Fund in 1989 in order to provide for the creation and preservation of affordable housing in the City of Somerville, for the benefit of low and moderate income households. In 1990, the City adopted an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, which requires that any development with 8 or more units reserve 12.5% of the units for low and/or moderate-income first-time homebuyers. In 1990 as well, the City adopted a Linkage Ordinance to mitigate the impact of large-scale development on the supply and cost of housing in the city, requiring that any new commercial development over 30,000 square feet contribute a fee to the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The amount was increased to its current \$3.91/square feet over 30,000 square feet in 2005.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Albert L. Haskell, "Haskell's Historical Guide Book of Somerville, Massachusetts."

Over the past few years, the City of Somerville has experienced many significant changes. An influx of immigrants, rising age of the population, rising housing costs, condominium conversions, and low vacancy rates have all impacted the ability of the City to provide adequate, safe, and affordable housing options for all of its residents. With over 75,000 residents, providing adequate housing is a daunting task for a city of only 4.1 square miles, yet Somerville has been committed to doing just that for decades and continues to make affordable housing a high priority.

***b. ADA Issues***

Persons with disabilities make up roughly 20% of Somerville's population. It is essential that affordable housing development in Somerville address the needs of this population. The City of Somerville Commission for Persons with Disabilities recommends that housing for persons with disabilities should be both integrated and accessible. Given that much of Somerville's housing stock was built in the first half of the century, prior to federal laws requiring accessibility, very few units in Somerville are truly accessible and require significant modifications to comply with ADA requirements. As a result, the majority of accessible units are in new construction buildings and therefore may not be well integrated throughout the community. The Massachusetts Access Registry lists 83 handicap-accessible units in the City of Somerville.

**Strategies and Goals 2003-2008**

The Consolidated Plan for 2003-2008 outlined 15 strategies. They are as follows.

1. Strengthen, support and expand the capacity of Somerville's nonprofit affordable housing providers to develop and manage housing.
2. Continue to support and finance Housing Rehabilitation Programs.
3. The preservation of expiring-use properties across the city.
4. Update and revise the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.
5. Continue to support and finance large, multi-family housing developments.
6. Educate the Somerville community, including public officials, on the importance of providing affordable housing.
7. Expedite City approvals and financial support of projects with one to four units.
8. Secure additional funds for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
9. Provide relief for development related fees for affordable housing
10. Explore the creation of a Tax Incentive Program.
11. Support the Comprehensive Permit Process and extend terms of affordability

12. Explore the creation of a Linked Deposit Banking Program
13. Explore land use and zoning models to increase affordable housing production
14. Continue to support and expand the First Time Homebuyer's Program and Down Payment Assistance.
15. Continue to support and increase homeless prevention programs

In addition, the Consolidated Plan set specific outcomes by which to measure its progress and accomplishments. These included:

| <b>TABLE 1: 2003-2008 CONSOLIDATED PLAN GOALS</b>       |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>5 Year Goal</b>                                      | <b>Units</b> |
| Create Affordable Housing                               | 220          |
| Create Senior Housing                                   | 100          |
| Create Housing for Chronically Homeless                 | 9            |
| Avoid Poverty Concentration through Housing Development | 200          |
| Increase Homeownership                                  | 50           |
| Rehabilitate Housing Stock                              | 350          |

### Accomplishments 2003-2008

During the reporting period of the HUD 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan, the Housing Division made significant progress in meeting its objectives, which included the following:

- Developing new affordable homeownership and rental units
- Preserving existing affordable rental units
- Assisting low and moderate income individuals and families become first-time homebuyers
- Stabilizing and rehabilitating existing housing stock
- Reducing the number of housing units with lead hazards, and
- Expanding the supply of permanent housing for homeless individuals and families

| <b>TABLE 2: HOUSING ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2003-2008</b>   |                    |                                |                              |                                       |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Objective</b>  | <b>5 Year Goal</b> | <b>Actual Units- Years 1-4</b> | <b>Expected Units Year 5</b> | <b>Expected Units Years 1-5 Total</b> |
| Create/Preserve Affordable Rental Housing               | 220                | 150                            | 231                          | 381                                   |
| Create Senior Housing                                   | 100                | 0                              | 194                          | 194                                   |
| Create Housing for Chronically Homeless                 | 9                  | 3                              | 27                           | 30                                    |
| Avoid Poverty Concentration through Housing Development | 200                | 190                            | 10                           | 200                                   |
| Increase Homeownership                                  | 50                 | 39                             | 10                           | 49                                    |
| Rehabilitate Housing Stock                              | 350                | 265                            | 70                           | 335                                   |

During this period the Housing Division continued to expand its housing activities in the following ways:

1. Continued its Housing Rehabilitation programs which sought to remove blighted conditions from the city's neighborhoods by repairing and improving properties, providing technical assistance, contractor oversight and quality control, and implementing rent restriction agreements on units assisted with HOME/CDBG funds for low and very-low income renters and very low to moderate income homeowners.
2. Continued Homebuyer Training and Counseling Programs for first-time Homebuyers that educate first-time homebuyers, provided access to below market rate home financing products, and expanded special home purchase opportunities for low to moderate income households. Homeowner units developed by the Somerville Community Corporation, the city's only Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) and lottery winners of units developed through the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, are offered for sale to income eligible graduates of the Homebuyer Training Program. The combination of a comprehensive education program, down payment/closing cost assistance, access to below market rate mortgages and access to unique home purchase opportunities has made homeownership a reality for a number of families and individuals who would not normally have been able to afford to purchase a home. The Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Homeownership Collaborative & MassHousing conducted these classes which included speakers from the Real Estate, Banking and Legal professions. In 2006, the City agreed to have the Somerville Housing Authority offer these classes in the future, but the City would continue to market the classes through our web site and coordinate with the Housing Authority to connect new graduates with affordable homeownership opportunities. Typically the classes are offered twice yearly and have 70 students attending each session.
3. Down Payment/Closing Cost Assistance programs were impacted by the spiraling escalation in home prices during this period making it difficult for applicants to identify appropriate properties that met the acquisition limit criteria. The exceptionally high real estate costs continue to hinder our ability to assist low and moderate-income homebuyers through existing programs. Although HUD has increased the acquisition value limits, homebuyers remain frustrated in identifying appropriate properties that meet those criteria. The City administers an additional Down Payment Assistance/Closing Cost Program funded through the City of Somerville's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (SAHTF). This fund serves higher income households from 80% or less of area median income to 110% or less of area median income. 15 households received Closing Cost or Down Payment Assistance in 2006 and 2007.
4. Continued the Renter Revolving Loan fund through the City's Affordable Housing Trust fund. This fund provided loans of up to three months rent to low, very low and moderate income tenants for payment of rent arrears, security deposits, and/or first and last months' rent on a rental unit. These loans stabilized existing renter households experiencing temporary financial crises. They also assisted renters to secure new units when priced out of their current units by rent increases, driven by the city's hot real estate market or forced to

move out due to sale of the properties or conversion to condominiums. In 2006, the Affordable Housing Trust fund established a hybrid model called the Tenant Stabilization Program to offer grants to eligible and impacted renters to prevent eviction and homelessness. Roughly 20 households area assisted per year through the Tenancy Stabilization Program.

5. Continued the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund financing for affordable housing development. The Trust fund supports the development of affordable housing by our non-profit housing development community as well as programs to assist renters and first-time homebuyers. Per its organizational by-laws, the Trust allocates approximately 70% of its funds to affordable housing developments providing much needed funding early in the development process to assist non-profits gain acquisition site control and fill financial gaps as they apply for other resources including state and federal funding. The Trust continues to receives it s funds predominately from the City of Somerville's Linkage Ordinance which mandates that developers of commercial property over 30,000 square feet be assess a mitigation fee and pay into the Trust \$3.91 per square foot over 30,000 square feet that they develop. In addition, as part of our Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, developers of housing with eight (8) are required to provide 12.5% of the units as affordable housing. For those projects that have a fraction below .5 units the developer is required to provide a payout to the trust based on the difference between a market rate unit and an affordable unit. The Trust has secured over \$2 million and provided over 220 units of affordable housing since its inception.
6. Continued Transitional Housing Opportunities for individuals and families in cooperation with Wayside Youth and Family support Network at ShortStop where the City provides tenant-based rental assistance from its HOME funds to formerly homeless teenagers and young adults as part of a comprehensive program of employment search and readiness, increasing academic achievement, and life skills training in a variety of topics that has enabled many individuals to move to more independent living environments. The City has also assisted the Just-A-Start Corporation, a Cambridge-based non-profit housing developer, with two transitional housing projects for young mothers with children. The First Step project on Medford Street was completed and occupied in 2006 providing six (6) units of housing for mothers with children and the Somerville Housing Authority provided (3) project-based Section 8 vouchers to assist the families in meeting the rent requirements. The City provided funds for environmental cleanup of the site as well as HOME funds towards construction of the new facility.
7. Expanded Transitional Rental subsidies for homeless families and individuals to transition from situations of homelessness to permanent housing through the Prevention and Stabilization Services Program (PASS) provided in cooperation with the Somerville Homeless Coalition. The City provides Tenant-Based Rental Assistance from its HOME Program allocation for 12 months to homeless families or individuals anticipated to be capable of maintaining themselves in permanent housing at the end of 12 months. The PASS program provides assistance with housing search, case management, referrals to needed services, and preparation of individualized plans for achieving permanent housing. At the end of the 5-year Consolidated Plan, the PASS program will have assisted (43) residents per year. The Pass Program also operated through the Somerville Homeless

Coalition's Passages Case Management Program which received its primary funding from the federal (HUD) McKinney Program. The Somerville Affordable Housing Trust fund also provided supplemental funding for the Passages program. The case management program provides over 200 homeless individuals and families each year with counseling, information and access to other services for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness throughout the city. The Passages program also subcontracted with Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services (CASLS) to provide legal assistance to homeless individuals and families seeking permanent housing and facing discrimination issues, and with the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) to provide translation and advocacy services to clients. The program receives referrals from other homeless provider agencies through Somerville.

8. Continued to develop Affordable Homeownership Opportunities with financial support to the Somerville Community Corporation for a 15-unit homeownership condominium project in 2005-2006 for low and moderate-income families for a former Archdiocese of Boston property, Temple Street Condominiums. The City of Somerville committed \$900,000 in CDBG and HOME funds towards the project.
9. Continued to develop Affordable Rental Housing opportunities with the Somerville Community Corporation as it completed construction and occupancy on its 42-unit low-income housing tax credit project on Linden Street. This important development included funding from the City's HOME, CDBG, Somerville Affordable Housing Trust fund, federal low-income housing tax credits, Federal Home Loan Bank and twenty-five units with Project-Based Section 8 subsidies through the Somerville Housing Authority. In 2007 the City of Somerville committed \$1.275 million in HOME and CDBG funds for 99 units of elderly assisted housing and HUD 202 independent elderly housing units by the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) as part of a Continuum of Care model project named Conwell Capen. In cooperation with the VNA, the Somerville Housing Authority is building 95 units of new senior housing called the Capen Court development adjacent to the Conwell Capen project with \$500,000 in City of Somerville HOME funds. These tenants will have services provided by the Conwell Capen assisted living facility made available to them. In addition in 2007 and 2008, the City of Somerville is committing \$1.6 million in HOME funds to the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) for the CHDO development of the former Archdiocese of Boston St. Polycarp's Church properties into a mixed-income, mixed-use urban village of 84 units of low and moderate-income homeownership and rental units. The VNA, St. Polycarp's and Capen Court will all integrate green-building practices into their design to lower costs and increase efficiency.





SCC Temple Street Condominiums



SCC Linden Street Rental Development

## Housing Needs Assessment

### *a. Housing Market Analysis*

#### 1. Somerville's Housing Stock

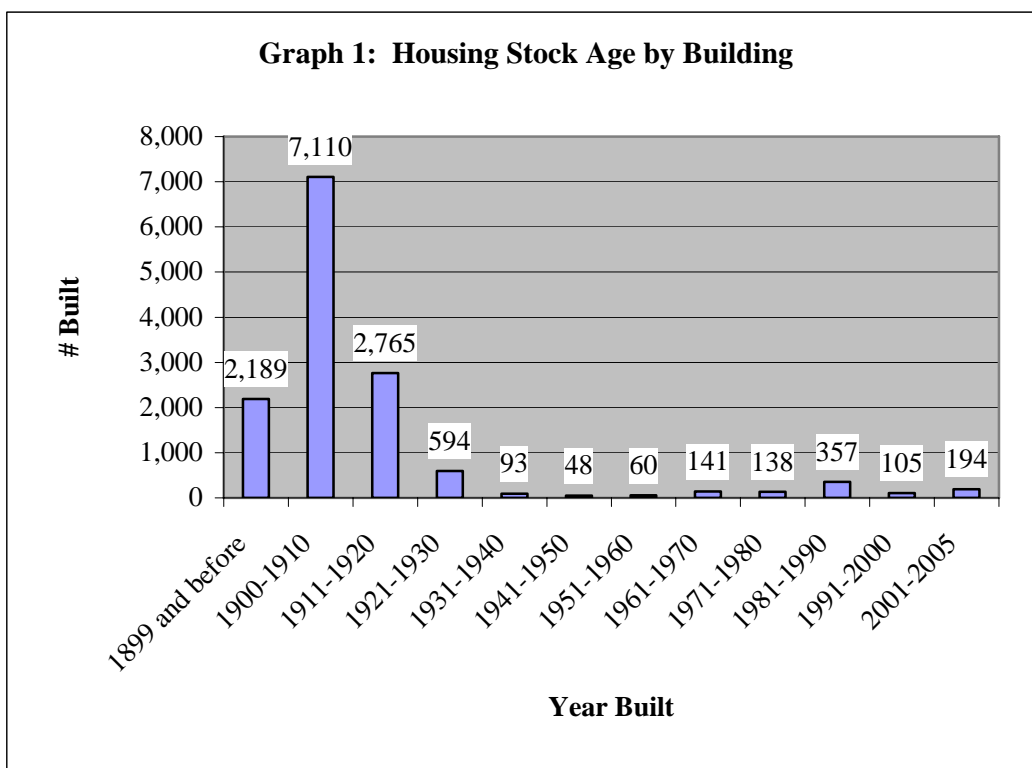
According to 2000 census data, the city of Somerville has approximately 31,555 occupied housing units. The housing stock in Somerville is characterized mostly by two and three family homes. An estimated 66% of all units are renter-occupied, while the remaining 34% are owner-occupied. In general, buildings are older, built in the early part of the twentieth century. Housing prices, both in the rental and ownership markets, are costly, making it particularly difficult for renters to transition into homeownership.

##### 1.1 Housing Stock Age

Established as a city in 1842, Somerville remained largely rural until the twentieth century. However, as the urbanizing trend extended from Charlestown into Somerville, new housing was built at alarming rates. By 1920, over 85% of the city's existing housing stock had already been built. Since 1930 new construction has been very sparse, with a slight increase in housing creation during the real estate boom of the 1980s.

| <b>TABLE 3: HOUSING STOCK AGE BY BUILDING<br/>AS OF JUNE 30, 2005</b> |          |                          |
|---|----------|--------------------------|
| <b>Years Built</b>  | <b>%</b> | <b># Built in Period</b> |
| 1899 and before   | 15.87%   | 2,189                    |
| 1900-1910   | 51.54%   | 7,110                    |
| 1911-1920   | 20.04%   | 2,765                    |
| 1921-1930   | 4.31%    | 594                      |
| 1931-1940   | 0.67%    | 93                       |
| 1941-1950   | 0.35%    | 48                       |
| 1951-1960   | 0.43%    | 60                       |
| 1961-1970   | 1.02%    | 141                      |
| 1971-1980   | 1.00%    | 138                      |

|   |       |     |
|---|-------|-----|
| 1981-1990                                       | 2.59% | 357 |
| 1991-2000                                       | 0.76% | 105 |
| 2001-2005                                       | 1.41% | 194 |
| Source: City of Somerville Assessing Department |       |     |



Source: City of Somerville Assessing Department

The City's plan to redevelop the Assembly Square area and to encourage infill development in some of the city's more industrial neighborhoods has recently led to slight increases in housing starts and is projected into the near-term. Funds from the City's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development have also allowed non-profit developers to purchase abandoned buildings to create new housing. While not always new construction, these resources have created new housing opportunities in buildings with newer amenities. A consequence of Somerville's older housing stock is the constant need for repair and the high costs of these improvements. City funds are available to low-income households to rehabilitate their properties, but many of the city's residents are ineligible, resulting in a deteriorating housing stock.

Housing starts in the recent past have remained fairly stable and relatively low. Demolished units, as well, make up a small amount of the housing activity in Somerville. From 2002 to 2004, Somerville saw a net gain of only 64 units, or less than 1% of the total housing stock.

| <b>TABLE 4: NEW AND DEMOLISHED UNITS</b>                    |  |   |                               |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>Year</b>   | <b># of Residential Units Demolished</b> | <b># of New Residential Units Constructed</b> | <b>Net Gain/Loss of Units</b> |
| 2002  | 16                                       | 38  | 22                            |
| 2003  | 6  | 33  | 27                            |
| 2004  | 6  | 21  | 15                            |
| Total   | 28                                       | 92  | 64                            |
| Source: City of Somerville Inspectional Services Department |  |   |                               |

The large majority of Somerville's land is currently built out and limited opportunities for new construction exist. Large parcels in the city, including Assembly Square, Boynton Yards, the Conwell School site, and Union Square, will result in significant new construction in the future, but the rest of the city will continue to see low numbers of new construction.

## 1.2 Housing Tenure Type

Somerville is a city of renters. This is a trend that has been present and increasing since as early as the 1970s. While the number of owner-occupied units increased from 1990-2000, the number of renter-occupied units increased at a greater pace. Probably as a result of conversions to rental units and demolition, between 1970 and 2000, Somerville actually lost owner-occupied units.

| <b>TABLE 5: SOMERVILLE HOUSING UNITS AND TENURE – 1970 - 2000</b> |                       |                             |                              |                         |                          |                                |                              |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
|   |                       |                             |                              |                         |                          | <b>Change vs. prior decade</b> |                              |
| <b>Year</b>   | <b>Occupied Units</b> | <b>Owner Occupied Units</b> | <b>Renter Occupied Units</b> | <b>% owner-occupied</b> | <b>% renter-occupied</b> | <b>owner-occupied units</b>    | <b>renter-occupied units</b> |
| 1970  | 28,944                | 9,877                       | 19,117                       | 34.10%                  | 65.90%                   |                                |                              |
| 1980  | 29,687                | 9,732                       | 19,955                       | 32.80%                  | 67.20%                   | -145                           | 838                          |
| 1990  | 30,319                | 9,398                       | 20,921                       | 31.00%                  | 69.00%                   | -334                           | 966                          |
| 2000  | 31,555                | 9,656                       | 21,899                       | 30.60%                  | 69.40%                   | 258                            | 978                          |
| <b>Change '70-00</b>  | 2,611                 | -221                        | 2,782                        | -3.50%                  | 3.50%                    |                                |                              |
| <b>Change '90-00</b>  | 1,236                 | 258                         | 978                          | -0.40%                  | 0.40%                    |                                |                              |
| Source: 1990 and 2000 Census; HUD State of the Cities Data Base   |                       |                             |                              |                         |                          |                                |                              |

Nearly 70% of units in Somerville were occupied by renters in 2000. However, recent figures reflect a slight increase in owner-occupied housing. From 2000-2005, 1,394 condo units were created. While some of these condos were new construction, the greatest number were existing units that were converted to condos.

Based on 2005 condo conversion numbers from renter-occupied units and estimated housing start data, it appears that an increased percentage of units (34%) are now owner-occupied. Today's percentages are more in line with the 1970 numbers. If condo conversions continue at their current pace, this trend will certainly have an impact.

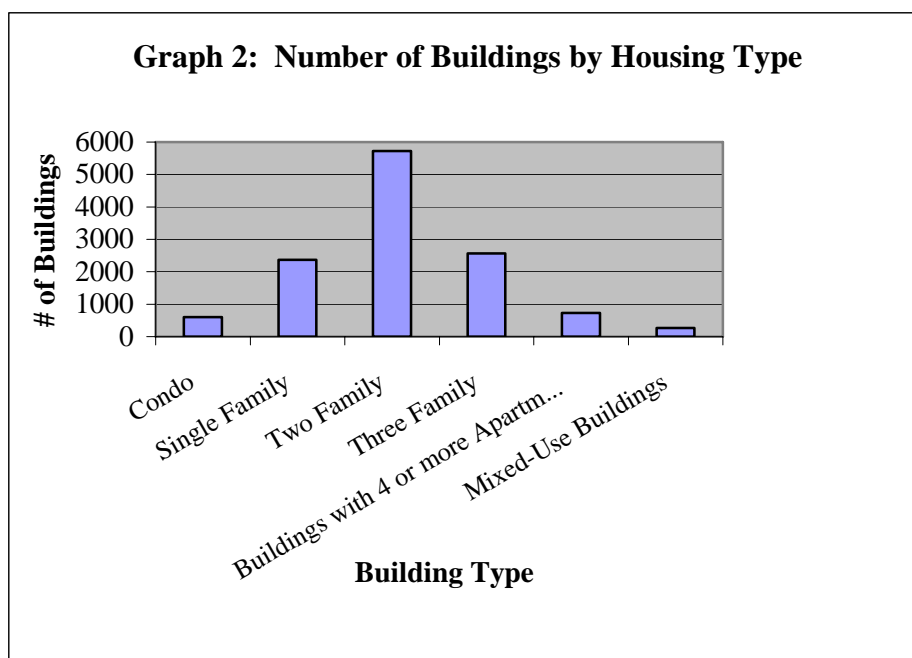
**TABLE 6: CONDO CONVERSION IMPACT ON TENURE TYPE 2000-2005**

|             | Total<br>Occupied<br>Units | Owner-<br>Occupied | Change<br>2000-<br>2005 | %<br>Owner-<br>Occupied | %<br>Change<br>2000-<br>2005 | Renter-<br>Occupied | Change<br>2000-<br>2005 | %<br>Renter-<br>Occupied | %<br>Change<br>2000-<br>2005 |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>2000</b> | 31,555                     | 9,656              |                         | 30.6%                   |                              | 21,899              |                         | 69.4%                    |                              |
| <b>2005</b> | 31,661                     | 10,873             | 1,217                   | 34.3%                   | 3.7%                         | 20,788              | -1,111                  | 65.7%                    | -3.7%                        |

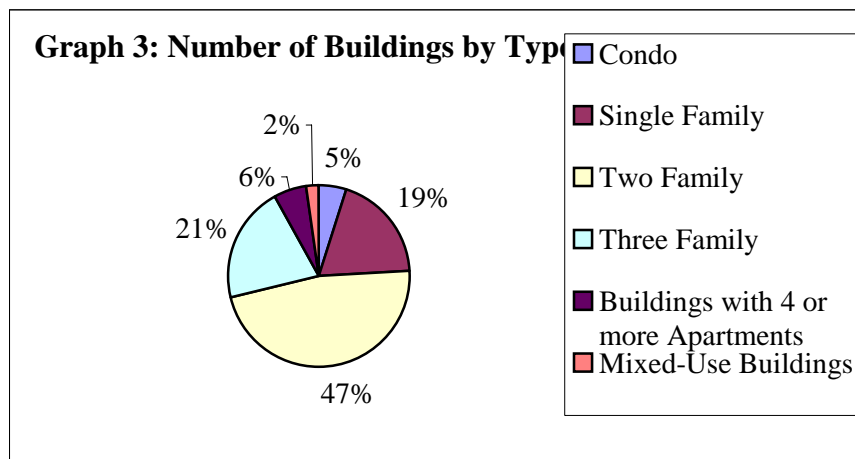
Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census, Somerville Assessing Department, Somerville Inspectional Services Department and Somerville Condominium Review Board

### 1.3 Building Type

Somerville's housing is characterized by detached homes. Almost 50% of these homes contain two units. Three-family and single-family homes largely make up the balance. Only a small portion, less than 10% of buildings, contain either 4 or more units or are in mixed-use buildings.

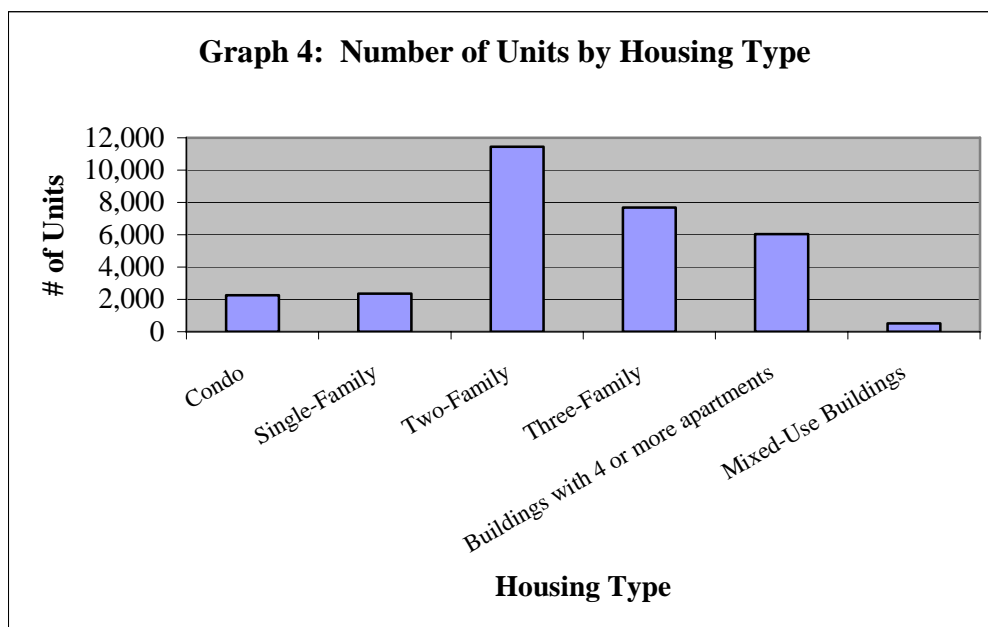


Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

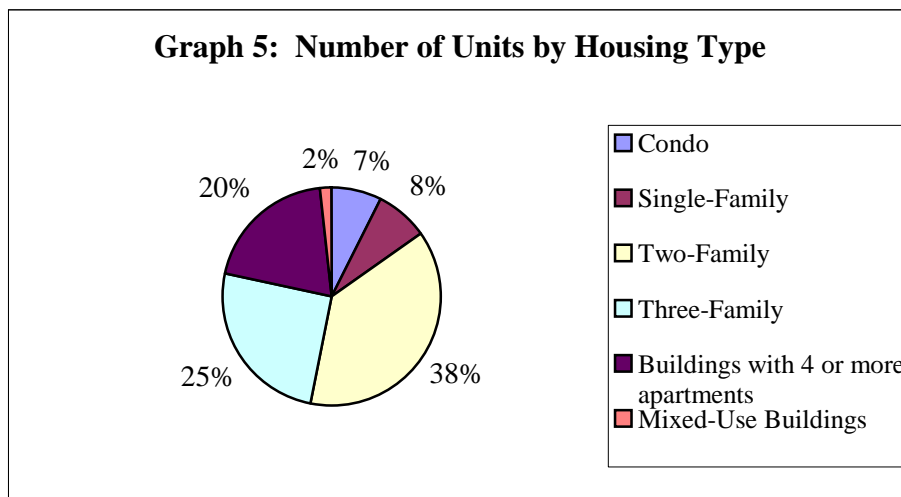


Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

The majority of Somerville's housing units are also contained within two and three-family homes. Buildings with four or more units contain a larger portion of units than is suggested when considering the number of structures alone because these buildings can contain large numbers of units within one structure.



Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

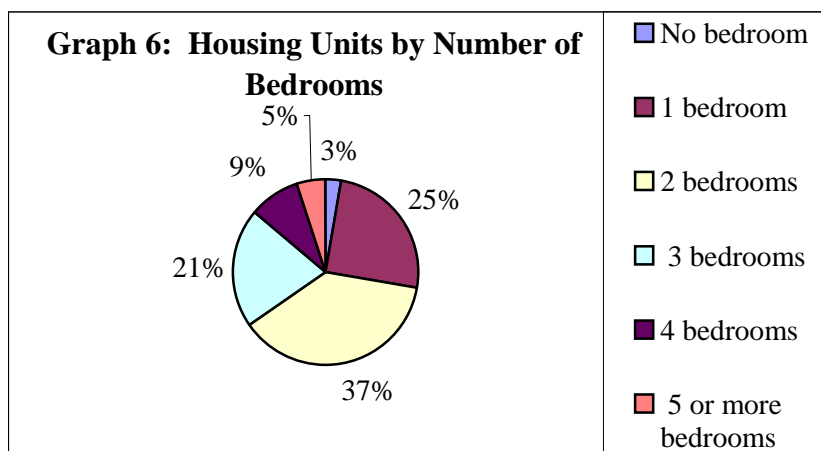


Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

The large number of two and three family homes provides an opportunity for both rental and homeownership opportunities. They are also likely candidates for condominium conversion.

#### 1.4 Units by Number of Bedrooms

In general, Somerville's housing units are well distributed by the number of bedrooms. When looking at all of the housing units in Somerville, a fairly equal amount of units have one, two and three bedrooms. A smaller number of 4 and 5+ bedroom units exist and a very small number of studio units are also present in Somerville.



Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

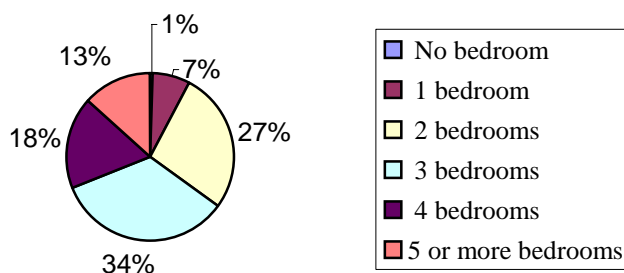
However, when the units are broken down by tenure type, it becomes clear that more of the larger units are available for ownership than for rent. The majority of owner-occupied units have two to four bedrooms, while the majority of renter-occupied units have one to two bedrooms. This means that larger households that do not have the means to buy a home have fewer options. It also means that smaller households hoping to own have fewer options. In addition, it is important to note that

very few studios exist in either tenure category. Studios are often the most affordable option for single-person households and should be a part of the housing stock as well.

| <b>TABLE 7: PERCENT OF UNITS BY # OF BEDROOMS BY TENURE TYPE</b> |                |              |               |               |               |                       |
|--|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Tenure   | No<br>Bedrooms | 1<br>Bedroom | 2<br>Bedrooms | 3<br>Bedrooms | 4<br>Bedrooms | 5 or more<br>Bedrooms |
| Owner Occupied   | 1              | 7            | 27            | 34            | 18            | 13                    |
| Renter Occupied  | 4              | 32           | 41            | 16            | 5             | 2                     |

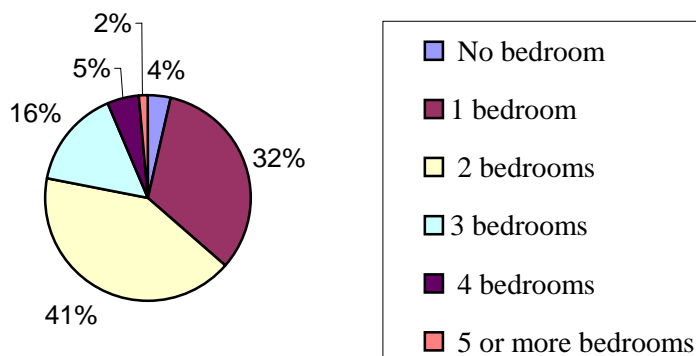
Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

**Graph 7: Owner-Occupied Housing Units  
by Number of Bedrooms**



Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

**Graph 8: Renter-Occupied Housing Units by  
Number of Bedrooms**



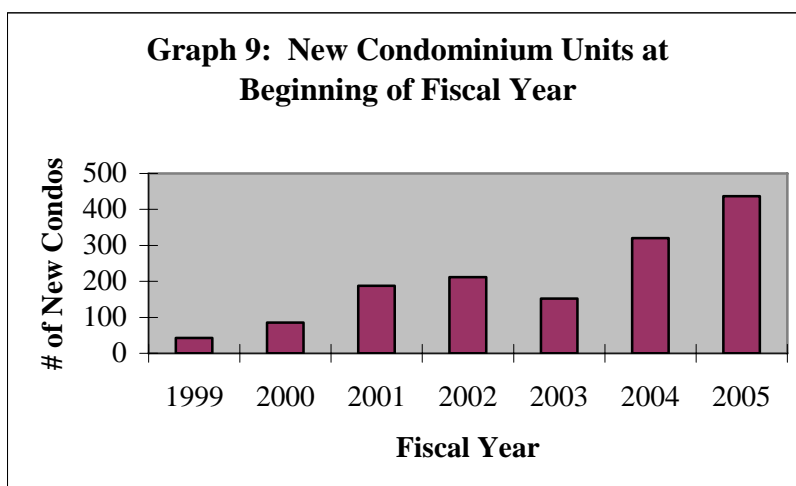
Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

It is important to have a housing stock that can adjust to population change, because the average household size in Somerville is currently decreasing. A variety of housing units offering a range of bedroom numbers will provide the most ideal situation for Somerville's changing population.

### 1.5 Condominium Conversions

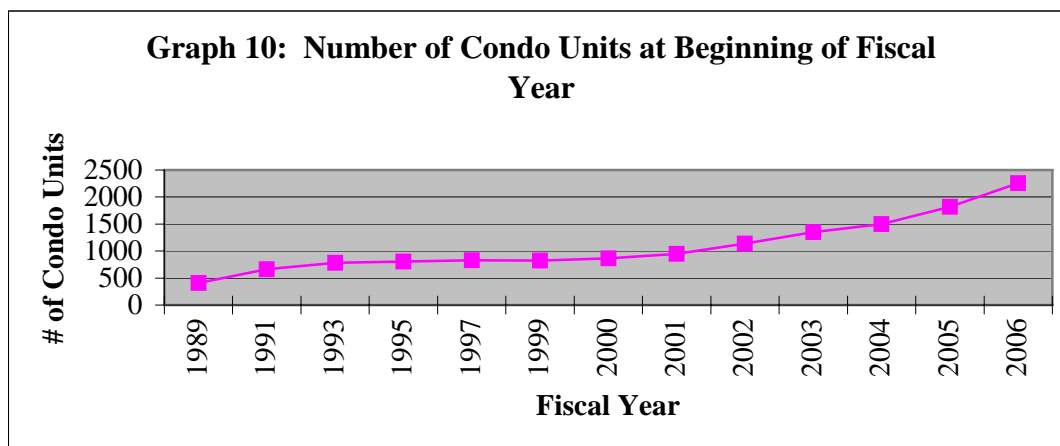
As housing costs increase, fewer households can afford to buy single-family and two-family homes. The costs of land, maintenance and larger units make this option impossible for many potential buyers. In Somerville, a trend has emerged that has made first-time homeownership more feasible and has increased the total number of ownership units in the city. As indicated above in Section 1.2, a significant number of conversions of multi-family rental structures to condominiums have taken place in the last five years. The percentage of owner-occupied units increased an estimated 3% from 2000 to 2005.

Between 2000 and 2005, 1,394 new and converted condominium units were placed on the market. In every year since 2000 except 2003, the City of Somerville has seen more conversions than in the previous year. Note that the City of Somerville's fiscal year extends from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. For example fiscal year 2005 includes all dates from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005.



Source: Somerville Condominium Review Board

Since the late 1980's, when the condominium conversion trend first began to appear, the number of condos in Somerville has increased by 500%, increasing from 409 units in 1989 to 2,258 in June of 2005.



Source: Somerville Condominium Review Board



While condo conversions plateaued slightly in 2006 and 2007, the effects of increased condominium conversions are significant for several reasons. First, because condominiums are often smaller and share land values with other units, condos are most often more affordable than single-family homes, making first-time homeownership more feasible. Second, because the sum of the less expensive condo units is greater than the original value, the assessed value of a converted two or three-family home is often higher after converting to condominiums, resulting in higher tax revenues for the City. Third, there has been a decrease in the number of rental properties in the city, which still remains the most affordable housing option. While Somerville has historically had an overabundance of rental properties, the population has come to rely on these rental units as an affordable housing option.

The full effect of these conversions will not be clear for several years, but initial observations reveal that the conversions have increased affordability for moderate-income households while decreasing available affordable rental units for low-income households. It is also important to note that it is not likely that all rental units being converted to condominiums were affordable prior to the conversion. These particular conversions may not have an impact on low-income households.

## 1.6 Housing Supply Product

One of the most basic indicators of housing need is the sheer number of units available for housing. If there are simply not enough housing units for the number of people living in Somerville, affordability and safety will become irrelevant. Taking into account the average household size, the total number of housing units and the total population in Somerville, it is possible to see if the city has a sufficient number of units for its population to live in. In doing so, it is important to recognize that the Greater Boston housing market is very fluid and that residents of Somerville often move back and forth between surrounding communities. The Greater Boston region is in need of additional housing units, so any progress made within the city limits of Somerville will have little impact if not matched by the rest of the region.

| <b>TABLE 8: HOUSING SUPPLY PRODUCT IN SOMERVILLE IN 2000</b> |                          |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| Average Household Size                                       | Housing Units per Person | Average Household Size x Housing Units per Person |
| 2.38   | 0.42                     | 1.00  |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census                             |                          |   |

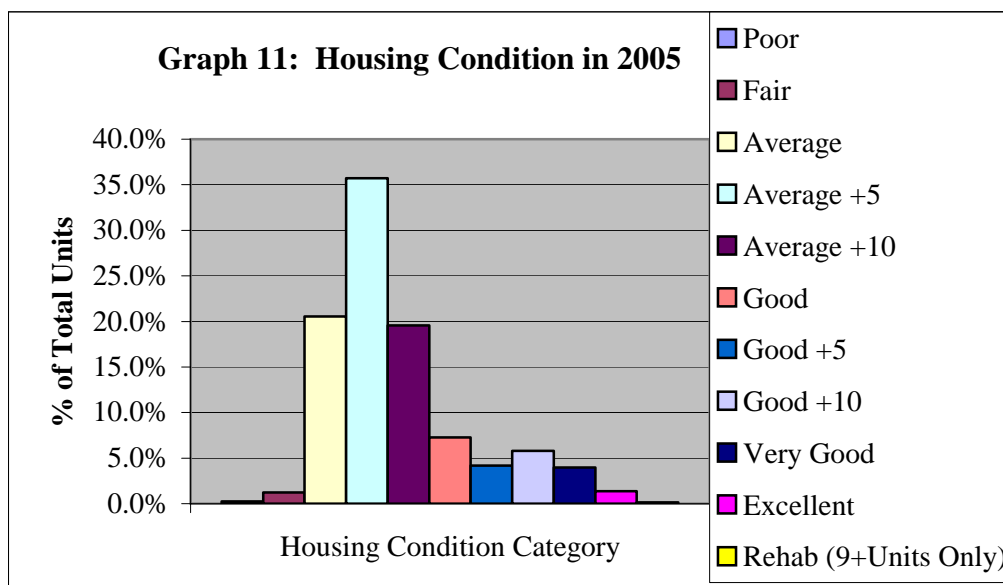
As illustrated in the chart above, Somerville's Housing Supply product is exactly 1.00. This indicates that while Somerville had an adequate supply of housing for the average household in 2000, there is very little room for change. For instance, if the average household size continues to decrease as is expected while population remains constant, there will be insufficient units. Or if Somerville's population increases slightly, there will be insufficient units. Any removal of units from the market will have a similar effect.

## 1.7 Housing Condition

The condition of Somerville's housing units is assessed annually and categorized by the Assessor's Department. While the categories are somewhat subjective, they provide the most realistic snapshot of the condition of the city's housing stock and a more accurate assessment than looking only at the year built. For example, a single-family home built in 1920 and fully remodeled in 1980 would be listed as being built in 1920, but would also have an effective year built date of 1980. In order to account for remodeling jobs and deterioration of units, the assessing department uses the housing condition designations.

These designations are as follows:

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Poor:        | No rehabilitation or maintenance performed since early 1900s, close to condemnation        |
| Fair:        | Remodeled through the late 1950s, poor maintenance and significant deterioration           |
| Average:     | Remodeled through mid-1960s  |
| Average +5:  | Remodeled through late 1960s to early 1970s  |
| Average +10: | Remodeled through late 1970s   |
| Good:        | Remodeled through early 1980s  |
| Good +5:     | Remodeled through mid-1980s  |
| Good +10:    | Remodeled through early 1990s  |
| Very Good:   | Remodeled through late 1990s   |
| Excellent:   | Brand New (Built or remodeled since 2000)  |
| Rehab:       | Refers to Buildings with 9 or more units only that have undergone extensive rehabilitation |



Source: Somerville Assessing Department Data

| <b>TABLE 9: HOUSING CONDITION BY BUILDING TYPE IN 2005</b> |              |            |              |            |              |            |              |            |             |            |                  |            |                |            |               |            |
|--|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|---------------|------------|
|  | <b>1 Fam</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Condo</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>2 Fam</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>3 Fam</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Mult</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>4-8 Units</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>9+Units</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Totals</b> | <b>%</b>   |
| <b>Poor</b>  | 6            | 0%         | 0            | 0%         | 19           | 0%         | 8            | 0%         | 0           | 0%         | 1                | 0%         | 0              | 0%         | 34            | 0%         |
| <b>Fair</b>  | 49           | 2%         | 3            | 0%         | 78           | 1%         | 33           | 1%         | 0           | 0%         | 4                | 1%         | 0              | 0%         | 167           | 1%         |
| <b>Average</b>   | 433          | <b>18%</b> | 245          | 11%        | 993          | <b>18%</b> | 463          | <b>18%</b> | 15          | <b>19%</b> | 499              | <b>92%</b> | 106            | <b>76%</b> | 2,756         | <b>21%</b> |
| <b>Average +5</b>  | 947          | <b>40%</b> | 175          | 8%         | 2,501        | <b>46%</b> | 1,134        | <b>44%</b> | 21          | <b>27%</b> | 13               | 2%         | 0              | 0%         | 4,793         | <b>36%</b> |
| <b>Average +10</b>   | 501          | <b>21%</b> | 310          | 14%        | 1,219        | <b>22%</b> | 561          | <b>22%</b> | 18          | <b>23%</b> | 13               | 2%         | 0              | 0%         | 2,623         | <b>20%</b> |
| <b>Good</b>  | 197          | 8%         | 197          | 9%         | 373          | 7%         | 173          | 7%         | 21          | <b>27%</b> | 0                | 0%         | 13             | 9%         | 975           | 7%         |
| <b>Good +5</b>   | 87           | 4%         | 262          | <b>12%</b> | 134          | 2%         | 72           | 3%         | 1           | 1%         | 4                | 1%         | 0              | 0%         | 560           | 4%         |
| <b>Good +10</b>  | 67           | 3%         | 525          | <b>23%</b> | 102          | 2%         | 75           | 3%         | 2           | 3%         | 4                | 1%         | 0              | 0%         | 775           | 6%         |
| <b>Very Good</b>   | 52           | 2%         | 386          | <b>17%</b> | 51           | 1%         | 38           | 1%         | 0           | 0%         | 5                | 1%         | 0              | 0%         | 532           | 4%         |
| <b>Excellent</b>   | 24           | 1%         | 132          | 6%         | 20           | 0%         | 5            | 0%         | 1           | 1%         | 0                | 0%         | 0              | 0%         | 182           | 1%         |
| <b>Rehab</b>   | 0            | 0%         | 0            | 0%         | 0            | 0%         | 0            | 0%         | 0           | 0%         | 0                | 0%         | 21             | 15%        | 21            | 0%         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | 2,363        | 100%       | 2,235        | 100%       | 5,490        | 100%       | 2,562        | 100%       | 79          | 100%       | 543              | 100%       | 140            | 100%       | 13,418        | 100%       |
| Source: Somerville Assessing Department Data               |              |            |              |            |              |            |              |            |             |            |                  |            |                |            |               |            |

While Somerville's housing stock as a whole is in average condition, condo units have much better condition ratings. In bold, the table above displays the greatest concentration of units for each housing type. Every category other than condos has a concentration of units with average-to-average +10 ratings. Condominium units concentrate around the Good +5 to Very Good ratings. Despite being more affordable than single-family homes, condos offer a more updated and better-maintained housing option in Somerville.

## 2. Somerville's Housing Market

This section explores the costs of housing in Somerville. The costs of both rental and ownership are discussed. It is important to note that housing costs are extremely variable between different units due to condition, location, seller, and time of year. However, the numbers presented below are estimates of what it might cost to live in Somerville.

### 2.1 Rental

Housing costs are difficult to assess. There is no comprehensive data on current rents for Somerville, although there are several ways to extract this data. A survey of Boston.com's available apartment listings for one, two and three-bedroom units revealed average rents for new movers in 2005. Due to landlords' willingness to raise rents on new renters more than long-term tenants, new mover rents are often higher than established rents. Of the 268 units listed, 60 were one-bedrooms, 113 were two-bedrooms and 95 were three-bedrooms. The average rents of these units are illustrated in the chart below.

| <b>TABLE 10: AVG RENT BY BEDROOM SIZE FOR NEW MOVERS 2005</b>  |                  |                  |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| <b>1 Bedroom</b>   | <b>2 Bedroom</b> | <b>3 Bedroom</b> |
| \$ 1,186   | \$ 1,433         | \$ 1,832         |
| Source: Boston.com advertised rents in Somerville for one, two and three bedroom units on July 1, 2005 |                  |                  |

These rent amounts are consistent with a separate study done by the Somerville Housing Authority used to establish payment standards for their Section 8 program. Based on 40<sup>th</sup> percentile new mover rent estimates in 2003, SHA pays \$1181 for a one-bedroom unit, \$1477 for a two-bedroom, and \$1848 for a three-bedroom, including utilities. The 50<sup>th</sup> percentile (average) rents in 2005 are slightly lower than the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile (below average) rents in 2003. Anecdotally, realtors and landlords have noted that rents appear to be stabilizing and falling slightly since the peak in 2002-2003, although these do not usually include utilities.

Data from the Greater Housing Report Card of 2005-2006, a report prepared for the Boston Foundation and Citizen's Housing and Planning Association, suggests that rent prices have stabilized as well. Data collected from 1998 through 2003 indicates that the rental market peaked in 2001 and began falling after and has now stabilized.

| <b>TABLE 11: MEDIAN ADVERTISED RENT FOR 2-BEDROOM APARTMENT IN SOMERVILLE 1998-2005</b> |         |         |         |         |         |                       |                       |                       |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1998  | 2001    | 2002    | 2003    | 2004    | 2005    | % Change<br>1998-2001 | % Change<br>2001-2004 | % Change<br>2004-2005 |
| \$1,050   | \$1,400 | \$1,350 | \$1,300 | \$1,298 | \$1,200 | 33.30%                | -7.30%                | -7.60%                |

Source: Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2005, The Boston Foundation and Citizens' Housing and Planning Association

The Greater Housing Report Card of 2004 also reported on the percentage of area median income that would be necessary to rent the average two-bedroom unit in Somerville. Similar calculations are illustrated in the Housing Cost Comparison Worksheets included in this study. In all four years examined in the report, this percentage exceeded the commonly used 30% threshold.

| <b>TABLE 12: ADVERTISED RENTS VS. MEDIAN RENTER INCOME</b> |                        |                                      |   |                        |                                      |   |                        |                                      |   |                        |                                      |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2001 est.<br>Median<br>Renter<br>Income                    | 2001<br>Median<br>Rent | % of<br>Income<br>Needed<br>for Rent | 2002 est.<br>Median<br>Renter<br>Income | 2002<br>Median<br>Rent | % of<br>Income<br>Needed<br>for Rent | 2003 est.<br>Median<br>Renter<br>Income | 2003<br>Median<br>Rent | % of<br>Income<br>Needed<br>for Rent | 2004 est.<br>Median<br>Renter<br>Income | 2004<br>Median<br>Rent | % of<br>Income<br>Needed<br>for Rent |
| \$44,364   | \$1,400                | 38%                                  | \$45,166                                | \$1,350                | 36%                                  | \$46,053                                | \$1,300                | 34%                                  | \$44,807                                | \$1,298                | 35%                                  |

Source: Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2004, The Boston Foundation and Citizens' Housing and Planning Association

As noted above, conventional wisdom suggests that paying more than 30% of a household's income towards housing costs indicates housing burden. In no year studied was median renter income adequate to pay only 30% of income towards the median rent. In addition, it is likely that the charts above understate the rent burden of Somerville households. While rents may vary slightly from the reported median, incomes vary much more. Many Somerville households earn well below the reported median renter income, but would find it difficult to find an apartment with a rent much below the median, and would therefore have to pay much more than 35% of their income towards housing costs.

## 2.2 Homeownership

Homeownership, though less prevalent in Somerville than renting has become increasingly less affordable as well. According to the Warren Group, from 2000 to 2007, the average price of a single-family home rose 90%, from \$229,000 to \$428,450. The price of the average condo, while still more affordable than a single-family home, rose 46% in the same time period from \$242,000 to \$353,250. In fact, in 2000, buying a condo was more expensive than buying a single-family home. The change in price is most likely due to the increased number of condominiums in the city, driving down their costs.

| <b>TABLE 13: AVERAGE SALES PRICE BY HOUSING TYPE 2000-2005</b> |               |          |           |          |           |          |
|--|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
|  | Single-Family | % Change | Condo     | % Change | All Sales | % Change |
| <b>2000</b>  | \$ 229,000    |          | \$242,000 |          | \$310,000 |          |
| <b>2001</b>  | \$280,000     | 22%      | \$279,875 | 16%      | \$339,000 | 9%       |
| <b>2002</b>  | \$329,500     | 18%      | \$310,000 | 11%      | \$375,000 | 11%      |
| <b>2003</b>  | \$362,500     | 10%      | \$327,750 | 6%       | \$390,000 | 4%       |
| <b>2004</b>  | \$381,000     | 5%       | \$322,750 | -2%      | \$400,000 | 3%       |
| <b>2005*</b>   | \$415,000     | 9%       | \$360,000 | 12%      | \$435,000 | 9%       |

|   |           |     |           |     |           |      |
|---|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|------|
| <b>2006</b>   | \$410,000 | -1% | \$343,000 | -5% | \$388,500 | -11% |
| <b>2007</b>   | \$435,000 | 6%  | \$353,250 | 3%  | \$390,000 | 4%   |
| <b>Change 2000-2007</b>   | \$206,000 | 90% | \$111,250 | 46% | \$80,000  | 26%  |
| Source: The Warren Group Real Estate and Financial Information, <a href="http://www.thewarrengroup.com">www.thewarrengroup.com</a> .<br>* 2007 Data through August only |           |     |           |     |           |      |

Housing prices appear to have spiked significantly in 2001 and 2002, with extreme increases in average sales price for both single-family homes and condos. These increases have moderated in the past few years, with slight decreases in 2006 and more modest increases projected for 2007. With the exception of 2004 when fewer new condos were built, Warren Group data also reveals that while the number of single-family home sales has fluctuated over the past 5 years, condominium sales have continued to increase. From 2000 to 2007, the number of sales per year grew from 176 to an estimated 570, an increase of over 200%.

| <b>TABLE 14: HOUSING SALES IN SOMERVILLE</b>   |                 |                 |              |                 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>Year</b>  | <b>1-Family</b> | <b>% Change</b> | <b>Condo</b> | <b>% Change</b> |
| 2000   | 129             |                 | 176          |                 |
| 2001   | 115             | -11%            | 252          | 43%             |
| 2002   | 132             | 15%             | 296          | 17%             |
| 2003   | 102             | -23%            | 350          | 18%             |
| 2004   | 145             | 42%             | 282          | -19%            |
| 2005   | 127             | -12%            | 514          | 82%             |
| 2006   | 98              | -2%             | 605          | 18%             |
| 2007 Projected   | 112             | 14%             | 570          | -6%             |
| Change 2000-2007   | -17             | -13%            | 394          | 224%            |
| Source: The Warren Group Real Estate and Financial Information, <a href="http://www.thewarrengroup.com">www.thewarrengroup.com</a> .<br>* Based on data from Warren Group through August of 2007 |                 |                 |              |                 |

Increased condo sales reflect the increase in the number of condos. Newly constructed and converted condo units will naturally lead to more sales. In addition, as the average household size decreases, smaller condo units may be more attractive to buyers than larger single-family homes. While the number of single-family sales has fluctuated over the past five years, condo sales have consistently outpaced single-family sales. Projected numbers for 2007 suggest that by year's end condo sales will exceed single-family home sales by 400%.



Ribbon Cutting at Temple Street Condominiums.

Homeownership affordability in Somerville has improved since the peak in 2005, with an 8% decrease in the median sales price in the first half of 2006, but homeownership is still well out of reach of the median income household in Somerville. As illustrated in the chart below, the median

income household in 2005 could only afford to purchase a home for roughly \$250,000, while the median sales price was well over that at \$380,000 in 2006.

**TABLE 15: AFFORDABILITY GAP IN SOMERVILLE**

| 2005 est.<br>Median HH<br>Income | Median SF<br>Home Price<br>2004 | Median SF<br>Home Price<br>2005 | Median SF<br>Home Price<br>Jan-May<br>2006 | % Chg<br>Median<br>Sales<br>Price<br>2004-2005 | % Chg<br>Median<br>Sales price<br>2005 v.<br>Jan-May<br>2006 | Max Home<br>Price<br>Affordable to<br>Median<br>Income HH<br>2005 | Affordable<br>in 2005 | Affordable<br>in 2006 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|--|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| \$54,219                         | \$381,000                       | \$415,000                       | \$380,000                                  | 8.90%  | -8.40%   | \$246,449   | N                     | N                     |

Source: Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2005, The Boston Foundation and Citizens' Housing and Planning Association

## ***b. Housing and Homeless Needs Assessment***

### **1. Somerville's Population and Households**

To satisfy the needs of a community, it is important to understand the composition of its population, and in turn what different groups desire and need. Characteristics such as age, income, race, household size and length of time in a community can signal different needs and necessitate different types of housing. This section will explore the general characteristics of the city's population in order to determine the demand for housing. This will guide the strategies and policies necessary to meet their needs.

#### **1.1 Population Changes**

Since 1930, Somerville has steadily been losing population. Between 1990 and 2000, Somerville saw a modest population increase of about 2%. Even with the decrease in population over time, Somerville remains a densely populated community. Decreased population does not necessarily signal less need for housing, as seen in the change of the average household composition. In addition, it is not necessarily true that Somerville's population is in fact decreasing. Social service providers in the city have indicated that there is a large undocumented immigrant population in Somerville. This population does not answer the census and often does not wish to be identified for fear of punishment, but nonetheless these families and individuals need services and housing.

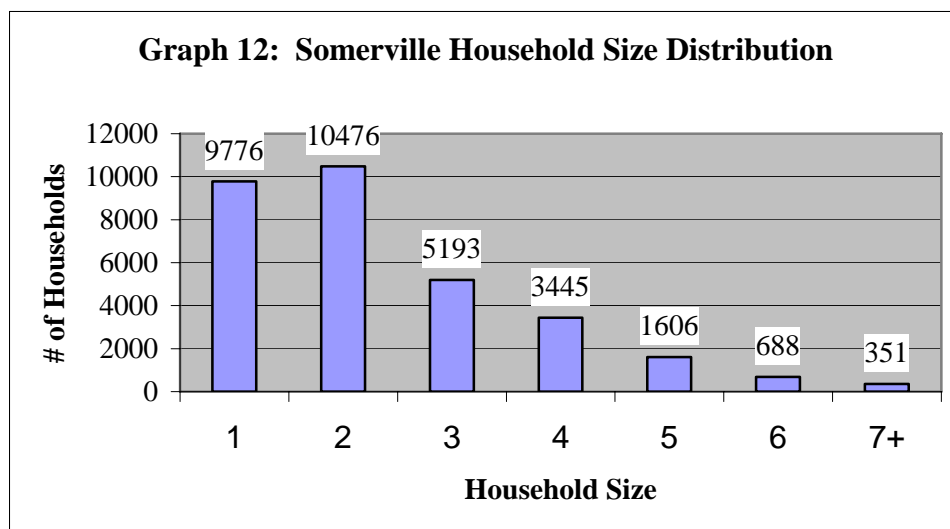
**TABLE 16: SOMERVILLE  
POPULATION 1930-2000**

| Census                    | Population |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1930                      | 103,908    |
| 1950                      | 102,351    |
| 1960                      | 94,697     |
| 1970                      | 88,779     |
| 1980                      | 77,372     |
| 1990                      | 76,210     |
| 2000                      | 77,478     |
| Source: US Federal Census |            |

## 1.2 Number of Households and Household Size

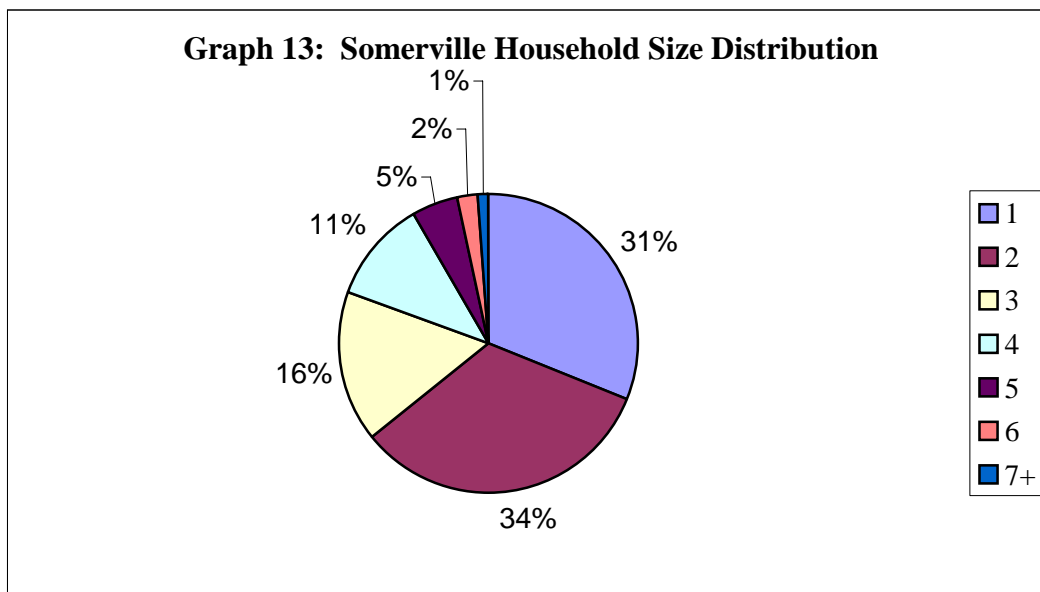
While population has decreased, the number of households has increased. The number of households in Somerville grew by 4.1%, from 30,319 in 1990 to 31,555 in 2000. This number does not contradict the decreasing population. In contrast, part of the reason for increased households may be the steady decrease in the average household size. As the average household size decreases, more households will contain similar numbers of individuals. This trend is in keeping with the rest of the United States, as families have fewer children, divorces become more common, and individuals remain single later in life.

| <b>TABLE 17: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE</b> |             |             |                 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
|   | <b>1999</b> | <b>2000</b> | <b>% Change</b> |
| <b>All Households</b>                   | 2.44        | 2.38        | -2.50%          |
| <b>Family Households</b>                | 3.10        | 3.06        | -1.20%          |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census        |             |             |                 |



Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census





Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

The majority of households in Somerville in 2000 consisted of only 1 or 2 members, while only 8% of the households were considered large (5 or more members). This translates into larger demand for smaller housing units, although significant numbers of larger housing units are still necessary to house the several thousand larger families.

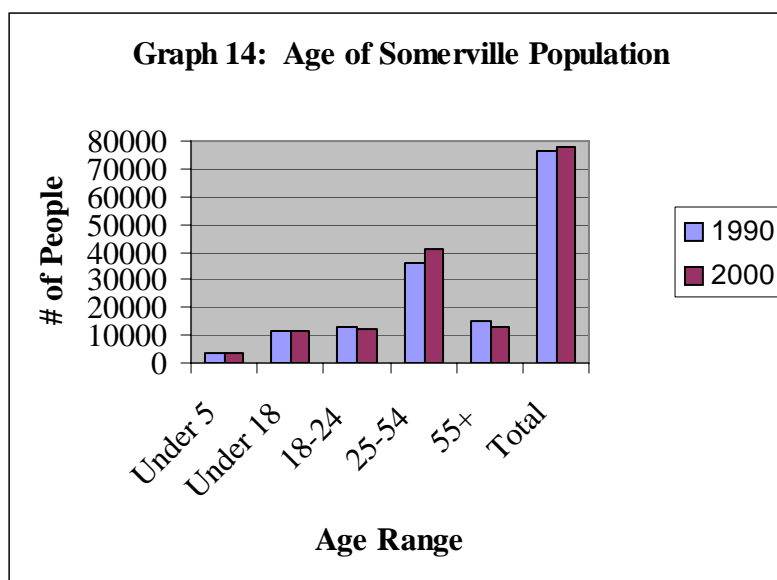
### 1.3 Age

The majority of Somerville's population is within the age range of 25-54. This is also an age group that saw rapid growth in Somerville during the 1990's (+12.4%) in contrast to statewide trends in Massachusetts, which saw declines in the 20-30 population. Interestingly, the population aged 85 or greater also increased (+14.8%) during the same time period.

However, between 1990 and 2000, the number of residents in every other age group (under 5, under 18, 18-24, and 55+) fell. The greatest numeric declines were in the population aged 55-85, despite the fact that this population is growing nationwide as the Baby Boomer generation ages. In addition the median age rose slightly in 2000, to 31.1 years old.

At present, no hard data exists to explain the changing age demographics in Somerville. One of the factors that may be influencing the decisions of households considering moving to or leaving Somerville may be the cost of housing. In addition, senior households may be looking for services that allow them to age in place or to move to living arrangements that provide direct services. Changes in international migration trends may also affect the age of Somerville residents in upcoming years.

| <b>TABLE 18: SOMERVILLE'S POPULATION BY AGE GROUP - 1990 and 2000</b> |               |               |                               |                             |                                 |                                 |
|---|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Age Group</b>  | <b>1990</b>   | <b>2000</b>   | <b>1990-2000<br/>% Change</b> | <b>1990-2000<br/>Change</b> | <b>% of 1990<br/>population</b> | <b>% of 2000<br/>population</b> |
| Under 5   | 3,944         | 3,500         | -11.30%                       | -444                        | 5.20%                           | 4.50%                           |
| 5 to 9  | 3,136         | 3,085         | -1.60%                        | -51                         | 4.10%                           | 4.00%                           |
| 10 to 14  | 2,906         | 3,086         | 6.20%                         | 180                         | 3.80%                           | 4.00%                           |
| 15 to 17  | 1,881         | 1,824         | -3.00%                        | -57                         | 2.50%                           | 2.40%                           |
| <b>Total under 18</b>   | <b>11,867</b> | <b>11,495</b> | <b>-3.10%</b>                 | <b>-372</b>                 | <b>15.60%</b>                   | <b>14.80%</b>                   |
| 18 and 19   | 2,380         | 2,332         | -2.00%                        | -48                         | 3.10%                           | 3.00%                           |
| 20 to 24  | 10,460        | 9,992         | -4.50%                        | -468                        | 13.70%                          | 12.90%                          |
| <b>Total 18 to 24</b>   | <b>12,840</b> | <b>12,324</b> | <b>-4.00%</b>                 | <b>-516</b>                 | <b>16.80%</b>                   | <b>15.90%</b>                   |
| 25 to 34  | 20,133        | 21,362        | 6.10%                         | 1,229                       | 26.40%                          | 27.60%                          |
| 35 to 44  | 10,226        | 11,623        | 13.70%                        | 1,397                       | 13.40%                          | 15.00%                          |
| 45 to 54  | 5,922         | 7,802         | 31.70%                        | 1,880                       | 7.80%                           | 10.10%                          |
| <b>Total 25-54</b>  | <b>36,281</b> | <b>40,787</b> | <b>12.40%</b>                 | <b>4,506</b>                | <b>47.60%</b>                   | <b>52.60%</b>                   |
| 55 to 64  | 5,818         | 4,773         | -18.00%                       | -1,045                      | 7.60%                           | 6.20%                           |
| 65 to 74  | 5,194         | 4,059         | -21.90%                       | -1,135                      | 6.80%                           | 5.20%                           |
| 75-84   | 3,247         | 2,934         | -9.60%                        | -313                        | 4.30%                           | 3.80%                           |
| 85 or older   | 963           | 1,106         | 14.80%                        | 143                         | 1.30%                           | 1.40%                           |
| <b>Subtotal 65+</b>   | <b>9,404</b>  | <b>8,099</b>  | <b>-13.90%</b>                | <b>-1,305</b>               | <b>12.30%</b>                   | <b>10.50%</b>                   |
| <b>Total All Ages</b>   | <b>76,210</b> | <b>77,478</b> | <b>1.70%</b>                  | <b>1,268</b>                |                                 |                                 |
| <b>Median Age</b>   | <b>30.8</b>   | <b>31.1</b>   |                               |                             |                                 |                                 |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census                                      |               |               |                               |                             |                                 |                                 |



Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

As the City moves forward, it will be important to work to provide housing for the expanding group of 25-54 year olds. Likewise, the City will need to explore housing options and services to support its senior population. However, it is also important to explore why the younger and older populations are shrinking and to provide housing that will attract and retain these groups in Somerville.

## 1.4 Income

Annual income directly impacts a household's ability to find housing adequate to meet its needs. The city's residents traditionally have had modest incomes and this dictates the types of housing that are affordable and maintainable for the community. Though the adjusted household median income rose 50% from 1979 to 1999, the change from 1989-1999 was more modest (an increase of only 6%). From 1999 to 2004, estimated increases in median household income are still modest, but already have surpassed the entire change throughout the 1990s.

| <b>TABLE 19: SOMERVILLE INFLATION-ADJUSTED MEDIAN INCOMES– 1979-2004</b> |             |             |             |                      |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Incomes (1999 dollars)</b>  | <b>1979</b> | <b>1989</b> | <b>1999</b> | <b>2004 Estimate</b> | <b>Change<br/>1979-<br/>1989</b> | <b>Change<br/>1989-<br/>1999</b> | <b>Change<br/>1979-<br/>1999</b> | <b>Change<br/>1999-<br/>2004</b> |
| <b>Per capita</b>  | \$14,573    | \$20,399    | \$23,628    |                      | 40%                              | 16%                              | 62%                              |                                  |
| <b>Household Median<sup>2</sup></b>                                      | \$33,047    | \$43,605    | \$46,315    | \$53,156             | 32%                              | 6%                               | 50%                              | 15%                              |
| <b>Family Median</b>   | \$41,811    | \$51,770    | \$51,243    |                      | 24%                              | -1%                              | 23%                              |                                  |

Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census  
\*Adjusted using CPI-U, US Average- All Cities, 2004 Household Median Income from Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2004.

In relation to the rest of the state, Somerville has actually seen improvements in its income rankings among the 351 jurisdictions in Massachusetts. From 1989 to 1999, Somerville's rank in terms of median household income improved from 275 to 265. However, as reflected in the decrease in median family income from 1989 to 1999, Somerville's rank for this category fell from 273 to 297. Despite these modest increases in median household income and per capita income, Somerville is still not a wealthy community. Another factor affecting the slight increase in incomes may be that as housing costs in Somerville increase, people with lower-incomes are displaced and the median income rises as a result. It is likely that increases in incomes are therefore a result of wealthier households moving into Somerville and poorer households moving out, rather than incomes for individual households rising.

Another indicator of income is the poverty rate of a community. Somerville has seen a slight increase in the number of residents with incomes below the poverty level, as illustrated in the chart below.

**TABLE 20: POVERTY IN SOMERVILLE – 1989 and 1999**

<sup>2</sup> Household Median Income and Family Median Income are not the same. A "Household" includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. This could include roommates, a single person, or extended families living together. A "Family" is restricted to a group of two or more people who live together and are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

|   | 1989   | 1999   | 1989<br>Poverty<br>rate | 1999<br>Poverty<br>rate | Change | % Change |
|---|--------|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|----------|
| Persons whose poverty status determined   | 74,061 | 75,199 |                         |                         | 1,138  | 1.50%    |
| Total persons below poverty               | 8,492  | 9,395  | 11.50%                  | 12.50%                  | 903    | 10.60%   |
| Persons 18-64                             | 5,755  | 6,663  | 10.80%                  | 11.80%                  | 908    | 15.80%   |
| Persons 65 or older                       | 978    | 1,063  | 10.80%                  | 13.60%                  | 85     | 8.70%    |
| Persons age 17 or younger                 | 1,759  | 1,669  | 15.30%                  | 15.20%                  | -90    | -5.20%   |
| Families whose poverty status determined  | 14,876 | 14,592 |                         |                         |        |          |
| Total families below poverty              | 1,221  | 1,254  | 7.60%                   | 8.40%                   | 33     | 2.70%    |
| Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Federal Census |        |        |                         |                         |        |          |

In conjunction with the increasing median income, this data indicates that a small group of residents whose incomes are rising is offsetting the effects of the group of residents who have slipped into poverty over the last decade. In short, the gap between Somerville residents with higher incomes and those with lower incomes is increasing.

## 1.5 Race and Ethnicity

Between 1990 and 2000, the City of Somerville experienced significant changes in the racial and ethnic makeup of its population. Excluding the White population, which saw decreases from 1990 to 2000, all ethnicities and races experienced modest increases in the population.

**TABLE 21: POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY**

| RACE                                    | 1990          | 2000   | 1990-2000<br>Change | 1990-2000 %<br>Change | % of 1990<br>total<br>population | % of 2000<br>total<br>population |
|---|---------------|--------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Total population</b>                 | 76,210        | 77,478 | 1,268               | 1.70%                 | 100.00%                          | 100.00%                          |
| <b>Not Hispanic or Latino</b>           | 71,426        | 70,692 | -734                | -1                    | 93.70%                           | 91.20%                           |
| White                                   | 64,287        | 56,320 | 7,967               | -12.40%               | 84.40%                           | 72.70%                           |
| Black or African American               | 3,982         | 4,868  | 886                 | 22.30%                | 5.20%                            | 6.30%                            |
| Asian or Pacific Islander               | 2,791         | 5,005  | 2,214               | 79.30%                | 3.70%                            | 6.50%                            |
| Some other race                         | 366           | 1,325  | 959                 | 262.00%               | 0.50%                            | 1.70%                            |
| <b>Two or more races</b>                | not available | 3,174  | 3,174               |                       | not available                    | 4.10%                            |
| <b>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</b> | 4,784         | 6,786  | 2,002               | 41.80%                | 6.30%                            | 8.80%                            |

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Federal Census

Given the current trend for domestic residents to move out of Massachusetts and foreigners to immigrate into Massachusetts, the number reported for 2000 likely underestimates the current breakdown of races in 2007.

The City of Somerville High School reports that in school year 2004-05, over 50% of students grades 9-12 spoke a language other than English as their primary language; 12.3% had limited English proficiency. A survey conducted by the Somerville Public School Administration revealed that in school year 2004-05, enrolled students spoke 46 identified languages.

In addition, while only 6.3% of Somerville's total population in 2000 was African-American, 15.6% of students enrolled in the Somerville public schools in 2004 were African-American. In that same year, 85% of Somerville's school age children were enrolled in public schools.<sup>3</sup> Based on this high percentage, it is safe to assume that Somerville is experiencing increasing diversity that will continue to grow as children age and settle their own families in the city.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Somerville's Extremely Low-, Very Low-, Low- and Moderate-Income Households

HUD uses the term **low income** in two ways. It uses the term to collectively describe all households with incomes at or below 80% of the "area median income adjusted for household size" (AMI). It also uses the term at times to describe households with incomes between 51% and 80% of median income. This Plan uses the term to describe all households at 0-80% AMI unless otherwise noted. Because the needs of households at the lowest end of this range differ from those at the upper end, HUD requires localities to study the needs of subcategories of low-income households:

- extremely low income households: incomes ranging from 0-30% of AMI
- very low income households: those with incomes ranging from 31-50% AMI
- low income households: those with incomes ranging from 51-80% AMI.

### 2.1 Number of Low Income Households

In 1999, 44% of Somerville households (13,598) had incomes at or below 80% AMI. Of these, 5,249 (17% of all Somerville households) were extremely low income; 3,397 (11%) were very low income, and 4,952 (16%) were low income (51-80% of AMI).

| <b>TABLE 22: HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME RANGE - 2000</b> |                   |                            |                  |                           |                  |                     |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Income bracket</b>                              | <b>Renter HHs</b> | <b>% of all Renter HHs</b> | <b>Owner HHs</b> | <b>% of all owner HHs</b> | <b>Total HHs</b> | <b>% of all HHs</b> |
| Extremely Low Income (0-30% MFI)                   | 4,301             | 19.81%                     | 948              | 10.13%                    | 5,249            | 16.89%              |
| Very Low Income (31-50% MFI)                       | 2,605             | 12.00%                     | 792              | 8.46%                     | 3,397            | 10.93%              |
| Low Income (51-80% MFI)                            | 3,544             | 16.32%                     | 1,408            | 15.04%                    | 4,952            | 15.94%              |
| Subtotal 0=80% AMI                                 | <b>10,450</b>     | <b>48.13%</b>              | <b>3,148</b>     | <b>33.64%</b>             | <b>13,598</b>    | <b>43.77%</b>       |
| Moderate Plus Income (>80% MFI)                    | 11,261            | 52%                        | 6,211            | 66.36%                    | 17,472           | 56.23%              |
| Total  | 21,711            | 100%                       | 9,359            | 100.00%                   | 31,070           | 100.00%             |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census                   |                   |                            |                  |                           |                  |                     |

### 2.2 Characteristics of Somerville's Low Income Households

Somerville's Low-income households are mostly elderly, small-related families (2-4 members) and other individuals or non-related households (30%, 28% and 35% respectively. Only 7% of

<sup>3</sup> Public School Enrollment Statistics for state and surrounding communities. Massachusetts, 90%. Boston, 82%. Cambridge, 86%. Arlington, 82%. Medford, 72%. Everett, 89%.

<sup>4</sup> Massachusetts Department of Education website. Somerville Enrollment Indicators 2004-2005. Accessed July 21, 2004.

Somerville low-income households have 5 or more household members. Much of this is probably related to the housing types available in Somerville. Very few large housing units are available for larger family units.

| <b>TABLE 23: SOMERVILLE'S LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS BY FAMILY TYPE</b> |               |          |       |        |     |
|--|---------------|----------|-------|--------|-----|
| Household Type   | Extremely Low | Very Low | Low   | Total  | %   |
| Elderly (1 & 2 members)  | 2,259         | 1,063    | 919   | 4,241  | 30% |
| Small Related (2-4 members)  | 1,059         | 1,074    | 1,712 | 3,845  | 28% |
| Large Related (5 or more members)                                  | 307           | 205      | 494   | 1,006  | 7%  |
| All Other Households   | 1,739         | 1,127    | 1,950 | 4,816  | 35% |
| Total  | 5,364         | 3,469    | 5,075 | 13,908 |     |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census                                   |               |          |       |        |     |

Most of Somerville Low-income households are renters (76%). This is about 10% higher than the % of renters in Somerville's total population.

| <b>TABLE 24: SOMERVILLE'S LOW-INCOME HH BY TENURE</b> |               |          |       |        |     |
|---|---------------|----------|-------|--------|-----|
| Household Type  | Extremely Low | Very Low | Low   | Total  | %   |
| Renter  | 4,362         | 2,614    | 3,594 | 10,570 | 76% |
| Owner   | 1,002         | 855      | 1,481 | 3,338  | 24% |
| Total   | 5,364         | 3,469    | 5,075 | 13,908 |     |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census                      |               |          |       |        |     |

Distribution of Somerville Low-income households by race and ethnicity is very similar to the racial and ethnic distribution for Somerville as a whole. A slightly larger percentage of low-income households in Somerville are white, non-Hispanic than Somerville total population. All other racial or ethnic categories have equivalent or lower representation in the low-income population

| <b>TABLE 25: SOMERVILLE HH BY INCOME AND ETHNICITY</b> |                  |                  |                       |                                  |
|--|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ethnicity of Householder                               | Total Households | Percent of Total | Low-Income Households | Percent of Low-Income Households |
| White, Non-Hispanic                                    | 56,320           | 77%              | 10,509                | 81%                              |
| Hispanic   | 6,786            | 9%               | 865                   | 7%                               |
| Black  | 4,868            | 7%               | 952                   | 7%                               |
| Asian/Pacific Islander                                 | 5,005            | 7%               | 668                   | 5%                               |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census                       |                  |                  |                       |                                  |

### 3. Housing Opportunities in Somerville

#### 3.1 Subsidized Housing Inventory

As detailed below, Somerville has over 3,000 units of permanent housing in HUD- or State-subsidized developments that are specifically reserved for low-income households. In addition, over 1,000 households receive help with housing costs through Section 8 housing choice vouchers or other tenant-based rent subsidy programs. Households can use the vouchers to rent any private unit that meets HUD standards. Because some households use their vouchers to rent units in subsidized developments, the total number of households receiving assistance is less than the combined total of assisted units and vouchers.

Somerville is home to a number of community residences for persons with disabilities and to transitional housing programs for special populations.



Mayor Curtatone speaking at the 109 Gilman Street Ribbon Cutting. 109 Gilman Street houses 6 low-income households.

#### Subsidized Developments (“40B” Inventory)

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts maintains a Subsidized Housing Inventory, known informally as the “40B inventory” which tracks subsidized developments (defined as developments which receive state, federal and/or local subsidies). Subsidized developments must meet the following criteria: (1) have at least 20-25% of their units reserved for and affordable to households with incomes at or below 80% AMI and (2) meet other state requirements regarding affirmative marketing and a minimum legally binding use restriction term.

As of August 2007, Somerville had 3,075 units of housing reserved for low-income households ( $\leq 80\%$  AMI) that met the State’s criteria for inclusion in the Subsidized Housing Inventory. These 3,075 units represent 9.49% of Somerville’s year round housing stock. 284 of these units are new additions since Somerville’s last Consolidated Plan in 2003.

Somerville’s 40B inventory includes 1,456 units of public housing and 1,619 units of privately owned subsidized housing. Of these 3,075 units:

- 1,459 units (47%) are in projects specifically for the elderly and disabled
- 210 units (7%) are in supportive housing programs for special populations (persons with developmental or psychiatric disabilities, victims of domestic abuse, formerly homeless), and
- 1,406 units (46%) are in projects without age or ability restrictions.

### 3.2 Additional Affordable Units:

Not included in the 3,075 total above are over 550 units affordable to households with incomes at or below 80% of median that were created under programs that do not meet all of the state standards for inclusion in the 40B inventory. This number includes 119 units of transitional housing, 55 inclusionary zoning units, 21 units that receive tenant-based rental assistance and 361 units assisted under the City's Homeowner Rehab Loan program. All of these units provide additional affordable housing to the city and its residences.



Marshall Street  
Inclusionary Housing Program

### 3.3 Expiring Use Properties

Twenty-two of the subsidized developments listed in the 40B inventory have use restrictions that expire in the next five years. The twenty-two projects contain 152 affordable units. Many of these units are project-based Section 8 developments with contracts held by the Somerville Housing Authority, who has indicated a desire to renew these contracts when they expire. The two largest projects (65 and 23 units) have contracts that will expire in 2010 and 2011 and the City is working to ensure that these units will become long-term affordable projects.

The City is fully committed to preserving the long-term affordability of these projects. To date, only one expiring use project has been lost in Somerville (this project accepted mobile Section 8 vouchers as a replacement) and the City was an active participant in negotiations that results in the preservation of over 700 units in two projects under long term agreements with their owners (Cobble Hill Apartments) or through the sale of the property of residents (Clarendon Hill Towers). The City is supportive of efforts to expand both project-based and mobile Section 8 vouchers and will continue to advocate to avoid concentrations of poverty, especially in census tracts with already high concentrations of very-low and low-income populations.

### 3.4 Homeowner Rehabilitation Units

In addition to the projects listed in the 40B inventory chart, Somerville has about 140 rental units subject to short-term affordability restrictions under its homeowner rehabilitation loan program.

Since 1991, the City of Somerville has successfully operated housing rehabilitation programs that provide funding to low and moderate income residents for housing rehabilitation, lead paint abatement, down payment assistance, heating system replacement, energy conservation, historic and architectural preservation and adaptive improvements for the elderly and physically impaired. All programs are administered by OSPCD and primarily funded through the Community Development Block Grant and HOME programs and HUD Lead Hazard Control Grants. OSPCD provides financial assistance to qualified homeowners and rental property owners that serve low and



moderate income individuals in the form of grants, deferred payment loans, and low or no interest loans.

The housing rehabilitation effort of OSPCD is a critically important element in the overall strategy to increase the supply of affordable housing in Somerville. The City is committed to increased CDBG and HOME funding, if possible, over the next five years. This important source of funding assistance serves to augment the supply of affordable housing within the city by providing funding assistance to eligible applicants who may not otherwise have the resources to maintain their property in good repair. Every participating property has an affordability period during which low and moderate-income owners agree to maintain the property as their primary residence and rental property owners agree to a rental restriction during which HOME rents and/or Fair Market Rents (FMR) are not exceeded. These restrictions encourage owner occupancy and provide decent, safe, and affordable rental housing for low and moderate-income families and households.



Home after Housing  
Rehabilitation Program

Since 2000, the City has identified the need for lead-safe housing in the community and has prioritized the abatement of lead paint hazards as part of an overall affordable housing strategy. The City is committed to the continuation of the abatement of lead paint hazards as a priority over the next five years.

Since 2001, the City has been the fortunate recipient of \$6.8 million used to produce upwards of 500 lead-safe, affordable housing units. Most recently, the City was awarded both a HUD Lead Hazard Control Grant (LHC) and a Lead Hazard Demonstration Grant (LHRD). These grants, combined with other resources including CDBG and HOME funds, provide the basis for our efforts to address childhood lead poisoning in the community and further provide additional resources to improve our efforts towards removing blight and dilapidated buildings from our neighborhoods. Since 2001, the city has seen a drastic reduction in blood lead elevations among local children and only one poisoning was recorded during the calendar year 2005. In addition, these valuable resources have significantly impacted all housing rehabilitation programs by providing the resources needed to comply with HUD regulations Title 1012/1013. With these LHC/LHRD grants, OSPCD is able to combine funding from several resources resulting in a more strategic use of funding with improved unit production and outcomes without excessive strain on any one pool of resources.

These combined efforts and resources have proven successful and remain the basis for continued work toward meeting all housing objectives as part of an overall strategy.

### 3.5 Inclusionary Zoning Units

Generally not qualifying for inclusion in the 40B inventory are 72 affordable units that have been created through the City's inclusionary zoning ordinance. The ordinance requires that all the affordable units be affordable in perpetuity.

For rental projects, at least half the inclusionary units must be reserved for households with incomes  $\leq 50\%$  of area median income (AMI), with the balance for households  $\leq 80\%$  AMI. For ownership units, at least half must be reserved for households  $\leq 80\%$  AMI, with the balance reserved for households  $\leq 110\%$  AMI. The 72 units completed to date include:

| <b>TABLE 26: COMPLETED INCLUSIONARY ZONING UNITS BUILT/IN<br/>PROGRESS AS OF OCTOBER 2007</b> |                              |                             |                     |                    |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Project Name</b>   | <b>Constructed<br/>Units</b> | <b>Affordable<br/>Units</b> | <b>Sale Date</b>    | <b>Rental Date</b> |
| Highland Commons  | 53                           | 5                           |                     | 1997               |
| Franklin Street   | 8                            | 2                           |                     | 2000               |
| 394-400 Washington Street   | 14                           | 1                           | 2005<br>(converted) | 2001               |
| 63 Gorham Street, Bldg 1 & 2  | 15                           | 2                           | 2001                |                    |
| Weston View Condos  | 19                           | 2                           | 2002                |                    |
| Sanctuary 60 Tufts Street   | 17                           | 2                           | 2003                |                    |
| Union Place, Phase I  | 31                           | 6                           | 2003                |                    |
| 17 Ivaloo Street  | 18                           | 2                           | 2003                |                    |
| 24-26 Line Street   | 5                            | 1                           | 2003                |                    |
| 7 Avon Place  | 5                            | 1                           | 2003                |                    |
| Union Place Townhomes   | 12                           | 2                           | 2004                |                    |
| 63 Gorham Street, Bldg 3 - 5<br>72-74 Berkley Street  | 22                           | 3                           | 2004                |                    |
| Union Place, Phase II   | 19                           | 4                           | 2004                |                    |
| 384 Washington Street   | 10                           | 1                           | 2004                |                    |
| Union Place, Phase III  | 35                           | 8                           | 2005                |                    |
| 50 Bow Street   | 14                           | 2                           | 2005                |                    |
| 24 Marshall Street  | 11                           | 1                           | 2005                |                    |
| 26R Adams Street  | 5                            | 1                           | 2006                |                    |
| 175 Beacon Street   | 17                           | 3                           |                     | 2006               |
| 140 Jaques Street   | 5                            | 1                           | 2006                |                    |
| 245 Beacon Street   | 8                            | 1                           | 2007                |                    |
| 131 Willow/Morrison   | 10                           | 1                           | 2007                |                    |
| 1188 Broadway   | 20                           | 2                           | 2007                |                    |
| 112-116 Sycamore Street   | 29                           | 4                           | 2007                |                    |
| 60-70 Webster Avenue  | 46                           | 7                           | 2008                |                    |
| 515 Somerville Avenue   | 36                           | 5                           | 2008                |                    |
| 39 Endicott Road  | 8                            | 1                           | 2008                |                    |
| <b>Total Completed</b>  | <b>470</b>                   | <b>72</b>                   |                     |                    |
| Source: City of Somerville Housing Division   |                              |                             |                     |                    |



140 Jacques Street  
Inclusionary Housing Development



26 Adams Street  
Inclusionary Housing Development

With the development of Assembly Square over the next five years, which will include almost 2,100 housing units, the City expects to receive over 263 affordable units either on-site, off-site or a cash equivalent.

### 3.6 Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Programs (Section 8 and others)

As of January 2003, over 1,000 households in Somerville were using tenant-based rental assistance, including 1,034 households using Section 8 vouchers, and 21 using vouchers under two City programs; Prevention and Stabilization Services (PASS) and the Wayside Youth and Family Network Transitional Housing Program. In addition, six (6) formerly homeless households are assisted under HUD's Shelter Plus Care program.

### 3.7 Committed/Upcoming Projects

#### RESPOND Emergency Shelter

\$200,000 in HOME funds and \$180,000 in Affordable Housing Trust Funds to rehabilitate a facility with 8 units as a domestic violence emergency shelter. These units will provide a safe haven for women and their children who have been victims of domestic violence as well as a place to receive services. All 8 units will be affordable to low and moderate-income families. The building will also have office and program space for the residents. The project is slated for completion in Fall 2007.

#### VNA Senior Living Community – Visiting Nurse Association

Committed \$1.275 million in HOME and CDBG funds to this project being built by the Visiting Nurse Association. Built on the site of the former Conwell School, the facility will provide 99 units of affordable elderly assisted living as well as a wide range of amenities and services to assist the residents. The project had its ground breaking in late 2007.

#### Capen Court Senior Housing – Somerville Housing Authority (SHA)

Committed \$500,000 in HOME funds to this project to assist the Somerville Housing Authority in building a 95-unit elderly housing development. The SHA will demolish the 64 outdated low-rise

units currently on the site and replace them with 95 units in one handicapped-accessible building. In addition to providing a much safer and nicer living environment, the building will be connected to the adjacent VNA Senior Living Community to allow the SHA residents to access the service there as well. The project is slated to begin construction in spring of 2008.

Just A Start House – Just A Start Corporation

Committed \$80,000 in Lead Hazard Abatement Funds to delead this project. The Just A Start House is a transitional living program for young mothers and their children. The program is moving from the Convent to the Rectory at St. Polycarp's Church as part of SCC's redevelopment of the property (see below). The Lead Abatement funds will delead 12 units of transitional housing, as well as the soil on the property, making both the inside and outside of the house safe for the young children living there.

St. Polycarp's Village – Somerville

Community Corporation

Committed \$750,000 in HOME funds to Phase I and \$850,000 in HOME funds to Phase II of SCC's largest development project at the former St. Polycarp's Church site. In addition to keeping the church building and housing Just A Start's transitional housing program for teen mothers and their children, the project will build 84 new housing units on the site. In Phase I, SCC will construct a 24-unit rental building. All 24 units will be affordable to low and moderate-income families. Two of the units will be rented to formerly homeless households and three units will be fully handicapped-accessible. In Phase II, SCC will construct 60 homeownership units, 20 that will be affordable and 40 that will be sold at market-rate. Several retail spaces on the ground floor of the rental building and creation of green space and a tot lot will round out the project. Phase I of the project is slated to begin in spring of 2008.



Saint Polycarp's Church  
Somerville Community Corporation Mixed-  
Use Development Site

#### **4. Housing Needs of Special Populations**

##### **4.1 Public Housing**

As described in the Somerville Housing Authority's most recent 5-Year Consolidated Plan (2006-2010), their mission is to promote adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity and a suitable living environment free from discrimination; And in so doing, to advocate for and serve the needs of its residents and to encourage and assist all those to achieve maximum independence.

The Somerville Housing Authority (SHA) has continued to develop ways to increase the quality and supply of affordable housing. In partnership with the City of Somerville, SHA has established a program to provide property owners with home improvement grants to repair property that will be preserved for voucher holders. The SHA has improved the quality of life in housing by focusing efforts on improved customer service by responding to all resident concerns within a reasonable timeframe and following-up with job satisfaction surveys. SHA accomplished this by improving the level of communication between departments and ensuring that they provide quality service. The SHA continues to renovate units to the highest possible standard upon vacancy. Their public housing inspectors maintains extensive inspection records and diligently performs semi-annual LUTs to UPCS standards. They have also identified and earmarked extensive modernization improvements funds from its capital fund program for circumstances where routine maintenance is inadequate. This was supported by the fact that in its most recent REAC Physical Inspection the SHA achieved a ranking as a High- Performing Public Housing Authority.

The SHA has committed additional staff to its housing choice voucher program and is actively participating in a partnership with the Regional Opportunity Counseling (ROC) program to expand housing choices for low-income families. ROC training provides comprehensive counseling services that include search, mobility and outreach to prospective property owners.

As reported in its 5-Year Consolidated Plan, the SHA consistently reviews its financial position to ensure that adequate resources allow it to meet its goal of providing decent, safe and sanitary housing for all residents. They continue to enhance supportive service programs that lead to employment opportunities for its unemployed residents and to ensure that all residents have equal access to assisted housing under affirmative action. Its preference for hiring residents has resulted in the recruitment and training of numerous previously unemployed public housing residents.

As part of its efforts to modernize parts of its affordable housing portfolio, the Somerville Housing Authority recently proposed to redevelop the Capen Court elderly public housing project built in 1955 which currently consists of (64) obsolete walk-up apartments in dire need of significant repair, into (95) units of modern supportive housing for frail elders and non-elderly handicapped units adjacent to the new Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) Assisted Living residence of (99) units also proposed for development on the same site. The completed development will create a community for low-income seniors offering a high- quality continuum of care that is accessible to all regardless of means. Residents of the new Capen Court facility will receive services from the VNA and will have direct access to the community facilities at the VNA for dining, activities, wellness and personal care. The redeveloped Capen Court will provide supportive and more comprehensive services if needed in a cost effective manner to promote independent and aging in place. The SHA worked closely with the Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund (MHP) to arrange financing under the Match Program. Through this joint program of MHP and Mass Development, the project will receive tax-exempt bond financing and bond-cap allocated Low-Income Housing Tax Credits for the Project. The remaining costs will be financed through the Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) public housing funds, City of Somerville HOME funds and the state's Community-Based Housing program for special needs populations.

SHA has committed (64) project-based Section 8 vouchers and requested (8) additional project-based vouchers from DHCD. The City of Somerville is particularly proud to support this model continuum of care and strongly encourages more partnerships of this type.

As indicated in its 5-Year Consolidated Plan, the SHA will solicit proposals for Project-Based voucher units not to exceed 20 percent of its baseline allocation. They anticipate entering into agreements for less than 150 units. In keeping with the goal of the City's Consolidated Plan project-based units will be scattered across the city to eliminate concentrations of poverty. Somerville is historically one of the most densely populated cities in the country with over 77,000 people residing in less than 4.1 square miles. Our low-vacancy rate (estimated at 1%) contributes to our affordable housing shortage. Our limited housing supply combined with our proximity to Boston and Cambridge has forced rents to remain among the highest in Massachusetts.

Although Somerville is close to achieving a 10% threshold for permanently affordable units as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) the City fully intends to surpass this threshold. As a consequence, project basing is necessary to increase our inadequate supply of affordable housing units and is consistent with the stated needs of our HUD Consolidated Plan. One of the stated goals of SHA is to deconcentrate poverty and expand housing opportunities. SHA considers proposed project based voucher sites consistent with this policy.

The Public Housing and Section 8 Waiting Lists in Somerville have been closed since May 2001. Despite closing the lists to new applicants, both lists remain long and contain far more applicants than can currently be housed.

The following two charts provide some insight into what type of housing would be most beneficial to those currently on the waiting lists. The Section 8 Wait List breaks the households down into income groups and race and ethnicity. The Public Housing Wait List goes one step further, breaking the households into the unit size necessary to adequately house them.

| <b>TABLE 27: HOUSING NEEDS OF FAMILIES ON SECTION 8 WAITLIST</b> |                      |                            |                        |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
|  | <b># of Families</b> | <b>% of Total Families</b> | <b>Annual Turnover</b> |
| Waiting list total   | 70,200               |                            | 10%                    |
| Extremely low income<br><=30% AMI                                | 68,005               | 96.87%                     |                        |
| Very low income<br>(>30% but <=50% AMI)                          | 2,456                | 3.50%                      |                        |
| Low income<br>(>50% but <80% AMI)                                | 150                  | 0.21%                      |                        |
| Families with children   | 25,140               | 35.81%                     |                        |
| Elderly families   | 3,977                | 5.67%                      |                        |
| Families with Disabilities                                       | 23,256               | 33.13%                     |                        |
| Race/ethnicity W   | 32,283               | 45.99%                     |                        |
| Race/ethnicity B   | 13,244               | 18.87%                     |                        |

|   |        |        |  |
|---|--------|--------|--|
| Race/ethnicity H  | 22,797 | 32.47% |  |
| Race/ethnicity AI   | 1,256  | 1.79%  |  |
| Race/Ethnicity Asian  | 2,125  | 3.03%  |  |
| Source: Somerville Housing Authority Fiscal year 2008 Annual Plan |        |        |  |

| <b>TABLE 28: HOUSING NEEDS OF FAMILIES ON PUBLIC HOUSING WAIT LIST</b> |                      |                            |                        |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
|  | <b># of Families</b> | <b>% of Total Families</b> | <b>Annual Turnover</b> |
| Waiting list total   | 4,221                |                            | PH: 11%                |
| Extremely low income <=30% AMI   | 3,729                | 88%                        |                        |
| Very low income<br>(>30% but <=50% AMI)                                | 420                  | 10%                        |                        |
| Low income<br>(>50% but <80% AMI)                                      | 69                   | 2%                         |                        |
| Families with children   | 2,674                | 63%                        |                        |
| Elderly families   | 101                  | 2%                         |                        |
| Families with Disabilities   | 684                  | 15%                        |                        |
| Race/ethnicity W   | 1,216                | 29%                        |                        |
| Race/ethnicity B   | 1,526                | 36%                        |                        |
| Race/ethnicity Am I  | 25                   | 0%                         |                        |
| Race/ethnicity H   | 1,024                | 24%                        |                        |
| Race/ethnicity As P  | 192                  | 5%                         |                        |
| Race/ethnicity Other   | 238                  | 6%                         |                        |
| <b>Characteristics by Bedroom Size (Public Housing Only)</b>           |                      |                            |                        |
| 1BR  | 1,547                | 37%                        |                        |
| 2 BR   | 2,026                | 48%                        |                        |
| <b>Small Family Unit (1-2 BR)</b>                                      | <b>3,573</b>         | <b>85%</b>                 |                        |
| 3 BR   | 498                  | 12%                        |                        |
| 4 BR   | 147                  | 3%                         |                        |
| 5+ BR  | 6                    | 0%                         |                        |
| <b>Large Family Unit (3+ BR)</b>                                       | <b>651</b>           | <b>15%</b>                 |                        |
| Source: Somerville Housing Authority Fiscal year 2008 Annual Plan      |                      |                            |                        |

The large majority of households and individuals on both waitlists are extremely low-income (earning up to 30% of AMI). A smaller, but still significant, percentage of families are very low-income (earning up to 50% of AMI) and a very small percentage of families are low-income (earning up to 80% of AMI). The need is clearly strongest with Somerville's poorest households.



Elderly families make up 5% and 2% of the waiting lists, although the need for this group is probably larger than indicated. Many elderly households live with family rather than applying for housing subsidies. Disabled households (households in which at least one Head of Household is physically or mentally disabled) make up 7% of the Section 8 Waitlist and 22% of the Public Housing List.

In addition, the Public Housing Wait List indicates that there is a greater need for small family units (1-2 Bedrooms), as 78% of current applicants are waiting for these units. Translating these numbers to the Section 8 Wait List, it can be estimated that an additional 1938 1-2 Bedroom Units and 54 3+ Bedroom Units are needed to house the Section 8 applicants on the list.

#### **4.2 Housing Needs of Elderly**

Somerville has 4,241 low-income elderly households, representing 30% of Somerville's low-income population. As highlighted above, 1,459 units, or 47% of the Subsidized Housing Inventory in Somerville is dedicated to low-income elderly households, and an additional 1,846 low-income elderly households are homeowners, leaving just under 1,000 elderly households without subsidized rental housing.

The City of Somerville has made the provision of housing for low-income elderly households a priority through the development of several assisted living facilities. The Assisted Living Facility located at 259 Lowell Street provides housing for 95 low-income elderly households. An additional 99 units of assisted living will be developed by the Visiting Nurse Association at the former Conwell School site in West Somerville. Adjacent to that property at the Capen Court Housing Development, the Somerville Housing Authority will be demolishing 64 units of dilapidated elderly housing and replacing it with 95 units, resulting in a net increase of 31 units.



259 Lowell Street  
Visiting Nurse Association  
Assisted Living Facility

In addition, the City of Somerville provides a variety of supportive services to its elderly population through the Council on Aging, Elder Services and the Visiting Nurse Association. Examples of services include transportation, social activities and home visits. The City of Somerville's Housing Rehabilitation program also assists many elderly low-income homeowners whose homes are in need of repairs.

#### **4.3 Housing Needs of Mentally or Physically Disabled**

According to the 2000 Census, 14,317 individuals of the civilian non-institutionalized population in Somerville had a disability status, including both mental and physical disabilities. The age



breakdown of this population is indicated below. The percentage of people with disabilities appears high. This is because of the way the Census determines disability.<sup>5</sup> Many people with disability status are fully functioning and are not impaired by their disability in any way, including access to housing or employment.

**TABLE 29: INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABLED STATUS (CIVILIAN NON-INSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION) IN 2000**

| Age                 | Total # of People | # People with Disability | % of People with Disability |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 5-20                | 11,498            | 997                      | 8.7%                        |
| 21-64               | 54,411            | 9,731                    | 17.9%                       |
| 65+                 | 7,837             | 3,589                    | 45.8%                       |
| <b>Total Over 5</b> | <b>73,746</b>     | <b>14,317</b>            | <b>19.4%</b>                |

Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

The Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) tracks the number of people with mental disabilities being served in each city and town in Massachusetts. In late July, 2005, 400 Somervillians were receiving services through DMR. This number however, does not include individuals with physical disabilities and also undercounts those with mental disabilities for a variety of reasons. Undiagnosed individuals and those who are simply not receiving services from DMR are not included on this list.

According to the subsidized housing inventory list for Somerville, 238 total subsidized units are designated and set aside for special needs populations. These units can only be occupied by someone identified as having either a physical or mental disability, and often each unit is specifically for one group or the other.

**TABLE 30: SPECIAL NEEDS SUBSIDIZED UNITS IN SOMERVILLE**

|                    | Non-elderly Disabled Units | Handicapped Accessible Units | Special Population Designation | Total |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Public Housing     | 135                        | NA                           | 16                             | 151   |
| Private Subsidized | 1                          | 21                           | 65                             | 87    |
| Total              | 136                        | 21                           | 81                             | 238   |

Source: City of Somerville Subsidized Housing Database, administered by Housing Division

In addition to these units, the Mass Access Registry, a registry of handicapped accessible units monitored by Residents' Housing and Planning Association, lists 83 accessible units in Somerville.

#### 4.4 Housing Needs of Persons With HIV/AIDS

<sup>5</sup> The Census considers the following people "disabled". (1) They are 5 years old and over and have a sensory, physical, mental or self-care disability; (2) They are 16 years old and over and have a disability which makes it difficult to go outside the home; or (3) they were 16 to 64 years old and have disability that makes it difficult to perform certain jobs.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 24 Somerville residents are living with HIV/AIDS as of 2005. While there are no specific programs for people living with HIV/AIDS in Somerville, nor any housing facilities, a variety of supportive services may be accessed by this population. In addition, regional housing options for this population are easily accessible.

## 5. Housing Problems for Somerville's Populations

*Incidence of Housing Problems in 2000.* A household experiencing a housing problem is defined by HUD as a household with a cost burden of 30 % or more (i.e. pays more than 30% of their income towards housing costs), is overcrowded (i.e. more than 1 person per room in a home), or lives in a home that lacks complete kitchen or plumbing facilities. Over one-third of all Somerville households had housing problems in 2000, including 66% of all low-income households. ELI and VLI households had the highest incidence of housing problems. The major problems were affordability and overcrowding. The majority of low-income households with problems (77%) were renters.

| <b>TABLE 31: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SOMERVILLE HOUSEHOLDS WITH HOUSING PROBLEMS</b> |                         |                                |                                |  |  |  |  |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
|   | <b>Total Households</b> | <b># with Housing Problems</b> | <b>% with Housing Problems</b> | <b># with Housing Problems that pay &gt; 30%</b> | <b>% with Housing Problems that pay &gt; 30%</b> | <b># with Housing Problems that pay &gt; 50%</b> | <b>% with Housing Problems that pay &gt; 50%</b> |
| <b>RENTERS</b>  |                         |                                |                                |  |  |  |  |
| 0-30% AMI   | 4,362                   | 3,141                          | 72.4%                          | 2,202  | 70.1%  | 1,727  | 55.0%  |
| 31-50% AMI  | 2,614                   | 2,010                          | 76.9%                          | 1,490  | 74.1%  | 645  | 32.1%  |
| 51-80% AMI  | 3,594                   | 1,934                          | 53.8%                          | 909  | 47.0%  | 99   | 5.1%   |
| Subtotal 0-80% AMI  | 10,570                  | 7,084                          | 67.0%                          | 4,600  | 64.9%  | 2,471  | 34.9%  |
| >80% AMI  | 11,303                  | 1,447                          | 12.8%                          | 113  | 7.8%   | 3  | 0.2%   |
| Total Renters   | 21,873                  | 8,531                          | 39.0%                          | 4,727  | 55.4%  | 3,784  | 44.4%  |
|   |                         |                                |                                |  |  |  |  |
| <b>OWNERS</b>   |                         |                                |                                |  |  |  |  |
| 0-30% AMI   | 1,002                   | 878                            | 87.6%                          | 769  | 87.6%  | 604  | 68.8%  |
| 31-49% AMI  | 855                     | 566                            | 66.2%                          | 375  | 66.2%  | 187  | 33.1%  |
| 51-80% AMI  | 1,481                   | 626                            | 42.3%                          | 254  | 40.6%  | 135  | 21.5%  |
| Subtotal 0-80% AMI  | 3,338                   | 2,070                          | 62.0%                          | 1,398  | 67.5%  | 926  | 44.7%  |
| >80% AMI  | 6,294                   | 1,315                          | 20.9%                          | 238  | 18.1%  | 49   | 3.7%   |
| Total Owners  | 12,970                  | 5,456                          | 42.1%                          | 3,034  | 55.6%  | 1,901  | 34.8%  |
|   |                         |                                |                                |  |  |  |  |
| <b>COMBINED TOTAL</b>   | 34,843                  | 13,987                         | 40.1%                          | 7,761  | 55.5%  | 5,685  | 40.6%  |
| <b>Subtotal 0-80% AMI</b>   | 13,908                  | 9,155                          | 65.8%                          | 5,998  | 65.5%  | 3,397  | 37.1%  |
| Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000              |                         |                                |                                |  |  |  |  |

The chart below highlights housing problems by housing type and highlights those with cost burdens. All households with incomes below 80% of AMI exhibit housing problems. Elderly

households (renter 50.1%, owner 45%) and large renter households (65.6%) appear to have the highest incidence of housing problems. Small owner households have the lowest incidence of housing problems.

**TABLE 32: 2000 CHAS- INCIDENCE OF HOUSING PROBLEMS IN SOMERVILLE BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE**

|                           | Renters |       |               |           |               | Owners  |       |               |           |              | Total              |
|---------------------------|---------|-------|---------------|-----------|---------------|---------|-------|---------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|
| Total Households by Type  | Elderly | Small | Large Related | All Other | Total Renters | Elderly | Small | Large Related | All Other | Total Owners | Renters and Owners |
| <b>0 to 30% AMI</b>       | 1,560   | 960   | 258           | 1,584     | 4,362         | 699     | 99    | 49            | 155       | 1,002        | 5,364              |
| % with housing problems   | 60.3    | 81.3  | 94.6          | 75.4      | 72.4          | 90.7    | 89.9  | 91.8          | 71        | 87.6         | 75.2               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 30%  | 59.3    | 77.1  | 77.1          | 75.4      | 70.1          | 90.7    | 89.9  | 91.8          | 71        | 87.6         | 73.4               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 50%  | 37.5    | 59.4  | 50.4          | 70.3      | 55            | 69.4    | 59.6  | 91.8          | 64.5      | 68.8         | 57.6               |
| <b>31 to 50% AMI</b>      | 515     | 930   | 146           | 1,023     | 2,614         | 548     | 144   | 59            | 104       | 855          | 3,469              |
| % with housing problems   | 52.4    | 78    | 87            | 86.8      | 76.9          | 56.4    | 79.2  | 83.1          | 90.4      | 66.2         | 74.3               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 30%  | 52.4    | 74.7  | 59.6          | 86.4      | 74.1          | 56.4    | 79.2  | 83.1          | 90.4      | 66.2         | 72.1               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 50%  | 12.6    | 26.3  | 2.7           | 51.2      | 32.1          | 19      | 62.5  | 76.3          | 42.3      | 33.1         | 32.3               |
| <b>51 to 80% AMI</b>      | 320     | 1,274 | 300           | 1,700     | 3,594         | 599     | 438   | 194           | 250       | 1,481        | 5,075              |
| % with housing problems   | 43.8    | 44.3  | 61.7          | 61.5      | 53.8          | 21.5    | 45.2  | 74.2          | 62        | 42.3         | 50.4               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 30%  | 43.8    | 35.2  | 18.3          | 61.5      | 47            | 21.5    | 44.3  | 63.9          | 62        | 40.6         | 45.1               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 50%  | 7.8     | 1.9   | 0             | 7.9       | 5.1           | 13.4    | 18    | 25.3          | 44        | 21.5         | 9.9                |
| <b>&gt;80% AMI</b>        | 369     | 3,069 | 540           | 7,325     | 11,303        | 760     | 3,425 | 760           | 1,349     | 6,294        | 17,597             |
| % with housing problems   | 9.2     | 9.4   | 48.1          | 11.7      | 12.8          | 13.2    | 16.9  | 33.6          | 28.1      | 20.9         | 15.7               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 30%  | 9.2     | 3.6   | 3.7           | 9.8       | 7.8           | 13.2    | 16.5  | 13.2          | 27.8      | 18.1         | 11.5               |
| % Cost Burden $\geq$ 50%  | 2.7     | 0.1   | 0             | 0.1       | 0.2           | 3.9     | 2.3   | 2             | 8.2       | 3.7          | 1.5                |
| <b>Total Households**</b> | 2,764   | 6,233 | 1,244         | 11,632    | 21,873        | 2,606   | 4,106 | 1,062         | 1,858     | 9,632        | 31,505             |
| % with housing problems   | 50.1    | 37.8  | 65.6          | 34.3      | 39.1          | 45      | 23.9  | 46.4          | 39.7      | 35.1         | 37.9               |

Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000

## 5.1 Incidence of Cost Burden

Cost burden is by far the most prevalent housing burden present in Somerville. 32% of all Somerville residents pay more than 30% of their income towards housing. Extremely low- and very low-income households are most likely to experience a cost burden (69% and 67% respectively). Low- and moderate-income households have lower incidence of severe cost burden (paying more than 50% of income towards housing), but many still have a cost burden.

| <b>TABLE 33: COST BURDEN BY INCOME</b>                                   |                         |                               |          |                             |          |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| <b>Income</b>  | <b>Total Households</b> | <b>Cost Burden 30.1-49.9%</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Cost Burden &gt;+50%</b> | <b>%</b> |
| <b>&lt;= 30% AMI</b>   | 5,359                   | 785                           | 15%      | 2,890                       | 54%      |
| <b>31%-50% AMI</b>   | 3,525                   | 1,265                         | 36%      | 1,090                       | 31%      |
| <b>51%-80% AMI</b>   | 5,070                   | 1,740                         | 34%      | 480                         | 9%       |
| <b>81%-95% AMI</b>   | 4,555                   | 955                           | 21%      | 200                         | 4%       |
| <b>&gt;95% AMI</b>   | 13,055                  | 770                           | 6%       | 60                          | 0%       |
| <b>Total</b>   | 31,564                  | 5,515                         | 17%      | 4,720                       | 15%      |
| Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000 |                         |                               |          |                             |          |

Renters and Owners appear to experience cost burdens at equivalent rate in Somerville. Moderate-income owners have slightly higher housing cost burdens than their renter counterparts.

| <b>TABLE 34: COST BURDEN BY INCOME AND TENURE</b>                        |                         |                               |          |                             |          |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| <b>Renters</b>   |                         |                               |          |                             |          |
| <b>Income</b>  | <b>Total Households</b> | <b>Cost Burden 30.1-49.9%</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Cost Burden &gt;+50%</b> | <b>%</b> |
| <b>&lt;= 30% AMI</b>   | 4,360                   | 600                           | 14%      | 2,220                       | 51%      |
| <b>31%-50% AMI</b>   | 2,645                   | 970                           | 37%      | 795                         | 30%      |
| <b>51%-80% AMI</b>   | 3,585                   | 1,475                         | 41%      | 165                         | 5%       |
| <b>81%-95% AMI</b>   | 3,180                   | 595                           | 19%      | 25                          | 1%       |
| <b>&gt;95% AMI</b>   | 8,135                   | 255                           | 3%       | 0                           | 0%       |
| <b>Total</b>   | 21,905                  | 3,895                         | 18%      | 3,205                       | 15%      |
| Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000 |                         |                               |          |                             |          |

| <b>TABLE 35: COST BURDEN BY INCOME AND TENURE</b>                        |                         |                               |          |                             |          |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| <b>Owners</b>  |                         |                               |          |                             |          |
| <b>Income</b>  | <b>Total Households</b> | <b>Cost Burden 30.1-49.9%</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Cost Burden &gt;+50%</b> | <b>%</b> |
| <b>&lt;= 30% AMI</b>   | 999                     | 185                           | 19%      | 670                         | 67%      |
| <b>31%-50% AMI</b>   | 880                     | 295                           | 34%      | 295                         | 34%      |
| <b>51%-80% AMI</b>   | 1,485                   | 265                           | 18%      | 315                         | 21%      |
| <b>81%-95% AMI</b>   | 1,375                   | 360                           | 26%      | 175                         | 13%      |
| <b>&gt;95% AMI</b>   | 4,920                   | 515                           | 10%      | 60                          | 1%       |
| <b>Total</b>   | 9,659                   | 1,620                         | 17%      | 1,515                       | 16%      |
| Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000 |                         |                               |          |                             |          |

## 5.2 Incidence of Substandard Housing Facilities

Somerville has a very low incidence of persons living in housing with substandard kitchen or plumbing facilities. A total of 230 housing units lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities, which is less than 1% of the total housing stock.

**TABLE 36: SUBSTANDARD HOUSING FACILITIES BY INCOME**

| Income       | Total Households | Lacking Complete plumbing or kitchen facilities | %         |
|--------------|------------------|---|-----------|
| <= 30% AMI   | 5,359            | 70  | 1%        |
| 31%-50% AMI  | 3,525            | 45  | 1%        |
| 51%-80% AMI  | 5,070            | 25  | 0%        |
| 81%-95% AMI  | 4,555            | 55  | 1%        |
| >95% AMI     | 13,055           | 35  | 0%        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>31,564</b>    | <b>230</b>                                      | <b>1%</b> |

Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000

## 5.3 Incidence of Overcrowding

Somerville also has a very low incidence of overcrowding. Only 5% of the total population lives in a home where there is more than 1 person per room and only 1% lives in a home where there are more than 1.5 persons per room. There does not appear to be a large disparity in overcrowding among income levels either as illustrated below.

**TABLE 37: OVERCROWDING BY INCOME**

| Income       | Total HH      | 1-1.5 persons / room | % w/1-1.5 persons / room | 1.51 or more persons / room | % w/1.51 or more persons / room | Total Over-crowded | % w/ > 1 person / room |
|--------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| <= 30% AMI   | 5,359         | 164                  | 3%                       | 125                         | 2%                              | 289                | 5%                     |
| 31%-50% AMI  | 3,525         | 135                  | 4%                       | 95                          | 3%                              | 230                | 7%                     |
| 51%-80% AMI  | 5,070         | 255                  | 5%                       | 55                          | 1%                              | 310                | 6%                     |
| 81%-95% AMI  | 4,555         | 145                  | 3%                       | 105                         | 2%                              | 250                | 5%                     |
| >95% AMI     | 13,055        | 370                  | 3%                       | 75                          | 1%                              | 445                | 3%                     |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>31,564</b> | <b>1,069</b>         | <b>3%</b>                | <b>455</b>                  | <b>1%</b>                       | <b>1,524</b>       | <b>5%</b>              |

Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000

## 5.4 Housing Problems by Race and Ethnicity

66% of all low-income Somerville households exhibit a housing problem. A difference greater than 10% more than the total percentage with housing problems would illustrate a racial or ethnic disparity. In a comparison of housing problems across racial and ethnic groups, only one group, Pacific Islanders, was found to have a housing problem incidence more than 10% greater than the total incidence of 66%. 100% of low-income Pacific Islanders in Somerville experience housing

problems, however, as the chart below indicates, with only 4 households in this category, the statistic is not very telling. All other ethnic and racial groups are within the 10% threshold, although the Asian population is on the cusp and should be monitored in the future.

| <b>TABLE 38: HOUSING PROBLEMS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY</b>  |       |       |          |                 |                  |                    |                  |
|--|-------|-------|----------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
|  | Asian | Black | Hispanic | Native American | Pacific Islander | White Non Hispanic | All Groups Total |
| Households income <= 80%   | 664   | 952   | 865      | 39              | 4                | 10,509             | 13,033           |
| # of households with housing problems  | 495   | 623   | 616      | 14              | 4                | 6,846              | 8,598            |
| % with any housing problems  | 75%   | 65%   | 71%      | 36%             | 100%             | 65%                | 66%              |
| Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Dataset 2000   |       |       |          |                 |                  |                    |                  |
| Note: These numbers do not include households of 2 or more races, so totals are slightly lower than the numbers presented in Chart 31. |       |       |          |                 |                  |                    |                  |

## 5.5 Housing Affordability for Low and Moderate-Income Households

The following table shows the income levels for ELI, VLI, LI and MI households in 2007. Very few low-income households can afford units renting at new mover rent levels (the Somerville Housing Authority “payment standard” for a two bedroom unit is \$1,366).

| <b>TABLE 39: HOUSING AFFORDABILITY FOR LOW AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS 2007</b> |                                |               |              |          |                             |                       |   |         |         |         |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---|---------|---------|---------|
| Household size   | 30% AMI (ELI)                  | 50% AMI (VLI) | 80% AMI (LI) | 110% AMI | Federal Poverty Limit (FPL) | ELI Limit as % of FPL | Maximum/month can afford for housing, including utilities, at 30% of income |         |         |         |
|  | Upper Income Limit for Bracket |               |              |          |                             |                       | ELI   | VLI     | LI      | MI      |
| 1  | 17,700                         | 29,450        | 46,300       | 64,790   | 10,210                      | 173%                  | \$443   | \$736   | \$1,158 | \$1,620 |
| 2  | 20,200                         | 33,650        | 52,950       | 74,030   | 13,690                      | 148%                  | \$505   | \$841   | \$1,324 | \$1,851 |
| 3  | 22,750                         | 37,850        | 59,550       | 83,270   | 17,170                      | 132%                  | \$569   | \$946   | \$1,489 | \$2,082 |
| 4  | 25,250                         | 42,050        | 66,150       | 92,510   | 20,650                      | 122%                  | \$631   | \$1,051 | \$1,654 | \$2,313 |
| 5  | 27,250                         | 45,400        | 71,450       | 99,880   | 24,130                      | 113%                  | \$681   | \$1,135 | \$1,786 | \$2,497 |
| 6  | 29,300                         | 48,800        | 76,750       | 107,360  | 27,610                      | 106%                  | \$733   | \$1,220 | \$1,919 | \$2,684 |
| Source: HUD Annual Income Guidelines   |                                |               |              |          |                             |                       |   |         |         |         |

## 6. Barriers to Affordable Housing

As discussions ensue from many suburban municipalities regarding implementation of the Massachusetts Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit law, the City of Somerville’s zoning remains friendlier to the development of affordable housing both in terms of housing as it allows as of right and its lot size and density controls. The zoning also offers incentives to developers in the form of density bonuses. The City has also approved several housing developments using the state’s

Comprehensive Permit Law under Chapter 40B (that allows communities to use an expedited review process to consider all waivers of local requirements necessary for the economic feasibility of an affordable housing development).

The following continue to be major barriers to the preservation and development of affordable housing in Somerville:

- the high cost of existing real estate and new construction;
- the lack of environmentally clean developable land and the competition with the private market for those few sites that become available;
- the reductions in state and federal funding available to create additional units of affordable housing and expand much needed rental assistance programs; and
- the severe cutbacks in state local aid during the last five years;
- the local pressures for individuals and families to locate closer to jobs in proximity to the Greater Boston region, and,
- the rate of conversions of multi-family housing into condominiums.

## **6.1 Strategies to Address Barriers**

The City of Somerville has a number of policies and City ordinances to address the aforementioned barriers to the creation of affordable housing including the following:

Brownfield Sites - Due to the age of the city's housing stock and because much of the land and buildings existing in this area were once industrial sites, it is no secret that Somerville has a number of Brownfield sites, which have a significant impact on the cost and availability of sites to create affordable housing. In spite of environmental contamination, in a highly desirable location such as Somerville, market rate developers are willing to incur necessary environmental clean-up costs in order to develop their properties. Non-profit housing developers, by necessity are competing with the market with fewer choices and resources to remediate these sites. Review of typical development proformas from non-profit affordable housing developers often indicates a myriad number of funding sources and deep subsidies to develop the project. These developments consequently put added pressures on state and federal resources to provide the necessary financing in other areas and communities across the state. These funding programs are often over-subscribed to and under funded even in a competitive application process. The City will continue to apply for Brownfield funds from the federal government to assist in remediation of these sites and prepare them for future development potential.

Inclusionary Zoning - Somerville has had a successful inclusionary housing ordinance since 1989 that requires developers of market rate housing projects to provide 12.5% affordable housing units in perpetuity in projects of eight units or more. In rental projects, the units must be affordable to individuals and/or households with incomes at or below 50-80% of area median income (AMI). In homeownership projects the units are targeted to individuals or households at or below 80-110% of area median income. Since 1989, the City has gained over 72 units of affordable housing; a figure anticipated to grow in upcoming years. In particular, the developers of Assembly Square propose to construct 2,100 units of rental and condominium housing as part of a mixed income, mixed use

urban village near a proposed Orange Line T-station. The Inclusionary Housing Ordinance will require that the developers provide 12.5% or 263 units of affordable housing. More recently, the City of Somerville has proposed zoning amendments in the Union Square area in preparation for extension of the future Green Line to Union Square, which is also slated to go through Somerville to the City of Medford. The “transit oriented development” zoning being proposed in Union Square will create districts that will incentivize development for affordable artists, resident housing, office and retail uses. In the densest portion of the area, the percentage earmarked to be affordable is proposed to be increased from 12.5% to 15%.



Ribbon Cutting at 432 Norfolk Street  
Inclusionary Housing development.

Comprehensive Permits - Under current state law (Chapter 40B), developers of projects where at least 25% of the units will be affordable to individuals and households with incomes at or below 80% of AMI (or at least 20% affordable to households with incomes <50% of AMI) may request a waiver of any local requirements, including zoning, needed to make the project financially feasible. Several projects have applied for relief and were granted approval permits under Chapter 40B. This includes the recent development of Temple Street Condominiums by the Somerville Community Corporation, the city’s only Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). In addition, the Visiting Nurses Association’s Conwell Capen Assisted Living project proposed the development of (99) units of affordable elderly-assisted housing units and was granted permitting under 40B.

Linkage Ordinance - Somerville enacted a linkage ordinance in 1989 that currently requires commercial developers to contribute \$3.91 per square foot for substantially renovated or new construction projects over 30,000 square feet to the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Since 1991, the Trust has received over \$2 million in linkage payments and seed money from the City to fund affordable housing related activities and projects including a rent arrearage/security deposit loan fund, an eviction prevention program, a tenant stabilization program, downpayment/closing cost assistance loans and long-term loans to non-profit housing developers to support the creation of affordable housing.

Project-Based Section 8 Vouchers - the Somerville Housing Authority (SHA) and the City have worked in partnership to take advantage of the option to utilize project-base vouchers since the inception of the program. Eighteen (18) vouchers were in use at the Linden Street rental project by SCC. Three (3) were utilized in Just-A-Start’s Next Step Transitional Housing project on Medford Street and Seventy-two (72) will be used as part of the Somerville Housing Authority’s newly proposed Capen Court elderly project in West Somerville. The Somerville Housing Authority also most recently offered some Section 8 vouchers to tenants in an expiring use project at 111 Walnut Street.

Condominium Conversions - the City is presently in the process of amending the current Condominium Conversion Ordinance to create more comprehensive notice provisions to tenants of



rental units impacted by pending conversions as well as strengthening the Ordinance by providing more tenant protections. The City has convened a working committee with representatives from all parties of interest to produce a report to the full Board of Aldermen in the coming year to address these concerns.

## **6.2 Fair Housing**

The City of Somerville conducted an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing in 1997 and updated the Analysis in 2001 and again in 2005. The Analysis found that high costs were a major impediment to obtaining housing, but also found that housing discrimination exists and creates difficult situations for many renters. Studies by the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston, a regional fair housing agency, and statistics maintained by the City of Somerville Fair Housing Commission, indicate that discrimination against households with children, especially young children whose tenancy would trigger lead hazard abatement obligations, and discrimination against Section 8 voucher holders are widespread, especially when the rental housing market is tight.

The City's Fair Housing Commission has worked closely with OSPCD and the Somerville Housing Authority to try to overcome these impediments and will continue this work over the next 5 years. Activities include:

- Lead paint loans and grants: In 2006, the City applied for and received two grants equaling \$3.5 million over three years from HUD to offer forgivable loans for lead paint abatement.
- Fair housing educational materials and workshops: The Fair Housing Commission has developed fair housing educational materials in multiple languages specifically for families with children and has conducted a series of workshops for realtors and owners. It is also working with a number of other municipal fair housing and human rights commissions to share information and undertake joint activities. The Fair Housing Commission is a sub-recipient of the Lead Hazard Demonstration Grant and will use these funds to educate landlords about their responsibility to delead their homes.
- Collaboration with community groups that work with racial and ethnic minorities: The Fair Housing Commission conducted a workshop for community social service and advocacy agencies in 2006 and is working to ensure information on fair housing and housing assistance programs is widely available. Current Commissioners include liaisons to both the Human Rights Commission and the Multicultural Commission.
- Fair Housing Month: The Commission undertakes activities each April to celebrate and promote Fair Housing Month. Examples of activities includes book readings in schools, trainings for community members, press releases of helpful tips and support of regional fair housing activities.
- Survey: The Fair Housing Commission, with the support of the Lead Grant, is collaborating with the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston to conduct a Fair Housing Survey Project to determine the prevalence of and nature of housing discrimination in Somerville.
- Advocacy: The Commission has begun to advocate for Fair Housing through its attention to and support for state legislation that improves fair housing for Massachusetts' residents.
- Complaint Filing: The Commission has the capacity and continues to increase its capacity to assist households who feel they have been discriminated against. In 2006-2007 alone, the Commission has assisted 5 households in a housing discrimination complaint, either by assisting

them in filing or referring them to another resource. The Commission often refers cases to the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston for testing and additional assistance.

### **6.3 Anti-Poverty Strategies**

As has been indicated throughout this 5-Year Consolidated Plan, the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development uses its CDBG, HOME and Emergency Shelter Grants for programs and projects that provide the maximum benefit to very low, low and moderate income individuals and households. Most of these funds leverage other both public and private resources that facilitate in providing job and life skills training, childcare assistance, and other services necessary for an individual or family to move out of poverty. The City also works towards creating more economic development opportunities so that residents can afford to live in our community and support their families in close proximity to their jobs. Wherever possible, the City forms partnerships with other municipalities and regional agencies to explore new and more cost-effective ways to deliver and provide more and better jobs as well as more affordable housing for our residents.

As an example of this partnership, the City of Somerville works closely with the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS), a private non-profit agency that is the legally designated anti-poverty agency for Somerville. The mission of CAAS is to reduce poverty among local families and individuals while working to counteract, and whenever possible eliminate, the societal conditions that cause and perpetuate poverty. Accomplishments include:

- CAAS provided a full array of Head Start services to low-income children and their families;
- Pioneered an award-winning fatherhood program, the Good Guys Project;
- Assisted low-income tenants of the Clarendon Hill Towers to organize a tenant association and purchase their housing complex from the former property owners who were opting out of their Section 8 contract;
- Created an Eviction Prevention Program that assists approximately 275 tenants each year who are in imminent danger of becoming homeless;
- Supported immigrants in creating their own community organizations, including the Haitian Coalition and the Somerville Latino Coalition;
- Provided information on Foreclosure Prevention issues and referrals;
- Created a rapid response network to cope with racist and anti-immigrant harassment, violence, and hate crimes; and,
- Continues to identify community needs as they emerge and coordinates the organization's resources with those of the community to meet the changing needs as they arise.

CAAS, in cooperation with the City, sponsors quarterly Agency Directors Meetings, with representatives of many of the non-profit housing and social service agencies in Somerville discussing timely issues of the day and strategizing to reduce the incidences of poverty throughout the city. The Executive Director of CAAS is a trustee on the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

## **7. Homelessness Needs Assessment**

Somerville, not unlike most communities across the country, has a plan in place for managing homelessness. This plan is articulated in the annual Continuum of Care submission for McKinney Funds administered by HUD. In addition, in 2006, the City of Somerville finalized its Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, a comprehensive strategy to ending homelessness through both public and private avenues. In partnership with OSPCD, the Somerville Homeless Providers Group (SHPG) serves as the lead entity for the Continuum of Care (CoC) planning process, as well as the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan. Much of the information provided in this section is provided through the SHPG and the Ten-Year Plan.

The SHPG is a coalition of housing developers, residents, local veterans services representatives, consumers, City officials, advocates and various social service providers, including those that serve the mentally ill, substance abusers, victims of domestic violence, youth and people with HIV/AIDS. The SHPG meets monthly throughout the year and is focused on identifying the needs of the homeless, educating one another and the community-at-large about homelessness, identifying strategies for prevention and intervention, determining, prioritizing, and advocating for resource needs to ensure the availability of services and affordable permanent housing, coordinating and integrating services and serving as a resource to the City of Somerville in evaluating funding and programming priorities, including CDBG, HOME and ESG.

In addition, the SHPG organizes the street count of the homeless, conducts an annual survey of all homeless programs, holds focus groups with the homeless, convenes sub population working groups, organizes the public hearing on proposed programs, and convenes the annual Homeless Summit.

While funds for transitional and permanent housing are prioritized, maintaining the existing shelter system is a key component in housing the city's homeless population. While it is beyond the financial resources of the City to ameliorate the conditions that lead to homelessness, it is not beyond our ability to prevent homelessness where we can. Further, the City can, within limits, address the infrastructure needs of existing homeless service providers that cater to the housing needs of our most vulnerable residents. A City program, Prevention and Stabilization Services (PASS), funded with HOME funds, provides 12 months of rental assistance to 12 individuals and families who are homeless or at risk for homelessness. The Wayside Youth and Family Network Transitional Housing Program provides rental assistance to 9 young individuals for up to 24 months. In addition, six (6) formerly homeless households are assisted under HUD's Shelter Plus Care program.

Somerville has four emergency homeless providers who operate five shelters with a combined bed capacity of 96 for both individuals and families. Shelter providers report that they are filled to capacity (and beyond) every night - even in the summer months. An unmet need of 109 beds was cited in the 2007 CoC submission.

In order to plan for the needs of the homeless, it is critical to know the number of homeless persons in the city and the circumstances in which the homeless find themselves. In order to determine this, the City and SHPG conduct a one night homeless street count every two years. A street and homeless facility count was conducted on January 30, 2007; Somerville reported that 248 people

were found to be homeless, 15 of who were living on the streets. The remainder were in emergency, transitional or permanent supported housing throughout the city.

This data may not represent an accurate count of homeless persons in Somerville on the night of the census. The count is, most likely, low for a variety of reasons and does not take into account any families sheltered in Somerville in nontraditional DTA placements (hotels, etc.), doubled up with family or friends, as well as women and children in domestic violence shelters or other "safe spaces."

The number of unsheltered chronically homeless individuals in Somerville has decreased slightly over the years from 25 in 2002 to 15 in 2007, but is still higher than the 5 reported in 2000. This reflects a growing trend across the state. The numbers of homeless have been growing while the supply of affordable housing has dwindled as housing costs soar. This is a result of a gridlock in the system: with limited affordable permanent housing units available, the homeless often languish in the shelters waiting for an available and appropriate housing unit. As a result, Somerville has made the creation of permanent housing a priority.

The populations with the greatest need are chronically homeless individuals with substance abuse and mental health problems. These populations require additional resources beyond housing to stay housed. An additional population that requires specific services is people who are homeless because they are victims of domestic abuse. The chart below documents the results of the homelessness census and highlights the subpopulations that are homeless as well.

| <b>TABLE 40: SOMERVILLE HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME COUNT</b>              |                  |                              |                    |              |
|---|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| <b>Indicate date of last point-in-time count:</b>                     |                  | <b>01/30/2007 Somerville</b> |                    |              |
| <b>Part 1: Homeless Population</b>                                    | <b>Sheltered</b> |                              | <b>Unsheltered</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|   | <b>Emergency</b> | <b>Transitional</b>          |                    |              |
| 1. Number of Households <u>with</u> Dependent Children:               | 9                | 24                           | 0                  | 33           |
| 1a. Total Number of Persons in these Households (adults and children) | 24               | 50                           | 0                  | 74           |
| 2. Number of Households <u>without</u> Dependent Children**           | 55               | 67                           | 15                 | 137          |
| 2a. Total Number of Persons in these Households                       | 55               | 67                           | 15                 | 137          |
| <b>Total Persons (Add Lines 1a and 2a):</b>                           | 79               | 117                          | 15                 | 211          |

| <b>Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations</b> | <b>Sheltered</b> | <b>Unsheltered</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|--|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| <b>(Adults only, except g. below)</b>  |                  |                    |              |
| a. Chronically Homeless                | 41               |                    | 41           |
| b. Severely Mentally Ill               | 31               | *                  | 31           |

|  |    |   |    |
|--|----|---|----|
| c. Chronic Substance Abuse                           | 34 | * | 34 |
| d. Veterans  | 1  | * | 1  |
| e. Persons with HIV/AIDS                             | 0  | * | 0  |
| f. Victims of Domestic Violence                      | 27 | * | 27 |
| g. Unaccompanied Youth (Under 18)                    | 0  | * | 0  |
| Source: Somerville 2007 Continuum of Care submission |    |   |    |

For the chronically homeless, access to the system is critical. For instance, chronic substance abusers can only access detox programs with a referral from the system. If they are unable to get in the door to the available shelters or service programs they may decide not to come back. For those individuals choosing recovery the lack of shelter is a serious problem. The SHPG and SPCD have worked tirelessly to maintain the limited services currently available. In spite of their best efforts, programs have been cut, affecting the safety net in place to catch the chronically homeless and move them toward permanent supported housing.

The City of Somerville and the SHPG have also considered the needs of the chronically homeless as part of their strategy for eliminating homelessness and have continued to incorporate their needs into their ongoing program design. The strategy for the chronically homeless has been to identify the gaps in their safety net (system of support) and design and implement programs that will result in long-term permanent solutions, thus achieving our ultimate goal of stabilizing these individuals in permanent housing.

Somerville has made ending chronic homelessness a high priority and has been working to implement this goal. The Somerville Homeless Coalition and Shelter, Inc., two local housing organizations, have both launched permanent housing programs (Better Homes I, II and III) for chronically homeless individuals over the past few years. Based on the Housing First method of providing housing for chronically homeless individuals with few to no strings attached, these programs provide intense case management to individuals placed in scattered-site apartments. These two organizations alone have been able to place 33 of Somerville's hardest to serve chronically homeless individuals in homes. In addition, another 17 people in families have been given permanent housing through these programs.

The charts below outlines Somerville's current inventory for the homeless, as well as the unmet need of the homeless in Somerville. Somerville currently has 325 beds for homeless families and individuals, with another 17 under development. However, the SHPG estimates a need for an additional 109 Emergency units, 93 Transitional units and 467 Permanent units as the ultimate goal.

| TABLE 41: EMERGENCY SHELTER HOUSING INVENTORY CHART                          |                          |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            |       |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------|----|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------|------------|-------|
| Provider Name  | Facility Name            | HMIS Part. Code | Number of Year-Round Beds in HMIS |   | Geo Code<br>☒               | Target Pop |    | Year-Round |           |             | Total Year-Round Beds | Other Beds |       |
|  |                          |                 |                                   |   |                             | A          | B  | Fam. Units | Fam. Beds | Indiv. Beds |                       | Seasonal   | O/V*  |
| Current Inventory pre January 31, 2006                                       |                          |                 | Ind.                              | Fam.  |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            |       |
| SHC  | Family Shelter           | PA              | 0                                 | 20  | 252250                      | FC         |    | 5          | 20        | 0           | 20                    | 0          | 0     |
| SHC  | Adult Shelter            | PA              | 16                                | 0   |                             | SMF        |    | 0          | 0         | 16          | 16                    | 0          | 0     |
| Catholic Charities   | St. Patrick’s            | PA              | 30                                | 0   |                             | SF         |    | 0          | 0         | 30          | 30                    | 0          | 0     |
| RESPOND  | RESPOND                  | DV              | 0                                 | 0   |                             | FC         | DV | 4          | 9         | 0           | 9                     | 0          | 0     |
| CASPAR, Inc.   | Emergency Service Center | PA              | 21                                | 0   |                             | SMF        |    | 0          | 0         | 21          | 21                    | 0          | 0     |
| SUBTOTALS:   |                          |                 | 67                                | 20  | SUBTOTAL CURRENT INVENTORY: |            | 9  | 29         | 67        | 96          | 0                     | 0          |       |
| New Inventory in Place in 2006   |                          |                 | Ind.                              | Fam.  |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            |       |
| NONE   |                          |                 | 0                                 | 0   |                             |            |    | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0                     | 0          | 0     |
| SUBTOTALS:   |                          |                 |                                   |   | SUBTOTAL NEW INVENTORY:     |            | 0  | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0                     | 0          |       |
| Inventory Under Development (Available for Occupancy after January 31, 2007) |                          |                 | Anticipated Occupancy Date        |   |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            |       |
| NONE   |                          |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |    | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0                     | 0          | 0     |
| SUBTOTAL INVENTORY UNDER DEVELOPMENT:  |                          |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |    | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0                     | 0          | 0     |
| Unmet Need   | UNMET NEED TOTALS:       |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |    | 12         | 33        | 76          | 109                   | 0          | 0     |
| Total Year-Round Beds—Individuals  |                          |                 |                                   | Total Year-Round Beds—Families                          |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            |       |
| 1. Total Year-Round Individual Emergency Shelter (ES) Beds:                  |                          |                 | 67                                | 6. Total Year-Round Family Emergency Shelter (ES) Beds: |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            | 29    |
| 2. Number of DV Year-Round Individual ES Beds:                               |                          |                 | 0                                 | 7. Number of DV Year-Round Family ES Beds:              |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            | 9     |
| 3. Subtotal, non-DV Year-Round Individual ES Beds:                           |                          |                 | 67                                | 8. Subtotal, non-DV Year-Round Family ES Beds :         |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            | 20    |
| 4. Total Year-Round Individual ES Beds in HMIS:                              |                          |                 | 67                                | 9. Total Year-Round Family ES Beds in HMIS              |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            | 20    |
| 5. HMIS Coverage—Individual ES Beds  |                          |                 | 100 %                             | 10. HMIS Coverage—Family ES Beds                        |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            | 100 % |
| Source: Somerville 2007 Continuum of Care submission                         |                          |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |    |            |           |             |                       |            |       |

| TABLE 42: TRANSITIONAL HOUSING INVENTORY CHART                                  |                    |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |   |            |           |             |                       |  |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------|---|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| Provider Name   | Facility Name*     | HMIS Part. Code | Number of Year-Round Beds in HMIS |   | Geo Code<br>☒               | Target Pop |   | Year-Round |           |             | Total Year-Round Beds |  |
|   |                    |                 |                                   |   |                             | A          | B | Fam. Units | Fam. Beds | Indiv. Beds |                       |  |
| Current Inventory pre January 31, 2006  |                    |                 | Ind.                              | Fam.  |                             |            |   |            |           |             |                       |  |
| CASPAR, Inc.  | Men’s Residential  | PA              | 44                                | 0   | 252250                      | SM         |   | 0          | 0         | 44          | 44                    |  |
| CASPAR, Inc,  | New Day            | PA              | 0                                 | 20  |                             | FC         |   | 10         | 20        | 0           | 20                    |  |
| Catholic Charities  | St. Catherine’s*   | PA              | 10                                | 0   |                             | SF         |   | 0          | 0         | 10          | 10                    |  |
| Wayside   | ShortStop – TLP    | D               | 0                                 | 0   |                             | YMF        |   | 0          | 0         | 6           | 6                     |  |
| Wayside   | ShortStop – THP*   | PA              | 9                                 | 0   |                             | YMF        |   | 0          | 0         | 9           | 9                     |  |
| Just-A-Start Corporation  | Next Step*         | PA              | 0                                 | 6   |                             | FC         |   | 3          | 6         | 0           | 6                     |  |
| Just-A-Start Corporation  | Just-A-Start House | PA              | 0                                 | 24  |                             | FC         |   | 11         | 24        | 0           | 24                    |  |
| SUBTOTALS:  |                    |                 | 63                                | 50  | SUBTOTAL CURRENT INVENTORY: |            |   | 24         | 50        | 69          | 119                   |  |
| New Inventory in Place in 2006  |                    |                 | Ind.                              | Fam.  |                             |            |   |            |           |             |                       |  |
| None  |                    |                 | 0                                 | 0   |                             |            |   | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0                     |  |
| SUBTOTALS:  |                    |                 | 0                                 | 0   | SUBTOTAL NEW INVENTORY:     |            |   | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0                     |  |
| Inventory Under Development<br>(Available for Occupancy after January 31, 2007) |                    |                 | Anticipated Occupancy Date        |   |                             |            |   |            |           |             |                       |  |
| Just-A-Start Corporation  | Just-A-Start House |                 | October 1, 2007                   |   |                             | FC         |   | 1          | 2         | 0           | 2                     |  |
| SUBTOTAL INVENTORY UNDER DEVELOPMENT:   |                    |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |   | 1          | 2         | 0           | 2                     |  |
| Unmet Need  | UNMET NEED TOTALS: |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |   | 13         | 38        | 55          | 93                    |  |
| Total Year-Round Beds—Individuals   |                    |                 |                                   | Total Year-Round Beds—Families                        |                             |            |   |            |           |             |                       |  |
| 1. Total Year-Round Individual Transitional Housing Beds:                       |                    | 69              |                                   | 6. Total Year-Round Family Transitional Housing Beds: |                             |            |   |            |           |             | 50                    |  |
| 2. Number of DV Year-Round Individual TH Beds:                                  |                    | 0               |                                   | 7. Number of DV Year-Round Family TH Beds:            |                             |            |   |            |           |             | 0                     |  |
| 3. Subtotal, non-DV Year-Round Individual TH Beds                               |                    | 69              |                                   | 8. Subtotal, non-DV Year-Round Family TH Beds         |                             |            |   |            |           |             | 50                    |  |
| 4. Total Year-Round Individual TH Beds in HMIS:                                 |                    | 63              |                                   | 9. Total Year-Round Family TH Beds in HMIS            |                             |            |   |            |           |             | 50                    |  |
| 5. HMIS Coverage—Individual TH Beds   |                    | 91 %            |                                   | 10. HMIS Coverage—Family TH Beds                      |                             |            |   |            |           |             | 100 %                 |  |
| Source: Somerville 2007 Continuum of Care submission                            |                    |                 |                                   |   |                             |            |   |            |           |             |                       |  |

| TABLE 43: PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INVENTORY CHART                       |                                 |                 |  |                                |                             |             |   |            |           |                 |                       |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|---|------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Provider Name  | Facility Name                   | HMIS Part. Code | Number of Year-Round Beds in HMIS                  |                                | Geo Code ☒                  | Target Pop. |   | Year-Round |           |                 | Total Year-Round Beds |
|  |                                 |                 |  |                                |                             | A           | B | Fam. Units | Fam. Beds | Indiv./C H Beds |                       |
| Current Inventory pre January 31, 2006                                       |                                 |                 | Ind.   | Fam.                           |                             |             |   |            |           |                 |                       |
| SCC  | Sewall Street SRO               | D               | 0  | 0                              | 252250                      | SMF         |   | 0          | 0         | 14/0            | 14                    |
| SHC  | PASS –scattered                 | PA              | 0  | 12                             |                             | SMF         |   | 6          | 12        | 0               | 12                    |
| SHC  | Shelter Plus Care*              | PA              | 5  | 6                              |                             | FC          |   | 3          | 6         | 5/0             | 11                    |
| SHC  | Better Homes *                  | PA              | 6  | 8                              |                             | SMF         |   | 3          | 8         | 6/3             | 14                    |
| Transition House   | Family Development Program*     | DV              | 6  | 2                              |                             | FC          |   | 1          | 2         | 6/1             | 8                     |
| Visiting Nurses Association  | Assisted Living, 259 Lowell St. | D               | 0  | 0                              |                             | SMF         |   | 0          | 0         | 10/0            | 10                    |
| Subtotals:   |                                 |                 | 17   | 28                             | Subtotal Current Inventory: |             |   | 13         | 28        | 41/4            | 69                    |
| New Inventory in Place in 2006   |                                 |                 | Ind.   | Fam.                           |                             |             |   |            |           |                 |                       |
| SHC  | Better Homes 2*                 | PA              | 14   | 9                              |                             | M           |   | 4          | 9         | 14/14           | 23                    |
| SHC  | Home For Good*                  | PA              | 0  | 2                              |                             | FC          |   | 2          | 5         | 0/0             | 5                     |
| Shelter Inc.   | Better Homes 3*                 | PA              | 13   | 0                              |                             | SMF         |   | 0          | 0         | 13/13           | 13                    |
| Subtotals:   |                                 |                 | 27   | 11                             | Subtotal New Inventory:     |             |   | 6          | 14        | 27/27           | 41                    |
| Inventory Under Development (Available for Occupancy after January 31, 2007) |                                 |                 | Anticipated Occupancy Date                         |                                |                             |             |   |            |           |                 |                       |
| Visiting Nurses Association  | Assisted Living, Conwell Sch.   | D               | June 2008  |                                |                             | SMF         |   | 0          | 0         | 15/0            | 15                    |
| Subtotal Inventory Under Development:  |                                 |                 |  |                                |                             |             |   | 0          | 0         | 15/0            | 15                    |
| Unmet Need   | Unmet Need Totals:              |                 |  |                                |                             |             |   | 37         | 140       | 327/173         | 467                   |
| Total Year-Round Beds—Individuals  |                                 |                 |  | Total Year-Round Beds—Families |                             |             |   |            |           |                 |                       |
| 1. Total Year-Round Individual Permanent Housing Beds:                       |                                 | 68              | 6. Total Year-Round Family Permanent Housing Beds: |                                |                             |             |   |            |           | 42              |                       |
| 2. Number of DV Year-Round Individual PH Beds:                               |                                 | 6               | 7. Number of DV Year-Round Family PH Beds:         |                                |                             |             |   |            |           | 2               |                       |
| 3. Subtotal, non-DV Year-Round Individual PH Beds                            |                                 | 62              | 8. Subtotal, non-DV Year-Round Family PH Beds      |                                |                             |             |   |            |           | 40              |                       |
| 4. Total Year-Round Individual PH Beds in HMIS:                              |                                 | 44              | 9. Total Year-Round Family PH Beds in HMIS         |                                |                             |             |   |            |           | 39              |                       |
| 5. HMIS Coverage—Individual PH Beds  |                                 | 71%             | 10. HMIS Coverage—Family PH Beds                   |                                |                             |             |   |            |           | 98%             |                       |
| Source: Somerville 2007 Continuum of Care submission                         |                                 |                 |  |                                |                             |             |   |            |           |                 |                       |



In addition to housing, Somerville has a wide variety of supportive services for the homeless and non-homeless population. The reasons that people become homeless are numerous and if these problems are not addressed, they will fall back into homelessness once again.

Prevention of homelessness is a high priority for Somerville. The Somerville Housing Authority has 74,421 families on its waiting lists for public housing and Section 8 vouchers. While not all Somerville residents, these numbers are large and these households are presumably all at risk of homelessness.

Individuals and families at imminent risk of homelessness have many resources in Somerville. Homelessness prevention takes several forms as highlighted in the chart below. Rental assistance is provided by the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund and other local agencies to help tenants who have experienced a loss of income or rent increase. Assistance with security deposits and moving expenses is also available for tenants who must leave their current housing situation. The Community Action Agency and Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services obtain a roster of evictions from the local court each week to facilitate outreach to these tenants and to either mediate a solution to keep them housed or connect them with better housing options. Just A Start does tenant/landlord mediation in an effort to resolve problems before they lead to an eviction.

It is more cost effective to house and keep people housed than to serve them when homeless. A recent study found that the average chronically homeless person costs at least \$40,440 in public resources each year.<sup>6</sup> If that person were in permanent supportive housing, i.e., housed with available supportive social services such as health care, mental health care, substance abuse services, etc., the annual savings per housed person would be \$16,282.<sup>7</sup>

The organizations of the SHPG and the City work very closely together to ensure that clients of any one agency are receiving the necessary services available through all other organizations. The list below highlights the organizations in Somerville working on the full continuum of care for homeless and at-risk families and individuals and their services.

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<sup>6</sup> "Home Again: A 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County" Action Plan, Residents Commission on Homelessness, Portland, Oregon, December 2004, page 19.

<sup>7</sup> "Home Again: A 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County" Action Plan, Residents Commission on Homelessness, Portland, Oregon, December 2004, page 19.

**TABLE 44: HOMELESS SERVICES IN SOMERVILLE**

| (1)<br><br>Provider Organizations              | (2)<br>Prevention   |                   |                      |                     |                  | (3)<br>Outreach |               |                 | (4)<br>Supportive Services |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|----------------|
|  | Mortgage Assistance | Rental Assistance | Utilities Assistance | Counseling/Advocacy | Legal Assistance | Street Outreach | Mobile Clinic | Law Enforcement | Case Management            | Life Skills | Alcohol & Drug Abuse | Mental Health Counseling | Healthcare | HIV/AIDS | Education | Employment | Child Care | Transportation |
| Cambridge Health Alliance                      |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             | X                    | X                        | X          | X        |           |            |            |                |
| Cambridge & Somerville Legal Services          |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               |                 |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| CASPAR, Inc.                                   |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  | X               |               |                 | X                          | X           | X                    |                          |            |          | X         | X          |            | X              |
| Catholic Charities                             |                     | X                 | X                    |                     |                  |                 |               |                 | X                          | X           | X                    | X                        | X          |          |           |            |            | X              |
| City of Somerville Health Department           |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             | X                    | X                        | X          | X        |           |            |            |                |
| City of Somerville Housing Division            | X                   | X                 | X                    | X                   |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| City of Somerville School Department           |                     |                   |                      | X                   |                  | X               |               |                 | X                          |             |                      |                          |            |          | X         |            |            |                |
| Commission on Human Rights                     |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               | X               |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Community Action Agency of Somerville          |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               |                 | X                          |             |                      |                          |            |          | X         |            |            |                |
| Disability Commission                          |                     |                   |                      | X                   |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Fair Housing Commission                        |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               |                 |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Family Center                                  |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Health Care for the Homeless                   |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  |                 | X             |                 | X                          |             | X                    | X                        | X          | X        |           |            |            |                |
| Just-A-Start Corporation                       |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  |                 |               |                 | X                          | X           |                      | X                        |            |          |           |            |            | X              |
| Massachusetts Alliance for Portuguese Speakers |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               |                 | X                          |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| RESPOND, Inc.                                  |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               |                 | X                          |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Shelter, Inc.                                  |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               |                 | X                          | X           |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Somerville Homeless Coalition, Inc.            |                     |                   |                      | X                   |                  |                 |               |                 | X                          | X           |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            | X              |
| Somerville Mental Health Association           |                     |                   |                      | X                   |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             | X                    | X                        |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Somerville Community Corporation               |                     | X                 | X                    | X                   |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          | X         |            |            |                |
| Somerville Police                              |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  |                 |               | X               |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          |           |            |            |                |
| Transition House                               |                     |                   |                      | X                   |                  |                 |               |                 | X                          | X           | X                    | X                        |            |          |           | X          | X          |                |
| Tufts University                               |                     |                   |                      |                     |                  |                 |               |                 |                            |             |                      |                          |            |          | X         |            |            |                |
| Wayside Youth & Family Support Network         |                     |                   |                      | X                   |                  |                 |               |                 | X                          | X           | X                    | X                        |            | X        |           | X          |            | X              |
| National Student Partnership                   |                     |                   |                      | X                   | X                |                 |               |                 | X                          |             |                      |                          |            |          |           | X          |            |                |

Source: Somerville 2007 Continuum of Care submission

## **8. Homeless Strategic Plan**

Somerville, in conjunction with the SHPG, has created a 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. This plan identifies the nine (9) goals and strategies that will end both Chronic and Family Homelessness. The Mayor's Task Force to End Homelessness (the lead group for the creation of the plan) has adopted principles and values that it believes constitute the essential foundation for all services and housing for homeless people. These include the following:

### **Homeless Persons**

- The homeless population is diverse and has varied needs.
- Many currently and chronically homeless persons have both the desire and ability to make positive contributions to the economic and social well being of Somerville.
- Homeless men, women and children should retain the same dignity and deserve the same respect accorded to those with homes.
- Significant numbers of Somerville residents live with a substantial and chronic risk of becoming homeless due to the high cost of housing, lack of economic opportunity, low wages in the service industry, untreated disabling conditions, and a limited supply of safe, affordable housing across the Boston metropolitan area.

### **Housing**

- Homelessness is recognized principally as a lack of appropriate housing.
- Appropriate housing is housing that is safe, affordable, and meets basic quality standards.
- Housing is a basic human need that society should provide for all people.
- Housing should foster the maximum independence of individuals and families.
- Communities have within themselves the resources to develop safe and affordable housing in ways that share responsibility and honor contributions across the spectrum of the city. All segments of the community need the opportunity to participate.

### **Services**

- Services should be designed to meet the particular needs of individuals and families.
- Services should be targeted to assist homeless sub-populations that have special needs.
- Services should promote the building of skills necessary for independent living, and, where skills are not sufficient, supports should be provided to individuals to offset skill deficits.
- The acceptance of services should be voluntary; availability of housing should not be contingent upon acceptance of services.
- Services should build upon the strengths of individuals.
- Services should have as their goal the prevention of repeat episodes of homelessness.
- Services are most effective when provided as early as possible to prevent people from becoming homeless or chronically homeless.

The Nine Goals, with corresponding strategies, action steps and measurable outcomes, of the Plan are as follows:

- Increase permanent housing stock for the chronically homeless and increase number of homeless persons remaining in permanent housing.
- Transitional housing that is targeted to meet the needs of specific sub-populations and that enables an increased percentage of homeless persons to move from transitional to permanent housing.
- Increase percentage of homeless persons gaining employment
- Determine the prevalence of chronic homelessness in Somerville
- Improve Coordination of Services for Homeless Population by ensuring that Continuum of Care has a functional HMIS system.
- Develop a central prevention-oriented case management system for individuals and families at risk of homelessness so that basic services are accessible at one location.
- Increase awareness of Homelessness in community and support for solutions
- Prevent those at risk of homelessness and transient and episodically homeless individuals from becoming chronically homeless through early intervention.
- Provide appropriate housing options for severely disabled homeless.

The City and the SHPG are working very closely to implement the strategies and action steps to achieve the goals highlighted above.

### **Prioritization of Needs**

#### ***a. Methodology of Prioritization***

- i. Methodology: As the Housing Needs section indicates, the City of Somerville's low and moderate-income population has a wide range of housing needs that need to be addressed over the next five years. With limited resources and staff capacity, it is imperative to prioritize these needs so as to most effectively and efficiently address the most pressing needs. Through a thorough analysis of the housing needs assessment, comments from the public, focus groups and study of past programs and projects, the Housing Division has been able to create a prioritization of needs.
- ii. Studies: In prioritizing, several studies that cover the range of needs have been utilized. They include:

Somerville Housing Needs Assessment 2005: This study undertaken by the City of Somerville Housing Division in the Fall of 2005 analyzed the housing market and housing costs and identified the most significant needs for housing in Somerville. It also identified key strategies for addressing these needs and serves as a guide for housing policies and

programs. This document, and updates of the data presented within, served as the main source in formulating the 5-Year Consolidated Plan.

Assessment of Impediments to Fair Housing: This study also conducted in 2005 served as an update to an earlier assessment conducted in 2000. The Assessment discusses the major barriers to housing experienced by Somerville's low and moderate-income population with a specific focus on special populations such as the elderly, disabled, and other protected classes including racial and ethnic minorities. It identifies the main areas of discrimination in Somerville and ways to combat it.

McKinney-Vento Continuum of Care Application 2007: The City of Somerville Continuum of Care (CoC) applies for HUD funds for the homeless population each year. The application requires the CoC to assess the prevalence of homelessness and the needs of this population. In conjunction with the application, the CoC conducts an annual homeless census and homeless shelter survey. This document was instrumental in identifying the homeless needs and formulating priorities.

The Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2006-2007: This study, conducted by The Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University, is an annual assessment of housing in the Greater Boston Region, which includes Somerville. It highlights changes in the housing market conditions on an annual basis, providing the most up to date assessment of the status of housing in the area. In particular, this study is useful in highlighting disparities between incomes and housing costs and in which areas communities must focus in order to increase affordability.

- iii. **Public Process:** As part of the planning for the Consolidated Plan, the City held three public hearings to present its initial data findings. In addition, a focus group was held on October 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss both housing and homelessness. Ten local housing and homelessness providers attended the focus group. Housing Division staff presented accomplishments of the past five years, housing and homelessness needs data collected via the census and the studies mentioned above, and suggested strategies for the next five years. The participants provided feedback and insight and these comments have helped to solidify the prioritization of needs presented here. Minutes from the focus group are included here in Appendix XX. In addition, focus group members were encouraged to email Housing Division staff with follow up comments and feedback for inclusion in the planning process.

***b. Matrix of Needs Indicating Priority: See CPMP Needs Worksheets for more detail***

| TABLE 45: HOUSING NEEDS                       |                |
|---|----------------|
| Need  | Priority Level |
| Rehabilitation of Aging Housing Stock         | High           |
| Lead Abatement                                | High           |
| Decrease Cost Burden of Low Income Households | High           |
| Housing for Elderly                           | Medium         |
| Housing for Disabled                          | Medium         |
| Homeownership Assistance                      | Medium         |
| Prevent Homelessness                          | Medium         |

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| End Chronic Homelessness | High   |
| Prevent Foreclosure      | Medium |

### Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs

#### ***a. Quantitative Gap Analysis***

See the CPMP tool worksheets for a comparison of the total needs with what currently exists. This matrix serves as the gap analysis.

#### ***b. Additional Obstacles***

Despite Somerville's strong commitment to housing, several obstacles present barriers to preserving and developing adequate affordable housing. These barriers are beyond the control of the City, but must be acknowledged and addressed when formulating strategies.

High Cost of Real Estate: Despite a slight softening of the housing market in the past year, housing and real estate in general remains extremely high in Somerville. The price of land in Somerville remains high due to the limited supply and the costs of construction remain high due to increased costs of building supplies. In response, for-profit developers have been producing high-end luxury housing in order to ensure a profit in such a high-cost market. Because creation of affordable housing does not cost less to build, non-profit developers have had to stitch together additional funding sources to make affordable housing development feasible, making their projects more complicated and at risk of failure if one source does not come through.

Income versus Housing Cost Gap: Somerville has made efforts to make housing more affordable to low and moderate-income households. However, incomes in the area have not kept pace with the increase in housing costs and despite the City's best efforts, much of Somerville's population is still unable to afford housing in the city. The solution for many is to move further out of the Boston area to find more affordable rents and sales prices. Without an increase in incomes, households will not be able to afford to live and remain in Somerville.

Brownfield Sites: The majority of the remaining buildable land sites in the city are Brownfield sites, which require environmental remediation in order to be habitable. In the current housing market, with high costs of construction, Brownfields add another layer of expense that many non-profit developers of affordable housing cannot undertake.

### Strategies

#### ***a. Vision***

To provide safe, affordable and livable housing and to create appropriate housing opportunities for the full range of Somerville residents.

#### ***b. Goals***

1. Maintain and Improve Housing Stock

2. Create New Affordable Housing
3. Increase Affordability of Rental Housing
4. Increase Affordable Homeownership
5. Prevent and End Homelessness
6. Remove Barriers to Housing

**c. Strategies**

- 1.1 Preservation of Expiring Use Properties: Many properties built in the city are currently affordable but have contracts that will expire and leave them vulnerable to increased rents or condominium conversions. Currently, there are twenty-two (22) different expiring use buildings in Somerville representing a total of 152 units that are due to expire during the period of time covered by this Consolidated Plan. OSPCD has contracted for the services of a nationally recognized consultant with particular experience doing HUD and other mortgage and Section 8 contract workouts for Expiring Use developments to work with the City and our community partners to preserve these units as affordable.
- 1.2 Prevention of Foreclosures: In response to rising foreclosures (according to Warren Group data, foreclosures in Somerville have tripled over the past three years), the Housing Division, with the assistance of an intern from the Kennedy School of Government, is exploring some of the root causes of and strategies to prevent foreclosure. The City will explore the possibility of creating a revolving loan fund for homeowners who need assistance in paying their mortgage. The City will also work on increasing education efforts around avoiding foreclosure and will work with local banks and mortgage companies to provide post-purchase counseling.
- 1.3 Housing Rehabilitation Program: Since 1991, the City of Somerville has successfully operated housing rehabilitation programs that provide funding to low and moderate-income residents for housing rehabilitation and heating system replacement. OSPCD is currently monitoring 140 ownership units that have received assistance. Every participating property has an affordability period during which low and moderate-income owners agree to maintain the property as their primary residence, serving to preserve the affordability of Somerville's housing stock. The City is committed to continuing this program over the next five years.
- 1.4 Lead Hazard Abatement Program: Since 2000, the City has identified the need for lead-safe housing in the community and has prioritized the abatement of lead paint hazards as part of an overall affordable housing strategy. As a recipient of a \$6.8 Million lead abatement award, the City will provide 0% interest loans to low and moderate-income homeowners to abate lead in both ownership and rental properties throughout the city. The City is committed to the continuation of the abatement of lead paint hazards as a priority over the next five years.
- 2.1 Elderly Housing: The City of Somerville has an aging population and a strong need to create housing opportunities for Somerville residents to age within the City. The Somerville Housing Authority and the Visiting Nurse Association both provide significant housing opportunities for both independent elders and those needing additional assistance. Over the next five years, the City will see completion of 99 units at the Assisted Living Facility built by the VNA at the former Conwell School site. In addition, the SHA will complete the demolition of the former Capen Court project and replace it with 95 units of more suitable independent elder housing.

The City will also continue to explore further partnerships to increase the number of units set aside for elders throughout the city.

- 2.2 Homeownership Units: As Somerville is predominated by rental housing, homeownership is particularly difficult to achieve. For low and moderate-income households, it is particularly hard to find properties that are affordable. The City will work with local non-profit developers to build new homeownership units throughout the City. In particular, the Somerville Community Corporation will be building 60 units of housing at the former St. Polycarp's church site. 20 of these will be restricted to low and moderate-income buyers. The remaining 40 units will be sold at market-rate but will also increase the stock of homeownership units throughout the City.
- 2.3 Family Size Rental Housing: In an effort to prevent displacement, the City is focused on providing housing opportunities to Somerville's larger families. Decreased school enrollments and decreasing family size both indicate that Somerville's larger families are finding it harder to remain. The City will work to provide rental housing units that are adequate in size and affordable to larger families with children. At the St. Polycarp's village, many of the 24 rental units will be 2 and 3 bedroom units and the City will continue to explore opportunities to fund housing developments for families over the next five years.
- 3.1 Housing Rehabilitation Program for Rental Units: As mentioned above, the City has operated a housing rehabilitation program since 1991. This program provides low interest loans not only to homeowners for their own units, but is also available to homeowners whose tenants are of low and moderate-incomes. Owners taking advantage of these programs agree to maintain their rent at an affordable rate, thereby increasing the amount of affordable rental property throughout the City. The City will continue to market and operate this program throughout the next five years.
- 3.2 Tenancy Stabilization Program: The City of Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund is an important asset operating in the city. In 2007, the Trust began funding of a pilot program operated by the Somerville Community Corporation providing rental assistance to low-income households. The Trust intends to continue funding this program throughout the next five years. Participants of the program receive funds to pay rent arrearages, moving expenses, security deposits or other housing related costs. They agree to work closely with a case manager to access supportive services and mainstream resources to decrease dependence on rental assistance in the future.
- 3.3 PASS and Wayside Rental Subsidies: The City provides rental assistance to two groups of individuals and families through HOME funds. The PASS program allows formerly homeless families and individuals to move into scattered site permanent housing rental units. The Wayside program provides housing in a congregate setting to homeless 18-21 years olds. Both programs require participants to pay 30% of their income towards housing costs and connect participants with case managers to address the underlying causes of homelessness.
- 4.1 Inclusionary Housing: The purpose of Somerville's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance is to retain and encourage housing opportunities for people of all income levels, and to mitigate the impacts of development of market-rate housing on the supply and cost of low and moderate income housing. Any private developer wishing to develop eight or more market rate housing units (home ownership or rental) must make 12.5% of the units available to low or moderate-income



households as outlined in Article 13 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. The City continues to update and revise the ordinance to accurately reflect the intention of the ordinance and changing market conditions.

By ranking this as a high priority strategy the City recognizes the importance of the contribution that can be made by for profit housing developers in increasing the supply of both rental and homeownership affordable housing units in the city. Since its inception, the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance has provided for (72) affordable housing units that are restricted in perpetuity. Federal Realty Investment Trust, developers of the Assembly Square area, are developing a mixed-use urban village to include 2,100 residential housing units, offices, retail, hotel and entertainment businesses to be built near a future Orange line transit stop of which over (263) residential units will be made affordable to individuals and families.

- 4.2 Closing Cost Assistance: The City's Closing Cost Assistance programs provide up to \$5,000 to low and moderate-income households to assist them in the purchase of a home in Somerville. Provided in the form of a forgivable loan, this program serves to increase the rate of homeownership throughout the city, while simultaneously increasing housing opportunities for low and moderate-income households. The SAHTF also contributes funds to this program and the City expects to serve 15 households per year over the next five years through both programs.
- 4.3 Down Payment Assistance: For households with further barriers to purchasing a home, the City's Down Payment Assistance program is a key strategy. The program provides up to 15% of the purchase price of a home to low-income households. The assistance takes the form of a 0% interest deferred loan and participants agree to maintain the home as their primary residence. In addition, participants purchasing multi-family homes agree to maintain the rental units as affordable to low-income households as well. The City holds an equity position in the home and receives a return on the investment upon the sale or transfer of the home. The City expects to assist 1-2 households per year over the next five years.
- 4.4 Homebuyer Education: In addition to monetary assistance, first-time homebuyers need technical support in the purchase of a home. The City of Somerville has operated a homebuyer-training program since 1991 that is widely considered to be one of the most successful programs of its type operating in the Commonwealth. Since its inception over 3000 potential homeowners have participated in the program. Home Buyer training classes were offered with classes designed to help potential first-time homebuyers understand the steps in the home buying process. In addition to qualified housing staff members who conducted the training, guest speakers from public and private industry who represent the banking, real estate, legal and accounting fields, as well as various City agencies, provided valuable information on resources currently available. Graduates of the program receive a certification of participation that they can use to access special mortgage products and other opportunities. The Somerville Housing Authority has recently taken over the duties of providing the training, but the City is committed to supporting these classes over the next five years and working closely with the SHA to improve and expand upon this resource.
- 5.1 Continuum of Care Programs: The City of Somerville, in conjunction with the Somerville Homeless Providers Group (SHPG), applies for and receives close to \$1.5 million in competitive grant funds to operate a variety of programs for the city's homeless population. These programs

provide permanent and transitional housing and supportive services. The City contracts for the services of a consultant each year to ensure the continued award of these funds and is committed to continuing the support for these programs over the next five years.

- 5.2 Creation of New Permanent Supportive Housing Units: Despite the efforts of the SHPG and the City to prevent homelessness and provide adequate affordable housing, certain populations require additional assistance. In particular, persons with substance abuse problems and mental disabilities with long histories of homelessness, chronic homeless, may be unable to live in a scattered site apartment on their own. The City will explore partnering with a non-profit developer and supportive service organization to create a housing development specifically for the chronically homeless in the next five years.
- 5.3 Homelessness Prevention Programs: Prevention of homelessness is a critical strategy for the City. Low-income households who are unable to pay their rent are often susceptible to homelessness and require significantly more supportive services once homeless than when able to maintain their housing. To this end, the City supports many prevention programs including tenant/landlord mediation, eviction prevention in the courts, case management and rental assistance. The City commits to continuing this strategy over the next five years.
- 6.1 Fair Housing: The City has had a Fair Housing Commission since 1989. This organization is charged with ensuring equal and fair access to housing for all of Somerville's residents. The Fair Housing Commission has recently been awarded \$10,000 over three years to increase awareness of and prevent discrimination against families with children due to the presence of lead in homes. The Commission will work over the next five years to conduct outreach to landlords and tenants, provide trainings and investigate claims of discrimination.
- 6.2 Lead Poisoning Outreach and Education: In addition to the Fair Housing Commission, the Lead Hazard Abatement program provides funds to educate the public on the dangers of lead paint to children 6 and under. This program conducts education sessions in schools and with local service providers to increase awareness of the danger of lead as well as to teach families tools to avoid poisoning. In conjunction with the Lead Abatement program, this strategy will decrease the incidence of lead poisoning in Somerville's children. The City will increase its outreach activities over the next five years.
- 6.3 Tenant/Landlord Rights Education: A key barrier to housing for many is a lack of understanding about tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities. The City has developed "The Tenant's Helper" in conjunction with the Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services, a local legal organization, and distributes it throughout the City to improve understanding of these concepts. This leads to fewer incidents of discrimination, fewer evictions and better relationships. The City updates the document annually and will continue to do so throughout the next five years.
- 6.4 Accessible and/or Adaptable Housing for Persons with Disabilities: Persons with disabilities are at an increased disadvantage when looking for housing. Most of Somerville's housing is older and not easily accessible. The City is committed to increasing the number of housing units in the city that are both accessible and adaptable for persons with disabilities. This will be attained

through partnerships with local non-profit developers as well as strict enforcement of ADA requirements in all housing developments.

### Performance Measures

In the next five years, the Housing Division hopes to expand upon the accomplishments achieved over the past five years and continue efforts towards making Somerville a more affordable and accessible place for its residents. To this end, OSPCD has created a matrix of goals and outcomes by which to measure its success.

| <b>TABLE 46: HOUSING PERFORMANCE MEASURES (2008-2013)</b> |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Strategy</b>   | <b>Benchmarks</b>   |
| 1. Maintain and Improve Existing Housing Stock            | 1.1 Continue preservation of expiring use properties throughout city to prevent displacement  | 1.1.1 Preserve 95% of 152 units at risk of expiration in next 5 years                           |
|   | 1.2 Evaluate prevalence of and prevent foreclosures throughout city particularly among low and moderate income households                       | 1.2.1 Develop and implement new foreclosure prevention program at City level                    |
|   | 1.3 Continue Housing Rehabilitation Program by providing low-interest deferred loans to bring properties in Housing Quality Standard compliance | 1.3.1 Rehabilitate 40 units per year  |
|   | 1.4 Continue Lead Hazard Abatement program to provide 0% interest loans to reduce incidence of lead poisoning                                   | 1.4.1 Abate 30 units per year   |
|   | 1.5 Explore expansion of current Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Guidelines for utilizing resources through a visioning process             | 1.5.1 Prepare a report to the SAHTF for consideration within two years                          |
| 2. Create New Affordable Housing                          | 2.1 Encourage creation of new housing for elders, both assisted and independent   | 2.1.1 Create 100 new units in 5 years   |
|   | 2.2 Encourage creation of additional homeownership units through funding of new development projects by local non-profits                       | 2.2.1 Create 85 new units in 5 years  |
|   | 2.3 Encourage creation of new family size rental units to help families remain in Somerville  | 2.3.1 Create 50 new units in 5 years  |
|   | 2.4 Study Effectiveness of existing Inclusionary Housing Ordinance in creating desired unit mix   | 2.4.1 Amend Ordinance to reflect housing mix priority of City based on findings within one year |
|   | 2.5 Explore implementation of a "Reverse Mortgage Program"  | 2.5.1 Prepare report outlining program feasibility within four years                            |

| <b>TABLE 46: HOUSING PERFORMANCE MEASURES (2008-2013)</b> |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Strategy</b>   | <b>Benchmarks</b>  |
|   | 2.6 Explore partnership with City Pension and or other funds to capitalize a program to expand housing production                                   | 2.6.1 Prepare report outlining partnership feasibility within four years                                 |
| 3. Increase Affordability of Rental Housing               | 3.1 Continue Housing Rehabilitation program for rental units by providing loans to landlords who agree to keep rental prices affordable             | 3.1.1 Rehabilitate 30 rental units for income-eligible renters per year                                  |
|   | 3.2 Continue Tenancy Stabilization program through SAHTF to provide rental assistance and case management to tenants at risk of eviction            | 3.2.1 Assist and stabilize 25 tenants at risk of eviction  |
|   | 3.3 Continue providing PASS and Wayside Rental Subsidies to formerly homeless and young adults to stabilize their housing situation                 | 3.3.1 Assist 30 tenants per year with rental assistance  |
| 4. Increase Affordable Homeownership                      | 4.1 Improve and implement Inclusionary Housing Ordinance to increase affordable homeownership units in city at minimal costs                        | 4.1.1 Create 200 new units of affordable housing in 5 years (includes Assembly Square development)       |
|   | 4.2 Continue administering Closing Cost Assistance to help income-eligible first-time homebuyers purchase a home with a 0% interest forgivable loan | 4.2.1 Assist 15 First-time Homebuyers with their Closing Costs   |
|   | 4.3 Continue administering Down Payment Assistance program to help first-time homebuyers purchase a home with a 0% interest deferred loan           | 4.3.1 Assist 2 First-time Homebuyers per year with their Down Payment                                    |
|   | 4.4 Support the SHA Homebuyer Education program to increase ability of first-time homebuyers to purchase homes                                      | 4.4.1 Educate 150 potential homebuyers per year through the SHA program                                  |
| 5. Prevent and End Homelessness                           | 5.1 Continue to support and seek funding for Continuum of Care programs through the HUD McKinney Grant Awards                                       | 5.1.1 Obtain \$1.5 million per year for programs for the Homeless  |
|   | 5.2 Support and encourage creation of new permanent supportive housing units to work towards ending chronic homelessness                            | 5.2.1 Create 5 new units of housing for the chronically homeless per year                                |
|   | 5.3 Support and fund homelessness prevention programs through mediation, eviction legal representation and case management                          | 5.3.1 Prevent 100 evictions per year   |
| 6. Remove Barriers to Housing                             | 6.1 Staff and provide support to the Fair Housing Commission to prevent housing discrimination  | 6.1.1 Assist in 3 complaint filings per year and hold 1 training per year and conduct quarterly outreach |

| <b>TABLE 46: HOUSING PERFORMANCE MEASURES (2008-2013)</b> |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Strategy</b>  | <b>Benchmarks</b>   |
|   | 6.2 Continue and expand Lead Poisoning Outreach and Education to reduce incidence of lead poisoning and housing discrimination                               | 6.2.1 Attend 10 events per year and conduct quarterly outreach  |
|   | 6.3 Provide tenant/landlord rights education to Somerville landlords and residents to reduce incidence of eviction, discrimination and improve relationships | 6.3.1 Assist 250 tenants and landlords per year with their rights and responsibilities<br>6.3.2 Update the Tenant's Helper Twice in 5 years   |
|   | 6.4 Encourage development of accessible and/or adaptable housing for persons with disabilities   | 6.4.1 Minimum of 10% of newly constructed units accessible to persons with disabilities<br>6.4.2 Create 6 units of housing for persons with mental disabilities<br>6.4.3 Hold 1 training per year on regulations for compliance with state/federal ADA/Section 504 requirements |

| <b>TABLE 47: HOUSING GOALS</b>                          |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>5 Year Goal</b>                                      | <b>Units</b> |
| Create Affordable Housing                               | 200          |
| Create Housing for Chronically Homeless                 | 25           |
| Avoid Poverty Concentration through Housing Development | 200          |
| Increase Homeownership                                  | 50           |
| Prevent Foreclosure                                     | 50           |
| Rehabilitate Housing Stock                              | 350          |

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**SECTION TWO:**

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT**

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## I. Introduction

### *History of Economic Development in Somerville*

The Late Industrial Period (1870-1915) was a time of phenomenal growth for Somerville in all spheres including civic and commercial ventures. Infrastructure such as water lines and an electric substation were established and connected to surrounding towns. In 1870, brick production in Somerville was at its peak. Somerville's 12 brickyards produced over 24 million bricks annually. However, only a few short years later, by 1885, only two yards remained and most yards were forced out of business by rising land values and the cost of new equipment which competition demanded.



**FIGURE 1: UNION SQUARE MURAL**  
Source: City of Somerville 2007

The meat packing and slaughtering industry grew rapidly in both Somerville and the state in the late 19th and early 20th century. Somerville was at the center of the slaughtering industry, housing 70% of the state industry total in 1909. The rendering of tallow and the production of soap was a natural offshoot of the meat packing business, and Norton Soap Works located near the meat packing plants.

One of the results of the City's phenomenal growth was a strong building industry. Almost half of all of Somerville's residential construction took place

between 1890 and 1900. Many architectural, woodworking, furniture, and other related companies were established during this period.

The period between 1900 and 1930 was one of growth for most commercial areas and squares. Although Union Square and Davis Square continued to be the largest commercial areas, smaller areas such as Ball Square, Magoun Square, Teele Square, and lower Broadway were developed with one or two story masonry commercial buildings. Retail development also spread. Banking facilities, which had formerly been located only in Union or Davis Square, began opening branches in some of the smaller squares. Another important commercial enterprise was automobile service. In 1914, the Ford Motor Company established an assembly plant in Cambridge and, by 1920 there were 24 separate automobile related headings in the City business directory.

During the Early Modern Period (1915-1930), Somerville's industries consolidated rather than expanded and the period's most important enterprises were meat packing, dairy processing, ice and food distribution, and car assembly. Somerville's location adjacent to Boston and its proximity to rail and road transportation made it an ideal location for distribution facilities.

#### *Inner Belt District / Brickbottom*

The area within the Inner Belt District was filled with rail yards and tracks with the growing railroad industry. From 1900 to 1930, the only development in the district was along the south side of Washington Street. During this time, there was a small mix of residential and industrial uses. Some

factories included production of milk, sawdust, vinegar, steel and iron. Separating the various factories were four streets, which were lined with tenement buildings and some free standing residential buildings. It is likely the residential buildings provided homes for the workers of the various factories.

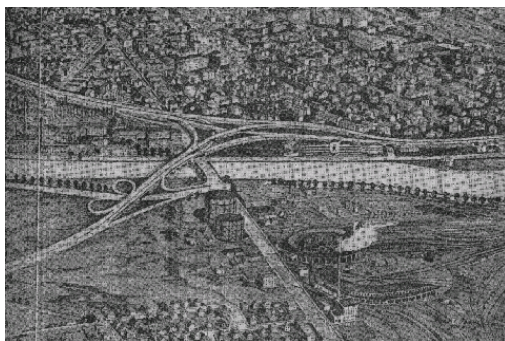
From the 1930's to the 1950's, the small strip of development evolved into exclusively industrial use. The factories continued to produce similar products; however their physical footprint grew substantially. The four streets were removed and replaced with more factories. The only buildings that still exist today are two structures that belonged to the old HP Hood & Sons Ice Cream Factory. The HP Hood buildings were erected between 1936 and 1942 and are only accessible through the City of Boston.



It was not until the late 1960's that the Inner Belt District was advertised as a modern industrial center. This was the first "modern" vision for the area that once housed the wasteland of railroad lines. At the time, the proposal to build an interstate connection known as the "Inner Belt" through Somerville, Cambridge and Boston was in the process of being implemented. The state had gone as far as buying much of the right of way and clearing houses and other structures for the proposed highway. With the anticipation of the Inner Belt, the Inner Belt District was advertised in a real estate booklet as a "unique parcel [which] combines the advantages of a suburban type development in a downtown location."<sup>1</sup> The assets of the district such as accessibility, proximity to Boston and the metropolitan region, auto-designed roads, and the large surrounding work force, were marketed to potential investors.

**FIGURE 2: INNER BELT**  
Source: City of Somerville 2007

The Inner Belt Expressway (I-695) went through many years of intense debate and controversy at a state and local level. First conceived in 1930 in a transportation report, the Inner Belt Expressway



**FIGURE 3: PROPOSED INNER BELT EXPRESSWAY**  
Source: Google Images 2007

would be an elevated inner ring highway connected to the Central Artery and cutting through Somerville, Cambridge, Brookline and Boston. The highway was later adopted as part of the 1948 Master Highway Plan. In the 1950's, most of the historical houses in Brickbottom were demolished in anticipation of the project. During the 1960's all planning for Somerville anticipated the Inner Belt Expressway plan, leading to the birth of the Inner Belt Industrial Center and the Redevelopment Plan for Washington Street. However, it was not until 1969 preliminary contracts and construction began for the Expressway. The path was cleared for the first one-mile stretch that came within 1/10 of a mile of Somerville and a \$22 million dollar

<sup>1</sup> Inner Belt Existing Conditions study



contract was awarded to begin the construction. Large-scale public protests claiming that the highway was not necessary for the metropolitan area soon arose and the state reconsidered its grand plan. In 1970, a Highway Halt bill went through the state legislature ending the construction of the Inner Belt Expressway.

Although the Inner Belt Expressway never developed, the 'Inner Belt Industrial Center' did. However, without the highway it did not develop to its full potential. From the late 1960's through the 1970's, Inner Belt Road ended just past Third Avenue. The first buildings to be erected were the windowless one-story concrete block style structures. Each was set back 20' to 30' from the road, with landscaping in between. Warehouses, offices, distribution facilities and light manufacturing were primary uses. In 1969, the city signed a contract for Filenes's Basement to build a warehouse facility at 70 Inner Belt Road. The Holiday Inn was built in 1974 on the corner of Washington Street and the Inner Belt Road as part of a larger proposal, including office uses, which was never completed, but the hotel remains as a major part of the district. The retro 1970's architecture continued the 'large block' look. Unlike the other structures in the district, the hotel reached heights of 90 to 110 feet.

In the 1980's, the City of Somerville purchased excess railroad land from the Boston & Maine' Railroad Corporation and obtained state funds to extend Inner Belt Road. The extension opened up additional developable parcels. 121 Inner Belt Road was one of the many newer developments located towards the end of the extension. Abutting properties purchased railroad land during this time to create larger lots.

Along Washington Street, non-industrial uses continued with the construction of the Cobble Hill Apartments in 1982. The complex provided 310 units and was subsidized by the Federal government. It was the first and only residential use for the district. A small shopping center at Washington Street and New Washington Streets developed at the same time. The Somerville City Club was built in 1981 across from the Holiday Inn.

#### *Cobble Hill Apartments*

During the mid-1980's to the late 1990's, little significant development influenced the area. Like many U.S. cities, industrial and manufacturing companies left the area to be replaced by service and business uses. Although at times it was a struggle, large-scale vacancies were not an issue. However the vision of the 'Inner Belt Industrial Center' seemed to be vanishing.

The completion of 200 Inner Belt Road in 2001 was the first major development to enter the district in over a decade. The building reflects a new vision for the area that began in the late 1990's: telecommunications uses. With the booming start-up and dot-com economy, it seemed obvious to promote such a use in an area that needed economic stimulation. Once again, the district provided many advantages including accessibility, a prime surrounding work force, vacating facilities and some room to build. The Northeast had a strong growing telecom market with new facilities developing just outside the city along Route 128 and Route 495. 70 Inner Belt Road, once home to the Filenes's Basement warehouse, was sold to Cathartes Investments, which was able to negotiate with neighboring properties to lay down fiber optics to the building.

In 1998, a joint venture named CO Space moved into the building to lease space to other internet and telecommunications companies that wanted to hook their equipment up to the fiber optic networks in Boston. Soon after, other telecom companies came to the area. HomeRuns, a web company that delivers groceries, also moved to 70 Inner Belt Road. Cathartes Investment began efforts to propose two new buildings that would house more telecom uses. City officials welcomed the development and assisted with the zoning process. The hope was that 150-200 Inner Belt Road would provide an example to the surrounding buildings of the new vision for the Inner Belt District. The momentum of the telecom vision propelled growth and property values in the area until early 2001 when a downturn in the economy brought the telecom movement to a halt across the nation. Some of the companies that came to revitalize the area left, leaving vacant buildings. The newly built 200 Inner Belt Road was without tenants and with little interest from prospective tenants.

### *Brickbottom*

Elevated railroad right-of-way separates the Brickbottom area located to the west of the Inner Belt District. The two areas resemble each other in terms of use. However, Brickbottom has older dense development in a grid pattern. Brickbottom houses one major residential development, called the Brickbottom Artist Lofts. The previous commercial lofts were converted to residential units in 1992.



**FIGURE 4: COURTYARD AT BRICK BOTTOM LOFTS**  
Source: Google Images 2007

This building is an important landmark in Somerville, which is well known for its active artist community: out of the 53,298 respondents of the City's census for 2005, 1,759 of those, or approximately, 3.3%, were involved in the creative sector, with the highest numbers going to Architects, Musicians, and Designers.



**FIGURE 5: ART AT BRICK BOTTOM**  
Source: Google Images 2007

### *Davis Square*

The Cambridge City Council worked with the MBTA to consider the extension of the Red Line beyond Harvard Square as an alternative to the proposed highway. The original design for the Red Line extension to Alewife in Cambridge did not include a station in Davis Square. The route was to run from Harvard Square north through Cambridge to Arlington. Somerville residents, businesspeople, and public officials, realizing the economic benefits that a train and bus station would bring to their community, launched a campaign in 1973 requesting that



**FIGURE 6: DAVIS SQUARE**  
Source: City of Somerville 2007

the extension be routed through Davis Square. Somerville was providing 5% of the MBTA's budget, and did not have a subway station within its borders.

Somerville residents felt that their transit service was unequal to their contribution. The City's well-coordinated effort was rewarded with the construction of the Davis Square T station. The City of Somerville used the creation of the new station as a catalyst for revitalizing Davis Square, promoting new commercial development and sponsoring other physical and infrastructure improvements. In 1977, while the Red Line Extension was in the planning stage, the City and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council put together the first Davis Square urban design and business study to provide a



**FIGURE 7: DAVIS SQUARE HOME**  
Source: City of Somerville 2007

framework for the revitalization plans and the type and extent of development. Advocates wanted Davis Square to retain and build on its traditional urban character. The City commissioned consultants to study potential land uses (including office and retail uses), as well as traffic, parking, and other concerns.

With input from the Davis Square Task Force, a group composed of local business owners, residents, and officials, the studies culminated in the Davis Square Action Plan, adopted in 1982. The primary goal of the Plan was to use the new Red Line Station as a cornerstone for redevelopment, strengthening Davis Square as a viable shopping district while preserving the residential character of the neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

### *Assembly Square*

During the 17th century the marsh and wetland area of the Mystic River that Assembly Square lies on was a place for the transport of people and goods. This trading led to the expansion of the region's economy as well as its population. By the early 1800s there were ten shipyards, and development continued when two railroads were installed in the middle of the 19th century.

Construction of the McGrath Highway in 1925 marked the beginning of Somerville as an industrial city, which continued when the Ford Motor Company built a plant in Assembly Square in 1926.<sup>3</sup> The Ford branch at Somerville, Massachusetts, had one of the unique contracts in the Ordnance Department's nationwide system. The plant was the only one in the U.S. to build universal carriers, and it did so during the entire World War II. The Somerville plant produced its first universal carrier in March 1943.<sup>4</sup>

Over the next thirty years, Assembly Square was one of the largest sources of employment in the region, but this changed soon after when in 1958 the Ford Assembly Plant closed due to a change in Ford's manufacturing strategies. As a result, hundreds of jobs were lost.

<sup>2</sup> Cynthia Nikitin, Project for Public Spaces, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> Rachel Sliman, To shop and to work: the re-making of Assembly Square.

<sup>4</sup> HAER, Ford's Richmond Assembly Plant

From the late 1950's through the early 1970's, Finast Supermarkets used the building that had earlier housed the Ford assembly plant on Middlesex Avenue. Finast also had additional operations in the area, most notably the office building at 5 Middlesex Avenue. In 1976, Finast moved all of its operations out of Somerville, leaving several vacant buildings and the loss to the City of more than \$1 million in annual tax revenues.

In the late 1970's, a development company called East Bay Corporation contacted the City and expressed interest in redevelopment of the former assembly plant and the office building. They were willing to invest \$20 million in redevelopment of these sites if the City would work to improve access to the area. At the time, I-93 had left the district isolated, with the only vehicular points of access being on Mystic Avenue and Middlesex Avenue. In 1979, the City sought and received a \$3.3 million HUD-funded Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) to fund access improvements to the site. In order to implement these improvements, the Somerville Redevelopment Authority and the City submitted the Assembly Square Urban Revitalization Plan to the state and federal governments to have the district named an urban renewal area.

The Plan was also written to make the area eligible for designation as a Commercial Area Revitalization District. Both of these designations made the district eligible for additional state and federal aid and allowed the Redevelopment Authority to exercise additional powers of eminent domain in the district, which was renamed "Assembly Square."

In the 1990's, IKEA furniture secured a permit to build a large sized store and restaurant along the waterfront in Assembly Square. However, community protest resulted in nearly a decade of litigation to encourage the store to be moved inland. In 2004 a zoning amendment was passed to create the Assembly Square Mixed Use District. This zoning laid the framework for the type of mixed-use development envisioned by the City to proceed. However, litigation caused delays in the process. However, litigation by the Mystic View Taskforce remained an impediment to development.

### *Union Square*



**FIGURE 8: BOW STREET UNION SQUARE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

This junction became a gateway for goods into Boston by way of bridges and ferries and paved the way for subsequent growth in industries such as blacksmithing, brick production, and meatpacking. In addition, construction of the railroad occurred and further

The history of Union Square is diverse and far-reaching, dating back to the Revolutionary period. The historic heart of the Square originally consisted of Miller's River surrounded by marsh. In 1813, the first major road was constructed over the marsh and named Somerville Avenue. The Square itself came into being when three main streets (Somerville Avenue, Bow Street, and Washington Street) were constructed and intersected.



**FIGURE 9: VINTAGE POST CARD**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



reinforced Union Square as a commercial center. The establishment of a horse-drawn streetcar system in the 1850s, the institution of an electric streetcar system in the early 1900s, and the incorporation of trolley lines marked the Square as a transit node in the greater Boston area. The concentrated development of brick row houses, apartments and hotels strengthened the residential base. The housing stock compounded by three-to-four-story commercial buildings rendered the Square much denser at the turn of the century than it is today.

The widespread use of automobiles in the 1950s and increased mobility for consumers triggered Union Square's decline as a strong commercial center. Presently, Union Square remains primarily a commercial square that shares features found in traditional neighborhood commercial centers in New England with most buildings now standing just one or two stories in height. A number of existing structures have been identified as architecturally and/or historically significant.

## **II. Five Year Consolidated Plan Goals (2003-2008)**

As noted in the City's adopted Consolidated Plan, during the past five years, the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) has worked toward accomplishing the following goals:

- a) Expansion of economic opportunities for low and moderate income residents;
- b) Elimination of economic distress which, unchecked, results in both the reduction of employment opportunities and the creation of slums and blight;
- c) Physical improvements and infrastructure development in commercial districts;
- d) Improved access and mobility for disadvantaged populations; and,
- e) Provision of suitable living environments within Somerville's neighborhoods.

## **III. Accomplishments 2003-2008**

In the context of these goals, the City has worked on numerous projects that are described as follows:

### Union Square Main Streets

In December 2004, the Union Square Main Streets (USMS) organization was incorporated after a series of grassroots efforts to involve the community. Their Executive Director was hired in January 2005 to implement a series of very successful initiatives, described below:

- Union Square Farmers Market: co-led 3 annual series of weekly farmers market with the City and the Federation of Massachusetts Farmers Markets. Attendance grew to over 1,300 people each week, bringing fresh fruits, vegetables, baked goods and meats to the area. The ArtsUnion, an initiative of the Somerville Arts Council, helped expand this market initiative to include 6 Crafts Markets. The total economic impact is estimated at over \$500,000.
- Fluff Festivals: organized 2 very successfully festivals



**FIGURE 10: FARMER'S MARKET**  
Source: Google Images 2007

based around Marshmallow Fluff, which was invented in Somerville. The Fluff Festival has attracted thousands of visitors to the area.

- Media Outreach: secured local and regional coverage in print and electronic media including numerous articles in the Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Stuff at Night, Improper Bostonian, Somerville Journal, Somerville News, Somerville Classifieds, and Weekly Dig. Also, USMS presented its projects on five cable access programs.
- Business Inventory: conducted detailed business inventory and developed database of all businesses in the NRSA of Union Square. Tabulated information and presented as part of the Union Square Visioning Project in September and October. The Business Inventory catalogued all the parcels, buildings, and businesses in the Central Business District of Union Square as well as the businesses of the extended Union Square area.
- Survey of Union Square Users: developed and implemented Customer Intercept Survey in Union Square. Presented information as part of the Visioning Project and made data available on-line. The Customer Intercept Study surveyed passersby on who they were, how they shopped in the Square, and what they thought of the business district. Volunteers provided the fifteen question sheets in four different languages and collected 278 surveys in July, August and September 2005.
- Zoning Use Survey: participated in ArtsUnion Task Force and at community meetings to advise on zoning and permitting changes to create an overlay district that fosters cultural uses and overall economic development.
- Foster New Businesses in Union Square: began detailed research for the fostering of innovative business models such as a Kitchen Incubator, a shared commercial kitchen for new businesses. Attended Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Licensing Board meetings to assist business development. Advised businesses one-on-one as needed.
- Streetscape Improvements: advised and supported ArtsUnion on the selection, placement and installation of artist created street furniture. Consulted with City planners on the selection of streetscape elements such as bus shelters and reconstruction of Somerville Avenue.
- Mural Project: initiated mural creation for fence behind 90 Union Square. Secured five sponsors and recruiting skilled artists.
- Improve Vehicular and Pedestrian Movement and Safety: advocated for effective snow removal and street maintenance to Head of Department of Public Works and Aldermen. Advised City Planners on repainting of lanes, turning and crosswalks.



**FIGURE 11: RIO DANCERS IN WHITE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

### East Somerville Main Streets

In September 2006, the East Somerville Main Streets (ESMS) organization was incorporated with the State of Massachusetts. The formation of ESMS was a yearlong effort that began with an initial informational community meeting on September 19, 2005. The event was followed by a series of meetings in 2006 involving the City and stakeholders to discuss the formation of ESMS. Events such as a Summer Clean Up were held to increase visibility in the neighborhood. A Board of

Directors was established in that same year and the Board hired an executive director in December 2006.

In January 2007, ESMS became a fully functioning organization with a full-time director and Board. In April 2007, the ESMS held a public open house to introduce itself to the community. For the most part, the group has been busy building relationships with area businesses, residents, and elected officials. The group has also accomplished the following:

- Advocated on behalf of East Somerville with regards to the citing of a sludge plant in Charlestown (with potential to increase traffic and air pollutants in East Somerville);
- Advocated on the behalf of East Somerville to the EPA to expand the Environmental Impact Review of the Assembly Square Development – to increase pedestrian access both to and from the area;
- Opened contact with all managers at Assembly Square Market Place, to inform them about the launch of East Somerville Mains Streets and include them as community members;
- Collaborated with City Historic Preservation Director to coordinate Patriot's Day celebration in East Somerville - where Paul Revere made his historic ride;
- Actively participating in the Somerville Community Corporation's "East Somerville Initiative" designed to develop an action plan to improve the neighborhood;
- Maintained a strong board with 80-100% attendance at meetings;
- Held a logo competition and received 20+ entries from local artists and worked with the winning artist to refine logo to reflect the East Somerville neighborhood;
- Successfully held Design, Economic Support & Development, and Promotions committee meetings, setting short term goals with each group; and,
- Participating in the Lower Broadway Streetscape Improvement project.



**FIGURE 12: EAST SOMERVILLE**

Source: City of Somerville  
2007

#### Small Business Loans program

Established in April 2007 this program targets microenterprises in partnership with ACCION USA, a leading microlender in New England. In order to promote the program, the City organized a roundtable with 13 representatives of local banks, a networking event in partnership with East Somerville Main Street where 5 business owners were exposed to the program, and a block walking in East Somerville and Union Square. Also, the City has advertised the program in the press, a Spanish-speaking radio station and on the Somerville Community Access television in 3 languages. As of November 2007, 10 small business owners have applied to the program, and 3 have received loans from ACCION, with a total amount of loans disbursed of \$16,378.09.

#### Somerville4Business

Launched in August 2006, Somerville4Business is a Capital Assistance Website for businesses looking for funding that provides information of local, regional and national funding sources. As of October 2007, 1,076 visitors browsed the site, over 50% inquiring about start up or general business

support funding, and 17% looking for minority/women owned business assistance.

### Welcome Kit

In April 2007, a new Welcome Kit for Businesses was created to summarize basic information for businesses wishing to open or having recently opened their doors in Somerville. Over 250 packages have been distributed through the City's website and other local community organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Union Square Main Streets, the Davis Square Residents and Business Initiative and the East Somerville Main Streets. In September 2007, the Welcome Kit was translated into Spanish, Portuguese and Haitian Creole to better serve minority business owners that hold an important place in the City's business community.

### Technical Assistance for Businesses

Presently, the City is working with ACCION USA to offer financial literacy workshops for businesses on several key topics, such as money management, understanding credit, fundamentals of running a successful business and business taxes and insurance. As of November 2007, 2 workshops were delivered and 6 more are scheduled for the first trimester of 2008.

### Storefront Improvement Program

The Storefront Improvement Program was established in 1980 to keep the City's local business districts vital and to set a design standard for retail shops in Somerville. From 2003 to date, 13 facades have been improved using CDBG funds.

Originally designed to target low/moderate income areas in the City, the eligibility criteria for the Storefront Improvement Program was extended to include micro-enterprises in 2007. This has provided access to the program to low/moderate income businesses owners city-wide. The result was a 50% increase in the number of applications the City received within the first six months of 2007.

Also in 2007, an additional expansion of the Storefront Improvement Program - the Awning / Lighting / Signage Program - was launched to allow business owners to apply for small grants towards the improvement of the physical appearance of their stores, without having to re-do the entire façade.

Following are examples of storefronts that have received City funding towards physical façade improvement since 2003:





**FIGURE 13: 99  
BEACON ST BEFORE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 14: 99 BEACON  
ST AFTER**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 15: 171 BROADWAY  
BEFORE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 16: 171 BROADWAY  
AFTER**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 17: 282 BROADWAY  
BEFORE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 18: 282 BROADWAY  
AFTER**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

### Assembly Square



**FIGURE 19: ASSEMBLY SQUARE CITY  
SCAPE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

Redevelopment of Assembly Square has made significant strides forward in the past year. In the fall of 2006, Federal Realty Investment Trust (FRIT), Swedish furniture retailer IKEA, and the Mystic View Task Force finalized a settlement agreement with the Mystic View Taskforce, allowing the development to proceed with a unified shared vision. As a result, by the end of the year the Planning Board had reviewed and conditionally approved the Preliminary Master Plan for the district, totaling 66.5 acres. The Master Plan consists of 2,100 residential units, 1.75 million square feet of office and 1,150,800 square feet of retail space (including the existing

Marketplace and a proposed IKEA store), and a 200-room hotel. In addition, FRI Trust and IKEA jointly committed to contribute \$15 million towards the design and construction of a future Orange Line T-stop at Assembly Square. The IKEA is anticipated to break ground in the fall of 2008 and open in late 2009. Additional phases are anticipated to follow shortly after, the first of which will be mixed-use residential along the Mystic River waterfront. The Assembly Square project is projected to reach full build out by 2019.

### Union Square District Improvement Financing (DIF) Analysis

In order to identify resources to aid in revitalization, in 2006, the City secured consulting services to prepare an analysis of the potential revenues that could be generated by the adoption of a District Improvement Financing (DIF) boundary in Union Square. DIF is a state-operated program that allows authorized jurisdictions to use the growth in property tax increment within identified boundaries for the purposes of re-investment within those boundaries. A DIF would also allow for the bonding of the tax increment in order to expedite key capital improvements. The consultant's analysis made recommendation regarding possible investments in the area, their cost, and means to use DIF to support. In recent months, City staff has further refined the concepts. However, it is anticipated that additional analysis will be required prior to giving a formal recommendation to the City's policy makers.

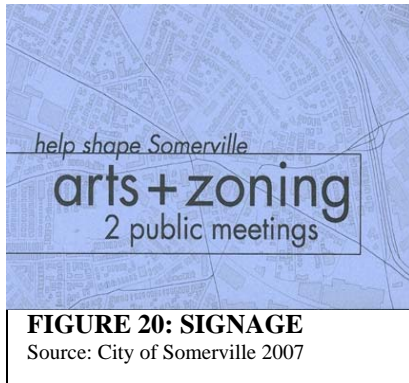
### Development Implementation Strategy for Union Square

In 2007, the City began working on a Development Implementation Study for Union Square. This study, prepared by an outside consultant, recommends specific action plan steps to jump start development in Union Square. The study analyses several public-private partnerships that could be used as models for the City's efforts in Union Square and recommends that the City initiate an RFQ/RFP process relative to the City-owned parcels in the area. This report further ties into the DIF analysis by making recommendations of needed infrastructure improvements to facilitate development.

### Union Square Rezoning

In the 2003 *Union Square Master Plan*, zoning is identified as a key tool in the revitalization of Union Square and encouragement of economic development in the area. A zoning analysis found that while the existing zoning is generally supportive of the type of new development desired in the area, the parking requirements and the number of dwelling units permitted per parcel were found to be highly restrictive for Union Square.

In 2005, the City applied for and received an Adams Arts Grant for economic development that provided an opportunity to examine the Somerville Zoning Ordinance with the wider goal of creating an arts-friendly district in Union Square and foster economic development to make it easier for artists to work in the Square. A series of meetings with an advisory group composed of various stakeholders in Union Square occurred in the summer of 2005 and their feedback was incorporated in the initial recommendation of the draft zoning changes.



A comprehensive working draft was submitted to the Board of Aldermen for public comment in October 2006 and a public community workshop that was scheduled to discuss the proposed zoning and gather feedback. This workshop was quickly followed by a community meeting, a joint Board of Aldermen / Planning Board public hearing, and several Land Use Committee meetings. In March 2007, the later voted to table the amendment in order for staff to revise the zoning and more effectively address the concerns expressed during the review process

Later in the spring of 2007, a community meeting to discuss a revised zoning amendment that incorporated changes recommended in previous public comments. That amendment was submitted to the Board of Aldermen and a joint Board of Aldermen / Planning Board public hearing was held in May 2007. In September, the Board of Aldermen decided to take no action so that additional issues may be resolved within the amendment. Staff is further refining the rezoning and anticipates holding a community meeting and introducing the rezoning to the Board of Aldermen during the winter of 2008. With each version, the draft zoning ordinance is further addressing community concerns while strengthening the economic development potential of the area.

### ArtsUnion

ArtsUnion, a cultural economic development initiative for Union Square began in February 2005. This initiative - a collaboration between OSPCD, the Somerville Arts Council, and community partners - has provided cultural economic development for local businesses, residents, and artists. The effort has five components: art & cultural events, markets, cultural and historical tours, street furniture fabrication, and zoning analysis and reform. A three-year CDBG monetary



**FIGURE 21: SOMERVILLE CRAFT FAIR**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



commitment of \$130,000 secured a matching commitment of \$130,000 from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). MCC matching funds for the fourth year have been secured. Accomplishments have included:

- **Producers Series:** Working with other independent producers, ArtsUnion has co-produced thirty large scale art/cultural events. Ranging from film/music series to public art exhibits within the square, each event attracted 300 to 1,500 visitors. This work in addition to changing the perception of the square, attracted visitors who subsequently provided additional economic benefit to local business establishments.
- **Markets:** Within the first year, six craft markets were organized to take place in conjunction with a new farmers market. For the second summer, twelve weekly craft markets were organized. In the third year, a shift in focus lead to the development of four larger, 25-30 vendor, thematic markets held in the afternoons to provide more economic development opportunity for vendors and local businesses.
- **Tours:** Working with the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission, three tours were developed that highlight Union Square's built environment. One tour was expanded to include the development of a self-guided brochure. In addition, a brochure and a series of tours highlighting the Square's ethnic markets were developed. During 2007, ten tours were



**FIGURE 22: STREET ART UNION SQUARE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

conducted, attracting major press coverage, new out-of-town audiences, all contributing to support the existing ethnic businesses within the square. In

2005, an Arts Studio tour, with accompanying



**FIGURE 23: STREET ART UNION SQUARE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

brochure, highlighted the 50+ studios within the area.

- **Street Furniture:** Ten benches, two trash receptacles, and two information kiosks were designed, fabricated, and installed within the square. This work creates both functional, utilitarian amenities for local residents and businesses, while also providing economic development opportunities for local artists/fabricators.
- **Zoning/Infrastructure:** Through numerous community meetings, the hiring of and recommendation by a zoning consultant, an Arts Overlay for Union Square has been developed. The Overlay will provide incentive for developers to expand arts and cultural related development within the square.
- **ArtSpace Improvement program:** Released in 2007, this program mirrors traditional storefront improvement programs but goes further to stimulate economic activity. This program provides financial support for physical improvements to space but also requires the applicant to enhance art and cultural activity within that space.

- Cultural Economic Development: Evaluation services by the University of Massachusetts Center for Policy Analysis documented that total economic impact generated by ArtsUnion activities were \$190,296 and \$352,470 for years 2005 and 2006, respectively.

#### Symposium on Strategic Growth

The event, entitled “Advancing Somerville: Symposium on Strategic Growth”, was hosted by Tufts University President Lawrence Bacow on March 29, 2005. More than 100 developers, business and government leaders and other invited guests heard presentations by Somerville Mayor Joseph Curtatone and then-Strategic Planning and Community Development Director, James Kostaras. This presentation was followed by a panel discussion that focused on growth opportunities in Somerville in the context of a dynamic economic region.

Simultaneously, the City launched the Somerville Business Development Initiative, which entailed a series of roundtable discussions, each one focused on the competitive advantages for several industries of locating in Somerville.

#### Brickbottom Design Competition

Along with Union Square, the Brickbottom District is recognized as a dynamic hub for local artists. However, the vital Brickbottom Artists Collaborative and the Joy Street Studios are located in an area of industrial buildings that are less than fully utilized. In January 2006, the City of Somerville held an international urban design ideas competition entitled “Edge as Center: Envisioning the Post-Industrial Landscape.”

This competition, funded by a local business owner, sought redevelopment strategies and design visions for the Brickbottom District and invited entrants to project the future of a pivotal post-industrial site. The competition was intended to activate redevelopment in the Brickbottom area, transforming it in intelligent ways that will benefit Somerville and its residents for generations. In May 2006, the City received over 50 entries and in June, four winners and eight honorable mentions were selected. A professionally produced publication has captured in vivid colors the many creative ideas that were generated.

#### Somerville Life Sciences Collaborative

In the summer of 2006, Somerville initiated a series of conversations around life sciences and launched the Somerville Life Science Collaborative (SLSC), in cooperation with the Bedford Stem Cell Research Foundation (BSCRF), a stem cell laboratory located in Davis Square. The purpose of the collaborative is to bring together experts from different sectors to talk about the future of the Life Science industry in Somerville. It is clear that the best way to promote and develop this industry is through partnerships with academia, scientists, investors and the private sector.

One key action that the City has undertaken was its participation in the BIO International Convention, an international convention that hosted over 20,000 attendees. The Somerville booth was created in collaboration with the BSCRF and Federal Realty Investment Trust, a local developer. The City’s participation generated 70 leads, 4 articles in newspapers and international visibility for the City. The BIO Convention was an extraordinary opportunity to promote Somerville to biotech

companies and showcase Somerville's affordable real estate, strategic location, close to major research and academic institutions, and municipal commitment and leadership.

#### IV. Needs Assessment

In analyzing the city's strengths and weaknesses, several needs exist in order to fully to capitalize upon the economic potential of the City of Somerville. These needs include:

##### Redevelopment of Under-Utilized Districts



**FIGURE 24: EAST BROADWAY NOW**  
Source: City of Somerville 2007

Although in very close proximity to downtown Boston, Somerville is home to several commercial and industrial districts that are recognized as under-utilized. These



**FIGURE 25: E BROADWAY STREET  
SCAPE DESIGN**  
Source: City of Somerville 2007

include the Inner Belt, Brickbottom, and Boynton Yards industrial districts and the Union Square commercial district. In addition, the Somerville Avenue corridor and Broadway corridor in East Somerville are not utilized to their full potential. Combined, these represent several hundred acres of land that could be used for more intensive business or residential purposes. Fortunately, the largest of these areas – Inner Belt, Brickbottom, Boynton Yards, and Union Square – will receive direct mass transit access through the extension of the Green Line MBTA railway during the next five years. This transit access represents an opportunity to catalyze development that can benefit the entire Somerville community through increased jobs and municipal revenues.

The City is actively developing visions and plans for these areas that analyze and are designed to capture their full potential. This will be followed by establishing regulations (zoning, etc.) that support the vision. However, to truly fulfill each area's potential, the City will need to work with partners to reduce existing barriers, such as infrastructure, parcel size, environmental conditions, etc., that are presently hampering development. The City will need to evaluate multiple funding mechanisms including state programs such as state tax credits and District Increment Financing (DIF) and federal programs such as HUD 108 loans and other grants for economic development.

##### Re-Use of Existing Structures

The City's largely built environment and historical structures has meant that re-use of buildings is more prevalent than new construction. However, several obstacles come with re-outfitting existing structures to meet the needs of businesses today. These include:

- *ADA Compliance:* incorporating the space requirements and design standards under Federal Regulations 28 CFR Part 36 into existing buildings can be a challenge for new businesses looking to alter portions of a building. For example, ADA compliance may necessitate re-grading portions of a site to comply with slope requirements. This may be just one component of many that could make a project financially difficult.
- *Parking Requirements:* parking requirements are often an impediment to re-using or expanding existing buildings and redeveloping the types of small parcels found in many of Somerville's commercial districts. A recent study by a Harvard Rappaport fellow has suggested several avenues that need to be explored in the near future including reducing requirements, encouraging shared parking, and establishing parking in lieu funds.
- *Environmental Remediation:* Somerville was previously home to a number of industries such as auto manufacturing, glass making, meatpacking, and brick production. While the majority of these industries have since left the City, many left extensive contamination. While a number of brownfields have been identified, additional contaminated properties have not yet been identified. The contaminants can be a major obstacle to re-use of buildings and/or demolishing an existing building to make way for new construction. The unpredictability in the level of remediation involved in a development can be cost prohibitive and halted development from moving forward, even after securing the necessary permits from the City.

### Improved Transportation Access

Sliced by Interstate 93, Routes 16, 28 and 38 and by the rights of way for the Orange MBTA Line, and the Newburyport, Rockport, Haverhill, Lowell, and Fitchburg commuter rail lines, no other city in Massachusetts compares to Somerville's position as the most vital gateway for downtown Boston and Cambridge. However, there are two issues with transportation access to the City.

First, while Somerville supports substantial vehicular and rail traffic destined for downtown Boston and Cambridge, there are few lines that actually stop in the City. In fact, Somerville only houses the Davis Square Station along the Red Line. Even though East Somerville has access to the Orange Line through the Sullivan Square Station in Charlestown, the fact remains that most residents and businesses do not have ready access to transit. This prevents businesses from connecting to consumers and workers that live in the Boston metropolitan region. Further, most Somerville residents do not have transit supported access to jobs and services.



**FIGURE 26: ELEVATED HWY**  
Source: City of Somerville 2007

Second, areas that can support intensive economic development, such as the Inner Belt and Brickbottom, are severely constrained by existing rail lines and elevated freeways. This has proven to be a severe impediment to securing private investment despite the areas' significant assets.

In upcoming years, to address the first issue, the City will need to continue to advocate strongly for implementation of the extension of Green Line and opening of commuter rail station(s) in Somerville. To address the second issue, advocacy will be needed to prompt the realignment of rail

right-of-ways and the reduction of freeway and railway barriers.

### Revitalization of Commercial Districts

The City of Somerville contains several local and regional serving commercial districts. However, storefront vacancies do exist in these areas and the business mix may not be fully conducive to supporting vibrant economic activity. The City will likely need to take actions to further support these areas in upcoming years.

During the summer of 2007, staff of OSPCD conducted a tally of storefronts in all commercial districts throughout the City (44.5% of the total number of businesses in Somerville were tallied). The results of the survey were compared with the business mix of typical commercial areas in the U.S. The results are as follows:

| <b>TABLE 1: SOMERVILLE BUSINESS MIX</b>                       |              |  |   |
|---|--------------|--|---|
| <b>Business Mix</b>   | <b>Tally</b> | <b>Percentage of Somerville's Business Mix</b> | <b>Compared to Typical U.S. Central Shopping District</b> |
| Restaurants, Bars, Bakeries, Food Services                    | 130          | 20.3%  | 21%   |
| Drugstore, Beauty, Salon                                      | 65           | 10.2%  | 1%  |
| Financing, Insurance, Real Estate                             | 62           | 9.7%   | 5%  |
| Automotive  | 59           | 9.2%   | 1%  |
| General Merchandise and Grocery                               | 51           | 8.0%   | 29%   |
| Other Office  | 38           | 5.9%   | 2%  |
| Personal Services   | 37           | 5.8%   | 6%  |
| Home Furnishings and Services                                 | 31           | 4.8%   | 5%  |
| Other Retail  | 26           | 4.1%   | 3%  |
| Industry and Manufacturing                                    | 26           | 4.1%   | 0%  |
| Medical and Dental  | 26           | 4.1%   | 0%  |
| Clothing, Accessories, Shoes                                  | 23           | 3.6%   | 9%  |
| School and Instruction  | 17           | 2.7%   | 0%  |
| Liquor  | 13           | 2.0%   | 1%  |
| Electronics, Appliances, Computers                            | 10           | 1.6%   | 2%  |
| Fraternal Organizations and Religious                         | 10           | 1.6%   | 0%  |
| Gifts, Specialty, Florist                                     | 5            | 0.8%   | 8%  |
| Travel Agent  | 5            | 0.8%   | 0%  |
| Building Materials and Hardware                               | 2            | 0.3%   | 4%  |
| Entertainment   | 2            | 0.3%   | 4%  |
| Post Office   | 2            | 0.3%   | 0%  |
| Total # of Businesses   | 640          | 44.5%  | 100%  |
| Source: City of Somerville commercial land use inventory 2007 |              |  |   |



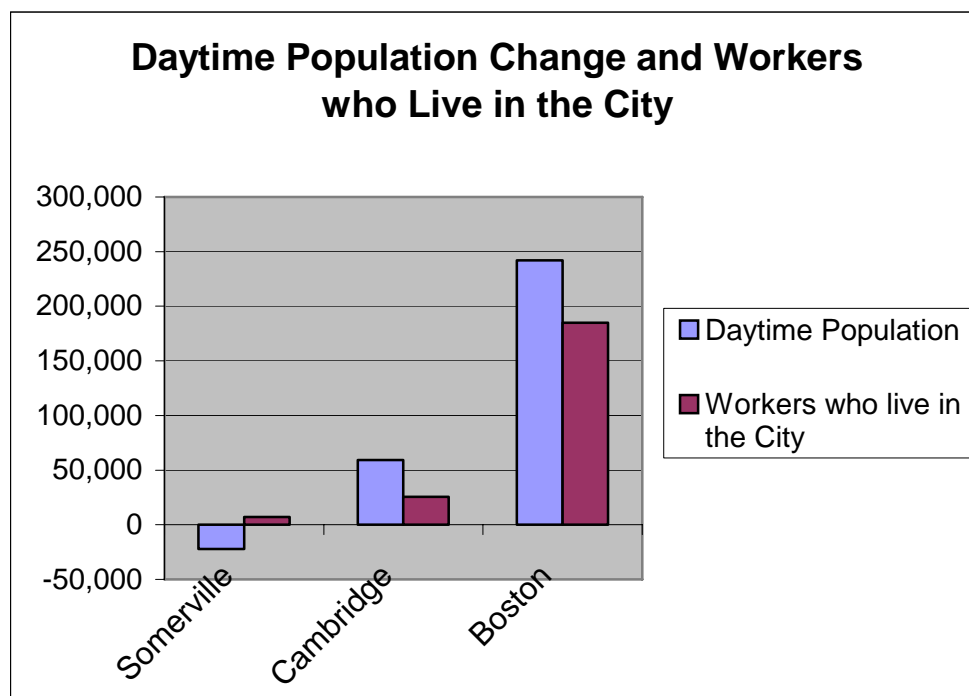
The black sections indicate markets gaps, i.e., businesses or services that Somerville could attract to improve the business mix of its commercial districts. The gray sections indicate saturated markets. Bold sections indicate differences in the mix of office space.

As can be seen, the most significant gaps exist in retail and specialty stores. This can be attributed, in part, to a lack of foot traffic in most commercial areas and the scarcity of daytime population in the City.

#### Increase Daytime Population<sup>5</sup>

Figures from the 2000 Census indicate that a disproportionate number of Somerville residents work outside of the City of Somerville. This leads to increased costs for residents as they must either pay for transit or use their private vehicles to get to work and results in a daytime drain of population, as people go to work in other cities in the region.

| <b>TABLE 2: DAYTIME POPULATION</b> |   |   |   |  |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| <b>City</b>                        | <b>Daytime population change due to commuting</b> | <b>Daytime population % change due to commuting</b> | <b>Workers who live and work in this city</b> | <b>% of Workers who live and work in this city</b> |
| Somerville                         | -22,057   | -28.50%   | 7,092   | 15.80%   |
| Cambridge                          | 59,174  | 58.40%  | 25,554  | 46.50%   |
| Boston                             | 242,062   | 41.10%  | 184,954                                       | 66.40%   |



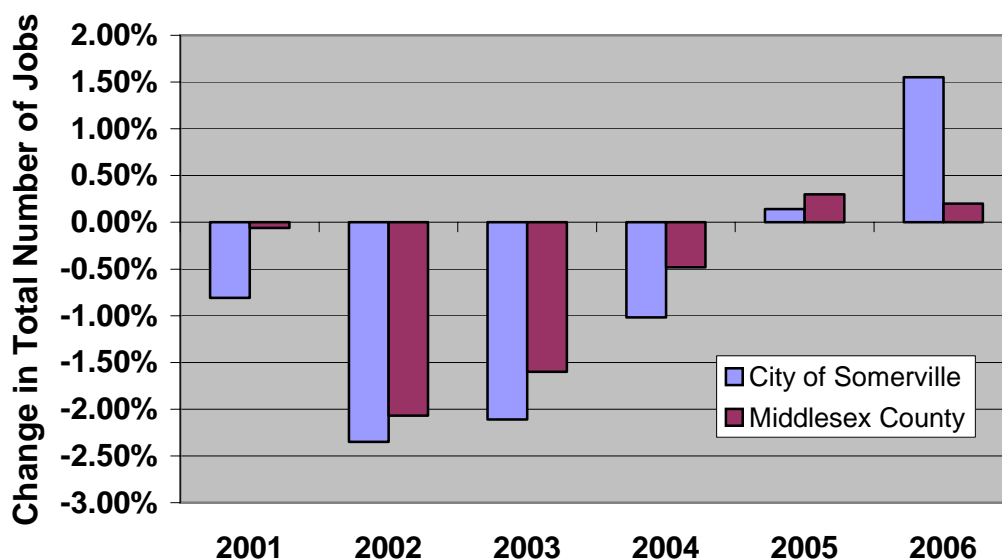
<sup>5</sup> For 2004. Source: City-Data.com

As neighboring communities gain population during the day, Somerville loses almost 30% of its population, and 85% of its workforce. Considering the fact that most workers expend income in the vicinity of their work – either for food or goods and services – it is no surprise that Somerville’s commercial districts are having difficulties attracting a significant number of customers during the day to keep their doors open. This directly affects business owners, resulting in high turnover rates in commercial districts and a business mix that does not offer a wide variety of goods or services.

#### Decrease Unemployment and Increase Job Growth

Somerville’s workforce has not experienced any significant changes over the past 5 years. In fact, 2005 marked the first year of net job growth since 2000. This is a disappointing figure given that increasing local employment is an important goal for the City. Increasing employment represents opportunities for local residents, increase to the tax base, and potential spin-off effects as employees shop or eat locally. That said, job growth in Somerville in 2006 exceeded that of Middlesex County likely due to the jobs added at the Assembly Square Market Place. Increased development activity could potentially build upon this growth in upcoming years.

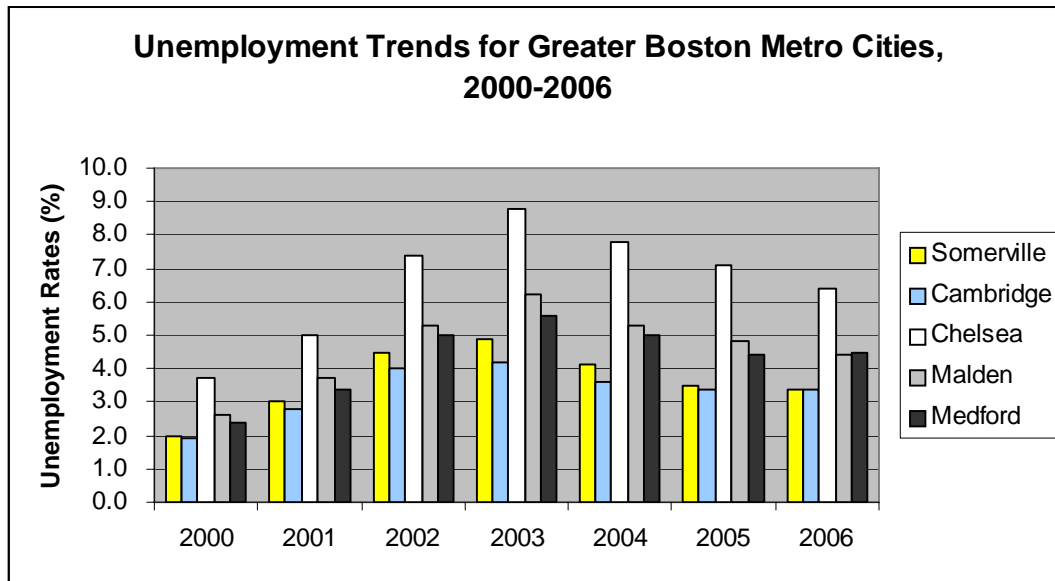
#### **Annual Rate of Job Growth**



In recent years, Somerville has consistently had a lower unemployment rate than surrounding communities and the state average. In 2006, the unemployment rate in Somerville was 3.4%, well below the state average of 4.6%.

#### **Somerville’s unemployment rate vs. State’s unemployment rate<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>6</sup> Source: Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development



**City's unemployment decline <sup>7</sup>**

#### Streamlined Development Review

Many businesses looking to alter space in an existing building must undergo the development review process and seek some form zoning relief. Often times the zoning relief sought involves parking variances. This has been a problem for many businesses because the small lot size in the City makes it difficult for many businesses to comply with parking requirements.

Parking variances are difficult to secure due to the strict conditions that allow for issuance of a variance. In many instances, the permitted business uses on a site are constrained by the parking allowance that is grandfathered on site and not conducive to the market conditions that could increase economic development for the City.

## **V. Prioritization of Needs**

### ***a. Methodology of Prioritization***

The City has taken a number of steps to prioritize the many needs with regards to economic development. These include:

- analyses of key redevelopment areas, their needs and possible strategies to address;
- preliminary review of development impediments resulting from parking requirements;
- self assessment through the Northeastern University Self-Assessment tool; and,
- evaluation of accomplishments during 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan.

Economic development was also a topic of discussion during the public hearings for development of the 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan and a specific focus group of stakeholders was held on October

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development

25<sup>th</sup>, 2007 to discuss economic development needs and strategies. Comments from participants at the focus groups included the need to:

- o implement strategies to attract prospective developers and businesses;
- o assist home based businesses elevate to next level; and,
- o shape zoning regulations to be more reflective of individual neighborhoods.

***b. Matrix of Needs and Relative Priority***

| <b>TABLE 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS &amp; PRIORITIES</b> |                   |              |
|---|-------------------|--------------|
|   | <b>Need Level</b> | <b>Units</b> |
| Redevelopment of Under-Utilized Districts                   | High              | Projects     |
| Re-Use of Existing Buildings                                | Medium            | Buildings    |
| Improved Transportation Access                              | High              | Stations     |
| Revitalization of Commercial Districts                      | High              | Businesses   |
| Increased Daytime Population                                | Medium            | Workers      |
| Decreased Unemployment                                      | Medium            | Jobs         |
| Increased Job Growth  | High              | Jobs         |
| Streamlined Development Review                              | Medium            | Permits      |

**VI. Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs**

***a. Monetary Gap Analysis***

- Shortage of staff: due to limited financial resources, the City of Somerville has a restriction on the number of economic development projects it can undertake, since staffing is limited, leaving other needs unmet.
- Restrictions in HUD fund eligibility do not allow the City to establish city-wide programs: the population of City is diverse in income, and most of the western side of the City is not eligible for programs financed with funds that target low/moderate income individuals. This reduces the effectiveness of the programs, since some locations that could use City assistance cannot receive it.
- Somerville is under great pressure to expand its commercial tax base in order to relieve its citizens of the burden of funding basic city services with residential property taxes. Somerville's commercial tax base remains very small in comparison to Boston and Cambridge that derive 66% and 60%, respectively, of their property tax revenue from businesses. By contrast, Somerville derives only 28% of its property tax revenue from businesses.

***b. Additional Obstacles***

- Construction inflation: due to the increasing cost in utilities and construction materials, the City is finding the cost of its infrastructure and beautification projects increase significantly. This cost increase is an extra burden on the City's budget, since City funds do not grow at the same pace inflation does.
- Rapidly increasing real estate costs: one of Somerville major competitive advantages is its proximity to Boston and Cambridge while having affordable property costs. In the past 5

years, Somerville's real estate cost has increased considerably, making the City less competitive in comparison to surrounding communities. Also, this real estate cost increase is having a negative impact in the business community, as older businesses may not be able to afford the cost of rent anymore.

- Competition from other municipalities to attract same type of companies and jobs: Somerville's competitive advantages are often comparable to neighboring cities (affordability, highly skilled labor force and location, being some of them) and the competition to attract companies in growing industries (such as biotech, medical devices or green energy) is fierce.

## **VII. Vision, Goals, and Strategies**

### Vision

Increase and maintain the economic vitality of the City of Somerville for both residents and businesses.

### Goals

1. Encourage investment and development in underutilized areas of the City.
2. Enhance vitality of existing commercial districts through support of existing businesses and attraction of others to support a healthy business mix.
3. Increase local job opportunities.
4. Enhance skills and abilities of Somerville residents.
5. Build a partnership between City Hall and community members to encourage public participation in economic development initiatives

### Strategies

1. Encourage investment and development in underutilized areas of the City.
  - 1.1. Focus on redevelopment of strategic districts, especially those along the Green Line Corridor, including, but not limited to:
    - 1.1.1. Assembly Square
    - 1.1.2. Inner Belt
    - 1.1.3. Brickbottom
    - 1.1.4. Union Square
    - 1.1.5. Boynton Yards
    - 1.1.6. Somerville Avenue
    - 1.1.7. Broadway in East Somerville
  - 1.2. Evaluate and revise land use regulations to encourage more intensive development in strategic districts and remove/reduce regulatory impediments, such as parking requirements.
  - 1.3. Identify regional and local business growth industries, such as life sciences and clean energy, and market Somerville to prospective developers and investors.
  - 1.4. Assess feasibility of financial incentives including but not limited to, tax incentives, grants, loan programs, 108 Loan Guarantees, District Increment Finance, etc. to address potential impediments to development such as infrastructure needs, environmental conditions, etc.

- 1.5. Streamline the permitting process.
- 1.6. Encourage expansion of regional transit within Somerville including but not limited to the Green Line extension, Orange Line station at Assembly Square and identification of future commuter rail station(s).
- 1.7. Utilize municipally-owned properties, as appropriate, as catalyst for economic development.
- 1.8. Facilitate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized property through site assemblage and predevelopment activities.
- 1.9. Promote redevelopment of strategic “anchor” sites and job creation through the use of HUD Economic Development Initiatives, Brownfield Development Initiative, and Section 108 Loan Guarantees and other state and Federal funding sources.
2. Enhance vitality of existing commercial districts through support of existing businesses and attraction of others to support a healthy business mix.
  - 2.1. Promote pedestrian-friendly and attractive business districts through infrastructure investments, design review criteria, etc.
  - 2.2. Provide technical assistance to business owners to ensure health of businesses.
  - 2.3. Facilitate access to capital and financing through programs such as the City’s Small Business Loan Program.
  - 2.4. Assist with physical improvement of commercial spaces, such as through the Storefront Improvement Program.
  - 2.5. Provide site-finding services for business wishing to locate in Somerville.
  - 2.6. Encourage art-related businesses and other target industries.
  - 2.7. Encourage collaboration among businesses in commercial districts such as through a shared marketing program, area-wide events, and possible establishment of Business Improvement District.
  - 2.8. Encourage maintenance and enhancement of historic properties as a way to improve appearance of commercial areas and to encourage tourism.
3. Increase local job opportunities
  - 3.1. Attract businesses to Somerville in growth industries that will provide desirable jobs for Somerville’s residents.
  - 3.2. Inform businesses about federal and state programs that encourage/support local hiring.
  - 3.3. Build partnership with universities and career centers to gather information about Somerville’s available workforce to encourage potential investors and companies.
4. Enhance ability of Somerville residents to compete for local jobs.
  - 4.1. Encourage local workforce development organizations to initiate programs/services in Somerville.
  - 4.2. Increase the opportunity of jobs for youth and disabled in collaboration with business community.
5. Build a partnership between City government and community members to encourage participation in economic development initiatives
  - 5.1. Continue to support Main Streets organizations
  - 5.2. Establish City liaisons with community groups to get them involved in strategic planning activities

## VIII. Performance Measures

| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES                                   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Goal  | Strategies   | Benchmarks   |
| 1. Encourage investment and development in underutilized areas of the City. | 1.1. Focus on redevelopment of strategic districts, especially those along the Green Line Corridor, including, but not limited to:<br>1.1.1. Assembly Square<br>1.1.2. Inner Belt<br>1.1.3. Brickbottom<br>1.1.4. Union Square<br>1.1.5. Boynton Yards<br>1.1.6. Somerville Avenue<br>1.1.7. Broadway in East Somerville | 1.1.1 Facilitate permitting of Phases 1-2 in next 5 years<br>1.1.2 Prepare Master Plan for Inner Belt and Brickbottom in next 5 years.<br>1.1.3 Prepare Master Plan for Inner Belt and Brickbottom in next 5 years.<br>1.1.4 Submit rezoning package for Union Square to Board of Aldermen within 2 years. ( <i>See Union Square NRSA 2.2.1</i> )<br>1.1.5 Analyze Boynton Yards zoning within 2 years. ( <i>See Union Square NRSA 2.3.1</i> )<br>1.1.6 Analyze zoning of Somerville Ave in next 3 years.<br>1.1.7 Submit rezoning package for lower Broadway to Board of Aldermen within 3 years. ( <i>See East Somerville NRSA 4.3.1</i> ) |
|   | 1.2. Evaluate and revise land use regulations to encourage more intensive development in strategic districts and remove/reduce regulatory impediments, such as parking requirements.   | 1.2.1 Revise City parking regulations in next 5 years.   |
|   | 1.3. Identify regional and local business growth industries, such as life sciences and clean energy, and market Somerville to prospective developers and investors.  | 1.3.1 Participate in at least 1 industry event (ex. convention) annually for the life sciences and clean energy industries.  |
|   | 1.4. Assess feasibility of financial incentives including but not limited to, tax incentives, grants, loan programs, District Increment Finance, etc. to address potential impediments to development such as infrastructure needs, environmental conditions, etc.   | 1.4.1 Evaluate multiple incentives in next two years.  |
|   | 1.5. Streamline the permitting process.  | 1.5.1 Complete Permit Streamlining Action Plan in next year.   |
|   | 1.6. Encourage expansion of regional transit within Somerville including but not limited to the Green Line extension, Orange Line station at Assembly Square and identification of future commuter rail station(s).  | 1.6.1 Regularly advocate on behalf of increased transit in Somerville.   |

| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Goal  | Strategies   | Benchmarks   |
|   | 1.7. Utilize municipally-owned properties, as appropriate, as catalyst for economic development.   | 1.7.1 Prepare RFP for City-owned parcels in Union Square in next 5 years.  |
|   | 1.8. Facilitate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized property through site assemblage and predevelopment activities.  | 1.8.1 Prepare and/or execute surveys, title abstracts, environmental reviews, appraisals, purchase options, property swaps etc. for strategic sites on an annual basis.                              |
|   | 1.9. Promote redevelopment of strategic “anchor” sites and job creation through the use of HUD Economic Development Initiatives, Brownfield Development Initiative, and Section 108 Loan Guarantees and other state and Federal funding sources. | 1.9.1 Apply for HUD grant programs also use CDBG Funds to leverage state and private grant funds.  |
| 2. Enhance vitality of existing commercial districts through support of existing businesses and attraction of others to support a healthy business mix. | 2.1. Promote pedestrian-friendly and attractive business districts through infrastructure investments, design review criteria, etc.  | 2.1.1 Complete design of Lower Broadway streetscape within 2 years and initiate improvements within 5 years. ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 3.1.1 and East Somerville NRSA 4.1.1</i> ) |
|   | 2.2. Provide technical assistance to business owners to ensure health of businesses.   | 2.2.1 Run workshops, training, and/or consultations for 30 businesses or individuals in 5 years. ( <i>See Economic Development 2.61</i> )  |
|   | 2.3. Facilitate access to capital and financing through programs such as the City’s Small Business Loan Program.   | 2.3.1 Ensure at least 3-4 loans are provided to businesses in Somerville annually. ( <i>See East Somerville NRSA 2.5.1</i> )   |
|   | 2.4. Assist with physical improvement of commercial spaces, such as through the Storefront Improvement Program.  | 2.4.1 Provide at least 3-4 storefront improvement grants each year. ( <i>See East Somerville NRSA 2.4.1</i> )  |
|   | 2.5. Provide site-finding services for business wishing to locate in Somerville.   | 2.5.1 Maintain an up-to-date database of available sites in Somerville   |
|   | 2.6. Encourage art-related businesses and other target industries.   | 2.6.1 Continue to financially support Arts Union activities  |
|   | 2.7. Encourage collaboration among businesses in commercial districts such as through a shared marketing program, area-wide events, and possible establishment of Business Improvement District.   | 2.7.1 Engage in discussion with at least one business district regarding the benefits of a BID in the next 5 years.  |



| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Goal  | Strategies   | Benchmarks  |
|   | 2.8. Encourage maintenance and enhancement of historic properties as a way to improve appearance of commercial areas and to encourage tourism.                           |   |
| 3. Increase local job opportunities   | 3.1. Attract businesses to Somerville in growth industries that will provide desirable jobs for Somerville's residents.  | 3.1.1 Attract at least one new business to Somerville each year.  |
|   | 3.2. Inform businesses about federal and state programs that encourage / support local hiring.   | 3.2.1 Prepare informational materials for businesses on employment programs within one year.                              |
|   | 3.3. Build partnership with universities and career centers to gather information about Somerville's available workforce to encourage potential investors and companies. | 3.3.1 Initiate discussions with Tufts University on how can collaborate on data gathering within one year.                |
| 4. Enhance ability of Somerville residents to compete for local jobs.   | 4.1. Encourage local workforce development organizations to initiate programs/services in Somerville.  | 4.1.1 Work with at least one workforce development organization to increase focus on Somerville within next 2 years.      |
|   | 4.2. Increase the opportunity of jobs for youth and disabled in collaboration with business community.   | 4.2.1 Work with developer of Assembly Square to identify ways to provide jobs for youth and disabled within next 5 years. |
| 5. Build a partnership between City government and community members to encourage participation in economic development initiatives | 5.1. Continue to support Main Street organizations.  | 5.1.1 Engage in at least 2 collaborative projects with each Main Street organization each year.                           |
|   | 5.2. Establish City liaisons with community groups to get them involved in strategic planning activities.  | 5.2.1 Engage in at least 2 collaborative projects with community and business groups each year.                           |

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## **SECTION THREE:**

# **TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE**

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## Introduction

### *History of Transportation in Somerville*

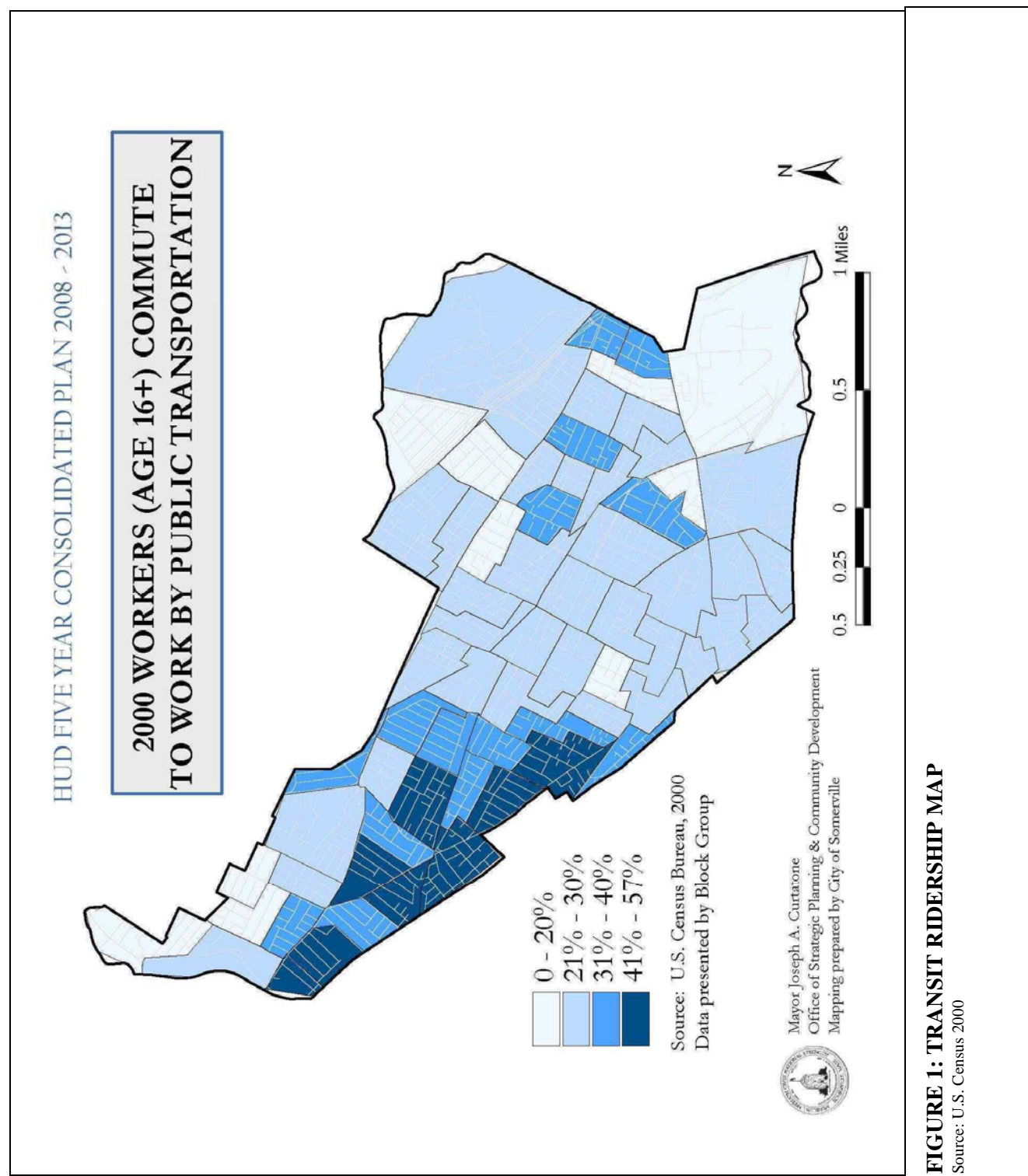
Since the time of Paul Revere's famous ride, Somerville's travel corridors have been vital to both local residents and the City. The importance of Somerville's transportation network has not diminished even as significant shifts in the modes of travel have occurred. Somerville's web of streets developed at a time when land travel was by horse or on foot, encouraging the close spacing of residential, retail and business areas. The City's broad squares were developed to allow horse carriages enough room to readily turn around. Travel by horse, foot and sailing ships was first supplemented in the early 1800's by barge travel on the Middlesex Canal that once started in the Sullivan Square area. Several toll roads once ran through Somerville. Four regional rail lines developed between 1835 and 1870 and continue to bring thousands of commuters through Somerville to this day. Trolley lines that developed in the 1870's, reached their peak capacity in 1917, and were soon supplanted by autos and bus service. Introduction of the private automobile created the need for expanded capacity on roads leading through Somerville to Boston. The Alewife Brook and Fells Parkways, originally conceived in the 1890's as a means for city residents to reach the metropolitan parks, evolved into commuter routes for suburban drivers, greatly diminishing Somerville residents' ability to enjoy the parklands.

The construction of Interstate 93 through East Somerville further divided the City and brought ever more commuters and pollution throughout the City. The Mystic River Bike Trail was built along the new Interstate but did not include safe connections to most residential areas in Somerville. The 1970's and 1980's saw a renewal of rail transit in Somerville via the extension of the Red and Orange lines to Davis Square and Sullivan Square in nearby Charlestown. Davis Square residents fought an important battle to minimize the amount of parking at the new station and to create a linear park on top of the subway tunnel. The linear park proved to be such a popular way to access the Holland Street entrance to the station, in the 1990's the City worked to build the Somerville Community Path to connect Cedar Street to the College Avenue Red Line entrance. The preservation of the pedestrian-friendly scale and mixed-use character of Davis Square proved to be a key to making the Square a model of urban redevelopment in the Boston area.

In the past decade, Somerville has endured the inconveniences brought by the completion of the "Big Dig" that takes Interstate 93 into Boston. The Big Dig represents what many transportation planners see as the last project to expand highway capacity into Boston. To ensure that the added capacity did not simply create more pollution, the Commonwealth committed to develop an extension of the Green Line through Somerville.

### Mass Transit – All Modes

The US Census gathers information on how people get to work. Figure 1 shows that the neighborhoods by the Davis Square Station have the highest rate of transit use. Broadway in East Somerville also has pockets of high transit use as well.



| <b>TABLE 1: 2006 JOURNEY TO WORK</b> |              |                |             |                                   |                         |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Commute Mode:</b>                 | <b>Auto*</b> | <b>Transit</b> | <b>Walk</b> | <b>Bike / Motorbike<br/>/ Cab</b> | <b>Work at<br/>Home</b> |
|                                      | 46.4%        | 32.8%          | 8.3%        | 6.2%                              | 2.5%                    |

Source: U.S. Census 2000

\* includes 6.2% who Car Pool.

Table 1 presents the 2006 Commuter Survey by the Census Bureau shows that more Somerville workers use alternative modes of transportation than the automobile. The large level of transit use results from a strong inter-modal network of subway trains and bus lines. Somerville currently has one MBTA Red Line station at Davis Square that serves 10,000 commuters a day, triple the 3,000 estimated when it was planned. Somerville residents are also within walking distance to the Porter Square Station in Cambridge. Many East Somerville residents walk or take the bus to Sullivan Square Station on the Orange Line.

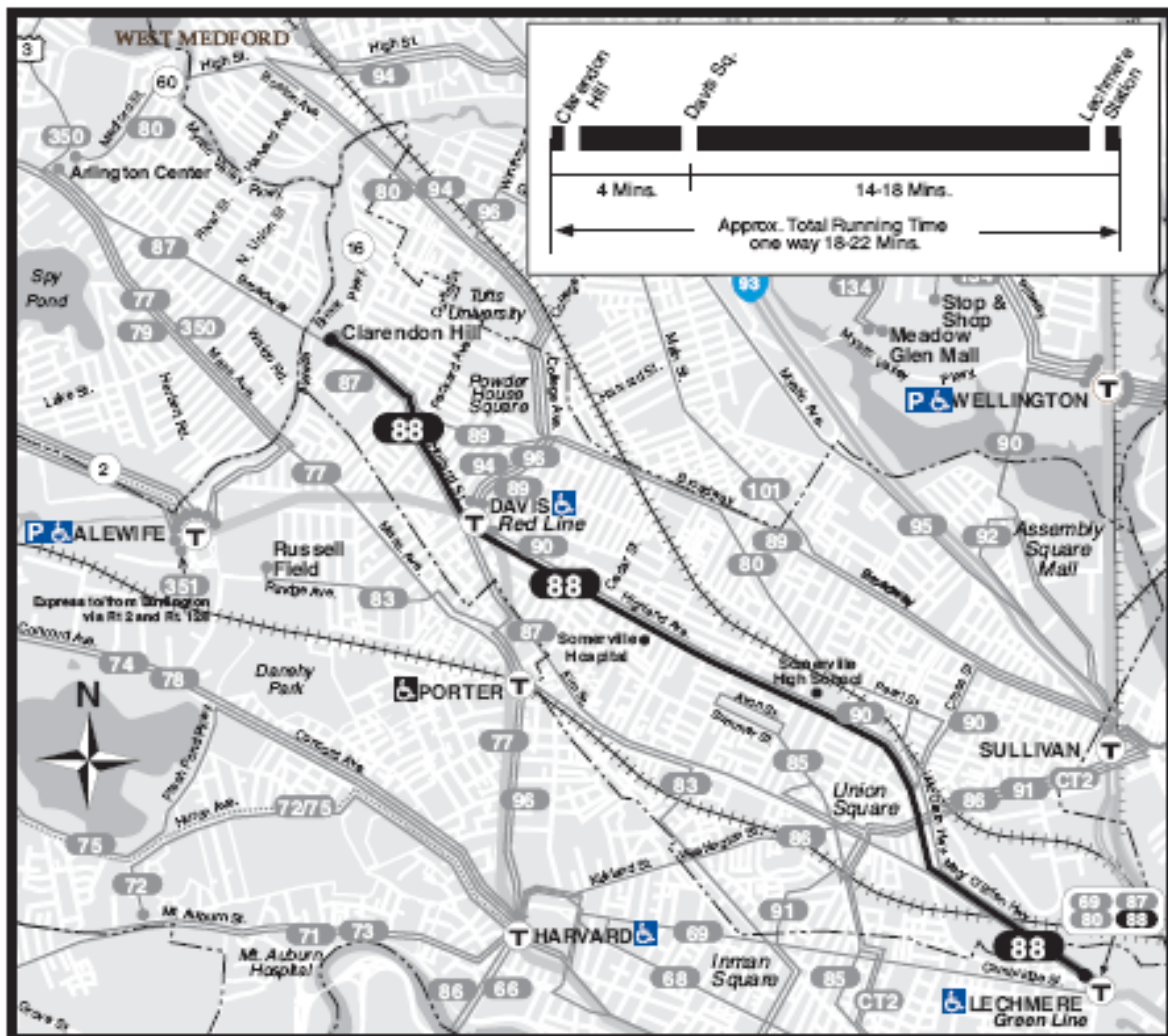
In addition, storage and maintenance facilities for trains are located in Somerville. The MBTA's Boston Engine Terminal, which services all MBTA commuter trains, is located in East Somerville, off of New Washington Street, and the MBTA's rail maintenance facility is near Sullivan Square. These critical MBTA facilities occupy sizable land parcels in the City. On the positive side these facilities provide well-paying jobs. On the downside these operations add additional pollution to air and water in Somerville.

### Mass Transit – Bus Service

The MBTA runs 17 bus routes throughout the City including the following routes (refer to Figure 2):

- o CT2: Crosstown Bus connecting Sullivan Square to Kendall Square and Longwood;
- o 80: connecting Arlington & Powderhouse to Lechmere Station;
- o 85: Connecting Summer Street to Kendall/MIT;
- o 87 and 88: buses connecting Davis Square to the Green Line at Lechmere
- o 89: connecting Davis to Sullivan
- o 90 and 91: that allow connections between Davis, Union, Sullivan and Assembly Squares;
- o 94, 95, 96: with connections to from Davis and Sullivan Square to Tufts and Medford
  - 101: running on Broadway to Sullivan.
  - 104 and 105: running to Everett.

Buses play a significant role in transporting residents to jobs and subway stations. Nearly 40,000 passengers board the buses that pass through Somerville each day (In Figure 3 note: the MBTA data is of total boarding on each line – including boarding outside Somerville).



**FIGURE 2: SOMERVILLE BUS ROUTES**

Source: MBTA 2007

| Typical Day Bus Ridership as of July 2007<br>All Boardings onto Buses that Pass Through Somerville |           |           |           |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Updated for Fall 2006 Ridechecks   |           |           |           |           |           |
| Weekday  |           | Saturday  |           | Sunday    |           |
| Route  | Boardings | Route     | Boardings | Route     | Boardings |
| 80   | 1,872     | 80        | 1,257     | 80        | 563       |
| 85   | 397       | 85        | x         | 85        | x         |
| 86   | 5,139     | 86        | 1,880     | 86        | 1,196     |
| 87   | 3,373     | 87        | 2,052     | 87        | 1,165     |
| 88   | 3,785     | 88        | 2,257     | 88        | 1,414     |
| 89   | 3,431     | 89        | 1,504     | 89        | 756       |
| 90   | 920       | 90        | 502       | 90        | x         |
| 91   | 1,482     | 91        | 1,234     | 91        | 570       |
| 92   | 1,286     | 92        | 493       | 92        | x         |
| 93   | 4,210     | 93        | 1,969     | 93        | 793       |
| 94   | 1,174     | 94        | 682       | 94        | 417       |
| 95   | 1,253     | 95        | 614       | 95        | 338       |
| 96   | 1,500     | 96        | 917       | 96        | 439       |
| 101  | 3,937     | 101       | 1,921     | 101       | 883       |
| 104  | 3,360     | 104       | 1,994     | 104       | 974       |
| 105  | 893       | 105       | 372       | 105       | 259       |
| 747 (CT2)  | 976       | 747 (CT2) | x         | 747 (CT2) | x         |
| 748 (CT2)  | 660       | 748 (CT2) | x         | 748 (CT2) | x         |

**FIGURE 3: TYPICAL WEEKDAY & WEEKEND ROUTE BOARDINGS**  
 Source: MBTA 2007

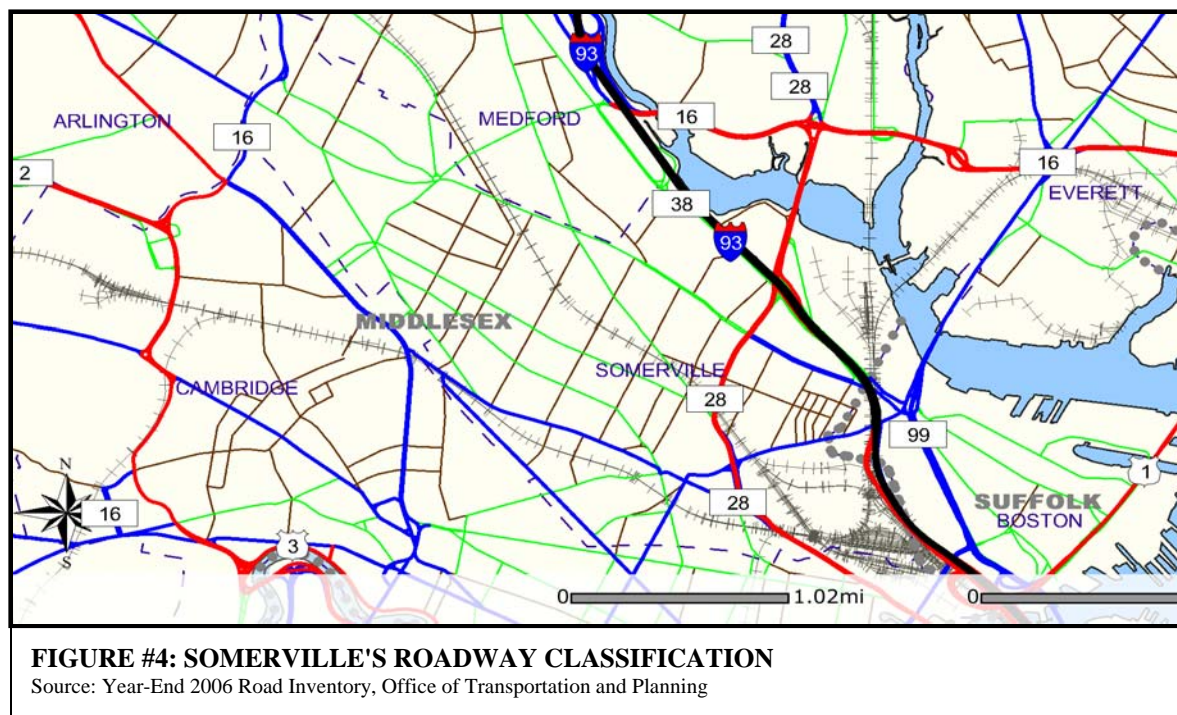
### Roads:

The City of Somerville has 101.5 miles of road. The longest streets the City maintains are:

- o Beacon Street running 1.2 miles from near Porter Square to Inman Square;
- o Broadway extending 3.2 miles from Medford to Sullivan Square;
- o Central Street running 0.9 miles between Somerville and Broadway;
- o Highland Avenue 1.7 miles from Davis Square to the McGrath Highway;
- o Medford Street 1.1 miles connecting Magoun Square to McGrath Highway;
- o Somerville Avenue 1.7 miles from Porter Square to just beyond Union Square and
- o Washington Street running 1.3 miles from the Boston line near Sullivan Square through Union Square to Cambridge.

Figure 4 shows the classification of the major roads in and around Somerville. Washington Street, Beacon Street, Somerville Avenue and the section of Broadway from McGrath Highway to the Boston line are classified as Urban Principal Arterial roads by the Executive Office of Transportation. The other roads listed are classified as Urban Minor Arterials with the exception of Central Street that has been classified as an Urban Collector. The classification of a road is used to prioritize funding, establish regional truck routes and influences road design decisions.





#### Parkways and Highways

The Department of Conservation and Recreation maintains the Alewife Brook Parkway along the western edge of Somerville and the Fellsway / McGrath Highway running from the Assembly Square area through the heart of Somerville towards Lechmere in Cambridge. McGrath Highway handles over 60,400 vehicles per day in 2005.

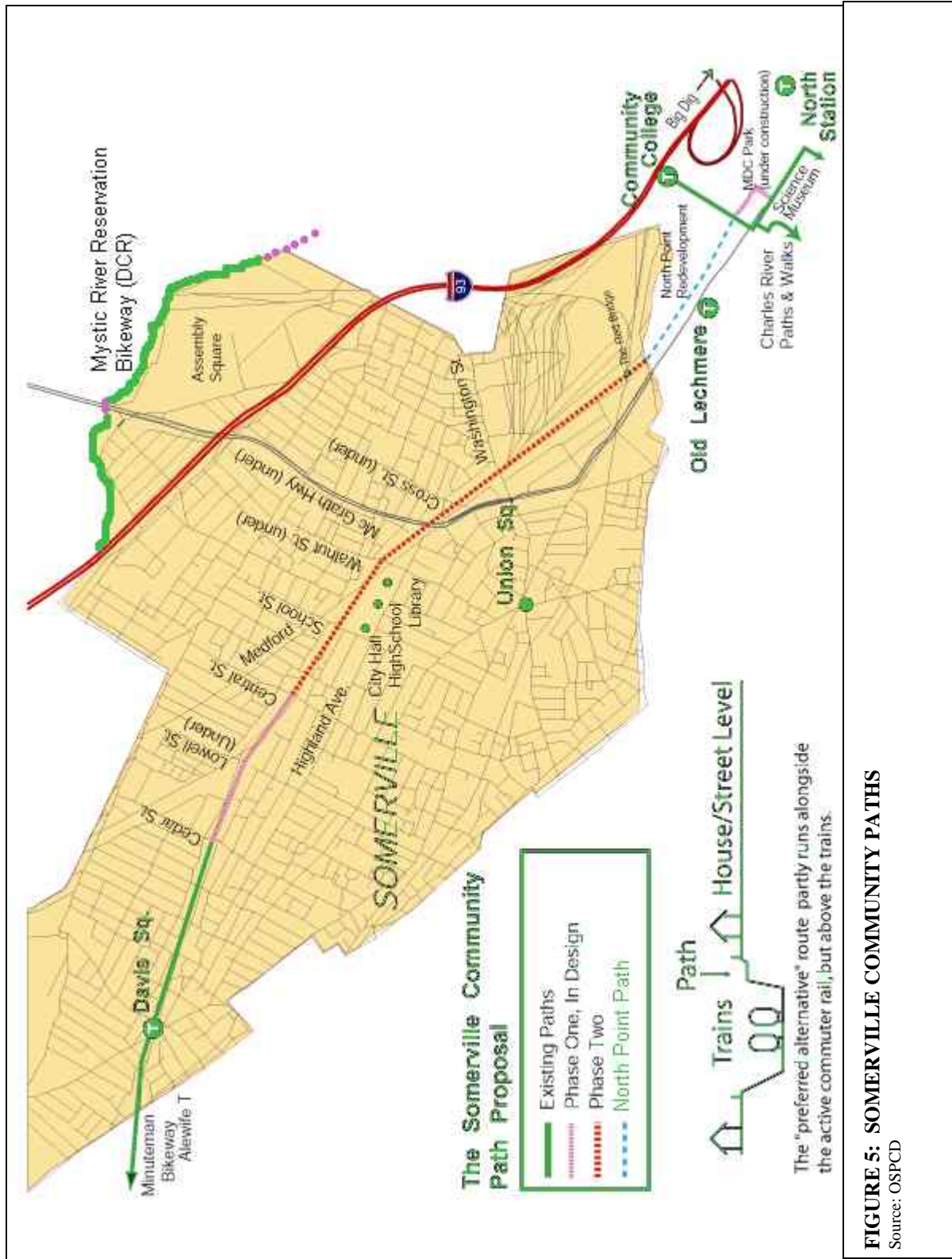
The Massachusetts Highway Department maintains Interstate 93 that runs from Medford through East Somerville and passes over Sullivan Square on its way into Boston via the Zakim Bridge. Interstate 93 handled nearly 170,000 vehicles per day each month in 2005 - approximately 4% of which were trucks - making the stretch through Somerville the 13<sup>th</sup> busiest stretch of highway in the Commonwealth.

#### Sidewalks and Paths

Nearly every Somerville street has a sidewalk; the vast majority have sidewalks on both sides. In total Somerville has 162.8 miles of sidewalk

Additionally Somerville has 2 miles of multi-use paths (Refer to Figure 5). The Linear Park Community Path extends ½ mile from the Cambridge line through Davis Square to Cedar Street. Five hundred people an hour use the Path to access the Davis Square station during rush hour. The Mystic River Bicycle Path runs along the Mystic River from the Blessing of the Bay Boathouse in the Ten Hills neighborhood and extending to Draw Seven Park near Assembly Square.





**FIGURE 5: SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY PATHS**

Source: OSPCD

The strong network of sidewalks and the community path help contribute to higher rates of commuting by walking and bicycling as compared to the Boston Metro Area (refer to Table 2).

| <b>TABLE 2: JOURNEY TO WORK BY WALKING &amp; BICYCLING 2000</b> |                |                   |             |             |             |
|---|----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|   | <b>2000</b>    | <b>2000</b>       | <b>2000</b> | <b>2000</b> | <b>2000</b> |
| <b>City</b>   | <b>Workers</b> | <b>Bicyclists</b> | <b>%</b>    | <b>Walk</b> | <b>%</b>    |
| <b>Somerville</b>   | <b>44,807</b>  | <b>1,251</b>      | <b>2.8%</b> | <b>4122</b> | <b>9.2%</b> |
| Boston - only   | 278,463        | 2,705             | 1.0%        | 36,323      | 13.0%       |
| Cambridge   |                |                   |             |             |             |
| Boston - 021 area   | 614,792        | 6,259             | 1.0%        | 56,910      | 9.3%        |
| Boston- Metro   | 2,009,750      | 9,759             | 0.5%        | 96,914      | 4.8%        |
| Source: U.S. Census 2000  |                |                   |             |             |             |

### Water Transportation

The Mystic River no longer serves as a major transportation corridor for either commuters or commerce. For the moment the river has become almost exclusively used for recreational boating. The Amelia Earhart Dam has locks capable of handling water taxis and commercial barges. Multiple waterfront projects have been or will be developed along the Mystic River such as Assembly Square in Somerville, Station Landing and River's Edge in Medford and others in Everett, Chelsea and Charlestown. Congressman Markey has secured an initial infusion of funds to provide water taxi service between Medford, Everett, Boston and Logan Airport; Assembly Square could be added to that service sometime in the future.

For more info see about the history of transportation in Somerville see: <http://www.provost-citywide.org/mpo.htm#H1>

### ***History of Public Works Infrastructure in Somerville***

Somerville began to implement of system of public works beginning in the 1880's. By 1907, Somerville's sanitary sewer system included 90 miles of pipes handled sewage and storm water, covering 90% of Somerville's land area. Today, Somerville has a total of 128 miles of combined and sanitary sewers covering nearly 100% of the city's land.

### Combined Sewer Overflow

A combined sewer is an antiquated type of sewer that is designed to carry both sanitary sewage and storm water runoff. Under usual conditions, when the sewer is able to contain all of the sewage and runoff, all flow goes to a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and is safely discharged after receiving treatment. When rainfall and/or melting snow is heavy enough to exceed the carrying capacity of the combined sewer system, both the precipitation and the sewage are discharged to a water body, such as a river or bay, rather than to the WWTP.

In Somerville, efforts began in the 1980's to separate sewage and storm water and the City now has 32 miles of exclusive storm drains, up from 6 miles in 1907.

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority provides water and sewer service to Boston and many surrounding communities. Somerville, Boston, Cambridge, and Chelsea have combined sewer systems connecting to MWRA's sewer system. There are 84 Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) outlet pipes among them and 21 of them currently overflow. Combined rainwater and sewage overflow into Boston Harbor and the Charles, Mystic, and Neponset Rivers when the CSO structures cannot contain it.

Table 3 shows the current amount of overflow from Somerville's only CSO. Additional sewer separation can reduce the frequency of overflows by 72%. This CSO discharges into the Alewife Brook and then eventually flows into the Mystic River.

| <b>TABLE 3: COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW VOLUMES AND SOLUTIONS</b> |                                     |                                   |  |             |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-------------|
|   | <b>Existing conditions (annual)</b> |                                   | <b>Sewer Separation<br/>Alternative A (annual)</b> |             |
|   | Frequency of<br>Sewage Overflows    | Volume of Sewage<br>Overflow (MG) | Frequency after<br>Proposed Alteration             | Volume (MG) |
| SOM01A<br>(Alewife Brook)                                     | 25                                  | 10.5                              | 7  | 2.24        |
| Source: City of Somerville Dept. of Engineering               |                                     |                                   |  |             |

In 1997, Somerville began to perform TV inspections of its sewer and drainage systems. The City also began to eliminate manholes that contained baffles that allowed storm water to flood into the sewer system. Some drain and sewer pipes were in such bad shape that cross flow between storm drain and sewer pipes occurs. In 2003, the City hired Camp, Dresser and McGee to identify rehabilitation measures to remedy this cross infiltration. CDM then prepared a plan and an estimate for the costs of rehabilitation. Total estimated project costs city-wide were just under \$3 million (2004 \$'s). Estimated costs for rehabilitation of drains along Broadway, Mystic Avenue, the Ten Hills neighborhood and East Somerville total \$1.31 million.

### Electrical and Telecommunications Infrastructure

Electrical and telecommunications infrastructure within Somerville is primarily provided by overhead wires connected by utility poles. Fiber optic service has added to the number of wires on each pole. Trees can interfere with aboveground wiring unless aggressively pruned. The City has recently been installing electrical and telecommunication wires underground when reconstructs major road corridors despite the additional costs to design and relocate the wires.

## **I. Five Year Consolidated Plan Goals (2003-2008)**

The Goals in the 2003-2008 Plan were defined as "*Strategies to Achieve Division Goals*" and are as follows:

1. Planning and redevelopment of the Inner Belt and McGrath Highway/Brickbottom areas of the city into mixed-use communities creating a variety of jobs.

2. Catalyzing development.
3. Contributing to the local and state development review process.
4. Encouraging redevelopment of former industrial and warehouse/distribution areas through zoning amendments, parcel acquisition and disposition, and projects to establish new identities for districts.
5. Leveraging CDBG funds with grants, matches from other public agencies and private donations.

## II. Accomplishments (2003-2008)

The Transportation Section of 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan focused on developing transportation infrastructure and plans to meet economic development needs of the City. The City's efforts accomplished many of the goals of that plan:

### Lower Broadway East Somerville

The City worked on the re-design of Broadway in East Somerville from McGrath Highway to the Boston City Line. A portion of the re-design has been implemented as part of the mitigation for the new Stop and Shop located off McGrath Highway. However, community concerns regarding the proposed design have led the City to re-open aspects of the original design. The City applied for and received a \$400,000 Transit Orientated Development grant that will be used in conjunction with CDBG funds to complete the 100% design and construction of a stretch from the Boston City Line to Franklin Street, in the vicinity of the Sullivan Square Orange Line Station.



**FIGURE 6: LOWER BROADWAY STREETCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**

Source: OSPCD 2007

### Inner Belt/Brickbottom

Figure 7 provides an aerial view of the Inner Belt/Brickbottom area- one of the City's most viable economic growth places. The City completed studies of alternatives to access the Innerbelt District of Somerville, a key potential regional economic growth and redevelopment area. The purpose of this study was to develop conceptual alternatives that provide improved access to the southern Inner Belt District that is currently constrained by rail lines. The study concluded that implementing three alternatives would best improve access to this district including:



**FIGURE 7: AERIAL MAP OF INNER BELT/BRICK BOTTOM**

Source: Circa 2000

- replacing the double bore tunnel under the commuter rail line;
- creating a bridge from Inner Belt to the McGrath Highway; and
- Extending two new roads from Inner Belt to Chestnut Street in the Brick Bottom area.

This planning effort also developed a design concept for the bridge that would connect Innerbelt to McGrath Highway.

#### Assembly Square

The City made significant accomplishments since 2003 including:

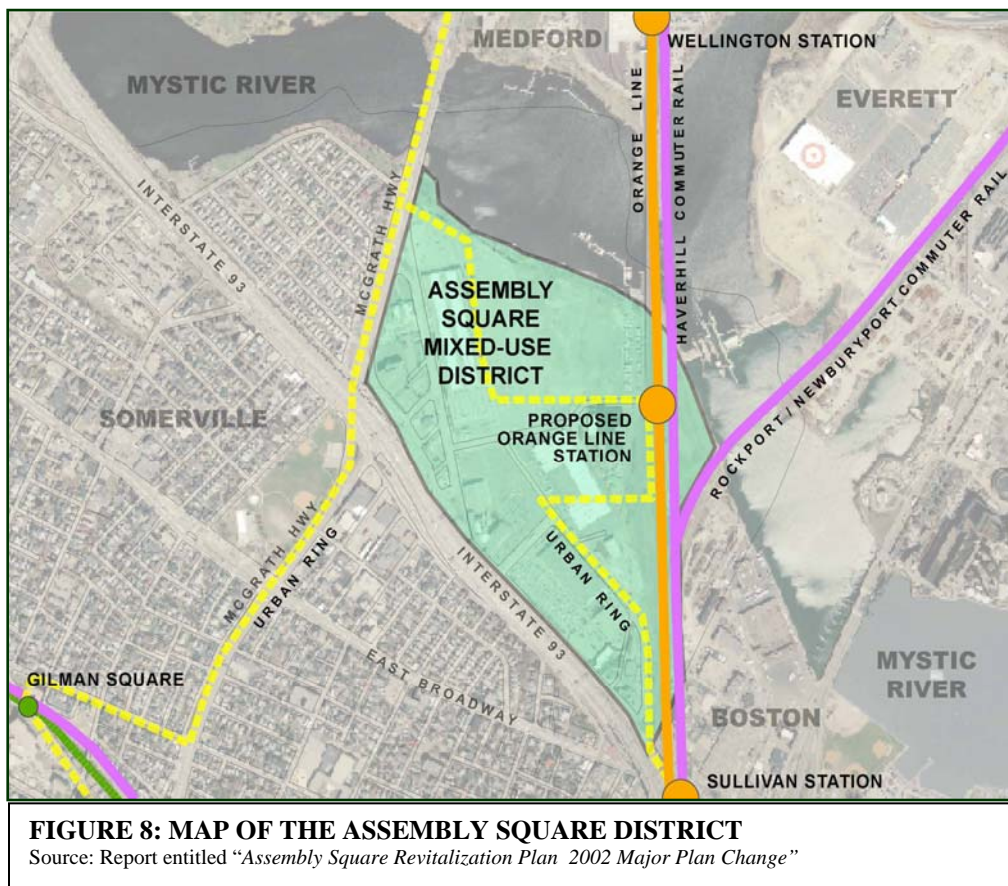
- The development of a new master plan and zoning regulations for the area;
- Re-tenanting of the Assembly Square Mall resulting in 700+ jobs and 233,000 square feet of new retail space.
- The resolution of lawsuits that prevented the next phase of development and approval of a site plan that includes improvements to 8 major intersections in and around Assembly Square, improved pedestrian connections at four locations, new bicycle lanes and a commitment to provide transportation demand management incentives for both employees and customers.
- Commitments of \$30 million in federal funds and \$15 million in private funds to build a new Orange Line subway station.



- Approved PUD Master Plan.
- Planning Approval and permit for IKEA and new Assembly Square Drive.

As mitigation for the new commercial activity generated by IKEA, FRIT will be constructing significant roadway improvements along Rt. 28 McGrath Highway at Assembly Square Drive, Middlesex Avenue, and Mystic Avenue northbound. They will also be substantially reconstructing the Lombardi Street / Broadway / I-93 off-ramp interchange and will be adding 2 additional traffic signals and replacing 2 existing signals. Assembly Square Drive itself will be realigned and will contain significant landscaping, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes leading to the waterfront.

Figure 8 illustrates the area of Assembly Square within the Greater Boston metro region



The redevelopment of Assembly Square will create new open spaces along the Mystic River for all residents to enjoy. Figure 9 depicts a future community path and public open space on the waterfront.



**FIGURE 9: A FUTURE OPEN SPACE IN ASSEMBLY SQUARE**

Source: Street Works LLC, 2007

### The Somerville Community Path

The City worked on several efforts to extend the Somerville Community Path beyond its existing terminus at Cedar Street. The City received a donation of 1.5 acres of land from the Cambridge Health Alliance that will allow the Path to be extended to Central Street. The City has used CDBG funds to leverage a \$200,000 US EPA Brownfields Grant and a \$192,000 Urban Self-Help to help fund this extension. Work on the Path also helped Somerville leverage a \$250,000 grant from the Active Living by Design Program run by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The City hired an engineering firm to develop a 25% design of the Cedar to Central extension and a 100% design of the extension and park being constructed on the former CHA land. The same firm also completed an engineering feasibility study showing the best proposed route of the extension from School Street to North Point along the Green Line Extension.

Figure 10 pictures the existing Community Path from Cedar Street to Davis Square and its popularity.



**FIGURE 10: RESIDENTS ON THE PATH**

Source: OSPCD 2007

### Regional Planning

The City continued its active participation in regional transportation planning initiatives. The City participated in planning for the Urban Ring, the Green Line Extension and State Trails Committee. The City successfully worked to obtain a seat on the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization. Activities include:

- Green Line Extension: the City continues to successfully promote the planning of the Green Line Extension through Somerville. The City commented on State air quality regulations that require the implementation of the line; participated in the “Beyond Lechmere” study by the MBTA, organized community meetings to review the plans and commented on the Environmental Notification Form for the project.
- Urban Ring Planning
- Route 28 Corridor Planning: The City participated in plans to improve the Route 28 Corridor from Wellington Circle in Medford to Boston.
- Transportation Improvement Program: The City has applied and supported the implementation of many projects in the state’s Transportation Improvement Program including: Somerville Avenue, Beacon Street and Magoun Square, Union Square, I-93 Interchange with Mystic Avenue and route 28, orange Line Station at Assembly Square. The Somerville Avenue project began in 2007 and includes improvements to aging storm drain and sewer lines.

### Bicycling & Walking

City staff sit on the Somerville Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Shape-up Somerville Task Force that focus on creating more “Active Transportation” opportunities for the City. OSPCD led the Mayor’s “Safe-START” pedestrian and bicycle pedestrian safety program. Safe-START developed a \$7.5 million plan to address the most significant pedestrian and bicycle safety issues within the City.

## **III. Needs Assessment**

In preparing this Consolidated Plan, staff have analyzed the challenges and assets of the City of Somerville with regards to transportation and infrastructure. The accomplishments made during the prior plan have also been considered. Several communities needs have been identified which include the need to:

- Improve access to Mass Transit, both rail and bus;
- Reduce of barriers to local connectivity;
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle access and active transportation alternatives;
- Improve access for persons with disabilities; and,
- Reduce Brownfield costs related to transportation projects.

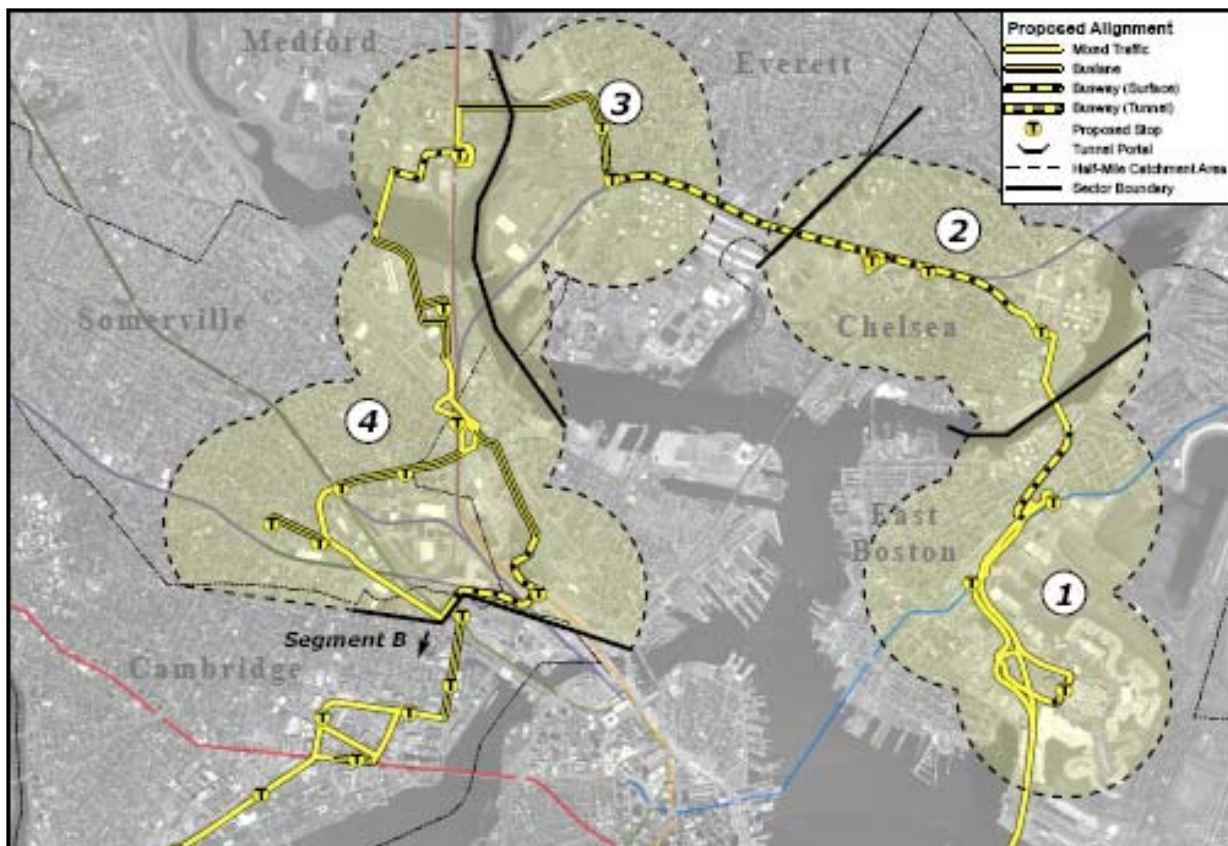
### Improve Access to Mass Transit

Somerville grew prior to the automobile age as a streetcar suburb with narrow streets, little off-street



parking, and better transit service than today. This historic development has created the most densely populated community in New England. Unfortunately, the quality of transit service in Somerville dropped significantly when buses replaced trolleys and commuter trains by-passed Somerville. Today, eight passenger rail lines pass through Somerville, but only one stops. Most residents are required to take slow moving, unreliable buses operating on congested streets requiring a transfer to transit stations. The City suffers from the unbalanced tax base and needs economic development to provide better city services, support capital investment, and operate a sustainable budget. The City currently pays an annual assessment of \$4.5 million to the MBTA.

The City continues to support the Urban Ring project. It is a phased set of transit improvements in a corridor around the downtown core of Boston. The project corridor forms a loop that passes through Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Medford and Somerville. The proposed corridor encompasses portions of Somerville including Assembly Square and the Inner Belt; some of Somerville's fastest growing districts. Additionally, it connects Somerville to the Bostons' Cambridges' and Medford's providing alternative access for residences to/from employment centers in the greater Boston Region. Figure 11 presents one of the alternatives being analyzed for the Urban Ring configuration.



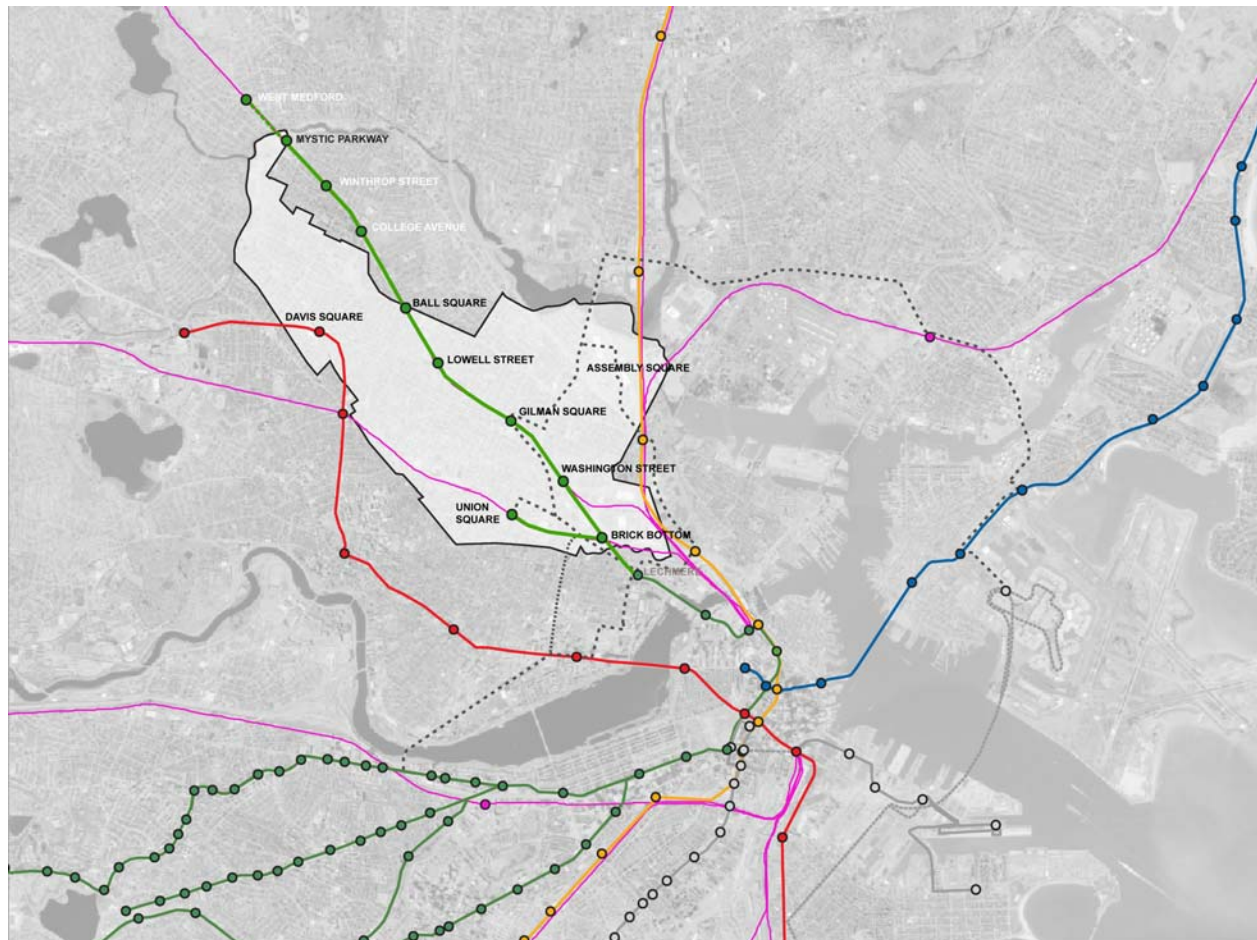
**FIGURE 11: A PROPOSED URBAN RING ALIGNMENT**

Source: Executive Office of Transportation Public Works (EOTPW), 2007

The City continues to advocate for the extension of the Green Line from Lechmere station in Cambridge through Somerville into parts of Medford. A large portion of Somerville includes environmental justice population areas designated by the State based on factors related to household income and minority populations. The City is home to the 46-acre (tax-free) MBTA Commuter Rail Facility that has major environmental impacts on the East Somerville and Ward 2 neighborhoods. The Green Line will likely add further maintenance facilities in Somerville.

The Executive Office of Transportation Public Works (EOTPW) is leading the project management and has begun data gathering and analysis needed for the Environmental Impact Report. The public participation process has also begun with the Project Advisory Committee meeting once a month. The City will need to push the state to consider land use and pedestrian and bike connection to the stations proposed along the corridor. The Green Line Extension through Somerville will greatly expand the number of residents in Somerville within walking distance of frequent and more comfortable trolley service. This will help relieve congestion on local roads, help improve mobility for residents, allow for more development and job opportunities, especially in Union Square and Inner Belt, and decrease air pollution.

Figure 12 presents a map of the existing commuter and light rail systems serving the region. The Green Line Extension in Somerville starts at the existing Lechmere station and will parallel the Lowell Commuter rail corridor with potentially 5 new stations and extend into Medford. There will also be a spur to Union Square either in the Fitchburg commuter rail corridor or at grade along Somerville Avenue.



**FIGURE 12: MAP OF PROPOSED GREEN LINE EXTENSION**

Source: OSPCD, 2005

Somerville also lacks a stop on the Orange Line Subway that runs through East Somerville. The lack of a station in the Assembly Square area has held back this area from full development. The creation of an Orange Line Station at Assembly Square will help open up this area to further economic development and reduce regional traffic traveling through East Somerville.

#### *More Regular MBTA Bus Service with Improved Cross-Town Access*

The existing bus service is not dependable and does not adequately serve the areas of the City that rely on public transport. The routes should be improved to provide greater mobility within the City as well as to provide access to major regional destinations. A survey conducted by the Somerville Transit Equity Partnership (STEP) indicated that the buses such as the 90 and 91 that provide access within the City are the most unreliable and have the lowest customer satisfaction rates.

#### Reduce of Barriers to Local Connectivity

Regional transportation corridors such as Interstate 93, McGrath Highway and MBTA rail corridors pose barriers to improved interconnectivity and impede economic development in areas such as the Innerbelt, Assembly Square and Brickbottom Districts.

### *Assembly Square District*

Assembly Square Transit Oriented Development (TOD) needs further study and design plans to implement connections from Assembly Square to other parts of Somerville and establish it as a new neighborhood. The Assembly Square neighborhood has and will add amenities the whole City of Somerville will want to access. Waterfront paths, recreational and open space will be improved and commercial and retail employment opportunities will continue to expand at Assembly Square, so safe and frequent connectivity and multiple mobility options in this area are paramount.

### *Lower Broadway/East Somerville*

Pedestrian level of service along lower Broadway needs to be improved. The community has expressed interest in a pedestrian-scale streetscape that encourages foot traffic and promotes the area as a retail district. Overall transit use lags areas such as West Somerville, hence improvements to public transit as well as support for alternate modes (i.e., safe pedestrian and bicycle connections) to transit stations and other squares in the City are necessary. Transit Oriented commercial development could be promoted through the design and construction of pedestrian improvements all along Broadway to Sullivan Square Orange Line Station.

### *Union Square*

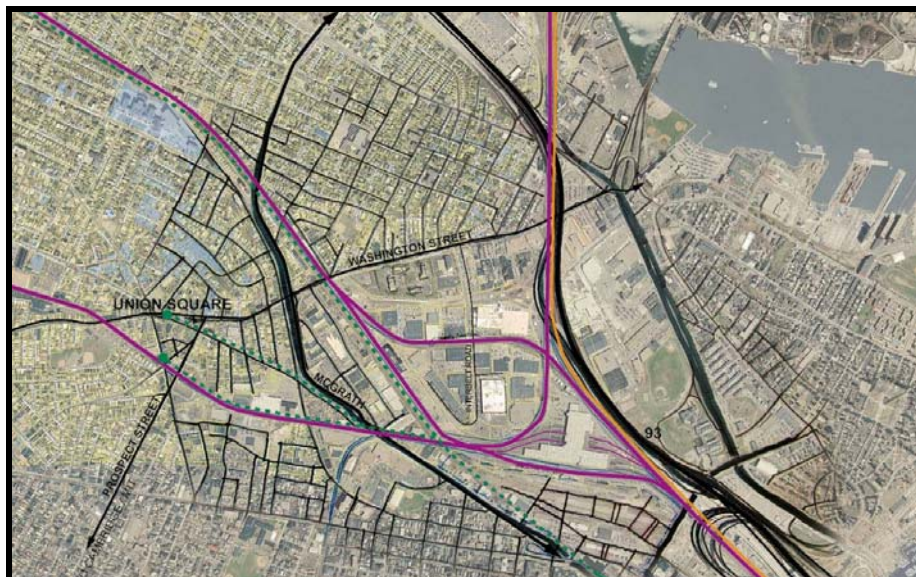
Union Square's great economic potential can only be fully realized by improved transit, road and pedestrian accommodations. Roadway and streetscape design developed by working with the Union Square Main Streets organization and other stakeholders is necessary to improve pedestrian, bike, and bus and vehicular circulation throughout the Square. Improving open space and addressing infrastructure needs, such as separating the combined sewer/storm drain system and constructing public parking, is needed to support more economic growth and spur revitalization of the Square.

### *Inner Belt / Brickbottom*

The Inner Belt and Brickbottom Districts are isolated from the rest of the City of Somerville through the elevated Route 28 viaduct, elevated commuter rail lines, and the I-93 elevated freeway. Of particular concern are the twin conduits serving as a tunnel underneath the Lowell Commuter Line. These tunnels are old and in need of repair; commercial vehicles have become stuck in them in the past due to their low height. As a result of multiple factors, these 200 plus acre areas in close proximity to downtown Boston are less than fully utilized and regional economic development activity is diminished.

Figure 13 highlights the infrastructure (streets, rail and interstate highway) surrounding the area rendering inaccessible with the exception of the twin tubes.





**FIGURE 13: BARRIERS SURROUNDING THE INNER BELT**

Source: OSPCD 2007

The Draft CTPS Route 28 Corridor Study did not identify solutions to resolve any of the problems that exist along this portion of the elevated Route 28 arterial. Inefficiencies on Route 28 spill over onto neighborhood streets creating greater car queuing. The viaduct is at the end of its design life and needs to be torn down. The State Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) needs support and guidance in planning a replacement for the viaduct consistent with the City's vision of the Corridor. Air pollution and congestion problems continue as improvements to Route 28 are delayed.

The City has studied the connectivity issue in the past and continues to do so. One alternative is to construct a bridge from the southernmost point of Inner Belt Road across the rail lines to McGrath Highway. Other options involve crossings further to the west and one to the east into the Charlestown area of Boston. Replacement of the twin tunnels has been considered, and while that may be an improvement, it will not fully unlock the Inner Belt District economic potential. Further, the connection between Inner Belt to Brickbottom must be addressed to allow the areas to fully benefit from the construction of the Green Line extension.

#### Improved Use of and Access to Mystic River

Over the past decade, great improvement has taken place along the Charles River in Cambridge – cleaner water, more recreational opportunities in and along the river, and a mixture of business, academic and residential development overlooking the river taking advantage of those improvements. With this success story in mind, the cities of Somerville, Everett, Medford, Boston, Malden and Medford wish to turn attention toward making the same progress along our region's other great river, the Mystic.

The Mystic River corridor is the site of many significant development projects as well as transportation projects including, but not limited to, Assembly Square, the Green Line Extension,

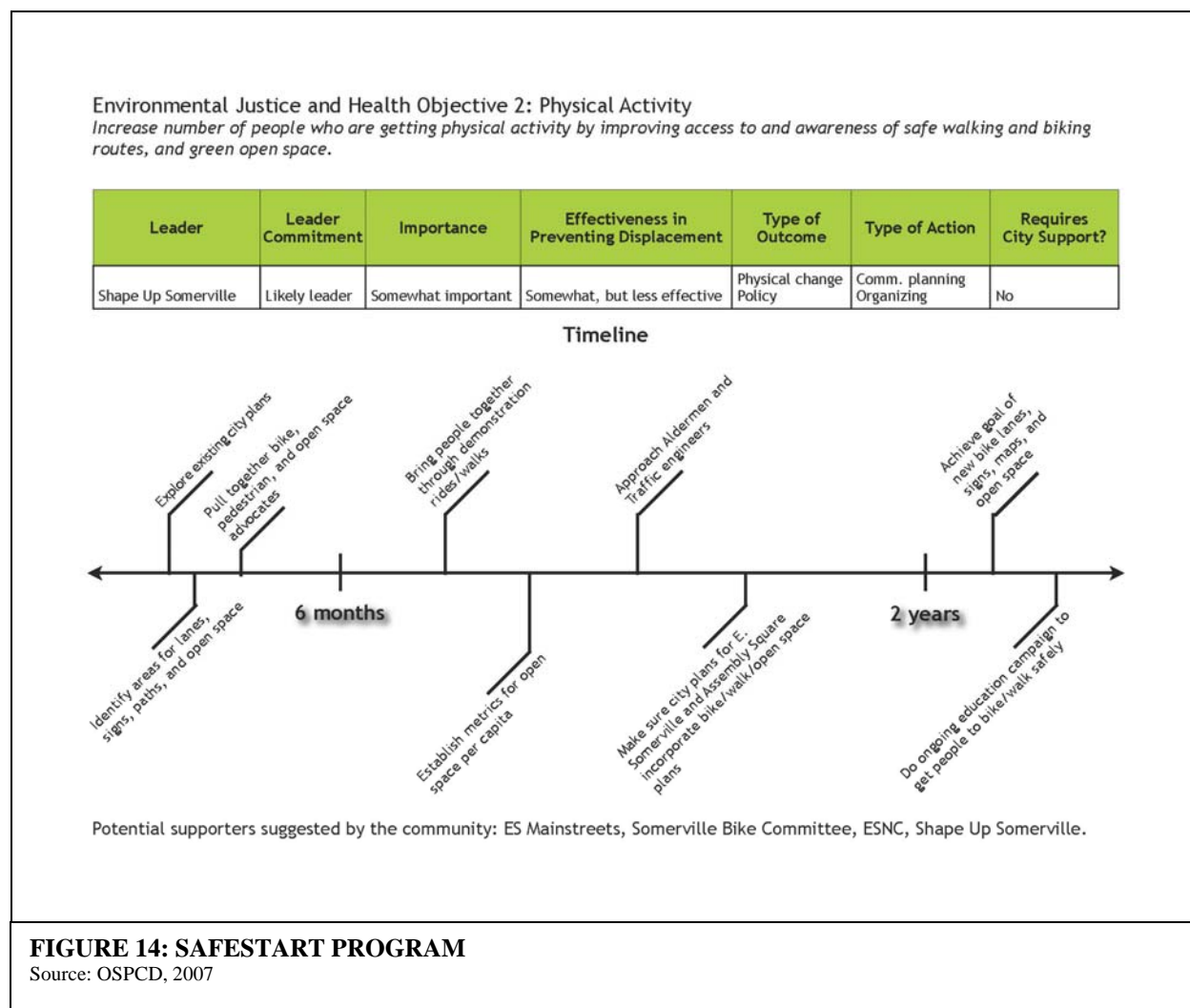
Rivers Edge and the Mystic River Reservation Master Plan. Smaller scale road and bridge projects also play an important role in access, connectivity and enjoyment of the open space resources. These are in various stages of planning and development and most will go through the MEPA process. The six cities will be working together to coordinate the review of these projects as they affect the Mystic River.

### Improved Pedestrian and Bicycle Access and Alternative Modes

#### *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Planning*

The City currently lacks a comprehensive master plan for creating bicycle corridors, although useful components exist. In fact, the Bicycle Advisory has developed a “Somerville by Bicycle” map that identifies major routes and the City’s Safe-START program has identified safety gaps for both bicyclists and pedestrians.

The development of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan would allow the City to plan and design specific improvements to create a system of bicycle corridor and community paths, and to fix the safety gaps in our sidewalk system. A Plan would focus on safety improvements and make recommendations regarding new infrastructure that will improve connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians. A comprehensive plan will help provide low and moderate-income residents with alternatives to relying on increasingly expensive motor vehicles.



### *Shape-Up East Somerville*

East Somerville has long been the lowest income and most ethnically diverse neighborhood in the City of Somerville. The neighborhood has a growing Latino population - 21% as compared to around 9% for Somerville as a whole, with increasing numbers of immigrants from Brazil, Haiti, India, China, and Central America. Local chronic disease indicators for Latinos are higher than the state, including rates for coronary heart disease hospitalizations, diabetes-related hospitalizations and deaths. The East Somerville Initiative, a community outreach and planning process led by the Somerville Community Corporation, identified pedestrian and bicycle access to and from East Somerville and streetscape improvements along lower Broadway and Cross Street as necessary to increase physical activity and promote health for East Somerville residents.

### *SafeSTART (Safe, Sustainable Transportation Assessment and Recommendation Team)*

Safe-START identified many actions necessary to improved pedestrian and bicycle safety at 27 priority areas within the City including the need to:

- Upgrade Traffic Lights to include pedestrian countdown lights
- Purchase infrared thermal heating equipment for pothole repairs
- Update Safe Routes to School maps for Parents and Children
- Create education material for parents who drive children to school to make them more aware of the need to watch carefully for students walking to school
- Install pedestrian safety tables (e.g., traffic calming tables/measures) at 30 locations across the City including high priority locations like those near schools and parks
- Install or repair, in collaboration with other entities, ADA ramps at 12 high priority locations
- Placement of bollards and streetscape changes near entry areas of all elementary schools to improve the safety of children arriving and leaving school
- Development of “Gateways” to key nodes around the City including Davis Square, Union Square and Tufts to highlight to motorists that they are entering high pedestrian traffic areas
- Upgrades to traffic signals to better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists in the course of new developments and major road reconstruction projects
- Install bulb-outs at crossings where pedestrian safety tables will not be appropriate
- Pilot-testing of solar-powered pedestrian warning lights.
- Construct raised intersection at Cameron Avenue and Holland Street.

### *Community Paths*

The existing Somerville Community Path needs to extend another 2.5 miles to connect to more areas within the City and to adjoining communities. Path extensions will increase transit use and physical activity at the same time they will help decrease air pollution and congestion. The extensions must be designed and coordinated with the design of the Green Line. The Department of Conservation and Recreation plans to extend the Mystic River Bicycle Path from Assembly Square to Sullivan Square including connections under Route 28 and in the vicinity of the Amelia Earhart Dam. The City must plan and design connections from the Mystic River Bicycle Path to Assembly Square and Sullivan Square to help create a system of paths and bicycle lanes that can be used both for transportation and recreational uses.

### Improve access for persons with disabilities

The Somerville DisAbilities Commission 2007 survey found that, 44% of the respondents rated their experience moving around the city streets as “poor.” Specific needs the Commission identified include:

- accessible bus shelters;
- sidewalk, intersection and streetscape improvements;
- evaluation of the existing Paratransportation Services within the city;
- a survey of traffic controls to determine where Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) have not been installed;
- development of a GIS-based inventory of city streets for standard, accessible curb cuts and safe pedestrian pathways with appropriate slope and terrains.



#### Reduce Brownfield Costs related to Transportation Projects.

Transportation projects such as connections to the Inner Belt and the Community Path require environmental assessments to be conducted to determine the presence of contamination and clean-up actions when contaminants are found. Where contaminants are found, project costs can be significantly increased to account for the required remediation.

### **IV. Public Input and Prioritization of Needs**

The work over the past 5 years has helped identify key priorities in improving mobility and transportation within the City. Additionally, on November 1<sup>st</sup> OSPCD held a meeting of key stakeholders to discuss transportation needs in Somerville.

#### ***a. Methodology of Prioritization***

The City has taken a number of steps to prioritize the many needs with regards to transportation and infrastructure needs. These include:

- planning and engineering studies from existing initiatives;
- review of existing regional plans and studies;
- surveys and outreach efforts by stakeholder groups including:
  - STEP's recent bus user survey results;
  - Somerville Community Corporation results of the East Somerville Planning Initiative;
  - Somerville Health Director's comments on health initiatives in East Somerville;
  - Chair of Disabilities Commission's recommendations for developing the 2008-2013 Action Plan that included comments on transportation infrastructure; and,
- evaluation of accomplishments during 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan.

Transportation was also a topic of discussion during the public hearings for development of the 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan and a specific focus group of stakeholders was held on November 1, 2007 to discuss transportation needs and strategies. Table 4 summarizes the key recommendations regarding prioritization including:

- Focusing CDBG resources on projects that can help leverage federal or state funding to contribute to the substantial cost to construct these projects;
- Continuing community outreach efforts from Main Streets, STEP and other organizations regarding significant projects;
- Improving the interconnectivity within the City between all modes of travel especially transit, walking and bicycling, including connectivity to the Urban Ring and the Green Line and extending the Community Path into Boston;
- Studying a Green Line / Commuter Rail transfer station within the City;
- Improving connections between squares, activity centers and neighborhoods;
- Ensuring all crosswalks have ADA compliant curb cuts, and;
- Following through on the recommendations of recent studies, carrying through existing initiatives and limiting new initiatives until more funds become available.

**b. Matrix of Needs and Relative Priority**

| <b>TABLE 4: TRANSPORTATION &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS &amp; PRIORITIES</b> |                   |              |
|--|-------------------|--------------|
|  | <b>Need Level</b> | <b>Units</b> |
| Improve access to Mass Transit - rail                                      | High              | Stations     |
| Improve access to Mass Transit - bus                                       | Moderate          | Improvements |
| Reduce barriers to local connectivity                                      | High              | Barriers     |
| Improve pedestrian and bicycle access and transportation alternatives      | Moderate          | Locations    |
| Improve access for persons with disabilities                               | Moderate          | Locations    |
| Reduce Brownfields costs related to transportation projects                | Moderate          | Sites        |
| Improved Utility Infrastructure  | Moderate          | Linear Feet  |

**V. Obstacles to Meeting Key Needs**

Obstacles related to infrastructure improvements include:

- Construction costs that vastly exceed the CDBG funds available for projects;
- Ever rising costs of construction and construction materials;
- Regional transportation corridors such as Interstate 93, McGrath Highway and MBTA rail corridors which pose barriers to improved interconnectivity and impede economic development in areas such as Inner Belt, Assembly Square and Brickbottom;
- Regional transportation corridors result in missing or difficult connections for pedestrians and bicyclists and also make improving interconnections expensive and complicated;
- Regional transportation corridors are under the control of regional and state agencies who must authorize any modifications within the corridors they control; and,
- Lack of local revenue raising capacity to significantly improve existing infrastructure.

**VI. Vision, Goals, and Strategies**

***Vision***

The City envisions a transportation network that balances various modes, encourages alternative transportation choices and readily connects residents and workers to key destinations and businesses within and without the city.

The City envisions utility systems that protect public health, safety and private property, expand to meet economic development needs and improves the environment and quality of life in Somerville.

***Goals***

1. Improve rail transit service to improve connectivity throughout the region for residents and businesses.
2. Improve bus service within Somerville and connecting to surrounding communities.
3. Enhance streetscapes, road and intersections to increase vitality in identified commercial districts.

4. Reduce barriers dividing neighborhoods and districts in Somerville.
5. Improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility in the City to support active transportation alternatives.
6. Improve infrastructure to comply with ADA requirements.
7. Increase Somerville's role in regional transportation planning.
8. Improve basic utility infrastructure within Somerville.

### ***Strategies***

The following strategies will be used to accomplish these goals:

#### **Improve Rail Transit Service**

- 1.1 Support the Green Line extension through Somerville and to Union Square.
- 1.2 Support the development of the Assembly Square Orange Line Station.
- 1.3 Participate in planning of the Urban Ring so that route benefits East Somerville.

#### **Improve Bus Service**

- 2.1 Analyze MBTA bus routes and the RIDE services within the City and recommend improvements.
- 2.2 Install new bus shelters.
- 2.3 Improve signage and information for riders

#### **Enhance Streetscapes, Roads, Intersections**

- 3.1 Implement streetscape improvements to support East Somerville NRSA.
- 3.2 Implement streetscape improvements to support Union Square NRSA.
- 3.3 Install Way-finding Signage to support commercial districts.

#### **Reduce Barriers Dividing Neighborhoods**

- 4.1 Design new road connections to promote economic development
- 4.2 Develop an improved concept for the McGrath / O'Brien Highway (Route 28).
- 4.3 Improve connectivity across Interstate 93.

#### **Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

- 5.1 Develop a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan to prioritize improvements.
- 5.2 Improve bicycle access on City streets.
- 5.3 Extend Community Path to Central Street.
- 5.3 Expand Community Path along the Green Line extension.
- 5.4 Improve paths along the Mystic River.
- 5.5 Identify and address safety impediments.
- 5.6 Improve Access to Water Transportation

#### **Improve Access for Persons with Disabilities**

- 6.1 In collaboration with the disabilities community, identify priority locations for ADA Improvements.
- 6.2 Fund and implement improvements at key locations.

### **Increase Somerville's Role in Planning**

- 7.1. Participate in the Metropolitan Area Planning Organization.
- 7.2 Partner with local and regional transportation agencies and advocates.

### **Improve Infrastructure**

- 8.1 Further reduce the number of incidents of Combined Sewer Overflows and the Volume of Overflow.
- 8.2 Replace leaking sewers.
- 8.3 Relocate electrical and telecommunications wires underground.

## **VII. Performance Measures**

| <b>TRANSPORTATION &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Benchmark</b>  |
| 1. Improve rail transit service to improve connectivity throughout the region for residents and businesses. | 1.1 Support the Green Line extension through Somerville and to Union Square.                  | 1.1.1 Five station locations designed within 5 years. ( <i>See East Somerville NRSA 5.1.1 and Union Square NRSA 5.1.1</i> )   |
|   | 1.2 Support the development of the Assembly Square Orange Line Station.                       | 1.2.1 Station design completed and funding secured within 5 years with attention to enhancing connections to Mystic River Reservation and Draw 7 Park.                                |
|   | 1.3 Participate in planning of the Urban Ring so that route benefits East Somerville.         | 1.3.1 Adoption of the Inner Belt Alternative. ( <i>See East Somerville NRSA 5.2.1</i> )   |
| 2. Improve bus service within Somerville and connecting to surrounding communities.                         | 2.1 Analyze MBTA bus routes and the RIDE services within the City and recommend improvements. | 2.1.1 Analysis completed and submitted to MBTA within 5 years. ( <i>See East Somerville NRSA 5.3.1 and Union Square NRSA 5.2.1f</i> )   |
|   | 2.2 Install new bus shelters.   | 2.2.1 Install 12 shelters over the next 5 years.  |
|   | 2.3 Improve signage and information for riders.   | 2.3.1 Install maps in new shelters.   |
| 3. Enhance streetscapes, road and intersections to increase vitality in identified commercial districts.    | 3.1 Implement streetscape improvements to support East Somerville NRSA.                       | 3.1.1 Complete design of Lower Broadway streetscape within 2 years and initiate improvements within 5 years. ( <i>See Economic Development 2.1.1 and East Somerville NRSA 4.1.1</i> ) |
|   | 3.2 Implement streetscape improvements to support Union Square NRSA.                          | 3.2.1 Complete Union Square Transportation Study within 2 years. ( <i>See Union Square NRSA 5.3.1</i> )   |
|   | 3.3 Install Way finding Signage to support commercial districts.                              | 3.3.1 Install citywide system of way finding signage within 5 years.  |
| 4. Reduce barriers dividing neighborhoods and districts in Somerville.                                      | 4.1 Design new road connections to promote economic development                               | 4.1.1 Complete 75% design of two Inner Belt connectors and application for construction funding for at least one of the alternatives within 5 years                                   |

| TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Goal   | Strategies  | Benchmark  |
|  | 4.2 Develop an improved concept for the McGrath / O'Brien Highway (Route 28).                           | 4.2.1 Develop a concept plan within 3 years. (See East Somerville NRSA 5.3.1)  |
|  | 4.3 Improve connectivity across Interstate 93.  | 4.3.1 Complete 75% design for I-93 connector in vicinity of Assembly Square within 5 years. (See East Somerville NRSA 5.4.1)                               |
| 5. Improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility in the City to support active transportation alternatives. | 5.1 Develop a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan to prioritize improvements.                            | 5.1.1 Complete Master Plan within 5 years.   |
|  | 5.2 Improve bicycle access on City streets.   | 5.2.1 Install an additional 2 miles of bicycle lanes within 5 years.   |
|  | 5.3 Extend Community Path to Central Street.  | 5.3.1 Construct the Community Path to Central St. within 5 years.  |
|  | 5.3 Expand Community Path along the Green Line extension.   | 5.4.1 Complete design of Community Path along Green Line extension within 3 years.   |
|  | 5.4 Improve paths along the Mystic River.   | 5.4.1 Ensure Mystic River Master Plan includes improvements to paths.  |
|  | 5.5 Identify and address safety impediments.  | 5.5.1 Annually identify Safe-START improvements and implement at least 50%.  |
|  | 5.6 Improve Access to Water Transportation  | 5.6.1 Prepare feasibility study to explore options for water transit over the next three years.  |
| 6. Improve infrastructure to comply with ADA requirements  | 6.1 In collaboration with the disabilities community, identify priority locations for ADA Improvements. | 6.1.1 Identify 40 key locations for improvements within 5 years.   |
|  | 6.2 Fund and implement improvements at key locations.   | 6.2.1 Include ADA improvements in all major road reconstruction projects.  |
|  |   | 6.2.2 Improve at least 4 other key locations annually  |
| 7. Increase Somerville's role in regional transportation planning and improvements                         | 7.1. Participate in the Metropolitan Area Planning Organization.  | 7.1.1 Continue active participation in MPO.  |
|  | 7.2 Partner with local and regional transportation agencies and advocates.                              | 7.2.1 Engage in at least 1 collaborative effort with one or more of STEP, MAPC, DCR, MBTA, MHD, SUS, Groundwork, and East Somerville Initiative each year. |

| TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE PERFORMANCE MEASURES |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Goal   | Strategies  | Benchmark  |
|  | 7.3 Ensure regional, state and federal agency coordination of all ongoing Infrastructure Projects | 7.3.1 Attend 5 meetings of Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Planning and Programming Committee and 5 meetings of Regional Transportation Advisory Council per year ( <i>See East Somerville NRSA 5.6.1</i> ) |
| 8. Improve basic utilities within Somerville         | 8.1 Further reduce Combined Sewer Overflows.  | 8.1.1 Decrease number of overflows from 9 to 3 per year and volume of overflow from 7.6Mg to 0.5MG.  |
|  | 8.2 Replace leaking sewers.   | 8.2.1 Replace 10% of leaking sewers within 5 years.  |
|  | 8.3 Relocate electrical and telecommunications wires underground.                                 | 8.3.1 Underground 1 mile of utilities within 5 years.  |

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## **SECTION FOUR:**

# **PARKS & OPEN SPACE**

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## Introduction

### *History of Parks and Open Space in Somerville*

Somerville's location in the Boston Basin coastal plain has guided its development over the last three and a half centuries. Glaciation left a series of drumlins, the "seven hills of Somerville," running west to east across the future city. Physical boundaries developed along waterways: the Mystic River to the north, the Alewife Brook to the west, and the Miller's River to the southeast.

By the 1600s, the ridgeline of hills had developed into overland travel routes, and agriculture occupied much of the rest of the landscape. As Cambridge and Boston grew, transportation needs fell along those points of connection, and the Miller's River and surrounding tidal flats were filled in. Railways and accompanying industry developed in the lower southeastern flats, and housing quickly spread throughout the rest of the area. In 1872, Somerville was incorporated as a city.

Only a few public parks were constructed before a massive housing boom at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1876, two major parcels were dedicated as permanent open space: Central Hill Park (current home of Somerville's High School, City Hall, and Central Public Library – see Figures 1 and 2); and Broadway Park (now Foss Park, owned and operated by the DCR).

Between 1890 and 1910, 50% of today's housing stock was constructed. This intense development and subdivision pattern resulted in Somerville's well-known status as the most densely populated municipality in New England<sup>1</sup>. It also left Somerville with little remaining available land for public parks. Lack of strategy was seen at the state level as well – the Governor vetoed a 1900 bill for the extension of the Metropolitan Park System, including an appropriation for a boulevard across Somerville. The city of Somerville only dedicated one major park during this time of rapid expansion: Lincoln Park (1900).

The rest of the City's parks, playgrounds, community gardens and open spaces were constructed after the housing boom. For this reason, many of Somerville's open spaces are less than one half acre in size, and scattered throughout the city in a "patchwork" or irregular pattern (see Map 1). Today's sizeable parks each have an interesting land use history - many are former schoolyards or other municipal lands that were converted to parks as the public demand for open space grew and housing needs declined.



**FIGURE 1: CENTRAL HILL PARK, 1913**

Source: City of Somerville Postcard Collection

As a densely populated city, Somerville has made the protection and creation of open space a top priority. Only 123 acres, or 4.7%, of the City's 4.1 square miles meet the definition of public open

<sup>1</sup> 29.45 people/acre; 2000 U.S. Census



space<sup>2</sup>; yet these spaces, particularly the parks, playgrounds, and recreational paths, are intensively used by the City's nearly 80,000 residents. Maintenance is a top concern as the City seeks to make open space available to all residents and promote healthy living through the Shape Up Somerville campaign. Ultimately, the quality of life for all of Somerville's residents is enriched by the quality of the open space in each of the City's neighborhoods, whether the space is enjoyed for recreational activity or green tranquility.

A Parks Inventory was conducted for all of the City's open spaces in 2007 and resulted in a number of important findings. The 123 acres of current Somerville parks and open space support a variety of uses, including passive recreation, athletic fields, playgrounds, and natural habitat. Less than 40% (48.24 acres) of open space in Somerville is actually owned by the City. The remainder is owned and managed by the State Department of Conservation and Recreation (68.36 acres), the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (6.13 acres), and Middlesex County Courthouse (.50 acres). Not included in these figures are approximately 45 acres of privately held open space, such as Tufts University fields and small church properties



The inventory also found that although the City has limited open space, nearly all residents live within 1/4 mile of an improved park (see Map 2).

Somerville retains a lean Parks & Open Space staff (2.5 positions) to manage the City's parks and street tree program; this staff works collaboratively with the Department of Public Works, Recreation Department, and the Office of Sustainability and Environment to maintain, renovate, and increase its holdings.

At the time of writing, the City is in the process of updating its 5-year action plan, the *Somerville Open Space & Recreation Plan*. The goals and strategies of this Consolidated Plan are intended to be consistent with the citywide goals of the Open Space & Recreation Plan. CDBG resources are vital to improving the open spaces in the eligible areas, as these residents are typically most underserved for access to open space.

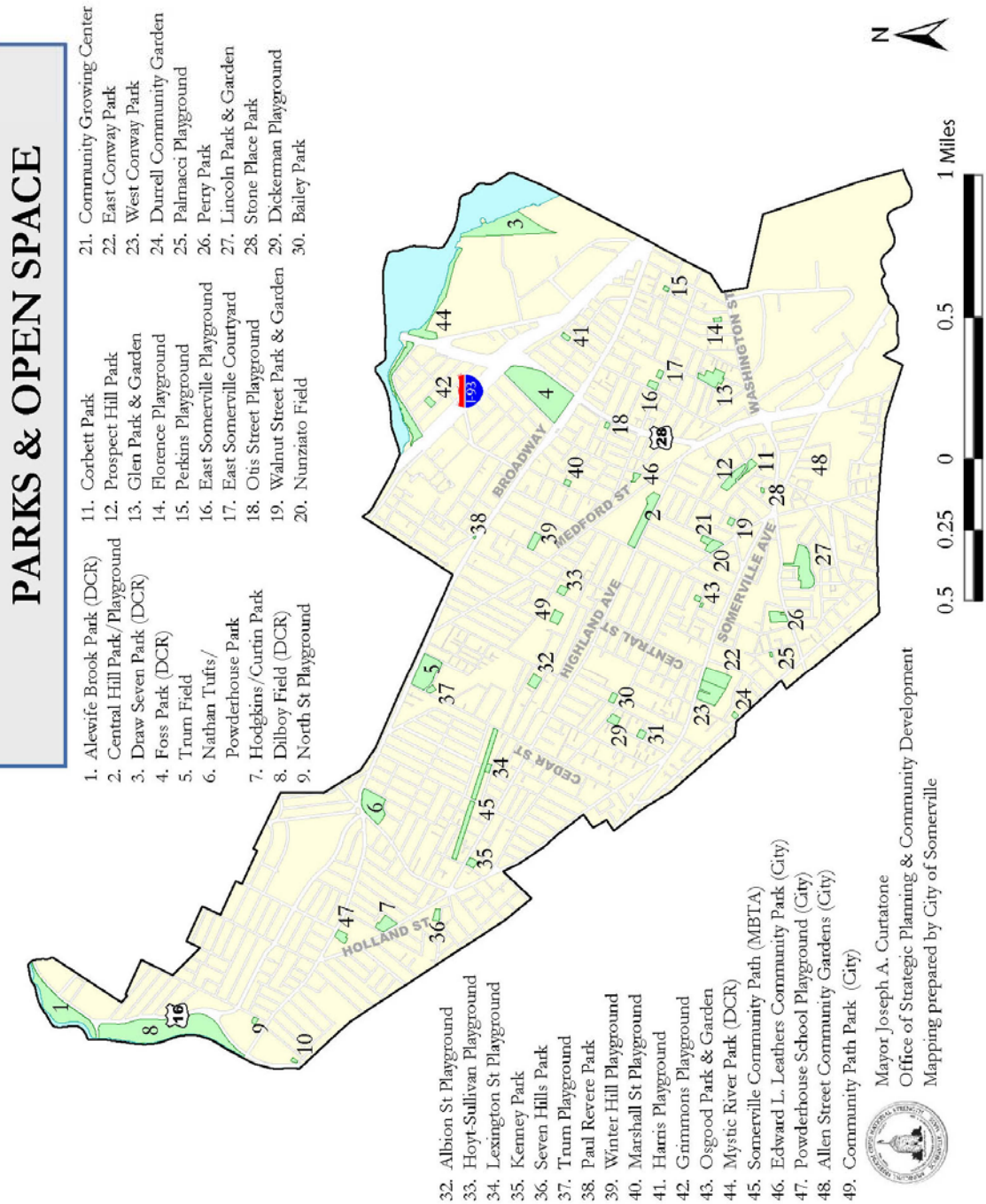
**FIGURE 2: CENTRAL HILL  
CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL**

Source: City of Somerville Postcard Collection

<sup>2</sup> The term "open space" is defined as follows: Publicly owned, undeveloped land that is primarily vegetated, or paved areas that serve a recreational or cultural purpose. This includes, but is not limited to, parks, playgrounds, community gardens, walking or biking trails, cemeteries, civic plazas, and playing fields, regardless of the level of protection. Also included as open space are certain water bodies with recreational use, namely Alewife Brook and Mystic River. Not included in this definition, but recognized for their potential usefulness as open space are certain privately owned properties, such as lawns, memorial sites, and other landscaped areas.

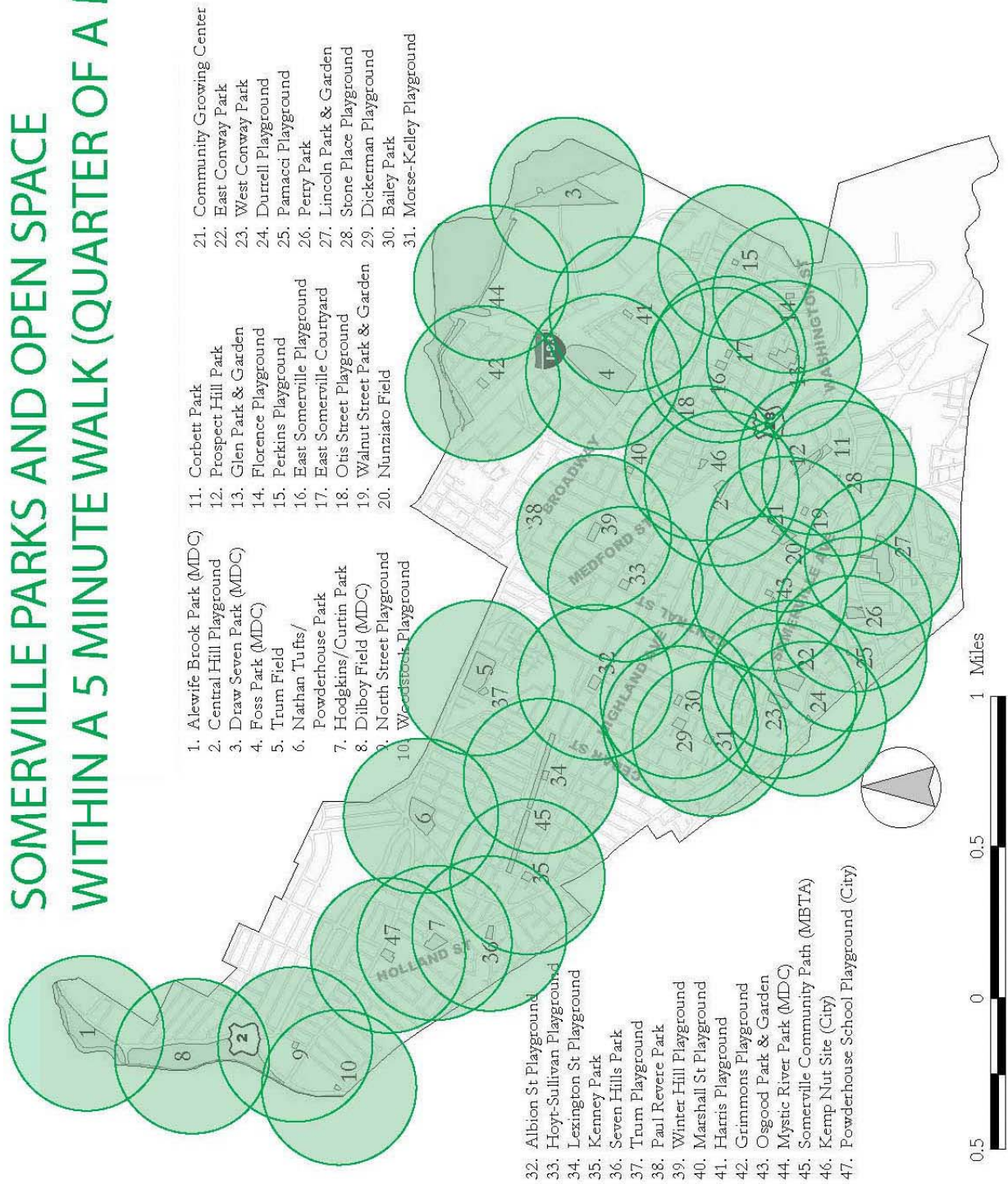
## HUD FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN 2008 - 2013

MAP 1 SOMERVILLE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



MAP 2 SOMERVILLE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE WITHIN ¼ MILE RESIDENTIAL WALK

SOMERVILLE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE  
WITHIN A 5 MINUTE WALK (QUARTER OF A MILE)



## **I. Goals & Strategies 2003-2007**

### **2003-2007 Strategies**

For the 2003-2007 Consolidated Plan, the Parks and Open Space strategies were subdivided into two categories: “substantive” goals to improve open space and recreation in the City; and “organizational” goals to create the administrative structures necessary to achieve these ends.

#### ***Substantive Goals***

##### Goal 1: Preservation and Stewardship

To manage, preserve, and otherwise steward our existing open spaces, recreational facilities, and natural resources:

- Preserve existing open spaces from development;
- Preserve water quality in the City and the watershed;
- Protect publicly- and privately-owned trees in the City;
- Develop and monitor environmental indicators for public and environmental health.

##### Goal 2: Enhancement

- To improve the City’s open space and recreational facilities and programs to provide innovative, state-of-the-art, and accessible opportunities for all residents:
- Continue to renovate parks and playgrounds;
- Continue to plant street trees to reinforce the urban forest;
- Address remaining ADA issues in all parks, playgrounds, and recreational programs and facilities;
- Investigate opportunities to enhance existing open spaces through public-private partnerships and other innovative strategies.

##### Goal 3: Acquisition and Expansion

- To expand and increase the City’s inventory of permanently protected open space and recreation resources through acquisition (and other means) whenever feasible:
- Expand the City’s supply of publicly held open space through outright purchase or dedication whenever feasible;
- Expand the City’s supply of privately-held open space through zoning provisions, development agreements, deed restrictions, public-private partnerships, and other means.

##### Goal 4: Environmental and Public Health

- To safeguard and improve the health of our community, including consideration of physical, mental, social, economic, and environmental well-being:
- Research and inventory public health problems caused by environmental hazards in the community;
- Inform and engage the public in a discussion of the connections between environmental issues and public health.



## ***Organizational Goals***

### Goal 5: Funding and Support

- To increase funding, staffing levels, and other support to meet existing management and programming needs;
- Investigate existing workloads and staffing levels to set priorities for allocating resources;
- Document ongoing maintenance scheduling and additional;
- Seek opportunities to pool or otherwise share resources between departments, agencies, commissions, and community groups.

### Goal 6: Management and Programming

- To make the most of our limited supply of open space through the coordination of open space and recreational activities within the City;
- Establish a permanent Open Space Advisory Committee;
- Seek opportunities to pool or otherwise share information between departments, agencies, commissions, and community groups;
- Seek additional funding for open space and recreation staffing;
- Develop and commit to measurements of customer satisfaction and accountability.

### Goal 7: Active Public Involvement & Ownership

- To promote and expect public awareness, utilization, and care of Somerville's open space and involve the public at all levels of open space decisions and stewardship;
- Provide educational opportunities about Open Space and Recreation issues;
- Involve the community at all stages of decision making and open space stewardship;
- Periodically review the changing needs of Somerville residents;
- Promote the Goals, Objectives, and Actions of this Plan, and remind all constituencies of their responsibilities in implementing them.

### Goal 8: Regionalism

- To emphasize, investigate, and benefit from a regional approach to open space and recreation, including both cultural and ecological regions;
- Work with the DCR to address local and regional open space issues;
- Work with neighboring communities to address regional open space issues.

## ***Top Strategic Priorities***

From the Substantive and Organizational goals outlined above, the 2003-2007 Consolidated Plan chose two items as being absolutely essential for any future progress towards meeting the goals of this Plan:

**The creation of an Open Space Advisory Committee.** Although there are many groups and departments active in open space and recreation issues, their activities have not been coordinated or

focused; there was no single consistent voice for open space needs in the City. To achieve the goals of the 2003-2007 plan, it was felt that a single committee should be charged with overseeing this progress and coordinating the actions and priorities of the various groups.

**Securing additional sources of funding and/or support for open space and recreation activities, staff, and programs.** Open space and recreation departments in the City (OSPCD, Conservation Commission, DPW, and Recreation) did not possess the resources to implement all the actions of the 2003-2007 plan. Additional support was needed to do more than maintain the existing program. Support could be additional staffing and larger departmental budgets, or other, less conventional sources, such as local business sponsorship, donated community labor or park “adoption”, and greater reliance on private grants.

#### 2003-2007 Parks Renovation Schedule

In order to meet the Substantive Goals outlined above, the City of Somerville proposed the following project schedule in the 2003-2007 Consolidated Plan:

##### Tier I:

- Restoration of Nathan Tufts (Powder House) Park
- Renovations to Corbett Park on Prospect Hill
- Renovations to Florence Park in East Somerville
- Renovations to Trum Tot Lot on Cedar Street and Franey Road
- Renovation to Trum Field on Broadway (Phase I)
- Renovation of Skating Rink on Somerville Avenue (DCR property)

##### Tier II:

- Renovation to Trum Field (Phase II)
- Renovation to Perkins Park
- Community Park on Walnut Street between Medford and Pearl Streets
- Renovation of Dilboy Field (DCR property)
- New Skate Park in Foss Park (DCR property)
- Renovation to Somerville/Milk Row Cemetery
- New Construction of proposed Allen Street Park
- Expansion and renovation of Harris Park

##### Tier III:

- Renovation of Trum Field (Phase III)
- Renovation of Palmacci Park
- Renovation of Perry Park
- Renovation of Stone Place Playground
- Renovation of Foss Park (DCR property)
- Renovation of Draw Seven Park (DCR property)
- Mystic Waterfront Park (DCR property)

## **II. 2003-2007 Accomplishments**

The City's efforts accomplished many of the goals of the Consolidated Plan 2003-2007.

These include:

Projects: Construction/Renovation

The City of Somerville committed to an aggressive schedule for the renovation of parks and open space in HUD-eligible areas. To date, the City has not only completed 94% of the proposed renovations, but also expanded the amount of dedicated open space, including the conversion of two brownfields to community gardens. In total, 1 acre of new properties was created, and 11.95 acres of existing parks and open spaces were renovated (see Table 1).

CDBG funds were used to leverage other funding sources, including grant awards from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Environmental Protection Agency (see Table 2). These monies were partnered with additional city funds for a diverse funding strategy.

| <b>TABLE 1: SOMERVILLE PARKS &amp; OPEN SPACE RENOVATION SCHEDULE*</b> |        |       |          |                |                    |         |       |       |
|--|--------|-------|----------|----------------|--------------------|---------|-------|-------|
| Project  | Type   | Acres | Class    | Year Completed | 2003-2007 Schedule | FUNDING |       |       |
|  |        |       |          |                |                    | CDBG    | State | City  |
| 30 Allen Street Community Garden                                       | CG     | 0.12  | new      | 2007           | Tier II            | X       | X     |       |
| Corbett-McKenna Park   | P/PL   | 0.61  | existing | 2004           | Tier I             | X       |       |       |
| Durell Pocket Park & Community Garden                                  | CG     | 0.18  | new      | 2007           | NEW                | X       | X     |       |
| Leathers Community Park  | P/OLRA | 0.7   | new      | 2007           | Tier II            | X       | X     |       |
| Florence Playground  | PL     | 0.26  | existing | 2004           | Tier I             | X       |       |       |
| Harris Playground  | -----  | ----- | -----    | on hold        | Tier II            | -----   | ----- | ----- |
| Nathan Tufts Park  | P      | 4.3   | existing | 2004           | Tier I             |         | X     | X     |
| Palmacci Playground  | PL     | 0.08  | existing | 2005           | Tier III           | X       |       |       |
| Perkins Playground   | PL     | 0.15  | existing | 2006           | Tier II            | X       | X     |       |
| Perry Park   | P      | 0.77  | existing | 2007           | Tier III           | X       |       |       |
| Stone Place Park   | P      | 0.12  | existing | 2007           | Tier III           | X       |       |       |
| Trum Field Phase I   | R      | N/A   | existing | 2003           | Tier I             | X       | X     |       |
| Trum Field Phase II  | R      | 5.2   | existing | 2004           | Tier II            | X       | X     |       |
| Trum Field Phase III   | R      | N/A   | existing | 2007           | Tier III           | X       | X     | X     |
| Trum Playground  | PL     | 0.46  | existing | 2003           | Tier I             | X       | X     |       |

\* renovation schedule does not include Somerville properties owned by DCR or other holders.

\*\* CG = community garden; P = park; PL = playground; OLRA = off-leash recreational area; R = recreational field.

A few featured projects from the CDBG-funded parks follow:

• **CORBETT – McKENNA PARK**

Located atop Prospect Hill, Corbett-McKenna Park enjoys a superb historic setting overlooking the City of Somerville. The old park was in poor condition for several years prior to the allocation of

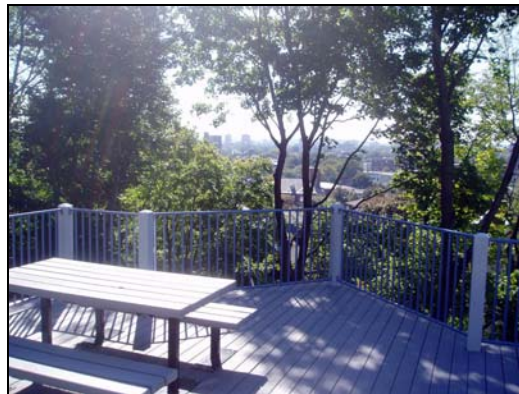
CDBG funds for its renovation. With the funding in place, the City staff recognized the opportunity to provide a great new space for the community and focused the renovation plans on a new design that both updated amenities for the park and also featured the prominent scenic vista on site.

Re-opened in 2004, Corbett-McKenna Park is a brightly colored, historically themed project built on two levels that featured basketball, play features for different age groups, a water feature, and a balcony deck that overlooks both Somerville and the City of Boston.



**FIGURE 3: ENTRANCE AND BI-LEVEL PARK STRUCTURE**

Source: City of Somerville 2004



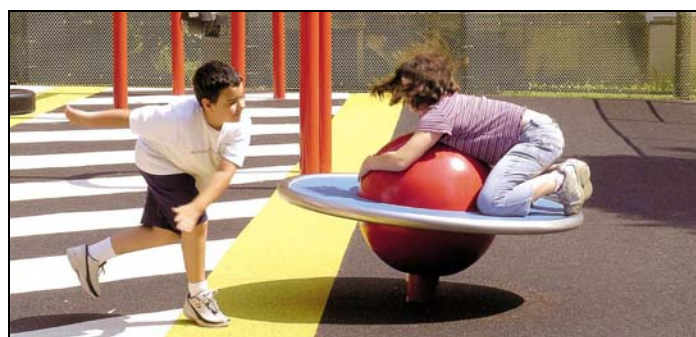
**FIGURE 4: PICNIC AREA AND SCENIC VISTA**

Source: City of Somerville 2004

- **PERKINS PARK**

Perkins Park is a highly utilized parcel of open space located in an Environmental Justice community in East Somerville. Given Somerville's classification as the most densely populated municipality in the Commonwealth, this specific neighborhood is particularly thickly settled and considered the home to the majority of the City's 27% minority population.

Prior to renovation, Perkins Park was an aging playground with crumbling surfaces, deteriorated picnic tables and benches, and playground equipment that was causing safety concerns. After the 2006 renovation, Perkins has been noted as an outstanding example of a successful urban park. Making the most of a small space, the park has superb graphic design elements and has been published internationally in landscape architecture publications.



**FIGURES 5 & 6: GRAPHIC SURFACES DOUBLE AS PLAY ELEMENTS AT PERKINS PARK, ENHANCING CREATIVE PLAY.**

Source: copyright StoSS



- **PERRY PARK**

Most of the City of Somerville's parks were converted to open space from land previously occupied by schools, factories, houses, or commercial institutions. Perry Park was the location of the old Perry School and while it has been a park since 1974, it wasn't until its recent renovation that its full potential was recognized. Perry Park is approximately one acre in size and is now recognized as one of the most attractive green spaces in the city. Whereas the earlier park was dominated by endless asphalt paving, this 2007 renovation features rolling lawns, stone walls, large caliper trees, an open plaza on the sidewalk and new lighting and play features that attract both new and long time residents to the park.



**FIGURE 7: PERRY PARK LAWN**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 8: RIBBON-CUTTING**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

In addition to fulfilling the 2003-2007 renovation schedule, the City also made good on its two top strategic priorities: an Open Space Committee was established in 2007 and additional funding was secured to hire staff and support resources to meet goals and objectives.

- **LEATHERS COMMUNITY PARK**

Formerly the site of the old Kemp Nuts Factory, the Edward L. Leathers Community Park is the manifestation of a rare opportunity to acquire 0.985 of an acre of land, protect it as open space and create a "green" design for a new community park. It is even more rare that a park of this size can be constructed in a neighborhood with a history of absentee landlords, narrow busy streets, and triple-decker homes with no yards. Many residents are recent immigrants who rarely become involved in neighborhood issues due to time constraints or language barriers. However, after extensive community outreach and review by the City's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, the vision of this community for a new "green park" has been realized.

The new park includes a large grassy open space, many substantial shade trees, flowering gardens, a variety of play opportunities for children, and tree lined walking paths that both transition into the surrounding neighborhood and provide circulation within the park. There is also a off leash recreation area for dogs, and elevated terrace down the length of the park that will not only serve as

a walking opportunity, but also as a viewing platform to watch trains go by, as a place to picnic, and a stage for community events and neighborhood cultural festivals.



**FIGURE 9: LEATHERS BEFORE**

Source: copyright Reed Hilderbrand Associates, Inc.



**FIGURE 10: LEATHERS PLAN**

Source: copyright Reed Hilderbrand Associates, Inc.

#### Projects: Acquisition and Expansion

In the past four years, the following new park spaces were dedicated to be retained as open space in perpetuity by the City of Somerville:

- 30 Allen Street Community Garden
- Community Path Park
- Durell Pocket Park and Community Gardens
- Edward L. Leathers Community Park
- Perkins Playground

These parks total 1.409 acres of dedicated land. Of the four dedicated parcels, the Community Path Park was also a City acquisition. This parcel of industrial land (0.259 acres) was acquired and dedicated as a neighborhood park. It also abuts the planned extension of the Community Path (see Brownfields section for additional information).

#### ADA Compliance

The establishment of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 resulted in refinement to Somerville's design approach to its parks and open spaces. The City ensures that all improvements meet the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, whether that is in new construction or the rehabilitation of existing spaces.

Recent projects have included the following modifications to improve accessibility:

- Handicapped ramps on public sidewalks;
- Accessible routes through parks and their entrances/exits;
- Safety surfacing in playgrounds, and accessible play structures;
- At least one provision for accessible planting beds in community gardens; and,
- Careful consideration of ground plane materials for durability, cost and access.

The City's ADA Coordinator helps the Parks and Open Space Department ensure that all new construction and renovation projects meet or exceed ADA requirements.

### Brownfields Conversion

Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties takes development pressures off of undeveloped open land, and both improves and protects the environment.<sup>3</sup> Somerville's industrial legacy and dense built footprint make the conversions of brownfields to public green space a logical and attractive option; it is a prioritized strategy for increasing the amount of municipal open space. Mass DEP lists 397 instances of reported contaminant releases in Somerville since 1993<sup>4</sup>, and the City prepared a list of 20 brownfield sites that was submitted to Mass EOEA in 2005. One of these city-identified properties, 245 Beacon Street, was converted to Durell Pocket Park and Community Garden in 2007.

Somerville has worked with the EPA on several brownfields conversion projects, and the City has established an Executive Office of Sustainability & Environment, which works with the Parks and Open Space Department on the detection and evaluation of Underground Storage Tanks (UST's), and the conversion of brownfields into public open space. Recent collaborations have included:

- **30 ALLEN STREET COMMUNITY GARDEN**

This vacant lot was a former residential parcel that was abandoned in the 1950s, and prey to several decades of illegal dumping. It was remediated and converted into a community garden through an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant, an Urban Self-Help Grant from the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation, and matching CDBG funds



**FIGURE 11: 30 ALLEN ST - BEFORE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 12: 30 ALLEN ST - AFTER**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

<sup>4</sup> <http://db.state.ma.us/dep/cleanup/sites/Results2.asp>, 11/15/07.



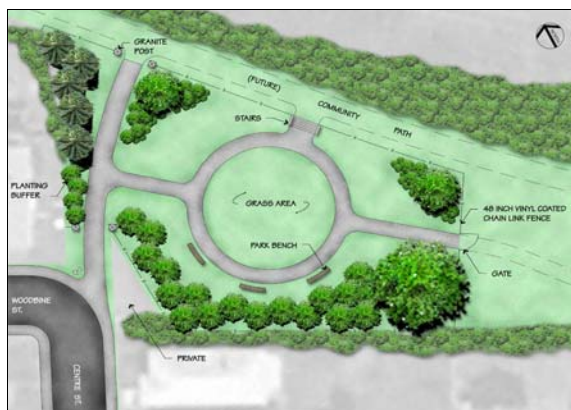
## • COMMUNITY PATH PARK

This neighborhood pocket park is adjacent to the proposed Cedar-Central extension of the Somerville Community Path (see *Transportation & Infrastructure* section). Its history includes the acceptance of urban fill and trash. The Community Path Park is scheduled for construction in Spring 2008, through the generosity of an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant, a MA Department of Conservation & Recreation Urban Self-Help Grant, and matching CDBG funds.



**FIGURE 13: EXISTING RUBBLE**

Source: City of Somerville 2006



**FIGURE 14: PHASE I DESIGN**

Source: copyright Stantec, Inc.

Somerville is proud of these two projects; both contribute to quality of life in low-income neighborhoods that have served as informal dumping areas in past decades. The City is enthused about this type of neighborhood revitalization, and hopes to partner with EPA and HUD on future brownfield conversion projects.

### Leveraging Outside Resources

The City of Somerville has committed to an aggressive grantwriting program, in order to fully maximize the potential of the CDBG funds it commits to Parks and Open Space projects. The City has applied for and won several competitive Urban Self-Help Grants from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services (DCS), which have expanded project scope and design potential significantly. The Environmental Protection Agency has also been a dedicated partner on two recent brownfield conversion projects. Table 2 shows the breakdown of funding that leveraged more than \$1,500,000.00 in outside awards for our recent CDBG parks projects.

| TABLE 2: LEVERAGED OUTSIDE GRANTS FOR CDBG PARKS PROJECTS |              |              |                |              |
|---|--------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Project   | Grant Source | Year Awarded | Year Completed | Grant Amount |

|   |   |      |                |                       |
|---|---|------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Trum Field Phase I  | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 8  | 2002 | 2003           | \$233,380.00          |
| Trum Field Phase II   | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 9  | 2002 | 2004           | \$250,000.00          |
| Trum Field Phase III  | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 10 | 2004 | 2008           | \$250,000.00          |
| Perkins Park  | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 11 | 2005 | 2006           | \$235,294.00          |
| Leathers Community Park   | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 12 | 2005 | 2008           | \$325,066.00          |
| 30 Allen Street and Durell Community Gardens                    | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 13 | 2005 | 2007           | \$115,100.00          |
|   | EPA Brownfields Grant - 30 Allen Street Garden                      | 2005 | 2007           | \$100,000.00          |
| Community Path Park   | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 14 | 2006 | Projected 2008 | \$192,904.00          |
|   | EPA Brownfields Grant   | 2007 | Projected 2008 | \$100,000.00          |
| Central Hill Memorial Park (playground approved for CDBG funds) | EOEEA, Department of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Grant 15 | 2007 | Projected 2010 | \$494,942.00          |
| <b>TOTAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE LEVERAGED FUNDS</b>               |   |      |                | <b>\$1,563,306.00</b> |

### III. Needs Assessment

In preparing this Consolidated Plan, staff has analyzed the challenges and assets of the City of Somerville with regards to parks and open space and has evaluated the accomplishments made during the prior plan. This has identified several community needs. These include the need for:

#### Increased Open Space

Somerville continually strives to expand and increase its inventory of permanently protected open space and recreation resources. The City has the opportunity to build on the successful acquisition of dedicated open space and resultant 1+ acre of new parks and community gardens constructed during the 2003-2007 period. One need is to expand the City's public open space holdings through outright purchase or dedication. Map 2, *Somerville Parks and Open Space Within ¼ Mile Residential Walk*, illustrates that the majority of city residents are within a five-minute walk of some type of park

or open space. However, a few areas of the city lie outside this boundary, and other neighborhoods are underserved in terms of relative acreage of open public space to population. A primary need is to analyze those neighborhoods most underserved, and develop a strategic plan to acquire additional parcels and construct new parks or selectively extend those existing parks identified as top priorities.

A second need is to expand the City's supply of privately-held public open space through zoning provisions, development agreements, deed restrictions, public-private partnerships, and other means. With less than 5% of the City qualifying as public open space, and the majority of the remainder dense residential neighborhoods, providing as much open space as possible is necessary to maintaining and improving the quality of life for all Somerville citizens. By considering both public and private open space opportunities, innovative ways can be found to bolster the physical and emotional health of City residents, and provide a long-term sustainable urban environment.

### Improved Open Space

In addition to expanding our open space acreage, a primary need is to continue to improve the quality of open space and recreational facilities and programs. Innovative, environmentally friendly, and accessible opportunities are needed for all residents. The City of Somerville manages 49 parks and open spaces; an estimated 20% are in need of renovation. Typical residential concerns with the aging parks are unsafe/inaccessible surfaces and play equipment, lack of trees, inadequate lighting, and programmatic elements that only serve one age group. Addressing these renovation needs, particularly in the prioritized East Somerville and Union Square NRSAs, is a top priority of the Parks and Open Space department and provides the most concrete local benefits to residents.

Somerville's current park system is aging. Many parks last renovated in the 1980s are typically paved recreational courts, with an accessory tot lot. These types of programmed spaces often do not reflect the programmatic needs of today's local residents, who clamor for open green space. The City also wants to make a commitment to 'green' practices in its public open spaces. Installing permeable park surfaces, whether lawn, groundcover, stonedust or unit pavers, serves many environmental objectives, including reduced stormwater runoff and increased groundwater recharge. Combining permeable surfaces with additional trees and vegetation serves to reduce the urban heat island effect, and has demonstrated benefits for mental and physical health. Good design can address both the active recreational needs of users and the need for tranquility and refuge.

Somerville's tremendous residential density makes the need for safe and engaging open space a priority. Without a ready supply of additional developable land, the pressure on the existing park system to provide refuge and recreational opportunities for 80,000 residents is intense. The need to renovate existing parks and open spaces is a clear mandate for the City to promote health, well being, and safety for all residents.



**FIGURE 15: ALBION PLAYGROUND**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 16: GRIMMONS PARK**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

### ADA Compliance

As part of the need for improved open space, it is critical to address those parks that do not fully meet accessibility for all potential users. A city-wide assessment is needed to determine which park properties need improvements to meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Improvements in these areas can then be prioritized as part of the City's ongoing ADA compliance effort.

In December 2006, testimony was given at a public meeting regarding the importance of considering children and adults with disabilities when designing parks and open space. The Somerville DisAbilities Commission has discussed the potential of equal-level playing areas and sensory stimulation additions to the existing Somerville parks system. There is a clear need going forward to examine residential needs and strive to ensure equal accessibility wherever possible.

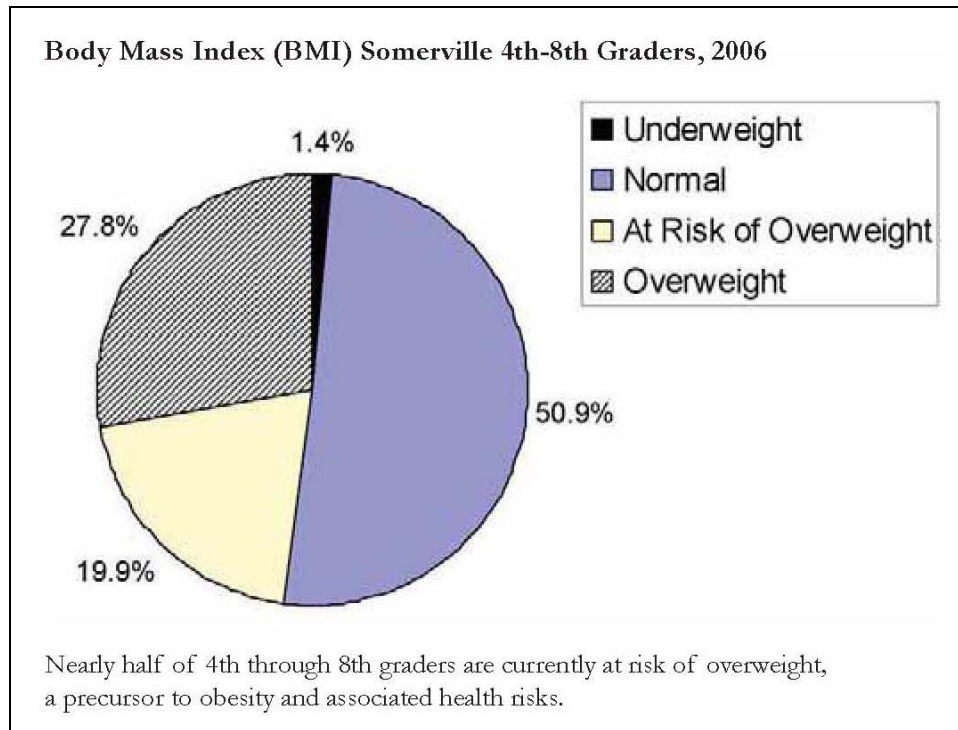
### Facilities and Programs to Address Fitness Needs

As obesity rates soar (see Fig. 17), access to public recreational areas has become even more critical. This is particularly true in economically disadvantaged areas where populations are most vulnerable (see Map 3). Somerville has responded to the national childhood obesity crisis by partnering with Tufts University to sponsor the nationally-recognized Shape Up Somerville program<sup>5</sup>.

Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Shape Up Somerville: Eat Smart. Play Hard.* was a 3-year (2002-2005), environmental change intervention designed to prevent obesity in culturally diverse, high-risk, early-elementary school children. The Shape Up team developed and implemented strategies designed to create energy balance for 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in Somerville. In before-, during-, and after-school environments, interventions were focused on increasing the number of physical activity options available to children throughout the day and on improving dietary choices.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.somervillema.gov/Division.cfm?orgunit=SUS>; [http://nutrition.tufts.edu/1174562918285/Nutrition-Page-nl2w\\_1179115086248.html](http://nutrition.tufts.edu/1174562918285/Nutrition-Page-nl2w_1179115086248.html)



**FIGURE 17: SOMERVILLE YOUTH WEIGHT RISK**

Source: Somerville Health Department presentation, 9/18/07.

Original data: *Physical Education Program Grant 2006 BMI Report*; Institute for Community Health, Tufts University

In 2003, 46% of Somerville's 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade population were at-risk of becoming overweight or were overweight. A BMI-z score (or BMI-for-age percentile) was recorded to report changes in weight gain among children who participated in the Shape Up Somerville (SUS) intervention, as compared to children in two socio-demographically similar communities in Massachusetts who did not receive the intervention.

Findings of the study were that, on average, SUS reduced approximately one pound of weight gain over eight months for an eight-year-old child. This may seem small for an individual, but on a population level this reduction in weight gain, observed through a decrease in BMI z-score, would translate into large numbers of children moving out of the overweight category.

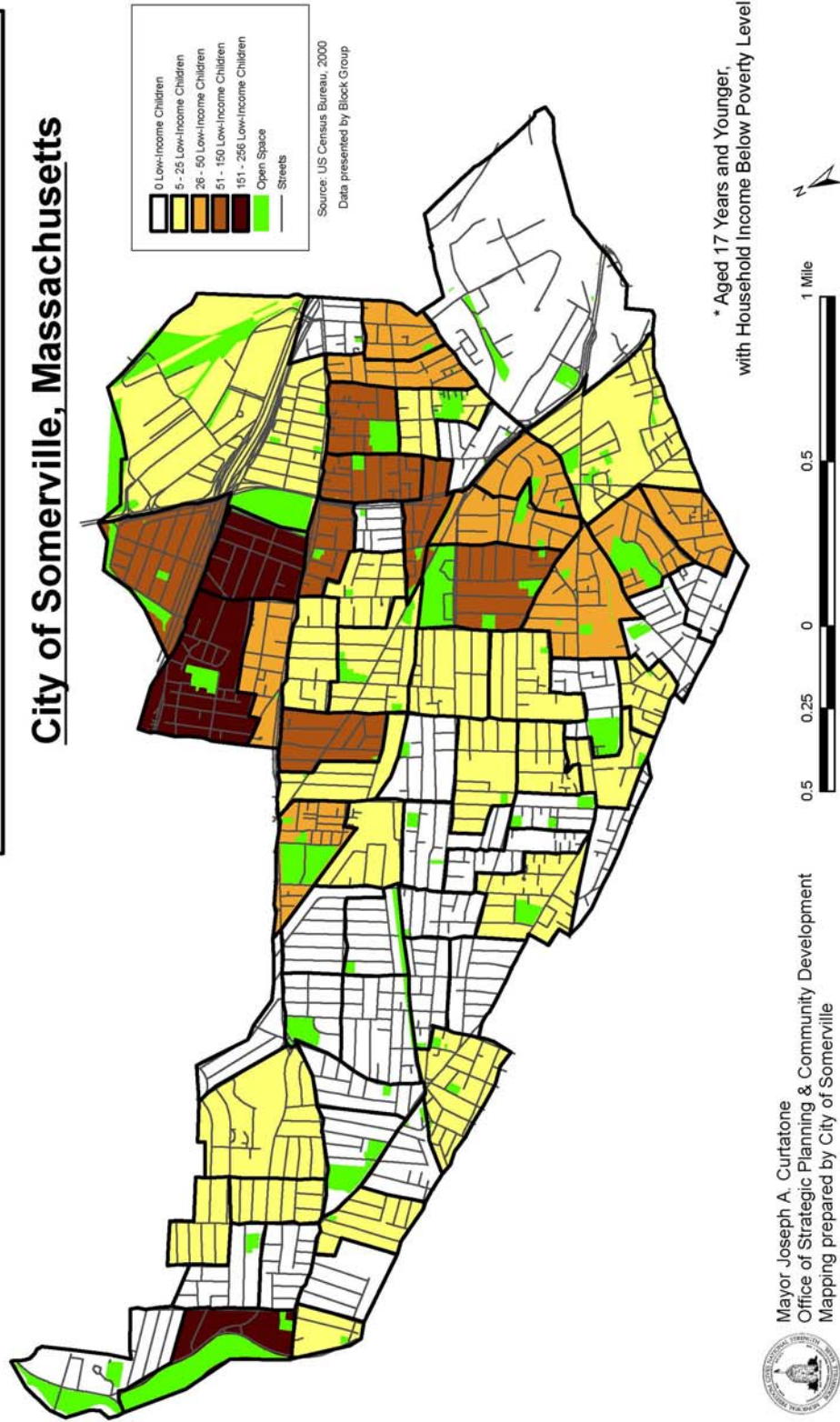
SUS is now working with Parks and Open Space to increase public education about healthy living choices by developing appropriate park signage and to create a parks map that shows walking distances/public transportation routes available from residential areas to the parks throughout the city. Improving access to parks and open space will be critical in order to continue the 2003 SUS results, and renovations to parks in SUS-target areas will be a priority.



MAP 3: DISTRIBUTION OF LOW-INCOME CHILDREN IN RELATION TO OPEN SPACE

**DISTRIBUTION OF LOW-INCOME CHILDREN\*  
 IN RELATION TO OPEN SPACE**

**City of Somerville, Massachusetts**



#### IV. Prioritization of Needs

##### *a. Methodology of Prioritization*

The City has taken a number of steps to prioritize the many Parks and Open Space needs. These steps include:

- Internal analysis through weekly staff meetings, monthly mayoral meetings, and coordination with the associated City departments that work on Parks and Open Space;
- Review and revision of the *Somerville Open Space and Recreation Plan* (5-year action plan);
- Review of comments provided by the Chair of the City's DisAbilities Commission;
- External assessment of needs and goals through the Open Space Committee; and,
- Evaluation of accomplishments during 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan.

The existing condition and strategic goals of Somerville's Parks and Open Space was also a topic of discussion during the public hearings for development of the 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan. A specific focus group of stakeholders was held on October 25, 2007 to discuss parks and open space needs and strategies. Comments from participants at the focus groups included the need to:

- Develop a strategic plan for new park acquisition; and,
- Improve public outreach and surveys in design process for renovating and constructing parks.

##### *b. Matrix of Needs and Relative Priority*

| <b>TABLE 3: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS &amp; PRIORITIES</b> |                   |                    |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Identified Need</b>                                      | <b>Need Level</b> | <b>Units</b>       |
| Renovate Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities         | high              | project            |
| Construct New Parks and Recreational Facilities             | high              | project            |
| Acquire More Land to Expand Parks Acreage                   | high              | project            |
| Improve ADA Access to Parks & Open Spaces                   | high              | tree               |
| Conduct Tree Inventory & Expand Tree Planting Program       | medium            | project            |
| Construct More Off-Leash Recreational Areas (OLRAs)         | high              | project            |
| Create Green Performance City Standards                     | medium            | revised city specs |
| Create a Brownfield Acquisition Strategy                    | medium            | map                |

#### V. Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs

##### *a. Monetary Gap Analysis*

The greatest gap that the City of Somerville faces in meeting the City's underserved needs for parks and open space is shortage of staff. Due to limited financial resources, the City has a limited number of parks and open space projects it can undertake in any fiscal year. The number of park renovation projects and other identified department needs exceeds the current staff and resources.

**b. Additional Obstacles**

- **Construction Inflation:** due to the increasing cost in utilities and construction materials, the City is finding the cost of its parks and open space projects increase significantly. This cost increase is an extra burden on the City's budget, since City funds do not grow at the same pace inflation does.
- **Acquiring Land:** with dense residential properties occupying nearly every square foot of the City, there is little available land left to purchase and convert into parks. Potential grants for new construction or brownfield conversion are missed opportunities without a City surplus of buildable land. The City needs to adopt a creative strategy to acquire and convert land to parks, looking at private partnerships and other resourceful tactics.

**VI. Vision, Goals and Strategies**

**Vision**

Provide a system of attractive, safe, accessible, and sustainable parks and open spaces for the City of Somerville.

**Goals**

1. Renovate existing parks and open spaces to improve condition of Somerville's recreational areas and ensure attractive, safe, and accessible public lands.
2. Secure more land to expand Somerville's total open space acreage and ensure access to open space in every neighborhood.
3. Analyze and improve access for persons with disabilities to parks and open space, as part of ongoing ADA compliance.
4. Increase tree canopy and green spaces to promote urban health and sustainability, and reduce the heat island effect.
5. Increase Off-Leash Recreational Area (OLRA) opportunities throughout the city.
6. Raise the bar for sustainable design and building practices in city parks and open space projects.
7. Reduce brownfields and convert to more desirable uses.
8. Improve accountability and set departmental vision through a series of strategic planning documents.

**Strategies**

**Renovate Parks and Open Space**

- 1.1 Analyze Somerville's parks and open spaces; rate condition and accessibility to underserved populations.
- 1.2 Develop a renovation schedule.
- 1.3 Improve community involvement/outreach in park renovation projects.
- 1.4 Leverage additional funding resources for park projects.

**Secure Additional Land**

- 2.1 Develop a strategic plan for acquiring parcels of land.
- 2.2 Leverage additional funding resources for land acquisition.

- 2.3 Increase open space opportunities through public/private partnerships.
- 2.4 Identify other creative strategies for increasing open space.

#### Analyze and Improve Access

- 3.1 Identify priority locations for ADA improvements, with the Somerville ADA Coordinator.
- 3.2 Fund reconstruction of improvements at key locations.

#### Increase Tree Canopy

- 4.1 Coordinate and execute complete tree inventory.
- 4.2 Expand and strengthen street tree planting/replacement program.
- 4.3 Work with DPW on best practices for maintenance and long-term tree health.
- 4.4 Private homeowner environmental education campaign on economic and health benefits of street trees and open space, and the importance of permeable surface area to reduce stormwater runoff and increase groundwater recharge.

#### Increase Off-Leash Recreational Areas

- 5.1 Identify areas of the city that would best be served with additional OLRAs.

#### Raise the Bar for Sustainable Practices

- 6.1 Identify and mandate sustainable practices in landscape projects.
- 6.2 Create a maintenance database for new environmental technologies installed in city parks.

#### Reduce Brownfields

- 7.1 Identify potential brownfields for City acquisition.
- 7.2 Continue to support brownfields programs to facilitate the clean up of privately-owned parcels.

#### Set Vision through Strategic Planning Documents

- 8.1 Revise and submit *Somerville Open Space and Recreation Plan* (OSRP).
- 8.2 Participate in the creation of the *Union Square Open Space Plan* and integrate into OSRP.

### **VII. Performance Measures**

| <b>PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Goal</b>  | <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Benchmarks</b>  |
| 1. Renovate existing parks and open spaces to improve condition of Somerville's recreational areas and ensure attractive, safe, and accessible public lands. | 1.1. Analyze Somerville's parks and open spaces; rate condition and accessibility to underserved populations. | 1.1.1 Report with prioritized recommendations for renovation schedule finalized within next 2 years. |
|  | 1.2 Develop a renovation schedule.  | 1.2.1 Renovate 6 parks/recreational areas in next 5 years.   |
|  | 1.3 Improve community involvement/outreach in park renovation projects.                                       | 1.3.1 Regularly provide multilingual announcements of public meetings for park design.               |
|  | 1.4 Leverage additional funding resources for park projects.  | 1.4.1 Secure 3 state grants over the next 5 years.   |

| PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Goal  | Strategies   | Benchmarks   |
| 2. Acquire more land to expand Somerville's total open space acreage and ensure access to open space in every neighborhood. | 2.1 Develop a strategic plan for acquiring parcels of land.  | 2.1.1 Report with prioritized recommendations for land acquisition finalized within next 3 years.  |
|   | 2.2 Leverage additional funding resources for land acquisition.  | 2.2.1 Secure at least 1 outside grant to purchase new land within next 5 years.  |
|   | 2.3 Increase open space opportunities through public/private partnerships.   | 2.3.1 Create 5 acres of open space in Assembly Square within next 5 years ( <i>see East Somerville NRSA 3.1.1</i> )  |
|   | 2.4 Identify other creative strategies for increasing open space.  | 2.4.1 Expand zoning requirements for publicly usable open space within the next 3 years.   |
| 3. Analyze and improve ADA access to parks and open space, as part of ongoing ADA compliance.                               | 3.1 Identify priority locations for ADA improvements, with the Somerville ADA Coordinator.   | 3.1.1 Report with prioritized recommendations for park accessibility improvements finalized within next 3 years.   |
|   | 3.2 Fund reconstruction of improvements at key locations.  | 3.2.1 Complete specific ADA improvements to 5 parks in next 5 years.   |
| 4. Increase tree canopy and green spaces to promote urban health and sustainability, and reduce the heat island effect.     | 4.1 Coordinate and execute complete tree inventory.  | 4.1.1 Compile electronic database with prioritized planting strategy within next 3 years.  |
|   | 4.2 Expand and strengthen street tree planting/replacement program.  | 4.2.1 Plant at least 100 trees per year with CDBG funds and 50 trees per year with City funds.   |
|   | 4.3 Work with DPW on best practices for maintenance and long-term tree health.   | 4.3.1 Conduct workshop with DPW on tree program goals and best maintenance practices within next 2 years.  |
|   | 4.4 Implement private homeowner environmental education campaign on economic and health benefits of street trees and open space, and the importance of permeable surface area to reduce stormwater runoff and increase groundwater recharge. | 4.4.1 Implement homeowner environmental education campaign within 2 years.   |
| 5. Increase Off-Leash Recreational Area (OLRA) opportunities throughout the city.   | 5.1 Identify areas of the city that would best be served with additional OLRAs.  | 5.1.1 Construct 2 new OLRAs within 5 years.  |
| 6. Create Green Performance Standards to raise the bar for sustainable design and building practices in city parks and      | 6.1 Identify and mandate sustainable practices in landscape projects.  | 6.1.1 Revise city specs for parks contracts to strengthen environmental accountability and quantify green products and practices used in project construction; within next year. |

| PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Goal  | Strategies  | Benchmarks  |
| open space projects.  | 6.2 Create a maintenance database for new environmental technologies installed in city parks.         | 6.2.1 Require contracted designers to submit a best practices manual for completed park projects to DPW and Parks & Open Space departments within next 2 years. |
| 7. Craft a City brownfield acquisition strategy, with a goal of future brownfield conversion to parks and open space. | 7.1 Identify potential brownfields for City acquisition.  | 7.1.1 Map locations of existing brownfields, rated according to City purchase potential and strategic location within next 5 years.                             |
| 8. Improve accountability and set departmental vision through a series of strategic planning documents.               | 8.1 Revise and submit <i>Somerville Open Space and Recreation Plan</i> (OSRP).                        | 8.1.1 OSRP completed within 2 years.  |
|   | 8.2 Participate in the creation of the <i>Union Square Open Space Plan</i> , and integrate into OSRP. | 8.2.1 <i>Union Square Open Space Plan</i> completed within 2 years (see <i>Union Square NRSA 3.1.1</i> ).   |

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**SECTION FIVE:**

**PUBLIC SERVICES**

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## **I. Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

### ***A. Somerville Population***

Perhaps the most renowned aspects of the City of Somerville are its well-recognized residential density and the diversity of its population. Built as a streetcar suburb of Boston, Somerville remains the most densely populated city in New England, housing 77,478 residents in a little over four square miles. The density of the built environment has nearly innumerable benefits to the community including relatively affordable (albeit increasingly higher in cost) housing, multiple housing types and options, strong support for pedestrian and bicycle activity, and extremely high transit usage, especially around the Davis Square Red Line Station. Communities around the country seeking to promote Transit Oriented Development merely need to look at Somerville to see the benefits.

Somerville recognizes the strength of its diversity on multiple levels – ethnicity, country of origin, language spoken at home, age, income, etc. This diversity is a tremendous asset to the community and has contributed to the many new ethnic stores, restaurants, and services through the City.

### ***B. Ethnicity and Language***

Somerville has long been a gateway community for newcomers to the United States. In past decades, the City has experienced sizeable waves of Italian, Irish and Portuguese immigrant populations. Recent years have seen influxes of Brazilian and Central/South American immigrants. 2000 U.S. Census data indicate that foreign-born residents of Somerville represent 29.3% (22,727) of the population, of whom roughly half have arrived in the past ten years and almost two-thirds are not naturalized citizens.

Not surprisingly, 36% of Somerville residents speak a language other than English at home and more than 50 languages are spoken in the city. Between 1990 and 2000, the Latino population increased by 41.3%, from approximately 4,800 to 6,800 residents. Today, the Latino community represents almost 9% of Somerville's population, which ranks as the 13<sup>th</sup> largest Latino population in the state. Primarily residing in the 02145 zip-code within the City of Somerville, Latinos greatly populate the neighborhoods of Prospect Hill, East Somerville, Winter Hill and Ten Hills. According to the 2000 U.S. Census of persons who speak a language other than English at home, Portuguese is spoken by 8,932 persons 5 years old or older, Spanish by 5,794 persons 5 years old or older, and French-Creole by 2,023 person 5 years old or older. Brazilians make up a majority of the Portuguese-speaking newcomers and most reside in East Somerville. Behind English, this makes Portuguese the 2<sup>nd</sup> most commonly spoken household language in Somerville, Spanish the 3<sup>rd</sup> most commonly spoken household language spoken in the city, and French-Creole the 4<sup>th</sup> most commonly spoken household language.

The City of Somerville High School reports that in school year 2004-05, over 50% of students grades 9-12 spoke a language other than English as their primary language; 12.3% had limited

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this document “public services” and social services” are interchangeable and include services such as child care, after-school programming, health education, youth leadership programs, elderly transportation, drug abuse counseling / treatment, emergency food assistance, health and wellness programming for elderly and special needs residents, among others, which may be provided by the CDBG grantee directly or by subgrantees.



English proficiency. A survey conducted by the Somerville Public School Administration revealed that in school year 2004-05, enrolled students spoke 46 identified languages.

During the 1990s, the Asian population nearly doubled (+79.3%) from approximately 2,800 to 5,000 residents. At the same, the White population declined by 12.4% to 56,320 residents.

### ***C. Household Income***

Historically, Somerville developed as the home of farmers, factory owners, shopkeepers and workers. With the exception of farmers, this mix of professions and incomes can still be found today. In the 1990's as middle-income professionals returned to the center cities, the median income in Somerville increased. However, large areas of mid- to low-income population remain.

In fact, the 2000 Census determined the 10% of Somerville households had an income less than \$10,000, and more than a quarter of households in Somerville earned less than \$25,000. In relation to the rest of the state, Somerville has actually seen improvements in its income rankings among the 351 jurisdictions in Massachusetts. From 1989 to 1999, Somerville's rank in terms of median household income improved from 275 to 265. However, as reflected in the decrease in median family income from 1989 to 1999, Somerville's rank for this category fell from 273 to 297. Despite these modest increases in median household income and per capita income, Somerville is still not a wealthy community.

Another indicator of income is the poverty rate of a community. Somerville has seen a slight increase in the number of residents with incomes below the poverty level, as illustrated in the chart below.

| <b>TABLE 1: POVERTY IN SOMERVILLE – 1989 and 1999</b> |             |             |                                  |                                  |               |                 |
|---|-------------|-------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
|   | <b>1989</b> | <b>1999</b> | <b>1989<br/>Poverty<br/>rate</b> | <b>1999<br/>Poverty<br/>rate</b> | <b>Change</b> | <b>% Change</b> |
| Persons whose poverty status determined               | 74,061      | 75,199      |                                  |                                  | 1,138         | 1.50%           |
| Total persons below poverty                           | 8,492       | 9,395       | 11.50%                           | 12.50%                           | 903           | 10.60%          |
| Persons 18-64   | 5,755       | 6,663       | 10.80%                           | 11.80%                           | 908           | 15.80%          |
| Persons 65 or older                                   | 978         | 1,063       | 10.80%                           | 13.60%                           | 85            | 8.70%           |
| Persons age 17 or younger                             | 1,759       | 1,669       | 15.30%                           | 15.20%                           | -90           | -5.20%          |
| Families whose poverty status determined              | 14,876      | 14,592      |                                  |                                  |               |                 |
| Total families below poverty                          | 1,221       | 1,254       | 7.60%                            | 8.40%                            | 33            | 2.70%           |
| Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Federal Census             |             |             |                                  |                                  |               |                 |

Geographically, the neighborhoods of East Somerville and parts of Winter Hill, in particular, have some of the lowest household incomes in the city. In terms of ethnicity, the per capita income for Latinos was \$16,490 compared to \$26,126 for white, not-Hispanic residents and 15% of Latinos lived in poverty in 1999 (vs. 11% of white-not-Hispanics).

### ***D. Age***

The majority of Somerville's population is within the age range of 25-54. This is also an age group that saw rapid growth in Somerville during the 1990's (+12.4%) in contrast to statewide trends in Massachusetts, which saw declines in the 20-30 population. Interestingly, the population aged 85 or greater also increased (+14.8%) during the same time period.

However, between 1990 and 2000, the number of residents in every other age group (under 5, under 18, 18-24, and 55+) fell. The greatest numeric declines were in the population aged 55-85, despite the fact that this population is growing nationwide as the Baby Boomer generation ages. In addition the median age rose slightly in 2000, to 31.1 years old.

**TABLE 2: SOMERVILLE'S POPULATION BY AGE GROUP - 1990 and 2000**

| Age Group             | 1990   | 2000   | 1990-2000<br>% Change | 1990-2000<br>Change | % of 1990<br>population | % of 2000<br>population |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Under 5               | 3,944  | 3,500  | -11.30%               | -444                | 5.20%                   | 4.50%                   |
| 5 to 9                | 3,136  | 3,085  | -1.60%                | -51                 | 4.10%                   | 4.00%                   |
| 10 to 14              | 2,906  | 3,086  | 6.20%                 | 180                 | 3.80%                   | 4.00%                   |
| 15 to 17              | 1,881  | 1,824  | -3.00%                | -57                 | 2.50%                   | 2.40%                   |
| <b>Totalder 18</b>    | 11,867 | 11,495 | -3.10%                | -372                | 15.60%                  | 14.80%                  |
| 18 and 19             | 2,380  | 2,332  | -2.00%                | -48                 | 3.10%                   | 3.00%                   |
| 20 to 24              | 10,460 | 9,992  | -4.50%                | -468                | 13.70%                  | 12.90%                  |
| Total 18 to 24        | 12,840 | 12,324 | -4.00%                | -516                | 16.80%                  | 15.90%                  |
| 25 to 34              | 20,133 | 21,362 | 6.10%                 | 1,229               | 26.40%                  | 27.60%                  |
| 35 to 44              | 10,226 | 11,623 | 13.70%                | 1,397               | 13.40%                  | 15.00%                  |
| 45 to 54              | 5,922  | 7,802  | 31.70%                | 1,880               | 7.80%                   | 10.10%                  |
| <b>Total 25-54</b>    | 36,281 | 40,787 | 12.40%                | 4,506               | 47.60%                  | 52.60%                  |
| 55 to 64              | 5,818  | 4,773  | -18.00%               | -1,045              | 7.60%                   | 6.20%                   |
| 65 to 74              | 5,194  | 4,059  | -21.90%               | -1,135              | 6.80%                   | 5.20%                   |
| 75-84                 | 3,247  | 2,934  | -9.60%                | -313                | 4.30%                   | 3.80%                   |
| 85 or older           | 963    | 1,106  | 14.80%                | 143                 | 1.30%                   | 1.40%                   |
| <b>Subtotal 65+</b>   | 9,404  | 8,099  | -13.90%               | -1,305              | 12.30%                  | 10.50%                  |
| <b>Total All Ages</b> | 76,210 | 77,478 | 1.70%                 | 1,268               |                         |                         |
| <b>Median Age</b>     | 30.8   | 31.1   |                       |                     |                         |                         |
|                       |        |        |                       |                     |                         |                         |

Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census

Nationwide, the population of people over the age of 65 will double in 2030. The 85 and older population, those most likely to give up their car keys, will also double. It is anticipated that many seniors will prefer to age with dignity in their homes.

### ***E. Persons with Disabilities***

According to the 2000 Census, 32% of people (25,059 persons) 5 years old or older in City of Somerville have a disability. Of this population 29% of those persons (7,148 persons) are 65 years old or older.

| <b>TABLE 3: CITY OF SOMERVILLE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES</b> |               |              |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| Civilian   | Population    | Percent (%)* |
| Total Population   | 77,748        |              |
|  |               |              |
| <b>Total Population (5 years old and above)</b>              | <b>73,746</b> |              |
|  |               |              |
| <b>Population 5-15 Years Old with Disability</b>             | <b>320</b>    | <b>0.4%</b>  |
| Sensory Disability   | 36            |              |
| Physical Disability  | 54            |              |
| Mental Disability  | 282           |              |
| Self-Care Disability   | 58            |              |
| Go-Outside-Home Disability                                   |               |              |
| Employment Disability  |               |              |
|  |               |              |
| <b>Population 16-64 Years Old with Disability</b>            | <b>10,408</b> | <b>14.1%</b> |
| Sensory Disability   | 799           |              |
| Physical Disability  | 2,218         |              |
| Mental Disability  | 1,771         |              |
| Self-Care Disability   | 755           |              |
| Go-Outside-Home Disability                                   | 4,262         |              |
| Employment Disability  | 7,676         |              |
|  |               |              |
| <b>Population 65 Years Old &amp; over with Disability</b>    | <b>3,589</b>  | <b>4.9%</b>  |
| Sensory Disability   | 1,076         |              |
| Physical Disability  | 2,490         |              |
| Mental Disability  | 783           |              |
| Self-Care Disability   | 856           |              |
| Go-Outside-Home Disability                                   | 1,943         |              |
| Employment Disability  |               |              |
|  |               |              |
| <b>Total Persons with Disabilities</b>                       | <b>14,317</b> | <b>19.4%</b> |
| ** % of Somerville population                                |               |              |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Federal Census                             |               |              |

According to the 2005 Census, more than 32% of people with disabilities in Somerville live below poverty levels. Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas in Somerville each include a high percentage of residents below the poverty level – approximately 21%. This is a population with unique issues and challenges, yet it is an increasingly organized community that advocates for the types of comprehensive and cohesive, yet individualized services that it needs. The City of Somerville in collaboration with its Commission on DisAbilities strives to serve people with disabilities through education and advocacy for their fullest civil rights and for their inclusion in all public service opportunities.

#### ***F. History of Public Services***

Since 1994, the City of Somerville has utilized HUD Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Funds and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds to provide essential services to low- and moderate-income individuals and families in Somerville. Public Services provide an entry point for

low-income residents to receive the services they need. These programs assist residents to overcome barriers to access, achieve self-sufficiency, and integrate into the community.

Programs have addressed both short-term crisis intervention and long-term support and development depending on the residents' needs (services have included housing, legal counseling, access to government assistance, etc.) These essential services range in scope from transportation services for the elderly and disabled, to after school youth mentoring programs, English as a Second Language classes for immigrants and new comers, to homeless supportive services and shelter operations.

Through the Equal Choice bill, Massachusetts' seniors can elect to use tax dollars to receive care at home instead of in a nursing home. Staying at home with its many practical benefits also brings with it the risk of isolation and disengagement from the community. Without access to critical services, staying at home can result in being trapped at home. The National Association of Area Councils on Aging confirms that transportation issues are closely correlated with poor income, self-care problems, isolation and loneliness. Non-profit and City agencies have provided the vital link between home and the community to enable the goal of aging in place.

Non-profit and City agencies have cooperated with anti-crime programs to involve young people who are most likely to become involved in negative behaviors and unconstructive activities in programming to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens. Mentoring by caring adults has fostered constructive attachment, moral compass and achievement as an important value. Summary findings by the Center for Teen Empowerment pointed to the need for programs to address prevalent youth issues – drugs, suicide, gangs, violence, safety, jobs and youth voices. Not only do youth need a safe space to meet but direct and intentional connections between specific goals, activities and problematic issues that are occurring among youth living in Somerville neighborhoods.

With growing demands and level funding, non-profit organizations are becoming even more creative in leveraging limited resources. These organizations often maximize the use of available resources through joint programming and collaborations including: the Youth Workers Network, counseling with the Department of Social Services and a partnership with the Cambridge Health Alliance. Over the next five years the City will continue to work in collaboration with its Public Services partners to provide the Somerville community with effective, high quality services.

#### ***G. HUD CDBG Public Services & ESG Funding***

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG regulations require that funds allocated to public services cannot exceed 15 percent of the total CDBG grant awarded for that program year. Over the past three years, not including the current fiscal year, this amount has ranged from \$442,137 to \$511,525.

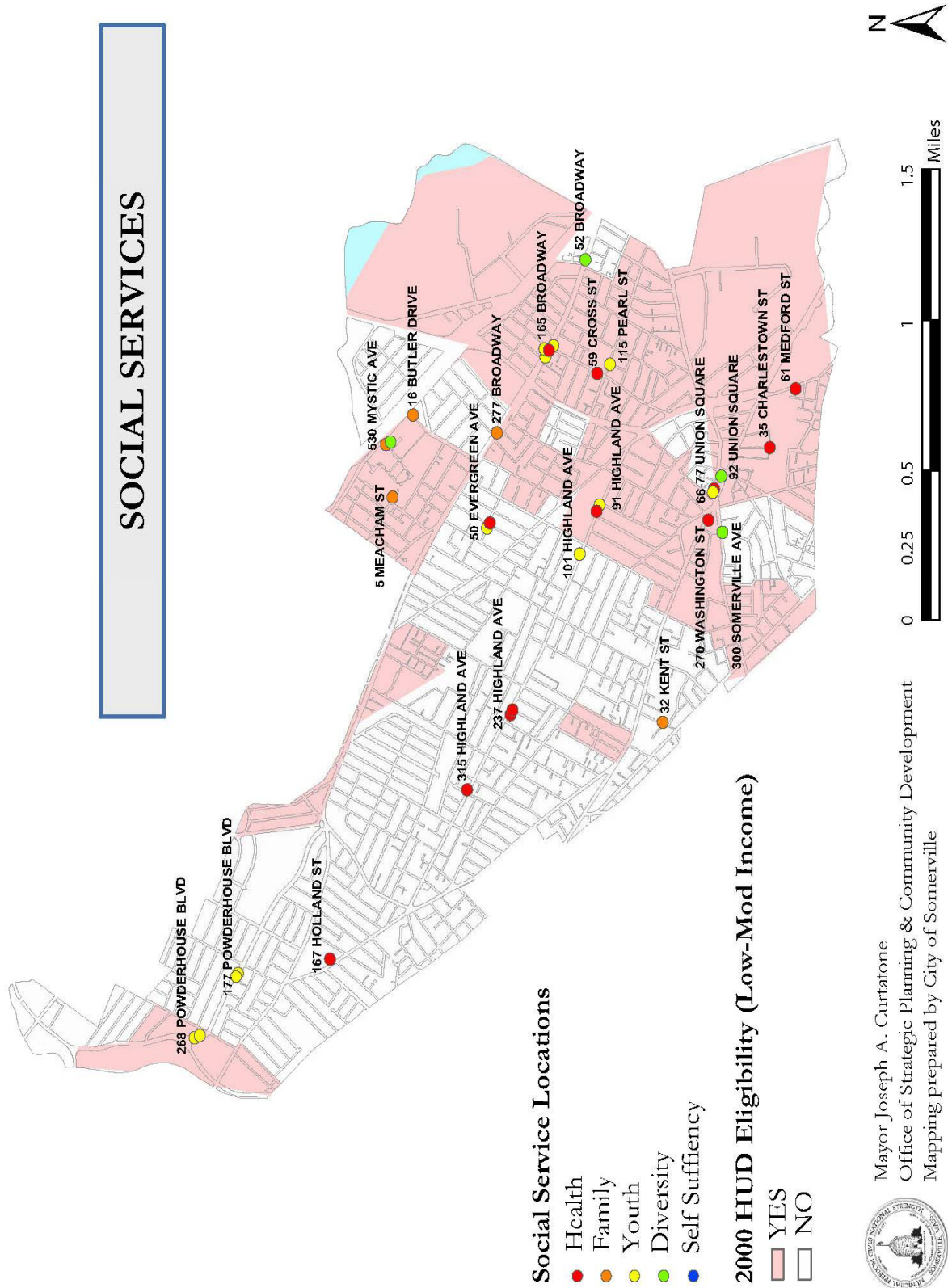
In addition to CDBG funding, the City of Somerville also received Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds. ESG funds are used as the first step in a continuum of assistance to prevent homelessness and to enable homeless individuals and families to move toward independent living. The objectives of the ESG Program are to increase the number and quality of emergency shelters and transitional living facilities for homeless individuals and families, to operate these facilities and provide essential

social services, and to help prevent homelessness. ESG grants can be used for facility operating costs (rent, maintenance, utilities or insurance), the rehabilitation or conversion of buildings into homeless shelters, the provision of essential shelter services and/or prevention of homelessness. The City of Somerville's ESG grant has ranged from \$125,755 to \$127,918 over the past several years. Subgrantees have leveraged CDBG and ESG funding to attract other funding sources.

## **II. Five Year Consolidated Plan Goals (2003-2008)**

The existing Five Year Consolidated Plan has a series of ambitious goals for the Public Services Program. The goals include:

1. Provide service to City's homeless and HIV/AIDS population through care management, support services for persons on the street, eviction prevention assistance, and voicemail capabilities for housing and employment.
2. Increase access to healthcare, and education for low income and public housing tenants, especially youth.
3. Provide Services and resources for the City's immigrant population and assist non-governmental agencies to achieve the same.
4. Provide paratransit services for seniors and the disabled to enable better access to healthcare, recreational services, and to encourage self-sufficiency.



### **III. Accomplishments 2003-2008**

More than 5,000 residents have been served by local social service agencies each year through the Public Services Program. They have received a variety of services to meet their basic needs whether this be through individual and group counseling; workshops on healthcare and immigration; or job readiness training and financial literacy. Youth have been offered positive opportunities to grow and challenge themselves in lieu of delinquent behavior and / or gang involvement. Educational, recreational and wellness programming for elders have helped decrease isolation and encourage participation in the community. Some specific accomplishments include:

- The bilingual and bicultural staff at Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, Concilio Hispano, Haitian Coalition and the Welcome Project have actively supported the minority community and limited English speakers. Additionally, many agencies have hired bi-lingual staff to assist the needs of their clients, such as Community Action Agency of Somerville, Guidance Center, Just-a-Start, Respond and the Somerville Health Department.
- Individual and group counseling has been provided by CASPAR, Guidance Center, Respond, Somerville Homeless Coalition, Somerville YMCA, Walnut St Center, Somerville Department on Aging, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Catholic Charities and Transition House.
- Workshops on healthcare were presented by Cambridge Public Health Alliance, Concilio Hispano, Haitian Coalition, Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, Walnut Street Center and the Somerville Health Department.
- Immigration workshops were conducted and or collaborated on by Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, Concilio Hispano, Haitian Coalition, Community Action Agency of Somerville and the Welcome Project.
- Job readiness training and budgeting was offered by Boys and Girls Clubs, Cambridge Public Health, Groundwork Somerville, Haitian Coalition, Mystic Learning Center, Somerville YMCA, Wayside Youth and Family Support Network, Somerville Arts Department, Somerville Cares about Prevention, Center for Teen Empowerment and Community Action Agency of Somerville.
- Youth behavior modification programs offering positive opportunities for youth were conducted by the Boys and Girls Clubs, Cambridge Public Health, Center for Teen Empowerment, Haitian Coalition, Mystic Learning Center, Somerville Community Corporation, Somerville YMCA, Transition House, Wayside Youth and Family Support Network, Somerville Arts Department, Somerville Cares about Prevention, Somerville Youth Program and Community Action Agency of Somerville.
- Presenting education educational, recreational and wellness programming for elders and the disabled community were conducted by the Somerville Department on Aging, Walnut Street Center and SCM Community Transportation.



Programming has focused on 5 major priorities – Community Health, Support Family Employment, Support Youth Empowerment, Discrimination and Diversity and Self-Sufficiency.

### Community Health

Accomplishments under community health include:

- Through the work of Respond, Somerville residents and members from surrounding communities have received domestic violence support and information from domestic violence counselors - 24 hours a day. Counselors have responded to approximately 300 calls each month providing safety net planning and information and referral.
- The Guidance Center, Just-a-Start and Elizabeth Peabody House made referrals to early intervention agencies to assist over 100 at-risk infants yearly who have displayed early warning signs of developmental delays and education was provided to low income families to implement behavior changes and develop community collaborations to prevent recurring problems. The Guidance Center was a pilot site for a federally funded Massachusetts Department of Public Health project on postpartum depression and newborns exposed to illegal substances.
- Yearly, over 300 low income men and women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to a history of chronic substance abuse have received individual and group counseling services and treatment planning and case management services to stay sober and make difficult lifestyle changes. These services were provided CASPAR, Catholic Charities, Respond, Somerville Homeless Coalition and Transition House.
- Transportation services were provided to over 300 low-income elderly or disabled residents providing the vital link between home and the community, decreasing the risk of isolation and disengagement from the community. The majority of the transportation provided was for medical appointments. Transportation services were provided by SCM Community Transportation, Shepherd Center and the Haitian Coalition.



**FIGURE 1: SCM PARATRANSIT**  
Source: OSPCD, 2007

- The Walnut Street Center created a health and wellness program for over 20 developmentally disabled adults. In partnership with a local teaching hospital, volunteer buddies integrated physical fitness into the daily lives of developmentally disabled adults to achieve a higher standard of healthy living. The Somerville Commission on DisAbilities conducted a survey of disabled persons focused on the needs of

this community . Based on this survey, a report was compiled that the City will use as a tool to increase understanding of disabled issues throughout the City. In addition, the Disability Commission developed a cable access TV show to publicize contact information related to the survey results and questions. The show offers information to city consumers regarding a wide array of disabilities-relevant topics. A five agency Community Partnership was formed to gather information and partner to design responses to common constituent's needs.

- Each year, fifteen Somerville High School teens received health education training from Cambridge Public Health to develop and lead interactive activities to educate and raise health awareness of their peers. These activities are conducted monthly at the high school to reach fellow students. Youth talked about body image, eating disorders and the media's influence on perceptions of beauty. Research was done on the affects of the media and how these images are affecting children as young as 10 years of age.
- During the research, the youth came across Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty – a campaign that embraces bodies of all shapes and sizes, all races and ethnicities from young to old. Pictures were taken as a true representation of a diverse student body of all ethnicities, shapes and sizes. In the final picture, youth cut out images of models, actors and actresses to demonstrate the media's message on body image. Youth were asked to write their thoughts on real beauty and positive body image, which were posted around the cafeteria for everyone to read.



**FIGURE 2: TEEN HEALTH ADVISORY TABLE – INFO ON POSITIVE BODY IMAGE**

Source: OSPCD, 2007

- Youth programming was developed by the Boys and Girls Program, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Center for Teen Empowerment, Haitian Coalition, Mystic Learning Center, Somerville YMCA, Wayside Youth and Family Support Network, Somerville Cares about Prevention and the Somerville Youth Program to reduce youth's access to use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs by engaging youth, parents, law enforcement, educators and substance abuse providers.
- Through the Shape Up Somerville Program, residents (pre-school, school age youth and adults) participated in a healthy lifestyle study in conjunction with Tufts University. Health education, workshops and nutrition information fostered changes in the community. Additional

partnerships were forged with the School Department/PEP Grant to implement a fitness and nutrition curriculum for youth participating in after-school programming.

#### Support Family Employment

Accomplishments under Support Family Employment include:

- Affordable daycare and after-school care through the Boys and Girls Clubs, Mystic Learning Center, Somerville YMCA and infant/toddler care programs at the Elizabeth Peabody House have served over 275 youth yearly with positive, enriching learning experiences. As a result, working families were more productive knowing their children are well care for.
- Through programs with the Guidance Center, Haitian Coalition, Elizabeth Peabody House Infant/Toddler Center, parenting workshops were conducted to facilitate the smooth and effective transition to the school system, parents were linked to support services and community resources. Early intervention services have assisted over 100 disabled children yearly with special needs services to achieve optimal development while supporting families through prevention and therapeutic intervention in home visits.
- A mentor program through Just-A-Start's Mentor Aftercare Program has provided a support system to 20 vulnerable youth mothers yearly by offering teens a positive relationship and role model to encourage youth mothers in building a safe and nurturing living environment as they raise their child(ren) and transition into adulthood. Over 30 families have been involved developing a sense of pride and community spirit through their participation in policy and program development at the Mystic Learning Center.
- Multi-faceted programming has been developed for 41 formerly homeless residents working to rebuild their lives at Transition House. Workshops and activities were designed to bring residents together in non-threatening environments, creating a sense of empowerment and decreasing isolation.
- Programs at Transition House for parents have stressed relief and self-esteem that have strengthened their self-confidence. Additional workshops included budgeting assistance and money management. Youth and teens have worked at the homework assistance program to increase their academic grades and self-esteem. Clubs have worked on emotional issues as well.

#### Support Youth Empowerment

The broad network of social service organizations working with youth in Somerville have focused on engaging youth in positive activities and service to others; challenging them to learn and explore; exposing them to a wide range of adult mentors and providing them access to powerful experiences to develop essential life skills, build self-esteem and create cross-cultural understanding. These agencies include Boys and Girls Clubs, Center for Teen Empowerment, Cambridge Public Health Alliance, Haitian Coalition, Mystic Learning Center, Somerville YMCA, Somerville Cares About Prevention, Groundwork Somerville, Somerville Arts Council and the Somerville Youth Department.

At least six of these agencies (Center for Teen Empowerment, Cambridge Public Health, Mystic Learning Center, Somerville Arts Department, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Somerville YMCA) have recruited, screened, interviewed and hired (7-17) youth each year. These programs include developing a training curriculum around employment and job readiness and leadership opportunities. In addition, leadership programming allowed youth to lead trainings and supported and empowered youth to use their voice to improve and participate in the community. These youth have developed leadership skills to work with their peers to address issues and bring about changes. Activities have focused on the environment, occupational safety, educational enrichment and substance abuse prevention strategies. Youth have drawn on their research, energy, example and artistic skills to teach and educate their peers.

Two organizations (Somerville Community Corporation and Wayside Youth and Family Support Network) have been working specifically on training students as mediators, conducting workshops teaching conflict resolution skills, anti-bullying techniques and resisting peer pressure when faced with gang involvement. Nearly 125

disputes have been resolved peacefully.



**FIGURE 3: MURAL OF MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED**

Source: OSPCD, 2007

In order to create a mural on Mystic Avenue (nine 4 x 8' MDO panels to be connected to the existing mural), Somerville Arts Department youth decided a map of the watershed was important in the context of the existing mural – explaining why it was created and how the images were connected. In order to do this the youth explored 16 different areas of the watershed that expressed the variety of experiences found on the River.

#### Elimination of Discrimination and Support of Diversity

At least four organizations including Concilio Hispano, Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, Haitian Coalition and the Welcome Project (serving over 900 clients) have been working citywide to empower refugee and immigrant communities and create opportunities for residents of all backgrounds to work together to improve their social, economic and personal well-being. A key component to their success has been the focus on education and self-development initiatives.

Efforts have been very successful in expanding and improving ESL, ESOL and Citizenship classes. Some agencies provide daycare for parents, classes are offered in both the evening and daytime to reach new constituency. Clients were linked with the Career Center for job searches and workshops. Clients participating in classes can participate in a range of agency support and education services to contribute to their overall success.



### Self-Sufficiency

Through education, information, referral and training, social service agencies have provided their clients with the tools to become independent, advocate for their own needs and integrate into the larger community and economy. During the summer through the YMCA Counselor in Training/Leadership in Training, forty-eight youth (ages 14 through 16) from low-income families have participated in job readiness, team building and leadership activities. Youth participated in Job Fairs and were exposed to job opportunities within the community.



**FIGURE 4: COUNSELOR IN TRAINING / LEADERSHIP IN TRAINING JOB READINESS PROGRAM**

Source: OSPCD 2007

High school youth participated in summer job programs that included environmental education, stewardship projects and recreational activities. Low-income youth built connections with youth from different communities and explored themes such as climate change, GPS mapping and the importance of open space. Together, they worked on multiple service projects each week that benefited the lives of other in Somerville.



**FIGURE 5: MYSTIC RIVER CLEANUP 2007**

Source: OSPCD. 2007



**FIGURE 6: GROUNDWORKS SOMERVILLE GREEN TEAM**

Source: OSPCD. 2007

Early intervention and infant/toddler services have stressed family driven prevention and therapeutic intervention services that maximize supporting families and developing community

collaborations to achieve optimal development and assisting families to understand ways to advocate for their child. Spanish parent-child groups were developed along with workshops for parents and providers.

#### Public Services Overall Accomplishments

The City is proud to announce that 4 of the 5 goals established in the 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan have been accomplished and exceeded. The fifth goal – provision of paratransit services – has not been met through the fourth year of the 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan. However, the City, through SCM Transportation, expects to serve an additional 400 clients in the fifth and final year of the 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan, achieving approximately 90% of this goal set for the 5-year period. With transportation costs increasing notably over the past four years, and returning clients using the service more intensively, the number of new clients that can be served has been constrained. SCM Community Transportation provides services are on a first-come first-served basis. All available rides have been booked; many two weeks in advance. Strategies are being analyzed for SCM to collect a sliding fee for services thus freeing up rides for the neediest residents.

| <b>TABLE 4: PUBLIC SERVICES 5 YEAR GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS</b>  |                         |                       |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>5 Year Goal</b>  | <b>Expected Clients</b> | <b>Actual Clients</b> |
| Increase safety within the City through tenant security, domestic violence prevention, youth mediation, and tenant outreach   | 15,000                  | 21,789                |
| Provide service to City's homeless and HIV/AIDS population through care management, support services for persons on the street, eviction prevention assistance, and voicemail capabilities for housing and employment | 700 - 1,000             | 6,223                 |
| Increase access to healthcare, and education for low income and public housing tenants, especially youth  | 4,000                   | 6,423                 |
| Provide Services and resources for the City's immigrant population and assist non-governmental agencies to achieve the same.  | 2,500                   | 6,761                 |
| Provide paratransit services for seniors and the disabled to enable better access to healthcare, recreational services, and to encourage self-sufficiency   | 2,400                   | 1,713                 |

#### **IV. Needs Assessment**

##### ***A. Needs Assessment Data and Surveys***

The City is fortunate to have access to the results of a series of questionnaires, forums and surveys conducted by various non-profit and city agencies in recent years to help guide the needs assessment process. Questionnaires and surveys were conducted by both agencies receiving and not receiving CDBG funds. While the questions were not written specific to the Consolidated Plan, the timely information generated by diverse populations is very helpful in understanding public service needs in the community.

| <b>TABLE 5: AVAILABLE SURVEY / FOCUS GROUP DATA</b> |   |             |                         |               |
|---|---|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Area of focus</b>                                | <b>Subject</b>                                  | <b>Date</b> | <b>Participants</b>     | <b>Agency</b> |
| Middle School Youth                                 | Youth Risk Behavior Survey (grades 6 through 8) | 10-Apr-07   | 926 students at 9 sites | Health Dept   |

|                         |  |        |  |                             |
|-------------------------|--|--------|--|-----------------------------|
| Immigrant Workers       | Work & Safety Concerns   | N/A    | 240 Spanish speakers   | CAAS and Haitian Coalition  |
| Disabled Residents      | Access Concerns  | Nov-07 | 100 disabled residents   | Disability Commission       |
| Youth & Youth Providers | Peace Conference   | Apr-07 | 500  | Center for Teen Empowerment |
| Youth                   | Comprehensive Assessment of Youth Services and Recommendations to Increase Effectiveness of Intervention and Prevention Strategies | Mar-04 | 23 social service organizations and 4 youth focus groups of 10-15 youth each | Center for Teen Empowerment |

### Youth Risk Behavior Survey

This survey was conducted April 10, 2007 by the Health Department at nine sites with students from grades 6 through 8. The survey took approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey was given between 10 am and noon in school classrooms. Questions included youth's perception and use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco, violence, mental health issue, nutritional and physical activity, etc. The survey alternated between middle school youth and high school youth. 926 surveys were analyzed. Fifty were discarded because the department felt the youth did not answer honestly and information might skew the results.

Once the results of the survey are approved by the School Committee, the Health Department will make presentations of the findings to the community – youth, educators, service providers, parents, etc. – to address concerns and shifting trends in behavior. While findings from the most recent survey are not yet available, previous surveys include findings that alcohol is the substance of choice, with 38% of middle school students reporting that they had consumed alcohol in their lifetime and 13% reported that they had consumed alcohol 30 days prior to the survey. Approximately one in every four students (245) reported using cigarettes and one in ten (11%) had used marijuana and inhalants. Both lifetime and current use of substances other than alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana and inhalants was comparatively low.

Overall, the percentage of Somerville middle school students who reported ever using each of these substances increased with age/grade. For example, the percentage who reported ever using alcohol in their lifetime increased from 28% in 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 34% in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 51% in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. By spring of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade, over half of middle school students (51) reported that they had ever tried alcohol, approximately one-third (33%) had tried cigarettes, one-fifth (20%) had tried marijuana and 14% had tried inhalants. Comparative middle school data (2004 Monitoring the Future Survey, conducted by the University of Michigan for the National Institute on Drug Abuse) indicated rates of 8<sup>th</sup> grade lifetime use of alcohol (51% Somerville, 44% National), cigarettes (33% Somerville, 28% National) and marijuana (20% Somerville, 16% National). Somerville's rates were higher than the national average. The rate of lifetime cocaine use was the same (3%) in Somerville and nationally. Rates of 8<sup>th</sup> grade lifetime use of inhalants (14% Somerville, 17% National), steroids (1% Somerville, 2% National), heroin (.9% Somerville, 2% National) and ecstasy (1% Somerville, 3% National) were lower than the national average.

The 2005-2006 results of a study of Somerville High School Students regarding depression and



suicidal ideation noted that depression among Somerville high school students (31%) was higher than the Massachusetts 2005 average (27%). Rates of suicidal ideation and behavior were similar among both populations, with the Somerville rate of planning suicide dropping below the state average: *seriously considered* suicide (14% Somerville, 13% MA), *planned* suicide (10%, 7% MA), *attempted* suicide (8%, 3%).

While the Somerville survey focused on many risk behaviors, it also contained item designed to measure the strength of certain protective factors such as social support, community attachment and physical activity. The percentage of Somerville high school students who reported protective factors increased between 2004 and 2006: volunteer work (25% to 31%), extra curricular activities (58% to 63%), school adult confidant (53% to 59%), family adult confidant (68% to 70%) non-family/school confidant (38% to 40%), engaging in *vigorous* physical activity three or more times a week (48% to 54%) and *moderate* activity five or more times (16% to 21%).

Additionally, the Institute for Community Health plans to conduct a telephone survey of adults entitled the Adult Behavior Risk Survey in 2008. Members of the Health Dept will be involved in the collection. The results will be immediate.

#### CAAS-Community Action Agency & Haitian Coalition

Both agencies are working with Tufts University on a 4-year study entitled “Occupational Risks Among Immigrants in Somerville”. The Tufts University School of Engineering received a grant from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health to advance understanding of the occupational health risks among a fast growing but vulnerable segment of the American workforce: immigrant workers. Beginning in 2006, an annual Latino Immigrant Worker Needs Assessment survey was conducted to identify and characterize this immigrant population, changes in the ethnic makeup, and work-related environmental exposure risk to immigrant workers in Somerville. The survey was performed by bi-lingual youth at events like the annual Immigrant Health Fair and through information tables at the Somerville Immigrants Conference organized by the Somerville Family Network, at St. Benedict’s Church and at the Mayor’s Summer Jobs Program.

Armed with in-depth knowledge of risk and health issues, such as respiratory and dermal exposure to potential harmful solvents and cleaning agents, the study team trained youth educators who will teach immigrant worker about occupational hazards and safe practices. This training model was successful in previous years on topics such as tobacco use to other environment issues. The results from this study will provide a model for other communities.

Assessment results indicated that immigrant workers in Somerville and greater Boston are working in small groups, particularly in service industries, such as housecleaners, floor refinishers housepainters or in small businesses such as nail salons, beauty salons and auto body shops. They often receive inadequate training about the hazards and how to do the job safely and as a result frequently develop illnesses and injuries that are often unseen and unmet.

To highlight how important an issue this is, the Boston Globe did a feature article highlighting the environmental work of the Brazilian Women’s Group, their use of ‘green’ friendly products and education about health hazards at work and ways to help prevent occupational injuries. The Brazilian women cleaners formed a non-profit green cleaning cooperative that has worked to break

down the barriers of isolation facing these workers who are benefiting from the new structure and learning about safe work practices and benefits of using environmental friendly cleaning products.

#### Center for Teen Empowerment

The Center for Teen Empowerment conducted a comprehensive needs assessment of youth services provided by the City and other non-profit youth and educational organizations and made recommendations concerning ways to increase the effectiveness of intervention and prevention strategies. The assessment reviewed the present youth service delivery system, interviewed 23 adult service providers (who work for the City or with private non-profit providers), conducted a series of 4 two-hour focus groups of 10-15 youth each (held at Mystic Learning Center, Full Circle Alternative High School, Somerville Community Youth Program and Matignon High School) and observed youth program activities at 3 sites (Boys and Girls Club, YMCA and Somerville Community Youth Program).

The assessment revealed a youth service system that has suffered from a series of severe budget cutbacks on the state and local levels and has lost much of its past capacity to reach and engage high-risk youth. Among the teen services available at this time, there is a lack of connection between the needs of adolescents and the limited programs provided. While these efforts vary in quality, few are structured to intentionally address the issue of drugs, gangs, suicide and racial tension that characterize the patterns of behavior among far too many Somerville youth. Many youth reported a lack of connection with police, leaving police with the tendency to be suspicious of all youth. Many youth expressed interest in participating in projects that would engage them in theater, art and music-based activities, but such programs are currently available on an extremely limited basis. Finally, many youth programs reported that there is no clear way for community-based programs to coordinate their efforts with the intervention and prevention programming taking place within the schools and these school-based programs are very limited.

The agency recommended developing a network of youth leaders to mount a major effort to engage adolescent in positive involvement with their neighborhoods and provide input into the policies and practices of governmental, police and school/community based organizations.

#### Disability Access Report & Evaluation

The disability access survey gathered information from at least 100 disadvantaged individuals related to their inclusion in public services and community opportunities. The survey was conducted between January and March, 2007, and the results of this survey were presented in November, 2007. This survey requested responses to ten (10) questions, including:

- 1) What is your experience regarding programs, services and activities operated by the City?
- 2) What is your experience moving around the City?
- 3) What is your experience with City employees when making reports and requests regarding access problems?
- 4) What is your experience with Hospitals, Public Safety Departments, and Public Health Department?

The findings from this survey identified some areas of strength (69% of respondents rated their

experience with Hospitals, Public Safety, and Public Health Departments as either good, very good, or excellent), as well as some areas of weakness (43% of respondents rated their experience moving around the city as poor). Additional information on this survey is available at the City of Somerville Office of Strategic Planning or at the Somerville Commission for Persons with Disabilities. The results of this survey are reflected in the public services needs and priorities for both Transportation Services and HUD's categories of Handicapped Services and Transportation Services as being ranked high for the next five years.

### **B. Needs Assessment Process**

In addition to reviewing the results of the surveys and questionnaires noted above, the City held three public hearings in the fall of 2007 to solicit input into community public service needs. In addition, a focus group with service providers was held on October 29, 2007. Some of the comments from the focus group include:

- The City should take a proactive approach towards the expected changes in Somerville and increase collaboration among its organizations. There was understanding that Somerville faces similar issues each year, and the Focus Group members wish to evaluate strategies to addressing these issues to improve responses.
- Affordable housing and gentrification. The Focus Group is concerned with the increasing cost to live in Somerville. It is concerned that its vulnerable populations are increasingly at risk of being forced out, or forgotten about under a new influx of more affluent residents. It is weary of the prospect of gentrification eroding Somerville's diversity.
- The wish to promote different demographics of the community to engage with one another, so all groups can learn and benefit from each other. The Focus Group believes an intergenerational philosophy integrated into all aspects of the city can foster civic involvement and a stronger sense of community.

## **V. Prioritization of Needs**

The categories listed below encompass the priority public service needs for low- and moderate-income residents. Cost estimates are not as critical a factor in the public services planning process because the needs are inevitably greater than the available CDBG and ESG funds. The estimates provided below are based on both the amount of CDBG funds requested for 2008-2013 in each of the public service categories and from the information obtained through the Consolidated Plan public participation process.

| <b>TABLE 6: PUBLIC SERVICE NEEDS &amp; PRIORITIES</b> |                   |              |
|---|-------------------|--------------|
|   | <b>Need Level</b> | <b>Units</b> |
| Immigrant Services & ESL                              | High              | Persons      |
| Public Services (05)                                  | High              | Persons      |
| Services for Seniors (05A)                            | High              | Persons      |
| Handicapped Services (05B)                            | High              | Persons      |
| Youth Services (05D)                                  | High              | Persons      |
| Transportation Services (05E)                         | High              | Persons      |
| Substance Abuse Services (05F)                        | High              | Persons      |
| Battered and Abuse Services (06G)                     | High              | Persons      |

|                                  |        |         |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Employment Training (05H)        | High   | Persons |
| Tenant/Landlord Counseling (05K) | Medium | Persons |
| Child Care Services (05L)        | Medium | Persons |
| Health Services (05M)            | High   | Persons |
| Shelter Operation Costs (03T)    | High   | Persons |

## VI. Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs

Based on information derived from grantees and other service providers with the City, it is clear that several obstacles to meeting needs exist. These include:

### Insufficient Resources to Meet Demand

Resources presently available to provide services to the underserved population are inadequate to meet demand. Each day, service providers are stretching their resources to provide basic services to their client population. The commitment shown by the agencies and their staff is tremendous and they each go beyond the call of duty regularly. That said, the costs of providing services continues to increased and is usually unmatched by equivalent increases in resources. Today's high energy costs and the crisis in the lending market with an increase in foreclosures across the country can only result in a increase in individuals and families in need.

### Limited English Proficiency

In order to best serve Somerville's population in need, services need to be provided in multiple languages including Portuguese, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. Advertising campaigns or flyers to make people aware of services must be provided in multiple languages and the City must target those periodicals and agencies best recognized by the limited English speaking populations in Somerville. This increases the cost and complexity of performing outreach across the city.

### Distrust of Government

Among the populations in need are individuals who have a distrust of government and government services, whether this distrust has arisen from experiences in their native country or experiences in the U.S. In order to successfully reach these individuals, the barrier of distrust needs to be reduced. Unfortunately, reports indicate that in recent months immigration actions in Somerville and other parts of New England have heightened the concerns of this population.

## VII. Vision, Goals, and Strategies

### Vision

Critical services will be available to needy individuals and families to meet their unique needs.

### Goals

1. Provide opportunities for residents to improve their economic, social and political situation.

2. Provide children with the best opportunities to live healthy and productive lives.
3. Provide education and leadership opportunities for youth to become involved in the community.
4. Provide comprehensive programs for low-income individuals and families who are having difficulty meeting their basic needs.
5. Prevent homelessness by providing interpersonal and systematic supports to undermine the causes of homelessness.
6. Provide services to support the elderly and persons with disabilities of all ages.

### Strategies

#### Improve Economic, Social, Political Situation

- 1.1 Provide job readiness program, computer literacy, resume workshops, and other efforts to improve employment opportunities for Somerville residents.
- 1.2 Reduce barriers to participating in the community by providing ESL, ESOL and Citizenship classes.
- 1.3 Provide affordable daycare opportunities and support services for working families to better provide for their families.
- 1.4 Provide training to workers on occupational health issues and worker safety
- 1.5 Provide training on how to stabilize and grow financial resources, including but not limited to, financial literacy
- 1.6 Provide culturally appropriate avenues for linguistic minorities to access necessary services

#### Services for Children

- 2.1 Provide support services to include parenting workshops, early intervention strategies to create optimal development environments for at-risk children
- 2.2 Continue to support Shape Up Somerville and other initiatives that prevent and address childhood issues health and obesity
- 2.3 Support efforts for early childhood education
- 2.4 Support efforts to provide school breakfasts and lunches and other nutritional programs

#### Educational and Leadership Opportunities for Youth

- 3.1 Provide programs to promote mentoring skills, sub-stance abuse and gang prevention strategies, community service, employment skills and academic success
- 3.2 Provide safe after-school programming offering tutoring, enrichment and recreational activities
- 3.3 Develop leadership training for youth to become agents for change in the community
- 3.4 Support and increase summer and year-round employment opportunities for youth

#### Comprehensive Programs for Families

- 4.1 Provide outreach, information, referral, education, counseling and case management on housing, health services, educational opportunities, social service benefits, food.
- 4.2 Provide services that stabilize the family and home setting
- 4.3 Provide mentoring programs to enable residents to support one another

Prevent and Address Homelessness

- 5.1 Provide safety net planning for individuals and families experiencing domestic violence
- 5.2 Provide mediation and tenant / landlord counseling
- 5.3. Provide education, support services and tools to prevent homelessness

Services of the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities

- 6.1 Provide appropriate services for low income seniors living on fixed incomes
- 6.2 Embrace intergenerational initiatives to find commonality among all ages and walks of life
- 6.3 Provide programs to meets the needs of people with disabilities, including but not limited to transportation, job training, and other support services

**VIII. Performance Measures**

Applicants for CDBG public service grants in FY08 and beyond will be required to develop a logic model for their funded service and they will report regularly on program outputs and outcomes. The overall performance measurement will be employed to measure the success of the Somerville public service program will be promoting sustainability and livability. The City had between 30 and 35 public service grantees, the City will use this outcome to compile individual outcome information from the agencies.

In the program accomplishment area of the yearly Requests for Proposals, all public service grantees will answer the following four questions:

- 1- List the main 'program goals' of this service.
- 2- List the 'number assisted' – primary and secondary clients served by the program.
- 3- List the 'program impact' – direct products of the program activities.
- 4- List the desired 'outcomes' of this service. (What benefits will result? What will be the value to the community?)

Those grantees who received public service grants have and will continue to receive technical assistance in the development of logic models. Additionally, program report requirement are specified in each grant agreement and must be filed by public service grant recipients quarterly.

| <b>PUBLIC SERVICES PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Goal</b>  | <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Benchmarks</b>                         |
| 1. To create opportunities for residents to improve their economic, social and political situation | 1.1 Provide job readiness program, computer literacy, resume workshops, and other efforts to improve employment opportunities for Somerville residents. | 1.1.1 Serve 440 residents over five years |
|  | 1.2 Reduce barriers to participating in the community by providing ESL, ESOL and Citizenship classes.   | 1.2.1 Serve 400 residents over five years |
|  | 1.3 Provide affordable daycare opportunities and support services for working families to better provide for their families.                            | 1.3.1 Serve 185 households each year      |

| <b>PUBLIC SERVICES PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Benchmarks</b>  |
|   | 1.4 Provide training to workers on occupational health issues and worker safety   | 1.4.1 Serve 400 residents over five years  |
|   | 1.5 Provide training on how to stabilize and grow financial resources, including but not limited to, financial literacy.  | 1.5.1 Offer workshops to serve 400 residents over five years   |
|   | 1.6 Provide culturally appropriate avenues for linguistic minorities to access necessary services   | 1.6.1 Serve 335 residents over five years  |
| 2. Provide children with the best opportunities to live healthy and productive lives  | 2.1 Provide support services to include parenting workshops, early intervention strategies to create optimal development environments for at-risk children                    | 2.1.1 Serve 350 households over five years   |
|   | 2.2 Continue to support healthy lifestyles (Shape Up Somerville) and other initiatives that prevent and address childhood issues health and obesity                           | 2.2.1 Provide education to 535 households over five years  |
|   | 2.3 Support efforts for early childhood education   | 2.3.1 Contract with 2 preschool agencies yearly to identify delays and develop prevention strategies to prevent larger problems later                                |
|   | 2.4 Support efforts to provide school breakfasts and lunches and other nutritional programs   | 2.4.1 Collaborate with agencies on 3 nutrition sites each summer   |
| 3. Create education and leadership opportunities for youth to become involved in the community                                | 3.1 Provide programs to promote mentoring skills, sub-stance abuse and gang prevention strategies, community service, employment skills and academic success                  | 3.1.1 Fund 8 programs each year  |
|   | 3.2 Provide safe after-school programming offering tutoring, enrichment and recreational activities   | 3.2.1 Serve 600 youth through after-school programming over five years   |
|   | 3.3 Provide leadership training for youth to become agents for change in the community  | 3.3.1 Engage 180 youth in leadership training over five years  |
|   | 3.4 Support and increase summer and year-round employment opportunities for youth   | 3.4.1 Provide stipends to 400 youth over five years  |
| 4. Provide comprehensive programs for low income individuals and families who are having difficulty meeting their basic needs | 4.1 Provide outreach, information, referral, education, counseling and case management on housing, health services, educational opportunities, social service benefits, food. | 4.1.1 Offer information and referral 24 hours a day in collaboration with 27-30 non-profit agencies and operate a food program to benefit 10,000 residents each year |
|   | 4.2 Provide services that stabilize the family and home setting   | 4.2.1 Contract with 7 agencies yearly who will provide family counseling   |
|   | 4.3 Provide mentoring programs to enable residents to support one another   | 4.3.1 Support 200 residents over five years  |



| PUBLIC SERVICES PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Goal   | Strategies   | Benchmarks  |
| 5. Prevent and address homelessness by providing interpersonal and - systematic supports to undermine the causes of homelessness | 5.1 Provide safety net planning for individuals and families experiencing domestic violence  | 5.1.1 Provide safety net planning to 1,000 persons facing domestic violence over five years |
|  | 5.2 Provide mediation and tenant / landlord counseling   | 5.2.1 Train 100 mediators and counsel 250 residents facing eviction over five years         |
|  | 5.3. Provide education, support services and tools to prevent homelessness   | 5.3.1 Provide case management to 1,000 residents in 5 shelters over five years              |
| 6. Provide services to support the elderly and persons with disabilities of all ages   | 6.1 Provide appropriate services for low income seniors living on fixed incomes  | 6.1.1 Operate 3 senior centers offering recreational and educational programming each year  |
|  | 6.2 Embrace intergenerational initiatives to find commonality among all ages and walks of life   | 6.2.1 Encourage 2 youth and 2 senior agencies to work together over five years              |
|  | 6.3 Provide programs to meets the needs of people with disabilities including but not limited to transportation, job training and other support services | 6.3.1 Serve 2,100 residents over five years   |

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**SECTION SIX:**

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

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## **I. Introduction**

In its earliest days, the community of “Somerville” was part of the town of Charlestown, and was known as “beyond the neck” referring to the slim slice of land connecting the two areas. Although historians are not quite sure, it is thought that the community was named in honor of the early nineteenth century American naval hero, Master Commandant Richard Somers. Somerville became an independent town in 1842, with a five member governing body. Today, its land area encompasses a mere 4.1 square miles bordering the communities of Arlington, Medford, Cambridge and Boston. Its hill-dotted terrain is located between the watersheds of the Mystic and Charles Rivers as they enter the Boston Harbor. The original 7 hills have defined the character and significantly shaped the development of the city. The major thoroughfares skirted them and followed the least precipitous routes along their feet, where large amounts of traffic converged, developing into the commercial centers.

First settled in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Somerville grew in waves until it reached its peak population of 100,000 just after World War II. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, farmlands were increasingly developed, initially in a suburban pattern near to areas of major commerce and industry, such as East Somerville and Union Square. Transportation improvements in the early to mid 1800’s factored significantly in the growth of a more urban residential form and Somerville’s incorporation as a City in 1872. These improvements included the opening of the Middlesex Canal through Somerville in 1803,



**FIGURE 1: DEVELOPMENT NEAR RAILROADS**

Source: Somerville, Historic Preservation Commission

various turnpikes such as Medford and Beacon Street, built during the 1810s and 1820s, and especially the introduction of rail lines. These rail lines were the extension of the Boston & Lowell Railroad on the south side of Washington Street into the community in 1835 and the completion of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1841, and of the Boston & Maine Railroad in 1845 that spurred unprecedented residential growth allowing Boston, Charlestown, and Cambridge merchants, lawyers, accountants, and others to live away from the filth and bustle of these cities while being within easy commuting distance of their downtown businesses, accelerating all types of growth in the City during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

The locations of railway stations resulted in development in East Somerville, Prospect Hill and Spring Hill. Industries such as the Fresh Pond Ice Company, the American Tube Works, the Union Glass Company and numerous slaughterhouses grew up along the railroad sidings. Worker’s housing was located near-by, in the areas considered less desirable than the hills with their expansive views of Somerville, Boston, Cambridge and Medford.

The introduction of streetcar lines had by far the greatest impact on residential and commercial development. The population increased six-fold between 1870 and 1915. The period of the most significant growth for residential structures was between 1890 and 1900 when almost half of the City’s current housing stock was built, most of it in the Davis Square, Powder House and West

Somerville areas. Benefiting from continuous layers of new construction in different parts of the community and in a diversity of architectural styles and building materials, today's Somerville takes pride in its distinct neighborhoods and rich architectural heritage.

**East Somerville** is the oldest settled area of Somerville. It is the land immediately “outside the neck” of Charlestown. Washington Street was built around 1630 as the road from Charlestown to New Towne (Cambridge). Broadway was built around 1637 as the “way to Mystick.” Cross and Franklin Streets were designated as rangeways, or less traveled roads, in 1658.

Paul Revere's famous ride brought him from Charlestown, across the neck and down Washington Street toward Union Square and Cambridge or Arlington. Unfortunately, he was spotted by the British and was unable to reach Union Square as originally intended. Instead Revere was forced to choose another route to Lexington and Concord, following lower Broadway in East Somerville to Main Street and into Medford. During the Revolution, several skirmishes took place along Washington Street, which connected Bunker Hill to General Washington's Headquarters in New Towne. Cobble Hill, Fort 3 and Mount Pisgah (Prospect Hill) were all major fortifications along this route.

Agricultural and industrial goods produced in East Somerville used to be transported on the Middlesex Canal (1803) that once ran through the area but this route was quickly made obsolete by the railroads. The Boston & Maine railroad extension opened near the eastern edge of East Somerville in 1842 with a depot on Broadway. The Boston & Lowell crossed at the southern edge with a station on Washington Street near Joy Street. While brick-making was one of the earliest major businesses, East Somerville had several other early industries which were still in operation after the Civil War. The 1850 Industrial Census lists a bakery, a pottery, a twine manufacturer, a spike and nail manufacturer, a vinegar works and an iron foundry.



**FIGURE 2: LOWER BROADWAY  
CIRCA 1910**

Source: City of Somerville Postcard collection

Due to its proximity to the railroads, East Somerville experienced extensive subdivision activity during the mid-1800s and was consequently the most densely populated section of the town by 1860. In 1845, a Charles Pierce laid out 69 lots between Pearl, Perkins, Franklin and Pinckney Street. A plan of the area describes these lots as “1090 feet from the depot,” stressing the easy proximity of the area to rail transportation near Sullivan Square. Pierce's subdivision was followed by R. Sullivan's 200 lot plan of 1846, extending from Oliver Street to Broadway, and from Cross to Franklin Streets. Edward Cutter platted Cutter Street and a portion of Lime Street 3 years later.

Mount Pleasant and Mount Vernon Streets were developed at the eastern border while brickyards and potteries were located south of Pearl Street.

The industries sprouting up adjacent to Washington Street spawned a number of two-family homes, brick cottages and rowhouses with the construction of humble single-family housing seems to have come to a halt in the 1870s. The greatest period of residential development in East Somerville occurred between 1875 and 1885 when speculators built homes for the workers and their families.

While Boston and Charlestown businessmen were building large country estates on spacious lots on Winter, Prospect and Spring Hills, others were colonizing the narrower streets of East Somerville. Many of the first prominent residents of East Somerville built Greek Revival, Italianate and Second Empire style single family homes along Broadway as well as Mount Pleasant, Mount Vernon and Pearl Streets.

**Union Square** is Somerville's oldest and largest commercial district, and remained the commercial, financial, religious, and transportation center for the City throughout the nineteenth century. This



**FIGURE 3: UNION SQUARE  
COMMERCIAL DISTRICT 1910**

Source: City of Somerville postcard collection

vibrant commercial and residential area has always been a major crossroads for the City and the region, beginning at the intersection of the Road to Newtowne (Washington Street) running to Harvard Square and Charlestown Lane (Milk Row and later Somerville Avenue), both of which were created as trade roads in the 1630s. These two roads connected outlying farms with the bustling food markets of Boston, Charlestown, and Cambridge. As more

families built farmhouses along Washington Street and Somerville Avenue, more trader residents settled in the area of the present-day square to serve these families and take

advantage of the ever-increasing east-west road trade. By 1770, Benjamin Piper's Tavern, near today's Stone Avenue, was dispensing refreshment to thirsty travelers, while a few wheelwrights and blacksmith shops vied for customers meeting at the important crossroads.

After the end of the Revolutionary War, farm trade between Lexington and other communities to the west, and Boston, Cambridge, and Charlestown to the east continued to increase as demand for produce in urban markets grew. Lexington and Arlington dairy farmers developed regular early morning milk deliveries into Boston via Charlestown Lane, causing it to be designated Milk Row before being renamed Somerville Avenue in 1872. This increased trade at the crossroads brought further population growth and building construction to the area. Industrious local residents even filled in the marsh skirted by present-day Bow Street in 1831, in order to straighten Milk Row and create more buildable land in the area.

The cheap railroad transportation also made Union Square a desirable manufacturing center. The abundant clay in the area had long supplied local brickyards their raw materials, but the railroad expanded these operations to new markets. Along with these brickyards, slaughterhouses, the Union Glass Company (the City's largest industrial employer), and the American Tube Works were among the largest mid-nineteenth century industries near the Square. Woodworking shops, ice businesses, and carriage factories had also located in or very near the Square by the end of the 19th century, making it a great hub of manufacturing for the City.



A horse-powered street railway, established in 1864 to connect Union Square to Boston, helped bring more workers, shoppers, and residents to the Square, and was gradually extended to connect to Harvard Square and West Somerville. Service to the Square's commercial and residential structures continued to improve with the advent of electric powered streetcars, and more routes continued to be added through this already major crossroads of Somerville. Reportedly, electric streetcars were making 88 stops per day in the Square by 1900. The old streetcar routes continue to be used by today's MBTA buses. Many of the buildings now in Union Square date no earlier than the 1930s; and many exteriors of older buildings have been modified in order to present a more "modern" appearance.

These physical changes also reflect the demographic changes that have occurred in the Square during the last half of the 20th century, with the area emerging as a very diverse center of multi-cultural businesses, even as the area remains true to its historical function as a major commercial, residential, religious, and transportation center for the City of Somerville.



**FIGURE 3: DAVIS SQUARE  
ATTACKS 1930**

Source: City of Somerville postcard collection

In West Somerville, **Davis Square** was officially designated by the Board of Aldermen in 1883 and named for Person Davis (1819-1894), a grain dealer in the firm of Davis and Taylor in Boston. He moved to the area in 1850 and built his Italianate house (demolished in 1926) near the intersection of Elm St., Grove St. and Morrison Ave. Over time he presided over a ten-acre estate that encompassed much of present day Davis Square. Only one house is documented before then, circa 1800 at the location of the current West Branch Library.

The square developed into a residential and commercial center by the end of the nineteenth century due to improvements made to area streets in the 1860's when Elm St. was widened and was no longer simply an extension of Milk Row (now Somerville Avenue), and then Holland St. was laid out in 1870. Public transportation made the area more accessible. In 1856-57 horse car railway lines were extended along Massachusetts Ave. from Harvard Square to Arlington, in 1863 the Somerville Horse Railroad Company connected Union Square with West Somerville via extended tracks along Somerville Ave. and Elm St., and in 1871 the Lexington & Arlington Branch of the Boston & Maine Railroad extended steam rail service to Davis Square. These public improvements stimulated substantial commercial development in the 1870's and 1880's as well as rapid residential construction in the 1890's through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Brick paving was introduced in Davis Square in 1900 and the area continued to be a vibrant commercial and transportation center until post World War II, with the exodus to the suburbs and the decline of urban centers throughout the nation. In 1984 public transit was extended to Davis Square via the Red Line subway, and the Square has once again become a vibrant and lively center for residents and businesses alike. Among the businesses located in Davis Square is the historic Somerville Theatre, noted not only for its architecture and carefully restored Art Deco interior but as a premiere performance space.

The Powder House is the oldest building in the City, originally a grist mill constructed by Jean Mallet, a Frenchman. It was later converted into an armory that holds a special significance in the American Revolution when a raid by General Gage and 250 troops removed all the powder from it, sparking rioting in the streets of Boston, Charlestown and Newtowne.

The land throughout much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by farms and orchards owned by the Russell, Dow and Cook families. Between 1880 and 1890, the area grew rapidly with stores, homes, churches and schools replaced what had been agricultural land. **West Somerville** was not extensively developed until after 1895 when the Tufts family and others sold their land to developers. The Tufts Family also donated a large area to the City to form a park to be named in the honor of Nathan Tufts, descendant of the founder of Tufts University which is located just to the north.

**College Avenue**, originally Elm Street, a major connector to the Powder House neighborhood, north of Davis Square, at the intersection of Broadway and College Avenue serves as the civic and religious center of West Somerville with a Carnegie Library and numerous churches lining the road. Broadway is dominated by two-family housing constructed for the emergent middle class with neighborhood businesses interspersed along the thoroughfare.

#### Historic Preservation Commission

In 1985, the City adopted a Historic Districts Ordinance through State-enabling Chapter 40 (C) legislation; this led to the formation of the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC). The Ordinance sets forth the types of professions and backgrounds to be represented on this fourteen member volunteer body. Commission members are appointed by the Mayor, serve for three-year terms, and are charged with administering both the Historic Districts Ordinance of 1985 and the Demolition Review Ordinance adopted in 2003. As a volunteer body they rely heavily on their two part-time staff to help them accomplish their mission of protecting of Somerville's historic resources.

Another mission of the Commission is to foster community pride in the City's history and to encourage the preservation of Somerville's historic building stock, both residential and non-residential, in order to improve the livability of Somerville neighborhoods. To accomplish this mission over the longer term the SHPC is particularly intent upon developing awareness and appreciation of the City's historic assets among the youth of the community.

## **II. Five Year Consolidated Plan Goals (2003-2008)**

As noted in the City's adopted Consolidated Plan, during the past five years, the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) has worked toward accomplishing the following goals:

- Preservation and documentation of the City's cultural and natural heritage;
- Elimination of physical blight and serious deterioration of older buildings causing neighborhood instability and reduced quality of life;
- Promotion of adaptive reuse of existing building stock and infrastructure;
- Increased outreach and benefits to low and moderate income persons;



- Enhancement of access to and use of City resources by disabled populations;
- Expansion of public education and appreciation of City's historic assets and resources; and,
- Encouragement of private efforts by Somerville citizens in support of historic preservation.

### III. Accomplishments (2003-2008)

#### Preservation Activities

Each year over the past five the City through its OSPCD and Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has undertaken a range of projects to accomplish several of the goals outlined above: preservation and enhancement of Somerville's historic resources, elimination of blight and neighborhood instability, and increased access for disabled and low-moderate income populations. A summary of each project is noted in Table 1 below; and all involved leveraging CDBG funds to secure additional resources. Project Completion Reports, prepared for the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and on file at the OSPCD, provide greater detail on specific work and accomplishments.

| <b>TABLE 1: HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECTS &amp; FUNDING</b> |                          |   |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Project Name</b>  | <b>Year of Execution</b> | <b>Funding Sources Complementing CDBG</b> | <b>Type of Work</b>                     |
| Bow Street Police Station                                    | 2002-June 2006           | MHC MPPF Grant                            | Stabilization and Adaptive Reuse        |
| West Somerville Branch Library                               | 2003- June 2004          | MHC MPPF Grant                            | Stabilization                           |
| Historic Surveying   | 2004-- June 2005         | MHC Survey & Planning Grant               | City-wide Survey                        |
| Local Historic Designations                                  | 2005- June 2006          | MHC Survey & Planning Grant               | Designation of Local Historic Districts |
| Milk Row Cemetery  | 2005- June 2006          | MHC MPPF Grant                            | Stabilization - ongoing                 |

The Bow Street Police Station is located in the Union Square NRSA and suffered from years of deferred maintenance by the City and various occupants. The blight on the surrounding neighborhood was serious and long-standing. To combat this and return the building to a productive and economically viable use, the City successfully executed a major stabilization project both inside and outside the site (2001-2003), and secured a private developer to adaptively reuse the structure for residential use, including two affordable units (2004-2006). The project was awarded a 2006 Preservation Award from the Historic Preservation Commission for its outstanding reuse and historic restoration work, as well as for its significant contribution to revitalization of the overall NRSA.



**FIGURE 4: BOW STREET POLICE STATION: BEFORE AND AFTER STABILIZATION AND REHABILITATION**

Source: City of Somerville

The West Somerville Branch Library plays a vital role as a community center in the western part of the City. It serves a wide range of populations, including young families and seniors of low-moderate income. The building had fallen into serious disrepair, and its conditions were becoming unsafe for all users, as well as a spot of blight in the area. To remedy this, the City undertook significant roof, drainage, wall and door repairs and restored irreplaceable architectural features of the interior entry, stairwell, and main room. The outcome was very successful, enabling the City to extend the hours of operation, increase the number of patrons and programs, and earn a 2005 Preservation Award from the Historic Preservation Commission for the exemplary work.

The Milk Row Cemetery, located in the Union Square NRSA, is both a repository for many prominent citizens of the City during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and a sorely needed passive recreational area in the midst of a highly trafficked and congested part of Somerville. The ravages of time, environmental pollution and deferred maintenance, however, led to highly visible neglect, disuse and deterioration of the site and surrounding area. Based upon a Preservation Master Plan produced in 2002, the City has reversed this trend through implementation of Phase One work, repairing gravestones, rehabilitating tombs, upgrading landscaping, and improving accessibility within the grounds. The site is now periodically open to visitors and a stage for sponsored historic events.



**FIGURE 5: NATHAN TUFTS PARK**

Source: City of Somerville

Historic work accomplished at the Nathan Tufts Park

during the early years of the millennium, including restoration of the Old Powder House, preparation of a Cultural Landscape Master Plan, and renovation of the stone Field House, were so well received that the City

received two State awards over the past five years, a 2004 Preservation Award from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and a 2006 Cultural Preservation Landscape Award from Preservation MASS.

#### Surveys of Historic Properties – LHD Designation

Other key goals of the OSPCD over the past five years were to preserve and document the City's cultural and natural heritage, and encourage private efforts in support of historic preservation. This was achieved by significantly increasing the number of properties that were surveyed and inventoried for historic designation for both the State and National Register of Historic Places. In 2004-05, 221 properties were researched and documented on survey forms, and in 2006-2007 the owners were contacted through extensive means, including direct mailings and ten neighborhood meetings. A Preliminary Report was submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Somerville Planning Board for review and comments, and a Final Report documenting all of the work was submitted to the Board of Aldermen in June, 2007. The result is that 171 properties, representing a mix of residential, commercial and institutional buildings, have been recommended for designation as Local Historic Districts (LHDs), and are still being debated. Those properties that are chosen for historic designation will help the City preserve structures of special value, and enhance its goals of neighborhood stability and community economic development.

#### Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Activities

As the administering body for the City's Historic Districts Ordinance, the HPC currently oversees 371 properties in 209 Local Historic Districts located in different parts of the City. The Districts include a wide variety of building types, from single-family workers' cottages to multi-family row houses, to municipal facilities, and institutional/commercial buildings. Through its monthly meetings the HPC regularly reviews applications from owners for repairs, alterations and additions to their property. This work over the past five years is summarized below.

As part of its goal to encourage adaptive reuse of the City's existing building stock and infrastructure, as well as preserve properties of architectural and historical significance, the Commission helped gain adoption of a Demolition Review Ordinance in 2003, following a year of research and debate. The Commission determines first whether the property is "significant" and if so, then whether it is worthy of being designated "preferably preserved" which enables them to work constructively with the owner up to nine months, with the goal of finding an alternative to demolition. Sometimes this means encouraging the owner to sell the property to another entity that sees the value of the historic resource, or to relocate it to a less burdensome location.

| <b>TABLE 2: HPC CASES 2003-2007</b> |                                |                   |                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Year</b>                         | <b>Repair &amp; Alteration</b> | <b>Demolition</b> | <b>NEPA / Section 106</b> | <b>Total Reviews</b> |
| 2003                                | 50                             | 25                | Not counted               | 75                   |
| 2004                                | 43                             | 25                | Not counted               | 68                   |
| 2005                                | 40                             | 20                | 5                         | 65                   |
| 2006                                | 47                             | 23                | 8                         | 78                   |
| 2007                                | 49                             | 20                | 11                        | 80                   |

#### Public Outreach and Educational Activities

The HPC periodically sponsors historic events that are designed to enhance the public image of the City and its economic development potential through heritage tourism and property reinvestment. One program that both reaches out to private owners as well as to the wider public, especially the youth of the City is the Preservation Awards Program initiated in the early 1990's. This annual

program gives public recognition to those owners, both historically designated and non-designated, that repair or restore their properties in a manner that is sensitive to their original character. Students from the High School learn about the value of these selected properties, and create drawings highlighting their historic architectural features. Each year over the past five, twelve awards have been given out at an annual Awards Ceremony that has become a significant community event publicized through public exhibits, videotapes on cable television, the City website, and newspaper articles.

The HPC also promotes widespread awareness of the City's historic assets through periodic sponsorship of walking tours, especially in the Union Square and East Somerville NRSA's. The Commission develops events that involve re-enactment of important historic events that took place in Somerville when it was an integral part of the United Colonies, and the founding of our nation. For example, for each of the last five years, the Commission organized and executed multi-faceted programs related to the Raising of the First Grand Union Flag

atop Prospect Hill on January 1776, as well as the historic Ride of Paul Revere through Somerville in April 1775 alerting the colonists to the Redcoats arrival. Due to scarce funds and staff, the Commission often collaborates with other local organizations, such as the Somerville Museum, the Somerville Library, the Somerville Arts Council, the Health Department and the School Department to sponsor its events, enabling it to expand its outreach and limited resources. Each year the Somerville Bicycle Committee helps organize the SHPC's Historic Bike Tour that traverses the length of the City, and sometimes the historic paths of abutting communities too. Each of these events have become City-wide celebrations that attract visitors from all over the community as well as the wider Boston metropolitan area.



**FIGURE 6: 50-100 BIKERS JOIN THE HISTORIC TOUR EACH SEASON**

Source: City of Somerville

#### IV. Needs Assessment

In analyzing the City's strengths and weaknesses, several needs exist in order to fully to preserve and capitalize upon the exceptional historic resources of the City of Somerville. These needs include:

##### Identification of Remaining Key Historic Resources in City

While Somerville has undertaken four major efforts in 1984-85, 1988-89, 1990 and 2005-06 to identify and document on surveys many of its architecturally and historically significant properties, surveying work is far from complete. Future work needs to research residential, commercial, industrial and institutional



**FIGURE 7: MILK ROW CEMETERY REENACTMENT**

Source: City of Somerville



properties, especially in the NRSAs and neighborhoods threatened by development pressures. Properties also need to be selected based upon public input and owner requests.

#### Determination of Existing Conditions and Issues Challenging Historic Resources

Many buildings and resources need stabilization and repairs so that they do not pose hazards to public health and welfare and remain viable over the longer term. These include the public libraries, the Brown School, the Milk Row Cemetery, Somerville High School, the Prospect Hill Observatory Tower, and several monuments and markers. Some facilities also need upgrading to meet current ADA standards, such as the West Branch Library, the Brown School and the Milk Row Cemetery. Before any work can be considered feasibility studies need to be undertaken or updated to determine the scope, phasing, and cost of the projects. Once completed priorities need to be set and resources to execute these projects need to be identified, including the City's Capital Budget, CDBG funds, community fundraising, and grant-writing.

#### Building of Community Support for Protection and Funding of Historic Resources



**FIGURE 8: TROOPS MINGLE AT  
RAISING OF THE FIRST FLAG**

Source: City of Somerville

Somerville is a well-located community with many assets to compete in the marketplace for continuing growth and prosperity. Among its enviable assets are the richness of the architectural building styles, the historical legacy of the past, and the appealing scale and character of close-knit neighborhoods. Preservation of these significant features enhances the quality of life and economic vitality of the whole community. To ensure that this is done, it is critical to reach out to the larger public, inside and outside the City, and inspire both awareness and pride. This can be achieved through continuation of the

Preservation Awards Program that celebrates the work of both property owners and high school students and sponsorship of promotional events, such as walking tours, re-enactment events, bike

tours, and of materials, such as brochures, historic property plaques, and local history books for the schools, libraries and the wider public. Once the community embraces the value of preserving its historical assets it will be find ways to fund the needed efforts.

#### Advancement of ADA Accessibility Goals

As noted above, one of the challenges of older buildings, historically designated or not, is that they often do not accommodate persons with disabilities. Physical barriers need to be removed wherever and whenever feasible, and also by encouraging historic storefront restorations that provide for entrance accessibility, installing sidewalk curb cuts to historic sites, and ensuring that historic events or tours (guided or self-guided) are conducted on paths or sidewalks that permit handicapped inclusion. In addition, these changes will dovetail well with the goal of increasing the mobility and physical fitness of all community members.

### Maintenance and Expansion of Efforts to Protect Historic Resources

Somerville needs to build upon its extensive surveying efforts over the past twenty-five years and find effective ways to protect and preserve its eligible historic resources. One of the most effective tools is to designate properties within local historic districts through the City's Historic Preservation Commission. Given the establishment of NRSAs in East Somerville and Union Square, it would be appropriate to focus on those areas, working in concert with their respective Main Streets Program members. Other protective measures that need to be explored are researching the feasibility of developing a loan program targeted at historic property owners, integrating preservation projects in annual Capital Budget requests, affordable housing proposals, and mixed use developments, and promoting economic development projects that capitalize on historic tax credits. Another key source of funding for protecting historic resources could be initiating a campaign for Somerville to adopt the Community Preservation Act, with its pool of associated State funds.

## **V. Prioritization of Needs**

### ***A. Methodology of Prioritization***

The City has taken a number of steps to prioritize the many needs with regards to historic preservation. These include:

- Review of most recent census data and maps for demographic and neighborhood shifts;
- Research on economic benefits of historic preservation planning;
- Baseline data analysis of completed historic structure reports, preservation master plans, and other existing conditions documents;
- Collaboration and ongoing discussion with other preservation-oriented organizations in community; and,
- Evaluation of accomplishments made during 2003-2008 Consolidated Plan.

Historic Preservation was also a topic of discussion during the public hearings for development of the 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan and a specific Focus Group of stakeholders was held on October 30 2007 to discuss needs and strategies. Comments from participants at the focus groups included:

- Devise strategies to work with owners to preserve and restore historic buildings of all types, including residential, commercial, industrial and institutional properties;
- Improve accessibility to historic properties and resources, especially the West Branch Library and Milk Row Cemetery;
- Address gentrification pressures associated with rising real estate values, Green Line Extension, and changing demographic mix of community;
- Continue to identify and document architectural development and historic fabric of community building stock before it is too late; and,
- Increase public/private partnerships and funding sources to highlight and preserve significant historic resources in community.

### ***B. Matrix of Needs and Relative Priority***

| <b>TABLE 3: HISTORIC PRESERVATION NEEDS &amp; PRIORITIES</b>      |        |                       |
|---|--------|-----------------------|
|   |        | <b>Units</b>          |
| Identification of Unprotected Historic Resources                  | Medium | surveys               |
| Determination of Challenging Conditions and Issues                | High   | studies               |
| Building of Community Support for Historic Protection and Funding | High   | Public info materials |
| Advancement of ADA Accessibility Goals                            | High   | projects              |
| Maintenance and Expansion of Protection Efforts                   | Medium | cases                 |

## **VI. Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs**

### **A. Monetary Gap Analysis**

- HUD Program funding shortages: due to the large number of needs in Somerville and the declining balance of the City's Block Grant over the years, only a limited portion of identified programs and projects can be funded in a given period. Historic preservation projects must be balanced against many competing priorities.
- HUD Program eligibility restrictions: due to specific criteria for use of CDBG funds, the City is not able to establish community-wide programs. Although Somerville's population is diverse in income and many residents qualify as low-moderate income, they are not concentrated in sufficient numbers to enable programs or projects to be financed in many parts of the City, including most of the western side of the community. This diminishes the scope and often effectiveness of program execution, since some properties or locations that could use City assistance cannot receive it.

### **B. Additional Obstacles**

- Staff shortages: Due to constrained fiscal resources, the City of Somerville can only undertake as many historic preservation projects as it has staff to direct, monitor and evaluate. This causes numerous needs to remain unmet.
- Compliance with competing codes: Historic structures by definition were built in a different era and building and accessibility codes have changed considerably over time. While not impossible to meld new construction or alterations on historic structures with updated regulations and requirements, challenges are posed and need to be addressed, often on an individual basis and sometimes with waivers required from State boards and commissions. This can necessitate extra time and financial resources.
- Rising real estate and property investment costs: While Somerville may be more affordable than adjacent communities of Boston and Cambridge, the incomes of many owners have not been able to keep up with the increased cost to maintain and improve their properties. This gap between costs and incomes creates hardships and deferred maintenance to older properties.



- Construction inflation: Due to the increasing costs in utilities and construction materials, the City is finding that the costs to repair and restore its public buildings and infrastructure are significantly outstripping its ability to fund them. This cost increase is an extra burden on the City's capital budget, since City revenues have not grown at the same pace as inflation.

## **VII. Vision, Goals and Strategies**

### Vision

The City of Somerville will maintain, enhance, and celebrate its historic architecture, landscape, and cultural resources, thereby complementing and reinforcing its economic development goals.

### Goals

1. Inventory and document existing historically and architecturally significant resources.
2. Ensure that City policies, regulations, and procedures support the maintenance of significant resources.
3. Develop and implement programs that encourage the improvement of significant resources.
4. Stabilize and support the character of individual neighborhoods
5. Highlight Somerville's unique assets to its residents, businesses, and outside visitors.

### Strategies

#### Inventory and Document Significant Resources

- 1.1 Complete inventory of City.
- 1.2 Add listing of historic resources to Assessor's Database.
- 1.3 Keep Massachusetts Historical Commission apprised of all new listings.
- 1.4 Update local historic districts listing at Middlesex Registry of Deeds.

#### Maintain Significant Resources

- 2.1 Continue to support the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) charged with administering the City's Historic Districts Ordinance and Demolition Review Ordinance.
- 2.2 Establish regulations to prevent "demolition by neglect".
- 2.3 Work with relevant City departments (e.g. DPW, ISD, Law, Health) to identify and resolve resource repair and maintenance issues in timely fashion.
- 2.4 Identify and propose resource maintenance needs to Mayor for Capital Improvement Budget.
- 2.5 Encourage adaptive re-use of surplus municipal resources.

#### Improve Significant Resources

- 3.1 Continue to support the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission charged with enhancing the City's historic resources.
- 3.2 Identify and propose resource restoration needs to Mayor for Capital Improvement Budget.
- 3.3 Identify and prioritize needed improvements in historic resources related to ADA compliance.
- 3.4 Implement ADA improvements in historic resources.
- 3.5 Apply for governmental and private grants to restore needy resources.

3.6 Identify new sources of funds for repair and restoration projects.

Stabilize Neighborhoods and Individual Character

- 4.1 Increase the number and size of local historic districts (LHDs) in each neighborhood.
- 4.2 Work with residents and organizations to identify neighborhood assets and issues.
- 4.3 Publicize property improvement programs and policies.
- 4.4 Develop and publicize historic plaque program.
- 4.5 Identify incentives for eligible owners to undertake historic property repairs and improvements.

Highlight Somerville's Unique Assets

- 5.1 Provide additional public information to foster Somerville pride in its past.
- 5.2 Collaborate with local organizations and schools on Somerville pride projects.
- 5.3 Work with local businesses and associations to enhance the City's image both inside and outside the community.
- 5.4 Apply for grants to publicize historic assets and their economic value to community health and well-being.

**VIII. Performance Measures**

| <b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Benchmarks</b>  |
| 1. Inventory and document all historically and architecturally significant resources.                       | 1.1. Complete inventory of City.  | 1.1.1 Strive to research, photograph & complete 80 surveys over next 5 years.  |
|   | 1.2. Add listing of historic resources to Assessor's Database.  | 1.2.1 Include all designated LHD's in database within next year.   |
|   | 1.3 Keep Massachusetts Historical Commission apprised of all new listings.  | 1.3.1 Submit up to 80 new survey and map documentations to MHC over next 5 years.                                    |
|   | 1.4 Update local historic districts listing at Middlesex Registry of Deeds.   | 1.4.1 Prepare up to 80 forms and maps for recording over next 5 years.   |
| 2. Ensure that City policies, regulations, and procedures support the maintenance of significant resources. | 2.1. Continue to support the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) charged with administering City's Historic Districts Ordinance and Demolition Review Ordinance. | 2.1.1 Provide staff support to SHPC enabling review and decisions on average of 60 cases per year over next 5 years. |
|   | 2.2. Promote regulations to prevent "demolition by neglect".  | 2.2.1 Finalize draft Ordinance and submit to BOA within next year.   |
|   | 2.3 Work with relevant City departments (e.g. DPW, ISD, Law, Health) to identify and resolve resource repair and maintenance issues in timely fashion.                          | 2.3.1 Meet at least 3x/year with pertinent staff to address maintenance issues at historic municipal sites.          |
|   | 2.4 Identify and propose resource maintenance needs consideration as part of Capital Improvement Program.   | 2.4.1 Prepare work specs for 1-2 historic facilities over next 5 years.  |
|   | 2.5 Encourage adaptive re-use of surplus municipal resources  | 2.5.1 Draft recommendations to re-use and/or rehabilitate 2 facilities over next 5 years.                            |

| HISTORIC PRESERVATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Goal   | Strategies  | Benchmarks   |
| 3. Create and implement programs that encourage the improvement of significant resources.                            | 3.1 Continue to support the Historic Preservation Commission charged with enhancing the City's historic resources | 3.1.1 Provide staff support to SHPC enabling technical assistance to 5-8 eligible property owners per years.                                     |
|  | 3.2 Identify and propose resource restoration needs to Mayor for Capital Improvement Budget.                      | 3.2.2 Prepare works specs for 1-2 historic facilities over next 5 yrs.   |
|  | 3.3 Identify and prioritize needed improvements in historic resources related to ADA compliance.                  | 3.3.1 Meet with City's ADA Commission Coordinator 1-2 per year to review conditions & assess progress.   |
|  | 3.4 Implement ADA improvements in historic resources.   | 3.4.1 Improve access to 1-2 historic resources over next 5 years.  |
|  | 3.5 Apply for governmental and private grants to restore needy resources.   | 3.5.1 Apply for 2-3 project grants over next 5 years.  |
|  | 3.6 Identify new sources of funds for repair & restoration projects.  | 3.6.1 Explore feasibility of adoption of Community Preservation Act within next 5 years.   |
| 4. Stabilize neighborhoods & individual character  | 4.1 Increase number and size of LHDs in each neighborhood.  | 4.1.1 Prepare 2 Preliminary Reports for submission to Planning Board & MHC over next 5 years.  |
|  | 4.2 Work with residents & organizations to identify neighborhood assets & issues.                                 | 4.2.1 Identify 3-5 representative properties eligible for surveying in 1-2 neighborhoods per year, especially in NRSA areas.                     |
|  | 4.3 Publicize property improvement programs & policies.   | 4.3.1 Refer average of 2-4 property owners per year to Housing Division for eligibility & participation in various assistance programs.          |
|  | 4.4 Develop and publicize historic plaque program.  | 4.4.1 Distribute 140-150 plaques to property owners over next 5 years.   |
|  | 4.5 Identify incentives for eligible owners to undertake historic property repairs and improvements.              | 4.5.1 Research feasibility of creating a Historic Loan Program and/or tax credit for eligible property owners over next 2 years.                 |
| 5. Highlight Somerville's unique assets to its residents and outside visitors, generating pride & economic activity. | 5.1 Provide additional public information to foster Somerville pride in its past.                                 | 5.1.1 Enhance SHPC website over next 5 yrs with postings of historic photographs, maps, brochures, and technical assistance bulletins.           |
|  | 5.2 Collaborate with local organizations and schools on Somerville pride projects                                 | 5.2.1 Co-sponsor 2 historic projects per year, such as Flag Raising and Patriot's Day programs with Somerville Museum and Main Streets Programs. |
|  | 5.3 Work with local businesses and associations to enhance City's image both inside & outside community           | 5.3.1 Sponsor 1-2 heritage tourism events each year, such as walking tours, historic bike tour.  |

| HISTORIC PRESERVATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Goal                                       | Strategies   | Benchmarks  |
|  | 5.4 Apply for grants to publicize historic assets and their economic value to community health and well-being. | 5.4.1 Strive to submit 1-2 grant proposals over next 5 years, such as to research & update local history book, develop 'how-to' rehab old buildings brochure(s), and promote integration of preservation and green sustainability principles. |

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**SECTION SEVEN:**

**EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA**

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Purpose**

Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSA's) are specially designated areas within a community which, based upon approval by HUD, allows for increased flexibility to program HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds. The City of Somerville's East Somerville NRSA was initially adopted on April 1, 2004, and it continues to be an important tool to help the City improve the infrastructure and services in this part of the City. For program year 2008, the City is proposing to modify the boundary on the western side of the existing East Somerville NRSA, and is incorporating this, along with other updates, into the 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan.

### **B. Background**

The eastern portion of Somerville generally contains the highest proportion of low- and moderate-income residents in the City. It is also the area that bears the highest burden from transportation infrastructure, such as the elevated I-93 (which has been dubbed the ugliest piece of interstate highway in the country), Route 28, several rail lines that do not stop in East Somerville, and various regional truck routes.

However, this part of the City also contains the most potential. Many large areas of underdeveloped commercial land offer the potential for job creation. The housing stock needs rehabilitation but contains many well-built homes and historic structures that are unique as well. In addition, the diversity of residents makes East Somerville an interesting area to live or visit.

The East Somerville NRSA is designed to help East Somerville reach its potential by tying the CDBG funds invested in the area to an overall strategy. By doing so, the City expects that improvements may be made in a strategic fashion that takes into account the specific needs and assets within the East Somerville NRSA. Many of the specific activities that the City proposes would be beneficial to the low- and moderate-income populations in East Somerville. Aggregating the commercial and residential areas into one NRSA allows the City to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy combining economic development, open space, transportation, aesthetics, and public service activities.

The East Somerville Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy includes parts of Somerville commonly referred to as East Somerville, Brickbottom, Inner Belt and Assembly Square. Route 28 (known as McGrath Highway and the Fellsway), the Mystic River, the Boston City line, and railroad tracks outline the NRSA. These boundaries represent an area of Somerville that contains a high-density residential population of low and moderate income persons, a local commercial corridor, and major regional commercial districts that will serve as the economic engine of the NRSA.



**FIGURE 1: INNERBELT  
AERIAL PHOTO**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

The East Somerville NRSA is primarily residential. A total of 9,437 persons live in the East Somerville NRSA, of which 5,872 are low- or moderate-income. That works out to approximately 14 residents per acre in the East Somerville NRSA, or 9,220 residents per square mile. In different areas of the East Somerville NRSA, specific land uses vary. The heart of the NRSA is densely residential. Inner Belt contains one affordable housing development for the elderly surrounded by low-density commercial and industrial uses. Brickbottom contains a former warehouse now used as artists' housing and various commercial and industrial uses. Assembly Square currently contains retail, commercial and industrial uses. The Assembly Square area underwent an extensive rezoning / master planning process in order to become a mixed-use district including residential, office, recreational and retail uses.



**FIGURE 2: BRICK BOTTOM ARTISTS LOFTS**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

The zoning of the NRSA is similar to the uses of the various areas. East Somerville contains large areas of residential zoning. Lower Broadway is zoned with 2 commercial districts for its ½+ mile length. The Brickbottom and Inner Belt Districts are zoned for industrial and commercial uses, with the exception of the area along Washington Street. Assembly Square includes commercial and industrial

zones and an overlay district that allows mixed-use Planned Unit Developments.

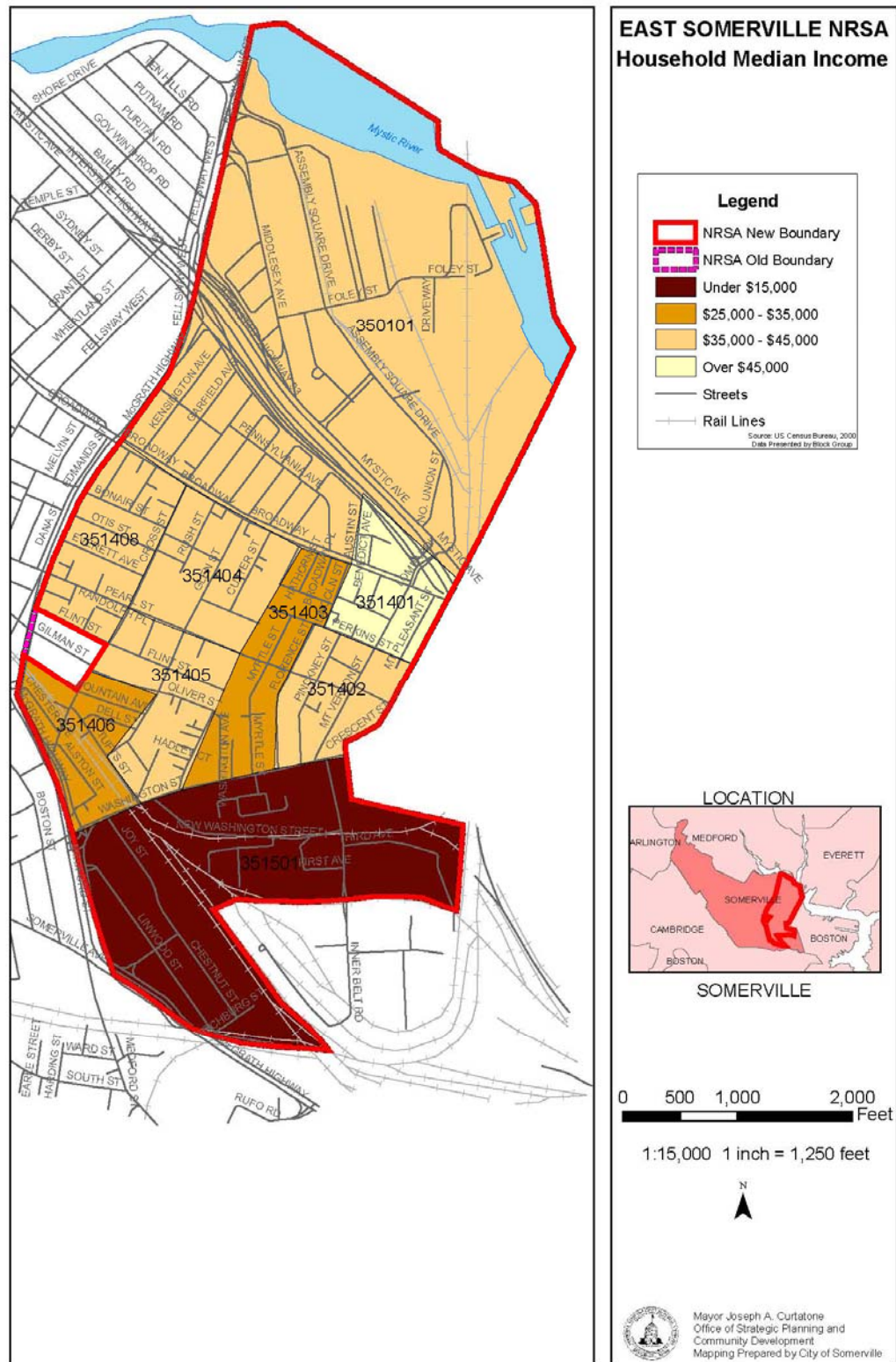
Finally, the southern half of the NRSA has been designated a “Community of Environmental Justice Concern” by the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This status recognizes the high number of lower income and minority residents of that area and gives it some preference when the Boston MPO makes transportation investment decisions.

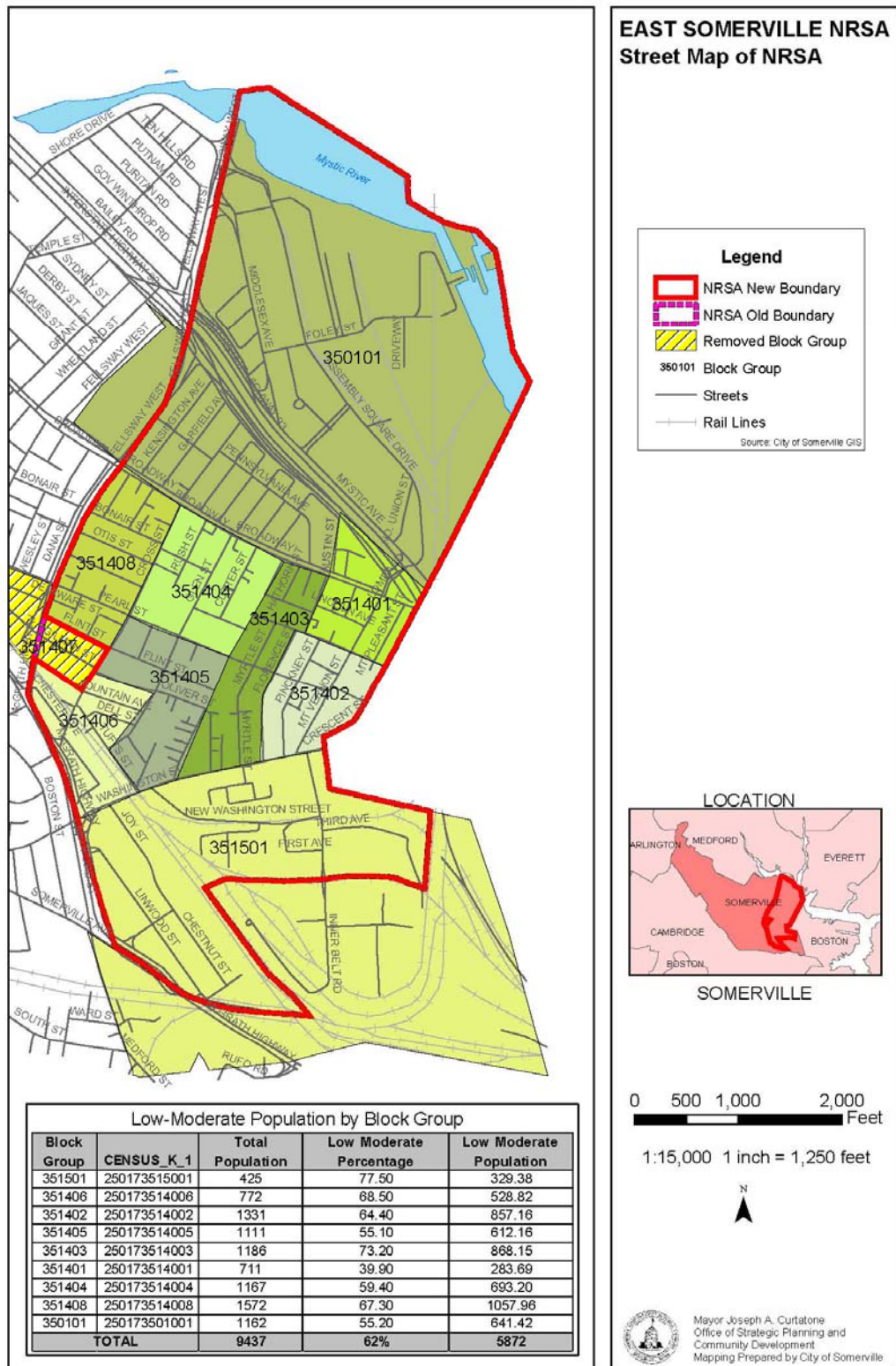
The East Somerville NRSA includes all of Census Block Groups 351401, 351402, 351403, 351404, 351405, 351406, and 351408. It also includes most of Census Block Groups 350101 and 351501.

## II. Planning Area Boundaries & Land Use

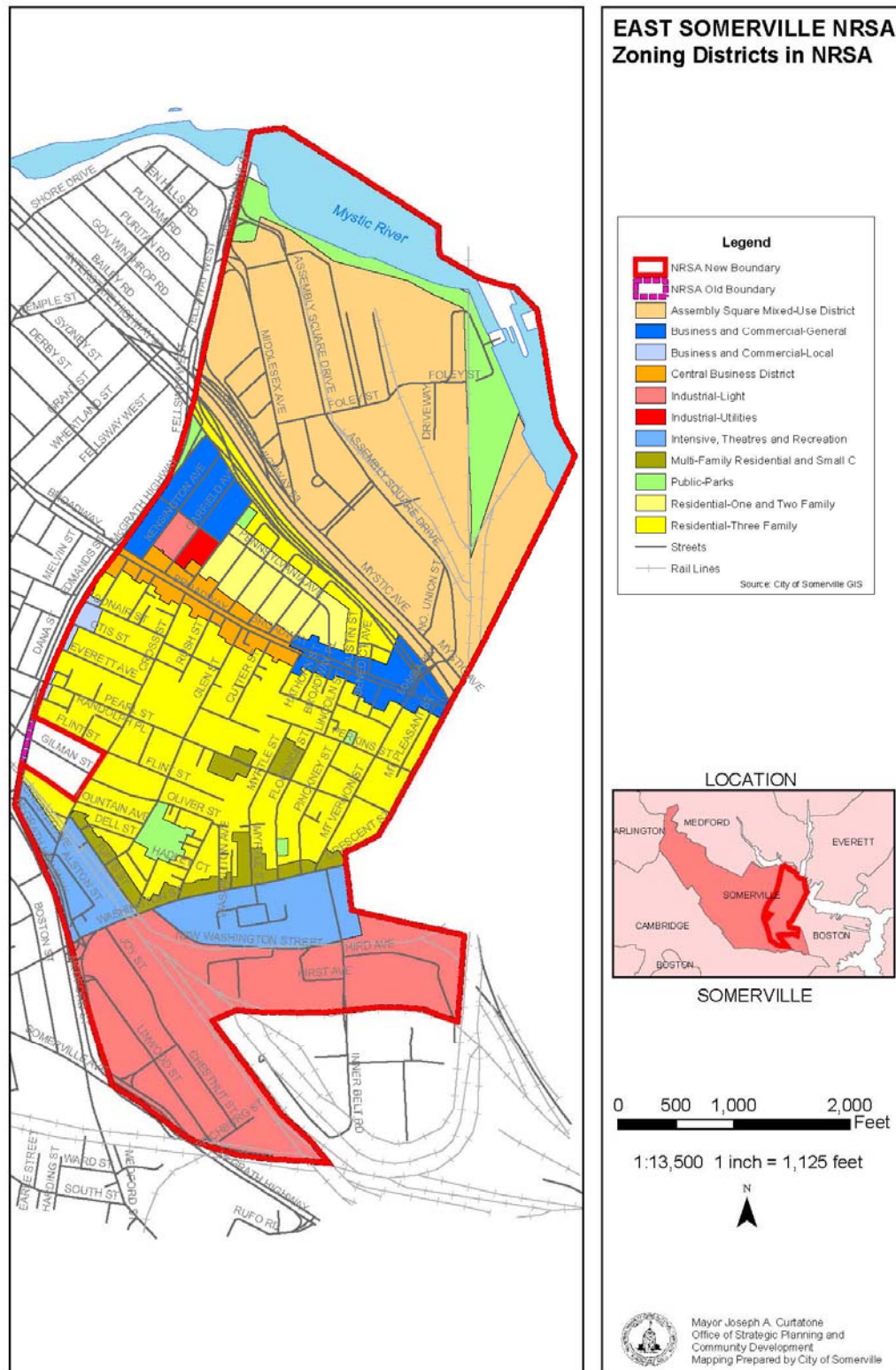
The updated East Somerville NRSA includes a minor modification to the NRSA boundary when compared to the original NRSA. In the original NRSA, “most of Census Block Group 25017 3514 007” was included. This Block Group is now being removed from the East Somerville NRSA and is being added to the Union Square NRSA so that the Union Square NRSA will maintain sufficient low- and moderate-income population. In making this change, staff has realized that while the 2003-2008 East Somerville NRSA plan made reference to this block group, none of the residential population was included in the population statistics. It is therefore assumed that only those portions of the block group that did not contain residences were intended for incorporation in the original NRSA plan. For ease of future analysis, all of Census Block Group 25017 3514 007 is hereby being removed from the East Somerville NRSA. It is being added to the Union Square NRSA. The study area of the East Somerville totals approximately 23.5 million square feet, or about .84 square miles.

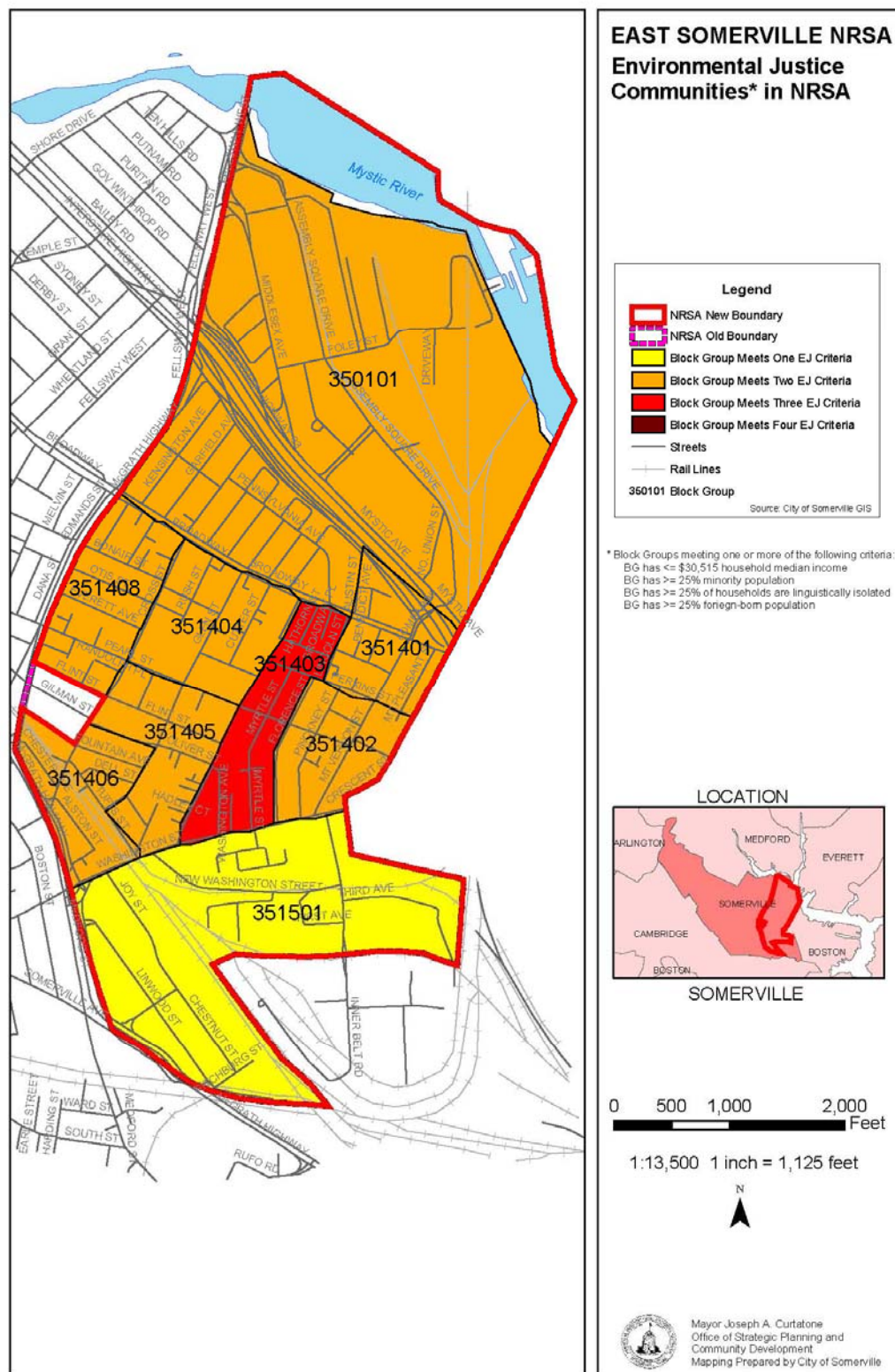












### III. Strategies and Goals 2004-2009

The following goals and objectives for East Somerville were included in the 2004 NRSA:

1. Increase supply of permanently affordable housing stock
2. Increase economic opportunities for East Somerville residents and businesses
3. Increase recreational opportunities for East Somerville residents
4. Increase attractiveness of East Somerville places
5. Improve access to and from East Somerville without impairing quality of life for residents

### IV. Accomplishments 2004-2009

In the past four years since the adoption of the East Somerville NRSA, significant accomplishments have been made. These include:

#### East Somerville Main Streets

In September 2006, the East Somerville Main Streets (ESMS) was incorporated with the State of Massachusetts. The formation of ESMS was a yearlong effort that began with an initial informational community meeting on September 19, 2005.

The event was followed by a series of meetings in 2006 involving the City and stakeholders to discuss the formation of ESMS. Events such as a Summer Clean Up were held to increase visibility in the neighborhood. A Board of Directors was established in that same year and the Board hired an executive director in December 2006.

In January 2007, ESMS became a fully functioning organization with a full-time director and Board. In April 2007, the ESMS held a public open house to introduce itself to the community. For the most part, the group has been busy building relationships with area businesses, residents, and elected officials. The group has also accomplished the following.

- Advocated on behalf of East Somerville with regards to the citing of a sludge plant in Charlestown (with potential to increase traffic and air pollutants in East Somerville);
- Advocated on the behalf of East Somerville to the EPA to expand the Environmental Impact Review of the Assembly Square Development – to increase pedestrian access both to and from the area;
- Opened contact with all managers at Assembly Square Market Place, to inform them about the launch of East Somerville Mains Streets and include them as community members;
- Collaborated with City Historic Preservation Director to coordinate Patriot's Day celebration in East Somerville - where Paul Revere made his historic ride;



**FIGURE 3: MAIN STREETS LOGO**

Source: E. Somerville Main Streets 2007



**FIGURE 4: E. BROADWAY ON THE MOVE**

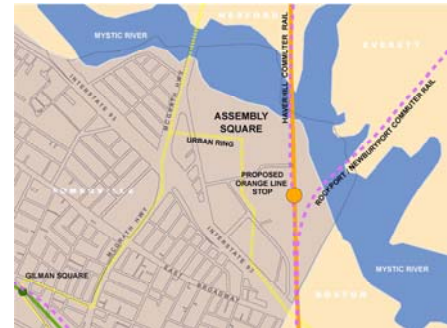
Source: E. Somerville Main Streets 2007



- Actively participating in the Somerville Community Corporation's "East Somerville Initiative" designed to develop an action plan to improve the neighborhood;
- Maintained a strong board with 80-100% attendance at meetings;
- Held a logo competition and received 20+ entries from local artists and worked with the winning artist to refine logo to reflect the East Somerville neighborhood;
- Successfully held Design, Economic Support & Development, and Promotions committee meetings, setting short term goals with each group; and,
- Participating in the Lower Broadway Streetscape Improvement project.

### Assembly Square

Redevelopment of Assembly Square has made significant strides forward in the past year. In the fall of 2006, Federal Realty Investment Trust (FRIT), Swedish furniture retailer IKEA, and the Mystic View Task Force finalized a settlement agreement with the Mystic View Taskforce, allowing the development to proceed with a unified shared vision. As a result, by the end of the year the Planning Board had reviewed and conditionally approved the Preliminary Master Plan for the district, totaling 66.5 acres. The Master Plan consists of 2,100 residential units, 1.75 million square feet of office and 1,150,800 square feet of retail space (including the existing Marketplace and a proposed IKEA store), and a 200-room hotel.



**FIGURE 5: ASSEMBLY SQUARE ORANGE LINE PROPOSED**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

As mitigation for the new commercial activity generated by IKEA, FRIT will be constructing significant roadway improvements along Rt. 28 McGrath Highway at Assembly Square Drive, Middlesex Avenue, and Mystic Avenue northbound. They will also be substantially reconstructing the Lombardi Street / Broadway / I-93 off-ramp interchange and will be adding 2 additional traffic signals and replacing 2 existing signals. Assembly Square Drive itself will be realigned and will contain significant landscaping, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes leading to the waterfront.

In addition, FRI Trust and IKEA jointly committed to contribute \$15 million towards the design and construction of a future Orange Line T-stop at Assembly Square. The IKEA is anticipated to break ground in the fall of 2008 and open in late 2009. Additional phases are anticipated to follow shortly after, the first of which will be mixed-use residential along the Mystic River waterfront. The Assembly Square project is projected to reach full build out by 2019.

### Storefront Improvement Program

In recent years, two properties in East Somerville have received funding from the City's Storefront Improvement Program (SIP). They include 114 Broadway (a small office building) and 173-179 Broadway (a local restaurant and bar called Casey's). The SIP was established in 1980 to keep the City's local business districts vital and to set a design standard for retail shops in Somerville.

Originally designed to target low/moderate income areas in the City, the eligibility criteria for the Storefront Improvement Program was extended to include micro-enterprises in 2007. This has

provided access to the program to low/moderate income businesses owners city-wide. The result was a 50% increase in the number of applications the City received within the first six months of 2007.



**FIGURE 6: 171 BROADWAY  
BEFORE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007



**FIGURE 7: 171 BROADWAY  
AFTER**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

### Transit Oriented Development

The City has received a \$400,000 Transit Orientated Development grant to make pedestrian improvements on Broadway in East Somerville from the Boston Line towards Franklin Street. Improvements will include new pedestrian crossing signals, improved sidewalks and pedestrian scale lighting. CDBG and traffic mitigation funds from developers will be used as the match for this project. Construction of improvements in this area is anticipated in the spring of 2008 and will be the first phase of the large lower Broadway streetscape improvement project.

### Community Path Extension

The City completed an Engineering Feasibility Study for the Community Path Extension from School Street through East Somerville to the North Point Development in Cambridge. The preferred route proposes a connection at Cross Street in East Somerville that will allow high school students walking to Somerville High School to avoid going across the 6-lane McGrath Highway. Connections have been proposed to Washington Street, Innerbelt and the Brickbottom areas. Additional connections are anticipated through Assembly Square and adjacent Draw 7 Park following along the Mystic River behind the existing MBTA yard and connecting to parkland in Charlestown.



**FIGURE 8: COMMUNITY PATH  
EXTENSION DRAWING**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

### Perkins Park

Perkins Park is a highly utilized parcel of open space located in East Somerville. Prior to renovation, Perkins Park was an aging playground with crumbling surfaces, deteriorated picnic tables and benches, and playground equipment that was causing safety concerns. After the 2006 renovation, Perkins has been noted as an outstanding example of a successful urban park. Making



the most of a small space, the park has superb graphic design elements and has been published internationally in landscape architecture publications.



**FIGURE 9: LANDSCAPE  
URBANISM**

Source: copyright StoSS



**FIGURE 10: GRAPHIC SURFACES DOUBLE AS PLAY  
ELEMENTS AT PERKINS PARK**

Source: copyright StoSS

### Brickbottom Design Competition

Along with Union Square, the Brickbottom District is recognized as a dynamic hub for local artists. However, the vital Brickbottom Artists Collaborative and the Joy Street Studios are located in an area of industrial buildings that are less than fully utilized. In January 2006, the City of Somerville held an international urban design ideas competition entitled “Edge as Center: Envisioning the Post-Industrial Landscape.”

This competition, funded by a local business owner, sought redevelopment strategies and design visions for the Brickbottom District and invited entrants to project the future of a pivotal post-industrial site. The competition was intended to activate redevelopment in the Brickbottom area, transforming it in intelligent ways that will benefit Somerville and its residents for generations. In May 2006, the City received over 50 entries and in June, four winners and eight honorable mentions were selected. A professionally produced publication has captured in vivid colors the many creative ideas that were generated.

### Housing Rehabilitation & Rental Assistance

Between 2003-2007, more than \$145,000 in federal funding was provided for housing rehabilitation and lead paint abatement for ten units located in the East Somerville NRSA area. Housing Rehabilitation provides necessary funding to repair and maintain the existing housing stock ultimately allowing low income residents to stay in their homes while providing rent restricted affordable housing units for low income tenants. The Lead Paint Abatement Program further enhances these goals while providing housing where low-income families with young children no longer must choose between health and safety and affordability.

In addition to housing rehabilitation, the Housing Division also provides funding for rental subsidies, through the Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program, for up to 24 months to stabilize

households with the goal of securing permanent affordable housing. In program year 2006, approximately \$16,300 was provided to stabilize two households located in the East Somerville NRSA

### East Somerville Initiative

Organized by the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC), the East Somerville Initiative was formed to allow residents and key community partners to create an East Somerville Action Plan. The ESI aims to prevent displacement and empower residents to proactively plan for their community. The first ESI Community Summit in 2006 resulted in the formation of eight working groups that focused on the range of topics affecting East Somerville including; Access to Programs and Services, Streetscape and Physical Space, Immigrant Issues, Education and Schools, Jobs, Youth, Affordable Housing, and Health and Environmental Justice. Staff from OSPCD actively participated in several focus groups. The recommendations of each focus group resulted in an East Somerville Action Plan, presented to participants in the summer of 2007. The plan outlines key strategies and identifies lead organizations for implementation. OSPCD will remain involved in the execution of the recommendations of the ESI.

## **V. Needs Assessment**

### ***A. Low-Moderate Income Population***

The East Somerville NRSA meets the income criteria for a NRSA outlined in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice CPD-96-01. According to CPD 96-01, an area designated as a NRSA must “contain a percentage of low- and moderate-income residents that is equal to the ‘upper quartile percentage’ (as computed by HUD pursuant to 24 CFR 570.208 (a) (1) (ii)) or 70 percent, whichever is less but, in any event, not less than 50 percent.”

24 CFR 570.208 (a) (1) (ii) states the method for calculating the upper quartile percentage as follows:

“ (A) All census block groups in the recipient's jurisdiction shall be rank ordered from the block group of highest proportion of low and moderate income persons to the block group with the lowest. For urban counties, the rank ordering shall cover the entire area constituting the urban county and shall not be done separately for each participating unit of general local government.

(B) In any case where the total number of a recipient's block groups does not divide evenly by four, the block group which would be fractionally divided between the highest and second quartiles shall be considered to be part of the highest quartile.

(C) The proportion of low and moderate income persons in the last census block group in the highest quartile shall be identified. Any service area located within the recipient's jurisdiction and having a proportion of low and moderate income persons at or above this level shall be considered to be within the highest quartile.

(D) If block group data are not available for the entire jurisdiction, other data acceptable to the Secretary may be used in the above calculations.”

Based on this methodology, the East Somerville NRSA must contain at least 55.2 percent low- and moderate-income residents. The East Somerville NRSA, as modified, exceeds that threshold: **62.2**

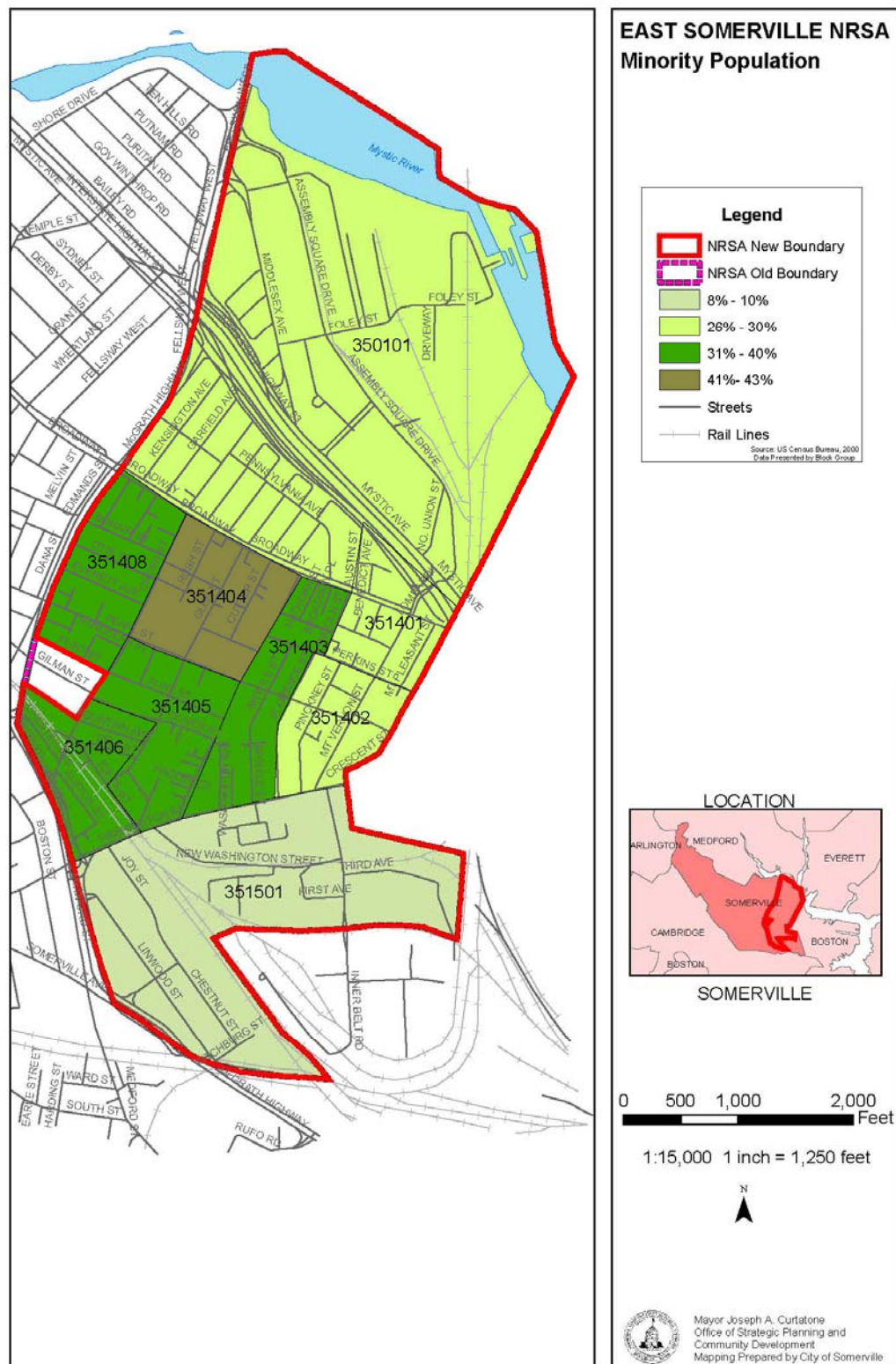
**percent** of residents are low- or moderate-income as defined by HUD. Only one of the block groups in the East Somerville NRSA contains less than 50 percent low- and moderate-income persons, and five contain more than 60 percent low- and moderate-income persons.

### ***B. Ethnicity***

Even more than the City as a whole, the East Somerville NRSA is ethnically diverse. 34 percent of the residents are races other than white and over 20 percent of the residents are Hispanic. A significant number of Portuguese, Brazilian, Haitian, and Asian residents live in the East Somerville NRSA. Reaching these diverse communities is an ongoing challenge of our Community Development Block Grant programs. This challenge has been met through various outreach efforts.

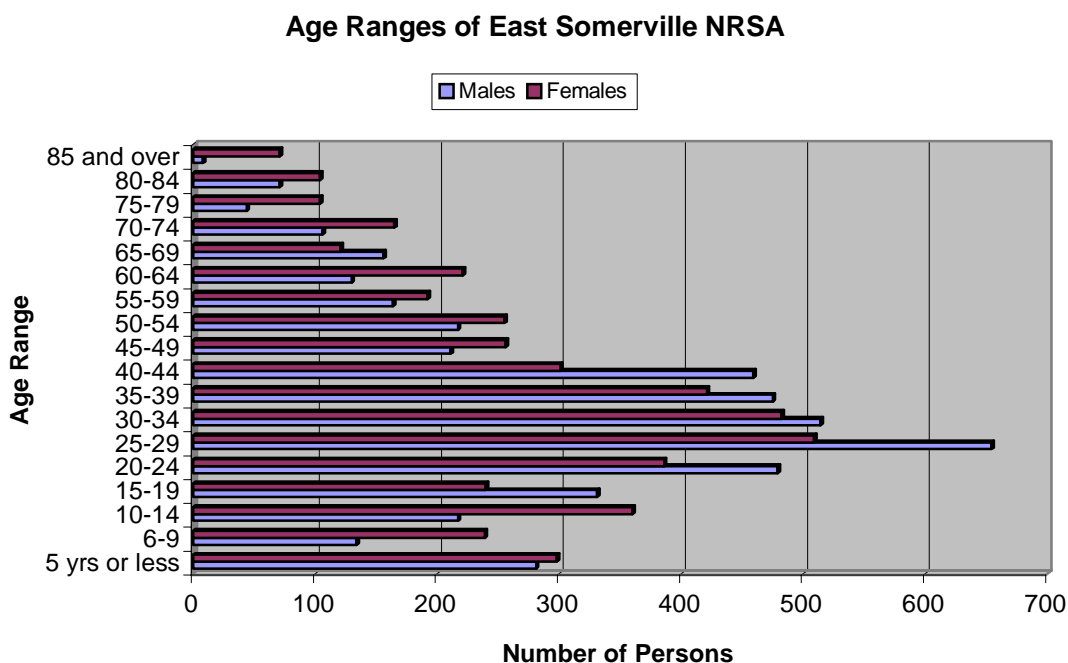
**TABLE 1. RACE AND ETHNICITY**

|  | East Somerville NRSA |               | City of Somerville |               |
|--|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
|  | # of People          | % of People   | # of People        | % of People   |
| White Alone                                      | 6,228                | 66.0%         | 59,635             | 77.0%         |
| Black or African American Alone                  | 565                  | 6.0%          | 5,035              | 6.5%          |
| American Indian and Alaska Native Alone          | 40                   | 0.4%          | 171                | 0.2%          |
| Asian Alone                                      | 684                  | 7.2%          | 4,990              | 6.4%          |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone | 7                    | 0.1%          | 50                 | 0.1%          |
| Some Other Race Alone                            | 1,041                | 11.0%         | 3,840              | 5.0%          |
| Two or More Races                                | 872                  | 9.2%          | 3,757              | 4.8%          |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>9,437</b>         | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>77,478</b>      | <b>100.0%</b> |
| Hispanic   | 1,926                | 20.4%         | 6,786              | 8.8%          |
| Non-Hispanic                                     | 7,511                | 79.6%         | 70,692             | 91.2%         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>9,437</b>         | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>77,478</b>      | <b>100.0%</b> |
| Source: 2000 US Census                           |                      |               |                    |               |



### C. Age

The population of the East Somerville NRSA, like Somerville in general, is significantly younger than that of the state as a whole. The median age in East Somerville is just over 31 years old, compared to 36.5 years old in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The median age in the East Somerville NRSA is 31.6 years old.



| TABLE 2. MEDIAN AGE    |                      |                    |                               |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|                        | East Somerville NRSA | City of Somerville | Commonwealth of Massachusetts |
| Median Age             | 31.6                 | 31.1               | 36.5                          |
| Source: 2000 US Census |                      |                    |                               |

### D. Education Levels

Education and training will be a focus of the East Somerville NRSA. Residents of the East Somerville NRSA have significantly less education than residents of Somerville or state residents. Less than 65 percent of East Somerville NRSA residents over 25 years old have a high school diploma, compared to almost 85 percent in the state as a whole. Less than 20 percent of East Somerville NRSA residents over 25 years old have a Bachelor's degree, which is less than half of the rate in Somerville overall.

| <b>TABLE 3. EDUCATION</b>    |                             |                           |                                      |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                              | <b>East Somerville NRSA</b> | <b>City of Somerville</b> | <b>Commonwealth of Massachusetts</b> |
| % HS Graduate or Higher      | 64.6%                       | 80.6%                     | 84.8%                                |
| % Bachelors Degree or Higher | 18.6%                       | 40.6%                     | 34.2%                                |
| Source: 2000 US Census       |                             |                           |                                      |

### ***E. Employment***

East Somerville residents are employed in a variety of urban professions. Most of them work outside of Somerville, as shown in Table 13 below. As compared to the City as a whole, more East Somerville employees work in services, production and transportation-related fields, and less work in management/professional positions. This is consistent with the demographic makeup of the NRSA, which contains more recent immigrants, fewer college graduates, and more people whose first language is not English.

| <b>TABLE 4. OCCUPATION</b>                                 |                             |                   |                           |                   |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
|  | <b>East Somerville NRSA</b> |                   | <b>City of Somerville</b> |                   |
|  | <b>Total #</b>              | <b>% of Total</b> | <b>Total #</b>            | <b>% of Total</b> |
| Employed Civilians 16 years and over                       | 4,785                       | 100.0%            | 45,967                    | 100.0%            |
| Management, Professional and Related Occupations           | 1,294                       | 27.0%             | 21,997                    | 47.9%             |
| Service Occupations  | 1,179                       | 24.6%             | 7,514                     | 16.3%             |
| Sales and Office Occupations                               | 1,151                       | 24.1%             | 10,216                    | 22.2%             |
| Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 794                         | 16.6%             | 3,915                     | 8.5%              |
| Construction, extraction and maintenance occupations       | 367                         | 7.7%              | 2,312                     | 5.0%              |
| Farming, Fishing and Forestry Occupations                  | 0                           | 0.0%              | 13                        | 0.0%              |
| Work in Somerville   | 687                         | 14.6%             | 7,092                     | 15.77%            |
| Work outside Somerville                                    | 4,013                       | 85.4%             | 37,885                    | 84.23%            |
| Source: 2000 US Census                                     |                             |                   |                           |                   |

The median household income in the East Somerville NRSA is just 74.4% percent of that in the state overall, even though the unemployment rate in the East Somerville NRSA is significantly below the state's.

| <b>TABLE 5. INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT</b> |                             |                           |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                       | <b>East Somerville NRSA</b> | <b>City of Somerville</b> | <b>Commonwealth of Massachusetts</b> |
| Median Household Income               | \$37,560                    | \$46,315                  | \$50,502                             |
| % in Labor Force                      | 63.9%                       | 70.6%                     | 66.2%                                |
| Unemployed                            | 2.0%                        | 2.5%                      | 3.0%                                 |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Census              |                             |                           |                                      |

## ***F. Housing Assessment***

The housing stock in East Somerville is a mix of older multi-family houses and newer large apartment buildings. Approximately 85.6% of housing structures in the NRSA consist of 2 or more units. Many of the older houses are in poor shape and need improvements to reduce the dangers from lead paint, overcrowding, and fire code violations. However, many of these residences also have historic elements that make them unusual and worthy of rehabilitation, rather than replacement. In fact, one of the major attractions for East Somerville in terms of new investment is the historic character of the housing stock. Another is the proximity of the area to downtown Boston, rapid transit, and other attractions.

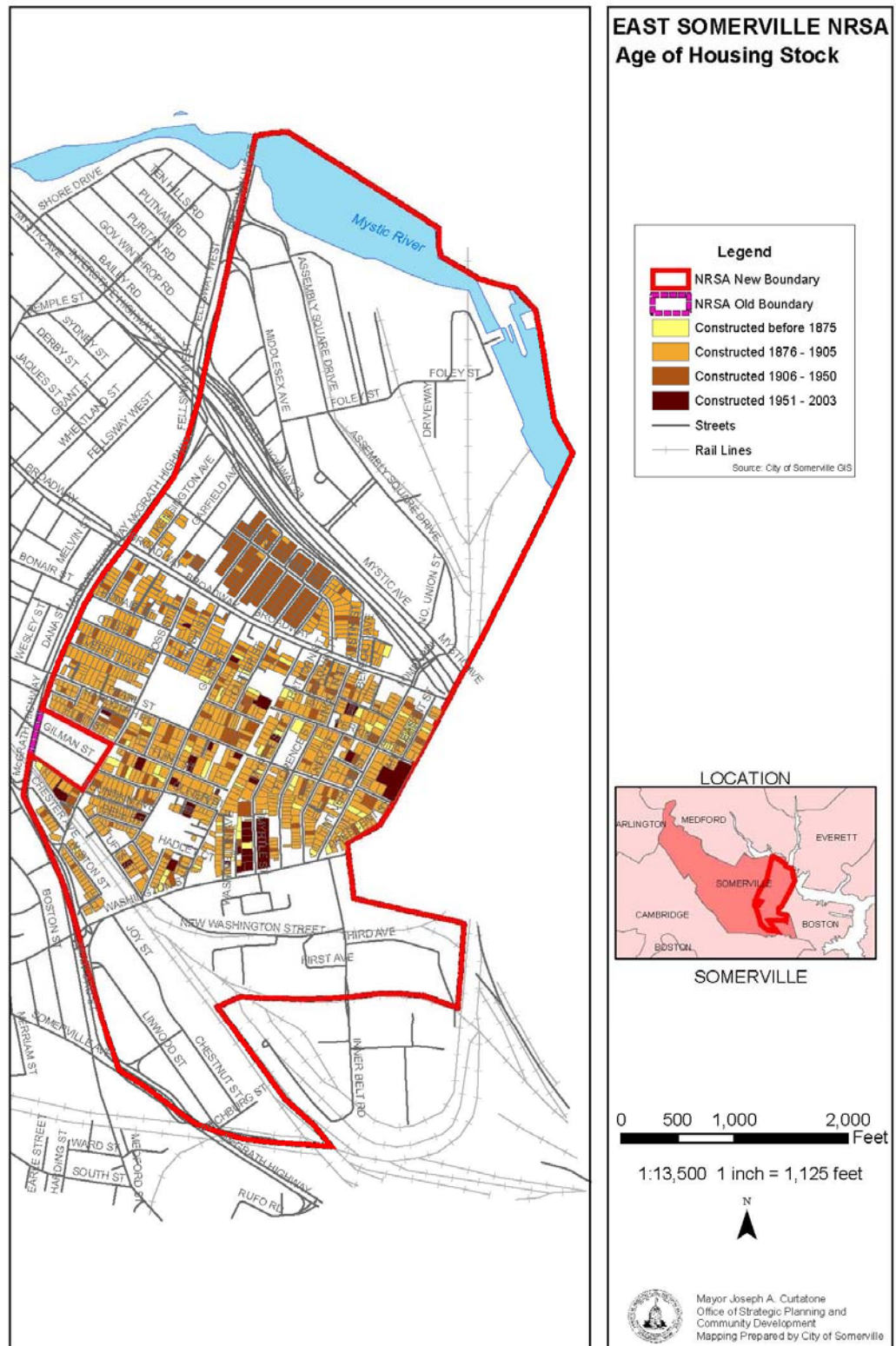
### Age, Condition and Size of Housing Stock

As shown in Table 7, most of the buildings in the East Somerville NRSA were constructed between 1875 and 1925. This is the time period in which people were choosing to develop in East Somerville as an alternative to East Cambridge and Charlestown. The construction of rapid transit through East Somerville, including Sullivan Station, also drove housing development at that time.

A few larger apartment buildings were constructed between 1925 and the present. These include public housing developments and private, market rate units. In addition, the Brickbottom Artists Colony was constructed in a former A&P Warehouse Building in the 1980s. That complex is a unique residential development located in a largely industrial part of the East Somerville NRSA, and it represents an economic engine for the NRSA as a location for artists' studios.

| <b>TABLE 6: AGE OF BUILDINGS IN NRSA</b> |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b><i>Year Built</i></b>                 | <b><i>Number of Buildings</i></b> |
| Before 1801                              | 1                                 |
| 1801-1825                                | 1                                 |
| 1826-1850                                | 18                                |
| 1851-1875                                | 51                                |
| 1876-1900                                | 941                               |
| 1901-1925                                | 278                               |
| 1926-1950                                | 16                                |
| 1951-1975                                | 3                                 |
| After 1975                               | 106                               |
| Source: Somerville Assessor's Office     |                                   |





Residential units are also proposed for the Assembly Square District in the northeastern part of the NRSA. Those units would be developed around a new rapid transit station, and would include both market rate and affordable units. Of the 2,100 anticipated housing units, at least 12.5% (263 units) would be affordable under existing City regulations.

The housing in East Somerville is generally in fair condition, although there are many housing units in poor condition and some units in excellent shape. Most of the units suffer from deferred investment in routine maintenance such as painting, weatherproofing, and electrical updates. There is also a need for additional investment in deleading of residential units.



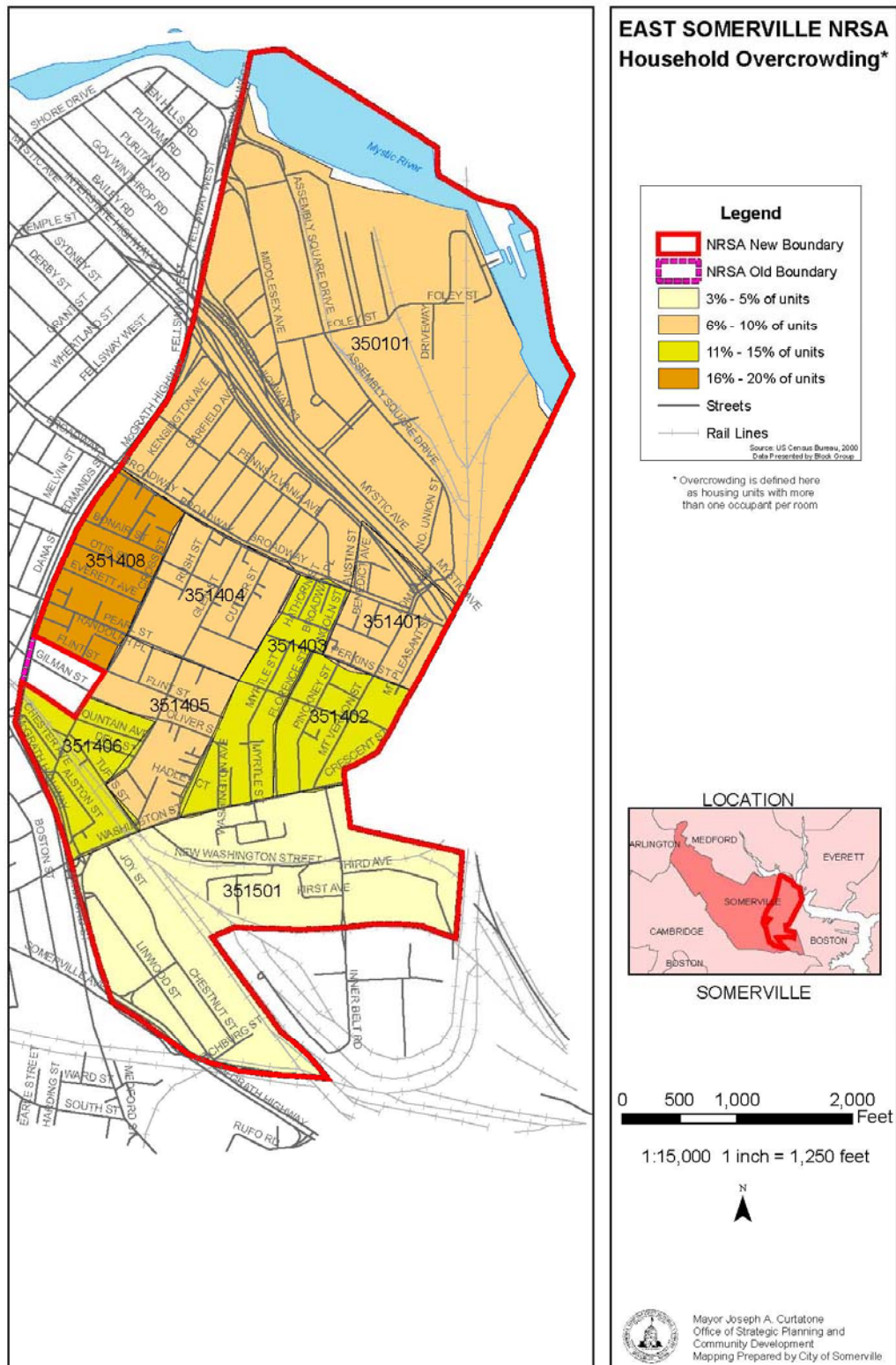
**FIGURE 11: E. BROADWAY** Source: City of Somerville 2007

### Overcrowding

The size of most units in East Somerville is also inadequate for the number of people living in them. It is not uncommon for a house that was built with two units that are adequate in size for a 5-person family to have been divided into three or more units, each of which might house 7 or more persons. This overcrowding is due more to the high cost of rent in East Somerville than the size of the units *per se*. The incidence of housing units experiencing overcrowding in the East Somerville NRSA is significantly high as it is more than double the citywide rate.

**Table 7: HOUSEHOLD OVERCROWDING**

|                        | <b>Total Occupied Housing Units</b> | <b>Total occupied units with 1 or less occupants per room</b> | <b>Total occupied units with more than 1 occupant per room</b> | <b>Percentage of housing units with overcrowding</b> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| East Somerville NRSA   | 3,464                               | 3,111   | 353  | 11.35%   |
| Somerville             | 31,555                              | 30,006  | 1,549  | 5.16%  |
| Source: 2000 US Census |                                     |   |  |  |



### Renters versus Homeowners

As shown in Table 8, below, over 10 percent of the households in Somerville are located in the East Somerville NRSA. Approximately a third (33.2 percent) of all housing units in East Somerville are owner-occupied, a low figure by many standards but actually higher than that in Somerville as a whole. The average household size is slightly higher in East Somerville than in the City as a whole, although that reported number is probably lower than the actual number due to the reluctance of many immigrants to respond to the Census.

| <b>TABLE 8: TENANCY</b> |                 |                        |                        |                    |                         |                     |                    |                     |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                         | <b>Total HH</b> | <b>Total Hsg Units</b> | <b>Owner Occ Units</b> | <b>% Owner Occ</b> | <b>Renter Occ Units</b> | <b>% Renter Occ</b> | <b>Avg HH Size</b> | <b>Avg Fam Size</b> |
| E. Somerville NRSA Area | 3,488           | 3,604                  | 1,158                  | 33.2%              | 2330                    | 66.8%               | 2.71               | 3.34                |
| Somerville              | 31,555          | 32,477                 | 9,656                  | 30.6%              | 21899                   | 69.4%               | 2.38               | 3.06                |
| Source: 2000 US Census  |                 |                        |                        |                    |                         |                     |                    |                     |

### Home Values and Rents

While the average rent in East Somerville is about the same as that in the City as a whole, the burden that rent places on occupants is much higher. This is due to the fact that the median household income in East Somerville is significantly lower than that in the City as a whole. Table 9 shows that the rent burden (defined as percentage of median household income to pay media rent) in East Somerville is over 25 percent, which is generally considered too high. As shown in Table 10, over 40 percent of the households in East Somerville pay more than 30 percent of their household income on rent, and over 30 percent pay more than 35 percent of their household income on rent. These figures are excessive, and result in an incentive to overcrowd housing units.

| <b>TABLE 9: RENT BURDEN</b> |                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
|                             | <b>East Somerville NRSA</b> | <b>City of Somerville</b> |
| Median HH Income (annual)   | \$37,560                    | \$46,315                  |
| Median rent (annual)        | \$10,032                    | \$10,488                  |
| Rent Burden*                | 26.71%                      | 22.64%                    |
| Source: 2000 US Census      |                             |                           |

\* Defined as percent of median income to pay median rent

| <b>TABLE 10: HOUSEHOLDS BEARING HIGH RENT BURDEN</b> |                    |                                       |   |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
|  | <b>Median Rent</b> | <b>Gross Rent 30-34% of HH Income</b> | <b>Gross Rent &gt; 35% of HH Income</b> |
| E. Somerville NRSA                                   | \$ 836             | 11.2%                                 | 31.4%                                   |
| City of Somerville                                   | \$ 874             | 8.6%                                  | 28.2%                                   |
| Source: 2000 US Census                               |                    |                                       |   |

Housing prices are also excessive in East Somerville, although they are lower than those elsewhere in the City. The median sales price for a home in East Somerville in the past 5 years was \$350,000. This price is not affordable at the median household income in the East Somerville NRSA (\$36,000.)

This cost also does not include the inevitable costs of repairs and renovations required when purchasing an old house.

| <b>TABLE 11: ASSESSED VALUE AND RECENT SALES (2002-2007) IN NRSA</b> |                      |                   |                          |                           |
|--|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | <b>Total Parcels</b> | <b># of Sales</b> | <b>Med Sales Price *</b> | <b>Med Assessed Value</b> |
| Residential  | 1,327                | 341               | \$350,500                | \$332,000                 |

Source: City of Somerville Assessor

\* All sales under \$100,000 were excluded, under the assumption that those sales were not market value sales, but rather transactions between related people, etc.

Relatively high sales prices result in the need to charge higher rents on the second or third units in these homes, as the need to seek assistance in making high mortgage payments is more pressing. Thus higher sales prices result in higher rents.

### Vacancy Rates

Despite high rents and high sale prices, vacancies remain very low in East Somerville, as they do in the City as a whole. This is due to the attractive location, proximity to rapid transit and downtown, and overflow of households from West Somerville and Cambridge who cannot afford the even higher rents in those areas. For this reason, low vacancy rates are somewhat misleading as they are likely to mask an ongoing replacement of long-time residents and lower-income families with young professional and students who are less likely to invest in their community.

| <b>TABLE 12: VACANCY RATES</b> |                 |                    |                  |              |                     |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|
|                                | <b>Total HH</b> | <b>Total Units</b> | <b>Occ Units</b> | <b>% Occ</b> | <b>Vacant Units</b> | <b>% Vacant</b> |
| E. Somerville NRSA Area        | 3,488           | 3,604              | 3,488            | 96.8%        | 116                 | 3.2%            |
| Somerville                     | 31,555          | 32,477             | 31,555           | 97.2%        | 922                 | 2.8%            |

Source: 2000 US Census

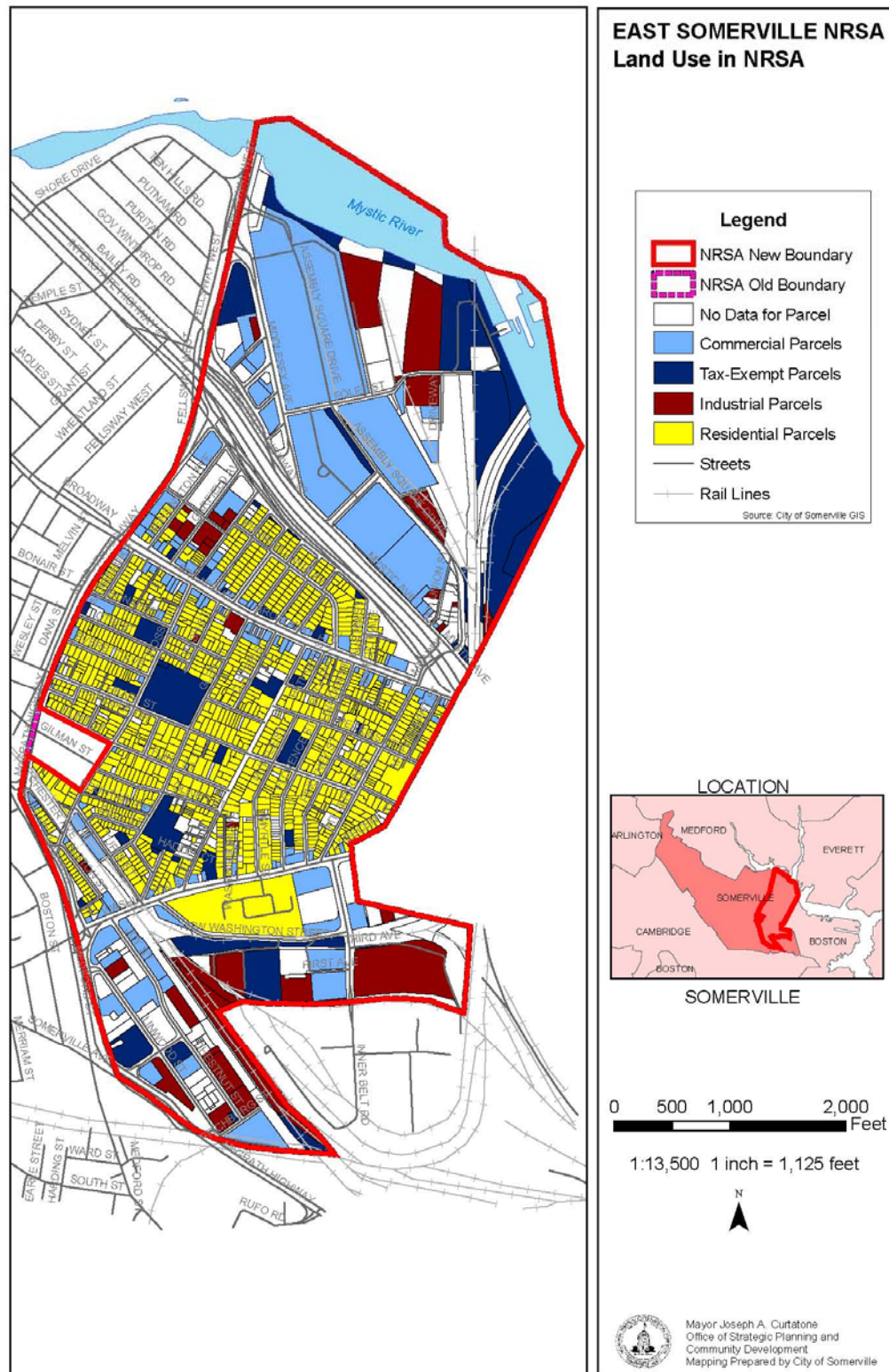
## ***G. Economic Assessment***

East Somerville is home to a large base of commercial and industrial warehouses. Commercial and industrial uses occupy over 20% of the NRSA. Substantial road and rail infrastructure are located throughout the NRSA. The total land use by category is listed below.

| <b>TABLE 13: EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA LAND USES</b> |                                |                      |                   |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Land Use</b>                                 | <b>Land Area (Square Feet)</b> | <b>% of Subtotal</b> | <b>% of Total</b> |
| Tax Exempt                                      |                                |                      | 19.9%             |
| ▪ Charitable organization                       | 80,476                         | 0.6%                 | 0.3%              |
| ▪ Churches                                      | 161,459                        | 1.2%                 | 0.7%              |
| ▪ Government                                    | 3,107,791                      | 22.2%                | 13.2%             |
| ▪ Housing Authority                             | 83,447                         | 0.6%                 | 0.4%              |

|                                    |            |        |       |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|
| ▪ Schools                          | 422,123    | 3.0%   | 1.8%  |
| ▪ Open Space/vacant                | 836,743    | 6.0%   | 3.6%  |
| Commercial                         | 4,246,677  | 30.3%  | 18.1% |
| Industrial                         | 1,328,615  | 9.5%   | 5.6%  |
| Housing                            | 3,748,971  | 26.7%  | 15.9% |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>                    | 14,016,302 | 100.0% | 59.6% |
| Roadways/Railways/ Misc. Utilities | 9,506,606  |        | 40.4% |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | 23,522,908 |        | 100%  |







According to City Assessors data for 2007, the value of the Lower Broadway CBD District is as follows:

|                        |              |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Total Land Value       | \$13,132,900 |
| + Total Building Value | \$13,585,800 |
| = TOTAL                | \$26,718,700 |

East Somerville has lower property values in relation to other areas with similar proximity to downtown Boston. These lower costs can also unfortunately prove to be a burden on property owners, who must pay a greater percentage of their square foot rental income in property taxes when collecting a minimum rent. Consequently, as rental rates increase, existing businesses may not be able to afford their current location and may be forced out of East Somerville.

A recent survey of asking office space rents in East Somerville finds rents ranging from \$10-20 per square foot, significantly lower than the fourth quarter 2007 average asking rents of \$54.80 in Boston and \$52.66 in Cambridge. These lower rents provide East Somerville with a competitive advantage over other areas with higher rents.

#### Employment in East Somerville

It is more difficult to measure the actual jobs that exist in the East Somerville NRSA since the data that exists does not easily break down into sub-municipal categories. However, local data that exists provides some background of the location and nature of East Somerville jobs.

The major employment centers and job types in the East Somerville NRSA are the following:

- *Lower Broadway*: Approximately 500 local retail and service positions
- *Assembly Square*: Approximately 445 retail positions exist in the Marketplace Mall
- *Inner Belt*: Approximately 500 warehouse/distribution, professional, and production positions
- *Brickbottom*: Approximately 300 production/transportation, service, and specialty/artists positions

Overall, approximately 3,800 full-time equivalent positions currently exist in the area. One of the goals of the NRSA is to increase the number of positions that exist in the area to offer increased opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents who may not be able to travel far for work. This strategy would largely be implemented through job creation in Assembly Square, Lower Broadway and the Inner Belt/Brickbottom area. According to the *Assembly Square Planning Study*, the potential for the creation of 10,235 new jobs exists in that 145-acre district over the next 12 years. The East Somerville NRSA will help the district reach that potential.

#### Business Mix

In recent months, the City conducted a business survey of the East Somerville area. Businesses were identified as existing in this area are listed in Table 14 below.

|   |
|---|
| <b>TABLE 14: BUSINESS MIX IN EAST SOMERVILLE (<i>incl. Assembly Square</i>)</b> |
|---|

| <b>Business uses in East Somerville</b> | <b>Business uses absent from East Somerville</b> |
|---|--|
| Architects                              | Advertising                                      |
| Banking (ATM)                           | Airline offices                                  |
| Auto Related                            | Answering service                                |
| Bakery                                  | Antiques   |
| Bars and pubs                           | Appliances                                       |
| Beauty Salon                            | Appraisers                                       |
| Bicycle Manufacture (custom)            | Art Supply                                       |
| Biotechnology                           | Balloons   |
| Building Services                       | Beauty School                                    |
| Building Supplies                       | Bike shop  |
| Car Rental                              | Book publishing                                  |
| Chiropractor                            | Book store                                       |
| Commercial Laundry                      | Brokers, investment                              |
| Craft Supply                            | Camera/photo                                     |
| Delivery Service                        | Candies and nuts                                 |
| Dentist                                 | Cards  |
| Drug Store                              | Carpet/floors                                    |
| Dry Cleaning                            | Child Day Care                                   |
| Educational                             | Clock repair                                     |
| Engineering Firms                       | Coin arcade                                      |
| Fitness Center                          | Coin shop  |
| Food Preparation                        | Collection services                              |
| Formal Wear                             | Computer services                                |
| Furniture (rental)                      | Computers/software                               |
| Garden supplies                         | Cookies  |
| Gas Station                             | Copy Services                                    |
| Glass Distributor                       | Costume shops                                    |
| Government                              | Credit unions                                    |
| Graphic Design                          | Dance studio                                     |
| Health Care                             | Delivery service                                 |
| Health Clinic                           | Doctors Office                                   |
| Home Improvement                        | Drapery/blinds                                   |
| Hotels and motels                       | Electrical repair                                |
| Industrial/Artisan                      | Electronics                                      |
| Jewelry                                 | Employment agency                                |
| Law Office                              | Fabrics/sewing                                   |
| Leasing Company                         | Florists   |
| Linens                                  | Framing  |
| Liquor Store                            | Funeral  |

|                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Live/Work Studios        | Galleries            |
| Professional Office      | Gifts                |
| Office furnishings       | Hardware             |
| Office supply            | Health foods         |
| Oil Company              | Hearing aides        |
| Optical                  | Hobbies/games        |
| Photographer             | Income tax           |
| Plastics Distributors    | Insurance agent      |
| Public Utility           | Interior design      |
| Restaurant               | Janitorial service   |
| Retail                   | Kitchen equipment    |
| Shoe Repair              | Lamps/lighting       |
| Social Club              | Limousine service    |
| Social Services Provider | Lingerie             |
| Sporting Goods           | Locksmiths           |
| Storage Facility         | Luggage/leather      |
| Supermarket              | Mailing service      |
| Technology               | Market research      |
| Travel Agent             | Medical supply       |
| Trophies                 | Messenger service    |
| Public Utility           | Movie theatre        |
| Waste Management         | Musical instruments  |
|                          | Newsstand            |
|                          | Package/shipping     |
|                          | Paint                |
|                          | Photo finishing lab  |
|                          | Post Office          |
|                          | Real estate          |
|                          | Records, tapes, CD's |
|                          | Secretarial service  |
|                          | Security/detective   |
|                          | Shoe stores          |
|                          | Sign shop            |
|                          | Stationery           |
|                          | Tailoring            |
|                          | Tanning salon        |
|                          | Tattoo               |
|                          | Temporary Agency     |
|                          | Ticket outlets       |
|                          | Title company        |

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
|  | Tobacco                  |
|  | Toys                     |
|  | Uniform supply           |
|  | Upholstery               |
|  | Used Merchandise         |
|  | Utility customer service |
|  | Variety store            |
|  | Video rental             |
|  | Wallpaper                |

### Economic Trends

In Assembly Square, the driving economic force in the mid-1990s was retail uses. However, in the late 1990s, there began to be an interest in uses other than retail in Assembly Square. On December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006 the Planning Board approved a Preliminary Master Plan for the redevelopment of a 66.5 acre parcel in the Assembly Square District. The Master Plan consists of 2100 residential units, 1.75 million square feet of office and 1,150,800 square feet of retail space (including the existing Marketplace and a proposed IKEA store), and a 200-room hotel. In addition, Federal Realty Investment Trust (the designated developer) and IKEA jointly committed to contribute \$15 million towards the design and construction of a future Orange Line T-stop at Assembly Square. As a result, the focus has changed in Assembly Square from a retail-driven approach to a mixed-use, transit-oriented approach to redevelopment.

In the commercial corridor of Lower Broadway the economic trend is for continued local retail and service employment. There is an effort to develop the artist population of the corridor through the redevelopment of the old Broadway Theater into classroom and display space for Mudflats as well. The primary focus of CDBG economic development activities on Lower Broadway has been and will continue to be on storefront improvement, assistance to local businesses, and physical improvements to increase the attractiveness of the corridor.

The Inner Belt District saw significant development interest during the late 1990s as a location for telecommunications switching “hotels.” Since the decline of that market, the demand for space in Inner Belt has gone down. The Brickbottom District has had little development interest for some time, with the exception of space for artists who are interested in working near the Brickbottom Artists’ Colony building.

### ***H. Infrastructure in East Somerville***

The infrastructure in East Somerville is extensive but in generally fair to poor shape. As part of the City’s planning for the Assembly Square District, a utility analysis of the Assembly Square District was completed in 2000. That study provides a great deal of data that is applicable to the East Somerville NRSA in general.

### Water System

The water system is provided by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, a regional water supplier. While water supply and pressure is adequate for current and future needs, the water pipes are old, sometimes made of clay or lead, and often rusted to the point where water quality and flow is impaired.

### **Electrical System**

The electrical system is generally adequate although dependent on regional supply and subject to restrictions in the peak summer months.

### **Telecommunication System**

The telecommunications system is extremely sophisticated for an area such as East Somerville. In the late 1990s, fiberoptic lines were run along railroad rights of way in Assembly Square and down to Inner Belt. These lines are state-of-the-art but mostly unused due to the decline in the telecommunications industry. They do represent an infrastructure advantage that East Somerville should be able to take advantage of as the economy recovers.

### **Stormwater/Sanitary Sewer Systems**

The stormwater and sanitary sewer systems are combined in East Somerville, although the City is hoping to separate these systems over time as improvements are made. Currently the system is over capacity and subject to backups during heavy rains. This problem exists throughout Somerville.

### **Transportation Systems**

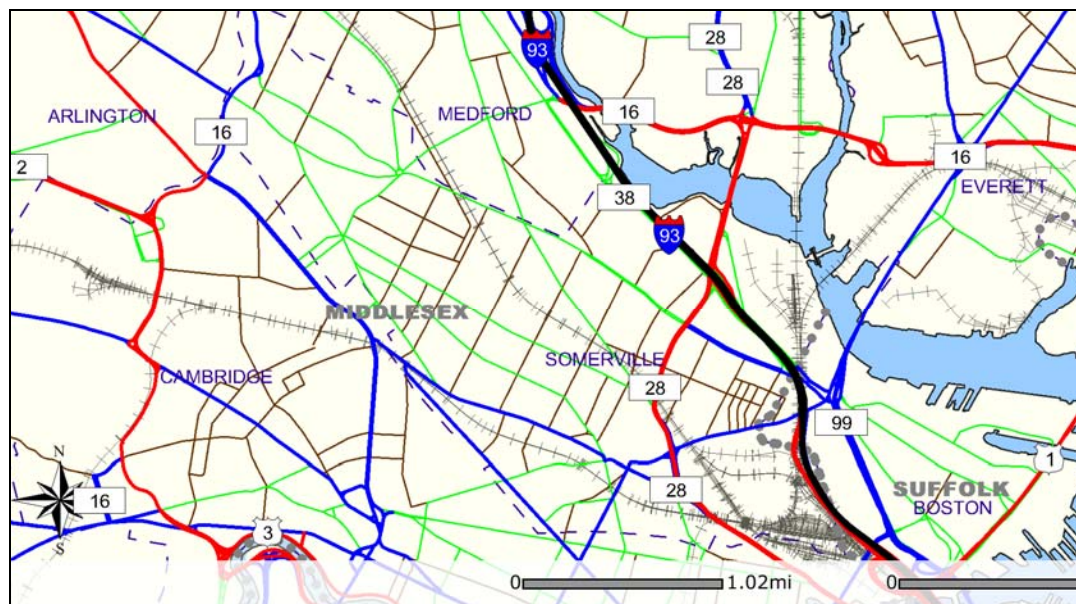
The roadway and transit systems in East Somerville are extensive but have little local access in the East Somerville NRSA. Interstate 93 travels through the area but the interchanges are unsafe and over capacity. In addition, the roadway cuts East Somerville in half and makes bicycle and pedestrian access across the area difficult. A new interchange opened on Washington Street as part of the Central Artery project, providing new and somewhat safer access to Inner Belt. The City and state are studying an improvement to another interchange that would provide a local roadway with bicycle lane and sidewalks under I-93.



**FIGURE 12: INFRASTRUCTURE PRESENTS PEDESTRIAN CHALLENGES**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

Similar problems exist along the Route 28 (McGrath Highway) corridor, due to its use as a major commuter roadway to the north. The Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization is working with the City on possible improvements to Route 28 that would provide better service to East Somerville.

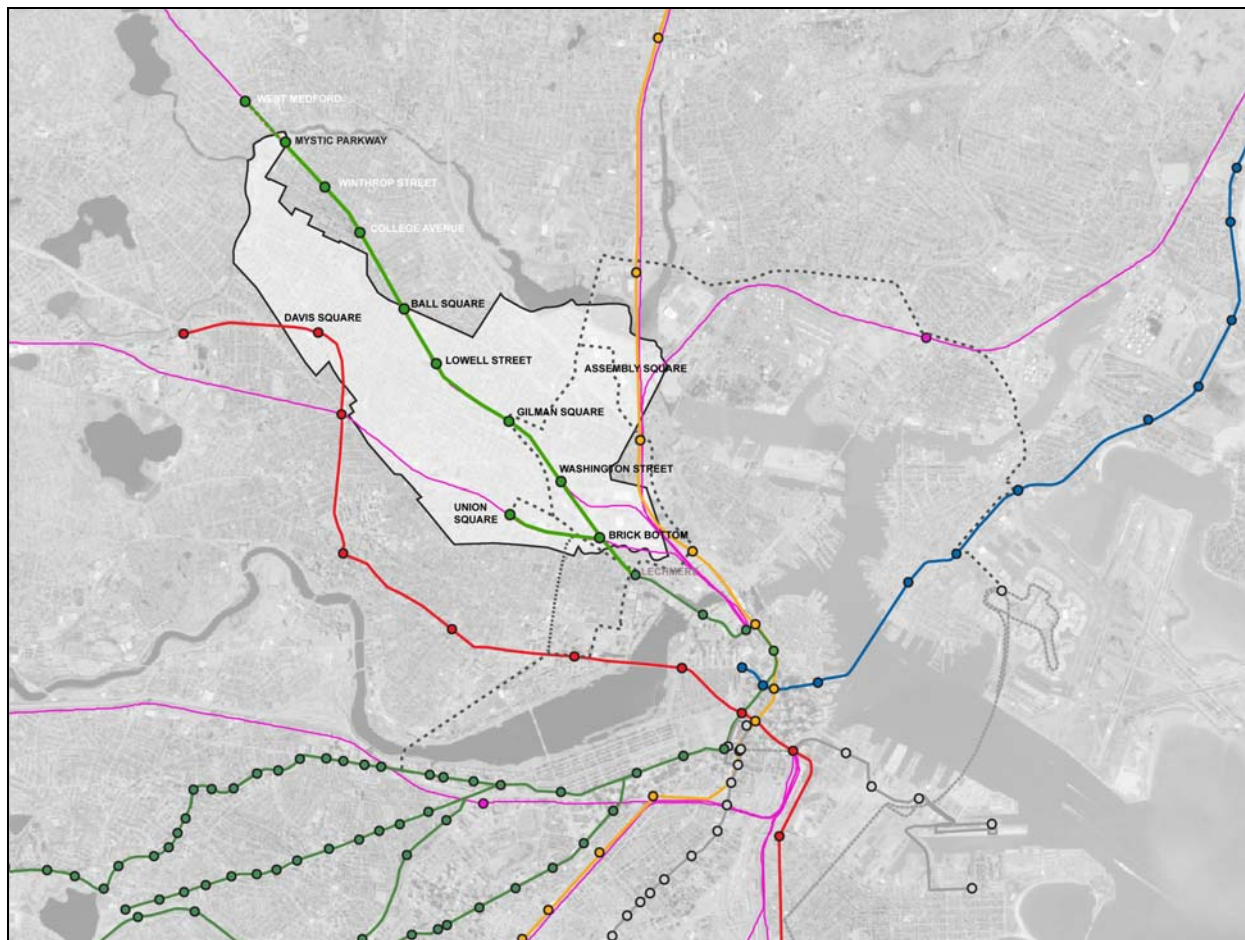


**FIGURE 13: SOMERVILLE'S ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION**

Source: Year-End 2006 Road Inventory, Office of Transportation Planning

Local roadways suffer from excessive traffic due to cut-through trucks and cars seeking to avoid bottlenecks on regional roadways. This traffic negatively impacts quality of life for East Somerville residents and makes it less safe to use local roads for local travel.

Several rail lines traverse East Somerville but no rapid transit lines or commuter rail lines stop in East Somerville. The Sullivan Square Station along the MBTA Orange Line rapid transit is located in Charlestown just east of East Somerville. The nearest commuter rail station is North Station, south of the Charles River. Several bus lines also travel through East Somerville, including the 91, the 90, the 80 and the CT-2. These buses provide feeder service to the rapid transit lines and employment centers, but suffer from travel delays on congested local roads.



**FIGURE 14: MAP OF PROPOSED GREEN LINE EXTENSION**

Source: OSPCD, 2005

Several transportation improvements are planned for the East Somerville NRSA (see Figure 14). These include a new rail rapid transit line on the Orange Line in Assembly Square, Urban Ring circumferential transit improvements to enhance cross-town travel, roadway reconstructions, the Somerville Community Path (a mixed use bicycle and pedestrian facility), and extension of the Green Line light rail through East Somerville.

In short, the infrastructure is theoretically in place to adequately serve community development needs in East Somerville. However, it will require investment from the City as part of the East Somerville NRSA. Infrastructure improvements will be a critical part of the NRSA.

### ***I. Public Service Facilities***

East Somerville is the location of several civic and public service agencies. These institutions and organizations are potential generators of pedestrian life and sales in the area. They include the following:

- East Somerville Library (115 Broadway)



- Somerville Youth Center (165 Broadway)
- Somerville Senior Center (165 Broadway)
- Ralph and Jenny Senior Center (9 New Washington Street)
- Concilio Hispano (52 Broadway)
- East Somerville Health Center (42 Cross Street)
- Project SOUP (59 Cross Street)
- Capuano Early Education Center
- East Somerville Community School

The East Somerville NRSA contains a number of public parks, playgrounds, and open space. These include:

- Glen Park and Garden – Located on the corner of Glen and Oliver Streets, this site has been expanded to accommodate a school as well as an improved park.
- Florence Playground – Located on Florence Street between Washington and Pearl Streets, with play equipment, a basketball court and a passive recreation area, which includes benches and trees.
- E Somerville Playground/E. Somerville Courtyard – Located on the corner of Pearl and Cross Streets, the playground is handicapped accessible, contains play equipment for older children and a tot lot, two basketball courts, two half basketball courts. Adjacent to the playground is a courtyard area that serves as a passive park location, with attractive gardens and trees.
- Harris Playground – Located at the end of Cross Street East, Harris contains play equipment and a basketball court.
- Draw 7 Park (MDC) – Located along the Mystic River past the Mystic River Parklands, the park is accessible via Foley Street behind Assembly Square, is handicapped accessible, it contains one small and one large soccer field, a bike/pedestrian path, a picnic shelter, picnic tables and a parking lot.
- Mystic River Park (MDC) – Located along the shore of the Mystic River behind Assembly Square, the parkland is handicapped accessible, with passive park uses including paths, benches and a fishing pier.
- Foss Park (MDC) – Located on McGrath Highway and Broadway, the park is handicapped accessible and contains a swimming pool, a wading pool, two baseball fields, basketball courts, a soccer field, tennis courts, play equipment, a parking lot and public restrooms.
- Perkins Playground-Located between Pinckney and Lincoln Streets. The 2,500 s.f. park was completed in 2006.

### ***J. Historic Preservation***

Some of the oldest buildings in Somerville are in the East Somerville NRSA. As mentioned above, one of the major assets of the housing stock in East Somerville is its historic character, both in terms of different architectural styles, and its local history associations. Much of the housing stock is more than 100 years old and represents one of the best collections of modest worker cottages of the 1800s in the Boston area. Many of the City's finest Greek Revival houses can be admired in East Somerville. A few houses in the area date back to the Colonial Era. Taking advantage of these assets

through reinvestment and sensitive restoration of key architectural features, rather than replacement or removal of them, will be an important goal within the East Somerville NRSA.

Map 8 shows the properties in the East Somerville NRSA that have been designated as Local Historic Districts (LHD). That designation requires that the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) review and approve changes to the exterior of the building that are viewable from the public way. One of the largest LHD's in East Somerville is located on Mount Vernon Street, near Sullivan Square. It is, however, by no means the only eligible multi-building historic district in the area, and the SHPC has been working closely with State and local officials, as well as East Somerville Main Streets, to identify, survey and recommend designation of other property groupings that meet the eligibility requirements of the City's Historic Districts Ordinance. In the third and current round of comprehensive surveying throughout Somerville, nearly one-third of the properties proposed for LHD designation are located within the East Somerville NRSA.



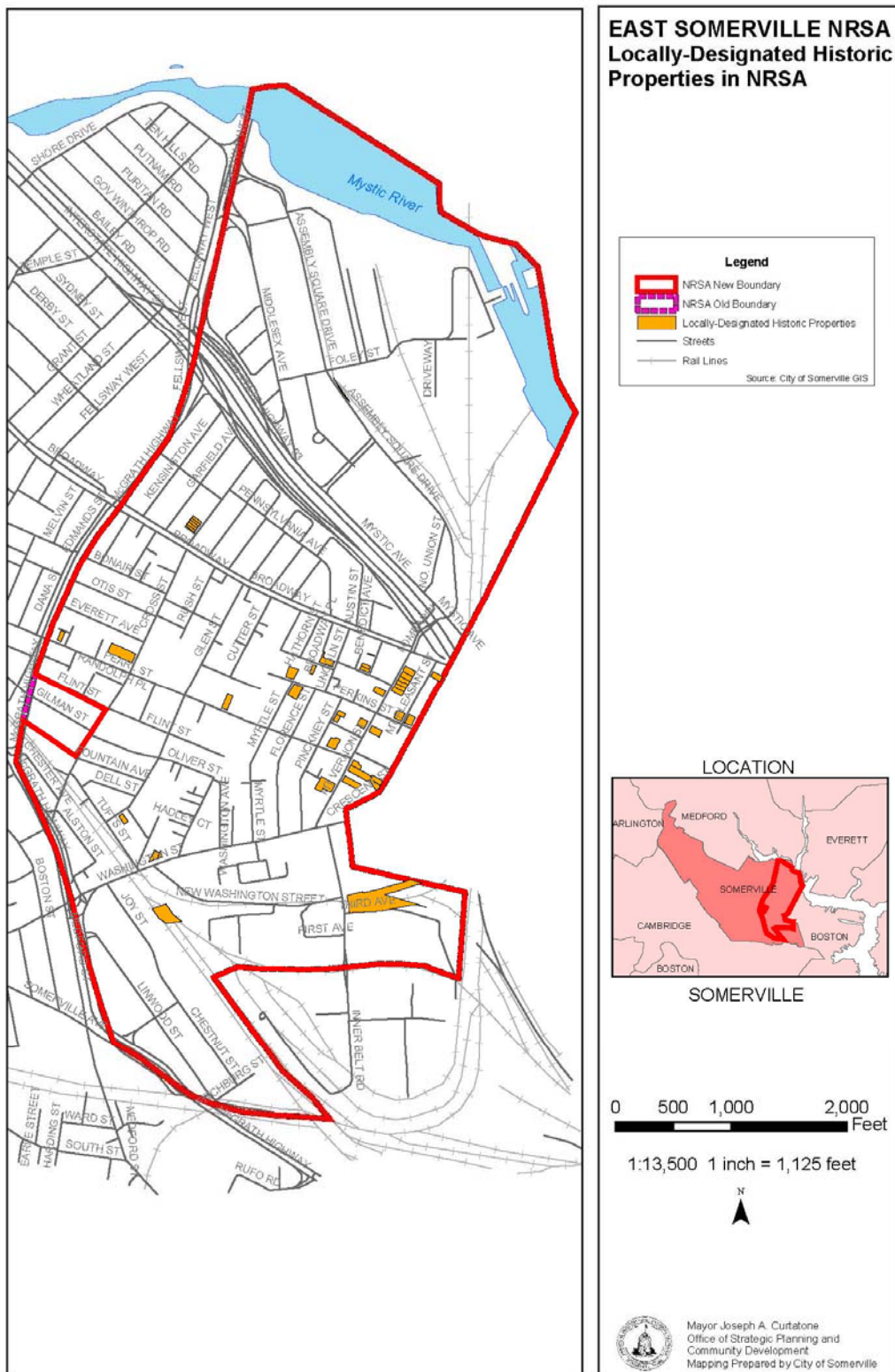
**Walter Glidden House, 380 Broadway**

**FIGURE 15: VINTAGE  
BROADWAY, SOMERVILLE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

East Somerville also has many properties that are not currently in a Local Historic District, but are listed on the National Register of Historic Place. This may sound prestigious, but such designation does not offer the same level of protection over time, unless public funds are used in making repairs or undertaking rehabilitation work. Because of this limited protection the SHPC has been actively seeking their LHD designation over the past 2 -1/2 years, and hopes that the Board of Aldermen will approve their recommendations in early 2008.

Other properties, both residential and non-residential, that are not formally designated at either the local or national level, can be found throughout the East Somerville neighborhood, and the Historic Preservation Staff is actively promoting them through walking tours, self-guided tour brochures, and most recently a very compact map that highlights routes one can take to not only appreciate the area's interesting historic character, but also help one stay or get into healthy physical shape.



## VI. Prioritization of Needs

### A. Methodology

The East Somerville NRSA takes advantage of the previous work done in the study area and additional analysis. All studies done to date within the study area were compiled (for a full list, see the Bibliography.) Based on the requirements of CPD 96-01, gaps in this existing information were identified and additional analysis was completed. In particular, data from the 2000 U.S. Census has been used to gain a current understanding of the state of the study area. In addition, an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the area was completed. Finally, performance measures and benchmarks were identified and documented.

### B. Existing Studies

This document builds on several planning processes that are underway or completed for East Somerville. These planning efforts both provide a baseline for the East Somerville NRSA and allow the City to take advantage of work that has already been done and focus the NRSA effort on achieving the goals of the CDBG program.

Along Broadway, the “neighborhood-business part of East Somerville with the largest residential component, the City has completed a business survey and is developing a design for streetscape improvements.

In the Inner Belt District, the City has completed an *Existing Conditions Report* documenting the current status of land uses in the district. The City has completed a similar report for the lower McGrath Highway corridor. In addition, the City has completed the *North Point Somerville Planning Study*, which examines the potential for sustainable redevelopment in Inner Belt, Brickbottom and the area south of the NRSA.

In addition, a *Route 28 Corridor Study* has been developed by the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to examine the need for improvements to Route 28 on the western edge of the NRSA and explores opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility along that corridor.

Numerous studies have been done on the Assembly Square District, which constitutes the northeastern portion of the NRSA. In 2000, the City completed the *Assembly Square Planning Study*, a strategic and policy plan for the district that explored opportunities for Smart Growth strategies in Assembly Square. Follow-up studies have included *Unifying Design Guidelines for the Public Realm in Assembly Square*, zoning for the district, the *Assembly Square Transportation Plan* and a major plan change to the *Assembly Square Revitalization Plan*, an urban renewal plan for the district. The City has worked with the Boston MPO on an *Assembly Square Rapid Transit Improvements Feasibility Study*.



**FIGURE 16: LOWER BROADWAY  
STREET SCAPE**

Source: City of Somerville 2007

### C. Public Process

The East Somerville NRSA area has been the subject of many planning studies in the past few years, each of which has had its own public process. The development of the *Assembly Square Planning Study* included the creation of an advisory committee, which met several times, and several public hearings to get input about the future of the Assembly Square district. There have been at least four public meetings as part of the development of the *Assembly Square Transportation Plan* and *Assembly Square Rapid Transit Feasibility Study*.

The proposed reuse of the Broadway Theater involved the creation of a reuse committee and several public meetings regarding that building and its impact on the neighborhood. The *North Point-Somerville Planning Study* process included two public meetings and meetings with individual stakeholders. The redesign of the Lower Broadway Streetscape has also included a number of public meetings and opportunities for public comment. In 2007, the City is carrying out another public process looking to improve Lower Broadway, which includes Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) funding from the State. Lastly, the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) engaged in a public “Somerville Conversations” project focusing on East Somerville, which was attended by a number of representatives from OHCD and other City agencies. More recently, the City also participated in a community planning process called the East Somerville Initiative (ESI) which was led by the SCC.

As part of the development of the NRSA, the City held two additional public hearings to inform residents and businesses about the process and the benefits it offers East Somerville and receive input. The reception at this meeting was very positive and provides a good baseline for ongoing consultation with the public.

| <b>TABLE 15: PUBLIC MEETINGS ON EAST SOMERVILLE</b>                  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Project</b>   | <b>Public Meetings</b>   | <b>Other Meetings</b>   |
| <i>Assembly Square Planning Study</i>                                | 8/25/99; 12/2/99; 12/15/99; 2/16/00; 3/15/00; 4/25/00; 9/11/00 | Meeting with Chamber of Commerce members (9/8/99); Advisory Committee (12/8/99, 1/11/00, 2/1/00, 3/20/00, 4/4/00) |
| <i>Assembly Square Transportation Plan</i>                           | 2/12/03; 8/15/02   |   |
| <i>Assembly Square Rapid Transit Feasibility Study</i>               | 3/14/03; 2/3/04  |   |
| <i>Broadway Theater Reuse (Lower Broadway)</i>                       | 7/26/01; 10/27/02  | Reuse Committee (1/15/02; 1/24/02)  |
| <i>North Point-Somerville Planning Study</i>                         | 8/7/02; 12/18/02   | Stakeholder meetings with Brickbottom, Inner Belt Business Interest Group   |
| <i>Lower Broadway Streetscape Project I</i>                          | 10/30/02; 4/24/03  |   |
| <i>Lower Broadway Streetscape Project II</i>                         | 11/19/07; 12/04/07; 12/10/07                                   |   |
| <i>Somerville Conversations Project / East Somerville</i>            | Fall, 2003   | Culminated in final summit meeting 12/4/03  |
| <i>East Somerville Initiative / Somerville Community Corporation</i> | 11/18/06; 6/19/07; 10/10/07                                    | Working Group meetings throughout Summer 2007. Steering Committee meetings  |

|  |  |                      |
|--|--|----------------------|
|  |  | throughout Fall 2007 |
|--|--|----------------------|

## VII. Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs

### A. Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The City conducted an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a “SWOT Analysis”) facing the East Somerville NRSA. This followed a similar SWOT analysis completed as part of an in-house planning process for the lower McGrath Highway (Route 28) corridor conducted by the City in 2001.

The results of the East Somerville NRSA SWOT are outlined below in Table 15. Table 16 shows the results of the SWOT analysis for the lower McGrath Highway corridor completed in 2001.

| <b>TABLE 16: EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA SWOT ANALYSIS (2001)</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| <b><u>Strengths</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diverse population with variety of experiences</li> <li>▪ Historic housing stock</li> <li>▪ Proximity to downtown Boston and other attractions</li> <li>▪ Artists’ involvement in ES community</li> <li>▪ Some transportation access (I-93, Route 28, Route 99, Sullivan Sq., bus lines)</li> <li>▪ Relatively healthy local businesses</li> <li>▪ Waterfront along the Mystic River</li> <li>▪ Well-programmed open spaces</li> </ul> | <b><u>Weaknesses</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Noise and pollution from I-93, Rte 28, rail lines</li> <li>▪ Lack of public funding for improvements to Assembly Square, Inner Belt, Lower Broadway</li> <li>▪ Need for human capital investment</li> <li>▪ Diverse population lacks common social facilities</li> <li>▪ Poor connection to Boston</li> <li>▪ Poor pedestrian environment</li> </ul> |
| <b><u>Opportunities</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infrastructure can be better tapped for better access</li> <li>▪ Mystic River waterfront</li> <li>▪ North Point development to the south</li> <li>▪ Artists’ involvement can become economic base for district</li> <li>▪ More developable land than in many places in Greater Boston</li> <li>▪ Improvement to bicycle and transit networks can be made</li> <li>▪ Public/private partnership opportunities</li> </ul>            | <b><u>Threats</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infrastructure continues to impair quality of life in East Somerville</li> <li>▪ Gang-related activities or threats thereof</li> <li>▪ Housing stock continues to decline in quality</li> <li>▪ Negative impacts from development are not mitigated.</li> <li>▪ Vacant properties and little private investment</li> </ul>                              |

**TABLE 17: LOWER McGRATH HIGHWAY SWOT ANALYSIS (2001)**

**Strengths**

- Entry point into Somerville from Cambridge and Boston.
- Good vehicular infrastructure.
- Proximity to Cambridge and Boston.
- Views of Boston skyline / Prospect Hill
- Because of the Inner Belt there is good fiber optic infrastructure
- A lot of research and technologic information has already been gathered about part of this study area.
- Area is subject to enormous growth stimuli from nearby MIT, Kendall, Lechmere and future North Point development in Cambridge.
- Area is permissive for wide scale development because of current zoning and large parcel sizes.
- Vibrant and detailed history. Lost place names offer potential for uniqueness.
- Area is unique for Somerville as an auto oriented commercial district.

**Opportunities**

- Increase pedestrian/bicycle accessibility.
- Put McGrath Highway below grade.
- Better signage for roads and buildings.
- Increase transportation fluidity.
- Site has potential to attract commercial, biotech and hotels.
- Opportunity to bolster City's tax base
- Building height can be higher because elevated highway will offset the effect.
- North Point Area development will spur businesses looking for land will look to this area.
- Create new road network within Brickbottom and Inner Belt.
- Proposed MBTA Urban Ring and Green Line extension
- Proposed bike path extension.
- Streetscape improvements
- Zoning changes
- MDC (DCR) involvement could lead to more parks and/or open space.
- Apply committed funding to environmental testing and cleanup of parcels in Inner Belt.
- Study feasibility of connecting North Point to Inner Belt.
- Examine traffic flow at key intersections.

**Weaknesses**

- Poor entry point, no "Welcome to Somerville" signage.
- Billboard bombardment.
- Dangerous and hostile pedestrian/bicycle corridor.
- Environmental concerns (brownfield and historically hazardous uses).
- Solid waste transfer station.
- Available large parcels of land not easily accessible to McGrath Hwy.
- McGrath Highway serves as a barrier to either side of the corridor; it acts like a wall.
- Washington/Somerville/McGrath interchange is a confusing mess.

**Threats**

- Accounting for the ownership of parcels.
- Public opinion of large commercial uses in East Somerville.
- Opposition of residents at Brickbottom.
- Lack of funding for projects.
- Grandfathered uses.
- MDC(DCR) control or jurisdiction over intersections.
- Without taking action we might miss the boat that is docked in Cambridge.
- Without action or a plan the area could become a NIMBY dumping ground.
- Big Box retail.
- Developments that make a large footprint but create few jobs.



### ***B. Monetary Gap Analysis***

- Shortage of staff: due to limited financial resources, the City of Somerville has a restriction on the number of economic development projects it can undertake, leaving other needs unmet.
- Somerville is under great pressure to expand its commercial tax base in order to relieve its citizens of the burden of funding basic city services with residential property taxes. Somerville's commercial tax base remains very small in comparison to Boston and Cambridge that derive 66% and 60%, respectively, of their property tax revenue from businesses. By contrast, Somerville derives only 28% of its property tax revenue from businesses.

### ***C. Additional Obstacles***

- Construction inflation: due to the increasing cost in utilities and construction materials, the City is finding the cost of its infrastructure and beautification projects increase significantly. This cost increase is an extra burden on the City's budget, since City funds do not grow at the same pace inflation does.
- Rapidly increasing real estate costs: one of Somerville major competitive advantages is its proximity to Boston and Cambridge while having affordable property costs. In the past 5 years, Somerville's real estate cost has increased considerably, making the City less competitive in comparison to surrounding communities. Also, this real estate cost increase is having a negative impact in the business community, as older businesses may not be able to afford the cost of rent anymore.
- Competition from other municipalities to attract same type of companies and jobs: Somerville's competitive advantages are often comparable to neighboring cities (affordability, highly skilled labor force and location, being some of them) and the competition to attract companies in growing industries (such as biotech, medical devices or green energy) is fierce.
- East Somerville has had rapid transit access for many years, yet has not seen significant development in response. Additional marketing of this amenity will likely be required, as well as additional capital investment in street improvements along lower Broadway and Washington Street.

## **VIII. Strategies**

The East Somerville NRSA approach to economic empowerment can be described as a three-pronged approach:

1. *Revitalize* Lower Broadway
2. *Redevelop* Inner Belt/Brickbottom, and
3. *Renew* Assembly Square.

### **Goals**

In order to implement this approach, the City has set forth the following goals for the East Somerville NRSA:

1. Increase supply of permanently affordable housing stock
2. Increase economic opportunities for East Somerville residents and businesses
3. Increase recreational opportunities for East Somerville residents
4. Increase attractiveness of East Somerville places
5. Improve access to and from East Somerville without impairing quality of life for residents

### **Strategies**

The following strategies will be used to accomplish these goals:

#### **Housing Stock**

- 1.1 Improve the inclusionary housing requirements for residential development
- 1.2 Encourage generation of housing stock that is affordable by design and that is consistent with the neighborhood
- 1.3 Sponsor renovation of existing housing that is affordable
- 1.4 Analyze housing needs of senior citizens in East Somerville and develop strategy to address.

#### **Economic Opportunities**

- 2.1 Attract and retain businesses in Assembly Square that create jobs and generate disposable income that will be spent in East Somerville
- 2.2 Attract and retain businesses in Inner Belt that create employment opportunities
- 2.3 Strengthen public/private partnerships in East Somerville
- 2.4 Support businesses on Lower Broadway through Storefront Improvement Program
- 2.5 Support businesses in East Somerville through small business/microenterprise loans and assistance
- 2.6 Support small businesses and entrepreneurs with business development educational services for low- and moderate-income businesses (financial literacy, marketing, best business practices, etc.)
- 2.7 Explore feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID).
- 2.8 Facilitate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized property through site assemblage activities, as appropriate.

#### **Recreational Opportunities**

- 3.1 Create new and improved open space in Assembly Square
- 3.2 Renovate existing parks in East Somerville

#### **Attractiveness**

- 4.1. Improve attractiveness of Lower Broadway corridor including improved bike access and pedestrian friendly streetscape
- 4.2 Expand Adopt-a-Spot program to aggressively target high-visibility areas in East Somerville
- 4.3 Develop zoning regulations to facilitate development along lower Broadway
- 4.4 Clean up and landscape gateways to Assembly Square

### **Access**

- 5.1 Support the Green Line extension through East Somerville and to Union Square.
- 5.2 Participate in planning of the Urban Ring so that route benefits East Somerville.
- 5.3 Develop an improved concept for the McGrath / O'Brien Highway (Route 28).
- 5.4 Improve connectivity across Interstate 93
- 5.5 Advocate for and implement other appropriate transportation access to Assembly Square and East Somerville in general, including pedestrian and bicycle improvements

### **Historic Preservation**

- 6.1 Increase awareness of historically significant properties

## **IX. Performance Measures**

| <b>EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>                                |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Goal</b>   | <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Benchmarks</b>  |
| 1. Increase supply of permanently affordable housing stock                      | 1.1. Improve the inclusionary housing requirement for residential development   | 1.1.1 5-10 new affordable units in 5 years (excluding Assembly Square)   |
|   | 1.2. Encourage generation of housing stock that is affordable by design and that is consistent with the neighborhood                        | 1.2.1 10 new private, non-subsidized, affordable units in 5 years  |
|   | 1.3. Sponsor renovation of existing housing that is affordable  | 1.3.1 City-subsidized renovation of 10 units in 5 years  |
|   | 1.4 Analyze housing needs of senior citizens in East Somerville and develop strategy to address.  | 1.4.1 Complete housing strategy for senior citizens within next three years.   |
| 2. Increase economic opportunities for East Somerville residents and businesses | 2.1. Attract and retain businesses in Assembly Square that create jobs and generate disposable income that will be spent in East Somerville | 2.1.1 500 new jobs in 5 years  |
|   | 2.2. Attract and retain businesses in Inner Belt that create employment opportunities   | 2.2.1 Prepare Master Plan for Inner Belt and Brickbottom in next 5 years ( <i>see Economic Development 1.1.3</i> )                                     |
|   | 2.3. Strengthen public/private partnerships in East Somerville  | 2.3.1 Increase East Somerville Main Streets' (ESMS) paid membership to at least 60 businesses in 5 years. ESMS to hold 17 community events in 5 years. |
|   | 2.4. Support businesses on Lower Broadway through Storefront Improvement Program  | 2.4.1 Improve 1-2 storefronts per year ( <i>See Economic Development 2.4.1</i> )   |
|   | 2.5. Support businesses in East Somerville through small business / microenterprise loans and assistance                                    | 2.5.1 Issue 1-2 loans per year for the next 5 years ( <i>See Economic Development 2.3.1</i> )  |

| EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Goal  | Strategies  | Benchmarks  |
|   | 2.6. Support small businesses and entrepreneurs with business development educational services for low- and moderate-income businesses (financial literacy, marketing, best business practices, etc.) | 2.6.1 Run workshops, training, and/or consultations for 20 businesses or individuals in 5 years ( <i>See Economic Development 2.2.1</i> )   |
|   | 2.7 Explore feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID).  | 2.7.1 Provide information to property owners and evaluate viability within 2 years.   |
|   | 2.8 Facilitate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized property through site assemblage activities, as appropriate.   | 2.8.1 Evaluate properties within East Somerville within next 5 years.   |
| 3. Increase recreational opportunities for East Somerville residents                          | 3.1. Create new and improved open space in Assembly Square  | 3.1.1 Renovate existing waterfront park within 5 years.   |
|   | 3.2. Renovate existing parks in East Somerville   | 3.2.1 Complete 1 park in the next 5 years   |
| 4. Increase attractiveness of East Somerville places  | 4.1. Improve attractiveness of Lower Broadway corridor including improved bike access and pedestrian friendly streetscape   | 4.1.1 Complete design of Lower Broadway streetscape within 2 years and initiate improvements within 5 years ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 3.1.1 and Economic Development 2.1.1</i> ) |
|   | 4.2. Expand Adopt-a-Spot program to aggressively target high-visibility areas in East Somerville  | 4.2.1 Locate 4-5 sites within 5 years   |
|   | 4.3. Develop zoning regulations to facilitate development along lower Broadway  | 4.3.1 Submit rezoning package to Board of Aldermen within 3 years ( <i>See Economic Development 1.1.7</i> )   |
|   | 4.4. Clean up and landscape gateways to Assembly Square   | 4.4.1 Design landscaping improvements for Assembly Square gateways within 2 years and construct landscaping improvements within 5 years.  |
| 5. Improve access to and from East Somerville without impairing quality of life for residents | 5.1. Support the Green Line extension through East Somerville and to Union Square   | 5.1.1 Five station locations designed within 5 years ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 1.1.1</i> )   |
|   | 5.2. Participate in planning of the Urban Ring so that route benefits East Somerville   | 5.2.1 Adoption of the Inner Belt Alternative ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 1. 3.1</i> )  |
|   | 5.3. Develop an improved concept for the McGrath / O'Brien Highway (Route 28)   | 5.3.1 Develop a concept plan within 3 years ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 4.2.1</i> )  |

| EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA PERFORMANCE MEASURES |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Goal                                      | Strategies   | Benchmarks  |
|   | 5.4. Improve connectivity across Interstate 93   | 5.4.1 Complete 75% design for I-93 connector in vicinity of Assembly Square within 5 years. ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 4.3.1</i> )  |
|   | 5.5 Support the development of the Assembly Square Orange Line Station.  | 1.2.1 Station design completed and funding secured within 5 years. ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 1.2.1</i> )   |
|   | 5.6. Advocate for and implement other appropriate transportation access to Assembly Square and East Somerville in general, including pedestrian and bicycle improvements | 5.6.1 Attend 5 meetings of Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Planning and Programming Committee and 5 meetings of Regional Transportation Advisory Council per year ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 7.3.1</i> ) |
| 6. Improve status of historic areas       | 6.1. Increase awareness of historically significant properties   | 6.1.1 Conduct 2-3 Educational Outreach Tours per year   |

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## **SECTION EIGHT:**

# **UNION SQUARE NRSA**

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Purpose**

Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSA's) are specially designated areas within a community which, based upon approval by HUD, allows for increased flexibility to program HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds. The City of Somerville's Union Square NRSA was initially adopted in 2002. It is the older of Somerville's two NRSAs and has been invaluable in the City's efforts to improve the infrastructure, economic vitality, and services in this part of the City. For program year 2008, the City is proposing to modify the boundary on the northeastern side of the existing Union Square NRSA, and is incorporating this, along with other updates, into the 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan.

### **B. Background**

The intersection of Bow Street, Somerville Avenue and Washington Street forms the oldest and largest commercial district in Somerville - Union Square. This area was originally situated on marshland and became the gateway for goods into Boston's larger markets. With the filling of the marsh and addition of several quick routes to Boston, Union Square exploded with commercial and residential growth. This helped change the area from a small rest stop on the way to Boston to a great commercial district.

The original marshland and sandy soils of the Union Square area suggested its first name of "Sandpit Square." The area originally contained a marsh at the edge of the Miller's River near Allen Street. Bow Street followed the perimeter of a marsh and Somerville Avenue was constructed over that marsh in 1813. Union Square emerged from the intersection of three main streets, used as trade routes into Boston in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mainland Charlestown and other surrounding farms sent goods via Somerville Avenue (known as Milk Row at the time) to meet ferries or to be carried across bridges to Boston.

With the development of the Medford Turnpike (Mystic Avenue) in 1803, the volume of traffic in and around Union Square began to intensify, and businesses began to flourish. Businesses such as blacksmiths and wheelwrights serviced travelers passing through the area. Brickyards, slaughterhouses and the Union Glass Company (predecessor to modern day Corning Incorporated) were among the largest mid-19<sup>th</sup> century industries near the Square. Franklin Hall, constructed in 1852, was the first multi-purpose building in the Square. This building contained a Post Office, grain and grocery store, and a meeting hall.

As a result of the increased development of Union Square, a two-story wooden engine house on the corner of Washington and Prospect Streets was erected in 1838. The building was reconstructed in brick in 1856. The firefighters erected a flagpole in 1853 across the street from the engine house and at that point in time the square was known as "Liberty Pole Square." However, the Square was later used as a recruiting center during the Civil War, thus acquiring its present name of Union Square.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Union Square was the home to several wood-working shops, ice



businesses, and carriage factories. Union Square's development opportunities were enhanced by the railroad – the first passenger rail opened in 1835 on the south side of Washington Street. The first horse-drawn streetcar system in the Boston area was established between Union Square and Harvard Square in 1852. In 1869, Union Square's first major commercial block (Masonic Hall) was constructed, housing an apothecary, shoe shop, offices, and a meeting hall. Until this time, Union Square consisted mainly of dwellings and farms, but the development of Masonic Hall fueled the beginning of a high style of architecture in commercial district. Buildings of red brick with granite sills and trim, dark bands of contrasting brick, patterned slate roofs trimmed with ornamental ironwork began to emerge. This began the development of the multi-unit row houses and apartment hotels such as the crescent-shaped apartment building at the corner of Bow and Summer Streets.

By 1900, the Millers River was filled to alleviate pollution and the marsh was filled in to make room for more businesses and more roads. Farms began leaving cities on the edges of Boston and moving farther west. With the development of the automobile, a farmer could move his farm a greater distance from the city to where land was less expensive, and still transport his goods to Boston in an affordable manner. The development of row houses and apartment hotels on the streetcar line made Union Square an attractive area for Boston commuters to live. In the early 1900's, electric streetcars made 88 stops a day in Union Square to bring commuters to their jobs in Boston.

Changes in transportation modes - particularly the widespread use of the automobile - provided consumers with greater mobility and led to changes in shopping patterns and location of new development. As is true for many historic commercial areas throughout the country, Union Square began to lose ground to newer, more competitive retailing establishments in outlying locations.

In 1980, the area was designated as an "Urban Renewal area," where issues such as storefront improvements, traffic flow, public parking and streetscape improvements were addressed. These improvements made a noticeable difference in the commercial center and the area. For example, the Washington Street parking lot was developed, the public safety building constructed, new tenants filled the old fire and police facilities, roads were reconfigured, street trees planted, the public plaza was constructed, and the storefront improvement program evolved.

### ***C. Union Square Vision for the Future***

Union Square is distinguished from other commercial areas within the Boston region by the diversity of ethnic groups, its rich history, and its reputation as a dining destination. Changes in the Square over time have produced a community of new immigrant families, long-term residents, students, authors, artists and young professionals. The diversity of the Union Square community is one of its greatest assets.

Relative to many commercial areas, Union Square is in a good position to encourage business development. The area is not plagued by a high number of vacancies, but development is at substantially lower densities than typical for a commercial center or than existed historically. Many upper levels of commercial buildings have been sealed or removed but additional stories could potentially be added under the City's Zoning Ordinance.

Union Square contains a close-knit pattern of varying lot sizes, mixed use buildings, and interconnected streets that increase the vitality of the area. Buildings designed to accommodate a variety of uses are more adaptable to changing economic conditions and can therefore sustain a longer useful life. Residences or offices in the upper floors of commercial buildings could increase the vitality of Union Square.

In addition, Union Square has an excellent location relative to transportation systems. The slogan “Lively Historic Crossroads” was developed for the area in 1998 to reflect its historical context. The area continues to be a crossroads to those traveling within Somerville, Charlestown, and Cambridge. It is accessible to I-93 and McGrath Highway, serves as a bus route hub, and provides access to the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) via Prospect Street.

Civic services provide an additional focus within the Square. Public service agencies include a branch of the United States Post Office, Somerville Community Access Television (SCAT), School Department Administrative Offices, and the Public Safety Building. Union Square is also within walking distance of City Hall. The Public Safety Building is in need of improvement in order to meet the future needs of the Police and Fire Departments and options for reconstruction are currently being explored.

Union Square is not beset with any major economic problems, but has many smaller economic challenges. For example, it has successful restaurants and specialty food stores, but lacks the retail, entertainment, and office components that generate pedestrian traffic and drop-in customers. The result is the need for a revitalization strategy designed to strengthen Union Square’s character and sense of place while building an economic base. The area is in need of new investment, improved physical appeal, enhanced infrastructure, a stronger daytime presence, and improved circulation.

Presently, the State of Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation is moving forward on the environmental review for the long awaited extension of the Green Line MBTA light rail system from Lechmere. This improved access is anticipated to serve as a catalyst for increased commercial and residential development in the area.

## **II. Planning Area Boundaries & Land Use**

The boundaries of the Union Square Study Area include the Central Business District as well as parts of the surrounding neighborhood within a comfortable walking distance. The boundaries were determined according to a ¼ mile radius from the center of the square, roughly the Vietnam Memorial at the intersection of Somerville Avenue and Washington Street. The area was extended along Somerville Avenue to the west in order to include additional residences and businesses, which identify with Union Square. Census block group data and City of Somerville parcel data were used to delineate the Study Area boundaries in order to eliminate confusion as to which parcels of land are included. The boundaries of the Study Area are as follows (See Map 1).

- West: Leland Street; Perry Street; and Dane Street/Granite Street
- North: Intersection of School Street/Summer Street; Aldersey Street; and Boston Street
- East: Boston Street; Rossmore Street; Merriam Street
- South: Charlestown Street; Fitchburg Railroad Right of Way; and Concord Avenue

The Study Area totals about 13.4 million square feet or 0.48 square miles. Approximately 82.8% of

the parcels and 34% of the land area in the Study Area are residential uses. The non-residential uses are predominantly in the Central Business District at the heart of Union Square and along Somerville Avenue and Washington Street. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 57% of the residents included in the Study Area are low- to moderate- income persons. There are approximately 30 residents per acre and 19,389 residents per square mile living within the Union Square NRSA block groups.

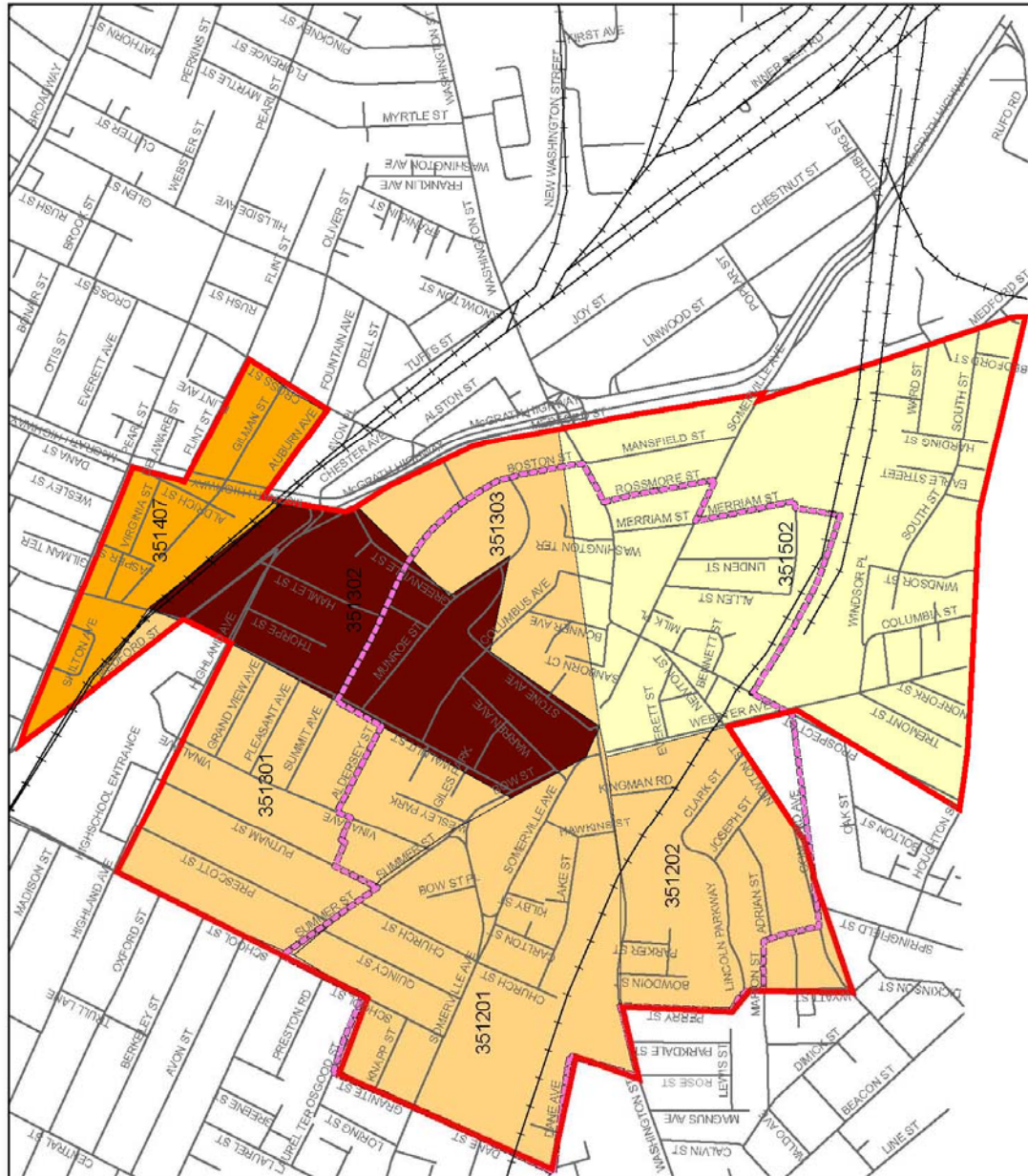
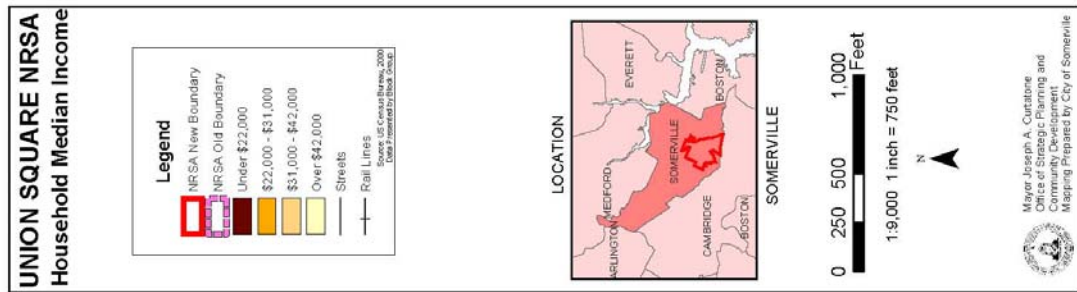
The 2008 updated Union Square NRSA includes a minor modification to the NRSA boundary when compared to the original 2004 NRSA. Based upon 1990 Census data, the 2004 Union Square NRSA included the following block groups:

25017 3512 001  
25017 3512 002  
25017 3513 001  
25017 3513 002  
25017 3513 003  
25017 3515 002

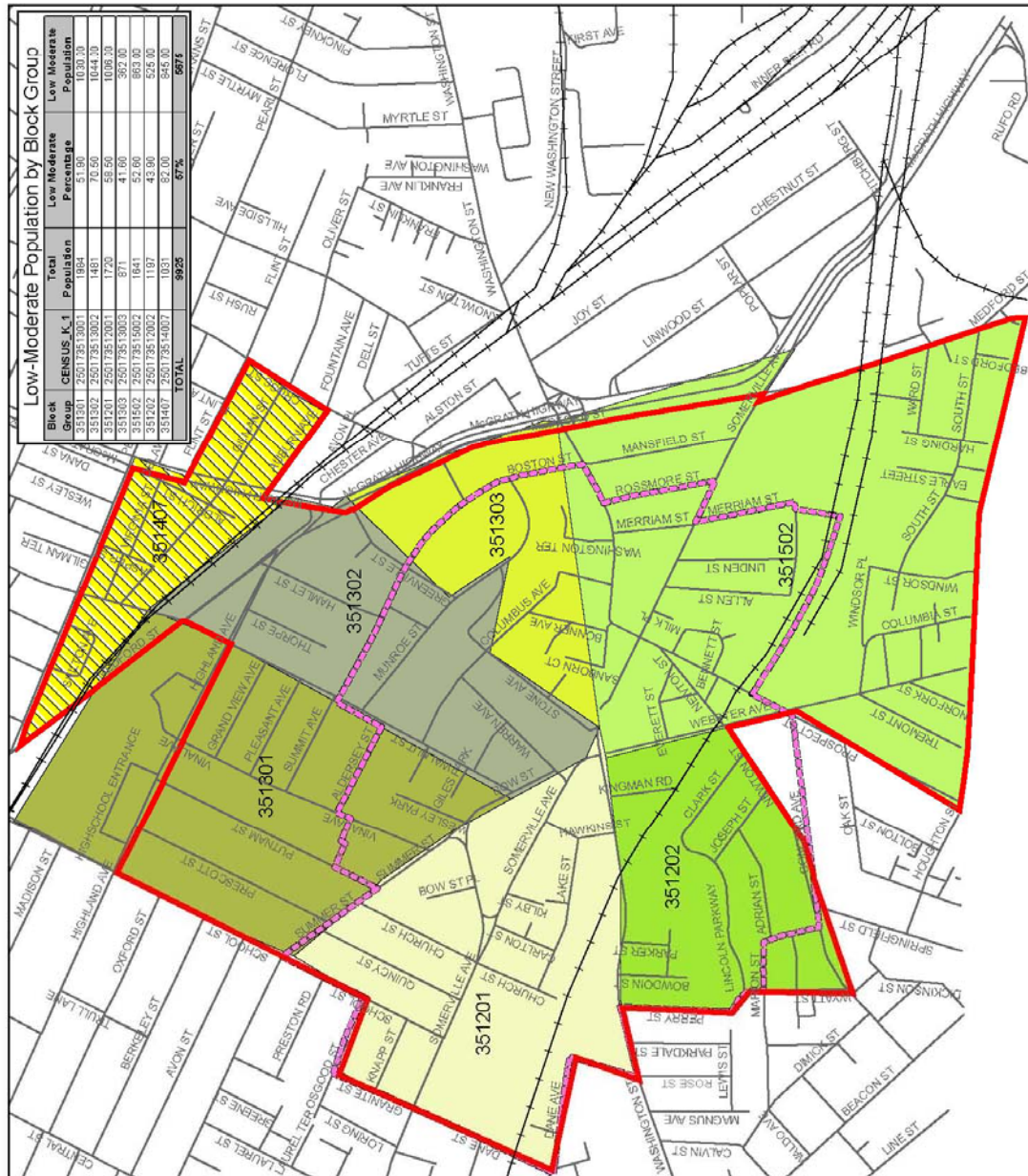
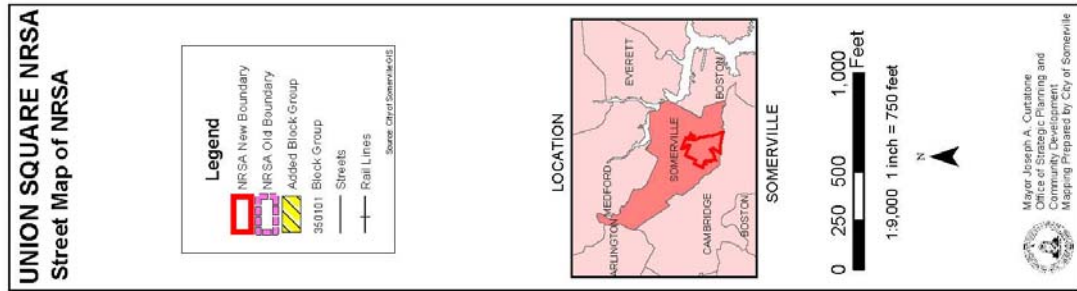
2000 Census data is now being used in the process of updating the Union Square NRSA and this data has revealed some demographic shifts that need to be acknowledged. Specifically, the proportion of low-income population in the Union Square NRSA has declined somewhat. Nevertheless, areas of significant poverty remain adjacent to the area. As part of this plan and the revised East Somerville NRSA plan, Census Block Group 25017 3514 007 is being removed from East Somerville and added to the Union Square NRSA. The 2008 Union Square NRSA will now include the following block groups:

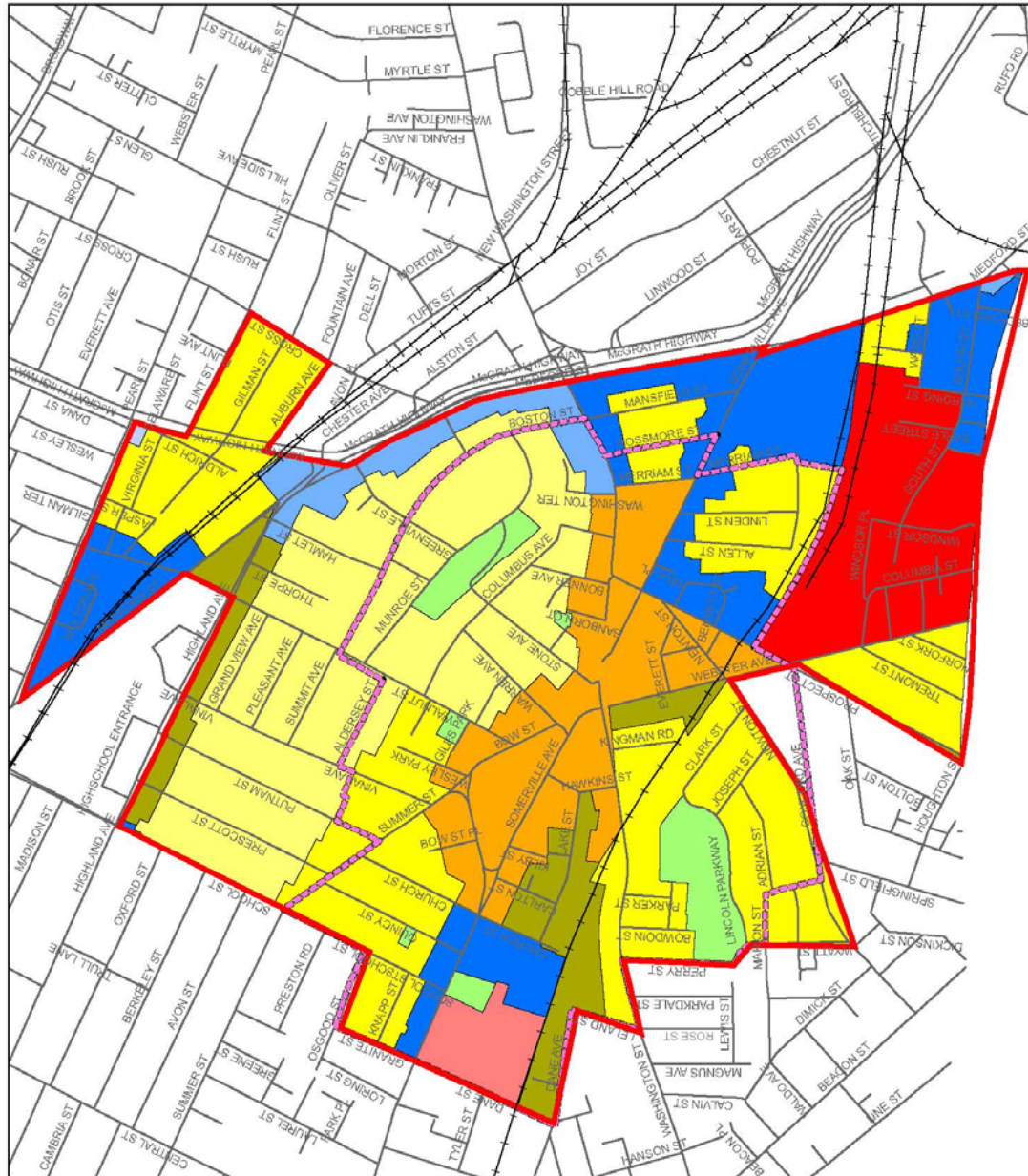
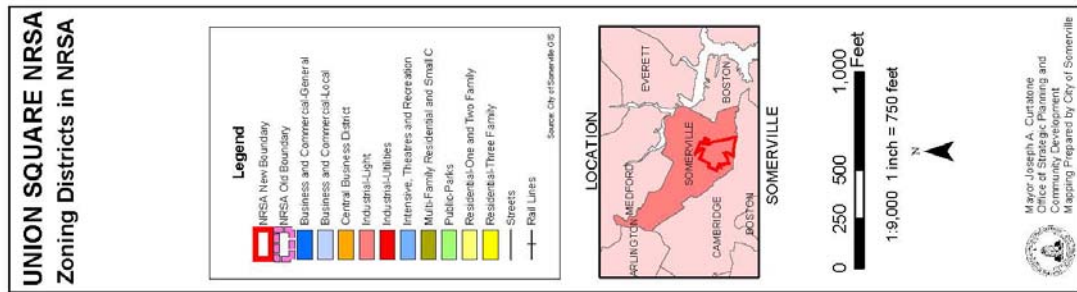
25017 3512 001  
25017 3512 002  
25017 3513 001  
25017 3513 002  
25017 3513 003  
25017 3515 002  
25017 3514 007

All data contained herein reflects the change in the boundaries of the Union Square NRSA.

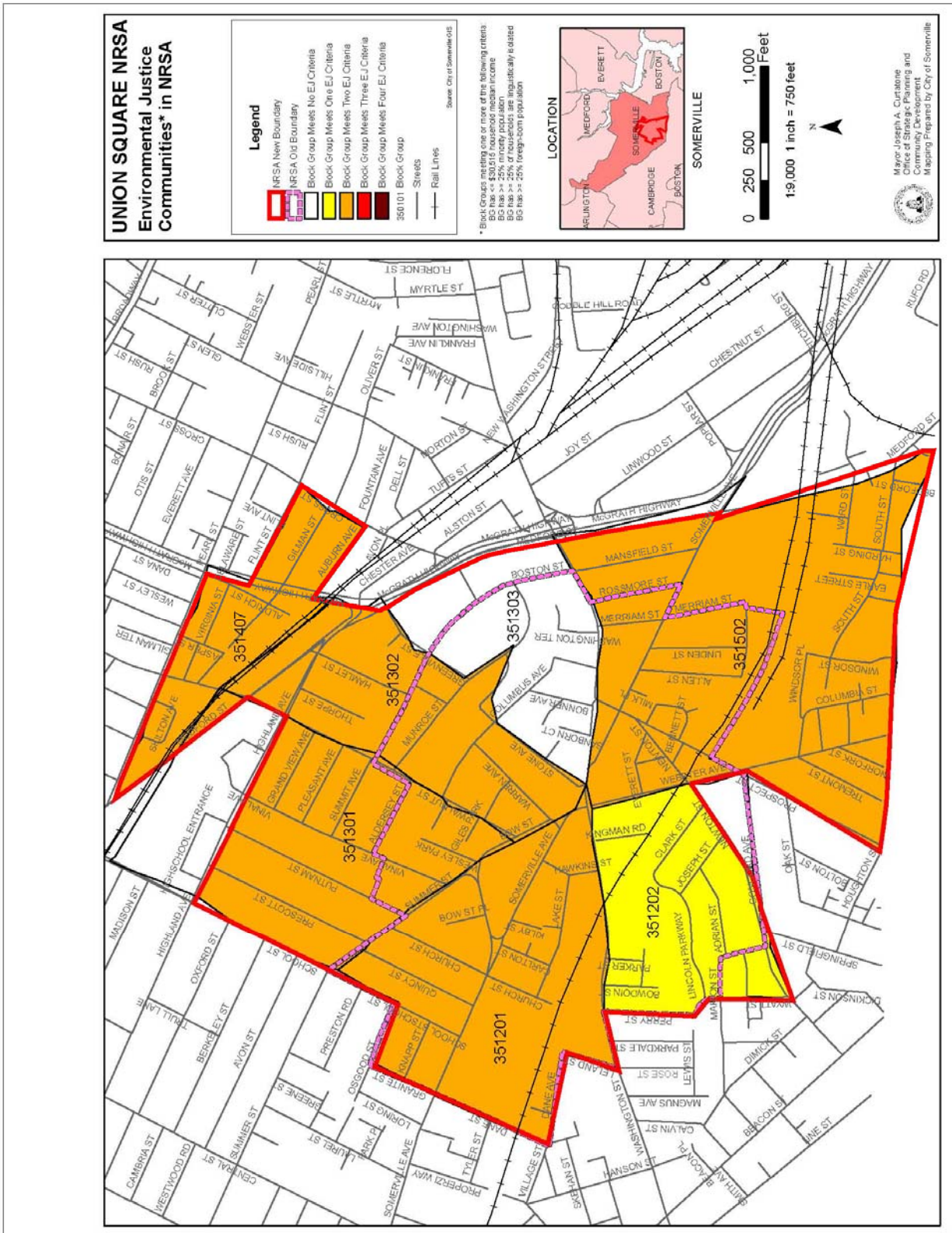














### III. Strategies and Goals (2003-2008)

The following goals and objectives for Union Square were included in the 2004 NRSA:

1. Develop a local economy that emphasizes the tax base, service, residential, shopping and employment needs of the community.
2. Strengthen and market Union Square's image.
3. Pursue urban design projects that create a unified square, are compatible on a pedestrian scale, define the area as a commercial center, and are aesthetically pleasing.
4. Strengthen the role of public places and facilities.
5. Maintain an efficient and thorough system of transportation that balances public transportation, private and commercial vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians that is consistent with Union Square's image as a commercial center.
6. Develop a comprehensive parking management plan.

### IV. Accomplishments (2003 – 2008)

The City of Somerville and its partners have made significant progress in increasing the vitality of Union Square, although more remains to be done. Some of the recent accomplishments include:

#### Union Square Main Streets

In December 2004, the Union Square Main Streets (USMS) organization was incorporated after a series of grassroots efforts to involve the community. Their Executive Director was hired in January 2005 to implement a series of very successful initiatives, described below:



- Media Outreach: secured local and regional coverage in print and electronic media including numerous articles in the Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Stuff at Night, Improper Bostonian, Somerville Journal, Somerville News, Somerville Classifieds, and Weekly Dig. Also, USMS presented its projects on five cable access programs.
- Business Inventory: conducted detailed business inventory and developed database of all businesses in the NRSA of Union Square. Tabulated information and presented as part of the Union Square Visioning Project in September and October. The Business Inventory catalogued all the parcels, buildings, and businesses in the Central Business District of Union Square as well as the businesses of the extended Union Square area. The inventory was first performed in 2005 and was updated in 2007.
- Survey of Union Square Users: developed and implemented Customer Intercept Survey and a Farmers Market Survey in Union Square. Presented information as part of the Visioning Project and made data available on-line. The Customer Intercept Study surveyed passersby on who they were, how they shopped in the Square, and what they thought of the business district. Volunteers provided the fifteen question sheets in four different languages and collected 278 surveys in July, August and September 2005. Several new businesses have opened since the surveys were done and are providing specific goods/services identified in the survey. These include: housewares/gifts (Grand), shoes (Union Boot), books (Hub Comics) and a café (Bloc 11). Additional local serving new businesses include: Master

Printing, Union Square Acupuncture, and Union Square Chiropractic.

- Zoning Use Survey: participated in ArtsUnion Task Force and at community meetings to advise on zoning and permitting changes to create an overlay district that fosters cultural uses and overall economic development.
- Foster New Businesses in Union Square: began detailed research for the fostering of innovative business models such as a Kitchen Incubator, a shared commercial kitchen for new businesses. Attended Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Licensing Board meetings to assist business development. Advised businesses one-on-one as needed.
- Streetscape Improvements: advised and supported ArtsUnion on the selection, placement and installation of artist created street furniture. Consulted with City planners on the selection of streetscape elements such as bus shelters and reconstruction of Somerville Avenue.
- Mural Project: initiated mural creation for fence behind 90 Union Square. Secured five sponsors and recruiting skilled artists.
- Improve Vehicular and Pedestrian Movement and Safety: advocated for effective snow removal and street maintenance to Head of Department of Public Works and Aldermen. Advised City Planners on repainting of lanes, turning and crosswalks.
- Neighborhood Promotion: As a result of marketing and promotional efforts, USMS reports that businesses are seeing an increase in gross sales of between 10% and 30%.

### ArtsUnion

ArtsUnion, a cultural economic development initiative for Union Square began in February 2005. This initiative - a collaboration between OSPCD, the Somerville Arts Council, and community partners - has provided cultural economic development for local businesses, residents, and artists. The effort has five components: art & cultural events, markets, cultural and historical tours, street furniture fabrication, and zoning analysis and reform. A three-year CDBG monetary commitment of \$130,000 secured a matching commitment of \$130,000 from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). MCC matching funds for the fourth year have been secured. Accomplishments have included:

- Producers Series: Working with other independent producers, ArtsUnion has co-produced thirty large scale art/cultural events. Ranging from film/music series to public art exhibits within the square, each event attracted 300 to 1,500 visitors. This work in addition to changing the perception of the square, attracted visitors who subsequently provided additional economic benefit to local business establishments.
- Tours: Tours overseen by ArtsUnion highlighted the city's historic riches, diversity of cultures, and breadth of businesses. Working with the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission, three tours were developed that highlight Union Square's built environment. One tour was expanded to include the development of a self-guided brochure. In addition, a brochure and a series of tours highlighting the Square's ethnic markets were developed. During 2007, ten tours



FIGURE 1: LANZL-MANKER TRASH BARREL

Source: OSPCD 2007

were conducted, attracting major press coverage, new out-of-town audiences, all contributing to support the existing ethnic businesses within the square. In 2005, an Arts Studio tour, with accompanying brochure, highlighted the 50+ studios within the area.

- **Street Furniture:** Ten benches, two trash receptacles, and two information kiosks were designed, fabricated, and installed within the square by Massachusetts-based artists. This work creates both functional, utilitarian amenities for local residents and businesses, while also providing economic development opportunities for local artists/fabricators.
- **Zoning/Infrastructure:** Through numerous community meetings, the hiring of and recommendation by a zoning consultant, an Arts Overlay for Union Square has been developed. The Overlay will provide incentive for developers to expand arts and cultural related development within the square.
- **ArtSpace Improvement program:** Released in 2007, this program mirrors traditional storefront improvement programs but goes further to stimulate economic activity. This program provides financial support for physical improvements to space but also requires the applicant to enhance art and cultural activity within that space.
- **Cultural Economic Development:** Evaluation services by the University of Massachusetts Center for Policy Analysis documented that total economic impact generated by ArtsUnion activities were \$190,296 and \$352,470 for years 2005 and 2006, respectively.

#### Union Square Farmers Market



FIGURE 2: FARMER'S MARKET

Source : OSPCD 2007

The Union Square Main Streets, ArtsUnion and the Federation of Massachusetts Farmers Markets have collaborated to make the Union Square Farmers Market a huge success for the past three years. Attendance has grown to over 1,300 people each week, bringing fresh fruits, vegetables, baked goods and meats to the area. The first year of the Farmers Market, ArtsUnion organized six companion craft markets to take place at the same time. During the second summer, twelve weekly craft markets were organized. This past summer, a shift in focus lead to the development of four larger, 25-30 vendor, thematic markets held in the afternoons to provide more economic development opportunity for vendors and local businesses. The total economic impact from the crafts market alone is estimated at over \$500,000 each year.

#### Fluff Festival and Other Events

The Union Square Main Streets and ArtsUnion organized 2 very successfully festivals based around Marshmallow Fluff, which was invented in Somerville. The Fluff Festival has attracted thousands of visitors to the area. Activities included live music, taste testing of Fluff-related foodstuffs, performance art, and games for children. In August 2007, a "Smell-O-Vision" screening of Willie Wonka & the Chocolate Factory was held. During the screening, the several hundred audience members were treated to the smells of chocolate, peppermint candy, and other smells as shown on the screen.

### Storefront Improvement Program

The Storefront Improvement Program was established in 1980 to keep the City's local business districts vital and to set a design standard for retail shops in Somerville. From 2003 to date, 13 facades have been improved using CDBG funds.

Originally designed to target low/moderate income areas in the City, the eligibility criteria for the Storefront Improvement Program was extended to include micro-enterprises in 2007. This has provided access to the program to low/moderate income businesses owners city-wide. The result was a 50% increase in the number of applications the City received within the first six months of 2007.

Also in 2007, an additional expansion of the Storefront Improvement Program - the Awning / Lighting / Signage Program - was launched to allow business owners to apply for small grants towards the improvement of the physical appearance of their stores, without having to re-do the entire façade.

Following are examples of storefronts that have received City funding towards physical façade improvement since 2003:



FIGURE 3: BLOC 11 Café

Source: OSPCD 2007



FIGURE 4: BLOC 11 Café

Source: OSPCD 2007

### Union Square District Improvement Financing (DIF) Analysis

In order to identify resources to aid in revitalization, in 2006, the City secured consulting services to prepare an analysis of the potential revenues that could be generated by the adoption of a District Improvement Financing (DIF) boundary in Union Square. DIF is a state-operated program that allows authorized jurisdictions to use the growth in property tax increment within identified boundaries for the purposes of re-investment within those boundaries. A DIF would also allow for the bonding of the tax increment in order to expedite key capital improvements. The consultant's analysis made recommendation regarding possible investments in the area, their cost, and means to use DIF to support. In recent months, City staff has further refined the concepts. However, it is anticipated that additional analysis will be required prior to giving a formal recommendation to the City's policy makers.

### Development Implementation Strategy for Union Square

In 2007, the City began working on a Development Implementation Study for Union Square. This study, prepared by an outside consultant, recommends specific action plan steps to jump start development in Union Square. The study analyses several public-private partnerships that could be used as models for the City's efforts in Union Square and recommends that the City initiate an RFQ/RFP process relative to the City-owned parcels in the area. This report further ties into the DIF analysis by making recommendations of needed infrastructure improvements to facilitate development.

### Union Square Rezoning

In the *2003 Union Square Master Plan*, zoning is identified as a key tool in the revitalization of Union Square and encouragement of economic development in the area. A zoning analysis found that while the existing zoning is generally supportive of the type of new development desired in the area, the parking requirements and the number of dwelling units permitted per parcel were found to be highly restrictive for Union Square.

In 2005, the City applied for and received an Adams Arts Grant for economic development that provided an opportunity to examine the Somerville Zoning Ordinance with the wider goal of creating an arts-friendly district in Union Square and foster economic development to make it easier for artists to work in the Square. A series of meetings with an advisory group composed of various stakeholders in Union Square occurred in the summer of 2005 and their feedback was incorporated in the initial recommendation of the draft zoning changes.

A comprehensive working draft was submitted to the Board of Aldermen for public comment in October 2006 and a public community workshop that was scheduled to discuss the proposed zoning and gather feedback. This workshop was quickly followed by a community meeting, a joint Board of Aldermen / Planning Board public hearing, and several Land Use Committee meetings. In March 2007, the later voted to table the amendment in order for staff to revise the zoning and more effectively address the concerns expressed during the review process

Later in the spring of 2007, a community meeting to discuss a revised zoning amendment that incorporated changes recommended in previous public comments. That amendment was submitted to the Board of Aldermen and a joint Board of Aldermen / Planning Board public hearing was held in May 2007. In September, the Board of Aldermen decided to take no action so that additional issues may be resolved within the amendment. Staff is further refining the rezoning and anticipates holding a community meeting and introducing the rezoning to the Board of Aldermen during the winter of 2008. With each version, the draft zoning ordinance is further addressing community concerns while strengthening the economic development potential of the area.

### Union Place

Union Place is a 102-unit development at 411-429 Norfolk Street at Webster Avenue on parcels assembled in what had been industrial sites that housed auto body repair shops. The land had varying levels of contamination that needed to be remediated before construction could begin. The



developers went beyond what was required by the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance making eighteen of the units available for low-income residents. They also solicited extensive input from people who reside in the neighborhood and incorporated their suggestions into the design of the buildings and landscaping. They had overwhelming support from people in the neighborhood as they were proposing a change in use to an area that had been an eyesore for years. The project is presently in its last phase of construction.

### Inclusionary Housing

The City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance has contributed to the development of four new affordable units in the Union Square NRSA. The Union Square Townhouses is a newly constructed twelve (12) unit development with two (2) affordable three-bedroom units on Lake Street. The former Bow Street Police Station Condo development, with eleven units total, included two (2) affordable two-bedroom units. In addition, the building was historically preserved as the developer agreed to restore a third floor that had been previously removed many years ago.

### Housing Rehabilitation & Rental Assistance

Between 2003 and 2007, nearly \$130,000 was spent to rehab 6 properties in the Union Square NRSA. These 6 properties represented a total of 9 units that were rehabbed using CDBG, HOME and lead abatement funds. In addition, through the Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program, two households were stabilized with the goal of securing permanent affordable housing. In program year 2006, approximately \$18,600 was provided to stabilize two households located in the Union Square NRSA.



FIGURE 5: EXISTING CONDITIONS  
SOMERVILLE AVENUE

Source: OSPCD 2007

### Somerville Avenue

The project entails the reconstruction of Somerville Avenue from the Cambridge city line to Union Square, a length of approximately 1.32 miles. The work consists of full depth roadway construction, sidewalk reconstruction with granite curbing and wheelchair ramps, installation of new drain line, renovation of the sewer line, replacement of old traffic signal equipment and signalization of intersections, street lighting poles, planting of new trees, installation of streetscape amenities, signing, pavement markings and landscaping. The reconstructed Avenue will connect Porter Square where there is both a Commuter rail and red Line station to Union Square. Widened sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, bike lanes and streetscape amenities will enhance and provide a safe and inviting environment for resident to stroll along.

### Allen Street Community Garden

In 2007, the City completed construction of two new community gardens using CDBG funds, the Allen Street Garden within the Union Square NARSA and the Durell Garden along Beacon Street. These gardens created 33 new garden plots, expanding the number of plots in the City by over 25%. Three of the plots are raised beds that will provide garden opportunities to the disabled gardens. Both construction projects involved the cleanup of Brownfields sites. CDBG funds leveraged \$200,000 in EPA funds to clean-up the Allen Street garden site and \$192,000 in Urban Self-Help funds to construct the gardens.

### Stone Place Park

The renovated Stone Place Park, located between Stone Place and Homer Square and directly north of Union Square, reopened in fall 2007. This is a passive green space with walkways, stonewall, benches, and an informal play area. Although small, Stone Place Park provides a respite from the activity found in the center of Union Square and provides an attractive connection from nearby residential streets into the heart of Union Square Plaza.

### Corbett – McKenna Park

Located atop Prospect Hill, Corbett-McKenna Park enjoys a superb historic setting overlooking the City of Somerville. The old park was in poor condition for several years prior to the allocation of CDBG funds for its renovation. With the funding in place, the City staff recognized the opportunity to provide a great new space for the community and focused the renovation plans on a new design that both updated amenities for the park and also featured the prominent scenic vista on site. Re-opened in 2004, Corbett-McKenna Park is a brightly colored, historically themed project built on two levels that featured basketball, play features for different age groups, a water feature, and a balcony deck that overlooks both Somerville and the City of Boston.



FIGURE 6: ENTRANCE AND  
BI-LEVEL PARK STRUCTURE  
Source: OSPCD, 2004

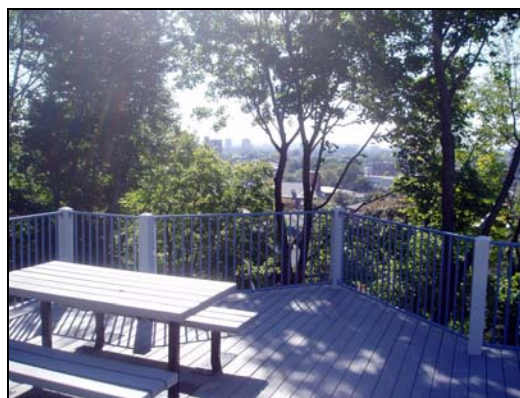


FIGURE 7: PICNIC AREA AND  
SCENIC VISTA  
Source: OSPCD, 2004

### Nunziato Dog Park



A portion of Nunziato Field was converted to an off leash dog park in 2006. It is the first official dog park in the City. This recreational facility allows dogs to play off leash under their owner's supervision. It has created a great meeting place and has given the area resident a sense of community with a gathering spot.

## **V. Needs Assessment**

### ***A. Low-Moderate Income Population***

The Union Square NRSA meets the income criteria for a NRSA outlined in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice CPD-96-01. According to CPD 96-01, an area designated as a NRSA must "contain a percentage of low- and moderate-income residents that is equal to the 'upper quartile percentage' (as computed by HUD pursuant to 24 CFR 570.208 (a) (1) (ii)) or 70 percent, whichever is less but, in any event, not less than 50 percent."

24 CFR 570.208 (a) (1) (ii) states the method for calculating the upper quartile percentage as follows:

" (A) All census block groups in the recipient's jurisdiction shall be rank ordered from the block group of highest proportion of low and moderate income persons to the block group with the lowest. For urban counties, the rank ordering shall cover the entire area constituting the urban county and shall not be done separately for each participating unit of general local government.

(B) In any case where the total number of a recipient's block groups does not divide evenly by four, the block group which would be fractionally divided between the highest and second quartiles shall be considered to be part of the highest quartile.

(C) The proportion of low and moderate income persons in the last census block group in the highest quartile shall be identified. Any service area located within the recipient's jurisdiction and having a proportion of low and moderate income persons at or above this level shall be considered to be within the highest quartile.

(D) If block group data are not available for the entire jurisdiction, other data acceptable to the Secretary may be used in the above calculations."

Based on this methodology, the Union Square NRSA must contain at least 55.2 percent low- and moderate-income residents. The Union Square NRSA, as modified, exceeds that threshold: **57.9 percent** of residents are low- or moderate-income as defined by HUD. Only 2 of the block groups in the Union Square NRSA contain less than 50 percent low- and moderate-income persons, and 2 contain more than 60 percent low- and moderate-income persons.

### ***B. Ethnicity***

The Union Square NRSA is ethnically diverse. 28.54 percent of the residents are races other than white and over 11 percent of the residents are Hispanic – a figure that is higher than the City of Somerville as a whole. A significant number of Portuguese, Brazilian, Haitian, and Asian residents live in the Union Square NRSA. This diversity of population cannot only be seen within the resident population, but also within the diversity of businesses in Union Square – ethnic restaurants and markets abound in the area.

| <b>TABLE 1. RACE AND ETHNICITY</b>               |                          |                    |                           |                    |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
|  | <b>Union Square NRSA</b> |                    | <b>City of Somerville</b> |                    |
|  | <b># of People</b>       | <b>% of People</b> | <b># of People</b>        | <b>% of People</b> |
| White Alone                                      | 7,092                    | 71.46%             | 59,635                    | 77.00%             |
| Black or African American Alone                  | 741                      | 7.47%              | 5,035                     | 6.50%              |
| American Indian and Alaska Native Alone          | 29                       | 0.29%              | 171                       | 0.20%              |
| Asian Alone                                      | 633                      | 7.18%              | 4,990                     | 6.40%              |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone | 4                        | 0.04%              | 50                        | 0.10%              |
| Some Other Race Alone                            | 833                      | 8.39%              | 3,840                     | 5.00%              |
| Two or More Races                                | 593                      | 5.97%              | 3,757                     | 4.80%              |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>9,925</b>             | <b>100.00%</b>     | <b>77,478</b>             | <b>100.00%</b>     |
| Hispanic   | 1,112                    | 11.20%             | 6,786                     | 8.80%              |
| Non-Hispanic                                     | 8,813                    | 88.80%             | 70,692                    | 91.20%             |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>9,925</b>             | <b>100.00%</b>     | <b>77,478</b>             | <b>100.00%</b>     |

Source: 2000 US Census

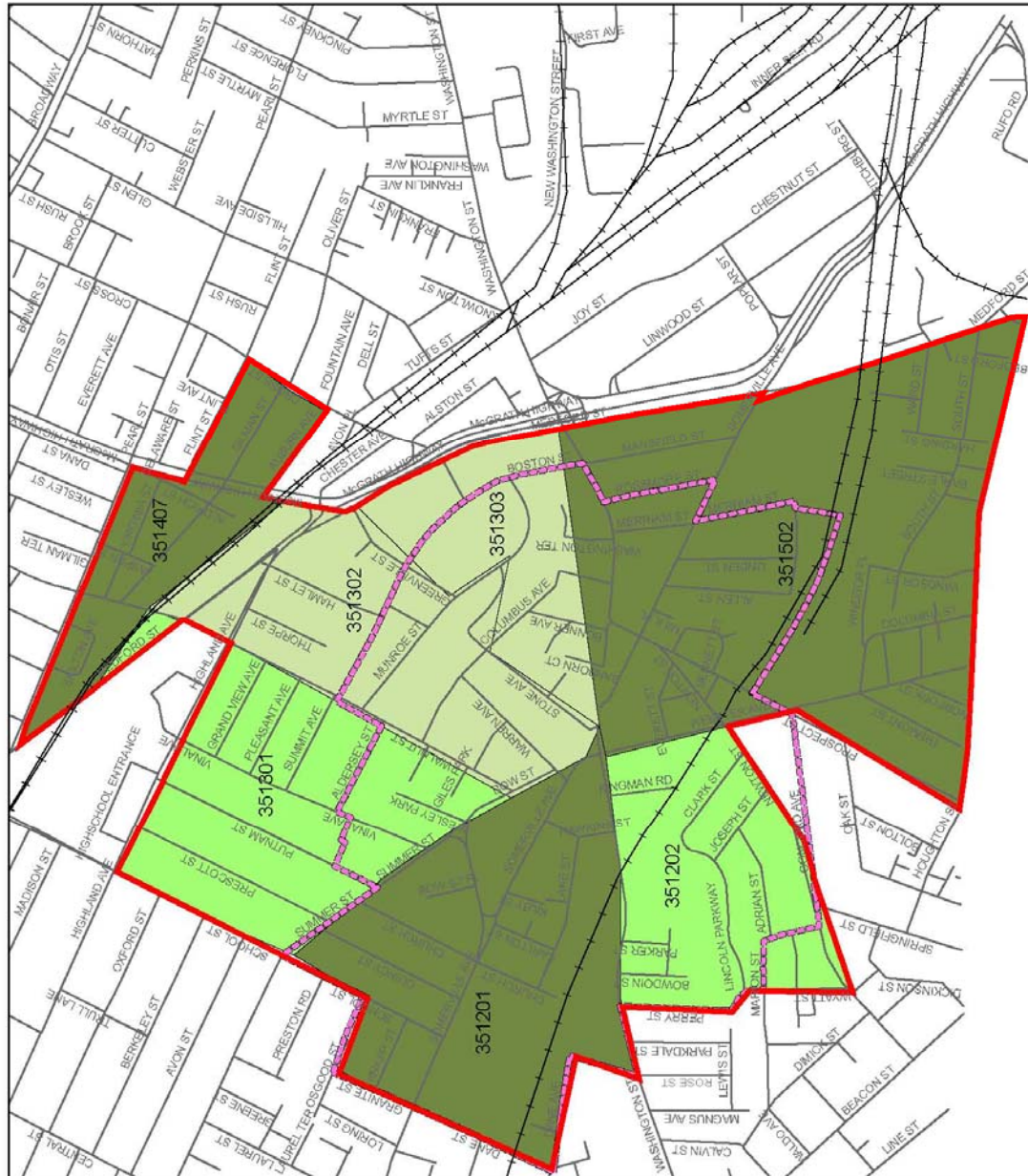
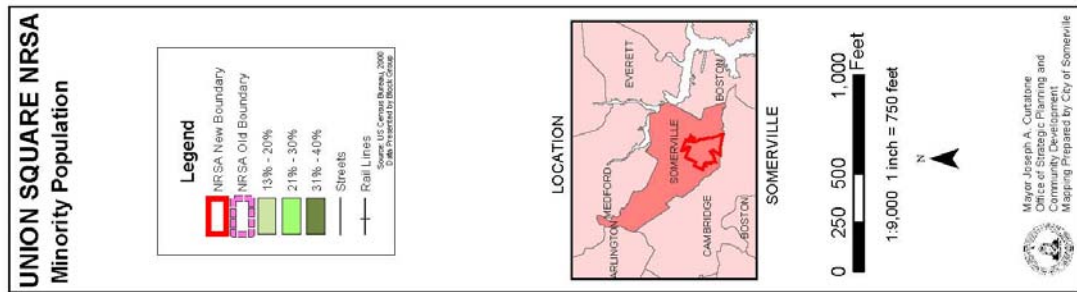
Immigrant and ethnic populations constitute populations of special interest for the revitalization of Union Square. The languages spoken in Union Square include Haitian- Creole, Portuguese, Spanish, Hindi, and several Asian languages.

According to the 2000 Census, between the years 1995 and 2000, 13.89% of the NRSA population moved to the area from a foreign country, with an additional .46% from Puerto Rico. Somerville as a whole had 9.87% of its population arriving from a foreign country during the same period.



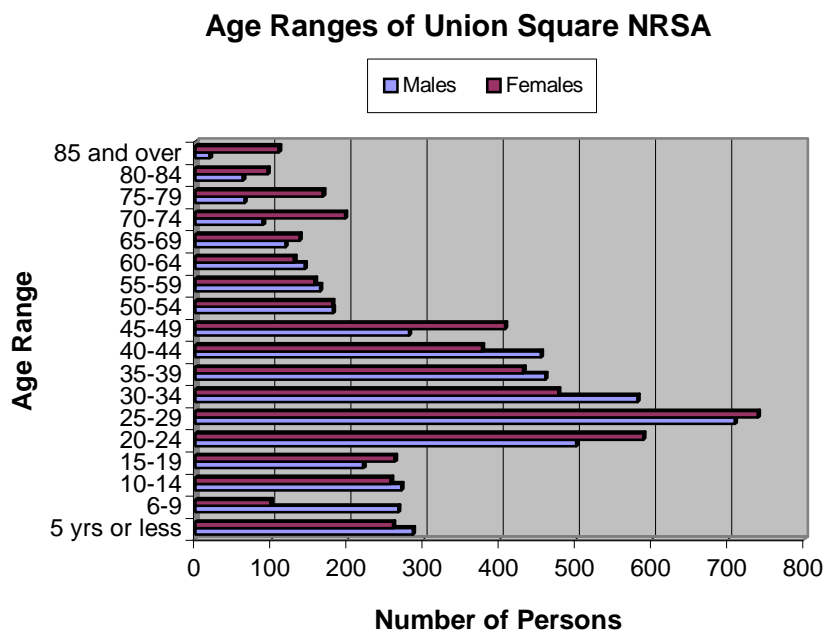
**FIGURE 8: ETHNIC MARKET**

Source: OSPCD, 2007



### C. Age

The population of the Union Square NRSA, like Somerville in general, is significantly younger than that of the state as a whole. The median age in Union Square NRSA is 32.4 years old, compared to 36.5 years old in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Union Square's median is actually higher than the median age for the City of Somerville which is 31.1 years old.



| TABLE 2. MEDIAN AGE    |                   |                    |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|                        | Union Square NRSA | City of Somerville | Commonwealth of Massachusetts |
| Median Age             | 32.4              | 31.1               | 36.5                          |
| Source: 2000 US Census |                   |                    |                               |

### D. Education Levels

Residents of the Union Square NRSA have somewhat less education than residents of Somerville or state residents. Just over 75 percent of Union Square NRSA residents over 25 years old have a high school diploma, compared to almost 85 percent in the state as a whole. Just over 30 percent of Union Square NRSA residents over 25 years old have a Bachelor's degree, which is approximately three quarters of the rate in Somerville overall.

| TABLE 3. EDUCATION           |                   |                    |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|                              | Union Square NRSA | City of Somerville | Commonwealth of Massachusetts |
| % HS Graduate or Higher      | 75.31%            | 80.60%             | 84.80%                        |
| % Bachelors Degree or Higher | 30.93%            | 40.60%             | 34.20%                        |
| Source: 2000 US Census       |                   |                    |                               |

### ***E. Employment***

Residents of Union Square are somewhat less likely to work in management/professional occupations than residents of Somerville as a whole, and more likely to work in services or transportation/production jobs. Less than 1/5 of all employed Union Square residents actually work in the City of Somerville, although low, this ratio is actually higher than the citywide figure.

| <b>TABLE 4. OCCUPATION</b>                                 |                          |                   |                           |                   |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
|  | <b>Union Square NRSA</b> |                   | <b>City of Somerville</b> |                   |
|  | <b>Total #</b>           | <b>% of Total</b> | <b>Total #</b>            | <b>% of Total</b> |
| Employed Civilians 16 years and over                       | 5,623                    | 100.00%           | 45,967                    | 100.0%            |
| Management, Professional and Related Occupations           | 2,110                    | 37.52%            | 21,997                    | 47.9%             |
| Service Occupations  | 1,296                    | 23.05%            | 7,514                     | 16.3%             |
| Sales and Office Occupations                               | 1,174                    | 20.88%            | 10,216                    | 22.2%             |
| Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 656                      | 11.67%            | 3,915                     | 8.5%              |
| Construction, extraction and maintenance occupations       | 387                      | 6.88%             | 2,312                     | 5.0%              |
| Farming, Fishing and Forestry Occupations                  | 0                        | 0.00%             | 13                        | 0.0%              |
| Work in Somerville   | 1,019                    | 18.55%            | 7,092                     | 15.77%            |
| Work outside Somerville                                    | 4,475                    | 81.45%            | 37,885                    | 84.23%            |
| Source: 2000 US Census                                     |                          |                   |                           |                   |

The median household income in the Union Square NRSA is just 82.0 percent of that in the state overall. Union Square NRSA's unemployment rate is significant higher than both the state and city average.

| <b>TABLE 5. INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT</b> |                          |                           |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                       | <b>Union Square NRSA</b> | <b>City of Somerville</b> | <b>Commonwealth of Massachusetts</b> |
| Median Household Income               | \$41,509                 | \$46,315                  | \$50,502                             |
| % in Labor Force                      | 70.09%                   | 70.6%                     | 66.2%                                |
| Unemployed                            | 4.53%                    | 2.5%                      | 3.0%                                 |
| Source: 2000 U.S. Census              |                          |                           |                                      |

### ***F. Housing Assessment***

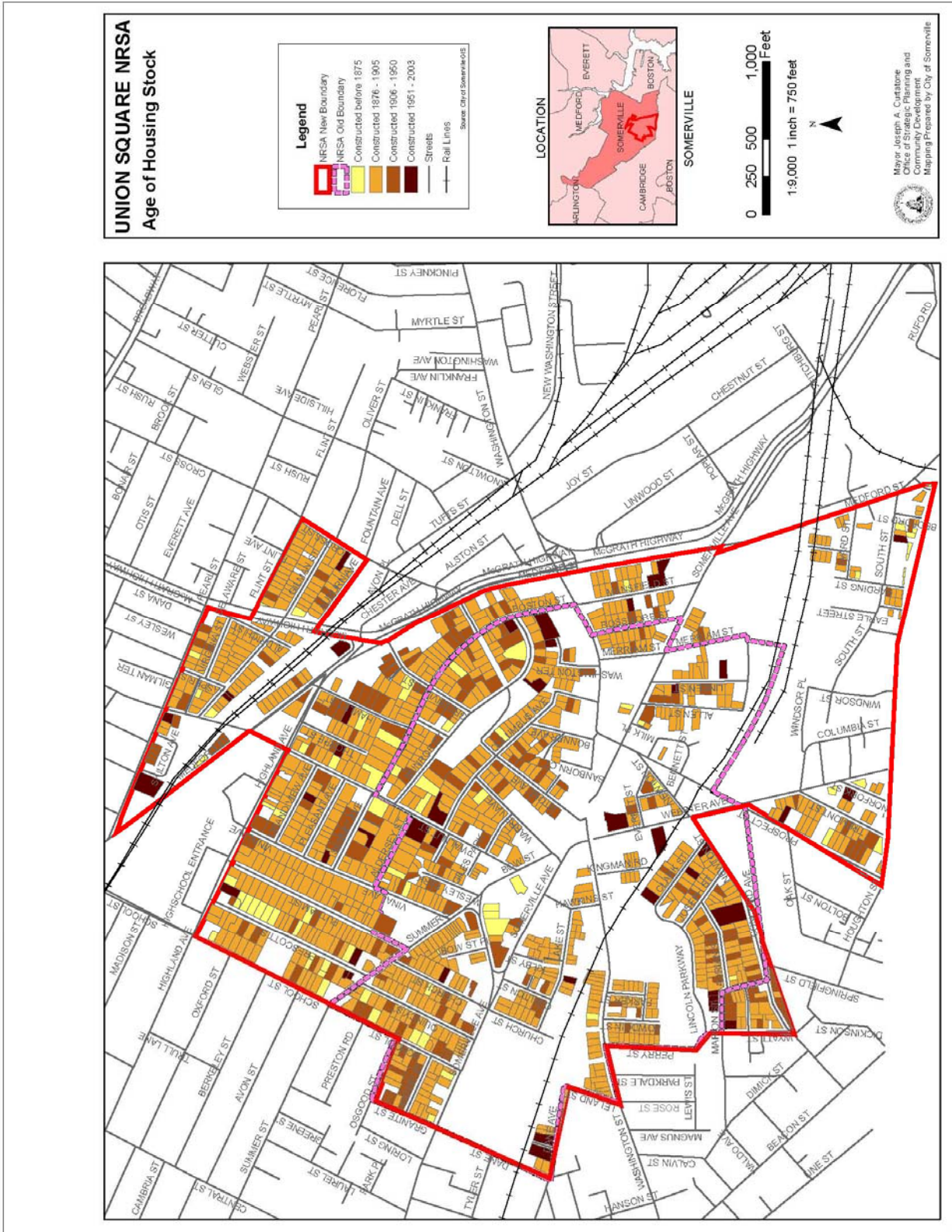
According to the 2000 Census, the block groups intersecting the Union Square NRSA contain a total of 4,358 housing units.

#### Age, Condition and Size of Housing Stock

The NRSA is made up of a variety of housing types, 83.6% of which are housing structures with 2 or more units. The housing in the NRSA is quite old (90% of units were built prior to 1925). This provides the area an interesting and historic character that is not found in many communities around the county, but does represent challenges in terms of property maintenance and upkeep.

| <b>TABLE 6: AGE OF BUILDINGS IN NRSA</b> |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b><i>Year Built</i></b>                 | <b><i>Number of Buildings</i></b> |
| Before 1801                              | 1                                 |
| 1801-1825                                | 2                                 |
| 1826-1850                                | 6                                 |
| 1851-1875                                | 61                                |
| 1876-1900                                | 1036                              |
| 1901-1925                                | 249                               |
| 1926-1950                                | 13                                |
| 1951-1975                                | 11                                |
| After 1975                               | 158                               |
|  |                                   |
| Source: Somerville Assessor's Office     |                                   |



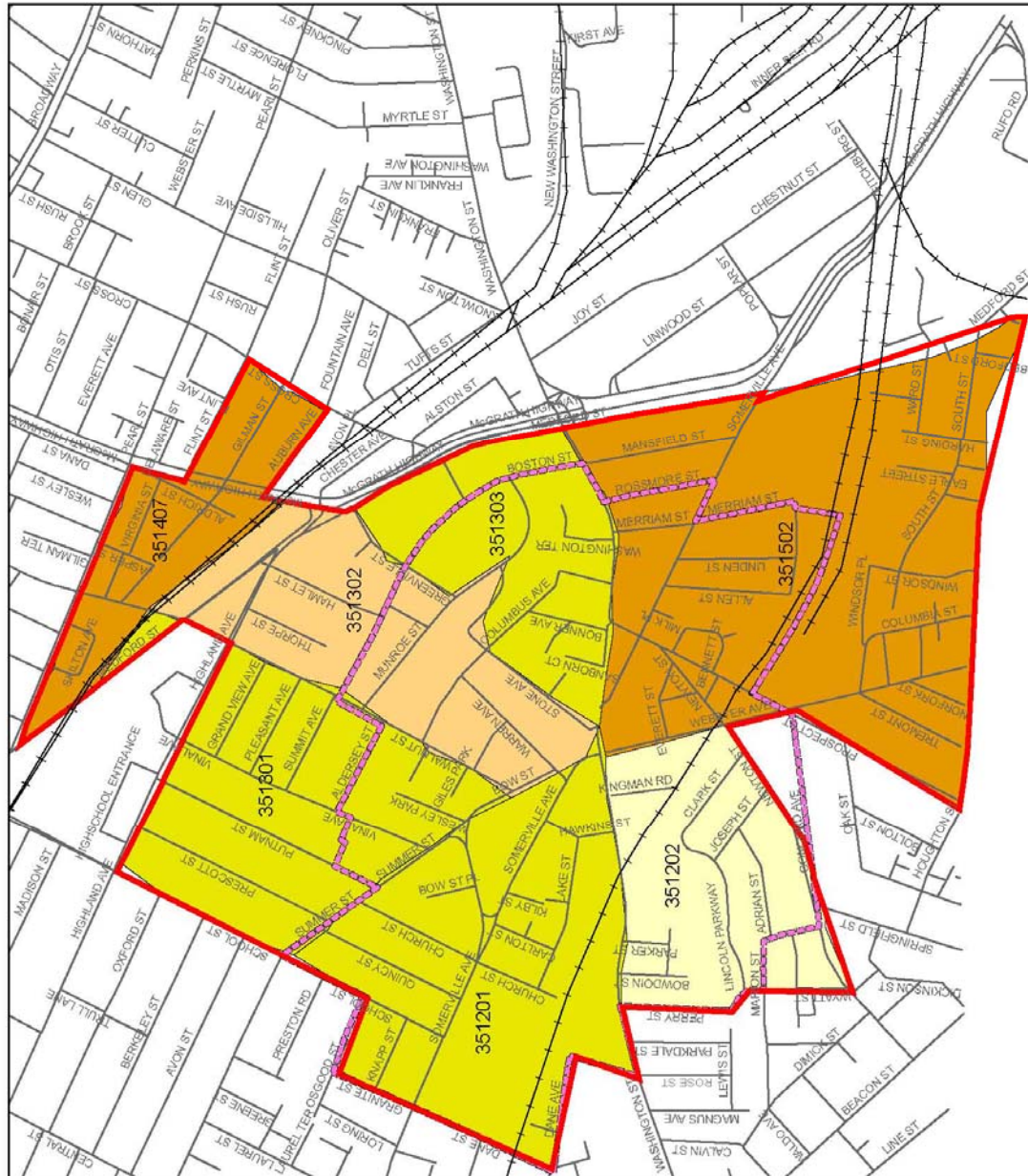
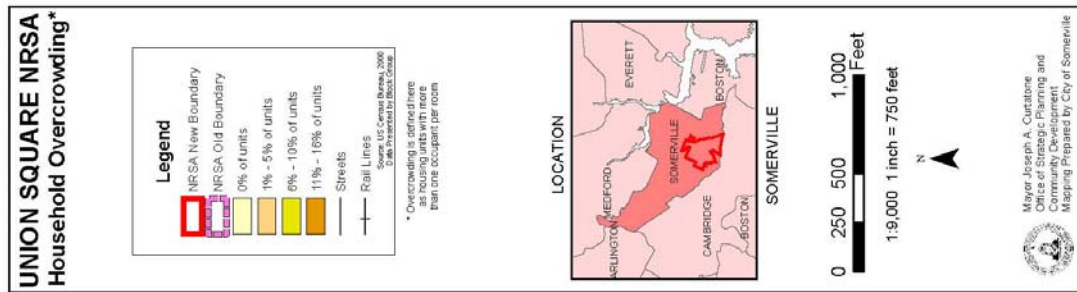




### Overcrowding

Housing overcrowding is defined as more than one occupant per room. In the Union Square NRSA, occupied housing units experiencing overcrowding is nearly 8%, which is almost 3 percentage points higher than the city as a whole.

| <b>TABLE 7: HOUSEHOLD OVERCROWDING</b> |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
|  | <b>Total<br/>Occupied<br/>Housing Units</b> | <b>Total occ<br/>units w / 1 or<br/>less occupants<br/>per room</b> | <b>Total occupied<br/>units w / &gt; 1<br/>occupant per<br/>room</b> | <b>Percentage of<br/>housing units w<br/>/ overcrowding</b> |
| Union Square NRSA                      | 4,206                                       | 3,895   | 311  | 7.98%   |
| Somerville                             | 31,555                                      | 30,006  | 1,549  | 5.16%   |
| Source: 2000 US Census                 |   |   |  |   |



### Renters versus Homeowners

Of the occupied units in the strategy area, approximately 73% are renter occupied as compared to Somerville as a whole, which had 69% of its total housing units renter occupied in 2000. As has been noted in the City's Consolidated Plan, Somerville's rate of homeownership is considerably lower than other U.S. communities.

| <b>TABLE 8: TENANCY</b> |                     |                        |                        |                    |                         |                     |                    |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                         | <b>Total Occ HH</b> | <b>Total Hsg Units</b> | <b>Owner Occ Units</b> | <b>% Owner Occ</b> | <b>Renter Occ Units</b> | <b>% Renter Occ</b> | <b>Avg HH Size</b> | <b>Avg Fam Size</b> |
| Union Square NRSA Area  | 4,206               | 4,358                  | 1,112                  | 26.44%             | 3,094                   | 73.56%              | 2.35               | 3.15                |
| Somerville              | 31,555              | 32,477                 | 9,656                  | 30.6%              | 21,899                  | 69.4%               | 2.38               | 3.06                |
| Source: 2000 US Census  |                     |                        |                        |                    |                         |                     |                    |                     |

The median household income in the Union Square NRSA is 10% lower than the City average and with rents as high as they are, the burden for renters in Union Square exceeds the citywide average.

| <b>TABLE 9: RENT BURDEN</b> |                          |                           |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|                             | <b>Union Square NRSA</b> | <b>City of Somerville</b> |
| Median HH Income (annual)   | \$41,509                 | \$46,315                  |
| Median rent (annual)        | \$9,660                  | \$10,488                  |
| Rent Burden*                | 23.27%                   | 22.64%                    |
| Source: 2000 US Census      |                          |                           |

\* Defined as percent of median income to pay median rent

In fact, nearly 30% of NRSA residents are spending in excess of 35% of their income for housing; over 40% are spending in excess of 30% of income for housing. When such a high percentage of household income is being used for housing, this constrains their ability to meet other household needs, such as food and healthcare, much less support local shopping districts.

### Home Values and Rents

Rents in Union Square in 2000 were approximately 8% below the citywide average. Nevertheless, due to the lower incomes in the area, the rent burden as percentage of household income was significantly higher than for the city. In fact, close to 1/3 of the residents spent in excess of 35% of income for rent. The impacts of the high cost of housing affects not only households' ability to meet basic daily needs including food, clothing, and healthcare, but impact the area's buying power and attractiveness to new businesses considering locating in Union Square.

| <b>TABLE 10: HOUSEHOLDS BEARING HIGH RENT BURDEN</b> |                    |                                       |   |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
|  | <b>Median Rent</b> | <b>Gross Rent 30-34% of HH Income</b> | <b>Gross Rent &gt; 35% of HH Income</b> |
| Union Square NRSA                                    | \$805              | 11.34%                                | 29.15%                                  |
| City of Somerville                                   | \$874              | 8.6%                                  | 28.2%                                   |
| Source: 2000 US Census                               |                    |                                       |   |

The median sales price of \$360,000 appears high on its face, but may reflect the fact that nearly 84% of residential parcels in the NRSA contain 2 or more units. The parcels sold for slightly higher than the assessed value indicating that housing costs were likely rising in the area.

| <b>TABLE 11. ASSESSED VALUES AND RECENT SALES (2002-2007) IN NRSA</b> |                      |                   |                         |                           |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | <b>Total Parcels</b> | <b># of Sales</b> | <b>Med Sales Price*</b> | <b>Med Assessed Value</b> |
| Residential   | 1,632                | 477               | \$360,000               | \$341,600                 |

Source: City of Somerville Assessing Department

\* All sales under \$100,000 were excluded, under the assumption that those sales were not market value sales, but rather transactions between related people, etc.

### Vacancy Rates

In 2000, there was a 3.49% vacancy rate in the NRSA, while Somerville as a whole had a vacancy rate of just 2.8%. Both of these figures represent very low vacancy rates and nationally, low vacancy rates are known to contribute to increases in rent costs. Table 12 compares housing occupancy for the study area and the City as a whole.

| <b>TABLE 12: VACANCY RATES</b> |                     |                    |                  |              |                     |                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|
|                                | <b>Total Occ HH</b> | <b>Total Units</b> | <b>Occ Units</b> | <b>% Occ</b> | <b>Vacant Units</b> | <b>% Vacant</b> |
| Union Square NRSA Area         | 4,206               | 4,358              | 4,206            | 96.51%       | 152                 | 3.49%           |
| Somerville                     | 31,555              | 32,477             | 31,555           | 97.2%        | 922                 | 2.8%            |

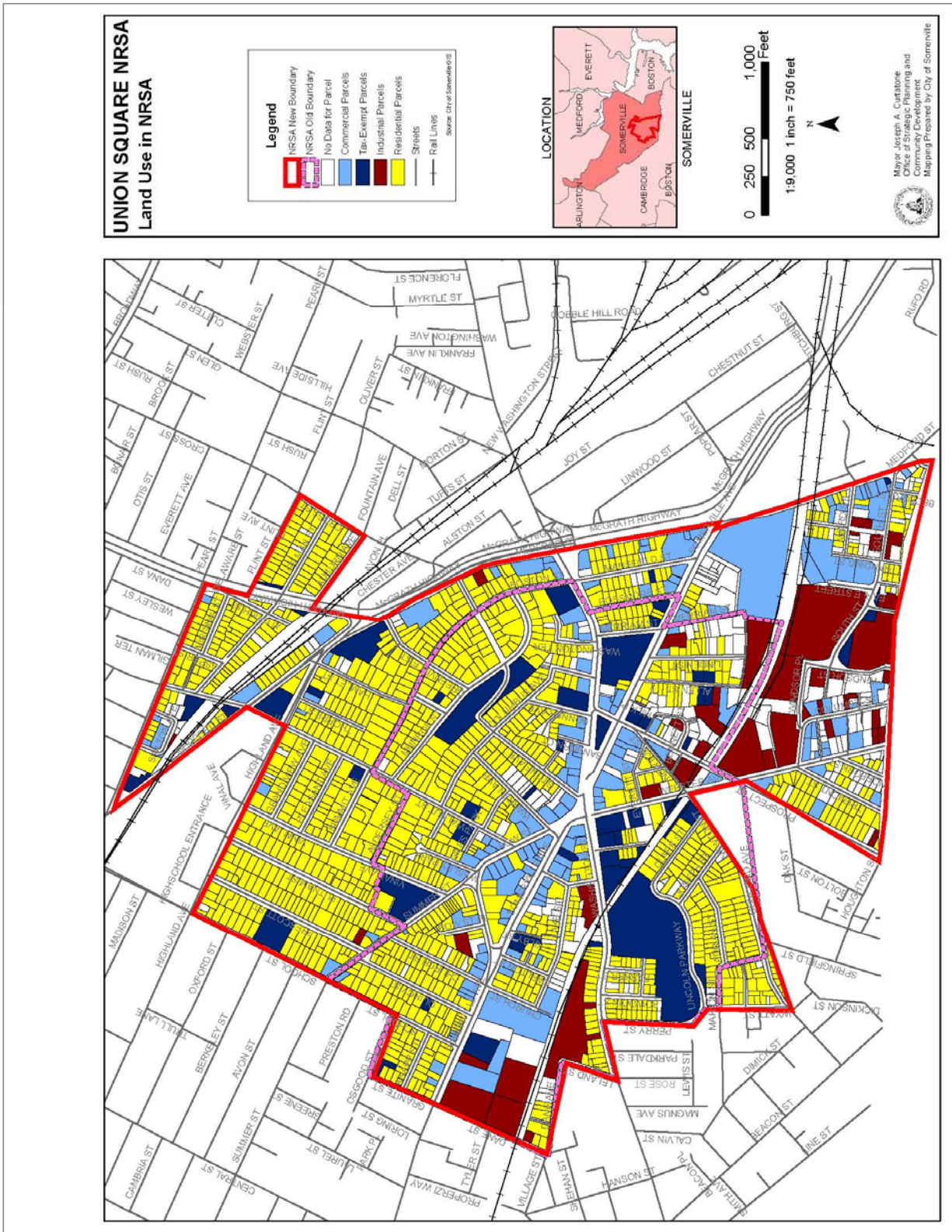
Source: 2000 US Census

### **G. Economic Assessment**

Union Square has a substantial number of restaurants and specialty foods/small grocers as part of its commercial base. It also has several automobile supply and repair establishments. However, commercial uses only constitute about 13.5% of the land area in the Study Area. The total land area by use category is listed below:

| <b>TABLE 13: NRSA LAND USES</b>    |                                |                      |                   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Land Use</b>                    | <b>Land Area (Square Feet)</b> | <b>% of Subtotal</b> | <b>% of Total</b> |
| Tax Exempt                         |                                |                      | 10.6%             |
| ▪ Charitable organization          | 167,750                        | 1.9%                 | 1.2%              |
| ▪ Churches                         | 98,973                         | 1.1%                 | 0.7%              |
| ▪ Government                       | 503,735                        | 5.6%                 | 3.8%              |
| ▪ Housing Authority                | 111,036                        | 1.2%                 | 0.8%              |
| ▪ Schools                          | 303,453                        | 3.4%                 | 2.3%              |
| ▪ Open Space/vacant                | 244,282                        | 2.7%                 | 1.8%              |
| Commercial                         | 1,811,646                      | 20.3%                | 13.5%             |
| Industrial                         | 1,022,150                      | 11.4%                | 7.6%              |
| Housing                            | 4,672,756                      | 52.3%                | 34.8%             |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>                    | 8,935,781                      | 100.0%               | 66.5%             |
| Roadways/Railways/ Misc. Utilities | 4,497,079                      |                      | 33.5%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | 13,432,860                     |                      | 100%              |





According to City Assessors data for 2007, the value of the Union Square CBD District is as follows:

|                               |              |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Total Land Value              | \$37,247,000 |
| + <u>Total Building Value</u> | \$35,945,000 |
| = TOTAL                       | \$73,192,500 |

Lower property values in relation to other areas in the Boston region provide an attractive opportunity for developers. However, affordable acquisition costs also mean rents commensurate with these property values. Therefore, property owners pay a greater percentage of their square foot rental income toward property taxes. In addition, as rental rates increase, existing businesses may not be able to afford their current location and may be forced out of Union Square.

A recent survey of asking office space rents in Union Square finds a range from \$12-24 per square foot, as compared to the fourth quarter 2007 average asking rents of \$54.80 in Boston and \$52.66 in Cambridge. This pattern of rents and sales provides Union Square with a competitive advantage in relation to other commercial centers in the region. Some start-up companies within the region may prefer the lower rental cost associated with adaptive reuse and renovation of existing buildings.

#### Employment in Union Square

Union Square primarily contains a mix of retail businesses, restaurants, and government or non-profit offices. Most of the operations are modest in size and the Square does not contain any large-scale employers. Government operations have a significant presence in the NRSA including, but not limited to, U.S. Postal Service, City of Somerville Public Safety Building, and the recently re-opened Argenziano Elementary School. Some of the non-profit agencies include: Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS); Cambridge and Somerville Program for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Rehabilitation (CASPAR); RESPOND, a domestic violence agency; Massachusetts Alliance for Portuguese Speakers (MAPS); Catholic Charities; Union Square Main Streets; and Somerville Community Access Television.

Along with the Brickbottom District, Union Square is well recognized as containing a concentration of artists or arts-related businesses. These include architect offices and landscape architecture offices.

The major employment centers in the Union Square NRSA are the following:

- U.S. Postal Service: approximately 120 jobs;
- Public Safety Building (police and fire stations): approximately 136 jobs in Police Department;
- Argenziano Elementary School: approximately 70 jobs; and,
- Walnut Street Center: approximately 100 jobs.

#### Business Mix

Union Square lacks some of the essential retail and service establishments that create linkages among businesses and promote pedestrian activity. For example, the numerous restaurants in Union Square



are destinations and in some cases, anchors in the Square. However, additional activities that are often associated with a dining experience are not available – there are no culture and entertainment uses such as a theater, galleries or artist studios; and few retail stores open in the evening hours. These types of uses support the existing anchors and contribute to more pedestrian activity on the street, contributing to a more vibrant Square. The Union Square Central Business District lacks traditional retail shops. There is only one clothing shop, and no gift stores, toy stores, hobby shops, bookstores, health stores or pharmacies.

Based on a list of traditional downtown retailers provided by the *National Main Street Center* of the *National Trust for Historic Preservation*, there are numerous retail categories that are absent in Union Square. However, there are many service uses that currently exist in Union Square. Although each community's market opportunities are unique and should be based on the realities of the local market, these lists provide a starting point in determining the types of uses that may benefit Union Square.

| <b>TABLE 14: RETAIL USES</b>                 |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Retail uses currently in Union Square</b> | <b>Retail uses absent from Union Square</b> |
| Antiques                                     | Appliances                                  |
| Auto dealers                                 | Art Supply                                  |
| Auto supply                                  | Bakery                                      |
| Bars and pubs                                | Balloons                                    |
| Beauty supply                                | Bike shop                                   |
| Book publishing                              | Book store                                  |
| Clothing (Brazilian)                         | Camera/photo                                |
| Comics                                       | Candies and nuts                            |
| Computers/software                           | Cards                                       |
| Florists (not in traditional sense)          | Carpet/floors                               |
| Framing                                      | Coin shop                                   |
| Furniture                                    | Cookies                                     |
| Gas station                                  | Crafts                                      |
| Garden supplies                              | Department store                            |
| Grocery                                      | Drapery/blinds                              |
| Jewelry                                      | Drug store                                  |
| Liquor store                                 | Electronics                                 |
| Optical                                      | Fabrics/sewing                              |
| Pet store/Veterinarian Clinic                | Formal wear                                 |
| Restaurants                                  | Galleries                                   |
| Shoe stores                                  | Gifts                                       |
| Tobacco                                      | Glass                                       |
| Upholstery                                   | Hardware                                    |
| Variety store                                | Health foods                                |
| Used Merchandise                             | Hearing aides                               |
|  | Hobbies/games                               |
|  | Kitchen equipment                           |
|  | Lamps/lighting                              |
|  | Luggage/leather                             |
|  | Linens                                      |
|  | Lingerie                                    |
|  | Medical supply                              |

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
|  | Musical instruments  |
|  | Newsstand            |
|  | Office furnishings   |
|  | Office supply        |
|  | Paint                |
|  | Records, tapes, CD's |
|  | Sporting goods       |
|  | Stationery           |
|  | Toys                 |
|  | Trophies             |
|  | Wallpaper            |

**TABLE 15: SERVICE USES**

| Service uses currently in Union Square | Services not available in Union Square |
|--|--|
| Acupuncture                            | Advertising                            |
| Architects/Planners                    | Airline offices                        |
| Auto repair                            | Answering service                      |
| Banks                                  | Appraisers                             |
| Beauty salons/Barber shops             | Beauty School                          |
| Child Day Care                         | Brokers, investment                    |
| Chiropractor                           | Car rental                             |
| Computer services                      | Clock repair                           |
| Dance studio (karate)                  | Credit unions                          |
| Dentist                                | Coin arcade                            |
| Doctors Office                         | Collection services                    |
| Dry-Cleaning                           | Costume shops                          |
| Educational                            | Couriers                               |
| Funeral                                | Delivery service                       |
| Health clinics                         | Electrical repair                      |
| Insurance agent                        | Employment agency                      |
| Law offices                            | Graphic design                         |
| Photocopy                              | Health club                            |
| Photography studio                     | Hotels and motels                      |
| Post Office                            | Income tax                             |
| Real estate                            | Interior design                        |
| Social services                        | Janitorial service                     |
| Tailoring                              | Limousine service                      |
| Travel agents                          | Locksmiths                             |
| Video rental (non-English)             | Market research                        |
|  | Mailing service                        |
|  | Messenger service                      |
|  | Movie theatre                          |
|  | Package/shipping                       |
|  | Photo finishing lab                    |
|  | Secretarial service                    |
|  | Security/detective                     |
|  | Shoe repair                            |
|  | Sign shop                              |
|  | Tanning salon                          |

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
|  | Tattoo                   |
|  | Temporary Agency         |
|  | Ticket outlets           |
|  | Title company            |
|  | Uniform supply           |
|  | Utility customer service |

### Economic Trends

Very limited commercial development has occurred in Union Square in recent years. However, the Union Square Main Streets organization, in collaboration with ArtsUnion, has drawn considerable positive public attention to the area in recent years. The annual Farmers Market and Crafts Fair and multiple annual events (including the Fluff Festival) have brought thousands of visitors to Union Square and created considerable media attention. Creating this positive atmosphere in the Square is a key step to attracting additional private investment and it appears to having some success. In recent months a favored restaurant has initiated construction to more than double in size, a café has opened and its competitor has increased hours of operation, and interest exists in opening a home goods store beneath a new architecture firm.

That said, the single greatest catalyst to large-scale development in Union Square will be the implementation of the long-awaited Green Line Extension. The State Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) has initiated the environmental review process for the extension and the Governor recently committed \$800 million in this year's bond bill for the design and construction of the line.

## ***H. Infrastructure in Union Square***

### **Water System**

The water system is provided by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, a regional water supplier.

### **Electrical System**

The electrical system is generally adequate although dependent on regional supply and subject to restrictions in the peak summer months.

### **Telecommunication System**

The telecommunications infrastructure within Union Square consists of numerous cable companies with facilities running through Union Square. The city has fiber optic lines which terminate within the square coming from the eastern section of the city (Washington St). These fiber optic lines service all city buildings. Also within the square are cable lines owned by Verizon, Comcast and RCN.

### **Stormwater/Sanitary Sewer Systems**

Now underway, the 1.26 mile reconstruction of Somerville Avenue will address long standing infrastructure issues and will not only address regular flooding conditions, but will provide for the long needed separation of stormwater and sanitary sewer systems. However, the pipelines being laid terminate at the western side of Union Square. Analysis will need to be done to determine the

extent of issues within Union Square and to initiate design solutions that will continue the infrastructure investment being made on Somerville Avenue further to the east towards the Charles River outflow.

### **Transportation Systems**

The roadway and transit system are well-recognized challenges within Union Square. The Square's location at the intersection of several major arterials providing cross-town and regional highway system access adds to the congestion of local streets. Union Square contains a network of arterial roads leading to Cambridge and Boston as well as rail tracks of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail. The Union Square Study Area is served by several bus routes and is a hub for MBTA bus service.



FIGURE 9: STREETSCAPE ALTERNATIVE

Source: Edwards & Kelcey, 2002

As noted above, Union Square has been the subject of considerable prior study. The Union Square Transportation Plan completed in 2002 provided two alternatives to address congestion in the Square and to balance the needs of the many users including vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, residents, businesses, visitors, etc. Neither of the two alternatives received a community consensus and, utilizing State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funds, the City intends to reevaluate the findings of the 2002 study and identify additional alternatives to present to the community in upcoming months.

### ***I. Public Service Facilities***

Union Square is the location of several civic and public service agencies. These institutions and organizations are potential generators of pedestrian life and sales in the area. They include the following:

- Public Safety Building (220 Washington Street);
- U.S. Post Office (237 Washington Street); and,
- Argenziano School (290 Washington Street).

The Union Square NRSA contains some public parks, playgrounds, and open space. These include:

- Stone Place Park – Located between Stone Place and Homer Square and directly north of Union Square, Stone Place Park was renovated and reopened in fall 2007. It is a passive green space with walkways, stonewall, benches, and an informal play area.
- Walnut Street Park and Community Garden – On Walnut Street opposite City Recreation

Offices, this park contains play equipment, a water spray feature, and community garden.

- Allen Street Community Garden – Located at 30 Allen Street, this garden was constructed and opened in 2007 and includes fifteen garden plots including one ADA accessible raised bed.
- Prospect Hill Park and Monument – The Prospect Hill Monument and Park was completed in 1903 and built to commemorate the Revolutionary and Civil War forts and events that occurred on the Hill. The Grand Union Flag (first flag of the Union) is raised there on January 1, every year.
- Corbett McKenna – On Prospect Hill, adjacent to Prospect Hill Park, Corbett-McKenna was renovated in 2004. This park includes play structures, water spray, a full basketball court, and a dramatic elevated picnic/viewing deck.
- Nunziato Field – On Summer Street at Vinal Avenue, Nunziato Field is the location of the former Nunziato School demolished in the 1990's. This green space accommodates football, soccer, Ultimate Frisbee, and kickball, and includes tables and benches for picnics and visitors.
- Nunziato Dog Park – On Summer Street at Putnam Street. In 2006, this portion of Nunziato Field was opened as a separate off-leash recreational area.
- The Growing Center – On Vinal Avenue, contains a labyrinth, gardens, outdoor classroom and performance space.
- Quincy Street Park – On Quincy Street, this is an informal passive green space designed and maintained by a neighborhood group. The park contains benches and gardens.
- Milk Row Cemetery – On Somerville Avenue, Milk Row Cemetery was founded by Timothy Tufts in 1803 and has recently been given new life by the Historic Preservation Commission. It contains the first non-military monument to the fallen soldiers of the Civil War.
- Lincoln Park – Located behind the Argenziano Elementary School on Washington Street. This park includes play structures, basketball courts, soccer and baseball fields.

Identifying and improving additional open space in the Union Square Study Area has been identified as high priority for the surrounding community.

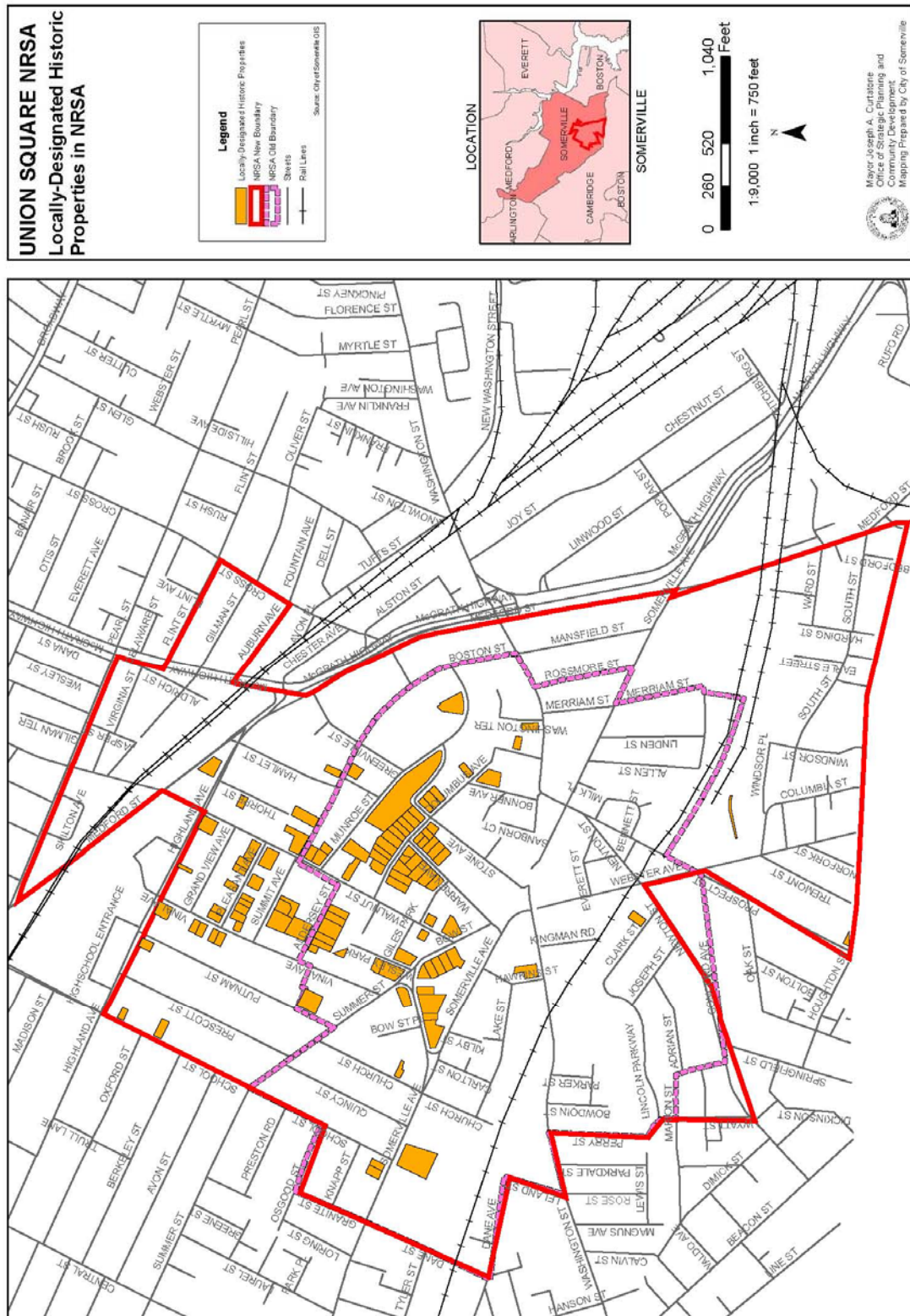
### ***J. Historic Preservation***

The Union Square NRSA holds a wealth of historic parcels in variety of styles. These areas are most heavily found in the Union Square Central Business District and the in the Prospect Hill area just to its north. Some of these examples include notable Queen Anne and Greek Revival houses boasting views overlooking Cambridge and Boston. As in the East Somerville NRSA, an important goal within the Union Square NRSA is to take advantage of its richness in architecture and ensure it is properly appreciated.

The Union Square Central Business District is the oldest commercial district in Somerville. A thriving commercial center at the beginning of the twentieth century, Union Square hosts a number of historical treasures. It is the site of the Bow Street Local Historic District (LHD), which was one of the first such districts approved in Somerville. Buildings adjacent to the Bow Street LHD on Summer Street are currently being proposed for addition LHD designations with the goal of forming a coherent streetscape.

The Union Square NRSA also covers dramatic Prospect Hill, which is one of Somerville's seven major hills. The area, which affords panoramic views of Boston and Cambridge, has several LHDs on its steep south slope as well as scattered to the east and north of its summit. On the eastern flank, towards Spring Hill, lie the Pleasant Avenue LHD and Aldersey/Summit LHD. The south side contains the large Warren Avenue/Columbus Avenue LHD leading down hill to the Bow Street LHD. Union Square occupies level, formerly marshy and sandy terrain once associated with creeks associated with the Miller's River.

Prospect Hill has several multi-building and single building LHDs. Eventually all the LHDs on Prospect Hill should be linked to form one large LHD with Vinal Avenue and Highland Avenue serving as the logical western and northern boundaries while further study is needed to determine the extent of the northeastern, eastern and southeastern boundaries.





## **VI. Prioritization of Needs**

### ***A. Methodology***

The Union Square NRSA takes advantage of the previous work done in the study area and additional analysis. All studies done to date within the study area were compiled (for a full list, see the Bibliography.) Based on the requirements of CPD 96-01, gaps in this existing information were identified and additional analysis was completed. In particular, data from the 2000 U.S. Census has been used to gain a current understanding of the state of the study area. In addition, an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the area was completed. Finally, performance measures and benchmarks were identified and documented.

### ***B. Existing Studies***

This document builds on several planning processes that are underway or completed for Union Square NRSA. These planning efforts both provide a baseline for the Union Square NRSA and allow the City to take advantage of work that has already been done and focus the NRSA effort on achieving the goals of the CDBG program.

The *Union Square Master Plan* was adopted by the Board of Aldermen in April 2003. This plan had a number of important recommendations including developing a local economy that emphasizes the service, residential, shopping and employment needs of the community and to pursue urban design projects that are compatible with the pedestrian scale and are aesthetically pleasing. Many of the recommendations of this study have fed into activities that are underway and are proposed for the area.

The *Union Square District Improvement Financing (DIF) Analysis* analyzes the feasibility and advisability of adopting a DIF as a means to support infrastructure development in Union Square. It makes recommendations on some important needed elements to attract increased business growth.

The *Development Implementation Strategy for Union Square* makes recommendations on how to use the municipally owned property in Union Square to catalyze development.

The draft *Union Square Rezoning* provides the regulatory framework from within which increased economic activity can occur. An amended version of the rezoning is anticipated to be submitted to the Board of Aldermen in the winter of 2008 after community meeting(s) have been held.

### ***C. Public Process***

The 2008 Union Square NRSA builds upon the work and community involvement that led to the 2004 Union Square NRSA Plan, plus several additional public forums. In the past year or so, considerable public dialog has occurred surrounding the proposed rezoning of Union Square and more than one community meeting was held. In addition, each version of the zoning (2 to date) has included a public hearing involving the Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen and the Planning Commission. The most recent meeting in May 2006 was attended by close to 100 persons. In addition, the Union Square Main Streets Board has taken a leadership role in crafting and implementing a vision for the area.

As part of development of the Consolidated Plan 2008-2013, three public meetings were held in October 2007 to gather input into issues and challenges, and accomplishments under the prior plan. This was followed up by focus groups around housing, economic development, transportation & infrastructure, parks & open space, historic preservation, and public services. Once the proposed Consolidated Plan was available an additional public hearing and public meeting were held in January 2008 to gather further input for the final submission.

| TABLE 16: PUBLIC MEETINGS ON UNION SQUARE                           |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Project   | Public Meetings                              | Other Meetings  |
| 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan and One Year Action Plan                | 10/11/07, 10/15/07, 10/16/07, 1/3/08, 1/8/08 |   |
| 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan and One Year Action Plan (Focus Groups) |  | 10/22/07, 10/25/07, 11/1/07, 10/25/07, 10/29/07, 10/30/07 |

## VII. Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs

### A. Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The City conducted an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a “SWOT Analysis”) facing the Union Square NRSA. The results of the Union Square NRSA SWOT are outlined below in Table 16.

| TABLE 17: UNION SQUARE NRSA SWOT ANALYSIS (2001)  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diversity and multi-cultural flavor</li> <li>▪ Artist community</li> <li>▪ Historical structures and significance</li> <li>▪ Plaza’s role as a public gathering spot</li> <li>▪ Close proximity to downtown Boston and Cambridge Union Square Main Streets, ArtsUnion</li> <li>▪ Events in Plaza drawing regional attention - Farmers Market, Fluff Festival</li> <li>▪ Active Somerville Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>▪ Non-profit service agencies such as CAAS, MAPS, SCC, CASPAR, Walnut Street Center</li> <li>▪ Quality housing stock</li> <li>▪ Multiple housing types</li> <li>▪ New construction of affordable rental housing</li> <li>▪ Local business anchors such as a grocery store, two banks, and a Post Office</li> </ul> | <b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Little day-time activity, except public service agencies</li> <li>▪ Lack of traditional retail, entertainment and office components</li> <li>▪ Limited developable land for new construction</li> <li>▪ Small lot sizes</li> <li>▪ Escalating rents</li> <li>▪ High and escalating cost of construction</li> <li>▪ High property acquisition costs</li> <li>▪ Underutilized or removed upper stories of buildings</li> <li>▪ Major employers are government agencies that do not contribute to the tax base</li> <li>▪ Limited organized marketing and promotion for Union Square as a whole</li> <li>▪ Difficult wayfinding for those unfamiliar to the area</li> </ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transportation hub for bus service</li> <li>▪ Nearby regional highway access</li> <li>▪ Low vacancy rate</li> <li>▪ Affordable alternative for space compared to Boston and Cambridge</li> <li>▪ Continuous street edge created by buildings</li> <li>▪ Historical sites such as the Bow Street historic district, Prospect Hill and the Milk Row Cemetery</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Restrictive parking requirements</li> <li>▪ Size of Union Square Plaza limits usability</li> <li>▪ Perceived lack of pedestrian safety</li> <li>▪ Lack of reputation as a business development center</li> <li>▪ Perceived lack of parking</li> </ul> |
| <p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planned Green Line Extension to Union Square and ability to promote transit oriented development</li> <li>▪ City-owned parcels</li> <li>▪ Somerville Avenue reconstruction and streetscape project</li> <li>▪ City regulatory tools and funding to promote affordable housing</li> <li>▪ Under-utilized upper stories of buildings</li> <li>▪ High traffic counts</li> <li>▪ Regional customers attracted to restaurants and ethnic businesses</li> <li>▪ Availability City programs such as Storefront Improvement Program</li> </ul> | <p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High traffic counts and traffic congestion</li> <li>▪ Speed of vehicular traffic</li> </ul>  |

### ***B. Monetary Gap Analysis***

- Shortage of staff: due to limited financial resources, the City of Somerville has a restriction on the number of economic development projects it can undertake, leaving other needs unmet.
- Somerville is under great pressure to expand its commercial tax base in order to relieve its citizens of the burden of funding basic city services with residential property taxes. Somerville's commercial tax base remains very small in comparison to Boston and Cambridge that derive 66% and 60%, respectively, of their property tax revenue from businesses. By contrast, Somerville derives only 28% of its property tax revenue from businesses.
- Infrastructure needs in Union Square need to be fully tabulated, but include the need to:
  - continue the storm water / water line improvements currently underway on Somerville Avenue further to the east toward the Millers River outflow;
  - address traffic congestion in the Square;
  - provide some type of public parking facility.
 Funds are not presently available to meet these infrastructure requirements.

### ***C. Additional Obstacles***

- Construction inflation: due to the increasing cost in utilities and construction materials, the City is finding the cost of its infrastructure and beautification projects increase significantly. This cost increase is an extra burden on the City's budget, since City funds do not grow at

the same pace inflation does.

- Rapidly increasing real estate costs: one of Somerville major competitive advantages is its proximity to Boston and Cambridge while having affordable property costs. In the past 5 years, Somerville's real estate cost has increased considerably, making the City less competitive in comparison to surrounding communities. Also, this real estate cost increase is having a negative impact in the business community, as older businesses may not be able to afford the cost of rent anymore.
- Competition from other municipalities to attract same type of companies and jobs: Somerville's competitive advantages are often comparable to neighboring cities (affordability, highly skilled labor force and location, being some of them) and the competition to attract companies in growing industries (such as biotech, medical devices or green energy) is fierce.
- Brownfields: Although clean up has occurred in industrial areas adjacent to Union Square (i.e., Boynton Yards), brownfields sites remain in the core Union Square area. The cost of site investigation and clean up can substantially increase development costs and will need to be accounted for when evaluating project viability.

### **VIII. Goals and Strategies**

The Union Square NRSA approach to economic empowerment can be described as a three-pronged approach:

1. *Revitalize* Union Square.
2. *Revitalize* Boynton Yards.
3. *Implement* Green Line Extension and capitalize on public investment.

#### **Goals**

In order to implement this approach, the City has set forth the following goals for the Union Square NRSA:

1. Increase supply of permanently affordable housing stock
2. Increase economic opportunities for Union Square residents and businesses
3. Increase recreational opportunities for Union Square residents
4. Increase attractiveness of Union Square places
5. Improve access to and from Union Square without impairing quality of life for residents

#### ***Strategies***

The following strategies will be used to accomplish these goals:

##### **Housing Stock**

- 1.1 Improve the inclusionary housing requirement for residential development.
- 1.2 Encourage generation of housing stock that is affordable by design and that is consistent with the neighborhood.
- 1.3 Sponsor renovation of existing housing that is affordable.

### **Economic Opportunities**

- 2.1 Attract and retain businesses in Union Square that create employment opportunities.
- 2.2 Use Zoning Regulations to promote desired uses and design characteristics in Union Square.
- 2.3 Use Zoning Regulations to promote desired uses and design characteristics in Boyton Yards.
- 2.4 Strengthen public/private partnerships in Union Square.
- 2.5 Support businesses in Union Square through Storefront Improvement Program.
- 2.6 Support businesses in Union Square through small business / microenterprise loans and assistance.
- 2.7 Support small businesses and entrepreneurs with business development educational services for low- and moderate-income businesses (financial literacy, marketing, best business practices, etc.) and networking services.
- 2.8 Support special events that increase foot traffic and business in Union Square.
- 2.9 Utilize disposition of City-owned property in Union Square as catalyst for development.
- 2.10 Revise parking requirements in zoning regulations so are not such a impediment to development.
- 2.11 Use Zoning to facilitate the development of additional arts related uses including galleries, live-work spaces, etc.
- 2.12 Explore feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID).
- 2.13 Facilitate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized property through site assemblage activities.

### **Recreational Opportunities**

- 3.1 Prepare *Union Square Open Space Plan* and integrate into OSRP.
- 3.2 Adopt zoning regulations that promote the provision of public open space on private property.
- 3.3 Adopt zoning regulations that allow payment in lieu of providing public open space on site so that developers can contribute financially if cannot provide high quality space on their property.

### **Attractiveness**

- 4.1 Continue to support Arts Union Initiative in Union Square
- 4.2 Clean up and remediation of environmental conditions on Union Square properties
- 4.3 Prepare design ideas for revitalized Union Square Plaza.

### **Access**

- 5.1 Support the Green Line extension through Somerville and to Union Square.
- 5.2 Analyze MBTA bus routes and the RI5E services within the City and recommend improvements.
- 5.3 Implement streetscape improvements to support Union Square NRSA.
- 5.4 Ensure that streetscape improvements adequately address pedestrian and bicycle safety and needs and the needs of persons with disabilities.
- 5.5 Explore use of District Increment Finance (DIF) as means to finance infrastructure improvements, among other activities.

### **Historic Preservation**

- 6.1 Increase awareness of historically significant properties.
- 6.2 Further implement the preservation of the Milk Row Cemetery.

## IX. Performance Measures

| UNION SQUARE NRSA PERFORMANCE MEASURES                                      |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Goal  | Strategies  | Benchmarks  |
| 1. Increase permanently affordable housing stock                            | 1.1. Improve the inclusionary housing requirement for residential development   | 1.1.1 5-10 new affordable units in 5 years.   |
|   | 1.2. Encourage generation of housing stock that is affordable by design and that is consistent with the neighborhood  | 1.2.1 10 new private, non-subsidized, affordable units in 5 years.  |
|   | 1.3. Sponsor renovation of existing housing that is affordable  | 1.3.1 City-subsidized renovation of 10 units in 5 years.  |
| 2. Increase economic opportunities in Union Square residents and businesses | 2.1 Attract and retain businesses in Union Square that create employment opportunities.   | 2.1.1 Develop and implement a marketing strategy for Union Square within 2 years.   |
|   | 2.2 Use Zoning Regulations to promote desired uses and design characteristics in Union Square.  | 2.2.1 Submit rezoning package for Union Square to Board of Aldermen within 2 years. ( <i>See Economic Development 1.1.4</i> )                       |
|   | 2.3 Use Zoning Regulations to promote desired uses and design characteristics in Boynton Yards.   | 2.3.1 Analyze Boynton Yards zoning within 2 years. ( <i>See Economic Development 1.1.5</i> )  |
|   | 2.4 Strengthen public/private partnerships in Union Square.   | 2.4.1 Increase Union Square Main Streets' (USMS) paid membership to at least 50 businesses in 5 years. USMS to hold 10 community events in 5 years. |
|   | 2.5 Support businesses in Union Square through Storefront Improvement Program.  | 2.5.1 Improve 1-2 storefronts per year ( <i>See Economic Development 2.4.1</i> )  |
|   | 2.6 Support businesses in Union Square through small business / microenterprise loans and assistance.   | 2.6.1 Issue 1-2 loans per year for the next 5 years ( <i>See Economic Development 2.3.1</i> )   |
|   | 2.7 Support small businesses and entrepreneurs with business development educational services for low- and moderate-income businesses (financial literacy, marketing, best business practices, etc.) and networking services. | 2.7.1 Run workshops, training, and/or consultations for 20 businesses or individuals in 5 years ( <i>See Economic Development 2.2.1</i> )           |
|   | 2.8 Support special events that increase foot traffic and business in Union Square.   | 2.8.1 Continue the annual operation of Union Square Farmers' Market.  |
|   | 2.9 Utilize disposition of City-owned property in Union Square as catalyst for development.   | 2.9.1 Solicit development options for City-owned property through a RFP process in next three years.  |

| UNION SQUARE NRSA PERFORMANCE MEASURES   |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Goal   | Strategies   | Benchmarks   |
|  | 2.10 Revise parking requirements in zoning regulations so are not such a impediment to development.  | 2.10.1 Submit rezoning package for Union Square to Board of Aldermen within 2 years ( <i>See Economic Development 1.1.4</i> )                          |
|  | 2.11 Use Zoning to facilitate the development of additional arts related uses including galleries, live-work spaces, etc.  | 2.11.1 Submit rezoning package for Union Square to Board of Aldermen within 2 years ( <i>See Economic Development 1.1.4</i> )                          |
|  | 2.12 Explore feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID).  | 2.12.1 Provide information to property owners and evaluate viability within 2 years.   |
|  | 2.13 Facilitate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized property through site assemblage activities.   | 2.13.1 Evaluate properties within Union Square within next 5 years.  |
| 3. Increase recreational opportunities for Union Square residents  | 3.1. Prepare <i>Union Square Open Space Plan</i> and integrate into OSRP.  | 3.1.1 <i>Union Square Open Space Plan</i> completed within 2 years ( <i>see Parks &amp; Openspace 8.2.1</i> ).   |
|  | 3.2 Adopt zoning regulations that promote the provision of public open space on private property.  | 3.2.1 Submit rezoning package for Union Square to Board of Aldermen within 2 years ( <i>See Economic Development 1.1.4</i> )                           |
|  | 3.3 Adopt zoning regulations that allow payment in lieu of providing public open space on site so that developers can contribute financially if cannot provide high quality space on their property. | 3.3.1 Submit rezoning package for Union Square to Board of Aldermen within 2 years ( <i>See Economic Development 1.1.4</i> )                           |
| 4. Increase attractiveness of Union Square places  | 4.1 Continue to support Arts Union Initiative in Union Square  | 4.1.1 ArtsUnion to collaborate on urban design and streetscape infrastructure (benches, etc.) as part of Union Square Transportation Study             |
|  | 4.2 Clean up and remediation of environmental conditions on Union Square properties  | 4.2.1 Perform environmental remediation on at least 2 properties in next 5 years.  |
|  | 4.3 Prepare design ideas for revitalized Union Square Plaza.   | 4.3.1 Complete Union Square Transportation Study within 2 years. ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 3.2.1</i> )                              |
| 5. Improve Union Square infrastructure, including transportation, utilities, parking, etc. without impairing quality of life for residents | 5.1 Support the Green Line extension through Somerville and to Union Square.   | 5.1.1 Five station locations designed within 5 years. ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 1.1.1 and East Somerville NRSA 5.1.1</i> )          |
|  | 5.2 Analyze MBTA bus routes and the RI5E services within the City and recommend improvements.  | 5.2.1 Analysis completed and submitted to MBTA within 5 years. ( <i>See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 2.1.1 and East Somerville NRSA 5.3.1</i> ) |



| UNION SQUARE NRSA PERFORMANCE MEASURES |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Goal                                   | Strategies  | Benchmarks  |
|  | 5.3 Implement streetscape improvements to support Union Square NRSA.  | 5.3.1 Complete Union Square Transportation Study within 2 years. <i>(See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 3.2.1)</i> |
|  | 5.4 Ensure that streetscape improvements adequately address pedestrian and bicycle safety and needs and the needs of persons with disabilities. | 5.4.1 Complete Union Square Transportation Study within 2 years. <i>(See Transportation &amp; Infrastructure 3.2.1)</i> |
|  | 5.5 Explore use of District Increment Finance (DIF) as means to finance infrastructure improvements, among other activities.                    | 5.5.1 Evaluate use of DIF within next two years. <i>(See Economic Development 1.4.1)</i>                                |
| 6. Improve status of historic areas    | 6.1. Increase awareness of historically significant properties.   | 6.1.1 Conduct 2-3 Educational Outreach Tours per year   |

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## **SECTION NINE:**

# **ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY**

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## I. Introduction

According to data from the U.S. Census 2000, 8.4 percent of families and 12.5 percent of individuals in Somerville are living below poverty level. The 2007 poverty guidelines from the Department of Health and Human Services are listed in the table below. This represents 1,254 families and 9,395 individuals, accounting for approximately 20.9 percent of the Somerville population.

### 2007 HHS Poverty Guidelines

| Persons in Family or Household  | 48 Contiguous States and D.C. | Alaska   | Hawaii   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1                               | \$10,210                      | \$12,770 | \$11,750 |
| 2                               | 13,690                        | 17,120   | 15,750   |
| 3                               | 17,170                        | 21,470   | 19,750   |
| 4                               | 20,650                        | 25,820   | 23,750   |
| 5                               | 24,130                        | 30,170   | 27,750   |
| 6                               | 27,610                        | 34,520   | 31,750   |
| 7                               | 31,090                        | 38,870   | 35,750   |
| 8                               | 34,570                        | 43,220   | 39,750   |
| For each additional person, add | 3,480                         |          |          |

With a median gross rent in Somerville of \$1200, according to the Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2005 (see table below), and a median housing price of \$435,000 in 2005, a family of three living on \$17,170 or less does not have much hope of renting, much less purchasing, their own home without substantial financial assistance.

**Table 1: Median Advertised Rent for 2-bedroom Apartment in Somerville 1998-2005**

| 1998    | 2001    | 2002    | 2003    | 2004    | 2005    | % Change 1998-2001 | % Change 2001-2004 | % Change 2004-2005 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| \$1,050 | \$1,400 | \$1,350 | \$1,300 | \$1,298 | \$1,200 | 33.30%             | -7.30%             | -7.60%             |

Source: Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2005, The Boston Foundation and Citizens' Housing and Planning Association

Even for moderate-income individuals and families meeting the demands of the cost of living in Somerville is challenging. The Greater Housing Report Card of 2004 also reported on the percentage of area median income that would be necessary to rent the average two-bedroom unit in Somerville. In all four years examined in the report, this percentage exceeded the commonly used 30% threshold. As noted above, conventional wisdom suggests that paying more than 30% of a household's income towards housing costs indicates housing burden. In no year studied was median renter income adequate to pay only 30% of income towards the median rent.

**Table 2: Affordability Gap in Somerville**

| 2005 est.<br>Median HH<br>Income  | Median SF<br>Home Price<br>2004 | Median SF<br>Home Price<br>2005 | Median SF<br>Home Price<br>Jan-May<br>2006 | % Chg<br>Median<br>Sales<br>Price<br>2004-2005 | % Chg<br>Median<br>Sales price<br>2005 v.<br>Jan-May<br>2006 | Max Home<br>Price<br>Affordable to<br>Median<br>Income HH<br>2005 | Affordable<br>in 2005 | Affordable<br>in 2006 |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|--|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| \$54,219  | \$381,000                       | \$415,000                       | \$380,000                                  | 8.90%  | -8.40%   | \$246,449   | N                     | N                     |
| Source: Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2005, The Boston Foundation and Citizens' Housing and Planning Association |                                 |                                 |  |  |  |   |                       |                       |

As has been indicated throughout this 5-Year Consolidated Plan, the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development uses its CDBG, HOME and Emergency Shelter Grants for programs and projects that provide the maximum benefit to very low, low and moderate income individuals and households. Most of these funds leverage other public and private resources that facilitate in providing job and life skills training, childcare assistance, and other services necessary for an individual or family to move out of poverty. The City also works towards creating more economic development opportunities so that residents can afford to live in our community and support their families in close proximity to their jobs. Wherever possible, the City forms partnerships with other municipalities and regional agencies to explore new and more cost-effective ways to deliver and provide more and better jobs as well as more affordable housing for our residents.

## II. Primary Anti-Poverty Strategies:

### 1. Promote Affordable Housing

- Preserve and maintain existing affordable housing opportunities
- Promote the development of new affordable housing units
- Support eviction / foreclosure prevention programs and services
- Expanding the supply of permanent housing for homeless individuals and families

### 2. Foster Employment and Economic Opportunities for the low- and moderate income residents of Somerville

- Work collaboratively to promote employment training opportunities that prepare low-moderate income individuals for jobs that provide a living wage
- Support English Language Learning programs to improve access to employment opportunities for Somerville's immigrant community

### 3. Support the Delivery of Human Services

- Champion programs that support anti-poverty efforts including: college access, occupational safety, youth leadership, childcare assistance, financial literacy.
- Assist low-moderate income families access programs and benefits that already exist, such as low-cost health insurance, childcare subsidies, basic food programs, utility rate reductions and the Earned Income Tax Credit.

### 4. Seek Partnerships that improve the cost-effectiveness and quality of programs to assist low-moderate income individuals and families.

As an example of the types of partnerships the City seeks to promote, the City of Somerville works closely with the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS), a private non-profit agency that is the legally designated anti-poverty agency for Somerville. The mission of CAAS is to reduce poverty among local families and individuals while working to counteract, and whenever possible eliminate, the societal conditions that cause and perpetuate poverty.

CAAS, in cooperation with the City, sponsors quarterly Agency Directors Meetings, with representatives of many of the non-profit housing and social service agencies in Somerville discussing timely issues of the day and strategizing to reduce the incidences of poverty throughout the city. The Executive Director of CAAS is a trustee on the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

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## **SECTION TEN:**

# **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

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## I. Introduction

The City of Somerville annually receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD), which it administers through the Somerville Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development. The primary purpose of these formula grant programs is to develop viable communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. As a recipient of these entitlement program funds, the City is required to produce the following documents:

1. **Consolidated Plan:** A five-year plan that documents Somerville's housing and community development needs, outlines strategies to address those needs, and identifies proposed program accomplishments.
2. **Annual Action Plan:** An annual plan that describes specific CDBG-, HOME- and ESGfunded projects that will be undertaken over the course of the upcoming fiscal year.
3. **Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER):** An annual report that evaluates the use of CDBG, HOME and ESG funds.

This Citizen Participation Plan has been developed to provide citizens and other interested parties with opportunities to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the CDBG, HOME and ESG programs which primarily benefit Somerville's low- and moderate-income residents and to review and comment on each of the documents listed above.

## II. Public Hearing Process

1. **Frequency.** The City will hold a minimum of two public hearings annually, at different times during the consolidated plan process to obtain citizen input on proposed programs and projects.
2. **Location.** Hearings will be held in areas of the City where CDBG funds are proposed to be used, specifically in neighborhoods of predominantly low- and moderate-income citizens as defined by the most recent U.S. census data.
3. **Outreach.** Public meeting notices will be published in both English and Spanish two weeks prior to the date of the hearing in general circulation publications within the City.
  - Translations of the public meeting notice in Haitian Creole and Portuguese, in addition to English and Spanish, will be published on the City's cable wheel.
  - Meetings will be posted in English on the City's website.
  - Fliers of the meeting will be posted and distributed in the following locations throughout the City:
    - Mailing to all public service agencies with a request that the fliers be translated, if possible, into languages other than Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole or English, if this is appropriate for their constituency.
    - All branches of the Public Library
    - Front hall of City Hall
    - The Mayor's office
    - OSPCD front desk



- Other locations as deemed appropriate
- 4. Accessibility. All hearing/meeting locations will be handicapped accessible. Meetings will be advertised in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Haitian Creole (and other languages as appropriate). All ads, notices and fliers will include a TTY phone number and contact information to arrange for special accessibility requirements.
- 5. Information Provided. At the first public hearing after the City receives information on the amount of assistance it expects to receive from HUD (including grant funds and program income), the City will provide this information to the public. Generally, at each hearing the following information is to be provided:
  - Amount of assistance received from HUD annually (grants & program income);
  - The range of activities that may be under-taken using these funds, including the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low- and moderate-income;
  - The areas of the City where activities may be under-taken;
  - A description of the projects programs and services that are underway using currently available funds; and,
  - Copies of the most recently published consolidated plan; performance report; and other relevant documents (NRSA plans etc.)

### **III. Notification to Public Housing Authority**

The City will provide information on a regular basis to the Somerville Housing Authority about consolidated plan activities related to its developments and surrounding communities so that the housing authority can:

- Make this information available at the annual public hearing required under the Comprehensive Grant program.
- Encourage participation among residents in the process of developing and implementing the consolidated plan.

### **IV. Citizen Comment on the Consolidated Plan / Amendments, and Performance Reports**

1. Notification. The City will publish notification of the availability of the proposed Consolidated Plan in a newspaper of general circulation and on the City website giving citizens not less than 30 days for the Consolidated Plan and Amendments and not less than 15 days for the Performance Report to comment. This notice will include:
  - The date on which the plan will be available and the date by which comments must be received;
  - The name of the person and/or agency where comments should be directed; and,
  - The form that comments should take (written, email, fax etc.).
2. Location. The City will make the plan available at the following location for a period of not less than 30 days so that citizens may comment on the plan:
  - All branches of the public library;
  - Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development;
  - By email or parcel post as requested; and,
  - On the City website.
3. Consideration of Comments. All comments or views of Citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings will be considered in preparing the final consolidated plan.

## **V. Criteria for Amendments to the Consolidated Plan**

A deletion or addition of an activity, source of income or objective will constitutes a substantial change in the consolidated plan.

### *VI. Availability to the Public*

The final Consolidated Plan and amendments and the final performance report will be made available to the public at the following locations and by the following means:

- All branches of the public library;
- Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development;
- By email or parcel post as requested; and,
- On the City website.

### *VII. Technical Assistance*

The City will provide technical assistance to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties in providing technical assistance in developing proposals for funding under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

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# **SECTION ELEVEN:**

# **CONSULTATION**

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The Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) and the Mayor of Somerville feel strongly that community participation is critical to the successful creation, implementation and evaluation of the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs. These programs primarily benefit Somerville's low- and moderate-income residents and as a result the City makes extra efforts to engage these residents in the community process. The City of Somerville's *Public Participation Plan* was created with this goal in mind and was carried out during this Consolidated Planning process accordingly.

The development of the Consolidated Plan was an intensive collaborative planning process beginning in the summer of 2007. During the summer months, City staff undertook data analysis of the 2000 census and identified trends relevant to long-range planning efforts. These trends were compiled into readable maps and graphs to allow stakeholders an opportunity to easily view and react to the data.

Over the course of the fall, in connection with the five-year plan, the City hosted three public hearings. These public hearings were published in the Somerville Journal two weeks prior to the hearing dates. The notice also aired on the City's cable channel in multiple languages and posted on the City's website. Previous recipients of the CDBG and ESG funding were notified by e-mail.

The hearings were located in geographically dispersed locations to ensure that all residents could attend a public hearing close to their home. Two of the three hearings were located in Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (East Somerville and Union Square). All locations were confirmed to be ADA accessible. The times, dates, and locations of these public hearings are listed below for reference:

**Public Hearing 1: October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007 (7:00pm)**

*Capuano Early Education Center*

**Public Hearing 2: October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 (7:00pm)**

*Dr. Argenziano School*

**Public Hearing 3: October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007 (7:00pm)**

*West Somerville Neighborhood School*

At each public hearing, OSPCD staff gave an identical presentation to the public. This presentation included a general overview of HUD funding and the Consolidated Planning process including: the amount of assistance received from HUD annually, the range of activities that may be undertaken using these funds, the areas of the City where activities may be undertaken, highlights of accomplishments from the 2003-2007 Consolidated Plan, and a description of projects and services underway with HUD funding. In addition, staff shared findings from the census data and listened as the community identified additional trends and needs. Copies of the most recently published Action Plan and Caper Report were also available to the public for reference. The first presentation was video-taped and shown on the Somerville Public Access Channel on October 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:50pm and October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8:50pm. These dates and times were posted on the City website for the public to reference.

A thirty-day comment period was opened at the first public hearing and closed on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007. All community members at the public hearings were informed of this written comment period. In addition, it was posted on the City's website and in the legal notices. All comments received during this time period are located in the Appendix.

The City hosted six focus groups in follow up to the public hearings. The topics of the six focus groups included: housing, economic development, transportation, parks, historic preservation, and public services. These groups provided an opportunity to coordinate efforts with local leaders and stakeholders and develop priorities. A summary of the comments provided at each of the focus groups is attached.

The City completed and submitted the Draft Consolidated Plan to the Board of Aldermen on December 13, 2007. The draft Consolidated Plan was then made available to the public in a variety of places including:

- All branches of the public library;
- Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development;
- By email or parcel post as requested; and,
- On the City website.

The public was informed that the Draft Consolidated Plan was prepared and ready for review through the posting of a legal notice on 12/13/07, 12/20/07, and 12/27/07. In addition, the City sent targeted e-mails to organizations received HUD and ESG funding, Boards / Commissions, and members of the community who attended the first three public hearings.

OSPCD hosted two additional public hearings on 1/3/08 and 1/8/08 to engage the community regarding the Draft Consolidated Plan and to seek community feedback on this proposed plan. The times, dates, and locations of these public hearings are listed below for reference:

**Public Hearing 1: January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 (6:30pm)**

*Capuano Early Education Center*

**Public Hearing 2: January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (6:30pm)**

*Dr. Argenziano School*

## II. Public Hearing Flyer



# PUBLIC HEARING PUBLIC HEARING

**Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone and the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development** invite you to a public hearing to receive community input on priorities and needs in community & economic development, parks, transportation, historic preservation, public service and housing programs for the proposed HUD 5-Year Consolidated Plan for 2008-2013.

**Hearings will be conducted at the following locations, with identical agendas:**

- Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm ~ Capuano Early Childhood Center
- Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm ~ Albert F. Argenziano School
- Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm ~ West Somerville Neighborhood School

*Accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request by contacting Carlene Campbell at 617-625-6600 ext. 3303. Translation services are available by contacting Mark Friedman at 617-625-6600 ext. 2539. Requests must be made no later than Thursday October 4, 2007.*



*Durrell Community Garden*



*1188 Broadway  
Inclusionary Housing  
Program*



*Storefront Improvement Program*

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE  
CONPLAN**

**LEGAL NOTICE**

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC  
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT**

**Consolidated Plan for 2008-2013  
and One Year Action Plan for 2008**

Pursuant to 24 CFR 91.100 and 91.105, The Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development (OSPCD) will be holding three public hearings to begin development of the HUD Five Year Consolidated Plan for 2008-2013 and the HUD One Year Action Plan for 2008. In an effort to gain increased input from the residents of Somerville, these public hearings will be held at the Capuano Early Childhood Center (150 Glenn Street, in the cafeteria) at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 11, 2007; at the Argenziano School (290 Washington Street, in the cafeteria) at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 15, 2007; and at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powderhouse Boulevard, in the cafeteria) at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 16, 2007. The purpose of the public hearings is to receive input from the community on priorities and needs for community development, public service, and housing programs to be included in the Five Year Consolidated Plan for 2008-2013 (April 1, 2008 - March 31, 2013), as well as program activities and priorities for the 2008 One Year Action Plan (April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009).

Accommodations for persons with disabilities, as well as translation services are available. Requests for accommodations must be made by the close of business on Thursday, October 4, 2007 by contacting Carlene Campbell at 617-625-6600 x3303; (voice) or 617-666-4426 (fax). General questions or requests for translation services should be made by the close of business Thursday, October 4, 2007 by contacting Mark Friedman at the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) at 617-625-6600 x2539.

Joseph A. Curtatone  
Mayor

AD#11463467  
Somerville Journal 9-27, 10-4-07

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE  
CONPLAN**

**LEGAL NOTICE**

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC  
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Joseph A. Curtatone  
Mayor

AD#11463467  
Somerville Journal 9-27, 10-4-07

10-10-AUCTION



1-3 PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE  
LEGAL NOTICE

CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC  
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR 2008-  
2013 AND ACTION PLAN FOR  
2008

Pursuant to 24 CFR 91.100 and 91.105, the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development (OSPCD) will hold a public hearing and a public meeting on the City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan (April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2013) and the One-Year Action Plan (April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) program, and the HOME program.

The public hearing will be held at the Capuano Early Childhood Center (150 Glenn Street) at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday January 3, 2008. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive input from the community on program priorities and activities for community development, public service, and housing programs to be included in 2008-2013 Five-Year Consolidated Plan, as well as the 2008 One-Year Action Plan. The public comment period for these plans will start on January 4, 2008 and end on February 4, 2008.

The public meeting will be held at the Argenziano School (290 Washington Street) at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday January 8, 2008, and will repeat the information presented at the January 3, 2008 public hearing. Public comments on program priorities and activities for community development, public service, and housing programs in the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and the One-Year Action Plan also will be taken at this meeting.

Copies of the 2008-2013 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and the 2008 One-Year Action Plan will be available: a) on the City website ([www.somerville.ma.gov](http://www.somerville.ma.gov)), b) in OSPCD on the 3rd Floor of City Hall, and at the West Branch and Central Libraries. Alternative formats will also be available upon special request to OSPCD.

Public comments can be submitted

verbally or in writing at this public hearing, or in writing or via email during the public comment period. Please send these comments to the Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development, Attention Brianna O'Brien, 3rd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143, or email to BOBrien@ci.somerville.ma.us.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities are available for the public hearing and the public meeting. Requests for accommodations should be made by the close of business on Monday, December 24, 2007, by contacting Carlene Campbell at 617-625-6600 x3310 (voice) or 617-666-4426 (fax). General questions about the hearing or meeting should be directed to the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) at 617-625-6600 x2500.

Joseph A. Curtatone  
Mayor

AD#11540806  
Somerville Journal 12-13-07 12:20:07

1-3 PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE  
LEGAL NOTICE

CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC  
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR 2008-  
2013 AND ACTION PLAN FOR  
2008

Pursuant to 24 CFR 91.100 and 91.105, the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development (OSPCD) will hold a public hearing and a public meeting on the City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan (April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2013) and the One-Year Action Plan (April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) program, and the HOME program.

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Joseph A. Curtatone  
Mayor

AD#11540806  
Somerville Journal 12-13-07 12:20:07

## AVISO LEGAL

### CIUDAD DE SOMERVILLE OFICINA DE PLANIFICACIÓN ESTRATÉGICA Y DESARROLLO COMUNITARIO

#### Plan Consolidado para el periodo 2008 - 2013 y Plan de Acción Anual para el 2008

A tono con la sección 24CFR 91.100 y 91.105, La Oficina de Planificación Estratégica y Desarrollo Comunitario (OSPCD por sus siglas en inglés) tiene a su disposición, en su versión inicial, el Plan Consolidado para los próximos Cinco Años (1 de abril de 2008 a 31 de marzo de 2013) y el Plan de Acción Anual (1 de abril de 2008 a marzo 31 de 2009) para el Programa de Subvenciones en Bloque para el Desarrollo Comunitario (CBDG por sus siglas en inglés), el Programa de Subvenciones de Cobertura de Emergencias (ESG por sus siglas en inglés) y el programa HOME.

La Ciudad invita a la comunidad a efectuar comentarios sobre las prioridades y actividades de los programas de desarrollo comunitario, servicio público y vivienda en el Plan Consolidado a Cinco Años y el Plan de Acción Anual. Estos comentarios serán aceptados hasta el cierre del período de comentarios el día 4 de febrero de 2008.

Las copias del Plan Consolidado a Cinco Años y del Plan de Acción para el Primer Año están disponibles en el sitio en Internet ([www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov)), en la Oficina de Planificación Estratégica y Desarrollo Comunitario en el tercer piso de la Alcaldía (City Hall) y Oficinas adjuntas (West Branch), y las Bibliotecas Centrales. Algunos formatos alternos estarán disponibles según solicitud especial a la OSPCD.

Por favor enviar comentarios por escrito a la Oficina de Planificación Estratégica y Desarrollo Comunitario con atención a Brianna O'Brien, 3rd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143, o enviar un correo electrónico a [BOBrien@somervillema.gov](mailto:BOBrien@somervillema.gov). Las preguntas o dudas relacionadas al Plan Consolidado a Cinco Años o al Plan de Acción Anual deberán ser dirigidas al señor Mark Friedman a la Oficina de Planificación Estratégica y Desarrollo Comunitario al teléfono 617-625-6600 x2500.

Joseph A. Curtatone  
Alcalde

**For Advertising call Ramon @ 617.522.5060**

El Mundo  
Oct 4- Oct 11 2007

## **AVISO LEGAL**

### **CIUDAD DE SOMERVILLE OFICINA DE PLANEACION ESTRATEGICA Y DESARROLLO COMUNITARIO**

#### **Plan Consolidado para 2008-2013 y Plan de Acción Anual para el 2008**

De acuerdo al 24 CFR 91.100 y 91.105, la Oficina de Planeación Estratégica y Desarrollo Comunitario (OSPCD por sus siglas en inglés) organizará 3 audiencias públicas para comenzar a desarrollar el Plan Consolidado para los próximos Cinco Años 2008-2013 de HUD (Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano) y el Plan de Acción Anual para el 2008 de HUD.

Buscando obtener mayor participación comunitaria por parte de los habitantes de Somerville, estas audiencias públicas tendrán lugar en la cafetería de la Escuela Capuano (Capuano Early Childhood Center), en 150 Glenn Street, a las 7:00 p.m. el jueves 11 de Octubre, 2007; en la cafetería de la Escuela Argenziano (290 Washington Street) a las 7:00 p.m. el día lunes 15 de Octubre, 2007; y en la cafetería de la Escuela West Somerville Neighborhood (177 Powderhouse Boulevard) a las 7:00 p.m. el martes 16 de Octubre, 2007.

El propósito de estas audiencias es recibir los comentarios de la comunidad acerca de las prioridades y necesidades en desarrollo comunitario, servicios públicos y programas de vivienda que se incluirán en el Plan Consolidado para los próximos Cinco Años 2008-2013 (del 1<sup>ero</sup> de Abril del 2008 al 31 de Marzo del 2013), así como las actividades y prioridades para el Plan de Acción Anual para el 2008 (del 1<sup>ero</sup> de Abril del 2008 al 31 de Marzo del 2009).

Habrán instalaciones para personas con discapacidad y servicios de traducción también. Si usted requiere de servicios para personas con discapacidad, por favor llame antes de las 7:00 pm del jueves 4 de Octubre del 2007 a Carlene Campbell al 617-625-6600 x3303; (teléfono) o al 617-666-4426 (fax). Para hacer preguntas en general o si requiere de servicios de traducción, por favor contacte a Mark Friedman antes de las 7:00 pm del jueves 4 de Octubre del 2007 a la Oficina de Planeación Estratégica y Desarrollo Comunitario (OSPCD) al 617-625-6600 x2539.

Joseph A. Curtatone  
Alcalde



# Consolidated Plan Public Hearing Developing the 2008-2013 Action Plan

City of Somerville, Mass.

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

**Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development**

Monica R. Lamboy

Executive Director



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Tonight's Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Overview of a Consolidated Plan
- 2008 1 Year Action Plan
- Accomplishments for 2003-2008
- Data for 2008-2013
- Public Comments
- Next Steps



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Overview of a Consolidated Plan

Under 24 CFR 91, a Consolidated Plan is Required to Qualify for CDBG, HOME, and ESG Funding

A Consolidated Plan Serves the Following Functions:

- A) “A planning document building on a participatory process at the lowest levels;
- B) An application for federal funds under HUD’s formula grant programs;
- C) A strategy to be followed in carrying out HUD programs; and
- D) An action plan that provides the basis for assessing performance.”

The goal of this document and these HUD funds is:

“to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low-and moderate-income persons.”



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### 1 Year Action Plan 2008

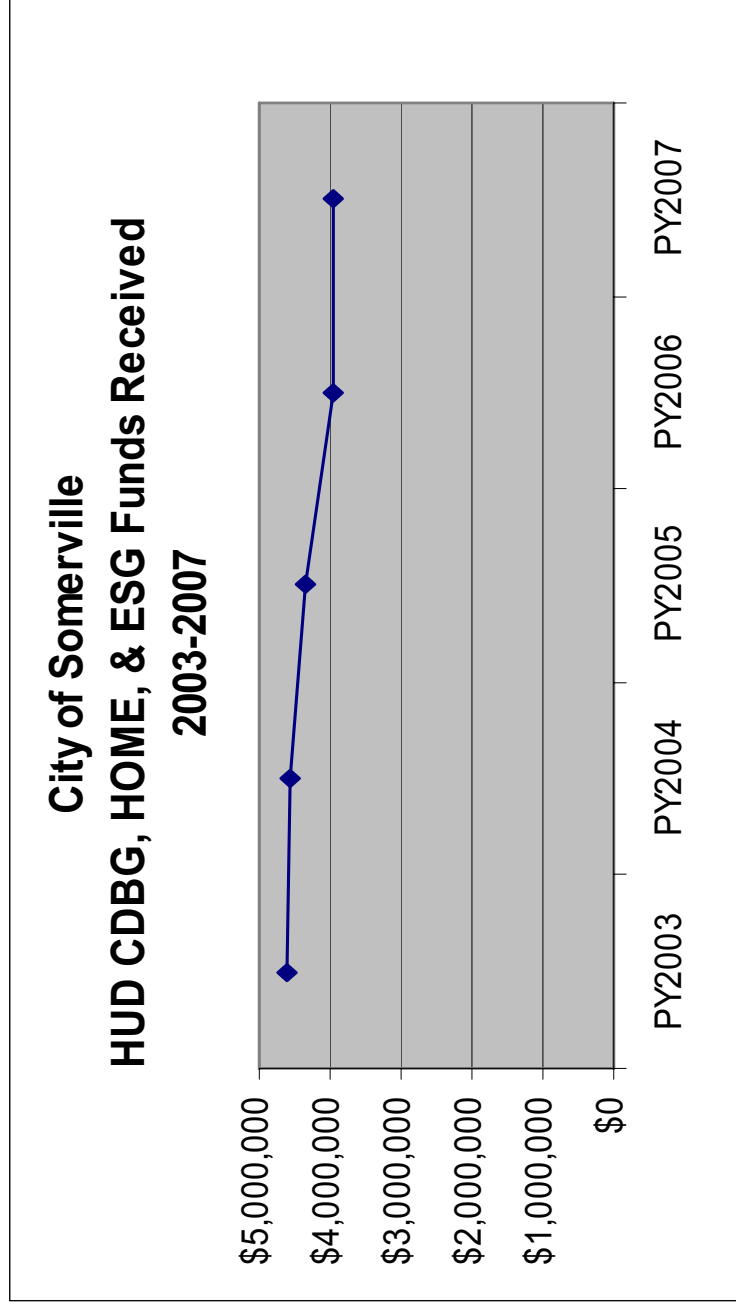
- 1 Year Action Plans are the plans and budgets for HUD CDBG, HOME and ESG funds for each year guided by the needs and priorities set in the 5 Year Consolidated Plan.
- CDBG Funds can be used in a flexible manner for economic development, improvements to parks and open space, needed public services, and affordable housing projects and programs.
- HOME Investment Partnership Funds can be used to further affordable housing programs and projects.
- Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Funds are to be used to support shelters and programs for homeless persons.





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

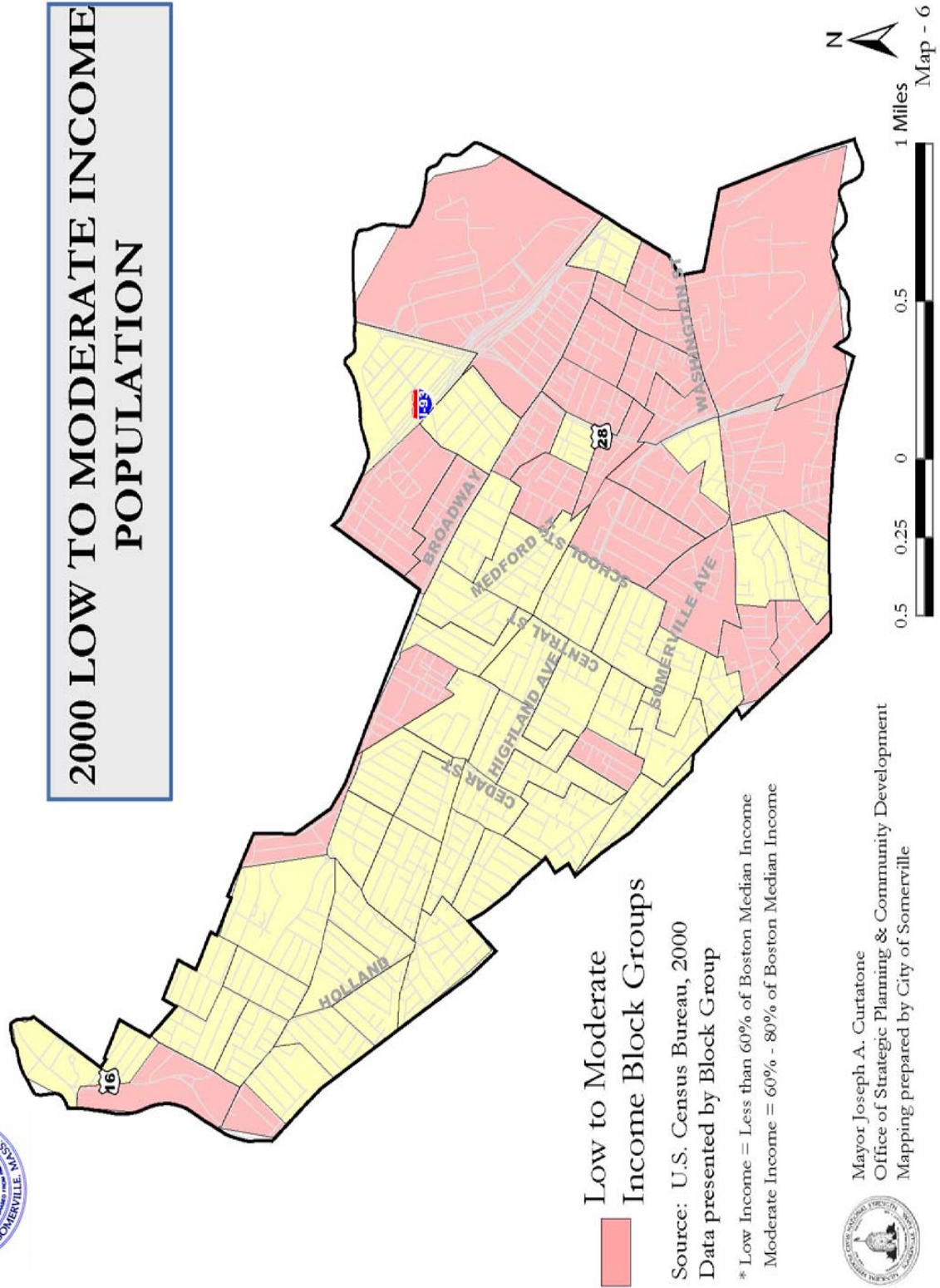
# City of Somerville HUD Funding 2003-2007





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### 2000 LOW TO MODERATE INCOME POPULATION





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

## 2003-2008 Accomplishments



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Housing

| <b>5 Year Goal</b>                                      | <b>Budgeted<br/>Units<br/>5 Years</b> | <b>Actual<br/>Units -<br/>Years 1-4</b> | <b>Expected<br/>Year 5</b> | <b>Expected<br/>Years 1-5<br/>Totals</b> |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| Create Affordable Housing                               | 220                                   | 150                                     | 231                        | 381                                      |
| Create Senior Housing                                   | 100                                   | 0                                       | 194                        | 194                                      |
| Create Housing for Chronically Homeless                 | 9                                     | 3                                       | 27                         | 30                                       |
| Avoid Poverty Concentration through Housing Development | 200                                   | 190                                     | 10                         | 200                                      |
| Increase Homeownership                                  | 50                                    | 39                                      | 10                         | 49                                       |
| Rehabilitate Housing Stock                              | 350                                   | 265                                     | 70                         | 335                                      |



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Housing

### Lead Hazard Abatement

- Received \$6.8 million over three years
- Abated over 500 homes since 2001
- Expanded Education and Outreach
- Drastic reduction in child lead poisonings (only one case in 2005)

### Housing Rehabilitation

- Assists 20-30 homeowners per year
- 140 affordable rental units created by rehab program





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Housing - Homeless Continuum of Care

- 96 emergency shelter beds
- 119 transitional housing units
- 110 permanent housing units including 31 for chronically homeless individuals
- Provide funding for rental assistance (PASS and Wayside)
- Homelessness prevention coordination







## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Housing

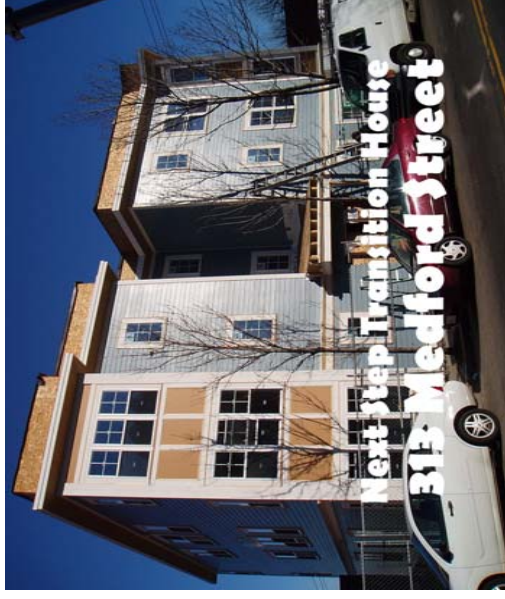
### **Temple Street Condominiums**

15 affordable  
homeownership  
units developed by  
SCC



### **Next Step House**

3 affordable rental units for young  
mothers and their children plus 3  
additional affordable rental units







## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Upcoming Housing Projects in Project Year 5

- St. Polycarp's: 84 rental and ownership units developed by Somerville Community Corporation
  - Committed \$1.6 million
- Conwell Capen Assisted Living: 99 assisted living senior housing units developed by the Visiting Nurse Association
  - Committed \$1.275 million
- Capen Court: 95 affordable senior housing rental units developed by the Somerville Housing Authority
  - Committed \$500,000





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Public Services

| <b>Public Services 5 Year Goals</b> |   |                            |                       |                              |                                 |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
|                                     | <b>5 Year Goal</b>  | <b>Performance Measure</b> | <b>Expected Units</b> | <b>Actual Units - Year 4</b> | <b>Actual Units - Years 1-4</b> |  |
|                                     | Increase safety within the City through tenant security, domestic violence prevention, youth mediation, and tenant outreach   | Clients                    | 15,000                | 2,509                        | 19,280                          |  |
|                                     | Provide service to City's homeless and HIV/AIDS population through care management, support services for persons on the street, eviction prevention assistance, and voicemail capabilities for housing and employment | Clients                    | 700 - 1,000           | 1,519                        | 4,704                           |  |
|                                     | Increase access to healthcare, and education for low income and public housing tenants, especially youth  | Clients                    | 4,000                 | 1,148                        | 5,275                           |  |
|                                     | Provide Services and resources for the City's immigrant population and assist non-governmental agencies to achieve the same.  | Clients                    | 2,500                 | 1,124                        | 5,637                           |  |
|                                     | Provide paratransit services for seniors and the disabled to enable better access to healthcare, recreational services, and to encourage self-sufficiency   | Clients                    | 2,400                 | 404                          | 1,309                           |  |
|                                     |   |                            |                       |                              |                                 |  |



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Public Services

### Supporting:

- Youth
- Elderly
- Homeless
- Disabled
- Immigrants
- Low-Income Families
- Tenant Services



*Counselor In Training/Leadership in Training  
(CIT/LIT) - job readiness program*



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Parks & Open Space

### **CDBG PARK PROJECTS COMPLETED OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

|                                  |                        |                        |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| • Corbett-McKenna Playground     | Summer 2004            | 0.61 acres             |
| • Florence Playground            | Summer 2004            | 0.26 acres             |
| • Palmacci Park                  | Summer 2005            | 0.08 acres             |
| • Nunziato Field OLRA*           | Summer 2006            | 0.21 acres             |
| • Perkins Park                   | Fall 2006              | 0.15 acres             |
| • Durell Street Community Garden | Summer 2007            | 0.18 acres             |
| • Allen Street Community Garden  | Summer 2007            | 0.12 acres             |
| • Perry Park                     | Fall 2007 (expected)   | 0.77 acres             |
| • Stone Place Park               | Fall 2007 (expected)   | 0.12 acres             |
| • Ed Leathers (Kemp Nut ) Park   | Spring 2008 (expected) | 0.70 acres             |
| • Trum Field House Renovation    | Spring 2008 (expected) | <u>      N/A      </u> |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                    |                        | <b>3.2 acres</b>       |

*\* Project completed with Non-CDBG funds*





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Parks & Open Space



Florence Playground



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Parks & Open Space



Corbett-McKenna Playground



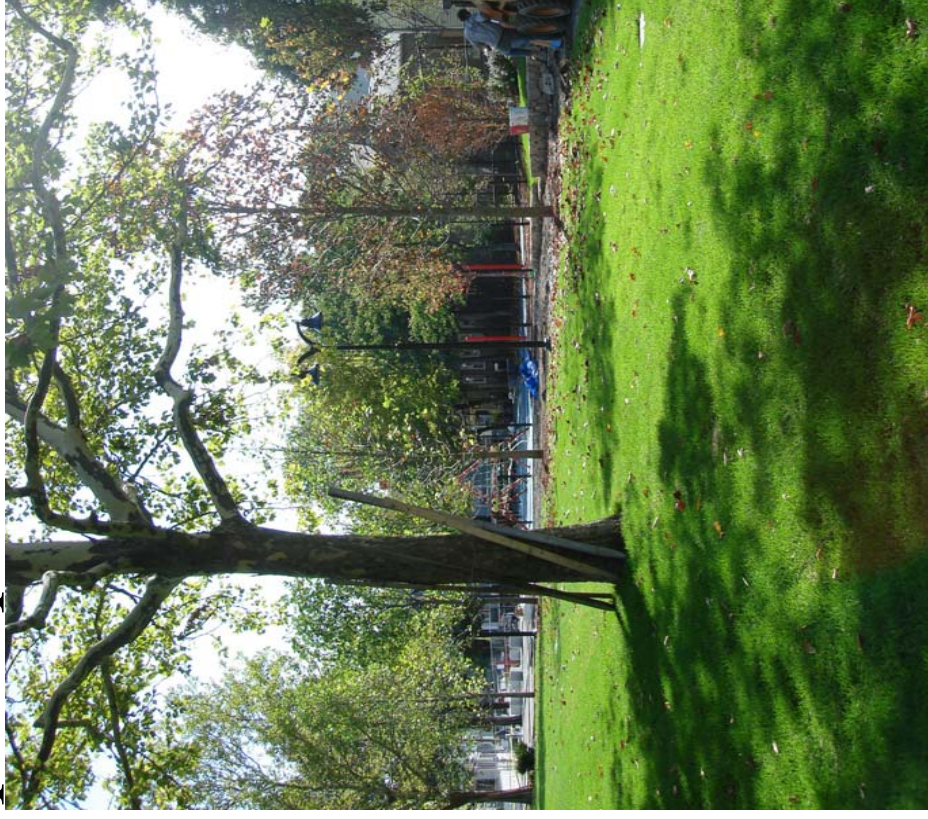


## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Parks & Open Space



Ed Leathers (Kemp Nuts) Park



Perry Park





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Transportation & Infrastructure

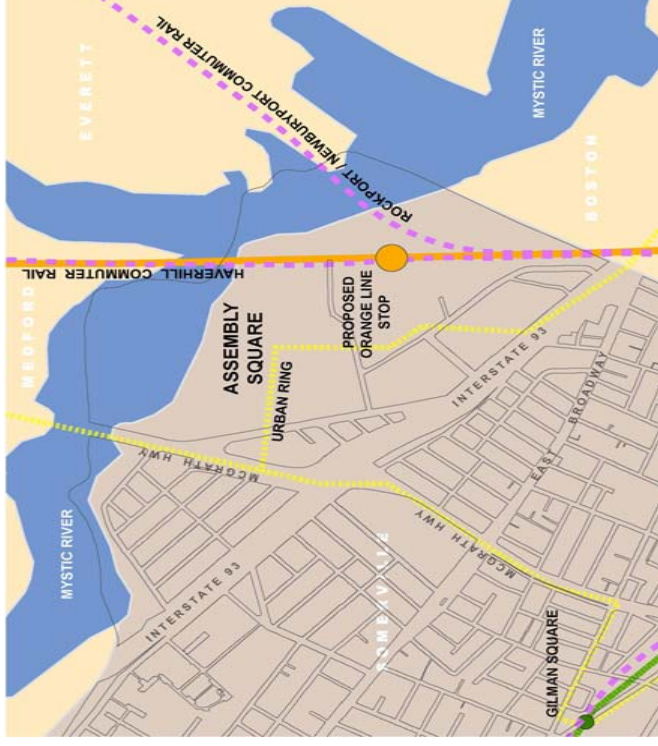
## Accomplishments 2003-2008

- Lower Broadway: 75% Design & TOD Grant Receipt
- Inner Belt: Access Study
- Assembly Square: \$25 Million for Station  
Route 28 undercarriage design underway
- McGrath/Inner Belt: Route 28 Corridor Study
- Community Path: Cedar to Central 25% Design & Land Acquisition  
\$250K Active Living Grant  
\$190K USH Grant  
\$200K EPA Grant
- Regional Planning: Metropolitan Plan Organization Seat  
Green Line Extension Planned  
Urban Ring Planning
- Bicycling & Walking: Bicycle Committee, Shape-up Somerville and  
State Trails Committee

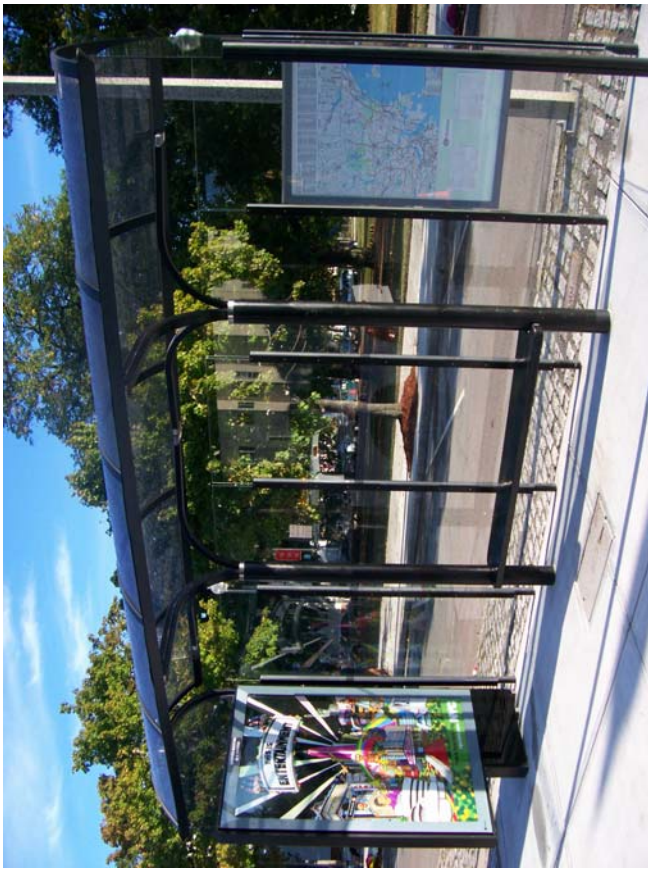


## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Transportation & Infrastructure



Assembly Square –  
Orange Line MBTA Stop Planning



New Cemusa Bus Shelter



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Economic Development

- 9 Storefront Improvements from 2003-2006
- 445 jobs created with Assembly Square Marketplace reopening
- Strategic acquisitions (Kiley Barrel, Yard 21, Boynton Yards and Assembly Square parcels) to facilitate economic activity
- Hotel study completed in 2007
- Brickbottom design competition
- Welcome Kit for new businesses

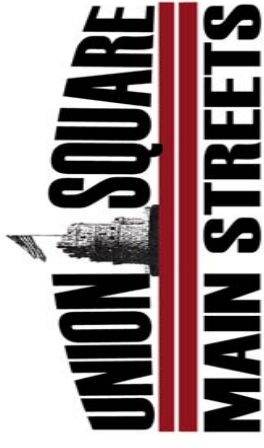




## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Economic Development

- Union Square Main Streets Non-Profit Organization assisted since 2005
- East Somerville Main Streets Non-Profit Organization assisted since 2006
- Small Business Loans program (April 2007) of a program in partnership with ACCION USA
- Participation in the BIO International Convention, an international convention that hosted over 20,000 attendees, an extraordinary opportunity to promote Somerville to Biotech companies







## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Historic Preservation

- Preservation and Restoration
  - Repairs and maintenance of municipal buildings
  - Technical support & financial assistance
- Neighborhood stabilization
  - Designation of Local Historic Districts
- Documentation
  - Research and photography
- Education and Outreach
  - Programming



*West Branch Library*



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Historic Preservation

- Accomplishments 2003-2008
  - Bow Street Police Station Emergency Stabilization
  - Milk Row Cemetery Restoration
  - West Branch Library Emergency Stabilization
  - City-wide Survey of 200 properties

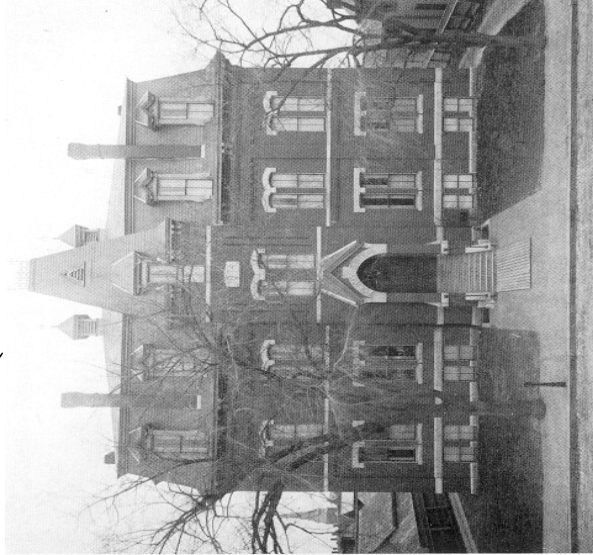




## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Historic Preservation

## Bow Street Police Station (Before, During, & After CDBG Assistance)



1908



2003



2005





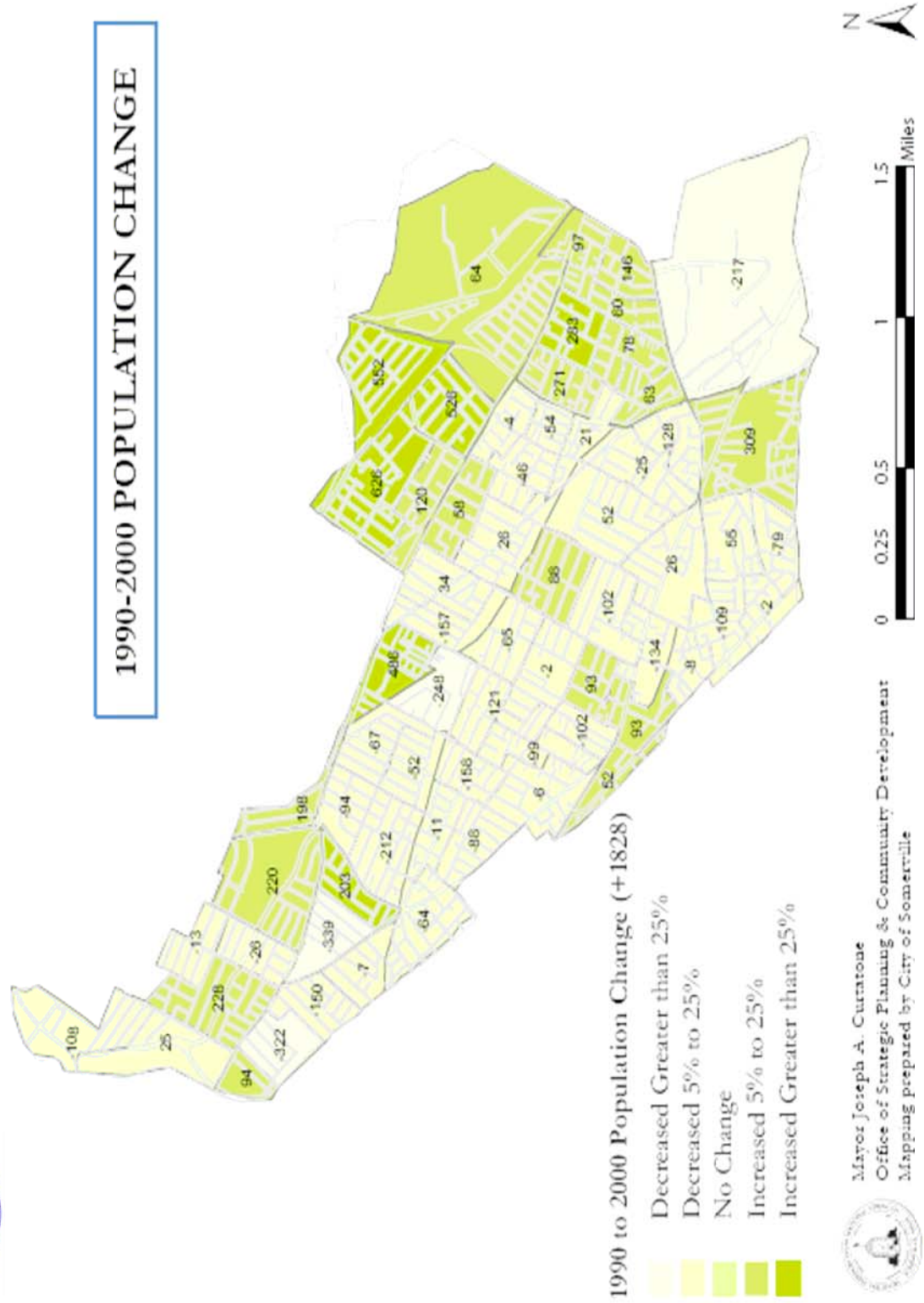
## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Data Informing 2008-2013 Consolidated Plan Development



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

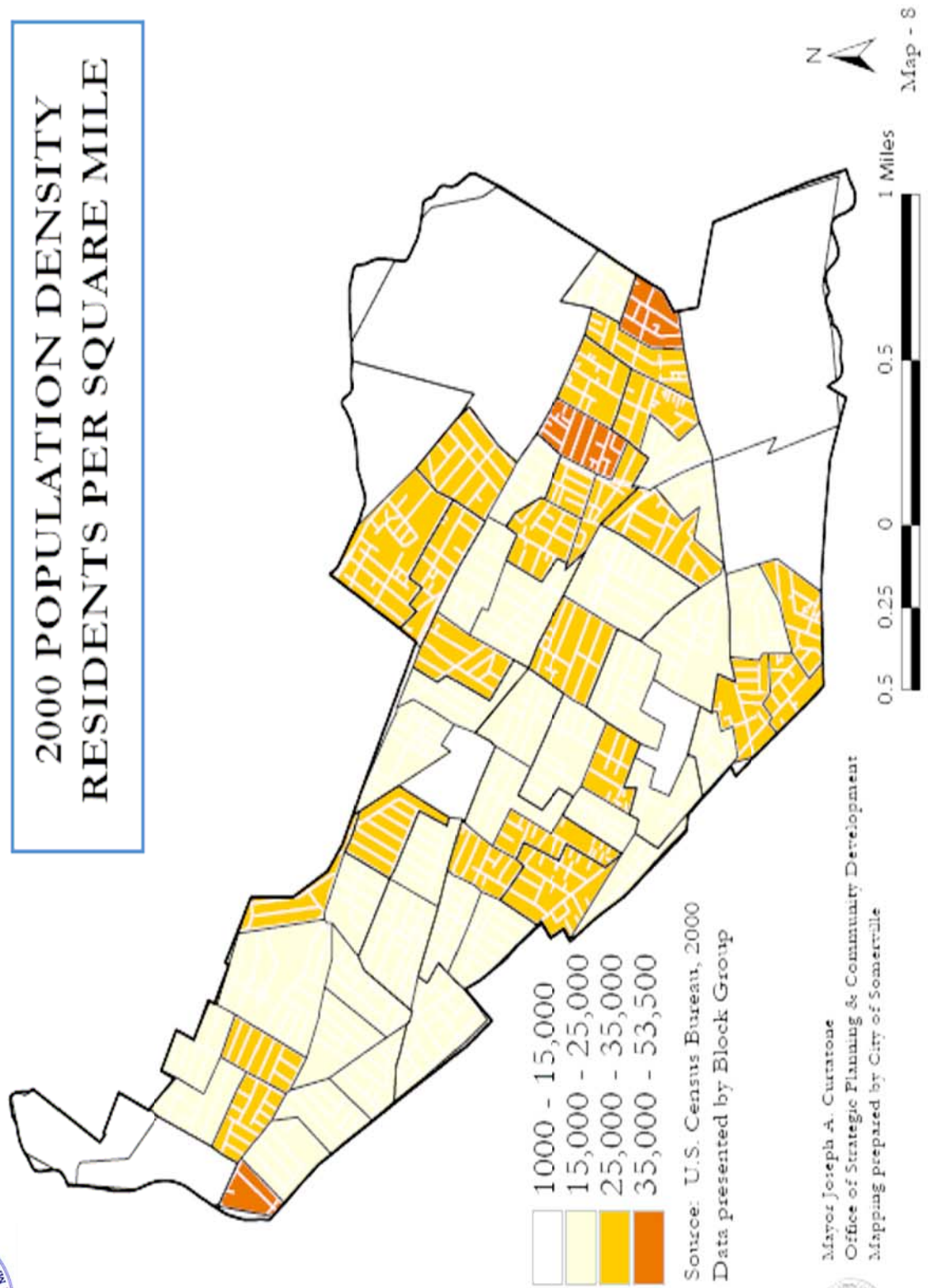
### HUD FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN 2008 - 2013





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

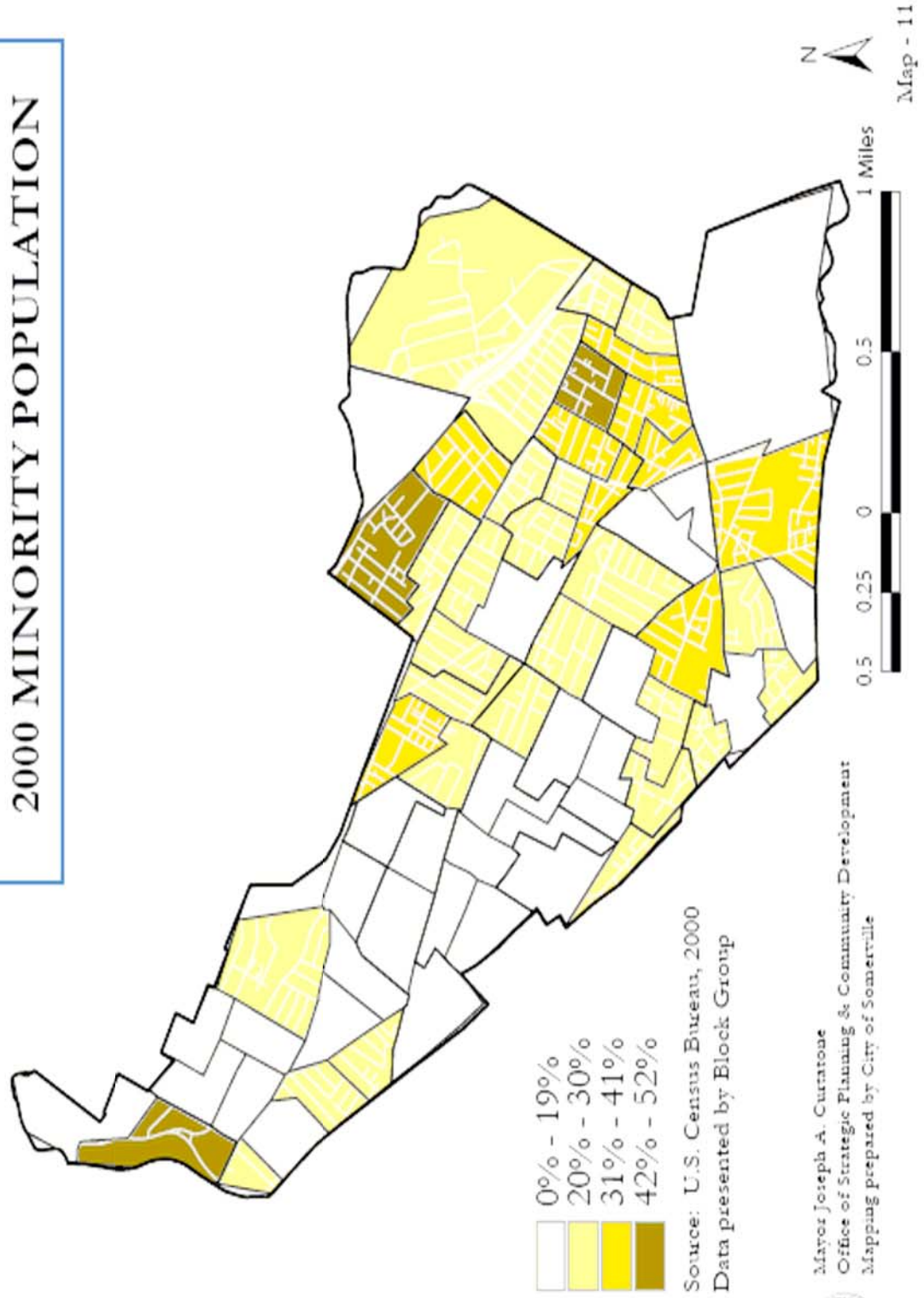
### 2000 POPULATION DENSITY RESIDENTS PER SQUARE MILE





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### 2000 MINORITY POPULATION



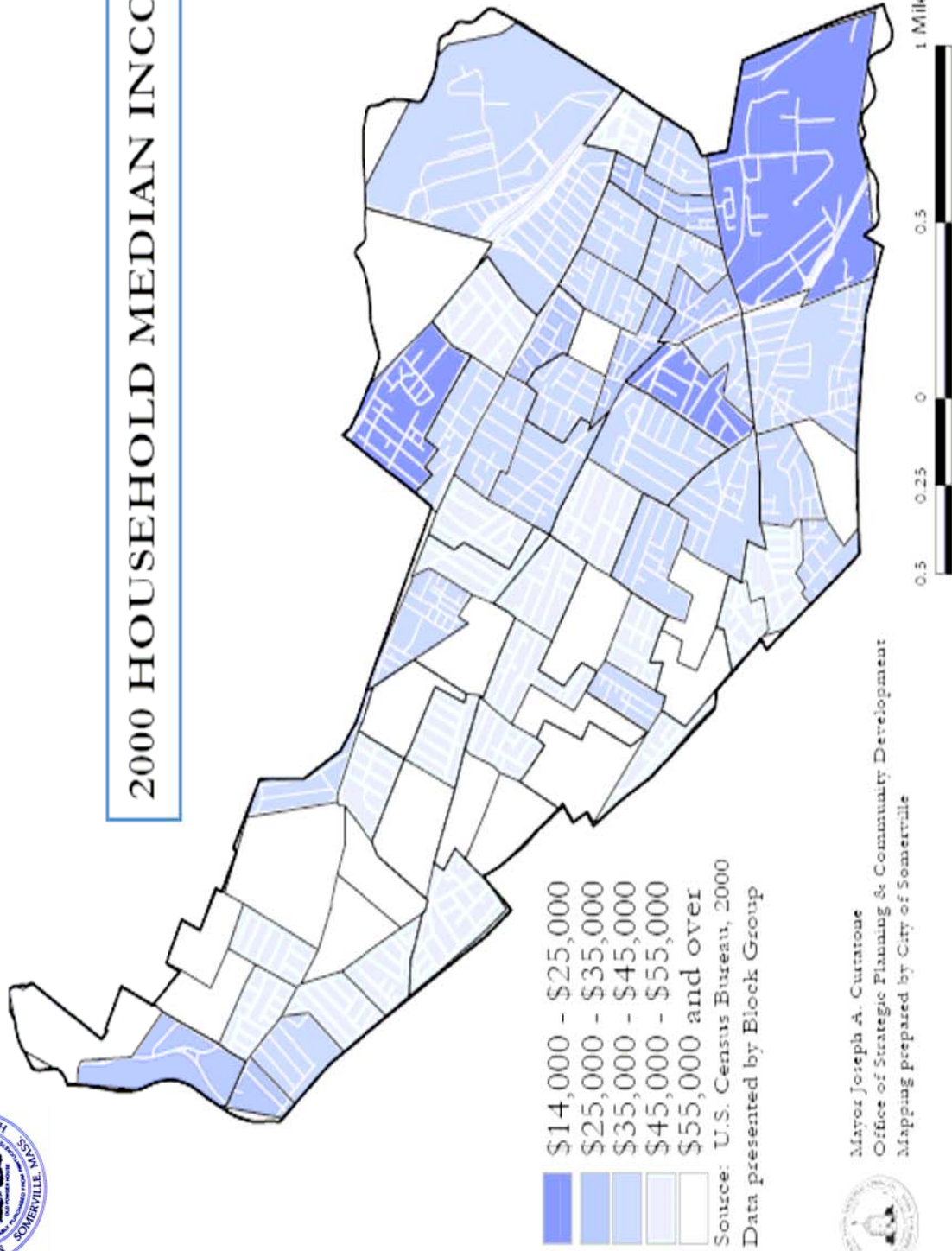
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### 2000 HOUSEHOLD MEDIAN INCOME



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

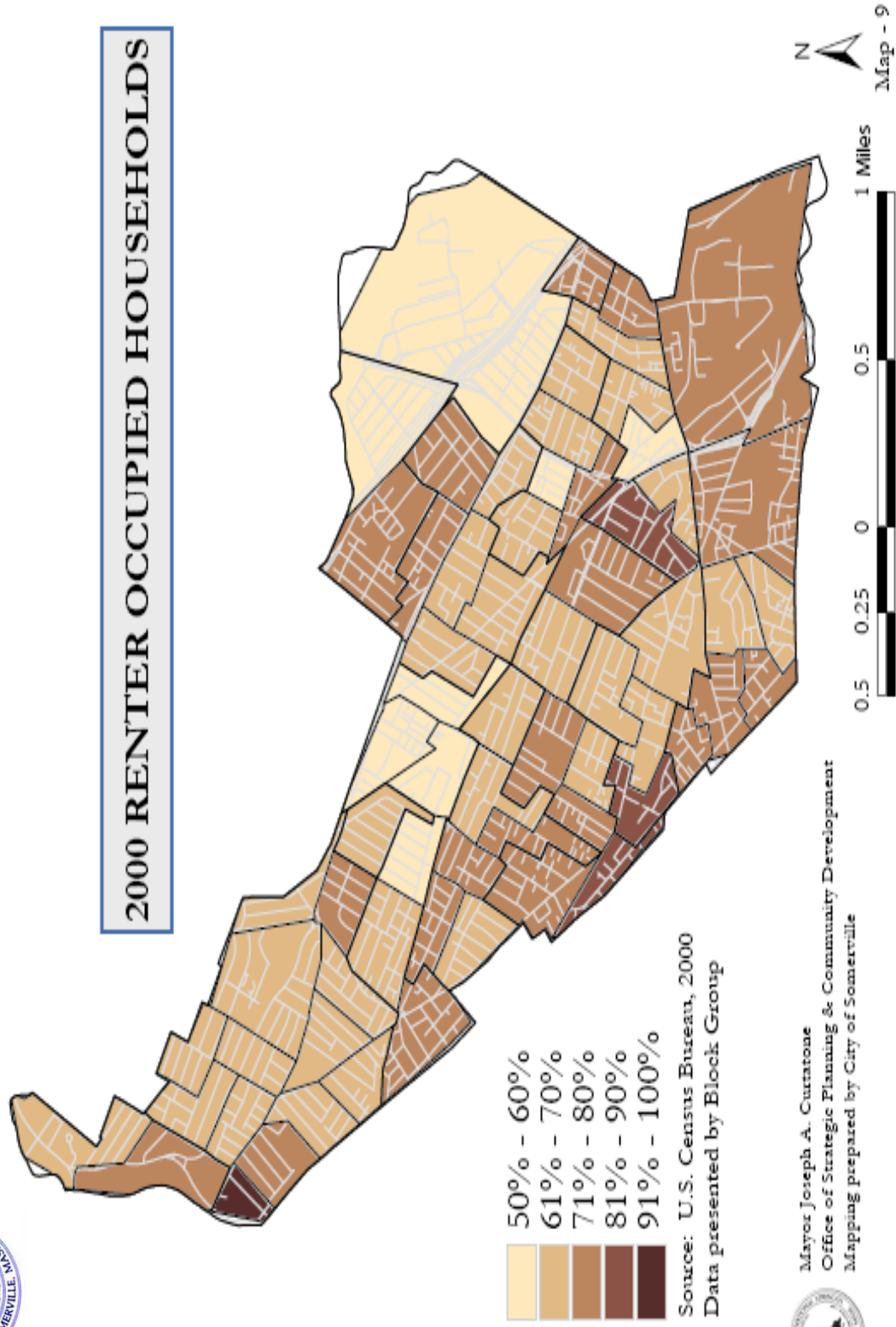
### Housing Data

- **32%** of Somerville households expend more than 30% of income for housing
- **15%** spend more than 50% of income for housing
- **4%** of households experience some level of overcrowding (i.e., more than 1 person per room)
- **1%** of housing units lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

HUD FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN 2008 - 2013

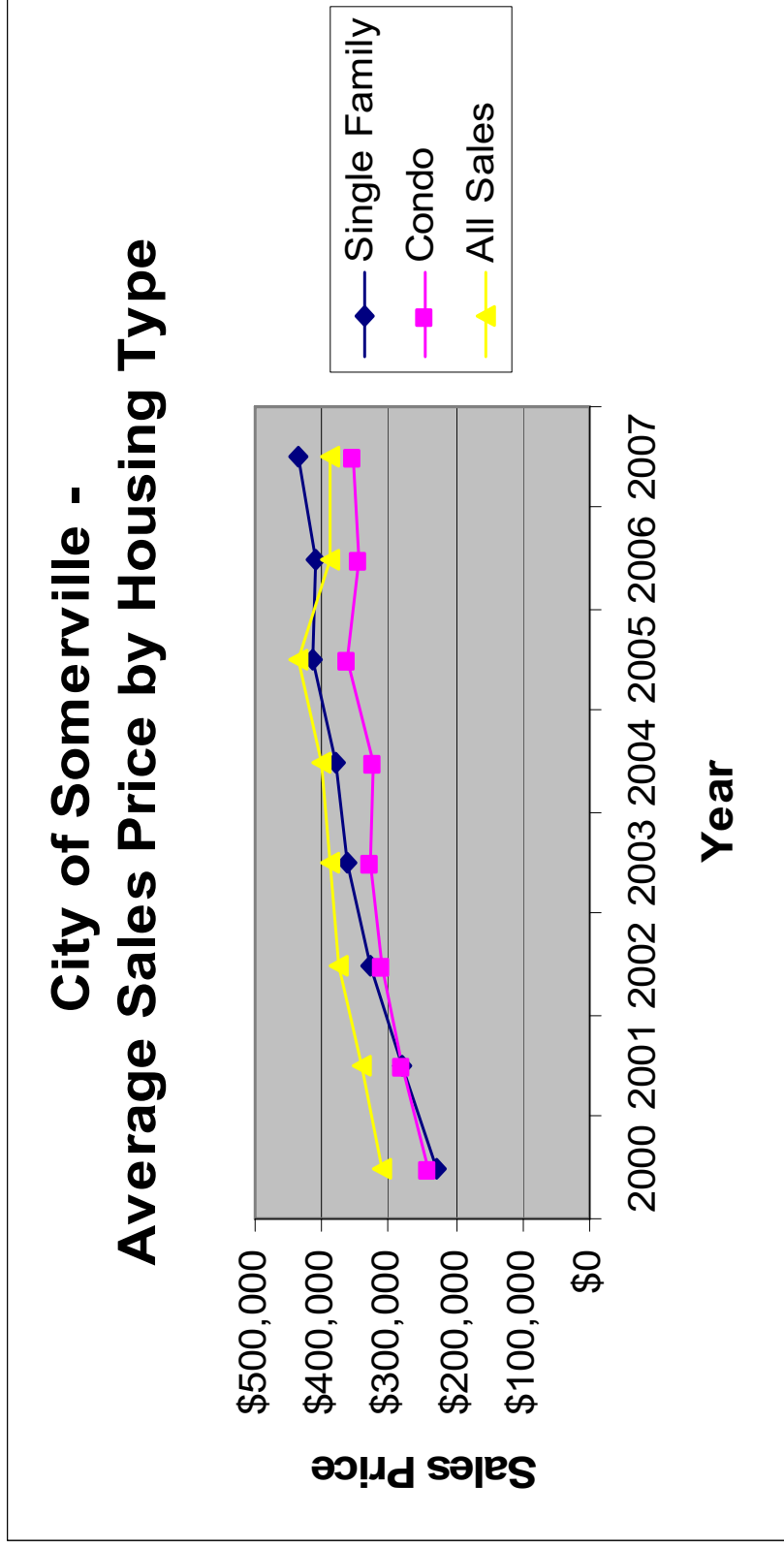






## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

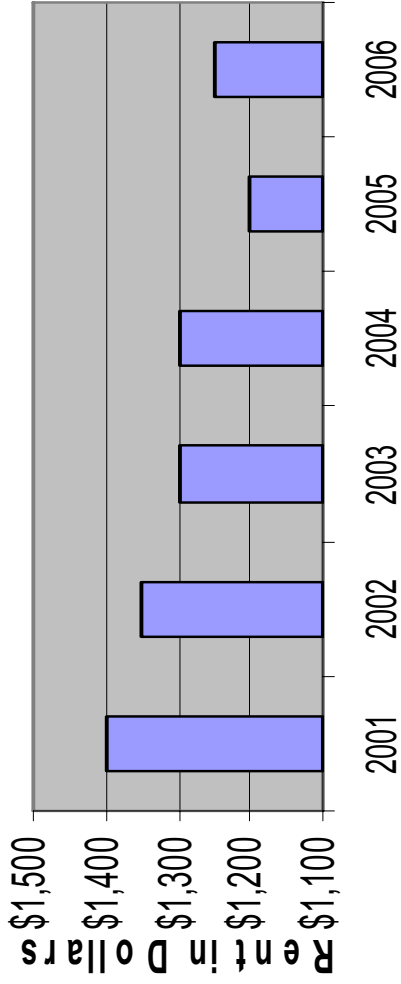
# Housing Data



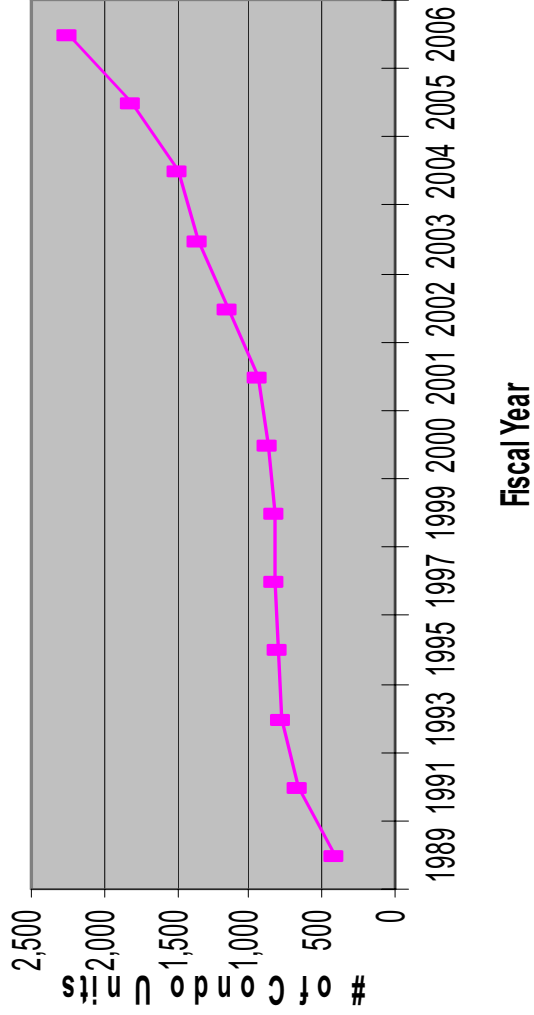


## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Housing Data



City of Somerville: Median  
Advertised Rent for a 2-bedroom  
Apartment



Somerville: Number of Condo  
Units at Beginning of Fiscal Year



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Public Services Data

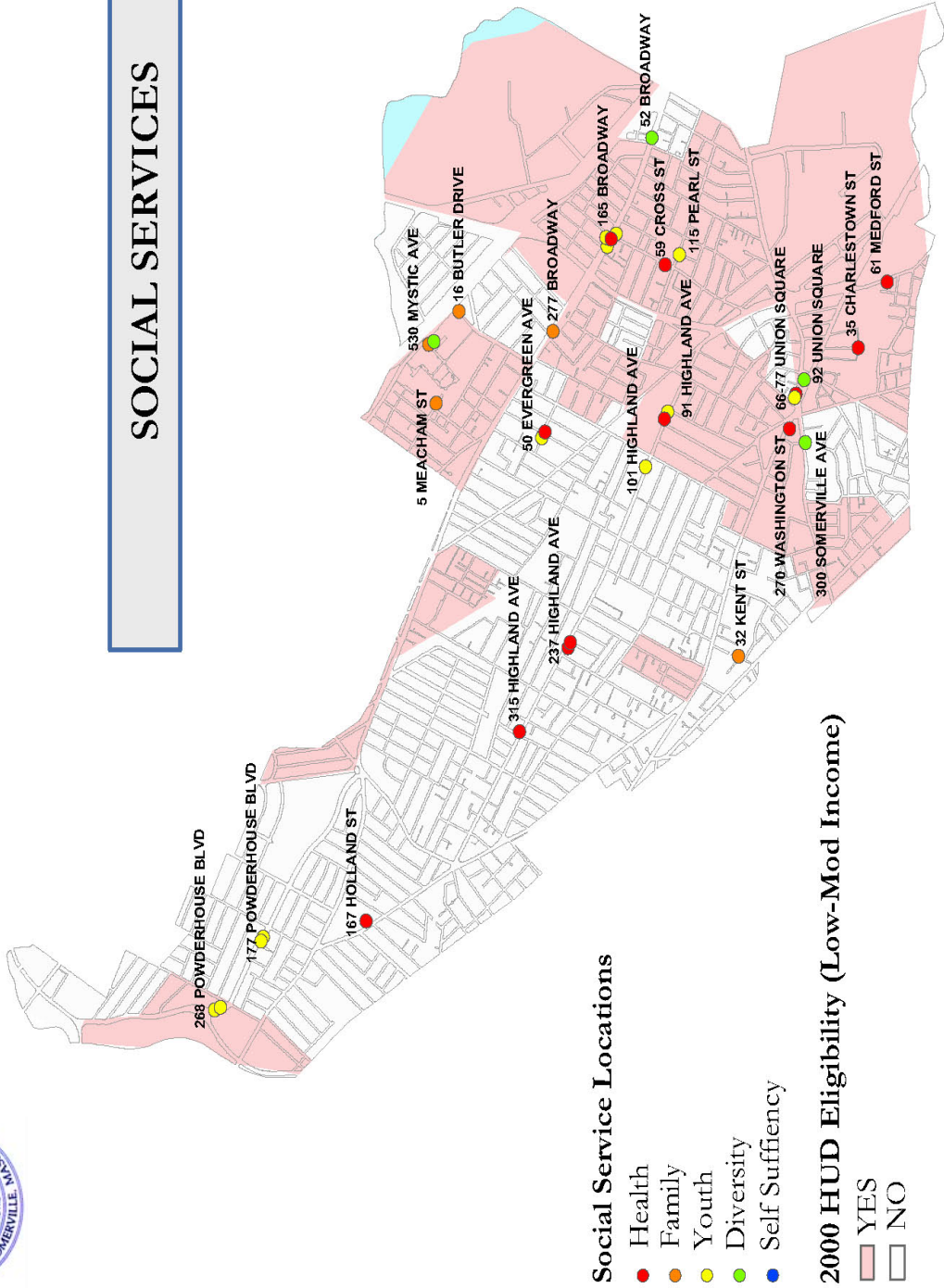
- 29% of Somerville residents were born in a foreign country (22,727)
- 19.4% of Somerville residents have a disability
- 10% of Somerville Households have an income less than \$10,000 annually
- 25% + of Somerville Households earn less than \$25,000 annually
- 16.6% of Somerville children speaks a language other than English at home

*Source: 2000 U.S. Census*



# 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

## SOCIAL SERVICES



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Parks & Open Space Data

**Somerville is the most densely populated city in New England and our public parks and open spaces are intensely used.**

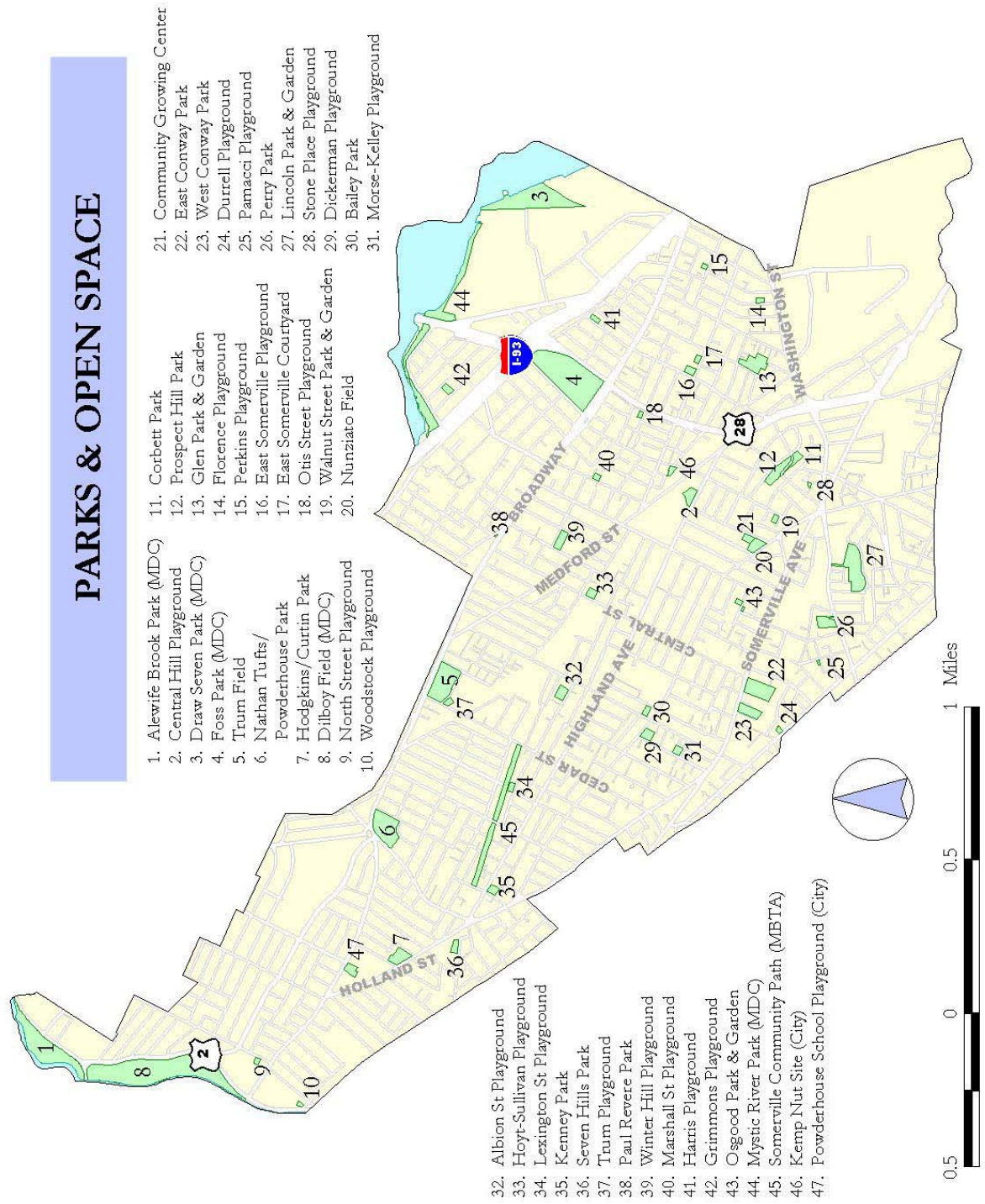
- The City of Somerville is 4.1 square miles in size. Population is nearly 77,478 people, or about 29.5 people per acre.
- Total public open space is 123 acres or 4.7 % of the city.
- Less than 40% (48.25 acres) of the public open space is owned by the City of Somerville. The City manages 46 parks, playgrounds, and ball fields for residents.
- Somerville renovated 11 parks\community gardens in 2004-2007.
- Park renovations average about 2.75 per year and typically have a 15 –20 year lifecycle.
- Because the city is essentially built out, it is unlikely that many large parcels will become available for conversion to parks or open space in the near term.





# 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

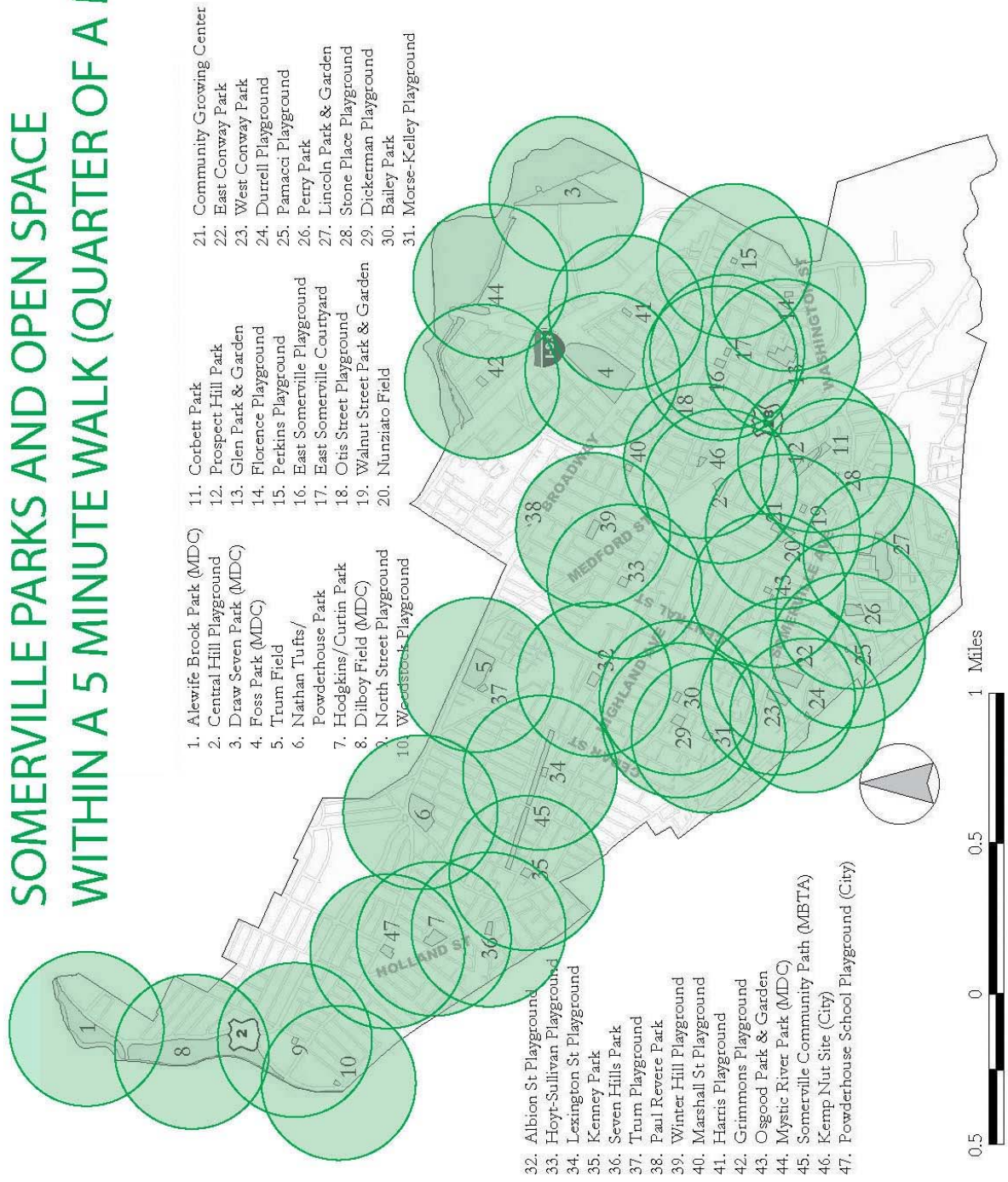
## PARKS & OPEN SPACE





# 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

## SOMERVILLE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE WITHIN A 5 MINUTE WALK (QUARTER OF A MILE)







## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Transportation & Infrastructure Data

### **INFRASTRUCTURE DATA:**

|                        |                                   |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Miles of paved streets | 101.5 miles (public & private)    |
| Miles of sidewalk      | 162.8 miles                       |
| Miles of sewers        | 128.0 miles (combined & sanitary) |
| Miles of storm drains  | 32.0 miles                        |
| Miles of water mains   | 116.5 miles                       |



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Transportation & Infrastructure Data

## 2006 Journey to Work Data for Somerville

| Commute Mode: | Auto*  | Transit | Walk | Bike/Motorbike/<br>Cab | Work at Home |
|---------------|--|---------|------|------------------------|--------------|
|               | 46.4%<br>(including<br>6.2% who<br>Car Pool) | 32.8%   | 8.3% | 6.2%                   | 2.5%         |

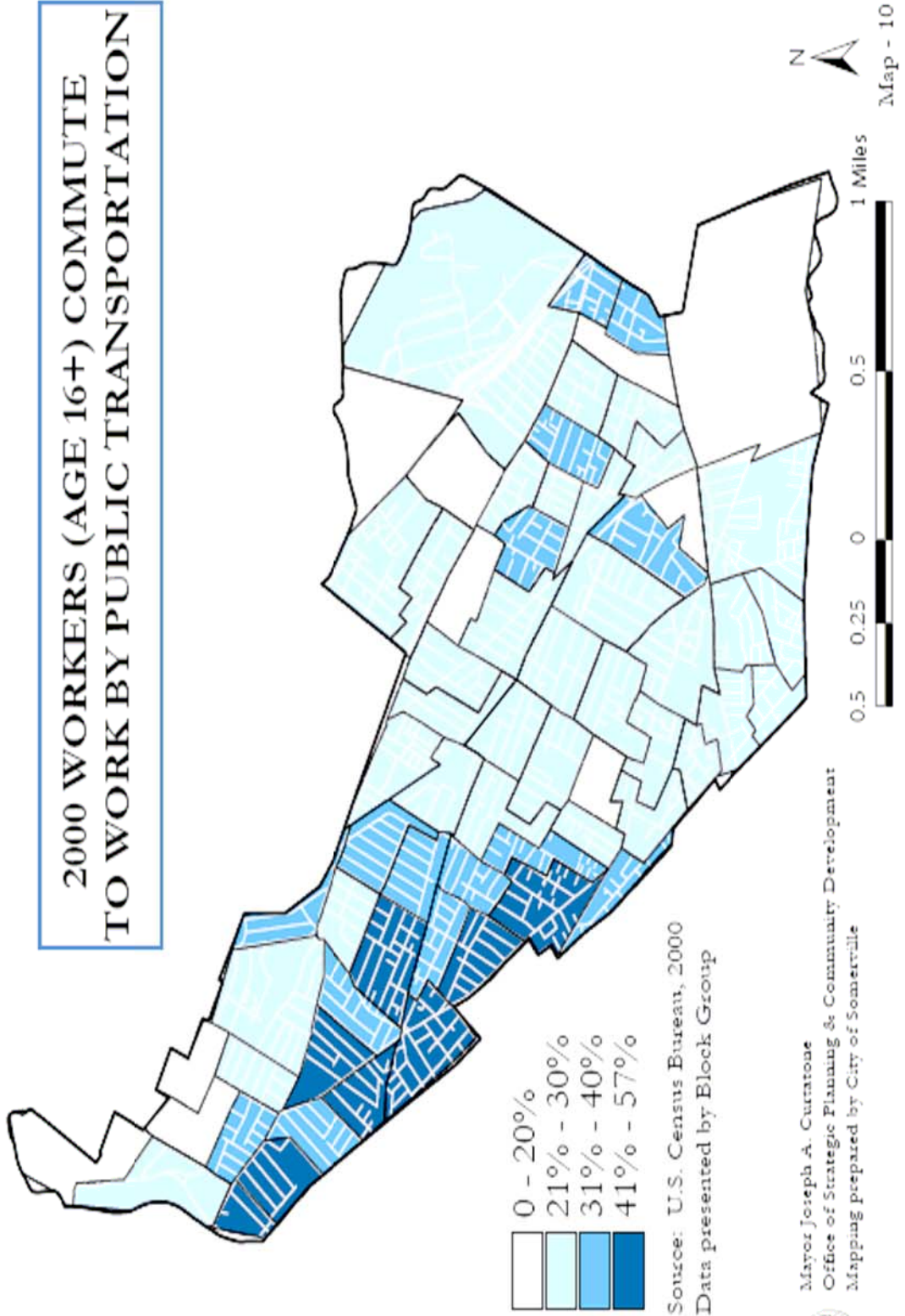
*The 2006 Commuter Survey by the Census Bureau shows that more Somerville workers use alternative modes of transportation than the automobile.*



# 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

## Transportation & Infrastructure Data

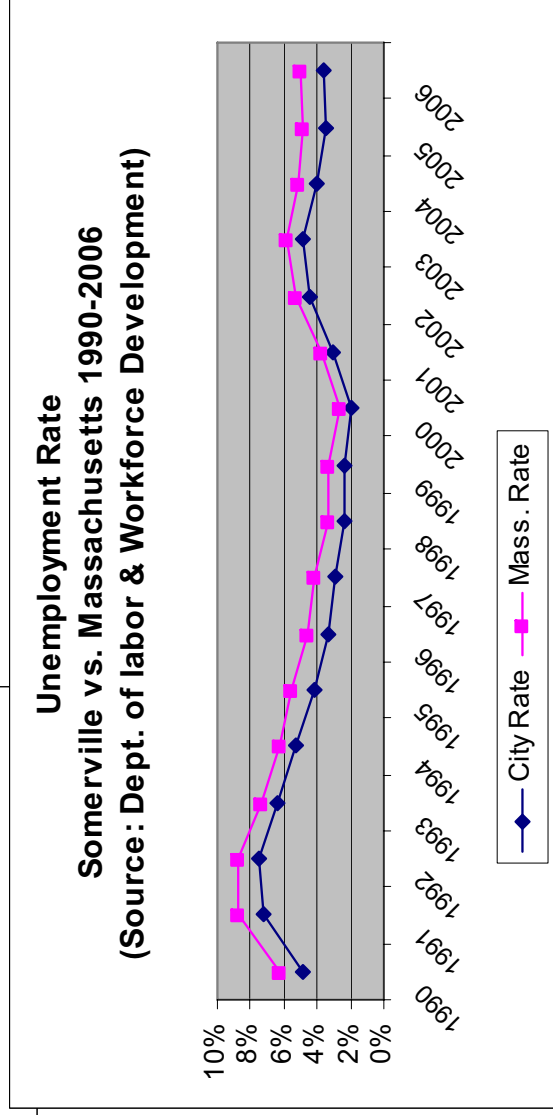
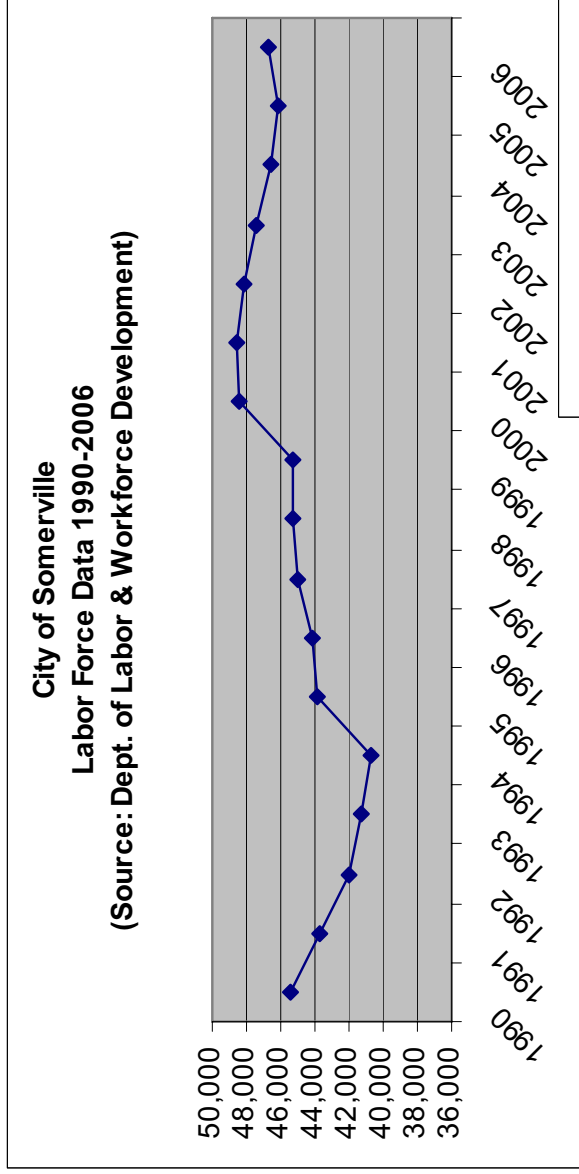
HUD FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN 2008 - 2013





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Economic Data





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Somerville's Largest Employers

The following table provides a listing of the largest employers in Somerville with 100

| Employer                       | Industry                 | # of Employees |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Tufts University*              | Educational Institution  | 2,193          |
| Somerville School Department   | Municipal                | 1,100          |
| Cambridge Health Alliance      | Health Care              | 771            |
| City of Somerville             | Municipal                | 700            |
| Angelica Textiles              | Laundry                  | 546            |
| Ames Safety Envelope           | Envelopes/ Printing      | 400            |
| Star Market/ Shaw's            | Grocery                  | 400            |
| Market Basket                  | Grocery                  | 275            |
| MBTA Commuter Rail Maintenance |                          |                |
| Facility                       | Railroad Maintenance     | 250-400        |
| Gentle Giant                   | Local Trucking           | 250-375        |
| Target                         | Retail                   | 200            |
| Share Group                    | Non-Profit Telemarketing | 196            |
| United Parcel Service          | Package Delivery Service | 180            |
| Stop & Shop                    | Grocery                  | 178            |
| Home Depot                     | Retail                   | 160            |
| Rogers Foam Corporation        | Foam Products            | 150            |
| Arrowstreet                    | Architecture/Design Firm | 150            |
| Grossman Marketing             | Paper Company            | 120            |
| Holiday Inn                    | Hotel                    | 114-154        |
| Somerville Housing Authority   | Development/Management   | 105            |

Source: Company or Institution listed, June 2007

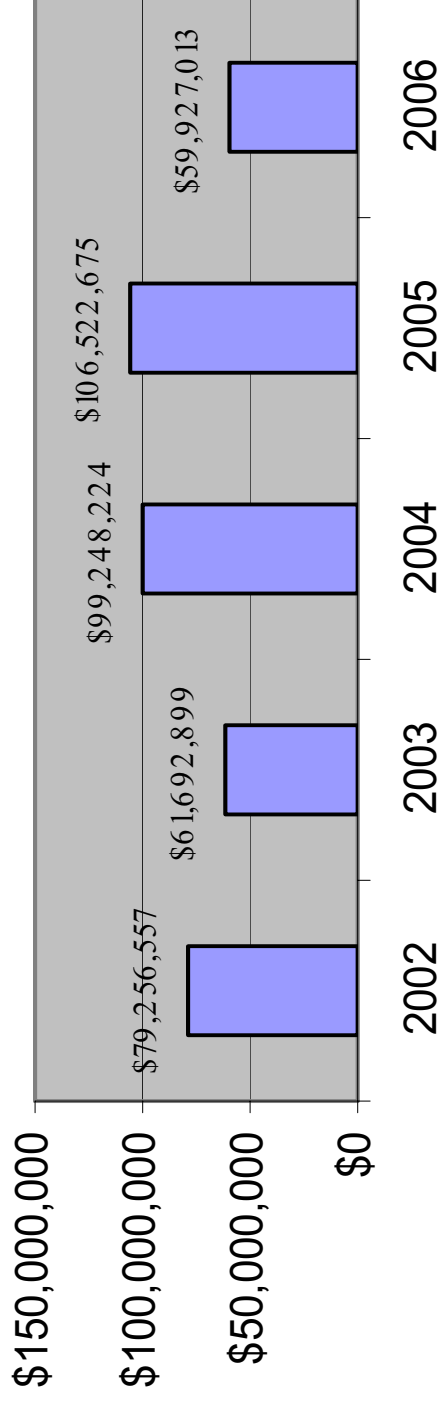
\* Approximately fifty percent of the campus is in Somerville and the balance is in Medford, MA.



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Economic Data

**City of Somerville -  
Construction Value of Building Permits**





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Historic Preservation Data

| Repair and Alteration | Demolition | NEPA/Section 106 | Total Number of Reviews |  |
|-----------------------|------------|------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 50                    | 25         | Not counted      | 75                      |  |
| 43                    | 25         | Not counted      | 68                      |  |
| 40                    | 20         | 5                | 65                      |  |
| 47                    | 23         | 8                | 78                      |  |
| 44                    | 19         | 10               | 73                      |  |
|                       |            |                  |                         |  |
|                       |            |                  |                         |  |

- The City has 17,500 buildings of which 309 are currently included in Local Historic Districts, which is less than 2% of all structures.
- HPC currently oversees 371 properties or 309 Buildings in 209 Local Historic Districts within the City.





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

## Public Comments & Next Steps



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Public Comments & Questions

- Verbal: at any of the Consolidated Plan Public Hearings
- Via Email: [BOBrien@ci.somerville.ma.us](mailto:BOBrien@ci.somerville.ma.us)
- In writing to:
  - OSPCD Attn: Brianna O'Brien
  - 93 Highland Avenue
  - Somerville, MA 02143
- Submit: from Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> through Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> 2007
- Visit the City's website more information at [www.ci.somerville.ma.us](http://www.ci.somerville.ma.us)



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Next Steps

- **Oct. 11 - Nov. 11, 2007:** Public Comments & Questions
- **Dec. 20, 2007 (approx.):** Draft Consolidated Plan & 1 Year Action Plan Published for Public Review
- **Jan. 7, 2008 (approx.):** Public Hearing on Draft Consolidated Plan & 1 Year Action Plan
- **Jan. 8 – Feb. 6, 2008:** Public Comments & Questions
- **Feb. 6 – Feb. 14, 2008:** Board of Aldermen Approval of Consolidated Plan & 1 Year Action
- **Feb. 15, 2008:** Final Draft Submitted to HUD

## V. Public Hearing Transcript: October 11, 2007

**Monica Lamboy** – For tonight's agenda you have a packet with information. We will be going through the slides before we end we will be getting public comment from everyone here. Turn to your agenda, Welcome and introductions. We will talk to you about what is a Consolidated Plan and a little about a One Year Action Plan, which is a partner document to the Consolidated Plan. We have a lot of great accomplishments that we want to let you know about from 2003-2008. We have interesting data to look at for the recent trends and changes in population. In order to do the new planning we want to really ground it in data. We have a lot of data a little bit more then we will cover tonight, but it's in your packet for review. Then we will be open for public comments and we will talk about the next steps. A Consolidated Plan is required by HUD. It helps us allocate resources from our CDBG program, Emergency Shelter Grants and our Home Program, which is available for affordable housing. The goal over all is to development viable urban communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low-moderate income people. We will be talking about low-moderate income populations, where they are and how we can work through our plan to aid those populations. The One Year Action Plan is a one-year plan that gets into a higher level of detail that helps us to define projects and targets that we are going to meet in one Year. Today we have to do both at the same time. Once we finish our 5-year plan we will be doing 4 additional One-Year Plan before the next period comes for a 5-year plan. This is a slide of resources that we have available from HUD. What you can see since 2003 is we have had some reductions but the last 2 years have been leveled off and we will see for the future what the resources are available. We have approximately 4 million dollars per year available, which 3 million of that is from our CDBG Program, \$900,000 from home and our Emergency Shelter Grant is approximately \$120,000. This is a slide that shows us the different block group areas where there are low-moderate income populations. These are the areas that we are open to spend the HUD resources, although we will be looking at a plan for the whole city. We will be looking at places where we can spend HUD resources. The far right side of the map is East Somerville and going out towards the left is the western part of Somerville. Moving on to accomplishments under the prior plan.

**Philip Ercolini** – My name is Phil Ercolini, I am the Director of Housing for the City of Somerville. The first chart illustrates our goals and objectives for the Con Plan period. As you can see the City and the Housing division has succeed their goals and expectations. If you look at the first category for creating affordable housing that incorporates, first time home buyer programs, rental programs. The second column is senior housing where we capture both assisted living and the independent elderly. The third category creating housing for homeless folks have been very successful in that area and we will talk about that later on and the 10-year plan to end homelessness. The fourth category avoiding poverty concentration and housing development part of both are rehab program. We have rehab throughout the City particularly trying to avoid concentrating on low-income folks on any part of the City. Increasing home ownership we have been very successful in that area and again a scattered site throughout the City so that were not concentrating on poverty. Our last category is rehabilitation of our housing, which we will talk about in the next few slides. The first slide is our lead hazard abatement program. The City has been very successful in the past 6 years and in the past 3 we received over \$6.8 million dollars for 2 different type grants. One is the HUD Healthy Homes program, which is a new demonstration grant that provides the City not only funds to abate lead hazard but also to

*expand education and outreach. We partnered with the Somerville Board of Health and School Administration to teach children about lead hazard and we are drastically reducing the childhood lead poisoning. It works very well with our housing rehab program as you can see we help 20-30 homeowners every year. Because some of those properties are 2-3 family homes we are also able to assist some of the tenants in the rental units their and works very well with the lead hazard abatement money. It gives the housing division more bang for the buck sort of speak. Typically rehabs are anywhere between \$25,000-30,000 range to abate a unit of lead is \$15,000. It requires a great deal of money. One of the City's strategies is meeting the needs of the homeless. We've been very successful in the past 5-6 years in securing HUD funds and working for forming a partnership with the Somerville Homeless Providers Group. The focus of HUD last year and the following years is going to be permanent housing. We also drafted and approved the 10 year plan to end homelessness were very proud. We continue to have an annual summit and working with the Somerville Homelessness Providers Group, whom do the annual census. We have been able to get the major stakeholders to begin to pay attention to homeless and try to find appropriate housing for them. The next slide deals with our affordable housing development program. We have been very successful in our partnership with the Somerville Community Corporation. They completed a 15 unit affordable home ownership, which is called the Temple Street Condominiums. Somerville Community Corporation acquiring a particular site from the Archdiocese from Boston and were going to continue to work with the archdiocese of Boston as their properties continue to close. The other is the Next Step House, which is sponsored by Just A Start Corporation, which is a Cambridge based non-profit organization. This facility is at 1313 Medford Street. Very successful project, for young mothers and their children, were able to secure 3 project based section 8 vouchers from the Housing Authority. What we have coming up this year is St. Polycarps, the former church. Once again the Somerville Community Corporation was successful in acquiring all their properties and the City committed \$1.6 million in home funds to development a multi unit and multi use facility next to the Somerville Housing Authority property on Mystic Ave and Temple Street. The next is the Connell-Capen assisted living facility. The visiting nurse association was successful in acquiring the former Connell School from the City and their developing what we call Continue of Care a model project 99 units of assisted living, Senior housing units which include HUD 202 independent living and their cooperating through the Somerville Housing Authority their existing Capen Court project. The development will be torn down and built adjacent to the Connell-Capen assisted living facility. Were proud of that and this is the first time a public housing authority company was able to secure not only federal funds and home funds but also tax credits. The entire facility of the 2 projects leveraged about \$75 million in public and private funds.*

**Penny Snyder** - My name is Penny Snyder. I am the Public Service and Emergency Contract Monitor for the City of Somerville. This slide delineates the Public Service goals and accomplishment for the last 4 years. Social service agencies have reached these numbers by leveraging funds from multiple sources. For example, in goal

1. Agencies have provided safety net planning to clients experiencing domestic violence. Youth have been taught conflict resolution strategies. Youth programming has provided safe alternative locations for youth to meet and ways to avoid involvement in negative behaviors.
2. Homeless and near homeless clients have received case management services. Tenants dealing with evictions have been taught how to defend against their eviction and/or negotiate an agreement with the landlord.

3. Clients have been trained and supported as they organize educational topics and presentations to their peers and the community as a whole (around health topics)
4. Newcomers to Somerville have received ESL and citizenship classes, have attended community workshops to familiarize them with community services available and have learned to advocate for themselves
5. Social service agencies have provided medical & nutritional transportation services to the elderly and disabled resident to enable them to remain independent. Additionally, recreational, educational and employment programming has been developed for elderly and disabled residents.

This slide indicates who benefits from public service funding. The photo is the July graduation of the Counselor in Training/Leadership in Training – A job readiness program for youth ages 14 through 16. Twenty-four youth graduated. For many this is their first job.

**Ellen Schneider** – My name is Ellen Schneider and I'm a project manager for Parks and Open Space. I'm going to talk a little bit tonight about the accomplishments that we have seen there. Since 2004 we have renovated and redesigned 11 parks, playgrounds, community gardens, or other open space in the City. Which includes 6 parks and community gardens in construction this year so were very proud of those achievements. That includes playgrounds such as Florence Playground and Corbett McKenna Playground, which is part of Prospect Hill. In our playgrounds were really looking to update site improvements and also safety surfacing for children. Currently were working on 6 parks currently, which includes the Ed Leathers Park behind the high school and also Perry Park on Washington. All these parks have been redesigned for relaxation or recreation. I will talk a little about transportation and Infrastructure as well. We have seen many accomplishments in recent years and this is also through both HUD funding and leveraging that money for state monies. That includes improvements to lower Broadway, working on Assembly Square, extending the community path and doing regional planning including the Green Line Extension. And some alternative transportation initiative working with Shape up Somerville, bicycle committees, and trails committees working on those projects. That includes projects like the Orange Line, plan for Assembly Square and the new Semasa Bus shelters popping up around the City.

**Monica-** Under the Economic Development we've have a number of accomplishments. This includes 9 Store Front Improvement's that were done in the past 3 years. We have also seen jobs created with the reopening of Assembly Square Market Place. We have been able to inquire some strategic parcels, including Kiley Barrel, Yard 21, some parcels in Boyton Yards. We do that in order to use those to leverage economic development activity. We want to make sure they came back into re-use for a purpose to benefit the community. We also completed a Hotel Study in 2007 to analyze the market. We had a very successful design competition for the Brick bottom area. This is an industrial area and their were over 200 different groups that came up with very interesting and creative ideas for how that space can be used. Were about to publish the official publications and will be available at our office of Strategic Planning and Community Development and also the Boston's AIA will be selling it on their website. We have also put together a welcome kit for new business. Welcomes them to the City and how they go about getting a building permit, appropriate licenses, ect. As



they join the community. Other accomplishments include support for our Union Square and East Somerville Main Streets. Both of these organizations have a lot of energy, working on community events and drawing people into the neighborhoods. When they bring people into these neighborhoods they come see the shops and restaurants available. It's a great marketing tool and they are great partners to work with. We have a small business loan program with the organization called Accion. Accion is bi-lingual for services in multiple languages and is geared toward working with a small business person who needs a start up loan or a loan to grow their business. They are another good partner to work with in the economic area. We participated in the bio international conference that took place late this spring. We partnered a local business and some of the developers in the area to promote Somerville as a destination for biotech and life science industry. Another important area we work on is Historic Preservation. The City is fortunate in having wonderful historic assets and we work on ways to maintain, preserve, and restore those assets. Some of the work we do is repair and maintenance of municipal buildings. They are apart of our historic culture as well. We offer technical support and financial assistance. We have designated local historic districts. We do research and photography, and education outreach. Some specific accomplishments during this Consolidated Plan period was the emergency stabilization of the Bow Street Police Station. We have also done restoration work at the Milk Row Cemetery. Stabilization at the West Branch Library and an effort that took some time was the City wide surveys of 200 properties to look at them for historic districts. In a nutshell those are some of the accomplishments from 2003-2008 some of those were HUD funded others were funded from other resources. Now that we embark on our new plan from 2008-2013 were going to ask ourselves were the goals that we set 5 years ago successful? Are there goals we still want to continue? Have their been changes in the environment that may lead us to new goals that we want to embark on and from those goals are projects. Why were here today is to talk about change in the neighborhoods and what you see in your community and how that can help us come up with goals for the next five years. So I'm going to go into some slides and this is some data that we were able to come about from other sources. Our first map here talks about population change and some areas have grown and some declines. Talking to some regional experts in population one of the reason for decline is the household size has been reducing in the area. As population age's people have been having fewer children. On the other hand we are seeing population growth of greater than 25% that means more people coming to the area and we need to look at that because we also need to make sure we have services available for them. That's why we look at population change. Another interesting fact to look at is the density of population. We want to make sure are services are where the residences are living. This is a map that shows the areas that are more or less dense in terms of residential living. Another aspect of this plan is to provide services to people who have limited English speaking. This map shows us where the larger percent's of minority populations live. In this neighborhood in East Somerville we do know that we have large numbers of people who don't speak English at home or at have limited English so we want to make sure that City services are available for everybody that lives in the City. Household Median Income. Another really key factor. We see immediate income that does vary across the City. Again with the Con-Plan are focus is on the low and moderate-income population and providing job opportunities. So this map shows us where some of those concentrations may lay in the City. I'm going to move specific areas around housing. The Con-Plan is an incredibly important aspect of that plan and we want to make sure we use the limited resources we have to

leverage outside funds and be successful as we can provide additional units. Some important statistic's 32% of Somerville Household expend more than 30% of their income of for housing. 30% of 130 of your income is a benchmark is what has been acceptable in how to pay for housing. 15% spend more than 50% of their income for housing. If we think about our own lives and what it would mean to us to spend 50% of our income, what about medical care, food, clothing, and other needs. This is a particular population that we want to work with to get them into a position either for job opportunities or affordable housing to get them into a better position to support the families. We have found from census data that 4% of the household has experience some level of overcrowding. That's defined has more than one person per room. Even today 1% of housing units lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities. Through our rehab program we want to reach out to those households and property owners to make sure they have the facilities that are needed.

Percent of renter occupied housing versus owner home occupied. With the amount of triple Decker's in the duplex we do have a high % of renters. Change has been accruing recently with the condo conversions. Actually this slide shows the number of condo units that existed from 1989 to 2006. You do see and upward trend which offers more homeowner's opportunities for people. On the upper level is about apartments. What is the average rent for apartments in Somerville? Interestingly from 2001-2006 their has been a decline in the monthly rental rate for apartment housing in the City. Which maybe be part of the housing market change that were seeing and may want to talk about the changes in the residential market.

Public Services. When Penny talked about the services reviewed for the services available for seniors. We want to look at those populations are and what there needs are. 25% of Somerville residents where born in foreign Countries. 19.4% of Somerville residents have a disability. These are large numbers and these are populations that we really need to identify on what their needs are. And we have statistics on again income for household. 16.6% of Somerville children speak a language other than English at home. This map shows where some of the social services are and what kind of work they do. You can see that a lot of the services are properly located in the areas where the people who need those services.

Parks and Open Space. As the most density population city in New England we also have limited open space available to us. So we want to use it well, and have high quality parks that people will be able to access. We only have about 4.7% of the total land area in the City, which is in parks and open space. We own less then half of that and we have a partnership with the state to maintain the other properties. This is a map that shows us where the 47 parks and open space are located in the City. In one of those things we done with that map is to look at the accessibly of the different parks. This map shows ¼ mile radius around each of the parks so what is nice to see here is that your within a 5 minute walk to a park. There are some areas that aren't covered yet but this is a good map to target and help us move forward.

Transportation and Infrastructure Despite the model size of the city we have over 100 miles of streets that need paving. We have 163 miles of sidewalk. Those are major infrastructure investments and there is a cost per mile for resurfacing those streets. Also on transportation one of the major focuses is access to public transit. This just shows how people get to work that is affordable and easily accessible to them. This map shows you what % of people use public transit to get to work. What you can see in the Davis Square area is over 40% of the residents in that area will use public transit to get to work. Imagine once the green line comes in and lots of other neighborhoods are open up to transit. Some of the economic

development data we look at is number of jobs in the area and unemployment rate. This is a table of some of the large employers of the City. Another data source that tells us the economic health of the city is the amount of Construction permit activity. So this graph shows us how many permits have come in. It's a variable statistic. One large project can result in an up bump in one year and a lot of smaller projects can actually end up with a smaller amount but it's a static that we look at regularly.

In terms of Historic Preservation one of our major programs is the demolition review process so that the Historic Preservation Commission reviews anything that is over 50 years. This gives the static's of the kind of reviews that they have done. This is some of the location of Historic sites. Historic sites are not only good for the community mentally and historically but they are a great economic development opportunity. We have walking tours that people will see the historic resources and be introduced to the different aspects of Somerville. With that we are open to hearing your ideas, information needs in the community, and where do we want to go in planning the next 5 years in terms of planning for the City of Somerville.

Danny Leblanc – I work at the Somerville Community Corporation chief executive officer. One is this we will offer this up in writing. Last night we had a full house of East Somerville residents and our organizations been working with people the on the East Somerville Innovative. It has a lot of areas for areas for the Con-Plan. Second thing in this sort of speaks to how we experience the housing affordably crunch in Somerville. I attended a session at the Boston Foundation this morning. The Greater Boston Housing Report Card and its regional so the statistics are not necessarily to Somerville but they include Somerville their were a bunch of alarming things in there. I would say the most alarming and encourage the City to think about this in how we plan for the future. There were 2 statistics that were just opposed. One was the median income of renters in the region, which have been going down in the last 2-3 years. That's shocking, this is going down, and so the median incomes of renters of the homeowners have gone down. The rents have actually gone up in greater Boston in the last 2 years. So despite condo conversion we still live in a city that is still occupied by 65% by renters. If you judge by the greater Boston statistics their incomes are going down while the rents are going up. The figures that Monica presented earlier have to do with how many people are paying more than 30% of their income for rent and how many are paying more than 50%. We ought to look at the as a plan for the City and for my organizations be part at least looking for and dealing with that problem. The third is Affordable Housing. There is nothing like having targets. One measure that some people have used over the years is the 10% Chapter 40B affordability. Whatever we use we all need to have target that were all trying to reach in terms of the production and affordable housing units on the rental side. We continue to want to be partners with the City and helping produce and solve those problems. Thank you.

Susan Bremer – Hi my name is Susan Bremer I live in Union Square section of Somerville. One of the things I'm interested is a transportation plan that is more comprehensive then waiting for the Green Line extension. Last week I had the opportunity to try to get to the TAB building (Tufts Campus) to the Diesel Café (Davis Square). As I was approaching Davis Square all of a sudden I realized this is going to be tricky crossing the street. But for me to get to where I wanted to go I had to take a funny route. I wonder how the City is

going to approach accommodating multi modes of transportation on our already crowded streets.

Monica Lamboy – Before we wrap up we want to talk about next steps. You can put your public comments into us in a number of fashions. We will actually be at two additional meetings next week. October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Argenzino School @ 7:00 and October 16<sup>th</sup> at the West Somerville Neighborhood School. If you aren't able to attend you can reach us by email and we do have a special section of the website dedicated to this plan. So as we move forward you will be able to get regular activities on this process. We are also having some focus groups talking to some experts in different area's one around affordable housing and homeless, parks and open space. If anyone is interested in joining the focus groups let us know. The slide shows the next steps. We have a public comment period open till November 11<sup>th</sup>. Sometime in mid December we will be presenting a draft plan to the BOA to officially get it to them. We have a second public hearing early in January and it's important and required by HUD that we come out and speak to community members right now to get info about issues. Then we want to come back to you and show you the strategies and goals and get your input again and get a document that works for the Community. So that will take place around January 7<sup>th</sup>. After that we have another public comment period and we will have documents on the website so people can read them remotely if they wanted to. We are aiming for approval by the BOA in mid February and then once we secured there approval we will submit it to HUD. Again thank you everyone for coming the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development is very happy that you were able to join us this evening.

## VI. Public Hearing Transcript: October 15, 2007

**Monica Lamboy** – For tonight’s agenda you have a packet with information. We will be going through the slides before we end we will be getting public comment from everyone here. Turn to your agenda, Welcome and introductions. We will talk to you about what is a Consolidated Plan and a little about a One Year Action Plan, which is a partner document to the Consolidated Plan. We have a lot of great accomplishments that we want to let you know about from 2003-2008. We have interesting data to look at for the recent trends and changes in population. In order to do the new planning we want to really ground it in data. We have a lot of data a little bit more then we will cover tonight, but it’s in your packet for review. Then we will be open for public comments and we will talk about the next steps. A Consolidated Plan is required by HUD. It helps us allocate resources from our CDBG program, Emergency Shelter Grants and our Home Program, which is available for affordable housing. The goal over all is to development viable urban communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low-moderate income people. We will be talking about low-moderate income populations, where they are and how we can work through our plan to aid those populations. The One Year Action Plan is a one-year plan that gets into a higher level of detail that helps us to define projects and targets that we are going to meet in one Year. Today we have to do both at the same time. Once we finish our 5-year plan we will be doing 4 additional One-Year Plan before the next period comes for a 5-year plan. This is a slide of resources that we have available from HUD. What you can see since 2003 is we have had some reductions but the last 2 years have been leveled off and we will see for the future what the resources are available. We have approximately 4 million dollars per year available, which 3 million of that is from our CDBG Program, \$900,000 from home and our Emergency Shelter Grant is approximately \$120,000. This is a slide that shows us the different block group areas where there are low-moderate income populations. These are the areas that we are open to spend the HUD resources, although we will be looking at a plan for the whole city. We will be looking at places where we can spend HUD resources. The far right side of the map is East Somerville and going out towards the left is the western part of Somerville. Moving on to accomplishments under the prior plan.

**Dana LeWinter** - Hi. My name is Dana LeWinter. I work in the Housing Division. I’m going to go over some accomplishments that we had in the last five years in the last Con-Plan. As you can see here, we create 5 year goals which range from senior housing, housing for the homeless, to creating home ownership opportunities. We set those goals and plan to meet those goals in the next 5 years. One of our main programs is the lead hazard abatement program. We recently received \$7 million over 3 years in order to do lead abatement in homes and a lot of education on keeping children safe and preventing lead poisoning. We also do Housing Rehabilitation. Somerville has extremely old housing stock which is great, but in order to maintain those properties, especially for our low and moderate income populations, we offer low interest loans in order to rehab those properties. Out of that we get rental properties that are affordable. We also work on housing for the homeless. We have Emergency Shelters to Transitional Units and now were focusing on permanent housing for the homeless. We do that through scattered site units for people who are homeless, rental assistance to help them get into a home, and preventing homelessness by providing legal assistance and assistance with their rent. Here you will see 2 projects that are samples of what we have done in the past 5 years. On your left you will see the Temple Street Condominiums that were recently completed. 15 condominiums for first time home buyers for both low and moderate income households. Your right is the next

*step transitional house. Another type of housing for people who aren't ready for their own home yet. Especially for young mothers and children. We assist them with their rent and support services and hopefully move into permanent housing. We have 3 large projects coming up in the next year that are underway. At St. Polycarps we have a multi 10 year property for rental, homeownership, and commercial development. Then we have 2 large senior housing developments being built in the West Somerville area.*

**Penny Snyder** - My name is Penny Snyder. I am the Public Service and Emergency Contract Monitor for the City of Somerville. This slide delineates the Public Service goals and accomplishment for the last 4 years. Social service agencies have reached these numbers by leveraging funds from multiple sources. For example, in goal

1. Agencies have provided safety net planning to clients experiencing domestic violence. Youth have been taught conflict resolution strategies. Youth programming has provided safe alternative locations for youth to meet and ways to avoid involvement in negative behaviors.
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4. Newcomers to Somerville have received ESL and citizenship classes, have attended community workshops to familiarize them with community services available and have learned to advocate for themselves
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This slide indicates who benefits from public service funding. The photo is the July graduation of the Counselor in Training/Leadership in Training – A job readiness program for youth ages 14 through 16. Twenty-four youth graduated. For many this is their first job.

**Arn Franzen** – Hi. My name is Arn Franzen. I am the Director of Parks and Open Space. The Parks and Open Space Program in the City of Somerville is doing very well. In the last few years we have completed many projects. As Penny has stated with her projects it is also true with our project. We take Block Grant money and leverage it with state or federal funds to accomplish our larger goals. You can see a number of parks that we have completed in the last 4 years. Perry Park and Stone Place is scheduled for a fall opening it actually is opening this Saturday. In Somerville, we have a limited amount of Parks and Open Space. So I'm happy to show you that we have renovated 3.2 acres in the last 4 years. I also wanted to review the Transportation and Infrastructure projects that we have got going for the City. We have a number of great projects from Lower Broadway, Inner Belt, Assembly Square, working with people in the Community to extend the community path. Other projects are

bicycle and walking pathways. Working with the bicycle committee, shape up Somerville, and the state trails committee. Some of the projects include the new orange line stop and green line. This is an example of a Semusa bus shelter popping up all over the city.

**Martha Tai** - Under the Economic Development we've have a number of accomplishments. This includes 9 Store Front Improvement's that were done in the past 3 years. We have also seen jobs created with the reopening of Assembly Square Market Place. We have been able to inquire some strategic parcels, including Kiley Barrel, Yard 21, some parcels in Boyton Yards. We do that in order to use those to leverage economic development activity. We want to make sure they came back into re-use for a purpose to benefit the community. We also completed a Hotel Study in 2007 to analyze the market. We had a very successful design competition for the Brick bottom area. This is an industrial area and there were over 200 different groups that came up with very interesting and creative ideas for how that space can be used. We were about to publish the official publications and will be available at our office of Strategic Planning and Community Development and also the Boston's AIA will be selling it on their website. We have also put together a welcome kit for new business. Welcomes them to the City and how they go about getting a building permit, appropriate licenses, etc. As they join the community. Other accomplishments include support for our Union Square and East Somerville Main Streets. Both of these organizations have a lot of energy, working on community events and drawing people into the neighborhoods. When they bring people into these neighborhoods they come see the shops and restaurants available. It's a great marketing tool and they are great partners to work with. We have a small business loan program with the organization called Accion. Accion is bilingual for services in multiple languages and is geared toward working with a small business person who needs a start up loan or a loan to grow their business. They are another good partner to work with in the economic area. We participated in the bio international conference that took place late this spring. We partnered a local business and some of the developers in the area to promote Somerville as a destination for biotech and life science industry.

**Monica Lamboy** - Another important area we work on is Historic Preservation. The City is fortunate in having wonderful historic assets and we work on ways to maintain, preserve, and restore those assets. Some of the work we do is repair and maintenance of municipal buildings. They are part of our historic culture as well. We offer technical support and financial assistance. We have designated local historic districts. We do research and photography, and education outreach. Some specific accomplishments during this Consolidated Plan period was the emergency stabilization of the Bow Street Police Station. We have also done restoration work at the Milk Row Cemetery. Stabilization at the West Branch Library and an effort that took some time was the City wide surveys of 200 properties to look at them for historic districts. In a nutshell those are some of the accomplishments from 2003-2008 some of those were HUD funded others were funded from other resources. Now that we embark on our new plan from 2008-2013 were going to ask ourselves were the goals that we set 5 years ago successful? Are there goals we still want to continue? Have there been changes in the environment that may lead us to new goals that we want to embark on and from those goals are projects. Why were here today is to talk about change in the neighborhoods and what you see in your community and how that can help us come up with goals for the next five years. So I'm going to go into some slides and



this is some data that we were able to come about from other sources. Our first map here talks about population change and some areas have grown and some declines. Talking to some regional experts in population one of the reason for decline is the household size has been reducing in the area. As population age's people have been having fewer children. On the other hand we are seeing population growth of greater than 25% that means more people coming to the area and we need to look at that because we also need to make sure we have services available for them. That's why we look at population change. Another interesting fact to look at is the density of population. We want to make sure are services are where the residences are living. This is a map that shows the areas that are more or less dense in terms of residential living. Another aspect of this plan is to provide services to people who have limited English speaking. This map shows us where the larger percent's of minority populations live. In this neighborhood in East Somerville we do know that we have large numbers of people who don't speak English at home or at have limited English so we want to make sure that City services are available for everybody that lives in the City. Household Median Income. Another really key factor. We see immediate income that does vary across the City. Again with the Con-Plan are focus is on the low and moderate-income population and providing job opportunities. So this map shows us where some of those concentrations may lay in the City.

I'm going to move specific areas around housing. The Con-Plan is an incredibly important aspect of that plan and we want to make sure we use the limited resources we have to leverage outside funds and be successful as we can provide additional units. Some important statistic's 32% of Somerville Household expend more than 30% of their income of for housing. 30% of 130 of your income is a benchmark is what has been acceptable in how to pay for housing. 15% spend more than 50% of their income for housing. If we think about our own lives and what it would mean to us to spend 50% of our income, what about medical care, food, clothing, and other needs. This is a particular population that we want to work with to get them into a position either for job opportunities or affordable housing to get them into a better position to support the families. We have found from census data that 4% of the household has experience some level of overcrowding. That's defined has more than one person per room. Even today 1% of housing units lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities. Through our rehab program we want to reach out to those households and property owners to make sure they have the facilities that are needed.

Percent of renter occupied housing versus owner home occupied. With the amount of triple Decker's in the duplex we do have a high % of renters. Change has been accruing recently with the condo conversions. Actually this slide shows the number of condo units that existed from 1989 to 2006. You do see and upward trend which offers more homeowner's opportunities for people. On the upper level is about apartments. What is the average rent for apartments in Somerville? Interestingly from 2001-2006 their has been a decline in the monthly rental rate for apartment housing in the City. Which maybe be part of the housing market change that were seeing and may want to talk about the changes in the residential market.

Public Services. When Penny talked about the services reviewed for the services available for seniors. We want to look at those populations are and what there needs are. 25% of Somerville residents where born in foreign Countries. 19.4% of Somerville residents have a disability. These are large numbers and these are populations that we really need to identify on what their needs are. And we have statistics on again income for household. 16.6% of Somerville children speak a language other than English at home. This map shows where

some of the social services are and what kind of work they do. You can see that a lot of the services are properly located in the areas where the people who need those services.

**Parks and Open Space.** As the most density population city in New England we also have limited open space available to us. So we want to use it well, and have high quality parks that people will be able to access. We only have about 4.7% of the total land area in the City, which is in parks and open space. We own less than half of that and we have a partnership with the state to maintain the other properties. This is a map that shows us where the 47 parks and open space are located in the City. In one of those things we done with that map is to look at the accessibility of the different parks. This map shows 1/4 mile radius around each of the parks so what is nice to see here is that you're within a 5 minute walk to a park. There are some areas that aren't covered yet but this is a good map to target and help us move forward.

**Transportation and Infrastructure** Despite the model size of the city we have over 100 miles of streets that need paving. We have 163 miles of sidewalk. Those are major infrastructure investments and there is a cost per mile for resurfacing those streets. Also on transportation one of the major focuses is access to public transit. This just shows how people get to work that is affordable and easily accessible to them. This map shows you what % of people use public transit to get to work. What you can see in the Davis Square area is over 40% of the residents in that area will use public transit to get to work. Imagine once the green line comes in and lots of other neighborhoods are open up to transit. Some of the economic development data we look at is number of jobs in the area and unemployment rate. This is a table of some of the large employers of the City. Another data source that tells us the economic health of the city is the amount of Construction permit activity. So this graph shows us how many permits have come in. It's a variable statistic. One large project can result in an up bump in one year and a lot of smaller projects can actually end up with a smaller amount but it's a statistic that we look at regularly.

In terms of Historic Preservation one of our major programs is the demolition review process so that the Historic Preservation Commission reviews anything that is over 50 years. This gives the statistics of the kind of reviews that they have done. This is some of the location of Historic sites. Historic sites are not only good for the community mentally and historically but they are a great economic development opportunity. We have walking tours that people will see the historic resources and be introduced to the different aspects of Somerville. With that we are open to hearing your ideas, information needs in the community, and where do we want to go in planning the next 5 years in terms of planning for the City of Somerville. I'm actually going to turn it over to the audience.

Hi my name is Libby Parsons. My question is how does the City choose its metrics and evaluate the success of its programs? And how do they use that to choose how they will allocate money going forward.

**Monica Lamboy** – That's a really good question and will probably take a long time to answer. In terms of data sources, the census data is invaluable. Speaking to service providers that are providing services that have a feel in what's going on in the street. We're actually going to have focus groups to talk about people on the street and learn from them what the issues are. In going forward, in measuring has really been a focus of the federal government for the last 10 years in terms of, making sure the jurisdiction have measurable outcomes. When you saw those goals you saw an actual target figure in terms of units then we have to

measure them afterwards. I think the focus is on outcomes. Instead of counting how many pamphlets we distribute. What was the meaningful improvement in health or did more people get access to transportation. It's really easier to count pieces of paper but that doesn't mean you really changed the community. What would help us is thoughts about some things that are important for you to know. How would you evaluate if we were successful five years from now. What would you want to know that we had done whether we met our goal or not.

My question is on retail space. Like the number of Storefront, and has there been any change in increase in % storefronts for functioning business.

**Monica Lamboy** – That's definitely a measure of the health of the commercial neighborhood is the amount of vacant. There's no data source that is easily available. A lot of time what we do is walk around. This summer we did a walking tour of the different commercial areas and counted the types of uses and to compare to other commercial areas to see what we have more and less of. That can help to identify a strategy to focus on for example coffee shops, because we didn't see any in a certain neighborhood. We do pay attention to closely to the retail areas, but it's more of an individual walking around seeing what's out there. Our business coordinator, Maria Ortiz is also in close contact with business in the area. The real estate industry can be really helpful as well to tell us if something became vacant that we can use that information to market the City and try to match people up together.

Question: Inaudible

**Arn Franzen** - We work in conjunction with DCR on DCR properties. But they oversee the management and the funding for those properties. We don't have direct involvement. We have a friends group with Foss Park that works with DCR. We have been working with them to acquire the stadium at Dilboy and some of the playing fields. But the rest of that is left for them to manage. In terms of moving forward the Governor has said he wants to strengthen those relationships and we want to work with them.

-Inaudible-

**Dana LeWinter** – In the past, there has been an emergency response team that would be able to assist the homeowner to get what they need to get the improvements they need. They may not even realize what condition their property so taking someone from the building department and offering our services.

**Monica Lamboy** – The Neighborhood Improvement Team is sort of an inspection of the property letting the landlord know that were serious and you need to change your behavior. One issue that is happening in these communities with a lot of foreclosures, but suddenly you have empty buildings and are owned by the mortgage companies. Sometimes these mortgage companies don't know the whole portfolio and their not coming out to look at. On the other hand could be an opportunity. How do we get those foreclosed properties into the hands of the local non-profits who can then use it to build for affordable housing.

Question – I was interested in your statistics to see that Tufts Employee's, fall into a good portion of Somerville. Are there things that go that Somerville links in with Tufts.

**Monica Lamboy** – I think in the past 4 years there has been a much stronger relationship. Some of the people talk about fencing and how they can't get in from the Somerville Side. But their still are some issues that need to be worked out with Tufts. The President over there and the Mayor here are very collaborative and were heading in the right direction. They are a big employer when you think about that. If you look at the top of the list the top Employer's is government services.

Question – Could you talk about weather you're having success of the Bio-tech?

**Monica Lamboy** – We are clear that there's no place else in this area that is better situated than us. Somerville is not on the raider screen of the decision makers. That's one of the things we have been working on this summer. After the bio convention, who are the potential groups that could come in how we get to them. We had a very successful meeting with a major developer and the Mayor and showed the different properties. What we have seen is a lot of interest in small start up companies. We don't have anyone on the hook yet.

Question – How does the Green Line fit into that?

**Monica Lamboy** – The Green Line is a huge asset to Somerville. It's a huge attraction for people who want to come and shop and work. It's a high priority for the Mayor. Were going to have our first meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup>. That was a big accomplishment. We're ready.

Question – How much control do you have over the allocation of the CDBG funds?

**Monica Lamboy** - \$3 million is CDBG. Then we have home, which is for housing only and then we have Emergency Shelter, which is only for shelter. There is a clear requirement from HUD. It has to serve Low-moderate income populations.

**Mark Friedman** – I'm Mark Friedman. I am the Director of Finance for the MOSPCD. HUD gives us very clear guidance for what we can and can't use these block grant monies for. But they don't set priorities for the community. That's why were here tonight, to see what we need for the coming 5 years and how were going to program the monies that HUD gives us. The City has a program that goes back to the late 80's that we have been using the HUD monies in the various programs we have. We have some programs for example public services. There are some specific requirements from HUD that we can't use more than 20% of the amount of money we get towards public service. Every year we advertise, to find out what the needs are for the community and every year there are more needs then money. We look at each need for the community, but were here tonight to here people's ideas.

**Monica Lamboy** – The nice thing about a 5 year plan is we can plan ahead. We have the benefit over the course of time to put our money where is makes sense.

**Mark Friedman** – the amounts of money we received from HUD over the past years, the decline wasn't the best thing for our programs. With the stabilization with those funds were hopeful to see improvements down in Washington, DC where there will be additional monies in the future. We also look for ways to leverage these funds as much as possible. So we can do larger projects. We are constantly looking for other funds in order to do these other larger projects.

**Monica Lamboy** – Before we wrap up we want to talk about next steps. You can put your public comments into us in a number of fashions. We will actually be at an additional meeting next week, October 16<sup>th</sup> at the West Somerville Neighborhood School. If you aren't able to attend you can reach us by email and we do have a special section of the website dedicated to this plan. So as we move forward you will be able to get regular activities on this process. We are also having some focus groups talking to some experts in different areas one around affordable housing and homeless, parks and open space. If anyone is interested in joining the focus groups let us know. The slide shows the next steps. We have a public comment period open till November 11<sup>th</sup>. Sometime in mid December we will be presenting a draft plan to the BOA to officially get it to them. We have a second public hearing early in January and it's important and required by HUD that we come out and speak to community members right now to get info about issues. Then we want to come back to you and show you the strategies and goals and get your input again and get a document that works for the Community. So that will take place around January 7<sup>th</sup>. After that we have another public comment period and we will have documents on the website so people can read them remotely if they wanted to. We are aiming for approval by the BOA in mid February and then once we secured their approval we will submit it to HUD. Again thank you everyone for coming the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development is very happy that you were able to join us this evening.

## **VII. Public Hearing: October 16, 2007**

*All speakers below presented the same presentation as the Public Hearing on 10-11-07 and 10-15-07.*

Philip Ercolini – Director of Housing

Penny Snyder – Public Service Contract Administrator

Lisa Lepore – Director of Transportation and Infrastructure

Mark Friedman – Director of Finance

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

My name is Mimi Graney with Union Square Main Streets. We're grateful for the support by the city with the CDBG funding. Union Square is a great area for the City to continue to focus its energy. Part of our work is we look at the mix of the business there. We found Union Square that a particular business area would only have 2% of industrial uses and we currently have 10%. Typically we would only have 15% of service and we have 52% are services for example, hair salon. Normally 16% of retail and we have 17%. So ongoing work to help us do business improvement. Part of that would be changing the zoning of Union Square to make it easier for business to reuse commercial projects. I know the City had a proposal and we encourage ongoing support of that. A number of steps for ongoing support are projects like the Farmers Market, which has demonstrated \$1/2 million economic impact and to focus on the Arts Union. In its first year showed an economic impact of \$325,000 and it's continuing to grow so ongoing support for that program. Union Square has the opportunity for significant potential. Comparing Union Square to Davis Square it's only 93% of the area but only generates 40% of the tax revenue. Some of the ways to leverage that revenue would be reuse some of the Historic Properties. So to make some of the properties a Historic District that would enable the properties owners to use Historic Tax credits. Right now, sections of Bow Street are Historic Districts. Bow Street Police Station they were able to use Historic Tax Credits. In particular, think about leveraging the arts so part of the Zoning Proposal that has been considered was to look at how to bring in theaters, cinemas, and artist workspace. To look at the Western part of the square, to do mixed use development. But not forget the infield properties like JJ Sullivan Plumbing. There is potential for some of those properties that we haven't been able to look at. I don't know if this is possible but to look at the permitting process. Business talk about how difficult it is to open up a business because of so many hoops you have to go around. I'm sure some of the City cares about helping to bring some of the offices under the same umbrella. Everyone is spread around which makes it difficult. The Storefront Improvement Program is great the ones that have happened. Typically there is funding for up to 6 at \$40,000 each. Often those funds get rolled over to the next year. The procedure has been very difficult to access. So maybe to look at other ways to leverage that funding. Maybe thinking about signage improvements or smaller grants. A couple things that weren't talked about is immigrants in terms of language needs and how this might affect poverty issues. So support for English as a second language both business based ones and Adult Learning. Union Square Main Street is looking at certain areas. Property improvements, people (looking at education) and, pedestrians. So thinking about pedestrian improvements. We have very limited open space,

but thinking about the streetscape. The Somerville Ave reconstruction project is a great gateway to Union Square.

**Mark Friedman** – Thank you very much. If you have noticed were just taking some notes on your comments.

My name is Reed Cochran. I am the Executive Director of SCM Community Transportation. We provide rides for people with disabilities and seniors; in fact 90% of our riders are seniors. First of all I didn't see anything about the % of population that is seniors. I didn't see anything in the overall plan in the way we want to do development that makes the most sense for seniors. The population of senior citizens is going to double. I focus mainly on transportation. SCM is always gotten to big piece of the CDBG funds. It's been flat; if it's flat we need to think of more creative ways of meeting the needs of transportation. Were working on a new business model that should leverage different sources of revenue and reduce our dependency on CDBG funding.

Housing cost are so high a Boston area senior is much more likely to live at or below the poverty level. I think there should be some thinking about this population. One of the things we saw on the slide is housing for low income mothers and their children. My question is can we have housing that has seniors in the same building to help with child care. I would like to see older citizens integrated in the population. Another interesting thing I would like to raise is Senior's can be economic contributors. I've seen were their building seniors friendly shopping districts. It would be really nice to see Somerville have that. The two top issues are housing and transportation for seniors going forward.

Hi. My name is Sonja Dirah. I am the Executive Director for the Commission for Women. I just wanted to say thank you very much for the work the MOSPCD has done for the community. I want to say I'm thankful for the support for the domestic violence services to the tenants I saw in today's presentation. I really appreciate the affordable housing units for young mothers and their children. I also appreciate all we did see for elderly, disabled, youth, homeless, low income families, and tenants. I appreciate the connections for young women and the elderly. Some areas I would like to see some support is how women in general are being served. Also in the Economic development sector women are strong contributor to the economy and would like to support that as much as we can. If we want to give women more support services we give them equal in pay and increase the tax-base for the City. I also want to say we do focus on disabilities and want to put a strong support for the disabilities.

Hello. My name is Janet. I'm not from an organization. I moved to Somerville over 20 years ago and I live in the Teele Square area. When I moved here Holland Street was totally undesirable. There has been some wonderful improvements in the City. I'm delighted to see low-income housing has been designed, but the thoughtfulness of the design. I'm hoping as more low-income housing is being built that consideration continues to be at appearance and numbers of people giving the place to live. I am very concerned about the History of Somerville. History is something to be recognized. When I'm hearing things that are being demolished I wonder if it should have been saved. I'm also very pleased that households are being able to renovate housing with monies from the City. I have been on the Historic Tours and encourage those tours. I did want to mention is safety in the buildings. My



daughter goes to the SHS, when the weather is really bad they are told what exit/enter the building. I hope we do keep it as a high school. The T stops have been pushed backs. I hope their will be no more push backs for the T. Having access to the T will reduce our pollution.

My name is Kevin Allen a Union Square resident. Just want to say the importance towards the Main Street Organization. Historic structures are an important piece of that puzzle. Just want to emphasize and push forward Historic Preservation as economic tool.

My name is Carrie. I work for the East Somerville Main Streets. I really want to thank OSPCD for the support we have received over the last year. Also for being really open for community leadership for the East Broadway streetscape planning process. And looking more to the future I would like to see more face to face outreach with the business owners. The Storefront Improvement would like to see a reevaluation for that process.

My name is Florence Bergman. I am the Director of the Mystic Learning Center. I have a few teen employees with me tonight and were here to put in a plug that the City use some of it's resources for teen employment. The Mystic Learning Center provides after school youth employment. CDBG \$ have helped sustain the learning Center from 1978. Currently were receiving \$13,972.00 and 99% going towards employing teens. Any bit that the City can help us. There has been the teen empowerment study, a lot of areas point to the areas for employing teens. We are open all summer. We offer a range of activities for youth. In the way were able to provide services, is through peer-leadership. I brought a few of them tonight so there here to say a couple comments about the Mystic Learning Center.

My name is Rose Davis. I am a junior at SHS. I work at the Mystic Learning Center as a peer-leader. I enjoy my job very much and enjoy the company of the young kids and makes me happy to see the young children do their homework and participating in activities.

My name is Vanica. I work with the program Books of hope. It's keeps young adults out of trouble and teaches young adults to channel their anger and happiness through poetry. It also involves going on field trips involving poetry. It is a great opportunity to meet individuals and intend to stay with this program.

Reina – I'm going to represent PTCC and TCC. PTCC is basically a program for pre-teens it stands for Pre Teen Choice Club. It's for kids 8-12. Rather then being outside in the street you come to PTCC and hang out, we go on field trips, have game nights, go to basketball games and it's a place to go rather then being on the streets. TCC is for teenagers 13-19. It stands for Teen Choice Club. It's a good experience and we do the same as PTCC but we do more because were older and we stay longer. It's a really good program to fund. We branch out with books of hope which is part of TCC. I have been working here for 5 years as a junior staff.

My name is Wendy from Teen Empowerment. I just wanted to add, that good times is gone, but what are youth are going to do without these spaces. We have to think about recreation for them. Our youth are competing for jobs with immigrants. We need to think about ways to support our youth with job experience.

**VIII. Housing Focus Group Notes**  
**October 22, 2007**  
**City Hall Annex**  
50 Evergreen Avenue, Somerville MA

**In Attendance:**

John Keegan – Walnut Street Center  
Daniele Levine - RESPOND  
Melissa McWhinney – CAAS  
John Spears – Visiting Nurses Association  
Mark Alston Follansbee – Somerville Homelessness Coalition  
Megan Goughan - CASPAR  
Danny Leblanc – Somerville Community Corporation  
Paul Mackey – Somerville Housing Authority  
Meredith Levy – Somerville Community Corporation  
Katie Anthony – Somerville Community Corporation

Dana LeWinter – City of Somerville  
Phil Ercolini - City of Somerville  
Vicki Wairi – City of Somerville

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

**1) Sub-Prime Lending Crisis**

- i) Foreclosures
  - 1) Impact
    - (a) Housing agencies are noticing more evictions
      - (a) Not necessarily foreclosures, but the process
    - (b) Somerville court seeing more people in foreclosure proceedings
    - (c) Minority groups are at risk
    - (d) Spilling over to renters and condo developments
  - 2) Causes
    - (a) Well beyond Somerville's control; regional and national issue
    - (b) Banks, Mortgage Industry, Brokers
      - (a) Differing regulations between industries
  - 3) Strategies
    - (a) Analyzing on a local level
      - (a) Housing assembling a report on banks and foreclosures
    - (b) Outreach and education at earliest stages
    - (c) Communicating with at-risk home owners before situations deteriorate into foreclosures
      - (a) Offering post home-ownership classes
    - (d) Re-exploring possibilities for local discussion between local banks on lending practices.

- (e) Examining CRA (Community Reinvestment Act) lending requirements and formulas used to determine loans.
  - (a) Leveraging CRA ability to look at bank records
  - (b) Exploring campaign to bring standard similar to banking industry to mortgage industry.
- (f) Look at how neighboring communities address similar problems.
  - (a) Cambridge's Justice Start Program
  - (b) Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust annual fundraiser
  - (c) Boston and Bank of America's merger commitment

## **2) Affordable Housing**

- i) Housing mixes
  - 1) Explore cost-benefit of building larger sized units
  - 2) Reserve more units as low-income rentals
  - 3) Avoid income stigmatization
  - 4) Continue to address those at the bottom of the economic ladder
- ii) Stabilized rents
  - 1) Address City's response to rents during economic cycles
    - (a) Determine how funds will aid people
  - 2) Explore options on how to extend rent subsidies
- iii) Ownership Funding Sources
  - 1) Affordable Housing Trust Fund
    - (a) Promote awareness of newly available funds
  - 2) Micro loans
  - 3) Study combining resources of low-income populations to purchase houses and co-ops.

## **3) Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance**

- i) Issues
  - 1) Market changing for inclusionary units
  - 2) City has had difficulty selling smaller units
  - 3) Need for more family units
    - (a) More families seeking larger units
    - (b) Ordinance framework promotes smaller units
- ii) Strategies
  - 1) Research trends in housing market
    - (a) Evaluate the trade-off between more 2-3 room family units but less overall units and more overall units but less families
    - (b) Explore an incentive for creating 2-3 room units
  - 2) Analyze financing situation for private developers
    - (a) Re-evaluate penalties towards private developers
  - 3) Study modifying ordinance to increase percentage of required units

#### **4) Homelessness**

- i) Addressing the Problem
  - 1) Promoting state discussion on how to define homelessness
  - 2) Develop methodology for more accurate counts of homelessness
- ii) Strategies
  - 1) Prevention
  - 2) Costs are lower than housing
  - 3) Congregational Housing
    - (a) Fulfills need for place where can people live with 24hr supervision
    - (b) People would have their own unit, but also a live in
- iii) Caritas SRO communities
  - 1) Analyze costs of Caritas programs
    - (a) Determine level of supervision needed
    - (b) Identify sources of funding
  - 2) Assist Caritas to identify possible locations for SRO housing
  - 3) Outreach to neighbors of potential locations
- iv) Examining Housing Underutilization
  - 1) Determine houses where there are underutilized rooms
  - 2) Reach out to families who are “house rich but cash poor”
  - 3) Develop program for housing non-substance abusing people in these rooms
    - (a) Explore incentives to families for hosting
- v) Collaborate with Mayor’s Task Force on Homelessness
- vi) Business Community
  - 1) Demonstrate how homelessness affects entire community
  - 2) Communicate economic benefits of reducing homelessness

#### **5) Next steps**

- i) Reconvene focus group
- ii) Participate in Green Line Planning

Ensure affordable housing is included in planning stages

## **IX. Economic Development Focus Group Notes**

### **Economic Development Focus Group**

**Thursday October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**Somerville City Hall Annex**

**50 Evergreen Avenue**

### **List of Invitees**

Dorie Clark (Marketing Consultant, ESMS Vice President)  
Dan Maher (Owner of Stained Glass Company in Magoun Square)  
Mimi Graney (USMS Director)  
David Apposian/Margo Grossberg (Developer in Union Square)  
Carrie Dancy (ESMS Director)

Maria Ortiz – City of Somerville

Martha Tai – City of Somerville

### **Unable to Attend**

Thalia Tringo (Real Estate Agent, DARBI President)  
Tony Morales (Pastor of Winter Hill Church, Business Owner in East Somerville)  
Steven Mackey (President of the Chamber of Commerce)

#### **1) Job Creation**

- a) Deciding the types of businesses the city wants
  - i) Industry
  - ii) Type of jobs
    - (1) Retail
    - (2) Services

#### **2) Developing New Opportunities for Businesses**

- a) Defining Standards
  - i) What does the City want to attract
- b) Attracting Investment
  - i) Determining strategies to market Somerville to prospective developers and business
  - ii) Tax breaks as incentives
  - iii) Fast track “Good developers”
    - (1) Expediting permitting process
    - (2) Parking breaks
    - (3) Can make residential areas nicer
- c) Attract specific industries

- i) Businesses that make sense for residents
  - ii) Cooperating with task forces
- 3) **Strengthen Existing Businesses**
  - a) Home based business
    - i) Elevate to next level
  - b) “Art Businesses”
    - i) Support arts overlay
  - c) Pedestrians
    - i) Pedestrian friendly equals business friendly
    - ii) Addressing pedestrian concerns to appropriate decision makers
    - iii) Magoun Square Revitalization
      - (1) Parking plays important role
      - (2) How removing parking spaces can affect local businesses
  - d) Public Transportation
    - i) “Auto” clients do not equal “T” clients
    - ii) Proposed Green Line affect on neighborhood businesses
    - iii) Bus routes
      - (1) Improving frequency
- 4) **Tax Base**
  - a) Tying car ownership to property taxes
  - b) Historic Tax Credits
    - i) State and federal credits available for historical designated properties
    - ii) Could provide incentive to maintain properties
- 5) Zoning
  - a) Districts
    - i) Shaping zoning to be more reflective of individual neighborhoods
      - (1) Different areas can support different levels of parking
        - (a) Depending on use
        - (b) Depending on abutting properties
      - (2) Blanket zoning can be difficult in an already built environment
  - b) Central Business Districts (CBD)
    - i) There are only technically three in Somerville
      - (1) Davis Square
      - (2) Union Square
      - (3) Lower Broadway

- c) Density
  - d) Taxing parking spaces for residents, developers
    - i) Parking requirements
  - e) City Aesthetics
    - i) Utility Poles
    - ii) Use open space (sidewalk)
  - f) Preserving Historic buildings (commercial)
    - i) SIP targets historical properties
- 6) **Continuing Efforts**
- a) Civic center or community place
  - b) Improving building stock
  - c) Developing to support business
  - d) Municipal properties as opportunities for economic development
  - e) Welcoming to diversity



## **X. Transportation & Infrastructure Focus Group Notes**

**THURSDAY NOVEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007**  
**OSPCD CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**8:00AM – 10:00AM**

### ***ATTENDEES***

Joel Bennet – Friends of the Community Path  
Karen Miloy – STEP  
Wig Zamore – Green Line Forum  
Nicole Rioles – Shape-Up Somerville  
Brian Postlewaite – Private citizen  
Mimi Graney – Union Square Main Streets  
Tom Gilbert – Disabilities Commission  
Helena Thrift

Lisa Lepore - OSPCD  
Steve Winslow - OSPCD  
*Bernie Cabill - OSPCD*

### ***OUTLINE***

#### **1) TRANSIT PLANNING**

- 1) Importance of Catch Basins
  - (a) Stressing bike and pedestrian connections to transit stops to extend their utility
    1. Davis Square example
  - (b) Need for proper planning, foresight, input from residents and organizations
- 2) Understanding Commuting Patterns
  - (a) Need to understand where people are traveling
    - (i) If residents don't work in Boston, Green Line does not benefit them
  - (b) Improving connectivity between transit modes
    - (i) Potential of Urban Ring
    - (ii) Green Line/Commuter intermodal rail transfer stations
- 3) Looking at European transit models
  - (a) Interconnectivity between all modes of transit
  - (b) Connecting squares, city centers

#### **2) PEDESTRIANS**

- 1) Need for more pedestrian friendly environment

- (a) Can people cross the street
- (b) How long does it take
- (c) Are projects designed to minimize crossings?
- (d) Are they more favorable to cars
- (e) Using funds to study how to make McGrath Highway safer for pedestrians

### **3) MOBILITY**

- 1) Importance of maintaining sidewalks
  - (a) Ensuring all crosswalks have curb cuts
  - (b) Vigilant in clearing snow
- 2) Enforcement
  - (a) Increasing awareness of laws
  - (b) Enforce laws against trucks parking in bus stops
  - (c) Improving 3-1-1 communication and response
  - (d) Relocating handicap spaces

### **4) BICYCLES**

- 1) Increase bicycle friendliness
  - (a) Safestart program
  - (b) More signage
  - (c) Wayfinding
  - (d) Identifiable landmarks
- 2) More bike lanes
  - (a) Making Somerville, Union Square, hub for bicycle connections
  - (b) Improving connectivity between squares
- 3) Planning for possible federal funds in 2010
  - (a) Work with city of Boston
  - (b) Opportunity to increase Sullivan Square access
- 4) Need for a bicycle master plan
  - (a) Could be addressed with CDBG funds

### **5) ROADS**

- 1) Fixing roads faster
  - (a) Storm water and sewer systems underground can be over 130 years old, need to repair them
- 2) Improving relationship with EOT
  - (a) More control over roadway projects
  - (b) Reducing dependence on MassHighway

## **6) MBTA**

- 1) Need for later service
- 2) Improving awareness of transit options, especially in low-moderate income neighborhoods

## **7) STRATEGIES**

- 1) Need to define priorities and strategies
  - (a) Focus efforts in one area, and then branch out. Projects in isolation waste resources
  - (b) Need to define accomplishments, and how we will achieve them
  - (c) Creating a coherent plan
  - (d) Setting concrete goals
- 2) Accepting CDBG will not cover all projects
  - (a) Only fraction of funds will be allocated to transportation and infrastructure
  - (b) Cannot be used for citywide improvements or maintenance
- 3) Increasing practice of leveraging funds
  - (a) Using funds as tipping point for bigger projects
  - (b) Combining with other funding programs to complete large projects
- 4) Continuing outreach to community
  - (a) Input from residents highly important
  - (b) Valuable resource in planning
  - (c) Main Streets, STEP, and other organizations
- 5) Utilizing MPO seat
  - (a) City seat on MPO can help prioritize Somerville projects

## **8) FUTURE PROJECTS**

- 1) Union Square Transit Improvements
- 2) Green Line
  - (a) Taking advantage of planning stages of green line to make most effective improvements
- 3) Improving signage
  - (a) Need for way finding
  - (b) Decreasing incidents of vandalism

- 4) Community Path
  - (a) Direct connection into Boston highly desirable
- 5) Examining congestion pricing
  - (a) Deciding if it would be a burden or benefit for Somerville
  - (b) Discussing if money generated would actually serve Somerville or be lost in state coffers
- 6) Broadway
  - (a) Leveraging 3 funding sources
  - (b) Construction will start happening soon

## **XI. Parks & Open Space Focus Group**

**Thursday, October 25 2007**  
**OSPCD Conference Room**  
**6:00 – 7:30 PM**

### **In Attendance**

Steve Winslow – Conservation Commission/Bike Advocacy Committee  
Michele Biscoe – Dog Owners' Task Force  
Steve Quinn – DPW Buildings and Grounds  
Peter Mills – Office of Sustainability & Environment  
Jennifer Lawrence – Groundwork Somerville  
Jim Halloran – Recreation Department  
Nicole Rioles – Shape Up Somerville  
Jessie Baker – SomerStat  
Lisa Brukilacchio – Somerville Growing Center  
Daria Ovide – Trust for Public Land  
Judy Eisenberg – Somerville Garden Club

Arn Frazen – Director of Parks and Open Space  
Ellen Schneider – Landscape Project Manager  
Joseph Crugnale – HUD Consolidated Plan Intern

### **1) Consolidated Plan Process/Open Space Committee**

- (a) Representation
  - (i) Representation from low and moderate income communities
  - (ii) Open forums
  - (iii) Possible new member suggestions
    - 1. Jonathan, Garden Club
    - 2. Green Line Community Forum
    - 3. Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership
    - 4. Organized User Groups
      - a. PTA, Little League, Welcome Project
    - 5. East Somerville for Change
    - 6. Mystic River Association
    - 7. Park Specific User Groups
    - 8. Foss Park
    - 9. Lexington Park
    - 10. Teen Empowerment
    - 11. Leanne Dorego East Somerville Neighbors for Change
    - 12. Groups represented at Nunziato Field Clean-Up Day
- (b) Cooperation
  - (i) Clear direction and goal
    - 1. Understanding what other groups are doing facilitates greater good

2. Exercise will allow everyone to be on the same page.
  3. "Green Congress"
  4. Can use collective input for Open Space Plan
- (c) Setting Guidelines and Priorities
- (i) Previous Con Plan great place to start
    1. Look at what was accomplished, what wasn't accomplished
  - (ii) Open Space Plan
    1. Another great place to start from
  - (iii) Old Parks
    1. Ideas
  - (iv) Continue to look at all related groups to address needs and issues
    1. Con Plan place to start

### **1) Regionalism**

- a) Regional Agencies
  - i) Mystic River Watershed Association \*Jim has their information
  - ii) DCR
- b) Reaching out to surrounding communities
  - i) Jointly examining common issues
  - ii) Developing regional goals
  - iii) Leaving funding as individual responsibility
- c) Consciousness of area surrounding city border
  - i) Maps should include parks, open space, etc beyond Somerville's borders.

### **2) DCR**

- a) Facilities
  - i) Foss Park
  - ii) Dilboy Field
  - iii) Skating Rink
    - (1) In perpetual disrepair (seems to be common theme in DCR facilities)
    - (2) People don't use because of poor state, which hampers effort to renovate
- b) Role in Somerville
  - i) Mediocre/poor record in maintaining its fields in city
  - ii) Shared agreement for Dilboy Field
- c) New Strategies
  - i) Matching Fund Programs
  - ii) Reverting parks to City control

3) Rediscovering the Mystic River

- a) Phenomenal resource
- b) Completely underutilized
  - i) Numbers of users (of boathouse) available

4) ***Sustainability***

- a) State of Repairs
  - i) Inventory parks to inform residents what city offers
  - ii) Continuing maintenance of parks to ensure they are always ready
    - (1) Drainage/water issues, notably at Argenziano School
  - iii) Staying in contact with community to address problems as soon as possible
- b) Data Collection
  - i) Surveying park users
    - (1) Knowing who is using park provides valuable insight on how to improve it
    - (2) Previous Surveys
      - (a) Somerville Community Group
      - (b) Foss Park Survey
      - (c) Dept. of Recreation occupancy counts
    - (3) Data Collection difficulties
      - (a) Data can be skewed as would be users of park do not use it because of its existing poor condition
  - ii) Applying actual park data to decision making
    - (1) Youth enrollment in sports programs, idea of what trends are
    - (2) Working with SomerStat
    - (3) Groups that “yell” the loudest can have a disproportionate effect on final decisions
    - (4) Perry Park Process example

5) ***Mapping and Accessibility***

- a) *Utility of maps*
  - i) *Showing access points for elderly and disabled*
  - ii) *Proximity of park amenities to resident*
  - iii) *Overall making city more accessible*
  - iv) *Absence of maps can mean less accessibility and awareness of parks to residents*
- b) Maps of the parks in the proposed
  - i) Assembly Square Development
  - ii) Brickbottom

6) ***New Park Possibilities***

- a) New Park Acquisition



- i) Has Mayor's Support
- ii) Identify strategic plan to develop this
  - (1) Concrete goals
  - (2) Linking and building upon existing network
- iii) Work with Assessor's office
  - (1) Identify absentee landowners
  - (2) Where there is opportunity to purchase cheap lands
  - (3) Paper Streets, city owned streets being used only to store vehicles
- iv) Community Path
  - (1) New parcels for parks along Community Path already being examined
- b) Other Opportunities
  - i) Opportunities for changing zoning in Industrial areas
  - ii) Assembly Square

## **7) *Next Steps***

- a) Try to meet again in December*

## **XII. Public Services Focus Group**

**Monday, October 29, 2007**  
***OSPCD Conference Room***  
**12:00 – 2:00 PM.**

### **NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED**

Children's Services Needs  
Adolescent Services Needs  
Adult/Family Services Needs  
Elderly Services Needs  
Service Needs of People with Disabilities  
Service Needs of People who are Homeless or At-Risk of Homelessness  
Service Needs of Newcomer Groups

### **NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

A focus group met on October 29, 2007 to identify the most effective ways to address the needs of the low-income community in Somerville. Members from the following groups will met to highlight, discuss, brainstorm and prioritize the needs in the community to be addressed in the next five years using HUD CDBG funds. Members from the following agencies were invited to the group:

Aru Manrique – City of Somerville Multi-Cultural Director  
Barbara Rubel - Tufts Community Relations also member of Public Service Advisory Committee  
Danielle Levine - Respond Inc Development Director  
Kate Ashton – City of Somerville Development Director and member of Public Service Advisory Committee  
Mark Alston-Follansbee - Somerville Homeless Coalition Executive Director  
Mark Friedman – Somerville Office Strategic Planning and Community Development Director of Administration and Finance  
Reed Cochoran - SCM Community Transportation Executive Director  
Noreen Burke - Somerville Health Department  
Carlene Campbell - Somerville Disability Liaison and member of the Public Service Advisory Committee  
Joe Medieros - Member of Somerville Disability Commission  
Wendy Weiser - Center for Teen Empowerment & Representative of Somerville Youthworkers Network  
Penny Snyder - Somerville Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development Public Service & ESG Contract Monitor

Participants in the focus group represented a cross-section of social interest groups. Approximately 50% of the participants were not recipients of grants through the CDBG Public Service program. Focus group participants were asked to state what they saw as the most urgent current and future needs of the service population in question. An Office of

Strategic Planning staff person was present to record the information derived from the meeting. The focus group met for 2 hours.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS**

### **1) Vulnerable Populations**

- i) Homeless
  - 1) Addressing the needs of people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness
  - 2) Better ways to identify and count the homeless and near homeless community particularly those who are doubled up in apartments and living in cars
  - 3) More shelter beds
- ii) Disabled
  - 1) Service the needs of the disabled
  - 2) More housing services for disabled persons
  - 3) Providing the Disabilities Commission with more office support
    - (a) Currently without an office
- iii) Youth
  - 1) Service needs of youth
  - 2) More Programs and Activities
    - (a) After-school programs
    - (b) Safe havens for youth to gather (i.e. multi purpose center)
    - (c) Childcare for working low income families
  - 3) More asset based approach to youth services, giving youth a voice and the tools to be successful
    - (a) More opportunities to be successful
    - (b) The importance of involving youth in the City vision of its future
  - 4) Bringing in better resourced organizations to aid programs
- iv) Seniors
  - 1) Service the needs of seniors
  - 2) Develop more aging in place programs, cooperative programming
  - 3) Working to bring teens to work with elderly
    - (a) Program of working with teens to shovel streets for elderly, disabled.
  - 4) Distributing more funds to elderly services
- v) Newcomers to Somerville
  - 1) Need for translation services particularly at program sites
    - (a) Live translations particularly in demand
  - 2) Need for a shared language bank and more collaborations
    - (a) Re-evaluating program established by Tufts students
  - 3) Increasing transportation services to elderly non-English speakers

### **2) Housing**

- i) Affordable Housing
  - 1) Lack of affordable housing
  - 2) More possibilities for subsistence payments
  - 3) Examining number of empty rental units
    - (a) Surveying seniors with unused rental units
- ii) Foreclosures
  - 1) More emergency services
  - 2) Plans for families at risk
  - 3) Increasing prevention/education programs

### **3) Community Building**

- i) Develop a multi-generational vision for Somerville to enable groups to be productive
  - 1) Fostering community integration/inclusion approach for a vibrant life
- ii) Building a better sense of community
  - 1) Service needs of the whole community
  - 2) More integration of programs and building a sense of community including seniors, youth, etc.
  - 3) Increasing sense of civic duty
  - 4) Need for multi-purpose community facility
- iii) Building a safer environment for residents focused on community health
  - 1) Lowering obesity
  - 2) Improving pedestrian ways
  - 3) Improving air quality
- iv) The 3-1-1 Program
  - 1) Utilizing 3-1-1 by connecting it with more contacts in the City of Somerville
  - 2) Providing 3-1-1 with more information to frequently asked questions

### **4) Practices**

- i) Funding and Implementation
  - 1) More collaborations as funds are shrinking
    - (a) Limited core funding makes it difficult to build connections
  - 2) Developing 'new ways' to identify revenue sources
  - 3) Looking into giving organizations a little more independence may provide savings
  - 4) Responding to the varied needs of increasing vulnerable population
    - (a) Best dollar practices to reach the most vulnerable and develop programming that is sustainable
- ii) Outreach
  - 1) Bringing more people together to work on common goals
    - (a) Decreasing competition

- (b) Increasing cooperation
  - iii) View problems in a macro vision context
    - 1) Setting priorities
    - 2) Figuring out how we can fix them
    - 3) Categorizing needs to see them and address how to fund them better.
      - (a) Placing like needs together to improve cooperation
    - 4) Develop forward thinking programs rather than reactive programs
    - 5) Continuing this conversation

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the focus group recognizes that Somerville is made up of a diverse group of residents with many challenges and special populations but the group feels that rather than prioritizing the needs of various vulnerable populations we should use CDBG Public Service funds to build community initiatives, to engage diverse residents in positive involvement with their neighborhoods and input into the policies and practices of the city. The focus group would recommend using the limited CDBG funds for sustainable programs and collaborative initiatives.

There are three main themes addressed by the Focus Group:

Taking a proactive approach towards the expected changes in Somerville and increase the collaboration among its organizations. The Focus Group understands Somerville faces similar issues annually, and wishes to evaluate its strategies addressing them to improve its responses.

Affordable housing and gentrification. The Focus Group is concerned with the increasing cost to live in Somerville. It is concerned that its vulnerable populations are increasingly at risk of being forced out, or forgotten about under a new influx of more affluent residents. It is weary of the prospect of gentrification eroding Somerville's diversity.

The wish to promote different demographics of the community to engage with one another, so all groups can learn and benefit from each other. The Focus Group believes an intergenerational philosophy integrated into all aspects of the city can foster civic involvement and a stronger sense of community.

### **XIII. Historic Preservation Focus Group Notes**

**Tuesday, October 30, 2007**  
**OSPCD Conference Room**  
**7:00 – 9:00 PM.**

#### **ATTENDEES:**

Tony Membrino – Prospect Hill resident  
Jim McGinnis – Union Square resident, SOHO (Somerville Old House Organization)  
Mimi Graney – Union Square Main Streets  
Amy Bauman – Green Goat  
Nancy Milnor – Somerville Central Library  
Kevin Allen – Department of Conservation and Recreation Preservation Planner  
Kellyann Binari  
Garrett Laws  
Jeff Meese

#### **OUTLINE**

##### **1. Accomplishments**

- a. Powderhouse
- b. Prospect Hill
- c. Milk Row Cemetery
- d. West Branch Library Restoration
- e. Bow Street
- f. Nathan Tufts Park

##### **2. Programs**

- a. Historic Districts
  - i. Example of Edgartown in Martha's Vineyard
- b. Restoring Union Square buildings to original heights
  - i. Used to be taxed based on height, led to owner neglect in lieu of being taxed
- c. Façade Guideline Programs
  1. Need for historically appropriate signage

##### **3. Demographic Changes**

- a. Devising Strategies to Work with Building Owners to Preserve Historical Buildings in Increasingly Popular Areas
- b. Increasing Accessibility to Historical Buildings

- i. Continue to develop solutions to provide accessibility at historic buildings
- c. Importance of Planning Incremental Improvements
  - i. Addressing gentrification pressures brought by Green Line extension
    - 1. Working to help businesses that want to stay preserve their buildings
    - 2. Try to avoid wholesale displacement of existing businesses
  - ii. Main Street programs are valuable tool in promoting preservation

#### **4. Resources**

- a. Distribution of CDBG Funds
  - i. Need to focus funding in solely CDBG eligible areas
    - 1. Concern that CDBG funds are not all completely going to CDBG eligible areas
  - ii. Need to Increase Historic Preservation Staff
- b. Limitations of CDBG Funds
  - i. Funds do not cover maintenance
  - ii. Majority of funds goes to Housing
- c. Incentives to Increase Historic Preservation
  - i. Increasing awareness of benefits of historic preservation
  - ii. Increasing access to people/firms specializing in historical preservation
  - iii. Historical Tax credits
- d. Increasing Public/Private Partnerships
  - i. Example of how developer added mansard roof to make project feasible while restoring property to original form

#### **5. Targets**

- a. Properties for Improvements
  - i. West Branch Library ADA compliance
  - ii. Prospect Hill Tower
  - iii. Union Civil War Monument
  - iv. Granite Markers
- b. Historical Designation
  - i. Need to preserve historic buildings which City is mulling to sell
    - 1. City should not resort to selling historic buildings to balance budget



## **XIV. Contact List**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| AHOC  | Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (M.A.P.S) |
| Arlington   | Massachusetts Planning Organization                     |
| Boys & Girls' Club of Medford and Somerville              | Mayor's Office Human Services                           |
| C.A.A.S.  | Medford Consumers Commission                            |
| C.A.S.C.A.P. Inc.   | Mystic Learning Center                                  |
| C.A.S.P.A.R.  | Mystic River Watershed Association                      |
| Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services GBLS              | Mystic Tenant Association                               |
| Cambridge Health Alliance                                 | North Charles Impact                                    |
| Cambridge Public Health Commission                        | North Charles Mental Health                             |
| Cataldo Ambulance Services                                | On the Rise   |
| Catholic Charities  | Peace Games   |
| Center Teen Empowerment                                   | Professional Ambulance Service                          |
| Child Care Resource Center                                | Project Soup  |
| City of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development     | Public Safety Commission                                |
| City of Cambridge Community Development Department        | Respond Inc.  |
| City of Malden Engineering/Planning/Waterworks Department | Salvation Army Shelter                                  |
| City of Medford Office of Community Development           | SCALE   |
| Clarendon Towers Tenant Association                       | SCM Community Transport                                 |
| Community Action Agency of Somerville                     | Shape Up Somerville                                     |
| Community Action Programs                                 | Shelter Inc.  |
| Concilio Hispano de Cambridge                             | Shepherd's Center of Cambridge - Somerville             |
| Cooperative of Human Services                             | Somerville Affordable Housing Trust                     |
| Council for Children                                      | Somerville Arts Council                                 |
| DARBI   | Somerville Bicycle Advisory Committee                   |
| East Somerville Main Streets                              | Somerville Board of Health                              |
| Elizabeth Peabody House                                   | Somerville Boxing Club                                  |
| Ethnic Arts Center of Somerville                          | Somerville Cares About Prevention (SCAP)                |
| Families in Need (FIN)                                    | Somerville Chamber of Commerce                          |
| Family to Family  | Somerville Community Corporation                        |
| Greater Boston Legal Service                              | Somerville Community Partnership                        |
| Greater Boston Rehabilitation                             | Somerville Community Schools                            |
| Groundwork Somerville                                     | Somerville Conservation Commission                      |
| Guidance Center Inc                                       | Somerville Council on Aging                             |
| Haitian Coalition   | Somerville Dept of Public Works                         |
| Health Care for the Homeless                              | Somerville Disability Commission                        |
| Just-a-Start Corp   | Somerville Fire Department                              |
| MA Area Planning Council                                  | Somerville Garden Club                                  |
| MA Dept of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)                | Somerville Hispanic Association & Community Development |
| Mass Highway Dept   | Somerville Historic Preservation Committee              |
| Somerville Homeless Coalition                             | Somerville Mental Health                                |
| Somerville Hospital                                       | Somerville Office of Environmental Protection           |
| Somerville Housing Authority                              | Somerville Police Department                            |

Somerville Human Rights Commission  
Somerville Public Schools  
Somerville Recreation Dept  
Somerville Visting Nurses  
Somerville Volunteer Corps  
Somerville YMCA  
Somerville Youth Program  
Special Olympics  
State of Massachusetts  
Tenant Opportunities Program  
The Family Center Inc.  
The Growing Center  
The Learning Center  
Transition House  
Tufts University  
Union Square Main Streets  
United Methodist College Avenue  
Walnut Street Center  
Wayside Youth and Family Network  
Welcome Project  
Women's Support Empower/Transition Hse  
Young Somerville Group  
Youth Advocacy Project

Somerville Pride Girls Basketball

**XV. Written Public Comment (Comment Period October 11, 2007 – November 11, 2007)**

**To: Mayor's Office for Strategic Planning and Community Development**  
**FROM: Mimi Graney, Executive Director, Union Square Main Streets**  
**RE: City of Somerville 5-Year HUD Consolidated Plan**  
**DATE: October 19, 2007**

USMS encourages ongoing focus on economic development by the City of Somerville within the 5-year HUD Consolidated Plan. We welcome additional opportunities to contribute to the planning process. As part of our comments we submit the following notes.

The need:

- Somerville has small commercial tax base. Per square mile Somerville has less than a quarter of the commercial property values of Cambridge. Cambridge has \$1,282,009,704 in business property value per square mile compared to Somerville at \$299,548,496.
- This small base causes Somerville heavily reliance on residential sector for tax revenue. In Cambridge, 37% of revenue is from residential taxes while in Somerville 86% is obtained from residential properties.
- Somerville is heavily dependent on State Aid and is among the top ten cities and towns receiving this funding. State aid is 33% of Somerville's income compared to just 9% in Cambridge.
- Commercial districts like Union Square have significant growth potential. Union Sq is 93% of the area of Davis Square yet generates only 40% of the tax revenue for the city.
- There is support for economic development. From the City of Somerville's own survey 2006 SomerStat survey shows more than half of residents think the city should do more to spur economic development. 86% say the arts are important to Somerville's economy, identity and sense of community.
- Economic development initiatives in commercial districts are showing success and deserve support. The Union Square Farmers Market has demonstrated a half million dollar economic impact each year. ArtsUnion demonstrated an economic impact of \$323,117 in its first year alone.

**Union Square Main Streets is focusing our energies in four key areas and recommends the City's support: Properties/Process/Pedestrians/People**

**Properties:** Encourage new growth – increase tax base, mixed use development with offices and residential to support street level retail and restaurant/entertainment, historically appropriate in-fill/re-use of under-utilized properties

- Zoning changes for Union Square should foster mixed use, transit-oriented development.
- Consider larger scale development for the eastern side of Union Square that draws together smaller, under-utilized parcels and remediates the area's brownfields. Enable recruitment of larger commercial businesses to leverage smaller scale development in the rest of the square in already existing smaller commercial spaces.
- Catalyze historically appropriate infill development throughout Union Square by lowering onerous regulations that are barriers to development.
- Enable opportunities for historic property tax credits and local oversight through creation of local historic district.
- Ease barriers for development by streamlining permitting process for new businesses.
- Review storefront program to make the program easier to access. Consider contracting with Main Streets to administer the program in their districts. Create program with small grants to improve commercial signage, install awnings, remove exterior steel window grates, improve window displays.

**People:**

Immigrants are more likely to entrepreneurs than native-born residents and nationwide are engines for economic growth. Immigrant businesses help to create a unique neighborhood character and make commercial districts a destination. Currently "ethnic" businesses make up approximately 50% of the businesses in Union Square. Therefore put particular focus on developing immigrant workforce.

- Address language needs of immigrants. Support for ESOL and adult education to train these employees. In Massachusetts immigrant workforce has doubled as the share of immigrants increased from 8.8% in 1980 to 17% in 2004. One in four of these immigrants have limited English skills. This has a significant impact on household earnings -- immigrants who speak English at home earn 2 ½ times as much as immigrants who speak another language at home.

Leverage Somerville's place as an immigrant city. In Union Square 36% of the population is foreign born. Increasingly the immigrants are Brazilian. Statewide, currently 1 in 5 immigrants are from Brazil. Somerville has an advantage with a high

number of established businesses serving this immigrant community. These experienced entrepreneurs provide a bridge for Portuguese speaking new arrivals seeking to start businesses or job opportunities.

- Conduct specific outreach and support for immigrant entrepreneurs through commercial incubators and other support programs.
- Look at marketing of Somerville as an international city with businesses serving immigrant shopping and service needs.
- Assist current businesses through re-location assistance, purchase of commercial properties, and/or loan programs.

**Pedestrians:**

- Make streetscape improvements on commercial corridors such as along Somerville Avenue, Prospect Street and Washington to foster pedestrian traffic to and from business centers. Create a positive experience at these vital gateways to the central business district and to become engines for economic development in their own right.
- Develop our streets as “Universal Streets”, accessible for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. Make Union Square a more pedestrian friendly neighborhood by easing the burden of truck traffic, creating bicycle amenities
- Foster the development of the Green Line Extension and Community Corridor as they will significantly increase economic viability of commercial districts
- Recognize the streetscape as Somerville’s most bountiful open space. Continue and expand elements such as benches, trees, bus shelters, plantings to enable these areas to best serve the community.
- Limit pass-through truck traffic to eliminate negative effects of emissions, high sound levels, wear on infrastructure and design that restricts pedestrian access.

**Process:**

- Engage Somerville residents and businesses in economic development, traffic/streetscape, and other decision making through outreach, education and planning.

**CREATE  
A  
CITY OF OPPORTUNITY  
FOR ALL**

**Recommendations for developing the 2008-2013 Action Plan  
Somerville, MA**

*submitted by:*  
EILEEN FELDMAN,  
Resident and DisAbilities Rights Advocate

November 12, 2007

Dear Mayor Joseph Curtatone, Board of Alderpeople, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD)  
Executive Director Lamboy and OSPCD Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit ideas and comments for Somerville's CDBG Five-Year Plan, 2008 - 2013.

Based upon the 2000 Census data regarding the overlap of poverty and disability characteristics in Somerville, it would appear that the flexible, locally-administered CDBG and HOME funds are uniquely suited to benefit Somerville residents who are disabled and also very low, low and moderate incomes.

With these funds, Somerville, a Formula B Entitlement Community, is able to improve and expand housing, economic development activities, social programs, and infrastructure improvements. In the planning and implementation of these HUD-funded programs, Somerville is required to consider the needs of individuals with disabilities. In fact, HUD says that a critical element in the development of CDBG plans is, "to identify the needs of persons with disabilities and to determine how best to address the identified needs." (HUD Notice CPD-05-03)

The Disabilities Commission was very pleased to help identify some of the community needs pertinent residents with disabilities through the use of a \$2,000 CDBG Public Service Agency grant and we thank you for giving us this opportunity. Our Final Report for Program year 06/07 will be sent on November 15, 2007. We are looking forward to continuing this work, detailing issues that can be improved and solved through the use of CDBG and HOME funds, and in partnership with local government and local public service agency programs.

I offer six ideas plus comments for the CDBG and HOME Five-year ConPlan 2008-2013 that focus on increasing the equity and community participation of individuals with disabilities. I hope that you will contact me with questions so that we can refine practicable ideas together, and communicate directly with me to improve my capacity to engage in these civic opportunities.

It is a very precious opportunity to be able to engage with city staff in creating a strategic plan to improve the quality of life in Somerville. Your hard work and dedication are apparent, and I thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Eileen Feldman



**CREATE  
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CITY OF OPPORTUNITY  
FOR ALL**

**Recommendations for developing the 2008-2013 Action Plan  
Somerville, MA**

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**APPENDIX ONE- two pages, Census 2000 data MAP, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN SOMERVILLE BY Age, Block....pages 12, 13**

**APPENDIX TWO- two pages, 2005 ACS Data....page 14, 15**

**APPENDIX THREE- six pages: US Census 2000 Detailed Tables re: Disabilities, Employment, Poverty, Public Assistance....pages 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22**

## Introduction

In 1974, then-President Nixon signed the Housing and Community Development Act into law. Title I of that Act created the current Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which replaced the Model Cities Program created by Johnson with the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act. This CDBG funding also consolidated several programs previously designed and administered by HUD from 1966 - 1973, such as the Neighborhood Facilities Program, the Water and Sewer Facilities Improvement, and also programs developed through Title VII of the Housing Act of 1961, such as the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development and Urban Beautification programs.

The CDBG program instituted reforms to address the perception that commercialization and overdevelopment were replacing housing programs for “the poor,” and the feeling that social service programs were being abandoned. Perhaps one of the most important distinctions between this and the previous HUD programs is the broad flexibility given to local jurisdictions (“entitlement communities”) to design programs specifically relevant to their community needs.

In Somerville, quality of life needs for people with disabilities appear similar to other communities nationwide; however, the number of persons with disabilities is slightly higher here than the national average (19.4% vs. 19.3%). Residents with disAbilities are concentrated in very low, low and moderate income Block groups (please see Appendix 1). In addition, Somervillians with disAbilities are disproportionately under- or not-employed. For example, of residents with a disability between the ages of 21 and 64, 17.8% have a disability; 35% of those are not employed and 17% live at below poverty level. Regarding those (aged 21-64) with disabilities who are not employed, 30.6% have an employment disability; therefore, the remaining 69.4% residents between the ages of 21 and 64 with disAbilities who can be employed are either underemployed or not employed.<sup>1</sup> The implications for strategic CDBG and HOME programs planning are evident.

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<sup>1</sup> Compared to: For Somerville residents without a disability between the ages of 21 and 64 (44,328), 18.9% are not employed and 10% are at below poverty level.

## **Review, Recommendations from DisAbilities Commission FY2006<sup>2</sup>**

On December 15, 2005, the Commission handed in our first Annual Recommendations report. We recommended the following Projects to build economic equity and access in Somerville:

- ❖ Accessible Community Technology and Career Center;
- ❖ Production of an ADA-compliance Resource for Local Businesses;
- ❖ Needs assessment and Outreach to “special needs” populations; and
- ❖ Community Access (CAM) Training for at least 20 Community members, including the BOA.
- ❖ In addition, we presented certain important reasons for the OSPCD to invest in a knowledgeable ADA-Specialist.

Regarding Transportation and Infrastructure, we recommended the following:

- ❖ Build a Model Accessible Bus Kiosk;
- ❖ Citizen Request Streetscape Improvement Project;
- ❖ Paratransportation Services evaluation;
- ❖ Evaluate Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) and increase where needed.

Regarding general construction policies, three ADA initiatives discussed were:

- ❖ Produce and mandate receipt of Architectural Barriers overview brochure for all Project managers;
- ❖ Evaluate policies to ensure ADA Compliance;
- ❖ Initiate daily Citizen Access phone report.

Regarding Housing, we recommend the following:

- ❖ Develop public awareness campaign regarding Visitability and Universal Design Principles;
- ❖ Develop economic and public incentives for accessible renovation/rehabilitation standards.

For Communications Infrastructure, we recommended that the City:

- ❖ Research and invest in Web Accessibility; and
- ❖ Evaluate and increase accessible communications devices throughout the City.

**Because of increased attention to access issues nationwide, these FY06 Recommendations are even more relevant today. Please reconsider them for the 2008-2013 ConPlan.**

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<sup>2</sup> this Report is found at: [http://www.somervillema.gov/CoS\\_Content/documents/CommissionRecomFY06.pdf](http://www.somervillema.gov/CoS_Content/documents/CommissionRecomFY06.pdf)

## **Review, Recommendations from DisAbilities Commission Member FY2007**

On January 1, 2007, a second disAbilities-relevant Annual CDBG Recommendations Report was sent. The following actions and projects were recommended:

### **Increasing Integrated & Accessible Housing Options:**

- ❖ Encourage adoption of local building codes at consistent with FHA;
- ❖ Education for all sub recipients re: Fair Housing Act Design Manual, Homes for Everyone, and other HUD materials relevant to Accessibility Best Practices;
- ❖ Create incentives for sub recipients and community Builders to integrate accessibility costs into project at the planning stage;
- ❖ Encourage all sub recipients to annually update their Self Evaluations and Transition plans relevant to Section 504, FHA, ABA and ADA.

### **A Suitable Living Environment:**

- ❖ Public Facilities Improvement Projects- Pedestrian Pathways GIS Mapping Project;
- ❖ Public Facilities ADA Improvements- Inventory (self evaluation) access issues within all City-owned buildings;
- ❖ Relocate inaccessible services to accessible locations;
- ❖ Add assistive and adaptive communications technologies throughout all City Departments;
- ❖ Outreach to isolated community members with creative media & alternate formats;
- ❖ Hire a knowledgeable, experienced ADA Coordinator.

### **Expanding Economic Opportunities:**

- ❖ Create partnership Initiative to incubate an accessible job training center in at least one low income block area;
- ❖ Ensure that all HUD-funded consultant and Bidding opportunities are advertised in accessible formats city-wide;
- ❖ Seek opportunities to purchase adaptive computer equipment and increase availability of assistive communications devices for local businesses as well as local government offices;
- ❖ Monitor the eradication of structural barriers for every Storefront Improvement Program (SIP) recipient.

**Because of increased attention to access issues nationwide, these FY07 Recommendations are again emphasized here**

*“to develop viable urban communities...*

## **SOMERVILLE’S LEVEL-HEADED PEDESTRIAN ACCESS & SAFETY CITIZEN MAPPING PROJECT**

In this year’s survey by the DisAbilities Commission, 44% of the respondents rated their experience moving around the city streets as “poor.” However, seniors and people with disabilities are not the only constituents concerned about having safe, accessible and level sidewalk paths and streets. Here is an idea to **create a Somerville training program to inventory the accessibility and safety needs of all city sidewalks, and map out an annual Streetscape Transition Plan.**

The result? By 2013, the city’s approximately 550 streets will have standard, accessible curb cuts and pedestrian pathways with appropriate slope and terrains throughout. In addition, the program can be coordinated by trained residents, who can respond to citizen sidewalk complaints by visiting the site, measuring the problem, and preparing an accurate report with recommendations- for DPW’s timely repair.

Members of the Disabilities Commission are capable of preparing a training manual and providing this street element access training to interested stakeholders throughout the city.

### **FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS:**

**500 Streets Mapped and Inventoried.**

**75 Residents trained** and able to train others.

**75 sidewalks** repaired, level, curb cuts correct and safe, and easy to clean.

**TOTAL CDBG INVESTMENT, FIVE-YEAR PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PROJECT: \$460,250.**

## **PEDESTRIAN ACCESS & SAFETY CITIZEN MAPPING PROJECT, Annual Plans:**

**YEAR ONE** April - June: Rights-of-Way Access Training for 20 residents: \$10,000. Procure 35 digital levels...\$3,500  
PY08/09 July - Sept.-Send 20 trained residents to measure and report 5 streets each, Stipends: \$500 each x 20 = \$10,000  
October- March: fix 10 of the worst sidewalks ...\$50,000.  
RESULT, YEAR ONE: 20 residents trained, 100 sidewalks inventoried, 10 sidewalks repaired.

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PROJECT, YEAR ONE: \$ 73,500.**

**YEAR TWO** April - June- Send 20 trained residents to measure and report 5 streets each, Stipends: \$500/each x 20 = \$10,000  
PY09/10 July - March: fix 20 more sidewalks...\$100,000.  
October - Nov.: Train 10 more residents...\$5,000 + 10 digital levels...\$1,000.  
RESULT, YEAR TWO: 30 total residents trained, 200 total sidewalks inventoried, 30 total sidewalks repaired.

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PROJECT, YEAR TWO: \$116,000.**

**YEAR THREE** April - June-Send 20 trained residents to measure and report 5 streets each. Stipends: \$500 each x 20 = \$10,000  
PY10/11 July - March: Fix 15 more sidewalks...\$75,000.  
October - Nov: 15 residents each train 1 neighbor.Stipends for resident trainers: \$250 ea = \$3,750. levels,\$1,500  
RESULT, YEAR THREE: 45 total residents trained, 300 total sidewalks inventoried, 45 total sidewalks repaired.

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PROJECT, YEAR THREE: \$90,250**

**YEAR FOUR** April - Sept.: Send 20 trained residents to measure and report 5 streets each. Stipends: \$500 each x 20 + \$10,000  
PY11/12 April - March: fix 15 more sidewalks...\$75,000.  
October - Nov.: 15 residents each train 1 neighbor. Stipends for resident trainers:\$250 ea.= \$3,750. levels,\$1,500.  
RESULT, YEAR FOUR: 60 total residents trained, 400 total sidewalks inventoried, 60 total sidewalks repaired.

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PROJECT, YEAR FOUR: \$90,250**

**YEAR FIVE** April - Sept.: Send 20 trained residents to measure and report 5 streets each. Stipends: \$500 each x 20 + \$10,000  
PY12/13 April - March: fix 15 more sidewalks...\$75,000.  
October - Nov.: 15 residents each train 1 neighbor. Stipends for resident trainers: \$250 ea.= \$3,750. levels, \$1,500.  
RESULT, YEAR FOUR: 75 total residents trained, 500 total sidewalks inventoried, 75 total sidewalks repaired.

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PROJECT, YEAR FIVE: \$90,250**

*...promote decent affordable housing...*

## **STRATEGIES TO EXPAND & IMPROVE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The 2000 Census shows that over 69% of people with disabilities in Somerville are underemployed;<sup>3</sup> if they are not enrolled in Federal public assistance programs, their housing cost burden is severe. It appears that a high percentage of people with disabilities do not actually utilize public assistance programs. In Somerville, the number of renter tenants living below poverty alone may still be close to the 1999 figures: 15.5% below poverty level; of those, **92.5% do not have public assistance income**<sup>4</sup>

The US Census 2000/Somerville estimates that, of 17,181 people with disabilities (not living in group quarters), 14.3% are living at below poverty level.<sup>5</sup> These statistics support that **the majority of persons living at very-low incomes in Somerville are people with disabilities-perhaps 92.3% of that total.** **Are accessible housing support services that enable economic self-sufficiency a current priority for CDBG and HOME Planners?**

In addition, for people with disabilities who are not enrolled in public assistance programs, are there any programs to help them achieve affordable housing opportunities? One idea promoted in California is an “Integration Set-Aside,” which funds an **Integration Incentives** program. Perhaps this idea can be explored by our excellent community affordable housing initiatives as well.

The HUD Strategic Plan<sup>6</sup> explicitly names these Strategic Objectives: “Expand access to and availability of decent, affordable rental housing, Improve the management accountability and physical quality of public and assisted housing, Improve housing opportunities for the elderly and persons with disabilities, Facilitate more effective delivery of affordable housing, and Promote housing self-sufficiency.”

**Two strategic ideas** for the next Five Years to improve and expand housing opportunities for constituents living with very-low, low, and moderate incomes, and continuing to adapt to disabilities, are described on the next two pages. They are:

- 1. CONDUCT A STUDY TO EXAMINE BARRIERS TO FAIR HOUSING OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**
- 2. HIRE A KNOWLEDGEABLE OSPCD SPECIALIST TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE (including for CDBG and HOME sub recipients) WITH FHA, ABA, ADA and State AAB Regs.**

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<sup>3</sup> SEE Appendix 3, Table PCT35

<sup>4</sup> SEE Appendix 3, Table HCT25)

<sup>5</sup> SEE Appendix 3, Table PCT34

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.hud.gov/offices/cfo/reports/hud\\_strat\\_plan\\_2006-2011.pdf](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cfo/reports/hud_strat_plan_2006-2011.pdf)



*...promote decent affordable housing, cont...*

## **1. CONDUCT A STUDY TO EXAMINE BARRIERS TO FAIR HOUSING OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

The 2005 ACS reflects a 7.4% population loss of people with disabilities in Somerville<sup>7</sup>.

Do they need to relocate due to the lack of accessible, integrated housing and equal participation opportunities?

Some questions that can be addressed in this study:

- Are people being unnecessarily institutionalized?
- Are home modification loan programs advertised in the widest and most accessible ways?
- Is more outreach necessary to ensure that appropriate recipients of such funds are reasonable notified?
- Is the local need for transitional vouchers determined from statewide information sources?
- Are people with disabilities affirmatively apprised of their FHA rights?
- Does that data reflect the on-the-street reality?

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<sup>7</sup> SEE Appendix 2

*...promote decent affordable housing, cont...*

## **2. HIRE A KNOWLEDGEABLE, PROACTIVE ADA/SECTION 504 OSPCD COORDINATOR**

Since approximately 77% of OSPCD's annual budget is CDBG-funded<sup>8</sup>, please protect the City's investments in these and other HUD-funded programs by employing a knowledgeable, experienced, motivated and proactive ADA/Section 504 Specialist in an open (per 24 CFR Parts 570 & 92) hiring process. This expert can:

- **Develop and implement trainings for City staff, City businesses, project managers and other applicants and recipients of HUD and OSPCD funds, and arrange for specialized technical assistance when requested in order to enhance comprehensive, City-wide access to programs and activities throughout Somerville;**
- **Provide technical information and research specific issues as requested on the requirements of Section 504 & 508, the ABA, and the more stringent State AAB regulations. Provide the conduit to outside agencies, support groups, and vendors for available services and technologies;**
- **Develop appropriate monitoring tools for self-evaluation, implementation and maintenance of statutory and regulatory requirements of programs, such as HOME Section 504 requirements, and ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines.**
- **Ensure that Engineering and Design Costs ensuring accessibility and barrier removal are integrated into the Planning Budget right from the start.**

In addition, right now, during Program year 07/08, please reinforce and encourage each of the current sub recipient entities (SCC, VNA, and SHA) to have at least one full time *knowledgeable, proactive Access Specialist/Section 504 & 508 Coordinator* on staff to help ensure that:

- accessible, visitable, and adaptive features (per 24CFR Part 100, ANSI A117.1.) are integrated into the budget and design;<sup>9</sup>
- compliance with Section 504 accessibility mandates re: % of accessible units AND occupancy by persons who require the accessibility features of those units;
- procedures to apply for these housing units are created in a fully accessible and integrated manner, and all public information will be available in various formats and language;
- a reasonable accommodations policy is developed and tested ASAP (if not already in place);
- a Transition Plan Strategy is updated annually to address ongoing accessibility and equal opportunity issues

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<sup>8</sup> FY07 OSPCD Budget Overview

*...and a suitable living environment...*

**ADA TITLE II RENOVATIONS:** Somerville was largely built before 1940. We have beautiful and historic buildings; however, structural barriers were the norm then, and we continue to inherit the results: **people with disabilities, who are physically and sensory impaired, suffer a lack of equal participation opportunities across the board**, including employment opportunities within municipal programs. I have heard complaints about the inaccessibility of the West Library, City Hall Annex, DPW, Traffic & Parking Building, and the Recreation Building, for example. Here are two ideas and one consideration:

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING & RENOVATIONS TIMETABLE**

Recently, unused school bond funds were reappropriated to be used for public facilities renovations.<sup>10</sup> **Could the CDBG Five Year Plan leverage a Project to conduct a citywide assessment of structural barriers and create a Strategic Transition Plan to address these ongoing needs?**

### **DEVELOP BOUNDLESS PLAYGROUNDS PARTNERSHIP**

In December 06, testimony was given at the CDBG Citizen participation meeting regarding the importance of including children with disabilities as well as parents with disabilities, in the design concepts for the City's excellent Parks developments. Some ideas that could be included are Equal-level playing areas so that children in wheelchairs can join in with their friends, and Sensory stimulation additions, so that Blind and Deaf children can play safely with their friends. Boundless Playgrounds, a partnership-building NPO in Connecticut, says: "Shouldn't playgrounds be for everyone?" Their information is found at: <http://www.boundlessplaygrounds.org/>

**Can the CDBG Five-Year Strategic Plans include some funding for the Disabilities Awareness group of Somerville, the Somerville Community for Inclusion, SPED PAC, and other community partners to develop a local Boundless Playground Initiative?**

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION BARRIER REMOVAL CONSIDERATION**

In addition, at least some of the Historic Preservation projects have not been attentive to the accessibility needs of the overall population. The Milk Row Cemetery Project, for example, creates a pedestrian path barrier right along the sidewalk, because there are no curb cuts to allow a level passage from the Market Basket sidewalk area to the School Street crosswalk.

**Will Historic Preservation Planning include, and mandate, the design for the removal of architectural barriers as we go forward?**

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<sup>10</sup> in August alone, the BOA approved reappropriations of school bonds to building renovations for over \$880,000.

*“...and expanding economic opportunities...”*

**DEVELOP an ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY CENTER, with COMPUTER AT CENTER INCLUDED**

Many community members, including veterans, elderly persons, and people with disabilities lack **structural access** to appropriate information technologies, **assistive devices**, and even **accessible document formats** which would enable them to take advantage of professional and volunteer training pathways. In Somerville, this can present an opportunity to enhance support services for low-income residents in applicable CDBG-eligible neighborhood areas.

**Develop an accessible Community Center that can provide services for youth to learn about vocational pathways, and for families and adults with disAbilities to enjoy access to computer stations- with printers- that have Assistive technology installed. Such as:**

- ❖ **Smart mouse (\$60 plus batteries)** Developed in Israel, the Virtual Touch System is a mouse designed to act as the eyes of the blind by helping them view computer graphics through touch. It allows a user to recognize graphic shapes, pictures, play tactile computer games and read text in normal letters or Braille by placing fingers in three pads that respond when a cursor on the screen touches a graphic or letter.
- ❖ **Talking GPS** The Trekker GPS device provides vision-impaired users with real-time information about travel destinations and their location. At 600 grams the device allows the user to plan their route and record vocal and written information. The available maps cover most Western countries. It is also upgradeable and designed to be compatible with new hardware platforms. **Cost ~ \$550.**
- ❖ **Blind Reader (\$3,500) & Reader Stand (\$140)** Developed in the US, the Kurzweil-National Federation of the Blind Reader combines digital photography with character-recognition software. The palm-sized device photographs text such as menus or documents and reads the content aloud to the user. The Blind Reader can store pages of text and transfer files to a computer.
- ❖ **Book port** This Book Port’s appearance belies its functionality with its text-to-speech capability. Vision-impaired users can listen to electronic files read by a synthetic voice as well as digital books in human voices. The device can record audio and includes a USB connection and CompactFlash card slot. **COST: \$395 plus ~\$200 for accessories.** For more information: [http://www.aph.org/tech/bp\\_doc.htm](http://www.aph.org/tech/bp_doc.htm)
- ❖ **Braille Printer:** A Community Braille printer would bring Somerville up to date, and assist the 800 or so residents who are Blind or near-Blind. **COST: \$6,000 for the initial installment; \$1,000 thereafter for maintenance and accessories.**

**BOTTOM LINE: A Neighborhood Community Center is a great way to recycle abandoned buildings. And, for the cost of \$11,000 CDBG funds, (no cost to the city) the community receives its first ACCESS CENTER.**

## STOREFRONT ENTRANCE ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVE

Please use the already-existing Storefront Improvements Program to eradicate current barriers in the small business venues throughout Somerville.

The current application brochure for the SIP program reminds applicants to adhere to Historical Preservation design requirements; however, accessibility is not reinforced.

**In every business district of Somerville, the majority of stores have at least entrance step impeding the flow of dollars- and equity- between People who have certain mobility, and other impairments, and the Business community.**

## CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT FACILITATES CULTURAL INTEGRATION

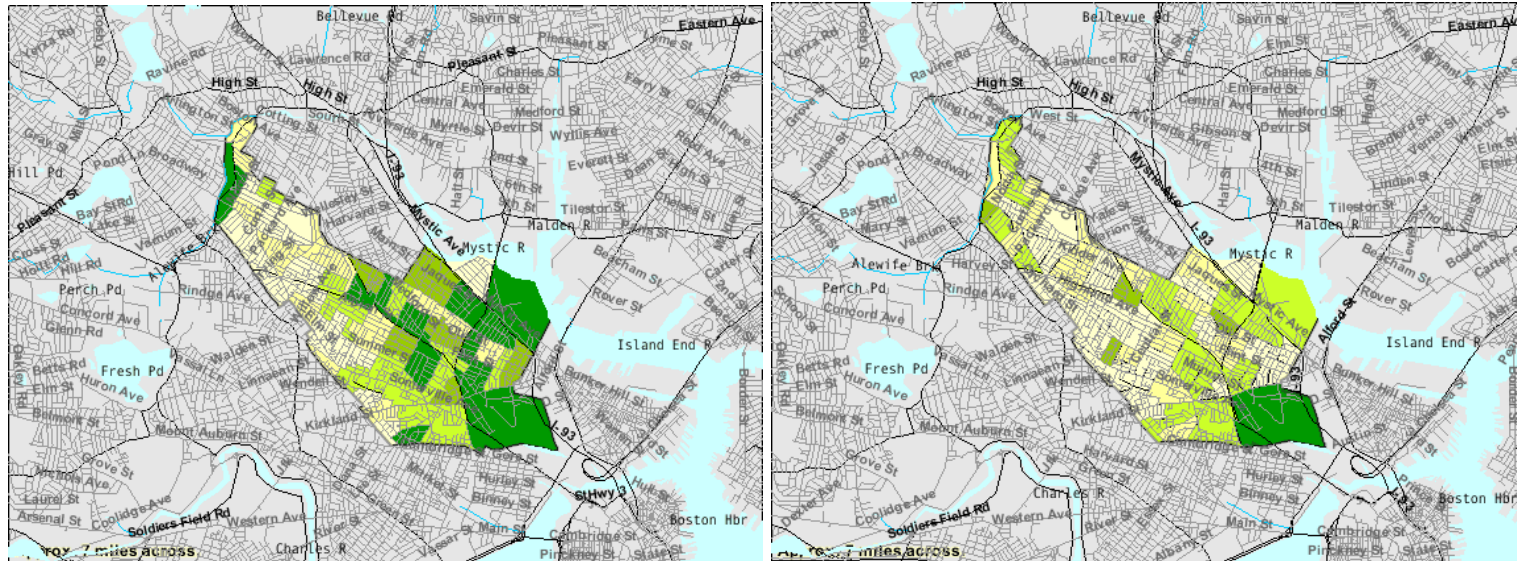
This concludes my Recommendations document for developing the 2008-2013 Action Plan in Somerville, MA. It is worthwhile to mention here that people with disabilities know what works for them and what doesn't- and such expertise should be directly and consistently integrated within all phases of planning, development, implementation, and continuation of programs, as appropriate. "Nothing about us without us," is a pithy saying that sweeps through the Disabilities Rights Movement worldwide. Therefore, I conclude this document with a plea to our local community to directly work with the Disabilities Commission members, other capable community members with disabilities, and other underrepresented community members from cultures that should also be offered equitable representation. Please utilize our experience, knowledge and skills in a manner that respects our rights to economic equity and opportunity. **Qualified people** from minority cultures, including the disabilities culture, **should be affirmatively hired**. When improving the quality of life for all residents and promoting equal opportunities, this is not collectivism or reverse discrimination; rather, it is a Best Practice that will effectively enrich the entity's capacity to serve all cultures with equal proficiency.

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  - **on statute of limitations re: Title III complaints:** <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/foia/tal830.html>
  - **differences btn. Section 508 and the ADA:** <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/foia/tal824.html>
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  - **enforcement of city building codes:** <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/foia/tal767.htm>

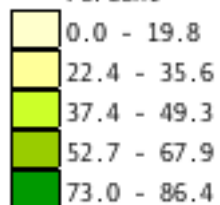


**APPENDIX ONE CENSUS 2000 DATA MAPS, PERCENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES BY AGE, 1 of 2**  
**PERCENT OF PERSONS 21 - 64 WITH A DISABILITY** **PERCENT OF PERSONS 5 - 21 WITH A DISABILITY**

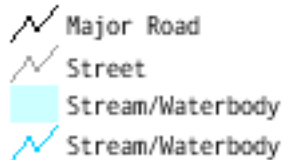


**Data Classes**

Percent



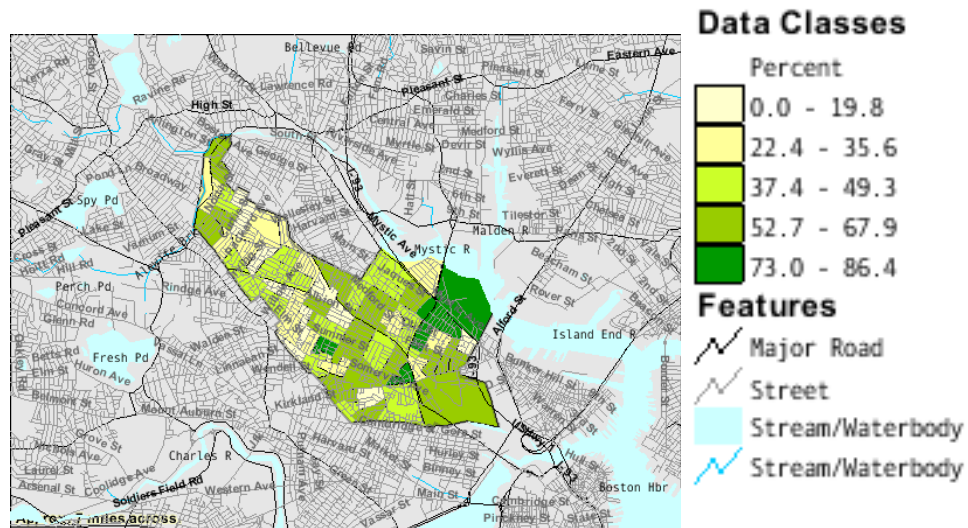
**Features**



**Somerville city, Massachusetts by Block Group**



# APPENDIX ONE CENSUS 2000 DATA MAPS, PERCENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES BY AGE, 2 of 2 PERCENT OF PERSONS 65 and OLDER WITH A DISABILITY



Somerville city, Massachusetts by Block Group

## APPENDIX 2, 1 of 2: 2005 American Community Survey- TABLE C18030 WITH A DISABILITY

C18030. DISABILITY STATUS BY SEX BY AGE BY POVERTY STATUS FOR THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION 5 YEARS AND OVER - Universe: CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION 5 YEARS AND OVER FOR WHOM POVERTY STATUS IS DETERMINED

Data Set: [2005 American Community Survey](#)

Survey: 2005 American Community Survey

|   | Estimate      | Margin of Error |
|---|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>Total:</b>   | <b>71,920</b> | <b>+/-7,942</b> |
| <b>With a disability:</b>   | <b>8,595</b>  | <b>+/-1,794</b> |
| <b>Male:</b>  | <b>3,174</b>  | <b>+/-1,267</b> |
| <b>5 to 15 years:</b>   | <b>119</b>    | <b>+/-190</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>       | <b>119</b>    | <b>+/-190</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b> | <b>0</b>      | <b>+/-282</b>   |
| <b>16 to 64 years:</b>  | <b>2,120</b>  | <b>+/-1,220</b> |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>       | <b>307</b>    | <b>+/-275</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b> | <b>1,813</b>  | <b>+/-1,090</b> |
| <b>65 years and over:</b>   | <b>935</b>    | <b>+/-441</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>       | <b>51</b>     | <b>+/-85</b>    |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b> | <b>884</b>    | <b>+/-423</b>   |
| <b>Female:</b>  | <b>5,421</b>  | <b>+/-1,247</b> |
| <b>5 to 15 years:</b>   | <b>171</b>    | <b>+/-282</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>       | <b>171</b>    | <b>+/-282</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b> | <b>0</b>      | <b>+/-282</b>   |
| <b>16 to 64 years:</b>  | <b>2,761</b>  | <b>+/-923</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>       | <b>1,567</b>  | <b>+/-840</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b> | <b>1,194</b>  | <b>+/-399</b>   |
| <b>65 years and over:</b>   | <b>2,489</b>  | <b>+/-757</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>       | <b>585</b>    | <b>+/-450</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b> | <b>1,904</b>  | <b>+/-684</b>   |
|   |               |                 |

|  |               |                 |
|--|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>APPENDIX 2, 2 of 2 2005 American Community Survey- TABLE C18030 NO DISABILITY</b> |               |                 |
| <b>No disability:</b>  | <b>63,325</b> | <b>+/-7,689</b> |
| <b>Male:</b>   | <b>32,190</b> | <b>+/-5,126</b> |
| <b>5 to 15 years:</b>  | <b>3,064</b>  | <b>+/-1,241</b> |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>                          | <b>489</b>    | <b>+/-473</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b>                    | <b>2,575</b>  | <b>+/-1,170</b> |
| <b>16 to 64 years:</b>   | <b>26,937</b> | <b>+/-4,693</b> |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>                          | <b>2,975</b>  | <b>+/-1,533</b> |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b>                    | <b>23,962</b> | <b>+/-4,296</b> |
| <b>65 years and over:</b>  | <b>2,189</b>  | <b>+/-693</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>                          | <b>105</b>    | <b>+/-120</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b>                    | <b>2,084</b>  | <b>+/-698</b>   |
| <b>Female:</b>   | <b>31,135</b> | <b>+/-3,900</b> |
| <b>5 to 15 years:</b>  | <b>2,778</b>  | <b>+/-1,000</b> |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>                          | <b>1,235</b>  | <b>+/-784</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b>                    | <b>1,543</b>  | <b>+/-626</b>   |
| <b>16 to 64 years:</b>   | <b>26,262</b> | <b>+/-3,482</b> |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>                          | <b>4,074</b>  | <b>+/-2,599</b> |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b>                    | <b>22,188</b> | <b>+/-3,405</b> |
| <b>65 years and over:</b>  | <b>2,095</b>  | <b>+/-606</b>   |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months below the poverty level</b>                          | <b>45</b>     | <b>+/-71</b>    |
| <b>Income in the past 12 months at or above the poverty level</b>                    | <b>2,050</b>  | <b>+/-618</b>   |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 American Community Survey

**APPENDIX 3, SELECTED DETAILED TABLES RE: CULTURES, INCLUDING DISABILITY CULTURE IN SOMERVILLE, US CENSUS 2000: Poverty, Income, Disability Type, Employment, Housing Characteristics, etc.**

**Somerville city, Massachusetts**

**Total 77,478**

**U.S. Census Bureau**

**Census 2000**

[P22. YEAR OF ENTRY FOR THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION \[9\] - Universe: Foreign-born population](#)

Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 3 \(SF 3\) - Sample Data](#)

|                    | <b>Somerville city, Massachusetts</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Total:             | 22,727                                |
| 1995 to March 2000 | 7,644                                 |
| 1990 to 1994       | 3,590                                 |
| 1985 to 1989       | 3,487                                 |
| 1980 to 1984       | 2,307                                 |
| 1975 to 1979       | 1,652                                 |
| 1970 to 1974       | 1,351                                 |
| 1965 to 1969       | 1,121                                 |
| Before 1965        | 1,575                                 |

U.S. Census Bureau

Census 2000

**APPENDIX 3, page 2 TABLE P41-  
AGE by TYPES OF DISABILITIES TALLIED, 5 yrs. and over with disabilities;, SOMERVILLE, MA 2000**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Total disabilities tallied:                              | 25,059 |
| Total disabilities tallied for people 5 to 15 years:     | 430    |
| Sensory disability                                       | 36     |
| Physical disability                                      | 54     |
| Mental disability  | 282    |
| Self-care disability                                     | 58     |
| Total disabilities tallied for people 16 to 64 years:    | 17,481 |
| Sensory disability                                       | 799    |
| Physical disability                                      | 2,218  |
| Mental disability  | 1,771  |
| Self-care disability                                     | 755    |
| Go-outside-home disability                               | 4,262  |
| Employment disability                                    | 7,676  |
| Total disabilities tallied for people 65 years and over: | 7,148  |
| Sensory disability                                       | 1,076  |
| Physical disability                                      | 2,490  |
| Mental disability  | 783    |
| Self-care disability                                     | 856    |
| Go-outside-home disability                               | 1,943  |

**APPENDIX 3, page 3-TABLE PCT26: SEX BY AGE BY TYPES OF DISABILITY, 5 yrs. and over.  
SOMERVILLE, MA 2000 Total:73,746,**

**Male: 35,744**

**5 to 15 years: 3,222** With one type of disability:178 Sensory disability, 6 Physical disability, 0 Mental disability, 155  
Self-care disability,17 With two or more types of disability:39 Includes self-care disability26 Does not include self-care disability, 13  
No disability, 3,005

**16 to 20 years:2,358** With one type of disability:214 Sensory disability, 18 Physical disability,16 Mental disability, 23  
Self-care disability,0 Go-outside-home disability, 86 Employment disability, 71  
With two or more types of disability:169 Includes self-care disability, 14 Does not include self-care disability:155  
Go-outside home and employment only, 133 Other combination, 22 No disability, 1,975

**21 to 64 years: 27,163** With one type of disability: 2,836 Sensory disability, 179 Physical disability, 309  
Mental disability, 230 Self-care disability, 21 Go-outside-home disability, 210 Employment disability, 1,887  
With two or more types of disability: 2,329 Includes self-care disability, 278 Does not include self-care disability:, 2,051  
Go-outside home and employment only, 1,330 Other combination, 721 No disability, 21,998

**65 years and over: 3,001** With one type of disability: 615 Sensory disability, 114 Physical disability, 277  
Mental disability, 52 Self-care disability, 0 Go-outside-home disability, 172 With two or more types of disability: 625  
Includes self-care disability, 248 Does not include self-care disability:, 377  
No disability, 1,761

**Female: 38,002**

**5 to 15 years: 3,357** With one type of disability: 72 Sensory disability, 9 Physical disability, 0  
Mental disability, 57 Self-care disability, 6 With two or more types of disability: 31 Includes self-care disability, 9  
Does not include self-care disability, 22 No disability, 3,254

**16 to 20 years: 2,561** With one type of disability: 144 Sensory disability, 0 Physical disability, 0  
Mental disability, 33 Self-care disability, 0 Go-outside-home disability, 18 Employment disability, 93  
With two or more types of disability: 150 Includes self-care disability, 44 Does not include self-care disability:, 106  
Go-outside home and employment only, 92 Other combination, 14 No disability, 2,267

**21 to 64 years: 27,248** With one type of disability: 2,374 Sensory disability, 99 Physical disability, 361  
Mental disability, 182 Self-care disability, 16 Go-outside-home disability, 253 Employment disability, 1,463  
With two or more types of disability: 2,192 Includes self-care disability, 382 Does not include self-care disability:, 1,810  
Go-outside home and employment only, 883 Other combination, 927 No disability, 22,682

**65 years and over: 4,836** With one type of disability: 1,073 Sensory disability, 184 Physical disability, 499  
Mental disability, 42 Self-care disability, 16 Go-outside-home disability, 332 With two or more types of disability: 1,276  
Includes self-care disability, 592 Does not include self-care disability:, 684 No disability 2,487

**APPENDIX 3 page 4:**

**TABLE PCT34 SEX by AGE by DISABILITY STATUS by POVERTY STATUS 5 yrs. and over SOMERVILLE 2000-MALE**

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <b>Total:</b>                            | <b>71,746</b> |
| <b>Male:</b>                             | <b>34,739</b> |
| 5 to 15 years:                           | 3,148         |
| With a disability:                       | 199           |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 21            |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 178           |
| No disability:                           | 2,949         |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 491           |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 2,458         |
| 16 to 20 years:                          | 1,659         |
| With a disability:                       | 356           |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 88            |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 268           |
| No disability:                           | 1,303         |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 191           |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 1,112         |
| 21 to 64 years:                          | 26,931        |
| With a disability:                       | 5,153         |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 745           |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 4,408         |
| No disability:                           | 21,778        |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 2,058         |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 19,720        |
| 65 years and over:                       | 3,001         |
| With a disability:                       | 1,240         |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 156           |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 1,084         |
| No disability:                           | 1,761         |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 129           |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 1,632         |
| <b>20</b>                                |               |



**APPENDIX 3 page 5:****TABLE PCT34 SEX by AGE by DISABILITY  
STATUS by POVERTY STATUS 5 yrs. and over  
SOMERVILLE 2000- FEMALE****Female: 37,007**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| 5 to 15 years:                           | 3,272  |
| With a disability:                       | 103    |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 38     |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 65     |
| No disability:                           | 3,169  |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 332    |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 2,837  |
| 16 to 20 years:                          | 1,790  |
| With a disability:                       | 273    |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 79     |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 194    |
| No disability:                           | 1,517  |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 404    |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 1,113  |
| 21 to 64 years:                          | 27,109 |
| With a disability:                       | 4,559  |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 905    |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 3,654  |
| No disability:                           | 22,550 |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 2,405  |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 20,145 |
| 65 years and over:                       | 4,836  |
| With a disability:                       | 2,349  |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 430    |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 1,919  |
| No disability:                           | 2,487  |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level       | 348    |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level | 2,139  |

APPENDIX 3, page 6

TABLE HCT25 TENURE by POVERTY STATUS in 1999 by RECEIPT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE INCOME SOMERVILLE MA

|   | <b>Somerville city,<br/>Massachusetts</b> |
|---|---|
| Total:                                    | 31,555                                    |
| Owner occupied:                           | 9,663                                     |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level:       | 520                                       |
| With public assistance income             | 14  |
| No public assistance income               | 506                                       |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level: | 9,143                                     |
| With public assistance income             | 54  |
| No public assistance income               | 9,089                                     |
| Renter occupied:                          | 21,892                                    |
| Income in 1999 below poverty level:       | 3,386                                     |
| With public assistance income             | 254                                       |
| No public assistance income               | 3,132                                     |
| Income in 1999 at or above poverty level: | 18,506                                    |
| With public assistance income             | 388                                       |
| No public assistance income               | 18,118                                    |

U.S. Census Bureau  
Census 2000

## XVI. January Public Hearing / Public Meeting Flyer



# PUBLIC HEARING PUBLIC HEARING

**Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone and the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development** invite you to a public hearing to receive community input on the draft 5 Year Consolidated Plan (2008 – 2013) and 1 Year Action Plan (2008) for HUD. These documents set priorities in the areas of community & economic development, parks, transportation, historic preservation, public service and housing program.

**Hearings will be conducted at the following locations, with identical agendas:**

- Thursday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30pm ~ Capuano Early Childhood Center
- Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm ~ Albert F. Argenziano School

*Accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request by contacting Carlene Campbell at 617-625-6600 ext. 3303. Translation services are available by contacting Mark Friedman at 617-625-6600 ext. 2539. Requests must be made no later than Monday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007.*



*Durrell Community Garden*



*1188 Broadway  
Inclusionary Housing  
Program*



*Storefront Improvement Program*

Public Hearing  
Consolidated Plan (2008 – 2013)  
Action Plan (2008 – 2009)



City of Somerville, MA

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

**Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development**

Monica R. Lamboy

Executive Director



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

### Tonight's Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Planning Process & Community Involvement
- Summary of Draft Consolidated Plan (2008 – 2013)
- Summary of Draft One Year Action Plan (2008 – 2009)
- Overview of Draft East Somerville and Union Square NRSAs
- Public Comments
- Next Steps



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

# Overview of a Consolidated Plan

Under 24 CFR 91, a Consolidated Plan is Required to Qualify for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Funding

A Consolidated Plan Serves the Following Functions:

- A) “A planning document building on a participatory process at the lowest levels;
- B) An application for federal funds under HUD’s formula grant programs;
- C) A strategy to be followed in carrying out HUD programs; and
- D) An action plan that provides the basis for assessing performance.”

**The goal of this document and these HUD funds is:**

“to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low-and moderate-income persons.”



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

### Overview of 1 Year Action Plan

- 1 Year Action Plans are the plans and budgets for HUD CDBG, HOME and ESG funds for each year guided by the needs and priorities set in the 5 Year Consolidated Plan.
- CDBG Funds can be used in a flexible manner for economic development, improvements to parks and open space, needed public services, and affordable housing projects and programs.
- HOME Investment Partnership Funds can be used to further affordable housing programs and projects.
- Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Funds are to be used to support shelters and programs for homeless persons.





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

### Overview of NRSAs

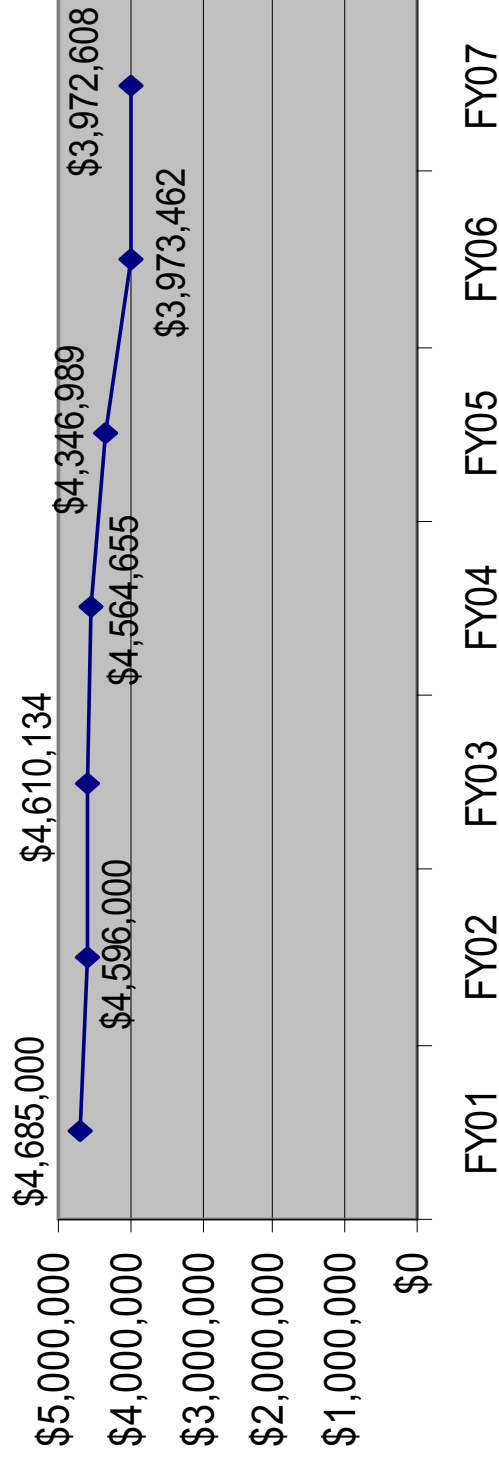
- NRSA = Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area, a special designation authorized by the Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for a particular geographic area of a community.
- NRSAs allow for more flexible use of HUD CDBG funds in order to carry out revitalization efforts in the targeted area
- City's currently approved NRSAs: Union Square NRSA (established in 2003) and East Somerville NRSA (established in 2004)



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

# City of Somerville HUD Funding 2001-2007

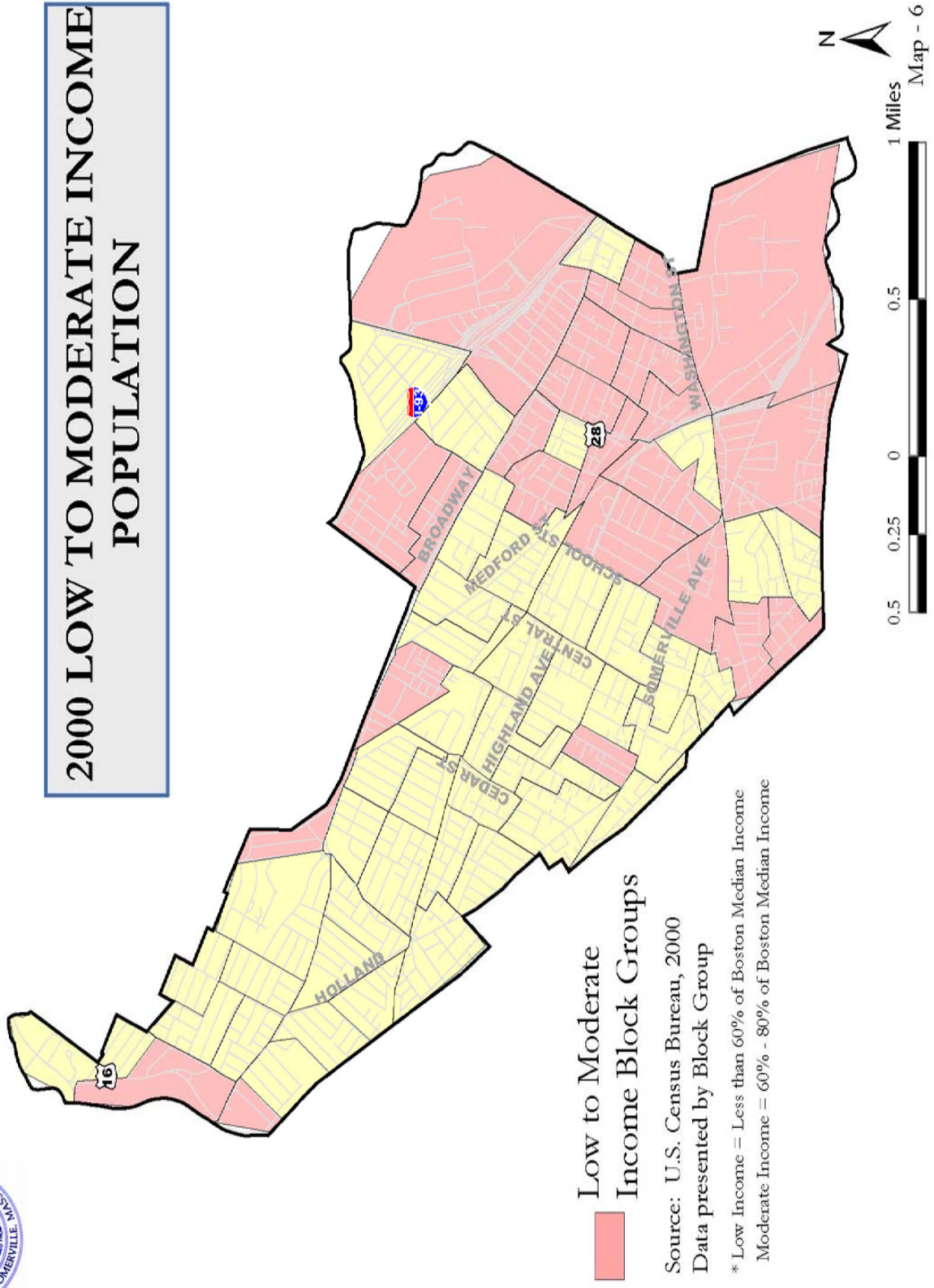
### City of Somerville CDBG, HOME, & ESG Funding Received 2001-2007





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

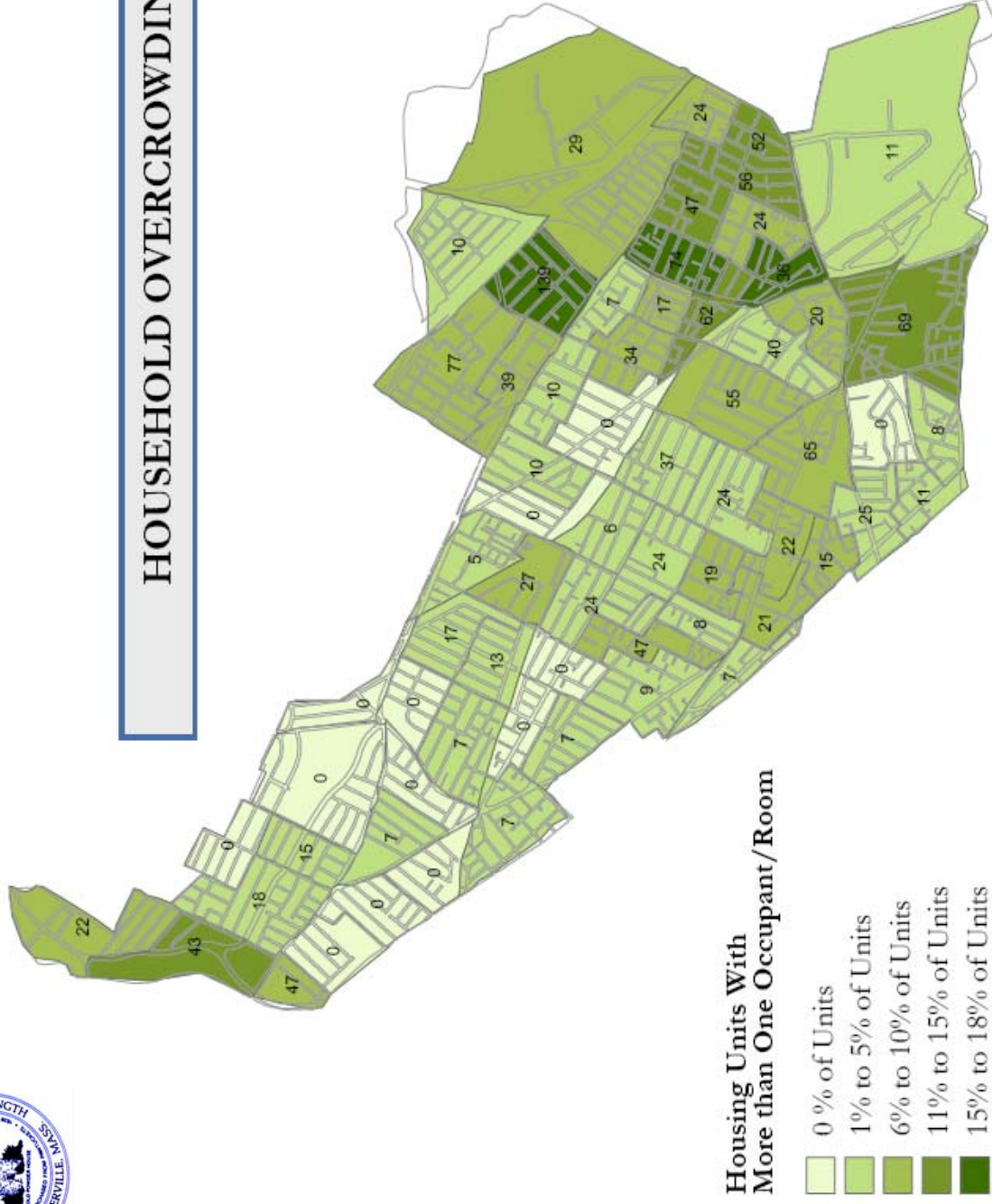
### 2000 LOW TO MODERATE INCOME POPULATION





# 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

## HOUSEHOLD OVERCROWDING

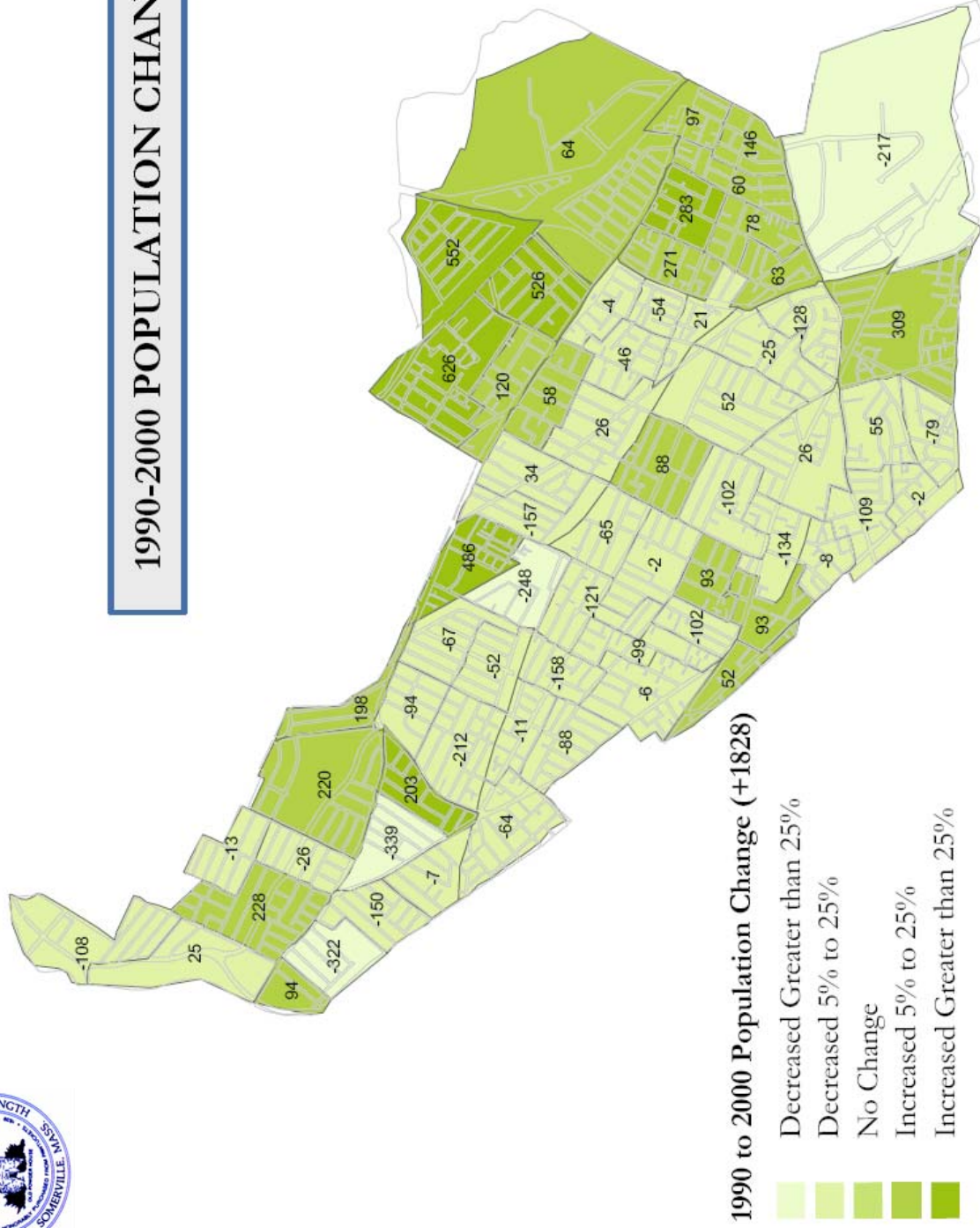






# 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

## 1990-2000 POPULATION CHANGE





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

# Planning Process & Community Involvement



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

### **Data Collection & Analysis:**

- Began in the Summer of 2007

### **Community Meetings:**

- October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007 ~ Capuano School

*(presentation **broadcasted on the Public Access Channel** on 10/18 & 10/23)*

- October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 ~ Argenziano School
- October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007 ~ West Somerville School

### **Focus Groups (October)**

- Housing
- Economic Development
- Historic Preservation
- Transportation
- Parks & Open Space
- Public Services

**Written Public Comment Period: 10/11/07 – 11/13/07**





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

# Themes Identified from the Data and Community Input



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

- 1. Changing Demographics**
- 2. Affordable Housing / Foreclosure Prevention**
- 3. Transit Oriented Development**
- 4. Sustainability**
- 5. Rising Cost of Construction**

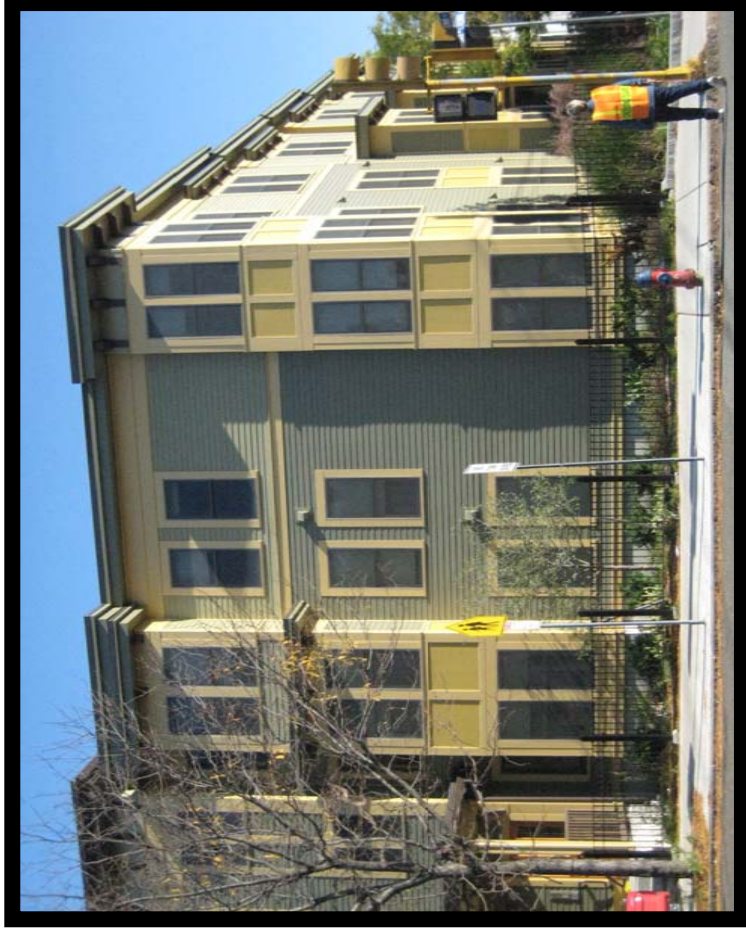


## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

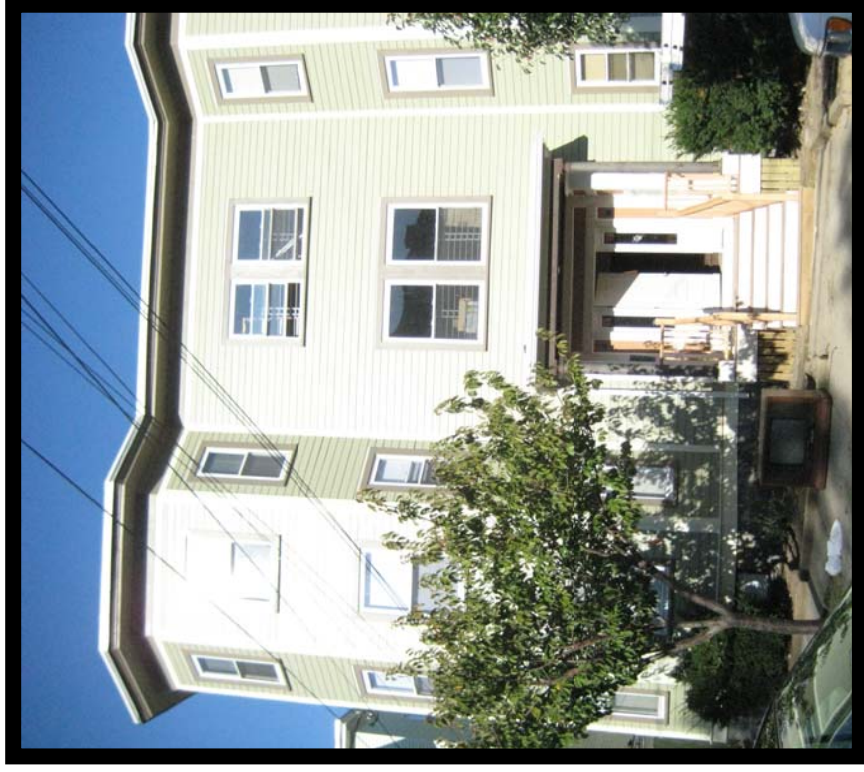
# Summary of Draft Five Year Consolidated Plan & One Year Action Plan



# HOUSING



*Temple Street*



*Gilman Street*



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

### Housing:

| 2008-2013                                   |  | 2008               |   | CDBG Est.         | HOME Est.         | ESG Est.          |
|---|--|--------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Consolidated Plan Goals</u>              |  | <u>Action Plan</u> |   | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> |
| 1. Maintain & Improve Housing Stock         |  | 1.A                | Housing Rehabilitation Program  | \$ 300,000        | \$ 356,138        |                   |
| 2. Create New Affordable Housing            |  | 2.A                | Housing Special Projects (funding for VNA, Capen Court, and other projects) | \$ 237,000        | \$ 1,706,752      |                   |
|   |  | 2.B                | CHDO Set Aside (St. Polycarp's)   |                   | \$ 1,309,304      |                   |
|   |  | 2.C                | CHDO Operating Set-Aside  |                   | \$ 44,768         |                   |
| 3. Increase Affordability of Rental Housing |  | 3.A                | Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program                               |                   | \$ 120,000        |                   |
| 4. Increase Affordable Homeownership        |  | 4.A                | Downpayment Assistance Program  |                   | \$ 90,000         |                   |
| 5. Prevent and End Homelessness             |  | 5.A                | Support for the Continuum of Care process via CDBG Admin Funding            |                   |                   |                   |
| 6. Remove Barriers to Housing               |  | 6.A                | Partially funded with CDBG Admin. & HOME Admin.                             |                   |                   |                   |
| TOTAL                                       |  |                    |   | \$ 537,000        | \$ 3,626,962      |                   |

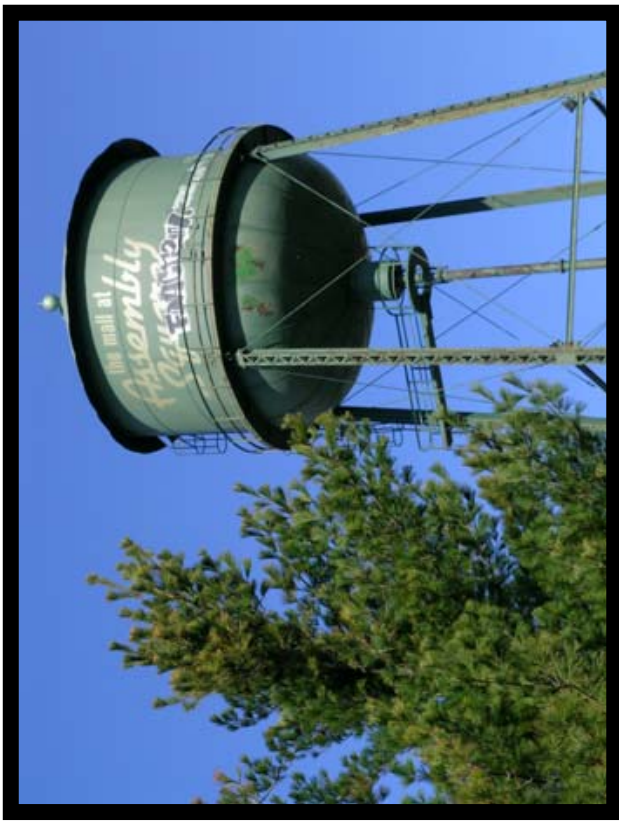




# ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



*Storefront Improvement Program*



*Redevelopment of Assembly Square*



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

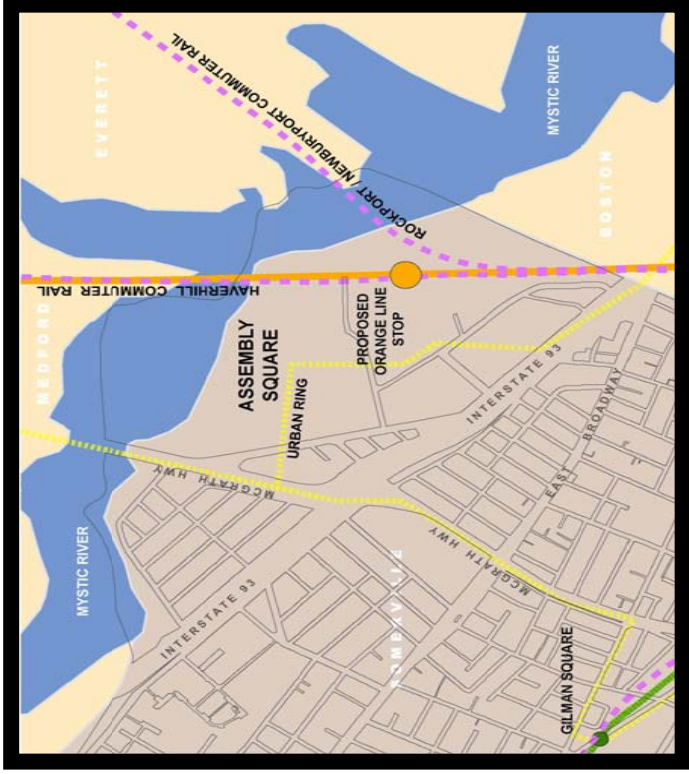
# Economic & Community Development:

|    | <b>2008-2013<br/>Consolidated Plan Goals</b>                            |     | <b>2008<br/>Action Plan</b>   | <b>CDBG Est.</b>  |           | <b>HOME Est.</b>  |  | <b>ESG Est.</b>   |  |
|----|---|-----|---|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|--|-------------------|--|
|    |   |     |   | <b>\$ Funding</b> |           | <b>\$ Funding</b> |  | <b>\$ Funding</b> |  |
| 1. | Encourage investment and development in underutilized areas of the City | 1.A | Section 108 Loan for Boynton Yards                                  | \$                | 649,109   |                   |  |                   |  |
|    |   | 1.B | Boynton Yards Pre-Development                                       | \$                | 30,877    |                   |  |                   |  |
| 2. | Enhance vitality of existing commercial districts                       | 2.A | Storefront Improvements Program                                     | \$                | 100,000   |                   |  |                   |  |
|    |   | 2.B | Union Square Wayfinding   | \$                | 11,865    |                   |  |                   |  |
|    |   | 2.C | Union Square Wayfinding Kiosk                                       | \$                | 30,000    |                   |  |                   |  |
| 3. | Increase local job opportunities  | 3.A | Micro-Enterprise Loan Program                                       | \$                | 30,000    |                   |  |                   |  |
|    |   | 3.B | ArtsUnion   | \$                | 50,000    |                   |  |                   |  |
|    |   | 3.C | Union Square Farmers' Market  | \$                | 12,000    |                   |  |                   |  |
|    |   | 3.D | Inner Belt Planning   | \$                | 25,000    |                   |  |                   |  |
| 4. | Enhance skills and abilities of Somerville residents                    | 4.A | Included as part of the Micro-Enterprise Loan Program scope of work |                   |           |                   |  |                   |  |
| 5. | Build a partnership between municipal government and community members  | 5.A | Union Square Main Streets   | \$                | 75,000    |                   |  |                   |  |
|    |   | 5.B | East Somerville Main Streets  | \$                | 75,000    |                   |  |                   |  |
|    | <b>TOTAL</b>  |     |   | \$                | 1,013,851 |                   |  |                   |  |

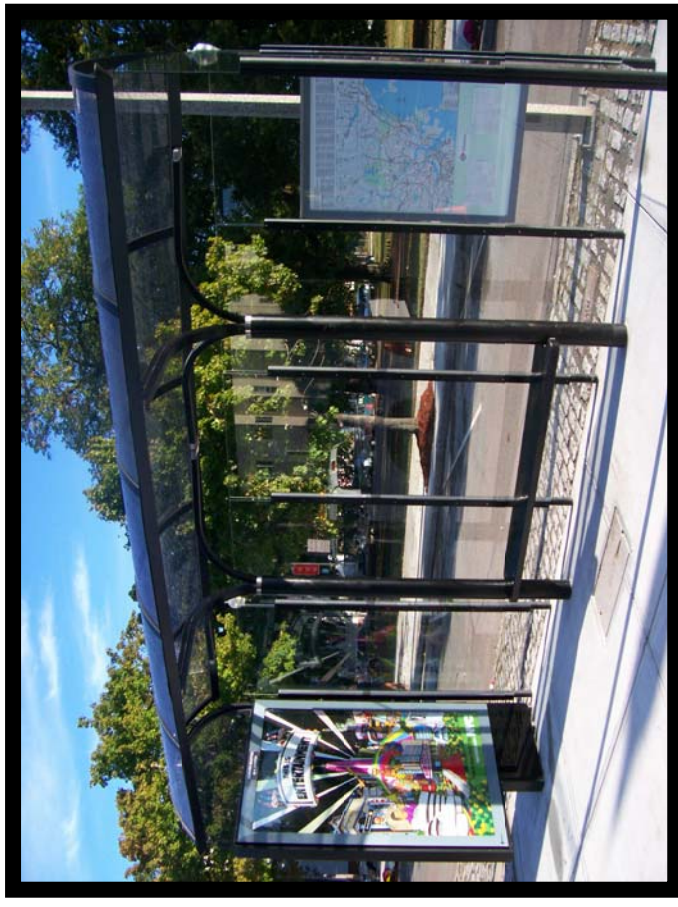




# TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE



*Assembly Square –  
Orange Line MBTA Stop Planning*



*New Cemusa Bus Shelter*



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

# Transportation & Infrastructure

| TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE                             |  |     |   |  |                             |                             |                            |
|---|--|-----|---|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
|   |  |     |   |  |                             |                             |                            |
| 2008-2013   |  |     | 2008                                    |  |                             |                             |                            |
| <u>Consolidated Plan Goals</u>                              |  |     | <u>Action Plan</u>                      |  | <u>CDBG Est. \$ Funding</u> | <u>HOME Est. \$ Funding</u> | <u>ESG Est. \$ Funding</u> |
| 1. Improve rail transit service                             |  | 1.A | Green Line Extension Planning           |  | \$ 25,000                   |                             |                            |
| 2. Improve bus service                                      |  | 2.A | CEMUSA bus shelter expansion            |  |                             |                             |                            |
| 3. Enhance streetscapes, roadways and intersections         |  | 3.A | East Broadway Streetscapes Improvements |  | \$ 653,246                  |                             |                            |
|   |  | 3.B | Union Square Infrastructure             |  | \$ 50,000                   |                             |                            |
|   |  | 3.C | Washington St & Route 28 Design         |  | \$ 15,000                   |                             |                            |
| 4. Reduce barriers dividing districts and neighborhoods     |  | 4.A | T.I.P. Study for Assembly Square/I-93   |  |                             |                             |                            |
| 5. Improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility             |  | 5.A | Community Path Design*                  |  | \$ 145,755                  |                             |                            |
| 6. Improve infrastructure for ADA compliance                |  | 6.A | ADA Streetscapes Program                |  | \$ 100,000                  |                             |                            |
| 7. Increase City's role in regional transportation planning |  | 7.A | Participation in the M.P.O.             |  |                             |                             |                            |
| 8. Improve basic utilities                                  |  | 8.A | Somerville Ave./Skilton Ave.            |  |                             |                             |                            |
| TOTAL   |  |     |   |  | \$ 989,001                  |                             |                            |





# PARKS & OPEN SPACE



*Corbett-McKenna  
Playground*



*Florence  
Playground*



*Florence Playground*

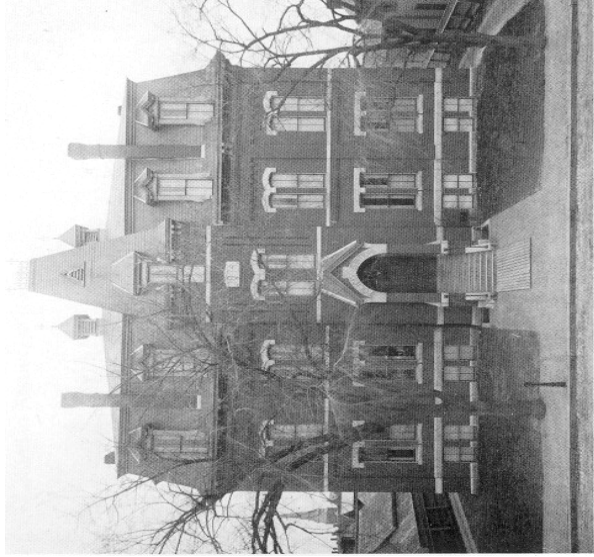


|    | 2008-2013   | 2008   |            |            |            |
|----|---|--|------------|------------|------------|
|    | Consolidated Plan Goals   | Action Plan  |            |            |            |
|    |   |  | CDBG Est.  | HOME Est.  | ESG Est.   |
|    |   |  | \$ Funding | \$ Funding | \$ Funding |
| 1. | Renovate existing parks   | 1.A Kemp Nut Park                                      | \$ 180,000 |            |            |
|    |   | 1.B Harris Park  | \$ 55,000  |            |            |
| 2. | Secure additional land for open space   | 2.A Kemp Nut Parcel Acquisition                        | \$ 115,000 |            |            |
|    |   | 2.B CHA Lot  | \$ 64,000  |            |            |
| 3. | Improve ADA access to parks and open space  | 3.A North Street Playground (and all parks projects)   | \$ 15,000  |            |            |
| 4. | Increase tree canopy and green space  | 4.A Street Tree Planting Program                       | \$ 75,000  |            |            |
|    |   | 4.B Tree Inventory                                     |            |            |            |
| 5. | Increase Off-Leash Recreational Area opportunities                                    | 5.A 111 South Street park design & construction        | \$ 55,000  |            |            |
|    |   | 5.B 0 New Washington Street park design & construction | \$ 150,000 |            |            |
| 6. | Promote sustainable design and building practices                                     | 6.A Groundworks Somerville                             | \$ 10,000  |            |            |
| 7. | Reduce brownfields  | 7.A Boynton Yards Pre-Development*                     |            |            |            |
| 8. | Improve governmental accountability   | 8.A Open Space & Recreation Plan**                     |            |            |            |
|    | TOTAL   |  | \$ 719,000 |            |            |
|    |   |  |            |            |            |
|    | * Boynton Yards Pre-Development is categorized under Economic & Community Development |  |            |            |            |
|    | ** Funded in part with CDBG Administrative Funds                                      |  |            |            |            |



# HISTORIC PRESERVATION

*Bow Street Police Station  
(Before, During, & After CDBG Assistance)*



1908



2003



2005





|    | 2008-2013  | 2008   | CDBG Est.         | HOME Est.         | ESG Est.          |
|----|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|    | <u>Consolidated Plan Goals</u>   | <u>Action Plan</u>                           | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> |
| 1. | Document historically significant historic resources   | 1.A Expansion of Local Historic Districts    | \$ 19,416         |                   |                   |
| 2. | Ensure City policies support the maintenance of historic resources   | 2.A Demolition By Neglect Draft Ordinance    |                   |                   |                   |
| 3. | Develop & implement programs that encourage the improvement of historic resources  | 3.A Historic Preservation Access Studies     |                   |                   |                   |
|    |  | 3.B Prospect Hill Park Technical Evaluation* | \$ 18,720         |                   |                   |
|    |  |  | \$ 25,000         |                   |                   |
| 4. | Stabilize and support the character of individual neighborhoods  | 4.A Historic Plaque Program                  |                   |                   |                   |
| 5. | Highlight Somerville's unique assets   | 5.A On-going Tours, Events, Materials        |                   |                   |                   |
|    | TOTAL  |  | \$ 63,136         |                   |                   |
|    |  |  |                   |                   |                   |
|    | * Prospect Hill Technical Evaluation project would encompass the monument, the park, and the surrounding infrastructure. This project is to be included in a revised final version of the 1 Year Action Plan |  |                   |                   |                   |



# PUBLIC SERVICES



*Mural of Mystic River Watershed*



*Teen Health Advisory Table – Info on Positive Body Image*





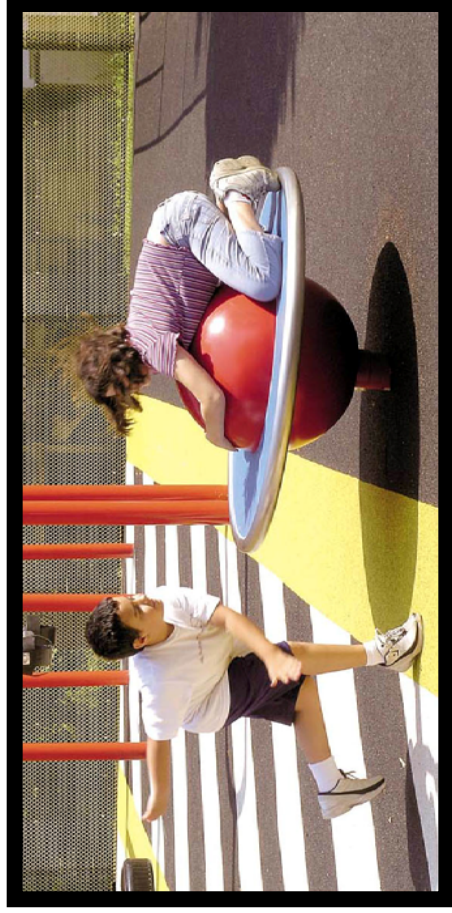
## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

### Public Services:

| 2008-2013   |     | 2008  |  | CDBG Est.         | HOME Est.         | ESG Est.          |
|---|-----|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Consolidated Plan Goals</u>  |     | <u>Action Plan</u>  |  | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> |
| 1. Provide opportunities to improve residents' economic, social, and political situation                                | 1.A | Maximum 15% of Entitlement Funding set-aside for programs to be selected via an RFP process |  |                   |                   |                   |
| 2. Provide children with opportunities to live healthy and productive lives   | 2.A | Maximum 15% of Entitlement Funding set-aside for programs to be selected via an RFP process |  |                   |                   |                   |
| 3. Provide education and leadership opportunities for youth   | 3.A | Maximum 15% of Entitlement Funding set-aside for programs to be selected via an RFP process |  |                   |                   |                   |
| 4. Provide comprehensive programs for low-income individuals and families having difficulties meeting their basic needs | 4.A | Maximum 15% of Entitlement Funding set-aside for programs to be selected via an RFP process |  |                   |                   |                   |
| 5. Prevent homelessness   | 5.A | Emergency Shelter Grant Funding   |  |                   |                   | \$ 127,121        |
| 6. Provide support services for the elderly and persons with disabilities   | 6.A | Maximum 15% of Entitlement Funding set-aside for programs to be selected via an RFP process |  |                   |                   |                   |
| TOTAL   |     |   |  | \$ 442,519        |                   | \$ 127,121        |



# EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA



*Graphic Surfaces Double as Play  
Elements at Perkins Park*





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

# East Somerville NRSA:

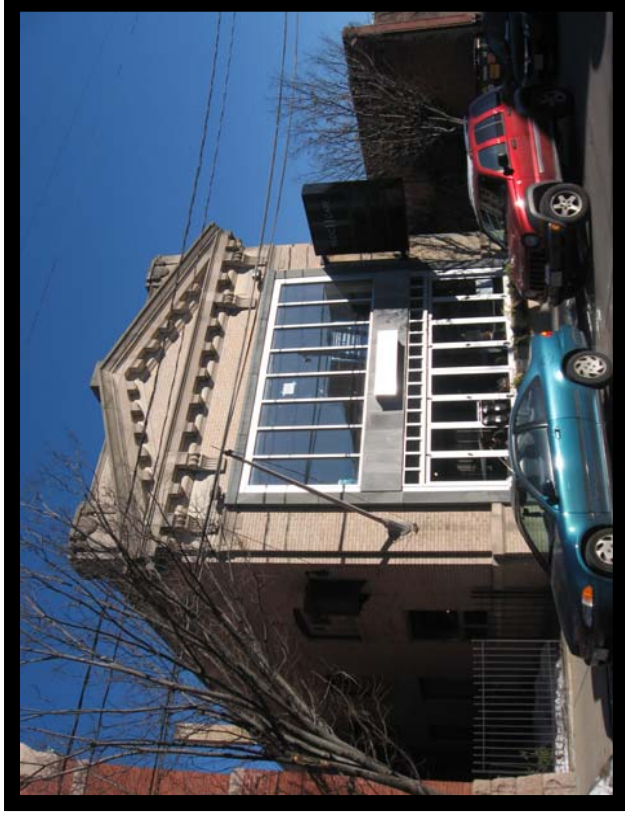
| 2008-2013   |     | 2008                                   | CDBG Est.         | HOME Est.         | ESG Est.          |
|---|-----|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Consolidated Plan Goals</u>  |     | <u>Action Plan*</u>                    | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> | <u>\$ Funding</u> |
| 1. Increase permanently affordable housing stock  | 1.A | Housing Rehabilitation Program         | \$ 300,000        | \$ 356,138        |                   |
|   | 1.B | Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program |                   | \$ 120,000        |                   |
|   | 1.C | Downpayment Assistance Program         |                   | \$ 90,000         |                   |
| 2. Increase economic opportunities  | 2.A | East Somerville Main Streets           | \$ 75,000         |                   |                   |
|   | 2.B | Storefront Improvements Program        | \$ 100,000        |                   |                   |
|   | 2.C | Micro-Enterprise Loan Program          | \$ 30,000         |                   |                   |
| 3. Increase recreational opportunities  | 3.A | Harris Park Design & Construction      | \$ 55,000         |                   |                   |
|   | 3.B | 0 New Washington Street Park           | \$ 15,000         |                   |                   |
| 4. Increase attractiveness of East Somerville   | 4.A | Street Tree Planting Program           | \$ 75,000         |                   |                   |
| 5. Improve East Somerville infrastructure   | 5.A | East Broadway Streetscapes Project     | \$ 653,246        |                   |                   |
| 6. Improve status of historic areas   | 6.A | Expansion of Local Historic Districts  | \$ 19,416         |                   |                   |
| TOTAL   |     |  | \$1,322,662       | \$ 566,138        |                   |
| * 2008 Action Plan projects and programs listed in this NRSA are also discussed under other categories of the Action Plan |     |  |                   |                   |                   |



# UNION SQUARE NRSA



*Union Square Farmer's Market*



*Bloc 11 Cafe*



## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

# Union Square NRSA:

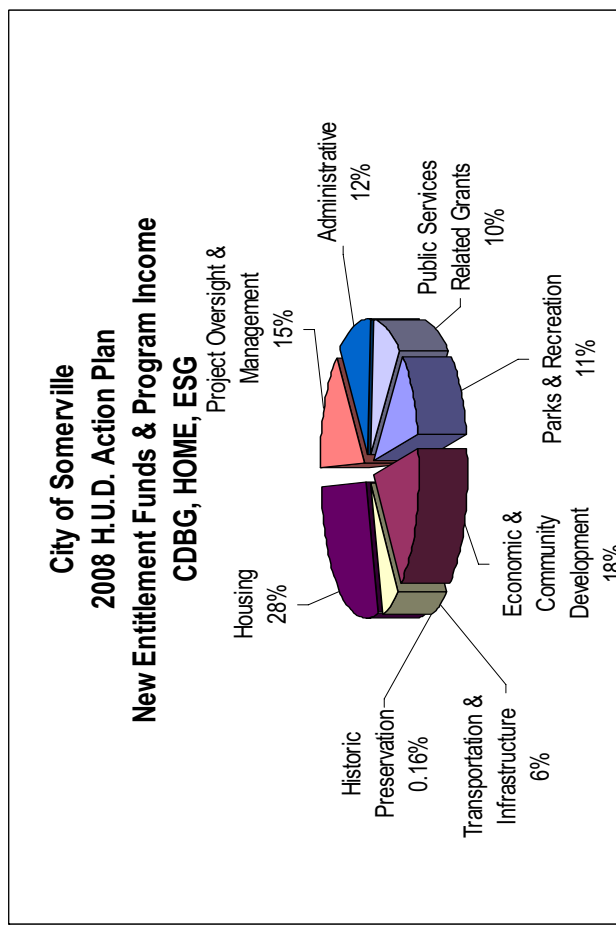
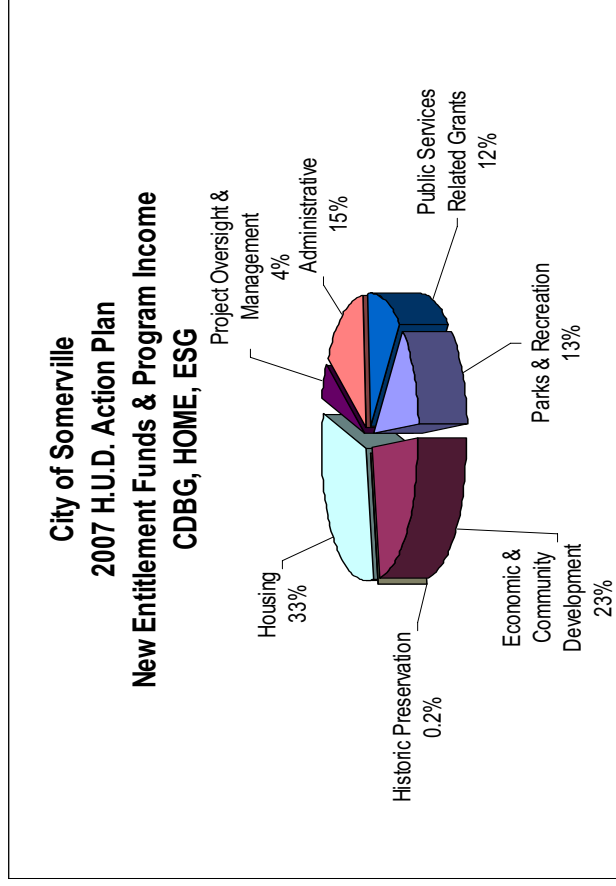
| 2008-2013   |  | 2008         | CDBG Est.  | HOME Est.  | ESG Est.   |
|---|--|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Consolidated Plan Goals   |  | Action Plan* | \$ Funding | \$ Funding | \$ Funding |
| 1. Increase permanently affordable housing stock  | 1.A Housing Rehabilitation Program         |              | \$ 300,000 | \$ 356,138 |            |
|   | 1.B Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program |              |            | \$ 120,000 |            |
|   | 1.C Downpayment Assistance Program         |              |            | \$ 90,000  |            |
| 2. Increase economic opportunities  | 2.A Union Square Main Streets              |              | \$ 75,000  |            |            |
|   | 2.B Storefront Improvements Program        |              | \$ 100,000 |            |            |
|   | 2.C Micro-Enterprise Loan Program          |              | \$ 30,000  |            |            |
| 3. Increase recreational opportunities  | 3.A 111 South Street Park                  |              | \$ 55,000  |            |            |
| 4. Increase attractiveness of Union Square  | 4.A ArtsUnion                              |              | \$ 50,000  |            |            |
|   | 4.B Street Tree Planting Program           |              | \$ 75,000  |            |            |
| 5. Improve Union Square infrastructure  | 5.A Union Square Wayfinding                |              | \$ 11,865  |            |            |
|   | 5.B Union Square Wayfinding Kiosk          |              | \$ 30,000  |            |            |
| 6. Improve status of historic areas   | 6.A Expansion of Local Historic Districts  |              | \$ 19,416  |            |            |
| TOTAL   |  |              | \$ 746,281 | \$ 566,138 |            |
| * 2008 Action Plan projects and programs listed in this NRSA are also discussed under other categories of the Action Plan |  |              |            |            |            |





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013 & 1 Year Action Plan 2008-2009

# 2007 & 2008 Funding Categorizations





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

## Public Comments & Next Steps





## 5 Year Consolidated Plan Development 2008-2013

### Public Comments & Questions

- Verbal: at any of the Consolidated Plan Public Hearings
- Via Email: [BOBrien@somervillema.gov](mailto:BOBrien@somervillema.gov)
- In writing to:
  - OSPCD Attn: Brianna O'Brien
  - 93 Highland Avenue
  - Somerville, MA 02143
- Submit: from January 3<sup>rd</sup> – February 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Visit the City's website more information at [www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov)



## Next Steps

- **Jan. 3 – Feb. 3, 2008: Public Comments & Questions**
- **Feb. 6 – Feb. 14, 2008: Board of Aldermen Approval of Consolidated Plan & 1 Year Action**
- **Feb. 15, 2008: Final Draft Submitted to HUD**

## **XVIII. Public Hearing Transcript - January 3, 2008**

**Monica Lamboy** – Good evening everyone. My name is Monica Lamboy. I am the Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development. Welcome to the 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 sessions for the Consolidated Plan for 2008-2013 and the One Year Action Plan. Our agenda tonight, were going to be talking about the process that we use to help draft the Consolidated Plan and the One Year Action Plan that includes the planning process and community involvement. Were going to go over the highlights of the Consolidated Plan and discuss the One Year Action Plan. The 5-year Consolidated Plan is a document that helps us guide our activities and how we manage our HUD resources for 5 years. And each year we have to do a One Year Action Plan that is required by HUD. It's a higher level of detail. We want to get public comments from people here. A Consolidated Plan is a planning document that helps guide how we use our HUD resources. Importantly the goal is to help develop viable urban communities, decent housing, suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities for low-moderate income communities. The One Year Action Plan is a higher level of detail and identifies projects in the upcoming year. Our fiscal year starts April 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 and runs through March 31<sup>st</sup> of 2009. Our other funding sources are CDBG, Home, and ESG. This slide talks a little about the NRSA (Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area) areas are. They are focused areas where for housing and economic needs and also a flexible use for HUD resources. We have 2 currently Union Square (2003) and East Somerville (2004). What were doing at this point in time is minor modifications and the boundaries between the 2 of them and also reinitiated them for a 5-year period. So that our 5 year Consolidated Plan and each of our NRSA's will have the exact same timeline. So it's more consistency between the efforts and start and end on the same time. This slide shows some of the HUD funding that we received in the last few years. What you can see is some decline since the beginning of FY01 and between FY06 and 07. As we know cost are beginning to increase. We don't know today what the numbers are for 2008, but there could be slight decline. What we budgeted in our Action Plan is the same funding we received in 2007. As we start to look at our plan going forward, we evaluated our accomplishments for the last five years and we looked at our census data, and gathering input from the public. We just wanted to include a few slides in here about some of the Census Data that we had looked at. This one shows the areas of low-moderate income areas. As you see they are mostly in the Eastern side of the City, but also some in other areas of the City. This graphic in green shows household overcrowding. It often happens in lower income households where people are doubling up to meet the rent. This map shows population change between 1990-2000. The darkest green colors are is where population has increased more then 25%. The middle green is no change. Overall the city went up by 1,828 people according to the 1990 and 2000 Census. What we saw in large areas of the City is a decline I household size. Again for the process, we looked at the accomplishments from the last year. We look at how our population has changed which helps us in the future. We also spent quite a bit of time talking to the public. We had 3 community meetings in October, and we did focus groups to talk to some of the experts about some of the key areas. We had housing, economic development, and parks and open space focus group. We invited probably 8-12 people who are working in those areas

to really dig in and talk in detail about what's happening in different areas. We also had a written public comment period. After we got all that public comment and all that data we started to talk about goals and strategies. We identified 5 big trends that are affecting the City. Continue changing demographics, as we know Somerville Median age is lower than a state. We look at affordable housing issues; transit orient development is a huge opportunity for the City. Sustainability is something unfortunately on the forefront of a lot of conversations right now. We are committed to bringing building and sustainability. We will now move into the specific sections of our draft plan and turn it over to housing.

**Phil Ercolini** – My name is Phil Ercolini. I am the Director of Housing for the City. 2 examples of projects that we have accomplished during the 5-year plan. One of the projects was the Temple Street Home Ownership, which was developed by the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC). It was 15 units of low-moderate income housing. Right down the street from the Temple Street housing is the St. Polycarp's project. The SCC is doing a phase 1 rental and phase 2-ownership. We continue to maintain and improving housing stock. We not only housing rehab programs, but also are very supportive of continuing aspiring use of properties in the City. We fund a consult, who works with the SCC, and owners of properties that are considering popping out of their contracts. The second is evaluating prevalence in prevention of foreclosure throughout the City of Somerville. Where in the process now of getting a student intern from the Kennedy School of Government, who is doing a study of foreclosures in the City and advising us to create a strategy for the City to address these potential problems. The housing rehabilitation program is very important program for the City and has been going on for a number of years. We continue to seek resources to expand this successful program. The last is lead abatement program. This past year we have been very successful is securing \$6 million for two programs. One is a demonstration grant that creates opportunities for education outreach. It further expands the capability of removing lead conditions in these properties. In creation of new affordable housing, the city has been very supportive of two projects. In particular the Visiting Nurse Association which is a assisted living facility and also Capen Court project which was a property owned by the Somerville Housing Authority. And Also the St. Polycarps, which the SCC is working on. In the next category, we increase the affordability of rental housing. We address that in a number of different ways, through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and SCC operates that program for us. Also have home funds through 2 different organizations. In the next category is increasing affordable home ownership. The city has a down payment assistance program. We also operate that through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The next is category is prevention and ending homelessness. They city is very supportive of the continuing of care process. The last category would be barriers to housing. Which is partially funded through CDBG Admin and Home Admin. The housing division administers the Fair Housing Commission as well as providing support.

**Monica Lamboy** - Under the topic of economic development, there has been some sufficient accomplishments in the last five years. We have storefront improvement programs, which offers matching fund to property owners or business owners that want to

improve the front of their building. We also have worked with ACCION program, to work with micro financing for small loans for start up business or expansion. We've also offered some recent classes in financial literacy to residence and business owners. There also is an interesting link on the City's Website. The Somerville for Business, which takes you to a website that offers information on grants. As many people know, the Assembly Square project is moving forward quickly and the past 5 years the market place has been reconfigured into a successful shopping center. In October we approved the permit for the new Ikea and Assembly Square Drive. We're currently working with the developers on the basis moving forward but it's a major economic development for the City. For goals moving forward, we have 5 broad areas under Economic Development. The first goal is to encourage investments and development in under utilized areas in the City. We have some great opportunities areas and we really want to focus on those. One example is, the Boyton Yards. There had been a previous Section 108 loan. We have also allocated some money to do pre development analysis in the Boyton Yards area, to help stimulate activity in the area. Under our second goal, which is to enhance Commercial districts. It's important to see the opportunity to see new development that we don't lose the opportunities in our existing areas to enhance the activity and shopping in those areas. To help support the existing commercial areas, we have our storefront improvement programs, a couple of wayfinding projects in Union Square area, which will help going further then the street improvements and the benches that we have done. Our third goal is to increase local job opportunities. We really would like to get more jobs in the City and more commercial activity. The micro enterprise loan program has been very successful and something we want to continue in the next five years. Our Arts Union program has been a real collaborative effort with the artist's community to bring events in Union Square to do the benches and the improvements and recently revealed a grant program to allow people to get matching funds to help stimulate activities. The Union Square Farmer's Market has been a huge success and is something that were going to continue. We allocated some funds into inner belt planning which we see as an opportunity area to bring new business and jobs in. The forth goal, we want to bring business's in but we also want to make opportunities for our residence to be the first one's in line to get those good paying jobs. We're actually working with ACCION and the Micro enterprise loan program to do financial literacy and other kinds of loan programs that will help stimulate job training. The fifth and very important goal is to build partnership between the City Government and community members, weather business, residence, and the different organizations. We support the Union Square Main Streets and the East Somerville Main Streets through out CDBG funding and will continue that as well.

**Lisa Lepore** – My name is Lisa Lepore. I am the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure. I will quickly go over some of the accomplishments over the past 5 years. We leverage private money to help implement improvements in streetscape throughout the City. An example of that is working with the Semusa Company, providing new MBTA shelters. Some of the other accomplishments that we had were the feasibility stage that we completed on access to innerbelt area for all transportation. We have also worked on the community paths. Worked on the extension from Cedar Street to Central Street. Also we looked at the feasibility of an alignment parallel to the green line extension as proposed to Lechmere/north point to School Street. We are moving forward

with the program funds that we had and were continuing to add to them and identifying them as goals for this 5-year period moving forward. One of the first goals is to improve rail transit service. By supporting green line extension planning in the City to insure that the state are doing that in coordination with the City. The second goal is to improve bus service, by working with the Semusa Company. The third goal is to enhance streetscape roadways and intersections. There are 3 specific areas that we are able to tab into CDBG funding and look at those areas and plan. One is East Broadway Streetscape Improvement's. We initiated a Broadway Streetscape urban design. We are looking at Somerville Main Streets on how we can improve sections of Broadway. We are also looking at Union Square and the infrastructure and Washington Street and Route 28. One of the most important things that we got out of the Community comments we cant connect to the squares. We have some barriers and we want to start to take down those barriers to help improve the connection to neighborhood and squares. The fifth goal is accessibly. The other is a third community path design through Davis Square to the Seven Hills. 6<sup>th</sup> goal is to improve infrastructure, ADA requirements. We need to rebuild ramps on City Streets and will be meeting with them this January. 7<sup>th</sup> goal is increasing our role in regional planning. We spent a lot of our time creating relationships at the State and working with the Metropolitan and Planning Organization. We have actually won a local seat and this agency controls all the state and federal money that goes to railroad projects. As of last month we were up to \$65 million. The 8<sup>th</sup> goal is improving basic utilities. That would be an example of Somerville Ave.

**Arn Franzen** – Hello. My name is Arn Franzen. I am the Director of Parks and Open Space for the City of Somerville. I would like to talk about some of the accomplishments. The parks that we have are generally small. We try to take them and develop then the best way possible. Some of the recent projects that we have completed, one is Perry Park. It's a sort of model that were trying to keep for the years ahead. Were trying to provide recreational green space. Perry Park was a large open space we opened in October. Stone Place is another small park, right behind Union Square. Perry Park is about an acre in space and Stone Place, which is a 1/10-acre. We also have a tree-planting program in the City. We try to plant 100 trees in a year with block grant funds. We try to take our block grant funds and leverage them with other funding to increase the project budget we have available. It's been a great use of the block grant funding. Our primary leveraging tools is grants from the State, EPA grants. The first goal is to renovate our parks. We have almost 50 parks in the City and it's a challenge to keep up with the needs of the neighborhood and to keep those parks nice. One of the parks that we have been working on for the last year is the Kemp-Nut Park. It's going to be called the Ed Lathers Park. It's the former Site of the Kemp-Nut factory. Another park we have going forward is the Harris Park, which is on Cross Street. Our second goal is to secure additional land use programs. Were trying to find ways to acquire new open space and expand the space we already have. Our third goal is to improve ADA access to parks and open space. It's an absolute requirement. 4<sup>th</sup> goal is to increase green space in the City. We have been doing that with our tree-planting program and will continue to do that in the years ahead. Another project we have coming up is to complete a tree inventory. One of the more interesting goals that we have is to increase the space dedicated to the off leash recreation. This is something that is recognized as a real need. We have 2 parks moving

ahead, South Street and 0 New Washington Street. Our 6<sup>th</sup> goal is sustainable to something and building practices and we do that in a number of ways. One is with Groundwork Somerville. Our 7<sup>th</sup> goal is to use Brownfield's and this is a goal for our department and the Highway Department. A great example is Boyton Yards. Our 8<sup>th</sup> goal is to improve government accountability. We want to be able to show the State, Federal Government, and the Community what were doing and why. Were developing the 5-year Open Space and Recreation Plan for the next 5 years.

**Brandon Wilson** - Hello my name is Brandon Wilson. I'm here tonight as the Executive Director of Somerville Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission is a municipal body made up of 14 members and we work very closely with the staff of the Community Development Office. The kinds of accomplishments that we have over the last several years. One is well known is the Bow Street Police Station. The City decided it was time to bring it back to its original architecture character. It's now used for housing, which two are affordable units. Other accomplishment is the West Branch Library, which is outside Davis Square. We did a lot of stabilization work both interior and exterior to the building. I should mention that Historic Preservation refers not only to public building but also to private residence in the City to a designation called Local Historic Districts. One of the things that we been working on the last couple years is designate a number of other structures in the City as a Local Historic Districts to protect them over time and work with the property owners. One thing we try to do is reach out to the wider population such as yourself. We do that in part by sponsoring events, cable television, and collaborate with the Somerville High School students on projects with our preservation awards program. We like to honor residence who actually work on their properties in a historic way. We have awards every May and the students actually create the drawings for those homeowners. For our upcoming 5-year Consolidated Plan our goals one is documenting different resources from the City, which would include libraries, City Hall, Public Buildings. One of the ways we do that is by expanding local historic districts. Secondly, we try to make sure that City Hall stays and actually enhances its historic recourses. One of the things we have been working on, is a demolition by neglect ordinances. Developing and implementing programs that improve Historic Resources. We intend to work on some properties in the City to make that happen. And also stabilizing and supporting the character of the individual neighborhood. This is a new budget that were starting. Which is to have an historic plaque program. Where people who owned historic properties, we created a plaque for them indicating when their home was built. We have a number of brochures that people can take and walk on their own to learn more about the City.

**Mark Friedman** – My name is Mark Friedman. I am the Director of Finance. Over the past 5 years the City has used both the CDBG block grant funding as well as Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funding that is received from the housing and urban development to assist 40 agencies for essential services. Example of services is, transportation for the elderly or after school programs. For the 2008 Action Plan the City has set a number of goals, providing opportunities to include residence's economic, social, political situations. Providing assistance to children and youth within the City. Providing education and leadership opportunities. Assistance providing comprehensive



programs for low-income families having difficulty providing their basic needs. Preventing homelessness is another important goal in today's society. The final goal is providing support systems for the elderly and people with disability. The City use's a competitive process each year, which we will continue, in the upcoming year. Inviting originations and agencies to propose programs for the up coming year to serve as essential needs. We will be setting aside the HUD regulations the maximum %15 of the annual funds that we receive. Moving on to East Somerville Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area. It's an exciting area and we expect to see a lot of activity and programs in the coming years. We have 6 different goals, 4 for the East Somerville NRSA area including focusing on affordable housing, economic and recreational opportunities, and attractiveness of the area and improving the basic infrastructure and also focusing our attention on Historic aspects of the area. There are a list of projects in the East Somerville NARSA area. Union Square NARSA area, we had some successful programs like the farmers Market. Again we have 6 goals for the Union Square NARSA area and with those goals we have projects listed.

**Monica Lamboy** – Our last slide here shows comparison between 2007-2008 and where the resources are being dedicated. In addition to just change, in 2008 graphic craved out the money that went to transportation. What you can see the % allocations are more and less the same but were definitely trying to balance. I want to thank you.

#### ***PUBLIC COMMENT***

My name is Ellen Frit. I am a member of the Somerville Disability Commission. I will be speaking tonight as a independent person about what my service has been through the City and hope this bring support. I will tell you the problem I have around affordable housing. The City ran a lottery for 1188 Broadway and I won the lottery. The people who are managing this changed the apartment from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor to an apartment right on top of the common parking, which lead off Carbon Dioxide. When you walked in the first thing you would see is sunlight and then you saw a wall. They decided that will become the affordable unit for someone who has my status. When I brought it up I said can I take that apartment? I was told take that one and I lost my ability to purchase. Which means I'm paying more then I can afford. Were offered something and if it doesn't comply with our status we cant accept it. What happens is in order to bring the ADA complaints it means we have to have total complaints or legal match. Whose responsibility it is to clear the handicapped parking spaces and the bus stops in the City with snow removal. There seems to be confusion about who cleans the bus stops? This isn't being paid attention to. What I'm suggesting is, working together as a community to get this information. We need proper signage for handicapped parking spaces. Also to make sure the cross hatched are plowed and the signage needs to be put back. We still have a problem with curb cuts? What I'm asking, really think about disability and try to put it into action. Also to think about when you hire somebody, make sure they know what the ADA requirements are. What would help? When you're studying your plan please include us. I will be here to help in any way that I can.

Hi my name is Danny LeBlanc. I live right up the street. I work as the Director of the SCC. I think the main comment I want to make know is we certainly appreciate the support we get from the City for affordable housing development that we do. When you look through the documents here, the absolutely severe shortage of funds that we have collectively to do this stuff. When you look at one of our developments that the City is supporting was \$150,000 that's going to create 24 new units of rental housing and that's pretty close to the home budget for the entire year. The conclusion that I want to offer here is that it's a little bit off this 5 year plan, is to say we need to find resources and get them into the City. Our affordable housing is going to lose the battle. I think there is a tremendous upside to what Monica made in her presentation.

Hi. My name is Ken Rowe Sr. I have lived in Somerville since 1975. I am very impressed by the presentation tonight. I just want to adjust the lack of funds that are available. If we had a different administration in the White House and different set of national spending priorities everything we were talking about would be in a entirely different picture. Personally I hope we have a president from the Democratic Party next November. It's time we have a president who can help rearrange our national properties.

**Monica Lamboy** – Thank you all for our thoughts and comments. We have another Public meeting next Tuesday. You can also send it electronic. Moving forward we have the 30-day comment period and then we will meet with the BOA for their considerations and adopt the document by Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>. So we can make sure HUD has it by the 15<sup>th</sup>. Thank you very much.

## **XIX. Public Meeting – January 8, 2008**

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:**

In the housing section, you mentioned how you're concerned about foreclosures. It wasn't clear to me if there was money attached to that. I work for the homeless coalition and were very concerned because we can't take care of the homeless we have now. Were concerned about many more people becoming homeless because of foreclosures. I wonder what the City's strategy is to try to help?

**Philip Ercolini** - At the moment were having an intern from the Kennedy School of Government and is doing a study and report on foreclosures. Looking at best practices and doing a lot of research into the data. Hopefully within the next couple of months we should have it. She's spoken to a lot of our local institutions and our resources at the state so we can begin to come up with a strategy to address that. At the moment the city doesn't have enough funds or resources to put towards foreclosure, but were beginning to speak to some people to put together a program of financial literacy so we can address this not only at an adult level but a children's level in the school systems. The short answer is no, but were working on a strategy.

Is the Housing Department the right place to send people who need information on the process to go through?

**Philip Ercolini** – We do have information links on our website. There are agencies out there. Usually we get the calls when they're already in the process. Any one who has questions about that, have them go to our website.

**Mark Friedman** – They city has identified this as a theme were looking closely at right now. In terms of the HUD 5 year Conplan, we will be looking at this very closely and as we get more information and can devise strategies you may see these resources. The Department of Housing and Urban Development also encourages communities to use these funds and try to leverage them to get other funding.

My name is Emmanuel. I'm interested in the issue of sustainability . I learned that you have grants. Can you tell us more about that?

**Ellen Schneider** – I think Groundworks does excellent work and has been an amazing partner, but were also looking at sustainability in planning. Some of the parks redevelopment as well. One of the parks projects for next year will have a sustainable water feature. Were really looking at ways to decrease the amount of water going down into the sewage system or planting trees. We would really welcome any comments on how we can address sustainability.

**Katie Brillantes** – You might be interested in looking at in 2007, the City published a Sustainability Plan, which is the first time the City has ever published such a document. It has things in it like goals for energy reduction, a plan to get more energy efficient

equipment into our public buildings and school, and also looks at having hybrid cars. That might be a helpful resource.

I was just wondering, as you work on these goals over the next 5 years, do you have some kind of way to evaluate how your doing? Also if you do kind of change things will these be up on the website?

**Mark Friedman** – The City is going through this process right now for the upcoming 5-year period. We've gone through an extensive process, which started with the detailed look at the 200- Census Data to try to identify what the needs are in the Community. What we hope is we identified the major goals for the next 5 years. If something changes, HUD and the Federal Government do make provisions to amend Consolidated Plans. As we go through 2008-2013, that your area is emerging that the City didn't address in this plan, the City may consider going back and amending this plan. If we do that we have to go through an extensive process, which were doing right now. This is where we stand right now. If you do have comments that you want to submit you can submit by email. We will be accepting those comments between now and February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Were currently in our public comment period, we encourage you to ask questions, submit comments, and we will be taking those till February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Through Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> we will be working with the City's Board of Alderman on the final plans. We need to submit the final plan by feb. 15<sup>th</sup>. Thanks for coming out.

# UNION SQUARE MAIN STREETS

February 4, 2008

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Don Warner  
Warner + Associates

*Ex Officio*

Stephen Houdlette  
Community Relations  
City of Somerville

Kristi Chase  
Historic Preservation  
City of Somerville

Monica Lamboy  
OSPCD  
City of Somerville  
Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Ms. Lamboy,

Union Square Main Streets is pleased to see the emphasis on economic development and the needs of Union Square well represented in the City's 5-Year Consolidated Plan to HUD.

Union Square Main Streets, an independent non-profit organization, was launched in 2005 thanks to CDBG funding and City leadership and is the economic revitalization program for Union Square. USMS follows the four-point approach of the Main Street model: Design, Organization, Promotion and Economic Restructuring. In 2007 with the maturation of the organization matured, we sought measurable outcomes for our programs and to target our limited resources for maximum benefit. We therefore overlaid the Main Street 4-point approach with our own themes of addressing the issues Pedestrians (improving pedestrian accessibility, increasing pedestrian traffic), Properties (increasing investment in commercial properties), People (engaging business owners and residents, developing leadership and education) and Process (engaging the community in planning). USMS has refined are goals to:

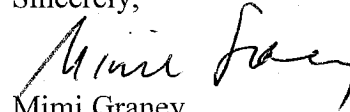
- Increase Assessed Values of Commercial Properties
- Balance Ratio of Commercial to Residential Property Values
- Increase net number of businesses
- Increase net number of jobs
- Increase number and investment in commercial and mixed-use building projects
- Increase wages at area businesses

While our program is just three years old there are significant changes to report in Union Square. There is a net increase of 4 businesses since our launch and the business mix has slightly shifted with a much needed increase in retail uses. Programming has shown a direct economic impact of over \$2 million. Greater confidence in the neighborhood has resulted in over \$4 million in commercial real

estate transactions in the Central Business District and more than \$610,000 in commercial rehabilitation projects.

Reviewing the City's 5-year Consolidated Plan, the goals are very much in keeping with the needs of the community. The plan effectively engages the non-profit community and thus leverages community-wide support and private investment. The plan's goals of increasing economic opportunities, recreational opportunities and transportation issues are key issues that dovetail with the efforts of USMS. A revitalized commercial district and infrastructure improvements both through the future Green Line and streets of Union Square make efforts to towards maintaining the affordability of the community even more important.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mimi Graney", written in a cursive style.

Mimi Graney  
Executive Director



## EAST SOMERVILLE MAIN STREETS

February 7, 2008

City of Somerville  
93 Highland Avenue  
Somerville MA 02143  
Attn: Brianna O'Brien

To Whom It May Concern at the City of Somerville,

I am writing on behalf of East Somerville Main Streets (ESMS) to comment on the City of Somerville's *Five Year Consolidated Plan 2008-2013*. ESMS would first like to commend the City on their commitment to the goals of the prior consolidated plan, and for their outreach in the development of this plan. Our comments, below, will follow the sections of the consolidated plan, and will be centered around the effects of the consolidated plan on the revitalization of East Somerville's business districts.

### ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Partnership** – The City's recognition of the "need to work with partners" (p. 83) to capture the full potential of under-utilized districts, is a very appreciated and important when tackling issues of such importance to the community.
- **Business Mix Study** - The City's study of the business mix in Somerville was a great step forward in proactively planning the City's commercial future (p. 85).
- **Parking Requirements**– Limited parking and over-zealous ticketing continue to be the primary complaint of business owners in East Somerville. In addition, zoned parking requirements for new businesses along Broadway are one of the biggest limitations in shifting the district away from historically industrial and office uses to pedestrian friendly commercial uses that will allow the district to thrive. With this consideration, we support the Consolidated Plan's intention to re-evaluate parking requirements when considering building re-use and expansion in commercial districts (p. 84).

Within the field of commercial revitalization, parking management is one of the areas with the most innovation. As Somerville both demands greater parking due to its density and has a reputation for ground-breaking developments -- this area seems ideal for moving forward to boost commercial potential.

- **Financial Incentives** – ESMS supports the assessment of financial incentives to help bring additional businesses into depressed areas, as suggested in Strategy 1.4 - *Encourage Investment in Underutilized Areas of the City*.
- **Streamlining the Permitting Process** – ESMS highly supports a more organized and streamlined permitting process for businesses, as suggested in Strategy 1.5. We suggest that this process, with regards to permitting for new business openings and for changes to businesses that require

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permits, be consolidated. A business owner would be able to enter all their information at one computer terminal (either remotely or at City Hall) and this information could then (through a specially developed program) be sent to all the necessary permitting offices for approval. This would potentially: a) save the City money via reduced staff time in a much more automated process, b) encourage new and innovative business development in Somerville and c) create a reliable database to track business owner data.

- **Enhance Vitality** – We greatly support all 8 of the strategies suggested under Goal 2 of *Enhancing vitality of existing commercial districts through support of existing businesses and attraction of others to support a healthy business mix*. The efforts of the City to date in this area have had a great positive effect on business development in East Somerville.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Regional Planning** - We commend the City's commitment to regional planning, as East Somerville is largely affected by regional forces, including traffic and the blight at the Boston-cited Sullivan Square, the gateway of our community.

Specifically, we support Goals 7.2 – *Partner with Local and Regional transportation agencies and advocates*, and 7.3 – *Ensure regional, state and federal agency coordination of all ongoing Infrastructure projects*. This type of communication and coordination will be essential in the redevelopment of East Somerville due to its patchwork of ownership surrounding Sullivan Square, the Commuter Rail, and I-93. We would like to see as a result of this communication, a more established and formal mechanism to:

- Pass on information and suggestions for the Sullivan Square area to the many agencies responsible for the area (MBTA, Mass Highway, City of Boston, and the City of Somerville).
  - Improve communication and collaboration regarding *all other* small tracts of land, bridges, underpasses, etc in East Somerville owned by entities other than the City, between those entities themselves, and with the City of Somerville.
- **Reduce Barriers** – We are also very much in support of the reduction of barriers ‘dividing neighborhoods and districts in Somerville,’ as East Somerville is probably the community most affected by these types of barrier –being intersected by the Rt. 28, Washington St. and I-93.

## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

- All 8 goals would move Somerville toward a stronger future.
- We are enthusiastic to see Florence Park in East Somerville as a Tier 1 park for renovation, and would urge that as the potential land-swap involving Harris Park develops, that it too be considered as a Tier 1 park. Access to high-quality open space directly off East Broadway, something that is currently unavailable, would be a huge support to economic development in the area.

- We would also support a move of Foss Park to City ownership – and hope that accompanying this would be a stronger link from the park to East Somerville through further evaluation of the barrier created by the McGrath Highway (as mentioned above).
- We are greatly in support of Strategy 1.3, in *Renovating existing parks and open spaces*, which is to *‘Improve community involvement /outreach in park renovation projects’*. Benchmark 1.3.1 of providing multilingual announcements is a great step toward a more inclusive process. We would also suggest flyer the neighborhood at least once during the planning process for each park.
- The Creation of *Green Performance Standards* (Goal 6) will also be an important part of taking Somerville and its Open Space to the next level.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

- **Public Participation Process** – The City’s current public participation process for the Consolidated Plan (p. 253) is very broad and has been quite successful.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- **Highlighting Somerville’s Unique Assets** – All 4 goals in this area are a huge support to economic development in East Somerville. Our past collaboration with the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission has lead to some of our most successful events and engagement of residents. These 4 goals allow Somerville’s history to be a cornerstone in its economic development. Our only addition to the strategies would be to add an additional bench mark for strategy 5.1 of *Providing Additional Public Information* – to extend that information beyond a web presence to include the creation of historic information kiosks throughout the City.

## EAST SOMERVILLE NRSA

Since many of the points included the East Somerville NRSA are also in the other sections of the consolidated plan, below we only address those that have not yet been commented on above.

- **Goal 2 – Increase Economic Opportunities for East Somerville Residents and Businesses**
  - **Storefront Improvement Program** (Strategy 2.4) – ESMS is enthusiastic to see that a goal of 1-2 storefront improvement *per year* has been established for the next five years. This is especially the case since only 2 properties in East Somerville (both of which had wonderful results) have been completed in recent years. We see strategically chosen storefront improvements, which have the potential to influence other property owners, as essential in turning the economic tides in the area. We look forward to partnering with the City to encourage businesses to apply for the program and we hope to see the application process further simplified to allow businesses greater access to this opportunity.

- **Support Businesses** – (Strategy 2.5) The small business/microenterprise loan program is hugely innovative and we are glad to see it in place. (Strategy 2.6) We are also very excited to see a continued commitment to educating current business owners through workshops and training that allow them to grow.
- **Goal 4 – Increasing the Attractiveness of East Somerville –**
  - **Broadway Streetscape** (Strategy 4.1) – The strict timeline that the City has created for the Broadway Streetscape Process is important in the effort to maintain momentum on the revitalization of Broadway, and therefore very appreciated. We look forward to working with the City to maintain that schedule.
  - **Adopt-a-Spot** (Strategy 4.2) – This is a great way to harness public private partnership to improve East Somerville.
  - **Rezoning Package** (Strategy 4.3) - ESMS is very supportive of re-evaluating the zoning of East Broadway. As East Broadway, from the McGrath Highway to Sullivan Square, is only partially zoned as a Central Business District, this will continue to affect and limit the revitalization of the commercial district until rezoned.
  - **Assembly Square Gateway Improvements** (Strategy 4.4) – We greatly support creating as much connectivity between these two parts of East Somerville as possible. We hope that these improvements will include changes at Lombardi Way and Kensington Avenue and will explore the possibility of murals (please see picture appendix).
- **Goal 5 – Improve Access to and from East Somerville without impairing quality of life for residents**
  - **Develop an improved concept for the McGrath O’Brian Highway** (Strategy 5.3) As the McGrath O’Brian Highway is one of East Somerville’s most limiting barriers, continuing to make a large number of Somerville residents feel separated from East Somerville, we support the development of a Concept Plan. As part of this plan, we hope the Broadway and McGrath Highway intersection will be re-evaluated to look at how pedestrian activity can be supported.
  - **Improve Connectivity Across Interstate 93** (Strategy 5.4) - We also look forward to receiving more information on the I-93 connector, and would encourage the continued evaluation of pedestrian and bicycle access to East Somerville from Assembly Square (at both the McGrath Highway and Lombardi Way) so as to prevent any additional barriers, both physical and mental, between East Somerville and the re-developed Assembly Square.
- **Goal 6 – Improve status of historic areas**
  - **Increase Awareness of Historically Significant Properties** – (See comments above).

Thank you for considering our input in this process.

Sincerely,

Carrie W. Dancy  
Executive Director, East Somerville Main Streets

## Appendix – Murals

Re: Goal 4.4 – Clean up and Landscape Gateways to Assembly Square



Figure 1  
Concrete Underpass Murals  
Seattle, Washington, International District

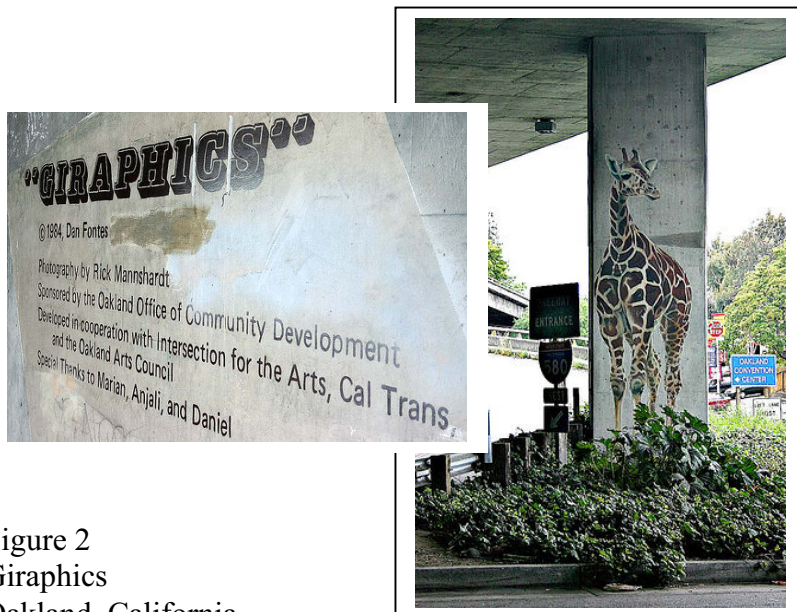


Figure 2  
Giraphics  
Oakland, California



SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY CORPORATION

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Somerville, MA 02143  
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February 4, 2008

Mayor Joseph Curtatone  
Monica Lamboy, Director  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
City of Somerville  
93 Highland Ave.  
Somerville, MA 02143

RE: Draft HUD 5-Year Consolidated Plan

Attn: Brianna O'Brien

Dear Mayor Curtatone and Director Lamboy:

I am writing to submit comments on the draft HUD 5-Year Consolidated Plan for the years 2008-2013. Overall the Consolidated Plan draft is a very impressive document that reflects a tremendous amount of work carried out by the OSPCD staff. I attended two of the public hearings – one in October and one in January – so I got to hear first hand the reports from OSPCD staff about what the Department and the City have done, and some of the plans going forward for the next 5 years. While I am sure that some details will need to be adjusted in the 5-year Plan document – no document of this size and scope gets completed without a few errors – I am equally sure that many of us working in Somerville nonprofit organizations will utilize the Consolidated Plan document both to support our efforts in the community, as well as in our efforts to advocate programs, policies and funding with the City.

SCC is most closely involved in affordable housing development, policy and funding issues, among all those addressed in the Consolidated Plan document, so the remainder of my comments will be mostly in that area. There is a tremendous amount of detail in the housing section of the Consolidated Plan that I would urge all of us to utilize in our collective efforts to make housing affordable across all income sectors of the Somerville community. Phil Ercolini and Dana LeWinter have done a terrific job assembling this information. And when you wade your way through all the information, it paints a picture of a Somerville that still struggles mightily to control the excesses of a real estate market that has driven the cost of both renting and buying homes in Somerville to be out of reach for an increasing portion of our population. In order to combat the problems that result from an overheated market, the Plan identifies a number of solid and viable strategies, for some of which SCC participates as an active partner. Among the considerations I would urge are:

1. While the Consolidated Plan correctly identifies the reduction in funds on both the federal and state levels for programs that will assist us in creating and/or preserving

affordable housing, we simply cannot leave it at that and say that we're doing everything we can. SCC works hard and would join in efforts with the City to urge the federal and state governments to increase their commitments to affordable housing. But we also must look hard at ways we can generate more funds locally to meet our affordable housing needs. We offer to join you in those efforts.

2. Increase the Inclusionary Housing requirement in areas newly zoned for dense development, such as Union Square, from the current 12.5% to 15%. The City should also consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to require 15% affordable housing in new development citywide. Most state programs, such as Chapter 40B and the new 40R program intended to promote transit oriented development require a minimum of 20-25% affordability.
3. Many of us acknowledge that the current Inclusionary Housing ordinance will result in small – one bedroom or studio – units if that's what developers are building in their market rate units. The loss of family-sized units of 2-4 bedrooms is a growing problem that must be addressed. While I don't have a specific solution to propose, I urge the City to work with SCC, the Affordable Housing Organizing Committee, and other advocates, to identify and create solutions that will result in the creation and preservation of more family-sized units.
4. Seek restrictions on rents for as long a period as possible on rental units whose owners are assisted through the City's Home Repair program. While I know well the difficulties in implementing and enforcing such deed restrictions, Somerville's continued need for affordable rental housing warrants gaining the maximum commitments from property owners in exchange for the assistance they get from the City.

A couple of additional comments:

There is a tremendous amount of excitement and energy generated around the planning processes for the MBTA Green Line extension into and through Somerville, and we share in that excitement. However, some of us, including the City, have also begun to be very concerned with the impact the Green Line extension will have on the affordability of our housing stock, and other economic equity concerns, along the new transit corridor. Some recent work that Reconnecting America, an organization that is nationally known for its research and policy work on transit-oriented development, is doing for SCC and for the City, points out that the economic impacts on land use and real estate costs extend in a half-mile radius out from each rapid transit station. For Somerville that means that a large portion of the City will see new pressures on its real estate resulting from the 5-6 new Green Line stations located in Somerville. For those of us who have lived in Somerville for decades, we witnessed first-hand the dramatic transformation in West Somerville that resulted in part from the Red Line extension that opened in the 1980s.

From the perspective of affordability, we must begin now to anticipate the impact of the Green Line on our housing stock. Just last week, SCC participated with the City of Somerville in a funding proposal the City submitted to the MacArthur Foundation in Chicago that would assist us in implementing a strategy to preserve up to 150 units of rental housing as affordable in the next 10 years. We're proud to be part of that attempt to bring some new resources into Somerville to help all of us work to ensure that the low income and working class folks who live



here today will be able to afford to reap the benefits of new development such as the Green Line extension.

While we may or may not receive the award from the MacArthur Foundation, the point is that we must continue to develop new and innovative ways to generate the funds necessary to meet the challenges of providing the necessary array of housing options that is affordable to the Somerville population. And we must do this anticipating that the real estate market, influenced by our new transit development, is almost certain to be pushing in a steadily more expensive direction. While I appreciate that Somerville faces many financial challenges as a City, I would argue that our quest to provide the level of housing affordability that we all want means that we must also seek funding and policy measures that we can implement ourselves as a City and as a community.

I appreciate the opportunity to have my comments added with others to the City's 5-Year Plan document. As CEO of a nonprofit organization that sees our own 5-year strategic plan as a working, breathing document – one that should not be seen as set in stone, but a plan that we actively work to implement – I view the current 5-Year Plan document as a welcome tool that sets out benchmarks and plans for the City and its many partners to follow over the next 5 years. The challenge for all of us will be to utilize the document, work hard to implement its plans, adjust it when new information tells us that's what is most appropriate to do, and then measure our progress accordingly. Whether we agree with all pieces of the Plan or not, the document provides all of us with strong ground for moving forward to meet our challenges in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Danny LeBlanc  
Chief Executive Officer

## Mark Friedman

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**To:** Katie Brillantes  
**Subject:** RE: Comments on Consolidated Plan

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**From:** Stephen Mackey [<mailto:smackey@somervillechamber.org>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 04, 2008 2:31 PM  
**To:** Monica Lamboy  
**Subject:** RE: Comments on Consolidated Plan

Hi Monica,

It's a good document.

In the economic development section, we would emphasize...

1. Somerville is the most densely populated city in New England yet has one of the smallest urban commercial tax bases.
2. The imbalance of the most urban population and lean urban economy means Somerville has the leanest municipal budget.
3. To sustain cornerstones of the urban quality of life - public works, public safety, and public ed - commercial development is key.
4. Urban transit can enable this fiscal change particularly in Assembly Square, InnerBelt/Brickbottom and Union Square.
5. Thus, urban planning will be oriented with a new goal of fiscal sustainability for the city's quality of life.

Monica Lamboy, Director  
Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development  
City Hall 93 Highland Avenue Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Ms. Lamboy,

Attached please find my comments. I have attempted to organize my remarks so that they follow the order of the Plan. Given the overlapping nature of topics covered by the various sections of the Plan, it is inevitable that comments about one section were relevant to another section. In the interest of brevity, I tried to make reference to such comments, rather than repeating them.

My comments include a mix of suggestions for additional strategies, statements of concern about proposed strategies/goals, and efforts to call attention to what appear to be technical mistakes or mis-statements.

I appreciate the huge amount of work that went into this document, and the amount of careful planning and thought that has gone in to the development of this plan, and hope that my focus on perceived "rough points", rather than on all the many positive elements of the plan will not be taken as reflecting a generally negative tone.

As I mentioned briefly in a prior email to Ms. Lamboy, I believe that the historical context in which the Plan is presented is helpful, and I believe that the strategies and goals outlined in the Plan are, for the most part, right on target.

I would be pleased to participate in further discussions about any of my comments, and look forward to being a resource to the City in the ongoing efforts to make it an even better place to live and work.

Fred Berman 25 Cherry Street Somerville, MA 02144  
[fredlori@rcn.com](mailto:fredlori@rcn.com)  
H: 617-776-0503 C: 617-501-1404

## Somerville Consolidated Plan: Comments on Housing Section

- (1) **Recommendations for helping existing owners and new buyers of small multi-family buildings** (Somerville's primary stock) **preserve existing affordable rental units**, and **convert higher-rent units to affordable housing**:
- (a) The **Housing Rehabilitation program** is an important tool for preserving rental housing stock and ensuring the availability and affordability of units for low income renters. Given that there is a waiting list of interested landlords, and given the urgent need to protect the affordability of rental housing, particularly in Union Square and along the proposed Green Line corridor, and given the cost effectiveness of securing rental housing affordability through an investment in rehabilitation (vs. new construction), **I would highly recommend program expansion** through targeted use of government and Affordable Housing Trust Fund monies. Specifically
- **I would target this program almost exclusively to protecting the affordability of rental housing**, given the range of other options available to homeowners needing to make repairs. **Note:** It is not clear whether 40% of the units assisted by the Housing Rehabilitation program have been rental units, or whether the 40% number refers to the percentage of ownership and rental units with residual affordability constraints.<sup>1</sup>
  - **I would explore strategies for leveraging substantially longer term affordability commitments with respect to the rehabilitated rental units**, in exchange for the rehab financing, and possibly in exchange for freezing the property taxes on the rental units (entailing a small loss of future revenue to the City). According to section 6.2 on Fair Housing (p. 47), the forgivable loans are awarded in exchange for a five-year commitment to renting to

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<sup>1</sup> Section 3.2 on Additional Affordable Units (p. 30) states that "361 units [have been] assisted under the City's Homeowner Rehab Loan program." The first sentence of Section 3.4 on Homeowner Rehabilitation Units (p. 30) states that "... Somerville has about 140 rental units subject to short-term affordability restrictions under its homeowner rehabilitation loan program." A sentence in the second paragraph of that section states that "Every participating property [in the housing rehabilitation program] has an affordability period during which the low and moderate income owners agree to maintain the property as their primary residence and rental property owners agree to a rental restriction during which HOME rents and/or Fair Market Rents (FMR) are not exceeded." In the strategies section on page 61, paragraph 1.3 on **Housing Rehabilitation Program** indicates that "OSPCD is currently monitoring 140 ownership units that have received assistance." In paragraph 3.1 on **Housing Rehabilitation Program for Rental Units**, the number of rental units currently under affordability constraints is not given

Section 8 subsidy-holders. Because the Section 8 rent is largely determined by market rates, the landlord isn't making much of a financial sacrifice in exchange for the forgivable loan, so extending the duration of the affordability commitment will not be onerous. The larger the loan, and the longer its payback period, and the greater the amount forgiven, the longer the commitment to affordable rents.

- **I would take whatever steps are possible to maximize the chances that these units go to Somerville households.** I would develop a plan whereby the rehabbed units are "advertised" via the network of Somerville-based non-profit providers and faith- and community-based organizations and the Somerville Housing Authority. In addition to increasing the likelihood that the units go to Somerville households, this approach to marketing would save owners the cost of purchasing more conventional advertisements for tenants.
- **I would broaden the base of potential tenants by including low income Somerville households that don't have Section 8 subsidies,** but that (a) have other viable subsidies (e.g., MRVP), or (b) are at the top of the Somerville Housing Authority waiting list, and can cover the full rent until they receive a subsidy.

- (b) I would explore **modification of the Down Payment / Closing Cost Assistance program** beyond the current limits on buyer income and property cost, so that the program can assist buyers and existing owners of multi-family properties (particularly owners burdened with mortgages that place them at risk of foreclosure) who are willing to **guarantee the long-term affordability of the rental units in those properties,** in exchange for such assistance.

In the case of buyers/owners who themselves are over-income for program assistance and/or owner-occupied units whose cost exceeds program limits (based on an assessment of the pro-rated value of the unit which is/will be owner-occupied), the program funds would be strictly targeted to ensuring the affordability of the rental units. I would explore further modification of the program to **allow funding assistance to be amortized,** in much the same way that a rental subsidy represents amortized assistance to the owner who must pay his/her mortgage.

- **Scenario 1:** Assist the owner of a multi-unit building who is at risk of foreclosure by **restructuring the mortgage, and by sharing in monthly payments under the restructured mortgage.** The amount of assistance should be pro-rated by the number of rental units and by the minimum period of time over which the owner commits to making the units affordable (via a deed restriction). Freeze the property tax on the affordable units for as long as the commitment to affordability lasts. With each payment of the restructured mortgage, the non-profit agency administering the City program would gradually gain equity in the property. Once the minimum number of years for sustaining affordability had elapsed, the property owner could restructure the mortgage and buy out the non-profit partner (and dissolve the deed restriction). At any point, the owner could sell his/her share to the non-profit, or the owner and non-profit could agree to put the property on the market for sale to a third party (in conjunction with dissolving the deed restriction), splitting the proceeds of the sale based on percent of equity held. (The proceeds of the sale would then be used to underwrite another such investment in preserving the affordability of rental housing.) In the absence of such a sale, the deed restriction would continue to apply for as long as the non-profit retains a share of ownership. For example:

| Total value of rental unit | property tax on rental unit | Interest Rate | Term of Mortgage (years) | financed portion, assuming 10% down-payment | Monthly mortgage plus amortized property tax without subsidy | up-front subsidy | financed portion, assuming 10% downpayment and subsidy | monthly mortgage plus amortized property tax with subsidy | Monthly subsidy to achieve comparable reduction in mortgage payment | 30-year cost of monthly subsidy (constant dollars, assuming 2.5% annual inflation) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---|--|------------------|--|---|---|--|
| \$250,000                  | \$2,737.50                  | 5.5%          | 30                       | \$225,000                                   | \$1,505  | \$50,000         | \$175,000  | \$1,221   | \$284   | \$102,240<br>(72,538)  |
| \$250,000                  | \$2,737.50                  | 5.5%          | 30                       | \$225,000                                   | \$1,505  | \$90,000         | \$135,000  | \$994   | \$511   | \$181,800<br>(\$128,985)   |

- **Scenario 2:** Assist the owner of a property no longer under mortgage, by **purchasing a deed restriction protecting the affordability of the rental units in the property in exchange for a freeze on property taxes on those units and a small monthly reverse mortgage payment** which allows the non-profit administering the program to gradually acquire equity in the property. For eligible elderly owners, the reverse mortgage payment could be structured to allow the non-profit to acquire equity in the owner's unit, as well as the rental units; however, unlike traditional (i.e., commercial) reverse mortgage agreements which sometimes come to term before the owner is ready to move out, the reverse mortgage arrangements proposed as part of this initiative would include an assurance that the owner could remain in their unit for as long as they want, even past the point that the non-profit acquires full equity.

Optionally, the non-profit could accelerate acquisition of equity in exchange for paying a disproportionate share of the cost of maintaining the property, or performing or arranging for performance of property maintenance (thereby protecting both the value of the property and the ability of the elderly owner to remain in the property).

The advantages of this approach to preserving housing, which partners the City and its non-profit agent with private homeowners are:

- Partnering with private owners is cheaper than outright acquisition
- Makes property ownership by private residents more affordable (and so allows well-intentioned, but less wealthy households to become owner occupant/landlords)
- As compared with non-profit ownership of property, retains a "feel" of community control, protecting affordable units from the "taint" of program housing and facilitating a de-concentration of affordable housing, which, in turn, advances Somerville's stated goal (p. 36) of de-concentrating poverty.

**Given the need for additional resources to finance this kind of strategy, I would explore partnership with the City's Retirement System and with local union and college pension and trust funds.** Such partners could capitalize a Fund, the interest from which would be used to generate the monthly subsidies. Because the principal would never be eroded, and because of the increasing value of the equity in the properties acquired, this would be a no-risk proposition for the investors. In the above example, a \$2 million endowment generating \$150,000/year (based on 7.5% interest) would allow long-term protection of approximately 25 units with an average monthly subsidy rate of \$500. Buying 25 units would have been far more expensive.

## **(2) Recommendations for Increasing the Development of New Affordable Housing for Families:**

The Consolidated Plan promises the development of hundreds of affordable inclusionary units in Assembly Square and Union Square. In fact, those units are likely to be only moderately affordable condominiums for individuals and childless couples, and, perhaps a handful of small families. In the meantime, there is **an increasing shortage of affordable units for families** which has already resulted in a net shrinkage in the number and size of family households. (The Consolidated Plan narrative seems to treat this shifting demographic as an "independent variable" in the equation, rather than ascribing the loss of families -- which has necessitated the closure of three schools -- to changes in the housing market.<sup>2</sup> I believe that **it is important for the Consolidated Plan to affirm and enhance the City's role in reversing the net loss of families and children by emphasizing development and protection of affordable family housing.**)

In addition to the aforementioned efforts to protect existing rental housing, I would therefore pursue two strategies:

- (a) **Emphasize office development over housing development in Mixed Use projects... and use the increased linkage payments to help protect the affordability of existing rental housing:** The Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance is not an effective tool for producing rental housing. According to Table 26 on page 32, only 15% (11 of 71) of the 71 inclusionary units produced since 1997 have provided rental housing. Only three of the 61 units produced in the past five years have provided rental housing. Instead of promoting new housing development in areas like Boynton Yards, Union Square, Assembly Square, and Inner Belt, the City should use zoning and other tools to encourage higher concentrations of office development, and use the increased linkage funds generated from that commercial development to support the protection of affordable rental housing, particularly in at-risk zones, like Union Square and the proposed Green Line corridor. As the densest cities in the Commonwealth, and with its excessive dependence on its residential tax base and on Chapter 70 Local Aid, Somerville doesn't need lots of new condominiums, even if 1/7 or 1/8 of those units will be (relatively) affordable. We should be seeking to maximize our commercial tax base. (Although condominiums may have high property values, they are taxed at a lower rate

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the comment on page 13 in section 1.4: "It is important to have a housing stock that can adjust to population change, because the average household size in Somerville is currently decreasing. A variety of housing units offering a range of bedroom numbers will provide the most ideal situation for Somerville's changing population." While it is true that family size has shrunk over the decades, the dramatic change in the size of Somerville households is not just a product of national demographic trends, but is largely driven by the unaffordability of family rental and ownership housing. There are a few and smaller families in Somerville, because more of the housing being built is for small households, and the larger units are increasingly unaffordable.

than commercial property, and are subject to an owner occupant exemption, and their residents put higher pressure on the transportation and parking infrastructure than commercial properties, especially office properties.)

(b) **Amend the Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) Ordinance to better address Somerville's need for affordable home ownership family housing.** To the extent that new housing is developed, the IZ Ordinance should incentivize the creation of inclusionary units that fill the most critical gap among Somerville's housing needs, namely affordable family-size units. Towards that end, I suggest three changes:

- i. **Lower the threshold** at which the Inclusionary Zoning requirement is triggered, from the current 8 units to 6 units, and **increase the inclusionary requirement** (from 12.5% to 15%)
- ii. **Base the inclusionary requirement on all of a developer's below-threshold projects that were permitted within the prior 24 months.** Although individual development projects might be too small to trigger the inclusionary requirement, the total number of units built by a particular developer over a two year period might very well exceed the threshold. The IZ Ordinance should be amended to ensure that the inclusionary requirement is triggered by the total number of units constructed by a particular developer (and his/her financial subsidiaries and affiliates), and not only based on the size of a particular construction project.

*Thus, for example, if within a two year period, a developer were to build two four-unit (below threshold) buildings, the second building would trigger the inclusionary requirement because the total of 8 units would exceed the 6-unit threshold. If within the two year period, the developer were to build a third 4-unit building, that building would not trigger a new inclusionary requirement, because the previous 8 units had been fully accounted for by the inclusionary requirement triggered with the construction of the second building. That is, units contributing to an inclusionary zoning requirement would not be subject to "double-jeopardy."*

- iii. In the interest of creating units that address the need for housing that is affordable to lower income families, explore strategies for leveraging a **smaller number of larger units** (i.e., more bedrooms) and/or **more deeply subsidized units** vs. the usual number of smaller units, **while holding constant the total value of the developer's contribution.** That is, hold constant the cumulative value of the subsidies engendered by the inclusionary requirement, but apply those subsidies to a smaller number of larger, more affordable units, instead of spreading them over a larger number of smaller, less affordable units.

*For example, a developer creating 20 one and two bedroom condominiums, each of which is worth, on average, \$300,000, might, under strict application of the 1:7 formula, construct three affordable one or two-bedroom units, selling for, perhaps, \$180,000, that is, at an average subsidy of \$120,000 and a total subsidy across the three units of \$360,000. With more flexibility in the IZ ordinance, the Affordable Housing Trust might prioritize construction of two deeply subsidized 3-BR units. If, say, each of two 3-BR units were worth \$350,000, and we allowed the required subsidy of \$360,000 to be applied to those two units, we would be able to make those subsidized units available at \$170,000. ( $\$350,000 \times 2 = \$700,000$  Subtracting the value of the usual subsidy  $\$700,000 - \$360,000 = \$340,000$ . Divide by 2 to derive the cost of each 3-BR unit = \$170,000.)*

### (3) **Recommendations for better meeting the needs of residents with disabilities**

Section 4.3 on **Housing Needs of People with Disabilities** states that "many people with disability status are fully functioning and are not impaired by their disability in any way...." A more accurate reflection on the Census report that 19.4% of the Somerville population (14,317 of 73,746 people) have disabilities is that an unknown percentage of these persons, but probably not a majority, need accommodations under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) in order to access housing.

The count of disabled residents undoubtedly includes Somerville homeowners who are facing the need to relocate to smaller, single-floor units, due to age- or disability-related mobility or sensory impairments, possibly in combination with income limitations, that constrain their ability to maintain their current home.

With respect to the Housing Rehabilitation program, in addition to prioritizing rental units in the proposed corridor of the Green Line Extension (which are at risk of loss to speculation, as described elsewhere in these comments), **I would recommend that OSPCD develop rules for prioritizing home ownership and rental properties in need of architectural modifications to permit homeowners and/or existing tenants with disabilities to remain in their units.** (I am not prepared to make recommendations as to whether the same rules limiting access to rehabbed rental apartments to only persons holding housing subsidies -- or at the top of the waiting list for housing subsidies -- should

also apply to units rehabbed to promote disability access. I am also not sure whether/how to ensure that such units will be reserved for persons with disabilities after the existing tenant moves out.)

With respect to home ownership properties where architectural modifications are needed to allow an owner with disabilities to remain, **I would further recommend that OSPCD investigate implementation of a reverse mortgage program**, whereby the City, through partnership with one or more non-profits, could help pay the cost of more expensive accessibility adaptations or other home maintenance that might help a senior or person with disabilities remain in their home, in exchange for gradual transfer of the owner's equity to the non-profit, and in conjunction with a deed restriction obligating future use of the property as affordable housing. (As noted elsewhere, this model will only be of interest to persons not hoping to transfer their property to inheritors.)

To the extent needed, such a program could also serve the "traditional role" of a reverse mortgage program, assisting low income owners by supplementing their income with monthly payments funded by a transfer of home equity from the owner to the non-profit. The difference between the proposed program and the "usual" program, wherein a bank gradually takes possession of the property, would be: (i) the non-profit's assurance of the owner's right to remain in the property, even at the expiration of the equity transfer, (ii) the commitment to deed restricting the property to ensure its long-term affordability, and (iii) the flexibility to draw down equity to fund home maintenance and modifications to permit the owner to remain in their home despite mobility impairments.

**To ensure the inclusion of accessible units among newly created inclusionary units**, I would recommend that the City build flexibility into the inclusionary formula to factor in the additional cost of accessibility modifications, such that fewer inclusionary units might be required if one or more of the units was accessible, and was listed in the Commonwealth's registry of accessible housing, and reserved for buyers with disabilities who require accessible units.

#### (4) **Miscellaneous Comments**

- (a) **Questionable Conclusion About Housing Cost Trends**: At the beginning of Section 2.1 (p.18) on Somerville's rental market, a statement describing the lack of data about Somerville rents is followed by a comparison of a 2003 survey by the Somerville Housing Authority (SHA) to a 2005 survey of Boston.com rentals. While the SHA's rent levels include utilities, the Boston.com data may or may not. Unless the authors are comparing apples to apples, there is **no basis for concluding that "rents may have actually fallen since 2003."** With the dramatic increase in heating and utility costs, there is certainly no basis for concluding that **"housing costs"** have fallen since 2003.
- (b) **Understatement of the Rent Burden**: Later on in that section, tables 11 and 12 (p. 19) examine the relationship between median income and median rent. What that comparison unfortunately hides is the fact that **rents vary much less than incomes**. While below-median incomes may range from \$7,000 (two-person household receiving TAFDC) to \$46,315 (the median income), the variation in below-median rents is much smaller -- that is, most below-median rents will be pretty close to the median.

While people earning the median income may be paying 35% of their income for a median-level rent, **people earning 30-50% of the median income experience a much more substantial rent burden -- or are excluded entirely from the Somerville market if they lack subsidies -- because there are no apartments charging only 30-50% of the median rent, and, in fact, very few apartments charging rents that are lower than 85-90% of the median rent**. For example, a family earning 50% of the median income (\$23,158) and lucky enough to find a cheap 2BR apartment costing \$1,000/month, including utilities, (about 84% of the 2005 median rent) would have a rent burden of 52%. If utilities were not included in the rent, the household's "rent burden" (more accurately "housing burden") could easily rise to 70% or higher, given the high cost of heat.

**Additional Note**: As per the comments in (4)(a) above, any discussion of rent burden and median rents vs. median income should clarify whether utility costs are included in the calculation.

- (c) Discussions in section 1.4 (p.25) about changing incomes among Somerville residents **ignores the influence of changes in the housing stock on the incomes of residents**. As housing costs increase, households with lower incomes are displaced; an escalation of rents and purchase prices leaves the city affordable to fewer and fewer low and moderate income persons, and as low and moderate income persons leave the city, median income increases. As these shifts happen, low income persons increasingly concentrate in public and Section 8 housing. Hopefully, efforts to geographically distribute new inclusionary units and new affordable housing, and a successful campaign



to protect existing units of affordable housing will reinforce Somerville's goal of de-concentrating poverty (p.36), and will offset market-driven trends that increasingly narrow the housing options of low income households.

- (d) Section 3.3 on **Expiring Use Properties** contains an unfortunate statement to the effect that "no net affordability was lost" when the owners of an expiring use property offered tenants mobile Section 8 vouchers. While those specific tenants were assured of affordable housing (although not necessarily in Somerville, if they couldn't find affordable units here), the City lost a portion of its affordable housing stock. Given the City's proven commitment to protecting the expiring use housing stock, I'm sure that OSPCD can find a better way to describe the outcome.
- (e) **The Somerville Housing Authority waiting lists for public and Section 8 housing do not identify Somerville households and the numbers cited appear to be inconsistent.** The statistics in Tables 27 and 28 (pages 36-37) appear to count all households on the Somerville Housing Authority's waiting list, and not just Somerville residents. It is not clear how the numbers in Table 27 (25,140 families with children on the Section 8 wait list) and Table 28 (4,221 families on the public housing wait list) relate to the numbers on page 55 in the discussion of homelessness prevention (3,540 families on the public housing and Section 8 wait lists, with a 2,398 household overlap)
- (f) **The numbers in Table 31 on Somerville Households with Housing Problems don't appear to add up.** In several rows, the number of persons with "housing problems" paying 30-49% of their income towards housing plus the number of persons with "housing problems" paying over 50% of their income towards housing exceeds the total number with "housing problems." I didn't check whether there is any spillover of this problem into Tables 32-37.

**The numbers in Tables 31 and 38 appear to be inconsistent.** According to Table 31, there are 10,570 renting households with income under 80% AMI, of whom 7,084 have housing problems, and 3,338 home-owning households with income under 80% AMI, of whom 2,070 have housing problems. In Table 38 on Housing Problems By Race and Ethnicity, however, there are only 13,033 households (instead of 13,908) with income under 80% of AMI, of whom 8,598 (instead of 9,154) have housing problems..

- (g) **The City should explore strategies that reduce the amount of on-site parking spaces that must be included as part of new housing development, while at the same time making sure that abutters are not subject to heightened competition for on-street parking.** Current parking requirements drive up the cost of housing and limit the amount of square footage that can be allocated to open space in any development parcel. Generous on-site parking, which encourages (multiple) car ownership, runs counter to the spirit of transit-oriented development (which should attract households with fewer cars and greater willingness to travel by alternate means). Reducing parking requirements will, by itself, not reduce the number of cars owned by the occupants of new transit-oriented housing projects, and could simply result in heightened competition with existing neighborhood residents for the finite number of on-street parking spaces. Therefore,
- To reduce dependence on cars, City zoning and development policies should promote options like Zipcar, shared parking, development of attractive transit waiting areas, discounted transit access, convenient bicycle parking, and safe travel and convenient access to transit and common destinations via the Community Path; and enforcement and Public Works operations should ensure that sidewalks and the Community Path are well maintained and accessible to persons with disabilities on a year-'round basis.
  - In conjunction with tighter constraints on on-site parking, the City should explore strategies for ensuring that residents of transit-oriented housing developments don't end up fighting long-time neighborhood residents for on-street parking. For example, the City might implement a version of permit parking such that residents of buildings which were granted variances on parking ratios (limiting on-site parking to one space for each 2BR unit and two cars for each 3BR unit, plus a few extra spaces for guests and persons with disabilities) would not be authorized to park their cars in un-metered spaces within, say, a half-mile radius of their home. [The distance should be set so as to act as a disincentive to second car ownership, rather than re-locating the increased competition for on-street parking to an adjoining neighborhood.]
  - To reduce the wasteful practice of regularly shuffling infrequently used cars from one space to another in order to avoid "storage" fines, the City should revise parking policies to re-define "storage" as entailing a longer period, say one week, of non-use. At the same time, in conjunction with the implementation of the kind of variance-related permit parking advocated in the second bullet, City policy should ensure that long-term on-street parking is inconvenient enough to so that occupants of a building constructed with more limited on-site parking can't easily store their cars in the spaces that residents of abutting neighborhoods need.

## **Somerville Consolidated Plan: Comments on Economic Development Section**

### **(1) Recommendations for boosting property tax income:**

Text on page 89 summarizes one of the most significant challenges of the City: "Somerville is under great pressure to expand its commercial tax base in order to relieve its citizens of the burden of funding basic city services with residential property taxes. Somerville's commercial tax base remains very small in comparison to Boston and Cambridge that derive 66% and 60%, respectively, of their property tax revenue from businesses. By contrast, Somerville derives only 28% of its property tax revenue from businesses."

The best thing Somerville could do is to implement zoning, land use, and transportation planning policies that strongly encourage the most lucrative kind of commercial development possible, namely development of offices and R&D space. Too often in the past (at Assembly Square and at Boynton Yards to name two examples), the City seems to have prioritized development that could quickly increase the tax base over development that would more substantially increase the tax base. Housing development and retail space development generate much lower net tax revenues per square foot than office and R&D. To achieve higher value development, the City needs to more aggressively plan for that kind of development, needs to ensure that necessary infrastructure, especially transportation, will be available to support such development (rather than allowing other uses to erode capacity), and needs to more effectively market developable parcels to the kinds of developers (and anchor tenants) who have the ability to succeed at such projects.

The negotiated Assembly Square Settlement Agreement is structured to promote development of office and R&D space. Strong municipal support for such development would go a long way toward moving it from intention to reality. In fact, the depressed market for condominiums may create a window of opportunity to convert some of the square footage reserved for residential development into office and R&D development, as allowed in the Settlement

Union Square, Inner Belt, Boynton Yards, and Brickbottom all present opportunities to create the kind of commercial tax base that Somerville needs. At each locale, the City will be tempted to support efforts to develop retail and (if the market ever recovers) residential uses, resulting in a faster increase in the property tax base, but in smaller growth than would be achieved by office and R&D development. With ever-increasing pressures on the municipal budget, the City will be hard-pressed to allow undeveloped and under-developed parcels to remain "fallow" in hopes of higher-end development. However, in the same way that it makes sense to wait for CDs and bonds to mature before cashing them in, it is in the long run better for the City's financial position to hold firm on the kind of development that will be permitted in these parcels, than to forego their potential value in the interest of a quicker infusion of linkage fees and commercial property taxes from lesser development.

### **(2) Recommendations for boosting residents' income:**

#### **(a) Supporting Small Business Development:**

- (i) **Creating a Small Business Ombuds program:** As I campaigned for office this past summer/Fall, I heard concerns about the lack of coordination in the process for getting the permits and approvals that a small business needs to get started. I heard concerns that access to the best advice and assistance depended more on luck and whom you know (or could get to advocate for you), than on the existence of a consistent source of information and guidance. Presumably, all (or most) of the bureaucratic requirements for permitting a new business are related to health, safety, environmental, and/or other requirements that protect the public's wellbeing. A Small Business Ombuds program that could clearly explain the process of complying with those requirements, and that could partner with the various City Departments to streamline the permitting and approval process (without compromising any of the protections of the public good) would enhance the City's ability to attract new businesses and expand/relocate existing operations.
- (ii) **Supporting ADA Compliance:** Text on p.84 essentially describes ADA compliance as a potential obstacle to financial feasibility of economic development projects. This is an unfortunate characterization of what should be understood as a civic and civil rights obligation ... and an economic opportunity. To the extent that businesses are accessible, they allow patronage by elders, persons with disabilities, and parents

pushing strollers who might otherwise feel excluded or prevented from consuming the business' goods or services. Universal access may sometimes end up being prohibitively expensive in old buildings (in which case the cost of accommodation renders it not "reasonable"), but the City's approach to disability access -- in the Consolidated Plan and on-the-ground -- should be "how to achieve" rather than "how to avoid".

- (iii) **Parking:** The City's approach to reducing the parking requirements in conjunction with small business development in Union Square makes sense in conjunction with the planned expansion of the Green Line, and should be replicated in other neighborhoods that are or will be adequately served by public transit. Parking in retail districts should be available and convenient to those who need it, expensive enough to discourage those who can use other modes of transportation, but not so expensive as to discourage shoppers from visiting the district at all. I encourage OSPCD to expand on the suggestion on p.84 to explore shared parking, so that such parking can be shared not only by other merchants, but also by businesses that want to reserve spots for their employees or delivery fleets, and by local residents who may need their cars to commute, but who need a place to park those cars evenings and weekends.

Unfortunately, the most recent Union Square zoning proposal took a schizophrenic approach to parking, on the one hand seeking to reduce parking requirements so as to allow existing businesses to expand, while on the other hand, (\*) allowing the inclusion of public parking spaces to qualify as an "extraordinary public benefit" for the purpose of justifying a project's exemption from the zoning's dimensional requirements [section 16.5.4], and (\*\*) defining parking as an acceptable commercial use of first floor building space [section 16.5.3], notwithstanding the fact that first-floor parking would be the least attractive use (in terms of promoting an active streetscape) and the least valuable use of building space (in terms of property tax revenue generation) in a mixed use development.

The Consolidated Plan offers the City the opportunity to unequivocally affirm its commitment to minimizing and coordinating the allocation of valuable land for parking in districts that are and/or will be adequately served by public transportation.

- (b) **Supporting Residents' Efforts to Gain Better Employment:** From my experience as Director of the Cambridge Employment Program, I saw firsthand the benefit of providing residents with basic help with their job search, including (i) career counseling to help residents identify their best chances for good employment, given their mix of education, skills, experience, and constraints; (ii) help with resume development; (iii) help with interviewing and presentation skills; and (iv) help with finding and responding to job leads. Too many people are unemployed or under-employed because they don't know how to search for a job in today's job market.

**i. Existing Resources**

- **Career Source**, the One-Stop career center in the Alewife Shopping Center, nominally offers that kind of assistance to unemployed and under-employed persons. However, my experience with the Cambridge Employment Program indicated many people who need and could benefit from Career Source's assistance were reluctant or unable to access help there, because of their need for greater "hand-holding" through the job search process, or because they were uncomfortable receiving services in a group setting, or because they had individual issues -- e.g., literacy deficits, learning challenges, communication barriers, issues relating to disability, prior incarceration, etc. -- that necessitated more individualized attention.
- The **Mass. Rehab Commission**, currently based at Assembly Square, offers more individualized assistance than is available from Career Source, and supplements that assistance with access to funds for education or training. However, eligibility for MRC services is limited to persons with documented disabilities, and application and enrollment often entails an extensive waiting period.
- The **Somerville office of the National Student Partnership**, currently co-located with the Family Center in Union Square, offers gap-filling employment assistance services to any Somerville resident, but the ability of staff to help is limited by their own lack of experience: the office is directed by a very competent Americorps participant in her first professional assignment, and is staffed by college student volunteers. While the NSP is one of the best collegiate community service programs that I've ever seen, and while the Somerville director is skilled beyond her years, without professional staffing, the office is

not prepared to fully meet the job-search needs of Somerville residents, many of whose ability to remain in this City will depend on their success in obtaining and holding onto better paying jobs.

## ii. Next Steps

Of course, nothing takes the place of education, training, and experience. However, **I believe that a professionally staffed employment assistance program, complementing and partnering with the aforementioned programs, could enable a substantial number of unemployed and under-employed Somerville residents to improve their earnings and thereby stabilize their housing situation.**

The City and the East Somerville residents and advocates who partnered to advocate for hiring preferences and training support in conjunction with the development of an IKEA store at Assembly Square are to be congratulated for taking an important step. However, many Somerville and East Somerville residents who could potentially benefit from employment at IKEA may not be able to gain such employment, if they are unprepared to successfully apply and compete for jobs. Lacking a resume, lacking the know-how to apply for jobs on-line, and lacking effective interview skills, otherwise appropriate residents may fail to complete applications or may be screened out. Professional assistance (and help learning to use computers to apply on-line -- training which is available at Career Source, but which people may need help in accessing) could make the difference between taking advantage of the hiring preference and missing out.

- For starters, I would explore the potential for creating a **small pilot individualized employment assistance program** with 1-2 staff people who would partner with the Somerville office of the NSP and help link clients with the more extensive resources available through MRC and Career Source (or other career centers, such as Career Link in Woburn, which expressed an interest in partnering in conjunction with the East Somerville Initiative).
- I would also explore **creation of a small temporary jobs program**, to address some of the demands for supplemental labor created by snow and ice management, leaf and yard waste removal, and other seasonal needs. At a recent Board of Alderman meeting at which the City's contract with Russell was renewed for another year, there was serious discussion about bringing trash collection and recycling back under the City's auspices, instead of contracting out. I was reminded of the Cambridge Nine-Week Program that benefits the City (by keeping overtime down) and benefits unemployed City residents (by offering 9-week jobs with the City's Department of Public Works). A comparable short-term employment program in Somerville, in conjunction with support for next-step job search, could help residents overcome deficient work histories or troubled backgrounds, and serve as a spring-board to more mainstream employment.
- In conjunction with future zoning/permitting to support economic development (for example in Inner Belt, Brickbottom, Boynton Yards, Union Square, and to the extent possible, Assembly Square, I would encourage the City to make it a policy to **work in partnership with local non-profits to negotiate so-called Community Benefits Agreements with developers and incoming employers**. Such Agreements could, among other negotiated benefits, afford local residents ongoing priority access to jobs, ensure competitive pay and benefits, support meaningful career ladders, and, wherever possible, provide for employer-funded and/or sponsored training to prepare residents for job entry and/or advancement.
- I would encourage the City to explore opportunities to **broaden access by all community residents to the vocational education programming currently offered only to High School students**. The Voc Ed staff and training facilities constitute an underutilized resource that could help local adults gain or sharpen the skills they need to upgrade their employment. As the business landscape has changed, long-time Somerville residents with out-of-date skills and knowledge have had to transition from more lucrative positions in light industry to positions in retail and service industries which barely pay enough to support a family, and which offer considerably fewer benefits and little or no job security. The same skills and knowledge that can help jumpstart the employment of high school students can -- and should -- be made available to benefit older Somerville residents. Clearly, the most significant obstacle to opening up the Voc Ed program to Somerville adults is the cost; however, growing support for adult education, driven by an expanding body of research documenting the need for upgrading the knowledge and skills of a generation of workers otherwise divorced from the economy, is likely to be followed by at least some new funding for such initiatives. With its exemplary Voc Ed program, Somerville is well-positioned to capitalize on such opportunities when they arise, and, in fact, to serve as a role model for other communities whose low and middle income residents face some of the same challenges.

(3) **Other Miscellaneous Comments:**

- (a) **Table 1: Somerville Business Mix:** The total at the bottom of the column labeled "Percentage of Somerville's Business Mix" should be 100%, even though the businesses counted represent only 44.5% of the businesses in Somerville. There is an implication that other "typical central shopping districts" contain an ideal mix of business types that Somerville's commercial districts should replicate. For example, it is suggested that Somerville's commercial districts have too heavy a concentration of automotive uses, industry and manufacturing uses, and medical/dental uses, and too small a concentration of building materials and hardware uses, gifts/specialty/florist businesses, and entertainment businesses. Before seeking to re-shape Somerville's districts to better match the "typical" American shopping district, we should more carefully evaluate our neighborhoods' strengths and gaps, and make sure that we preserve the positive qualities that make our community distinctive.
- (b) As suggested in the section on **Increasing Daytime Population**, Somerville needs to do more than simply fill a few "gaps" in the mix of retail uses; the City needs to attract some of the office, R&D, and light industrial uses that create the mix of employment that could (i) boost our City's commercial tax base, (ii) boost the daytime population (and thereby increase demand for our retail goods and services, as noted at the top of p. 87), and (iii) create more -- and more convenient -- job opportunities for Somerville residents. These "anchor" businesses will, in turn, spark the development of additional support businesses, including retail business offering the goods and services that workers need.

Attracting such "anchor" businesses/employers will require more effective marketing of Somerville as a business address. Our proximity to Boston and Cambridge, and to three world-class universities (Harvard, MIT, and Tufts), the soon-to-be improved transit access via the Green and Orange Lines, and potential linkages via the Mystic River and, eventually, via the Urban Ring should all enhance our desirability as a business location. Our success in marketing the City will depend upon convincing anchor businesses not only of Somerville's potential, but of the City's commitment to ensuring that future development will be managed to realize that potential and reward their decision to locate here, rather than isolating and trapping them in a location that lacks adequate infrastructure and secondary support.

The settlement between Mystic View Task Force and the developers should be portrayed not just as the long-awaited resolution of a progress-impeding conflict, but as a watershed agreement outlining a partnership and commitment by the developers, key community groups, and City officials to work collaboratively to develop and implement a 'long-term vision' for Assembly Square which will guide incremental development towards attainment of the mutually beneficial land use, transportation, economic, and environmental goals that were established in the Settlement Agreement and memorialized in the zoning and environmental filings, and that can provide the framework for leveraging the kind of significant and distinctive economic development activities that Somerville needs and is increasingly well-positioned to attract."

- (c) Businesses in the **Lower Broadway District** will inevitably be impacted by the large-scale development at Assembly Square -- by altered traffic patterns, by the establishment of higher profile business competitors, by secondary demand for goods and services that cannot be met by Assembly Square businesses, and, in the absence of adequate branding and marketing of the Lower Broadway District, by virtue of being simply overshadowed by the self-promotion and sheer magnitude of the much larger mixed use development. The creation of an East Somerville Main Streets program is an important step in ensuring the survival of the Lower Broadway District. **The City should conduct or leverage an analysis of the economic opportunities and challenges that the District will face as the Assembly Square development takes shape, so as to anticipate and capitalize on the opportunities, and understand and parry the threats to its economic wellbeing.**

## **Somerville Consolidated Plan: Comments on the Transportation and Infrastructure Section**

### **(1) Improving Access to Mass Transit:**

#### **(a) Assembly Square:**

- (i) **A Second Head-House for the Assembly Square Orange Line T Stop:** Maximizing transit use by employees and patrons of the new IKEA is an essential component of the strategy to minimize highway traffic, congestion, and pollution (and to preserve road capacity for next-step office and R&D development). While IKEA can incentivize transit use by employees, it cannot overcome the barriers to use by shoppers engendered by inconvenient access. A second head-house, directly linked to the store by an elevated (and covered?) walkway would be much more conducive to transit use than the single head-house currently envisioned, which is several blocks and a few flights of stairs away from the store entrance. The City should do everything possible to promote this more substantial link with transit.
- (ii) **Access to and from the Assembly Square T Stop and Pedestrian and Bicycle Paths to the River, the Draw 7 Park, and Surrounding Neighborhoods.** Again, convenience is critical. While the developer is committed to building the promised pedestrian links between Assembly Square and surrounding neighborhoods, and while the City and the developer are committed to extending the bike path from the crossing of McGrath Highway to the eastern terminus of the Park, it is not clear whether the connections between the bike path and the T Stop, and between the other pedestrian links and the T Stop, will be direct and convenient. To the extent that they are not, the value of the Assembly Square T stop as an intermodal connection will be compromised. The commitment to facilitate direct and easy access to the T by bicyclists and pedestrians should be memorialized as part of the Comprehensive Plan, and should be reflected in legislation supported by the City transferring land from the DCR to the developer, and in advocacy with the MBTA, the State, and the developers with respect to the design of the Assembly Square station and the siting of its entrances and exits.

#### **(b) Union Square:**

- (i) **Integrating the Union Square Stop Into a Single Line from Lechmere to Medford:** To promote maximum utilization of transit to and from Union Square, access to other points along the Green Line extension should be as direct and easy as possible. To the extent that travel from other points along the extension to Union Square necessitate a transfer, the trip is less likely to be made by T. One possible unifying route which should be considered would travel from Lechmere to Union Square via the Fitchburg Line, and then bend towards Washington St and the Lowell Line heading out towards Tufts and Medford. Travel into Union Square from the Fitchburg Line and out of Union Square under Washington St. would necessitate a cut-and-cover tunnel and/or a shared car/trolley right-of-way. Both options would be vastly more affordable than a bore-tunnel.
- (ii) **Access from the Union Square Station to Destinations in Union Square:** As previously stated, convenience is all-important. To the extent that passengers have to walk three, four, or even five blocks from the Station to their destinations, they are less likely to use the T to access those destinations. A Union Square station along an integrated rail line from Lechmere to Medford could make two stops -- one at the Fitchburg Railway/Prospect St. and one at, for example, the junction of Somerville Av. and Washington St. (or Prospect St.) (Similarly, the Airport shuttle and the Silver Line both make multiple stops at Terminal B, so as to facilitate easy access to/from the various Terminal B carriers.)

**In addition to easy transit access, Union Square should provide convenient bicycle and pedestrian access.** To the extent possible, through traffic should be routed along the edges of the Union Square district, rather than through the heart of the district. Traffic through the district should be slowed by stop lights, stop signs, and crosswalks where pedestrians have the right of way. The number of car lanes should be minimized, so that crossings are manageable even for elderly and disabled pedestrians who move slowly. Where possible, bike lanes should be separated from vehicular lanes to reduce the likelihood of collisions. Bicycle parking should be plentiful and convenient to promote access to transit, as well as local travel. Automobile parking should continue to be limited to short-term use, and concentrations of parking

should, wherever possible, be below-ground, so as to reserve above-ground uses for open space and commercial uses which generate more pedestrian traffic and higher-property values.

As noted elsewhere in these comments, the most recent Union Square zoning proposal took a schizophrenic approach to parking, on the one hand seeking to reduce parking requirements so as to allow existing businesses to expand, while on the other hand, (\*) allowing the inclusion of public parking spaces to qualify as an “extraordinary public benefit” for the purpose of justifying a project's exemption from the zoning's dimensional requirements [section 16.5.4], and (\*\*) defining parking as an acceptable commercial use of first floor building space [section 16.5.3], notwithstanding the fact that first-floor parking would be the least attractive use (in terms of promoting an active streetscape) and the least valuable use of building space (in terms of property tax revenue generation) in a mixed use development. The Consolidated Plan offers the City the opportunity to unequivocally affirm its commitment to minimizing and coordinating the allocation of valuable land for parking in districts that can be adequately served by public transportation.

(c) **Other Green Line Locations:**

- (i) **Convenience to Business Districts:** Station stops should provide convenient access to local business districts. An extra 3-4 block walk is much less of a disincentive to commuters taking the train to and from work than it is to shoppers traveling to a commercial district.
- (ii) **Convenience and Safety of Use:** Station stops should be convenient to bus lines, to the Community Path, and to pedestrians traveling on main streets. Station stops should provide shelter from the weather. Station stops should, wherever possible, incorporate business activity, for example kiosks that are open during the full span of transit operation and whose presence enhances station safety. The easier it is to safely use transit, the more likely people are to do so.

(2) **Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Planning:**

The City, in partnership with Shape Up Somerville, is doing a great job promoting walking and biking. Bicycle and pedestrian master planning is needed to ensure that Somerville's sidewalks and streets are ready to safely accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

As Assembly Square, Union Square, Inner Belt, Boynton Yards, and Brickbottom are (re-)developed, attention must be paid to **ensure that pedestrian and bicycle access is safe and adequate**. The zoning process, with its give and take in negotiating the tradeoffs attendant to granting variances, provides a perfect opportunity for the City to leverage such access. Initial plans for the Ikea store at Assembly Square, for example, provided for extremely inconvenient pedestrian travel between the proposed T stop and the store entrance, which was about as far as possible from the station entrance. Extensive pressure from community advocates helped bring about a proposed compromise, allowing pedestrians to enter the store through the same driveway as cars. Although a second headhouse with a walkway directly to the Ikea roof would have provided safer and more direct passage, the City took no position on the matter.

Concerns about **inadequate attention to pedestrian safety** go far beyond plans for new development. Campaigning for office, I heard numerous complaints about the dangers pedestrians face when they cross Somerville streets. I heard complaints from parents of young children and from residents of elderly housing, from people with and without disabilities, and from people across just about every demographic in just about every part of the City.

- I heard calls for **better enforcement** of speed limits and better enforcement of stop signs and traffic signals at busy intersections and, in particular, in our Squares.
- I heard calls for **reduced speed zones** around elderly housing complexes and where children are likely to play.
- I heard calls for speed bumps, protruding sidewalks (nobody knew to call them bulbouts!) and plantings at the edge of sidewalks that **help pedestrians get a safer head start on crossing the street**, traffic islands, raised pedestrian crossings, and other traffic-calming devices that could make crossing streets a little safer.
- I heard calls for more and better maintained **curb cuts**, and for better maintenance of brick sidewalks that, with the passage of time and the uneven settling of individual bricks, become hazardous to pedestrians
- I heard calls for **better snow and ice removal** on sidewalks fronting public and private buildings, at curb cuts, at bus stops, and along the entire length of street crossings from one curb to the next.



- I heard cynical remarks about how the needs of pedestrians have been studied in the past, particularly in Union and Davis Squares, but that in the end, automobile traffic was treated as a much higher priority than pedestrian traffic.
- And I heard cynical remarks about how parking enforcement was becoming a source of revenue generation, while traffic enforcement, which could make the streets safer for pedestrians, appears to be random and occasional.

If, indeed, Somerville is ready to take the steps to become more transit and pedestrian and bicycle friendly, these concerns will have to be addressed. Different approaches to **traffic calming** engender dramatically different costs, and may offer different degrees of pedestrian protection. A bicycle and pedestrian master plan could incorporate some short-term/temporary, lower cost strategies for addressing some of the worst hazards, and a longer-term plan for implementing more expensive, more aesthetic, permanent solutions.

**Stricter enforcement of traffic laws** could generate the kinds of revenues that may have been generated by rigorous parking enforcement, at a much lower cost in terms of resident resentment.

**It isn't enough to randomly fine property owners who fail to clear their sidewalks of snow and ice.** When owners are negligent, the City has to step in and get the job done. Stiffer fines against negligent property owners would help cover the cost of supervision and stipends for teenagers participating in a winter youth employment program .. and would become a much greater deterrent to such negligence. Such fines could also help fund the supervision and stipends for teenagers to proactively clear sidewalks in front of houses owned by elderly and disabled persons who make prior arrangements for City assistance.

→ **Disability Access:** The ability to get around is fundamental to participation in the community. **The idea that the City will address access barriers at only four locations every year (p.121) is ... unacceptable.** At that rate, Somerville might be an accessible city sometime in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century, maybe. In fact, the cycle of freezing and thawing each winter is probably responsible for the deterioration of accessibility at at least four street corners every year. Addressing four access barriers per year might not even keep up with slippage. **We have to do better.**

### (3) **Improving Access By Seniors and Persons With Disabilities to Transit:**

SCM, a private non-profit organization that is jointly funded by the Cities of Somerville, Cambridge, and Medford, and recently, by special State Legislative appropriation, provides seniors and persons with disabilities with door to door access to health care appointments and, on a weekly basis, to certain shopping destinations.

Seniors I spoke with during the campaign -- in particular, seniors lacking cars or unable to drive -- expressed near universal dissatisfaction with the transportation options available to them, particularly for non-medical destinations. Those who depended upon SCM or The Ride for medical transportation spoke about the extra time that waiting for their van added to the trip. Those who remembered the Senior Shuttle lamented its demise. Those who regularly take buses complained about the routine failure of bus drivers to stop close enough to the curb and to take full advantage of the lift and ramp system with which buses are equipped (and which too frequently seem not to be working). (According to recent news reports, the T is more aggressively monitoring driver practices with respect to pulling close to curbs and using the lift to assist passengers with mobility issues.)

The City, which pays a healthy fee to the MBTA for services, could use its "bully pulpit" to push for more responsible and responsive driver behavior.

The City might also push for route changes to ensure that buses stop right in front of all senior housing developments. (Residents at the Lowell St. VNA, for example, have walk up steep Lowell St. to catch the bus along Highland Av. Instead, the bus could take a quick detour to the Lowell St. entrance.)

And, in the absence of sufficient municipal funding to re-start the Senior Shuttle, the City could work with interested merchants in some of the larger Squares to put together funding to pay for weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly trips to these Squares from the various senior housing developments. To the extent that seniors with otherwise limited access are enabled to shop at these stores, their patronage could help offset the cost to the businesses of their private investment in bridging the transportation gap ... all the while helping to keep the seniors more connected in the community.

## **Somerville Consolidated Plan: Comments on the Parks and Open Space Section**

### **(1) Parks and Open Space Plan**

The City has done a good job renovating community parks and playgrounds. Somerville remains a City with too little open space. As I campaigned across the City, I heard many complaints about the inadequate number and maintenance of fields available to the children and adults that play soccer<sup>3</sup>, about the lack of access to open space for residents with dogs, including off-leash areas, and about the lack of any open space at all in some parts of the city.

A Five Year Parks and Open Space Plan mapping out next-step renovations, acquisitions, and (re-)development plans would be a good next step. Given the level of dissatisfaction with current conditions, I would strongly support efforts to involve the public in the process of prioritizing projects. The proposal on p. 128 to create an Open Space Advisory Committee represents a good start at community inclusion. Such a plan should be accompanied by a 10 Year Capital Improvements Plan which could help integrate and prioritize all of Somerville's outstanding capital projects, including building renovations, open space improvements, accessibility upgrades, road projects, sewer and drainage projects, etc.

### **(2) Foss Park**

There has been considerable talk about transferring Foss Park from State (DCR) to City ownership, so that it can be more reliably maintained. While it is absolutely true that there would be a greater level of accountability if responsibility rested with City Hall, it is also true that the lack of adequate maintenance was a product of insufficient funding, reflecting a Statewide policy of neglect during the spate of Republican administrations. Somerville faces an ongoing shortage of operating funds; there is no reason to believe that revenues will pick up so substantially that we will have the ability to take on maintenance of yet another (large) park, without putting funding to address other critical needs at risk. If Somerville has the good fortune of a revenue surplus, there are any number of program areas -- community-oriented policing, fire protection, youth programming, senior shuttle, extended day programming in the schools, youth employment, adult workforce development to name a few -- that could benefit from the infusion of those funds. Why would we want to wrest responsibility of Foss Park from the State, particularly during an Administration that is committed to reversing the pattern of neglect?

### **(3) Draw 7 Park**

With the execution of the Assembly Square Settlement, Federal Realty, the principal developer of the Assembly Square parcel, made a commitment to partner with the DCR to support upgrades to and better maintenance of Draw 7 Park. Pending home rule legislation endorsed by the City would, apparently, transfer ownership of the land that currently provides the only access to the park from the DCR to the private developer, for future considerations.

Use of the park will depend on the quality of access. Draw 7 park has been underutilized, in no small part, because it is invisible and only marginally accessible to most of the city. The proposed re-development of Assembly Square, including the development of a T stop, the creation of bicycle access, and the development of footpaths from the various neighborhoods surrounding Assembly Square -- all committed to as part of the Settlement -- holds the promise of broadening access to and use of the park. The proposed home rule legislation leaves it entirely up to the developer to ensure the integration of those new foot and bicycle paths with the new T station.

The City needs to take more ownership of the issue, needs to ensure easy and unfettered access to the park via public land. Assurance and protection of such access should be an element of any Parks and Open Space Plan, and the goal should likewise be memorialized in the City's Consolidated Plan.

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<sup>3</sup> I heard, for example, that Somerville has the fewest number of fields per soccer player among all of the towns with youth soccer leagues. I heard that soccer fields are poorly maintained and have rocks and broken glass and holes where kids can sprain their ankles. I heard parents of soccer-playing children complain that millions of dollars was spent on renovating Dilboy Field, but that youth soccer has no access, and that millions of dollars are being poured into Trum Field, where youth soccer will have no access. Whether or not all these complaints are well-founded, there is a perception that soccer is the stepchild of Somerville athletics. That's not the impression that City government wants to leave residents with.

## **Somerville Consolidated Plan: Comments on the Public Services Section**

### **(1) Miscellaneous Comments**

- The totals in Table 3 on people with disability (p.149) are seriously wrong, and are at odds with more accurate totals stated elsewhere in the Consolidated Plan. For starters, it appears that the numbers of people with each of the specified disabilities have been added together, based on the incorrect assumption that there is no overlap. In fact, for example, some of the same people who have a physical disability also have a "go-outside-home" disability and an employment-related disability.
- The history of public services on pages 149-150 tells an apparently happy story of how the City and its non-profit partners have come together to make sure that community needs are addressed. The fact is, there are substantial unmet needs with respect to the physical and mental wellbeing of our youth, as evidenced by continued high levels of substance abuse and stress (see, for example, the Teen Health Survey), ongoing complaints about the lack of youth programming and about the lack of assistance with youth employment, unacceptably low levels of college matriculation, etc. The City continues to lack staffing to provide basic human services for residents facing income and housing challenges, particularly if the residents in need fall outside the categorical eligibility guidelines established by the funders of the various non-profits (e.g. homeless, at immediate risk of homeless, eligible for TAFDC, etc.). The City has only limited ability to provide specialized services for seniors and persons with disabilities beyond limited recreational activities. The City lacks the resources to make serious inroads in addressing the kinds of access barriers identified in the survey described on p. 162. Beyond the excellent work of SCALE, the City has little additional ability to provide the kind of support for workforce development that many residents with stale or outdated skills need in order to strengthen their employability in the context of the current economy... despite the potential benefit to Somerville's unemployed and under-employed adults that the City's Voc Tech program at the High School could provide. For the most part, persons from the various linguistic minority communities have only limited access to City services and programming in their native languages.

While the City may, indeed, have good working relationships with its non-profit partners, and while those non-profits may work wonders with their limited budgets, there are significant gaps in services which remain to be filled.

## **Somerville Consolidated Plan: Comments on the East Somerville NRSA Section**

(see other sections for comments about East Somerville and Assembly Square)

## **Somerville Consolidated Plan: Comments on the Union Square NRSA Section**

### **(1) Union Square Re-Zoning**

- The boundaries of the Union Square study area, **and the boundaries addressed in the re-zoning process** should encompass the full area where development needs to be guided and where impacts need to be mitigated, and should incorporate zones within which different kinds and intensities of development will be encouraged and allowed. The Consolidated Plan describes expansion of the Union Square NRSA along its northeast boundary. The NRSA already extends to Medford Street on the east and to the southern border (with Cambridge). I would encourage the City to integrate that full area, including Boynton Yards and the residential and commercial areas south of Washington St and east of Prospect/Webster, into the re-zoning effort, so as to ensure a more holistic approach. The path of the Green Line and the reconfiguration of traffic patterns will be much more significant determinants of the shape and impacts of development than any pre-existing zoning boundaries, and the zoning discussion should

be integrated with a discussion of how traffic and transit will flow through the area. I was pleased to see that the zoning package will not be re-submitted to the Board of Aldermen for another two years, to allow for greater clarity about the location(s) of the Green Line stop(s).

- Elsewhere in this document, I commented about the treatment of parking by the zoning proposal that was tabled by the Board of Aldermen last Fall. In particular, I stated concerns about (a) treating parking as an "extraordinary benefit" that might qualify a project for waivers from the dimensional requirements imposed by the zoning, and (b) treating parking as an acceptable commercial use of first-floor space. In addition, **I was very disappointed to see that the provision to allow developers to make a payment in lieu of providing public open space was not only retained from the originally proposed zoning, but actually incorporated as a goal (#3.3 on page 246) in the Consolidated Plan!** Union Square has precious little open space, and can ill afford to trade away the possibility of new open space in exchange for cash payments. This goal should be eliminated.

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Attention: HUD Five-Year (2008-2013) ConPlan Comments

February 3, 2008

Dear Director Lamboy,

I would like to thank you and the Staff of OSPCD for the hard work you have put into devising a Five-Year draft Plan for CDBG/Home expenditures for the period April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2013.

These HUD programs should encourage the development of better programs and well coordinated efforts to improve the lives of individuals that share certain social and political consequences of poverty and low income lifestyles. Shared experiences of traditionally marginalized cultures include: being censored, marginalized, undervalued, underrepresented, exploited- and empowered.

In Somerville, groups that continue to share these inequities, difficulties, and potentials include limited English language (LEP) cultures and people with disabilities (PWD) culture.

As an arts therapist, and disAbilities rights specialist, I have worked for three decades to affirm and confirm the rights of people with various chronic and acute conditions to be included and enabled in civic, health-related, education, employment, and social programs.

This past month, I have focused my review of Somerville's Five-Year (2008-2013) ConPlan on how this plan will positively impact the lives of PWD. I have increasing concerns regarding the ongoing executive decisions to deny the obvious social and community impact of obvious access issues. In Somerville, approximately 73%- 86% of PWD live at very-low or low income levels, and are concentrated in the NRSA tracts that this Five-Year ConPlan discusses in detail. Yet their viability as community participants is (literally) challenged at every step.

Every city in America has inherited structural and communications barriers. With forthright collegial dialogue, the solutions can emerge and ongoing committed efforts can ensure that community participants have confidence in local government. However, our local disAbilities advocates, who have the expertise to collaborate and inform a shared vision of equal access, are being aggressively or covertly locked out of dialogues, while a cloud of myths and mismanagement hover around these issues. While architectural barriers may appear to have a structural form, these exclusionary, discriminatory habits cast the longest shadows.

Thanks to the staff members of OSPCD who printed the Plan out for me in Large Print format. This took time and attention to format, and the staff then kindly brought this 800-paged document in a carton right to my doorstep so that I could have the opportunity to review this Plan in portable form. I am very grateful for this effort.

## COMMENTS SUMMARY:

### **I. HOUSING CONCERNS**

#### **A. Fair Housing Needs of People with disAbilities (PWD) Not Yet Adequately Assessed**

1. Areas of Poverty plus DisAbilities Concentration Not Included in AI.
2. Fair Housing discrimination issues of PWD in Somerville are not acknowledged; Fair Housing Affirmative outreach programs to give PWD information and guidance about Fair Housing rights Requested. RECOMMENDATIONS (AFFH)
3. Impact of the disproportionate poverty issues for PWD are minimized.

#### **B. Structural impediments to Fair Housing noted; yet need for assessment of compliance with accessibility regulations- and adoption of visitability and universal design methodologies wherever possible- put off until tomorrow.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS, Administrative Steps to Mitigate Impediments

### **II. ECONOMIC CONCERNS**

#### **A. Economic conditions of People with disAbilities (PWD) Not Yet Adequately Assessed**

1. Disproportionate economic data re PWD in NRSA not assessed or addressed, RECOMMENDATION
2. The Benchmark for job creation for PWD is minimal and segregated.

#### **B. ADA Title II and ADA Title III Proactive Architectural and Communication Barrier Removal Not Regularly Monitored or Incentivized:**

1. Relevant to Lack of Equal Employment, Volunteer, and Civic Participation Opportunities
2. The Storefront Improvement Program (SIP) Does Not Eradicate Existing Architectural Barriers. RECOMMENDATIONS
3. Translators and Section 508 information needs RECOMMENDATIONS

### **III. CITIZEN AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION CONCERNS**

- A. Two Project Examples: Bus Kiosk PY06, Streetscape Improvements PY07
- B. DisAbilities Commission Instructed to Limit Participation in Focus Groups.
- C. Citizen Participation Process RECOMMENDATIONS

### **IV. Request for knowledgeable Self Evaluation/ Transition Plan Activities repeated for third year.**

## I. HOUSING CONCERNS

### **A. Fair Housing Needs of People with disAbilities (PWD) Not Yet Adequately Assessed**

Lack of attention to the housing needs of PWD are seen in the two main documents for the Housing Section of the ConPlan: 2005 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Access (AI) and the 2005 Housing Needs Assessment. Neither of these guiding documents appears to have a conceptual or experiential understanding of the real needs of PWD. This Five-Year ConPlan, which utilizes much language from both these documents carries forth statements which dis-acknowledge the need to overcome the structural challenges in designing affordable, accessible, integrated housing (including homeownership) opportunities for PWD, and also lacks affirmation of the ongoing housing and related activities discrimination issues that PWD are known to face nationally.

#### **1. Areas of Poverty plus DisAbilities Concentration Not Included in AI.**

The 2005 AI states, “For this report, any census tract that has 5% higher concentration than the City’s overall percentage will be considered an area of concentration.” The City’s overall PWD population (2000 Census) is 19.4%. Below are three examples, described through a variety of variables<sup>1</sup> of Census tracts, which show that PWD are disproportionately living in concentrated housing and/or are above one-third (33%) of the total number of residents living below poverty in these NRSA Tracts. Yet this is not mentioned in the AI.

Census Tract 3513. Census tract 3513, which is within Union Square, has a total population of 4,336 individuals. Within this area there are 1,160, or **26.8%** of individuals with at least one disability. clearly an area of concentration.

Census Tract 3514. Census Tract 3514 has a population of 8,881. There are 1,969, or 22.2% residents with disabilities. Within this Census tract, 1,197 (13.5%) individuals live below poverty; of those, PWD below poverty is 451 individuals- **37.7% of persons below poverty.**

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<sup>1</sup> Census 2000 Detailed Tables used to extract data: P1, P41, P42, PCT26, PCT34.



Census Tract 3515. In Census tract 3515, which has a population of 2,086, there are a tally of 1,005 disabilities.<sup>2</sup> For the Civilian noninstitutionalized population 5 years and older, there are a total of 550 individuals with a disability residing in Census Tract 3515. **That's 24.7%-** clearly an area of housing concentration.

## **2. Fair Housing discrimination issues of PWD in Somerville are not acknowledged; Fair Housing Affirmative outreach programs to give PWD information and guidance about Fair Housing rights requested.**

The 2006 HUD Report, "Unequal Opportunity- Perpetuating Housing Segregation in America," shows that, nationally, housing discrimination based on disability is 49%- the highest percent of recent complaints.<sup>3</sup> Denial of available rental units and refusal to make a reasonable accommodation are two of the highest percentage of documented complaint types.

Yet Somerville 2005 AI reports (page 1): "As in 1998 and 2000, impediments to fair housing still exist, but the majority of these remain structural...the priority for many is for housing of any sort.... Despite these challenges and potential impediments, the City remains an entry-point for many immigrants and has had very few reports of discrimination in housing since 2000..."

Although discrimination based on National origin and Family Status are both named as areas of local concern and projected as special affirmative housing activities, disabilities discrimination is not addressed. In fact, the 2005 AI reports, "The majority of complaints received by the City are reported by households experiencing discrimination based on income source (Section 8, SSI, SSDI) or household composition (having children)...In order to decrease these instances of discrimination, the City's lead abatement program provides

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<sup>2</sup> Please note: *the tally* is different than the *number of persons*. Please correct analytical mistakes found at Table 3, Section 5, Public Services, pp. 148 and 149.

<sup>3</sup> 2006 HUD Fair Housing Trends Report, page 18. Second highest is race, at 41%, followed by family status at 12%. DOJ statistics show the same order: disabilities at 49% followed by race at 23% and family status at 15. Sex is next; for HUD and DOJ complaints: 10%. Then National origin, religion, Color and "other." NFHA and FHAP complaints seem to follow the same order.

funds to landlords who may be reluctant to rent to families with children due to lead paint laws.” Issues “based on income source such as SSDI” obviate that housing discrimination relevant to disabilities issues have been logged.

**RECOMMENDATIONS (per 2005 CFR 24 §570.904):**

- Gather the data of inquiries to the Fair Housing Commission since 1998 (or the earliest possible date after that).
- Classify and analyze the types of disabilities-relevant inquiries that have been logged and integrate this information into the current AI.
- Create a series of Fair Housing information and question and answer sessions to bring to each SHA site annually, and provide residents with a contact that can help them discuss these issues on an individual and confidential basis.
- Value the expertise of disabilities advocates in these efforts, by creating paid consultant positions to resource this effort through affirmative Fair Housing grant opportunities.

**3. The impact of the disproportionate poverty issues for PWD are minimized.**

The 2005 Housing needs report makes this assertion: “The Census data on PWD appears high...[but] Many people with disability status are fully functioning and are not impaired by their disability in any way, including access to housing or employment.”<sup>4</sup> This unsubstantiated analysis, which flies in the face of all current nationwide analysis of housing, economic, transportation, and social disparities for PWD culture, obviates the need for an up to date City Knowledge Project: to assess and understand the housing, economic and community needs of PWD in Somerville.

Just one example may serve to illustrate the disparities that are denied by that analysis: within Census Tract 3513, out of the total population of 4,336, there are 790 individuals (18.9%) living below poverty. Of those, 303 individuals are PWD. That means that **38.4% of residents living below poverty in Census tract 3513 alone are PWD.**

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<sup>4</sup> This assertion is carried forth into the ConPlan draft, pp. 38-39.

**IB. Structural impediments to Fair Housing noted; yet Need For Monitoring Of Accessibility Regulations- and Adoption of Visitability and Universal Design Methodologies- Put Off Until Tomorrow.**

The Five-Year ConPlan contains language that states that ADA/accessibility compliance in all CDBG and HOME projects will be strongly adhered to. However, no specific Plan has been explicitly outlined, such as mandating all subrecipients with 15 or more staff members to hire a competent Section 504 Coordinator, or providing subrecipients with a helpful monitoring checklist, or incentivizing yearly Self Evaluations, etc.

Page 1 of the 2005 AI states, “ As in 1998 and 2000, impediments to fair housing still exist, but the majority of these remain structural. “ Further down the page is stated, “While many of the impediments remain the same due to structural and market forces beyond the City’s control, much progress has been made in providing affordable housing opportunities.”

The obvious question is: Did CDBG/HOME-funded multiunit rehabs and construction projects adopt accessibility standards since 1998, either by private or non-profit developers? **Enforcing compliance with Federal and State accessibility statutes, regulations, and guidelines is not beyond the City’s control.**

Again, within the Five-Year ConPlan’s Housing Section, the Introduction has this language: “The City of Somerville Commission for Persons with Disabilities recommends that housing for persons with disabilities should be both integrated and accessible. Given that much of Somerville’s housing stock was built in the first half of the century, prior to federal laws requiring accessibility, very few units in Somerville are truly accessible and require significant modifications to comply with ADA requirements. As a result, the majority of accessible units are in new construction buildings and therefore may not be well integrated throughout the community. The Massachusetts Access Registry lists 83 handicap-accessible units in the City of Somerville.”

Listed as accomplishments since 2003, are enumerated: 55 inclusionary zoning units, 21 units that receive tenant-based rental assistance, and 361 units assisted under the City's homeowner Rehab Loan program. In addition, it is noted (page 8, 2005 AI): "Since 2002, only 92 new units have been built."

Another question arises: How many affordable homeownership opportunities were provided for PWD with sensory or mobility enhancement needs in Somerville since 1998? The lack of such information may indicate that the challenges of these issues have not yet been addressed, despite clear guidelines and many innovative, sustainable and readily usable resources to help implement fair housing choice for PWD in America- even in cities with similarly old housing stock. Pittsburgh, for example, has had a visitability ordinance in place since 2002.<sup>5</sup>

Except for the provision of 3 accessible units at the St. Polcarp's mixed-use development, and the benchmark of "10% accessible units" (which seems to refer to the already segregated opportunities being created in Somerville Housing Authority (SHA) and VNA assisted living project developments) the housing needs of PWD appear to be inadequately addressed in this Five-Year ConPlan.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS, ADMINISTRATIVE STEPS TO MITIGATE IMPEDIMENTS:**

- Collect information about the accessibility standards and how they have been met in Somerville since 1998<sup>6</sup> to incorporate into a current AI;
- Conduct a study to examine barriers to fair housing options for PWD, and value PWD as paid consultants for this effort.
- Create a standardized accessibility monitoring checklist that can be capably coordinated by a staff member knowledgeable about State and Federal accessibility statutes, regulations, and guidelines;
- Create a series of trainings and/or education seminars to introduce residents and

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<sup>5</sup> SEE, for example: [http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/ada\\_coordinator.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/ada_coordinator.html)

<sup>6</sup> 1998 is used because that's the earliest date of the AI reports.

subrecipients about visitability and universal design principles;

- incentivize visitability and universal design housing projects and activities.

## **II. ECONOMIC CONCERNS**

### **A. Economic Needs of People with disAbilities (PWD) Not Yet Adequately Assessed.**

#### **1. The disproportionate economic conditions of PWD in NRSA have not been assessed or addressed.**

For example, in Census Tract 3513, Union Square, there are 26.8% of residents that have at least one disability. For persons aged 21 - 64, males with disabilities equals 23.6% and females with disabilities equals 27.9%. Of males with disabilities 66.1% are employed, contrasted with males with no disability, of which 85.6% employed. For females of employment age, the disparity appears less, signifying social and familial differences: females with disabilities are 67.6% employed; those without disabilities are 69.2% employed.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- Identification of the aspirations of PWD with regards to employment and job training opportunities would seem a helpful addition to City Knowledge, assisting in evaluating the appropriateness of CDBG economic goals for these residents. Value PWD in these NRSA's by affirmatively employing culturally competent persons to collect information and prepare an Assessment of the Economic Needs of PWD in Somerville over a two-year period.

#### **2. The Benchmark for job creation for PWD is minimal and segregated.**

As the Plan stands now, the only employment activity that appears to address one particular subset of PWD is this benchmark: "Work with developer of Assembly Square to identify ways to provide jobs for youth and disabled within next 5 years."

While this acknowledges the important employment needs of a subset of PWD and the goals of a program for those individuals located near Assembly Mall, it offers nothing in the way of integrated or diverse-wage employment opportunities for PWD -or youth- in Somerville.

## **IIB. The Need For Proactive Architectural Barrier and Communication Barriers Not Addressed:**

### **1. Relevant to Equal Employment, Volunteer, and Civic Opportunities:**

The DisAbilities Rights Commission (a.k.a. Commission for Persons with DisAbilities) was able to conduct a survey of 103 residents (approximately 77% were PWD) with a \$2,000 CDBG Public Services Agency (PSA) grant in 2007<sup>7</sup>. This survey addressed the awareness of public facilities accessibility and included communications, staff relations, Public Safety & Health Departments, and programs. It was found that PWD surveyed are aware of access and barrier issues, and that PWD, in general, are not engaged in many civic participation opportunities.

Without accessible public facilities, PWD with mobility and sensory impairments especially are left out of a majority of local government employment opportunities, despite their capabilities.

**2. The Storefront Improvement Program (SIP) Does not Eradicate Existing Architectural barriers.** Stores that have been improved with these CDBG funds still have architectural and communication barriers, such as the continuation of the six-inch-step barrier at the entrance, the lack of accessible aisles within the stores, and the lack of accessibly formatted consumer information.

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<sup>7</sup> The Public Services Section, p. 155 claims, incorrectly that this Community Needs Survey grant was also able to accomplish our FH and Emergency Planning information goals. The amount of funding we received was not enough to cover those Objectives. Please correct that misinformation (as well as the incorrect analysis of Table 3 Tallies.). Thank you.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Make sure that the Storefront Improvement Plan (SIP) is linked to a competent Section 504 and 508 Review consultant(s), so that no projects are completed with architectural and communication/information barriers still in place.
- In addition, Policies and procedures need to be reviewed to ensure that the SIP stores are able to provide consumer information in accessible formats and languages as the need arises.
- Before Project is accepted as complete, sign-off by an Accessibility Specialist from the community should be a mandatory requirement.

### **3. Translators and Section 508 information needs- RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Provide at least one place in the City that has accessible and adaptive computer hardware and software for residents with sensory and mobility disAbilities, and make those AT-enhanced computers and printers, etc. available to all CDBG public service agency subrecipients, so that their work is Section 508 compliant. This includes making sure there is a way for all residents with format needs to have access to Braille materials, video magnifiers, multiple language translations, text to speech capabilities, transcriptions, etc.
- Employ a competent consultant to help OSPCD and subrecipient agencies and other City Departments convert their documents and websites, etc. into accessible formats.
- Translator and accessible format specialists should be paid (*apropos* of the Section 3 clause) instead of being exploited to perform these functions for “their communities.”
- Fund a coalition of the various interested community members to develop a community center in one of the NRSAs that offers training in new technologies, universal design, and languages. Provide funds for minority cultures to provide Portuguese, Haitian-Kreyol, Spanish, ASL, and other language classes to residents throughout the year.



### **III. CITIZEN AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION CONCERNS**

#### **A. LACK OF APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION OPTIONS IMPEDES TIMELINESS; DISABILITIES COMMISSION MEMBERS STEERED TO RESTRICT COMMUNICATION WITH PROJECT MANAGERS.**

##### **Two Project Examples: Streetscape Improvements PY07, Bus Kiosk PY06**

1. Streetscape ADA Improvements On January 12, 2008, the Commission finally had the chance to discuss the Transportation Improvements with a skillful Project Director. Before that, we were being managed by a staff person with little understanding of these streetscape issues, who told this volunteer body that we should evaluate the city (550 streets) and find some intersections that might be prioritized, so that DPW contractors could then decide if these were legitimate access concerns worthy of CDBG expenditures. Our email attempts to share information and begin teamwork with this Project, from 7/11/07 until this January were wholly unanswered.

2. Bus Kiosk Despite several attempts to at least gain an understanding of this project's timetable since it was placed into the Annual Plans for PY06/07, this \$30,000 Bus Kiosk Project has been "on hold" since it was created. Although this is a project that I suggested at my first Citizen participation meeting in November 2005, it appears that I am not being allowed to have direct dialogues with this Project's manager, nor to receive responses regarding my design ideas. This wasteful "middle-management" approach impedes the progress of a place-making design<sup>8</sup> Project that could model how accessible and innovative

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<sup>8</sup> Bus Kiosk Idea Includes the following features: APS • Braille street and transit information signage; • a TTY device and information on TTY device locations throughout Somerville; • bus schedule signage at an appropriate height for wheelchair users; • appropriate surface renovations, benches and covered waiting spaces for elderly and mobility-impaired travelers; • multilingual signage (for example: Portuguese, Tibetan, Spanish, Haitian-Creole, Vietnamese, Russian and Chinese). I suggest including technological features, such as optical scanners and character recognition software, in order to exploit current trends and opportunities for assistive design improvements currently being developed in the transportation, communication, and entertainment industries.

information technology can enable the surrounding community members- at a bus stop that serves 5 bus lines.

## **B. DisAbilities Commission Instructed to Limit Participation in Focus Groups.**

The Commission for Persons with disAbilities (a.k.a. the DisAbilities Rights Commission) is a self-organized, consensually directed group of volunteer individuals who can offer expert guidance regarding the “on the street” needs and realities of PWD. Among us, we have the potential to offer the City guidance on issues as diverse and technical as, for example:

- how the coordination of transportation and housing can be more coherent;
- how most employment accommodations can be successfully implemented for as little as \$350;
- how assistive technology can make an Historic preservation site accessible without many architectural modifications; and
- how to write about people with disAbilities in a culturally competent way.

Since July 2007, an ominously increasing series of aggressive constraints have been placed upon our outreach efforts and intercity communications. A listing and discussion of these are not relevant for this Comments document.

However, some of these constraints appear due to the unwillingness to discuss accessibility issues openly and forthrightly. In this particular example the ADA Coordinator “liaison” created a series of emails during the fall Focus Groups that had the effect of not only limiting our participation, but actually dividing and separating us, so that not more than one of the Commission members were allowed to attend any focus group together. This certainly has the consequence of providing us with unequal Citizen Participation procedures; however, in this particular occurrence, those effects may have simply been the unintended consequences of an odd unwillingness to communicate the obvious access issue- while also clearly disrespecting our right to represent ourselves.

We received the following 2 emails:

1. In which we are restricted to choose "which focus group" we would like to participate in, and informed that we would be "coordinated"

-----COPY, EMAIL:

**From:** "Carlene Campbell" <CCampbell@somervillema.gov>

**Date:** October 5, 2007 9:17:37 AM EDT

**To:** <sbrina40@netzero.net>, <williamtycoon@yahoo.com>,  
<somdisAbilitiescomm@verizon.net>, <transportationgeek@juno.com>

**Cc:** "Mark Friedman" <MFriedman@somervillema.gov>, "Michael Buckley"  
<MTBuckley@somervillema.gov>, "John Gannon" <JGannon@somervillema.gov>

**Subject: Consolidated Plan Focus Groups**

Hello everyone,

I have been asked by OSPCD to coordinate with the Disabilities Commission on having members participate in the upcoming focus groups for the Consolidated Plan. These focus groups are being held to help the City understand the needs and potential priorities in the City over the next 5 years, and this information would help create a stronger ConPlan. While we don't have specific dates for these focus group meetings, we hope to hold these focus groups by the end of October, and they would last approximately 90 minutes each.

\* Transportation & Infrastructure \_      \* Parks & Open Space \_      \* Economic  
Development \_      \* Public Services \_      \* Housing \_      \* Historic Preservation

Please let me know which focus group you would like to participate in. I will send you follow up correspondence once the dates, times and locations are determined.

Have a nice weekend, \_Carlene

Carlene Campbell \_ADA Coordinator \_(617) 625-6600 ext. 3303

P.S. \_For those members who do not have e-mail, I will be contacting them either via phone and/or regular mail.

\_\_\_\_\_END, COPY, EMAIL

2. In which we are informed that our participation is restricted to just one member per group, and that this staff member, with no experiential knowledge or skills in disAbilities issues, will "fill in the gaps":

-----COPY OF EMAIL:

**From:** "Carlene Campbell" <CCampbell@somervillema.gov>  
**Date:** October 16, 2007 2:20:30 PM EDT  
**To:** <sbrina40@netzero.com>, <transportationgeek@juno.com>,  
<williamtycoon@yahoo.com>, <somdisAbilitiescomm@verizon.net>  
**Cc:** "Mark Friedman" <MFriedman@somervillema.gov>  
**Subject:** Five Year Consolidated Plan

Hello everyone,

Per our previous correspondence, attached is the list of focus groups being conducted by the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (SPCD) for the City of Somerville's Five Year Consolidated Plan. In an effort to keep these groups small (so that we can cover more information), it has been requested that **ONE** member of the Disabilities Commission attend each of the focus groups. If there is any type of gap, I will be able to fill in and will report back to the full Commission. Please let me know which focus groups you are interested in participating in so that SPCD can plan accordingly.

Thanks,

Carlene

Carlene Campbell \_ADA Coordinator \_(617) 625-6600 ext. 3303

<<5 yr Consol Plan-Focus Groups.pdf>>

-----END, COPY OF EMAIL

During the fall Citizen Participation meetings, all community members were offered the opportunity to join any specialized focus group in the development of this ConPlan<sup>9</sup>.

It is noted that the 2nd email allows us again to choose more than one group; however, the confusing message is that we are supposed to coordinate this with the “liaison,” instead of amongst ourselves; thus, it had the effect of discouraging the participation of half of the members- since we did not wish to obstruct another’s opportunities!

In general, these procedures smell as if we are being treated to a “guardianship” relationship (similar to what is unfortunately provided for seniors and others considered “mentally incapacitated,” - often with no substantive proof). The other municipal Commissions seem to have supportive administrative staff persons and budgets to care for their capacity-building, outreach, and programmatic needs, per collegial and appropriate agreements.

### **3. Citizen Participation Process RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Bring information and opportunities to the people: Please create logical opportunities for immigrant cultures, SHA residents, and residents with disAbilities to become more involved. Bring information and opportunities to places within the city that are used by these residents regularly, such as the SHA sites, and churches, temples, community centers, etc. It would be respectful to hire consultants from the various minority cultures (including the disAbilities culture) that could be trained about the process so they can mentor others in the community on how to become involved.
- Timing is everything: It is difficult to see the real impact of citizen participation meetings and comments when they come at the very end of the process. In order for a meaningful citizen participation process, information, trainings and outreach should be conducted throughout the year- not just right before and after the end of year holidays.

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<sup>9</sup> see p. 263 transcribed, Monica says, “We are also having some focus groups talking to some experts in different area’s one around affordable housing and homeless, parks and open space. If anyone is interested in joining the focus groups let us know.” Are we not experts? Shouldn’t we represent ourselves and our knowledge?

- Make information easily seen and understood: In addition, if newspaper notices are limited to the small print Legal Notices at the back of the papers, this does not afford the ordinary resident an opportunity to learn about these programs and how these plans will impact residents. Place stories within the body of community papers, tell residents how these programs can impact them, give specific examples of how resident participation resulted in programs funded by these HUD funds.

#### **IV. Request for Knowledgeable Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan Barrier Removal Project Activities Repeated for third year:**

- Ongoing structural and communication barriers prove that PWD with mobility and sensory disAbilities aren't invited. Although this Plan states that all programs will strictly adhere to ADA compliance, there is no explicit plan to effect this change. Without a plan, nothing will change.
- Hire a knowledgeable ADA Coordinator so that an evaluation of all the structural and programmatic and communication barriers in city-run facilities is inventoried. This person can then create a competent Transition Plan, and work with the DisAbilities Commission and other experienced community people to make sure that this timetable of improvements is coordinated in a timely and competent manner.
- A skilled and trained community accessibility consultant might also be hired to take an inventory of all the (approximately 550) streets, so that all 4 zones of the city's Public Rights-of-way can be intelligently mapped out and a comprehensive Streetscape Improvement Plan can be implemented in the next five to ten years.
- The ADA Streetscape improvement Plan only provides for a benchmark of 4 sites? to be improved per year?- if so, this is a very slowed process and appears to be a problem of lack of coordination with the relevant TOD grants.
- Provide the DisAbilities Commission with a reasonable budget, including stipends, so that they can conduct the outreach and training opportunities that could enable

residents to begin to trust and take pride in local government. Since this is a municipal Commission, please do not steer it to compete with the PSAs; but, rather, please integrate this group of committed community members into the overall framework of municipal Commission policies and procedures.

Thank you for the opportunity to place these Comments into public record and the City of Somerville's HUD file. I welcome any opportunities to be of genuine service to the community.



**From:** Monica Lamboy  
**Sent:** Monday, February 04, 2008 9:04 AM  
**To:** Mark Friedman; Katie Brillantes  
**Subject:** FW: CDBG Five Year Plan Comments  
[FYI](#)

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**From:** Ungerleider Pirie [mailto:ibis6@rcn.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2008 11:03 PM  
**To:** Monica Lamboy; Brianna OBrien  
**Subject:** CDBG Five Year Plan Comments

**Thanks for your hard work in pulling the public comments together. I asked t meet with Eileen Feldman from the Disabilities Commission after reading her very thoughtful document “Create A City of Opportunity For All.” Beyond her constructive suggestions, and sincere and dedicated advocacy, what impressed me was the opportunity she envisions for engaging both the community that she serves and the community at large in making Somerville a city which all can share and live in equally. My comments (below) are drawn from her recommendations and I was heartened to learn that the full document is being included as an appendix to the Five Year Report.**

**I would like to highlight two issues. One, the process of developing a plan with the participation of community should begin long before a report is developed. To make the assumption that any set of planners and politicians, no matter how skilled and how well intentioned, can proceed without a major effort to include all members of the Somerville community prior to assembling a report of this magnitude and importance is a mistake and, as we’ve learned from the re-do of Lexington Park, not including community often winds up being costly. We have five years to ramp up for our next look into the CDBG future and I hope we’re better prepared as a community.**

**Two, historically, the paid staff person for the Disabilities Commission has either been someone with experience in the field and familiarity both with the statutes and technical matters and/or a disabled person. For a brief time, this job was conflated with the position of Director for the Human Rights Commission. Subsequently, and to my way of thinking, inappropriately, it was attached to the personnel executive and then to a person with other responsibilities that do not necessarily coincide with the needs of the commission. This needs to be quickly addressed.**

**As a senior citizen and, quite probably, a person who will develop disabilities over time, this is extremely important to me. The Disabilities Commission exists to work on the behalf of the disabled and anything that hampers this activity, even if by oversight, needs to be rectified. Sometimes this means kicking the city’s tires and identifying deficiencies. I think**

**the city is strong enough to admit mistakes and correct them and I hope you agree.**

**Thanks for your attention,**

**Alex Pirie**

**Coordinator, Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health**

**c/o Somerville Community Corporation**

**337 Somerville Ave. Second Floor**

**Somerville, MA 02143**

**617-776-5931 x243**

**617-776-0724 FAX**

**[apirie@somervillecdc.org](mailto:apirie@somervillecdc.org)**

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## **CDBG Five Year Plan Comments**

### **1. Citizen Participation Process Needs Improvement:**

- Bring information and opportunities to the people: Please create logical opportunities for immigrant cultures, SHA residents, and residents with disAbilities to become more involved. Bring information and opportunities to places within the city that are used by these residents regularly, such as the SHA sites, and churches, temples, community centers, etc. This could be an opportunity for Section 3 clause affirmative consultant positions as well. Instead of exploiting minority communities to volunteer their limited free time in spreading word about these programs that pay 77% of OSPCD's salaries, hire consultants from the various minority cultures (including the disAbilities culture) to be trained about the process and to spread the word in ways that are culturally competent.
- Timing is everything: It is difficult to see the real impact of citizen participation meetings and comments when they come at the very end of the process. In order for a meaningful citizen participation process, information, trainings and outreach should be conducted throughout the year- not just right before and after the end of year holidays.
- Make information easily seen and understood: In addition, if newspaper notices are limited to the small print Legal Notices at the back of the papers, this does not afford the ordinary resident an opportunity to learn about these programs and how these plans will impact residents. Place stories within the paper, tell residents how these programs can impact them, give specific examples of how resident participation resulted in programs funded by these HUD funds.

## **2. City needs to eradicate structural and communication barriers:**

We serve many clients with disAbilities. They can't get around easily, and are prevented from accessing many City Departments and programs, because the structural and communication barriers prove that they aren't invited. What is your specific plan to become ADA complaint? Without a plan, nothing will change.

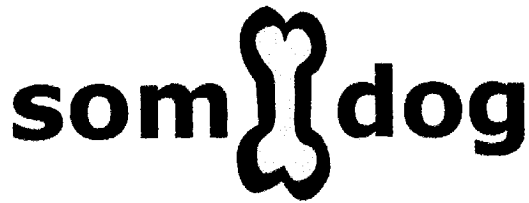
- Hire a knowledgeable ADA Coordinator so that an evaluation of all the structural and programmatic and communication barriers in city-run facilities is inventoried. This person can then create a competent Transition Plan, and work with the DisAbilities Commission and other experienced community people to make sure that timetable of improvements is coordinated in a timely and competent manner.
- You should also hire a skilled and trained community accessibility specialist to take an inventory of all the (approximately 550) streets, with the sidewalks and curbcuts needs documented, so that there is a comprehensive Streetscape Improvement Plan going forth. The Transportation Plan only provides for a benchmark of 4 sites to be improved per year- this is a very slow timetable for such a large problem.
- Provide the DisAbilities Commission with a reasonable budget, including stipends, so that they can conduct the outreach and training opportunities that are needed for residents to begin to trust local government.

## **3. In the Economic Plan, three specific barriers have not been acknowledged:**

- a. Stores have been improved with these CDBG funds that still have architectural and communication barriers.
  - b. Jobs and job training opportunities that are benchmarked by this plan do not consider residents who have the skills and potentials to reach higher-wage job aspirations.
  - c. Stipends for translators and Section 508 information specialists have not been included and are necessary for the residents in these communities to be served appropriately.
- Make sure that the Storefront Improvement Plan (SIP) is linked to a competent Section 504 and 508 Review consultant(s), so that no projects are completed with architectural and communication/information barriers still in place. Policies and procedures need to be reviewed to ensure that the SIP stores are providing consumer information in accessible formats and languages.
  - Provide at least one place in the City that has accessible and adaptive computer hardware and software for residents with sensory disAbilities, and make those AT-enhanced computers and printers, etc. available to all CDBG public service agency subrecipients, so that their work is Section 508 complaint. This includes making sure there is a way for all residents to have access to Braille materials, video magnifiers, multiple language translations, etc. It also includes making sure there is a competent consultant available to

help agencies convert their .pdf documents and websites into accessible formats. Such translator and accessible format specialists should be paid apropos of the Section 3 clause regulations.

- Fund a coalition of the various interested community members to develop a community center in one of the NRSAs that offers training in new technologies, universal design, and languages. Provide funds for minority cultures to provide Portuguese, Haitian-Kreyol, Spanish, ASL, and other language classes to residents throughout the year.



RECEIVED  
somerville dog owners group  
P.O. Box 63  
PLANNING DEPT  
somerville, ma 02143  
2008 FEB -4 PM 4:34

4 February 2008

City of Somerville  
93 Highland Avenue  
Somerville, MA 02143  
Attention: Brianna O'Brien

Re: Five Year Consolidated Plan

Dear Brianna O'Brien,

On behalf of the Somerville Dog Owners Group, I am writing to express my support and enthusiasm for the City's Five Year Consolidated Plan for 2008-2013, especially Section 4: Parks & Open Space.

As you know, Somerville is extremely densely populated with relatively little open space (about two acres of open space for every 1000 residents according to the City's last Open Space and Recreation Plan). Access to open space for recreation is a serious issue concerning the livability of the city: The City's Five Year Consolidated Plan for 2008-2013 addresses this serious issue by prioritizing the expansion and addition of open space.

The Somerville Dog Owner Group appreciates the City's commitment to open space that serves the many and diverse recreational needs of all residents as reflected in the Five Year Consolidated Plan. With a stated goal of increasing opportunities for off-leash recreation throughout the city, Somerville is addressing a need that has long been underserved. Off-leash recreational areas serve not only families with dogs, but everyone who enjoys open space in the community. In neighborhoods with areas where residents may enjoy the benefits of socializing and exercising our pets off-leash, the City can better enforce the leash law in parks and playgrounds where, due to other concerns such as usage by small children, dogs must be leashed.

On behalf of the Somerville Dog Owners Group, I applaud the Five Year Consolidated Plan and look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the City to support open space that serves the many and diverse recreational needs of all residents including not only opportunities for off-leash recreation but the improvement and addition of open space in general.

Sincerely yours,

Michele Biscoe  
Chairperson

**promoting responsible dog ownership, safe and legal options for off-leash recreation and the equitable distribution of open space in Somerville, MA.**

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# **SECTION TWELVE:**

# **APPENDICES & MAPS**

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**APPENDIX A:  
APPROVALS & CERTIFICATIONS**

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# CPMP Non-State Grantee Certifications

Many elements of this document may be completed electronically, however a signature must be manually applied and the document must be submitted in paper form to the Field Office.

- ☐ This certification does not apply.  
☒ This certification is applicable.

## NON-STATE GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATIONS

In accordance with the applicable statutes and the regulations governing the consolidated plan regulations, the jurisdiction certifies that:

**Affirmatively Further Fair Housing** -- The jurisdiction will affirmatively further fair housing, which means it will conduct an analysis of impediments to fair housing choice within the jurisdiction, take appropriate actions to overcome the effects of any impediments identified through that analysis, and maintain records reflecting that analysis and actions in this regard.

**Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan** -- It will comply with the acquisition and relocation requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and implementing regulations at 49 CFR 24; and it has in effect and is following a residential antidisplacement and relocation assistance plan required under section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, in connection with any activity assisted with funding under the CDBG or HOME programs.

**Drug Free Workplace** -- It will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:

1. Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;
2. Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about --
  - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
  - b. The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
  - c. Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
  - d. The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
3. Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph 1;
4. Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph 1 that, as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will --
  - a. Abide by the terms of the statement; and
  - b. Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction;
5. Notifying the agency in writing, within ten calendar days after receiving notice under subparagraph 4(b) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to every grant officer or other designee on whose grant activity the convicted employee was working, unless the Federal agency has designated a central point for the receipt of such notices. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant;
6. Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under subparagraph 4(b), with respect to any employee who is so convicted --
  - a. Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or
  - b. Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;
7. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.



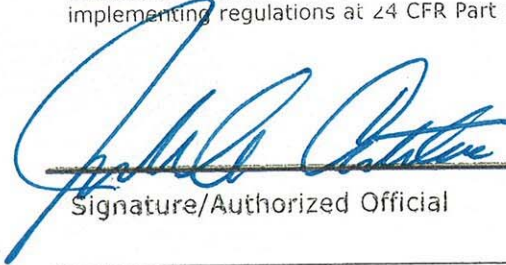
**Anti-Lobbying** -- To the best of the jurisdiction's knowledge and belief:

8. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of it, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;
9. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, it will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions; and
10. It will require that the language of paragraph 1 and 2 of this anti-lobbying certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

**Authority of Jurisdiction** -- The consolidated plan is authorized under State and local law (as applicable) and the jurisdiction possesses the legal authority to carry out the programs for which it is seeking funding, in accordance with applicable HUD regulations.

**Consistency with plan** -- The housing activities to be undertaken with CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA funds are consistent with the strategic plan.

**Section 3** -- It will comply with section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, and implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 135.



Signature/Authorized Official

2/14/08

Date

Joseph A. Curtatone

Name

Mayor

Title

93 Highland Avenue

Address

Somerville, MA 02143

City/State/Zip

617-625-6600

Telephone Number

- ☐ This certification does not apply.  
☒ This certification is applicable.

### Specific CDBG Certifications

The Entitlement Community certifies that:

**Citizen Participation --** It is in full compliance and following a detailed citizen participation plan that satisfies the requirements of 24 CFR 91.105.

**Community Development Plan --** Its consolidated housing and community development plan identifies community development and housing needs and specifies both short-term and long-term community development objectives that provide decent housing, expand economic opportunities primarily for persons of low and moderate income. (See CFR 24 570.2 and CFR 24 part 570)

**Following a Plan --** It is following a current consolidated plan (or Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) that has been approved by HUD.

**Use of Funds --** It has complied with the following criteria:

11. **Maximum Feasible Priority -** With respect to activities expected to be assisted with CDBG funds, it certifies that it has developed its Action Plan so as to give maximum feasible priority to activities which benefit low and moderate income families or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight. The Action Plan may also include activities which the grantee certifies are designed to meet other community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community, and other financial resources are not available);
12. **Overall Benefit -** The aggregate use of CDBG funds including section 108 guaranteed loans during program year(s) 2008, 2009, 2010, (a period specified by the grantee consisting of one, two, or three specific consecutive program years), shall principally benefit persons of low and moderate income in a manner that ensures that at least 70 percent of the amount is expended for activities that benefit such persons during the designated period;
13. **Special Assessments -** It will not attempt to recover any capital costs of public improvements assisted with CDBG funds including Section 108 loan guaranteed funds by assessing any amount against properties owned and occupied by persons of low and moderate income, including any fee charged or assessment made as a condition of obtaining access to such public improvements.

However, if CDBG funds are used to pay the proportion of a fee or assessment that relates to the capital costs of public improvements (assisted in part with CDBG funds) financed from other revenue sources, an assessment or charge may be made against the property with respect to the public improvements financed by a source other than CDBG funds.

The jurisdiction will not attempt to recover any capital costs of public improvements assisted with CDBG funds, including Section 108, unless CDBG funds are used to pay the proportion of fee or assessment attributable to the capital costs of public improvements financed from other revenue sources. In this case, an assessment or charge may be made against the property with respect to the public improvements financed by a source other than CDBG funds. Also, in the case of properties owned and occupied by moderate-income (not low-income) families, an assessment or charge may be made against the property for public improvements financed by a source other than CDBG funds if the jurisdiction certifies that it lacks CDBG funds to cover the assessment.

**Excessive Force --** It has adopted and is enforcing:

14. A policy prohibiting the use of excessive force by law enforcement agencies within its jurisdiction against any individuals engaged in non-violent civil rights demonstrations; and
15. A policy of enforcing applicable State and local laws against physically barring entrance to or exit from a facility or location which is the subject of such non-violent civil rights demonstrations within its jurisdiction;



**Compliance With Anti-discrimination laws** -- The grant will be conducted and administered in conformity with title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d), the Fair Housing Act (42 USC 3601-3619), and implementing regulations.

**Lead-Based Paint** -- Its activities concerning lead-based paint will comply with the requirements of part 35, subparts A, B, J, K and R, of title 24;

**Compliance with Laws** -- It will comply with applicable laws.



Signature/Authorized Official

2/14/08

Date

Joseph A. Curtatone

Name

Mayor

Title

93 Highland Avenue

Address

Somerville, MA 02143

City/State/Zip

617-625-6600

Telephone Number

- ☒ This certification does not apply.  
☐ This certification is applicable.

**OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION  
CDBG**

Submit the following certification only when one or more of the activities in the action plan are designed to meet other community development needs having a particular urgency as specified in 24 CFR 570.208(c):

The grantee hereby certifies that the Annual Plan includes one or more specifically identified CDBG-assisted activities, which are designed to meet other community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community and other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

---

Signature/Authorized Official

Date

Name

Title

Address

City/State/Zip

Telephone Number

- ☐ This certification does not apply.  
☒ This certification is applicable.

### Specific HOME Certifications

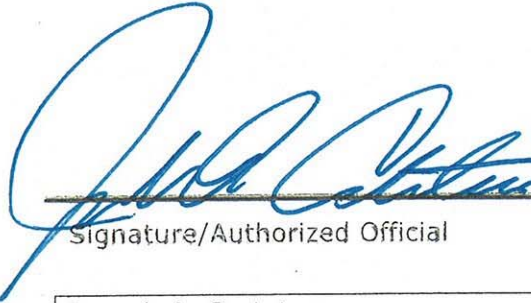
The HOME participating jurisdiction certifies that:

**Tenant Based Rental Assistance** -- If the participating jurisdiction intends to provide tenant-based rental assistance:

The use of HOME funds for tenant-based rental assistance is an essential element of the participating jurisdiction's consolidated plan for expanding the supply, affordability, and availability of decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing.

**Eligible Activities and Costs** -- it is using and will use HOME funds for eligible activities and costs, as described in 24 CFR § 92.205 through 92.209 and that it is not using and will not use HOME funds for prohibited activities, as described in § 92.214.

**Appropriate Financial Assistance** -- before committing any funds to a project, it will evaluate the project in accordance with the guidelines that it adopts for this purpose and will not invest any more HOME funds in combination with other Federal assistance than is necessary to provide affordable housing;

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Authorized Official

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### HOPWA Certifications

The HOPWA grantee certifies that:

**Activities** -- Activities funded under the program will meet urgent needs that are not being met by available public and private sources.

**Building** -- Any building or structure assisted under that program shall be operated for the purpose specified in the plan:

1. For at least 10 years in the case of assistance involving new construction, substantial rehabilitation, or acquisition of a facility,
2. For at least 3 years in the case of assistance involving non-substantial rehabilitation or repair of a building or structure.

---

Signature/Authorized Official

Date

Name

Title

Address

City/State/Zip

Telephone Number



- ☐ This certification does not apply.  
☒ This certification is applicable.

### ESG Certifications

I, Joseph A. Curtatone, Chief Executive Officer of the City of Somerville, certify that the local government will ensure the provision of the matching supplemental funds required by the regulation at 24 *CFR* 576.51. I have attached to this certification a description of the sources and amounts of such supplemental funds.

I further certify that the local government will comply with:

1. The requirements of 24 *CFR* 576.53 concerning the continued use of buildings for which Emergency Shelter Grants are used for rehabilitation or conversion of buildings for use as emergency shelters for the homeless; or when funds are used solely for operating costs or essential services.
2. The building standards requirement of 24 *CFR* 576.55.
3. The requirements of 24 *CFR* 576.56, concerning assurances on services and other assistance to the homeless.
4. The requirements of 24 *CFR* 576.57, other appropriate provisions of 24 *CFR* Part 576, and other applicable federal laws concerning nondiscrimination and equal opportunity.
5. The requirements of 24 *CFR* 576.59(b) concerning the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.
6. The requirement of 24 *CFR* 576.59 concerning minimizing the displacement of persons as a result of a project assisted with these funds.
7. The requirements of 24 *CFR* Part 24 concerning the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.
8. The requirements of 24 *CFR* 576.56(a) and 576.65(b) that grantees develop and implement procedures to ensure the confidentiality of records pertaining to any individual provided family violence prevention or treatment services under any project assisted with ESG funds and that the address or location of any family violence shelter project will not be made public, except with written authorization of the person or persons responsible for the operation of such shelter.
9. The requirement that recipients involve themselves, to the maximum extent practicable and where appropriate, homeless individuals and families in policymaking, renovating, maintaining, and operating facilities assisted under the ESG program, and in providing services for occupants of these facilities as provided by 24 *CFR* 76.56.
10. The requirements of 24 *CFR* 576.57(e) dealing with the provisions of, and regulations and procedures applicable with respect to the environmental review responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and related

authorities as specified in 24 CFR Part 58.

11. The requirements of 24 CFR 576.21(a)(4) providing that the funding of homeless prevention activities for families that have received eviction notices or notices of termination of utility services will meet the requirements that: (A) the inability of the family to make the required payments must be the result of a sudden reduction in income; (B) the assistance must be necessary to avoid eviction of the family or termination of the services to the family; (C) there must be a reasonable prospect that the family will be able to resume payments within a reasonable period of time; and (D) the assistance must not supplant funding for preexisting homeless prevention activities from any other source.
12. The new requirement of the McKinney-Vento Act (42 USC 11362) to develop and implement, to the maximum extent practicable and where appropriate, policies and protocols for the discharge of persons from publicly funded institutions or systems of care (such as health care facilities, foster care or other youth facilities, or correction programs and institutions) in order to prevent such discharge from immediately resulting in homelessness for such persons. I further understand that state and local governments are primarily responsible for the care of these individuals, and that ESG funds are not to be used to assist such persons in place of state and local resources.
13. HUD's standards for participation in a local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and the collection and reporting of client-level information.

I further certify that the submission of a completed and approved Consolidated Plan with its certifications, which act as the application for an Emergency Shelter Grant, is authorized under state and/or local law, and that the local government possesses legal authority to carry out grant activities in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

  
Signature/Authorized Official

2/14/08

Date

Joseph A. Curtatone

Name

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## APPENDIX TO CERTIFICATIONS

### Instructions Concerning Lobbying and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

#### Lobbying Certification

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

#### Drug-Free Workplace Certification

1. By signing and/or submitting this application or grant agreement, the grantee is providing the certification.
2. The certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance is placed when the agency awards the grant. If it is later determined that the grantee knowingly rendered a false certification, or otherwise violates the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, HUD, in addition to any other remedies available to the Federal Government, may take action authorized under the Drug-Free Workplace Act.
3. Workplaces under grants, for grantees other than individuals, need not be identified on the certification. If known, they may be identified in the grant application. If the grantee does not identify the workplaces at the time of application, or upon award, if there is no application, the grantee must keep the identity of the workplace(s) on file in its office and make the information available for Federal inspection. Failure to identify all known workplaces constitutes a violation of the grantee's drug-free workplace requirements.
4. Workplace identifications must include the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the grant takes place. Categorical descriptions may be used (e.g., all vehicles of a mass transit authority or State highway department while in operation, State employees in each local unemployment office, performers in concert halls or radio stations).
5. If the workplace identified to the agency changes during the performance of the grant, the grantee shall inform the agency of the change(s), if it previously identified the workplaces in question (see paragraph three).
6. The grantee may insert in the space provided below the site(s) for the performance of work done in connection with the specific grant: Place of Performance (Street address, city, county, state, zip code) Check if there are workplaces on file that are not identified here. The certification with regard to the drug-free workplace is required by 24 CFR part 21.

| Place Name                             | Street           | City       | County    | State | Zip   |
|--|------------------|------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| OSPCD, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor City Hall | 93 Highland Ave. | Somerville | Middlesex | MA    | 02143 |
| City Hall Annex                        | 50 Evergreen Rd. | Somerville | Middlesex | MA    | 02143 |
|  |                  |            |           |       |       |
|  |                  |            |           |       |       |
|  |                  |            |           |       |       |
|  |                  |            |           |       |       |
|  |                  |            |           |       |       |
|  |                  |            |           |       |       |

7. Definitions of terms in the Nonprocurement Suspension and Debarment common rule and Drug-Free Workplace common rule apply to this certification. Grantees' attention is called, in particular, to the following definitions from these rules: "Controlled substance" means a controlled substance in Schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and as further defined by regulation (21 CFR 1308.11 through 1308.15); "Conviction" means a finding of guilt (including a plea of *nolo contendere*) or imposition of sentence, or both, by any judicial body charged with the responsibility to determine violations of the Federal or State criminal drug statutes; "Criminal drug statute" means a Federal or non-Federal criminal statute involving the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, use, or possession of any

controlled substance; "Employee" means the employee of a grantee directly engaged in the performance of work under a grant, including:

- a. All "direct charge" employees;
- b. all "indirect charge" employees unless their impact or involvement is insignificant to the performance of the grant; and
- c. temporary personnel and consultants who are directly engaged in the performance of work under the grant and who are on the grantee's payroll. This definition does not include workers not on the payroll of the grantee (e.g., volunteers, even if used to meet a matching requirement; consultants or independent contractors not on the grantee's payroll; or employees of subrecipients or subcontractors in covered workplaces).

Note that by signing these certifications, certain documents must be completed, in use, and on file for verification. These documents include:

1. Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing
2. Citizen Participation Plan
3. Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan



2/14/08

Date

Signature/Authorized Official

Joseph A. Curtatone

Name

Mayor

Title

93 Highland Avenue

Address

Somerville, MA 02143

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# SF 424

The SF 424 is part of the CPMP Annual Action Plan. SF 424 form fields are included in this document. Grantee information is linked from the ICPMP.xls document of the CPMP tool.

## SF 424

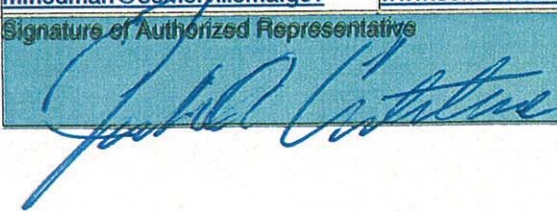
Complete the fillable fields (blue cells) in the table below. The other items are pre-filled with values from the Grantee Information Worksheet.

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| Date Submitted 2/15/08   | Applicant Identifier  | Type of Submission   |   |
| Date Received by state   | State Identifier  | Application  | Pre-application                           |
| Date Received by HUD   | Federal Identifier  | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction     |
|  | B-08-MC-25-0022<br>M-08-MC-25-0022<br>S-08-MC-25-0022                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non Construction               | <input type="checkbox"/> Non Construction |
| <b>Applicant Information</b>   |   |  |   |
| City of Somerville   |   | UOG Code   |   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor City Hall  |   | DUNS: 061054693  |   |
| 93 Highland Ave.   |   | Organizational Unit: City of Somerville                            |   |
| Somerville   | MA  | Department: OSPCD  |   |
| 02143  | U.S.A.  | Division:  |   |
| Employer Identification Number (EIN):  |   | County: Middlesex  |   |
| 04-6001414   |   | Program Year Start Date: 04/08                                     |   |
| Applicant Type:  |   | Specify Other Type if necessary:                                   |   |
| Municipal  |   | Specify Other Type:  |   |
| <b>Program Funding</b>   |   | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development                   |   |
| Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers; Descriptive Title of Applicant Project(s); Areas Affected by Project(s) (cities, Counties, localities etc.); Estimated Funding |   |  |   |
| Community Development Block Grant  |   | 14.218 Entitlement Grant   |   |
| CDBG Project Titles Community Development Block Grant  |   | Description of Areas Affected by CDBG Project(s)<br>Somerville, MA |   |
| \$CDBG Grant Amount \$2,843,782  | \$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged                                   | Describe   |   |
| \$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged \$200,00  | \$Additional State Funds Leveraged                                    | \$844,066  |   |
| \$Locally Leveraged Funds  | \$Grantee Funds Leveraged   |  |   |
| \$Anticipated Program Income \$1,298,114   | Other (Describe) \$100,00 private matching economic development funds |  |   |
| Total Funds Leveraged for CDBG-based Project(s) \$5,285,962  |   |  |   |
| <b>Home Investment Partnerships Program</b>  |   | 14.239 HOME  |   |
| HOME Project Titles HOME Investment Partnership  |   | Description of Areas Affected by HOME Project(s)<br>Somerville, MA |   |
| \$HOME Grant Amount \$865,345  | \$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged                                   | Describe   |   |
| \$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged   | \$Additional State Funds Leveraged                                    |  |   |
| \$Locally Leveraged Funds  | \$Grantee Funds Leveraged   |  |   |



|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| \$Anticipated Program Income \$100,000  |  | Other (Describe)   |  |
| Total Funds Leveraged for HOME-based Project(s) \$965,345   |  |  |  |
| <b>Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS</b>   |  | 14.241 HOPWA   |  |
| HOPWA Project Titles  |  | Description of Areas Affected by HOPWA Project(s)                        |  |
| \$HOPWA Grant Amount  | \$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged    | Describe   |  |
| \$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged  |  | \$Additional State Funds Leveraged                                       |  |
| \$Locally Leveraged Funds   |  | \$Grantee Funds Leveraged  |  |
| \$Anticipated Program Income  |  | Other (Describe)   |  |
| Total Funds Leveraged for HOPWA-based Project(s)  |  |  |  |
| <b>Emergency Shelter Grants Program</b>   |  | 14.231 ESG   |  |
| ESG Project Titles Emergency Shelter Grants   |  | Description of Areas Affected by ESG Project(s)<br>Somerville, MA        |  |
| \$ESG Grant Amount \$127,110  | \$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged    | Describe   |  |
| \$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged  |  | \$Additional State Funds Leveraged                                       |  |
| \$Locally Leveraged Funds   |  | \$Grantee Funds Leveraged  |  |
| \$Anticipated Program Income  |  | Other (Describe)   |  |
| Total Funds Leveraged for ESG-based Project(s) \$127,110  |  |  |  |
| <b>Congressional Districts of:</b>  |  | Is application subject to review by state Executive Order 12372 Process? |  |
| Applicant Districts Eighth  | Project Districts Eighth               |  |  |
| Is the applicant delinquent on any federal debt? If "Yes" please include an additional document explaining the situation. |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   | This application was made available to the state EO 12372 process for review on DATE |
|   |  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No                                   | Program is not covered by EO 12372   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A   | Program has not been selected by the state for review                                |

Person to be contacted regarding this application

|   |  |                              |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Mark  | A.   | Friedman                     |
| Director of Finance & Admin   | 617-625-6600 ext. 2539   | 617-625-0722                 |
| <a href="mailto:mfriedman@somervillema.gov">mfriedman@somervillema.gov</a>          | <a href="http://www.somervillema.gov">www.somervillema.gov</a> | Other Contact: Monica Lamboy |
| Signature of Authorized Representative  |  | Date Signed                  |
|  |  | 2/14/08                      |

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## APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

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For the past 13 years, the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) has facilitated and managed a number of programs for city residents and businesspersons, all in keeping with the goal of increasing Somerville's diversity by improving the economic, social, physical and housing environments for families and individuals with low or moderate incomes. Current programs administered by OSPCD include housing (development, rehabilitation, and first time homebuyer), economic development (including 2 Main Streets Organizations), neighborhood improvements, accessibility improvements and homeless and human service programs.

Effective program delivery would not be possible, however, without the efforts of many other local, state, federal and private partners. Many agencies and organizations form the front line of community development in Somerville. The institutional structure established to develop the City of Somerville Consolidated Plan is broadly based and integrates the talents of key organizations and committees involved in the CDBG, ESG and HOME programs, and other housing and human service activities. This institutional framework for planning and implementing housing and community development activities operates with the goal of expanding programs and services to low- and moderate-income persons in the community.

Affordable housing production and community development programs within the City of Somerville are driven primarily by the actions and interactions of three groups of actors: government agencies (or public institutions); nonprofit and for-profit organizations (especially developers and social service providers); and private lenders and corporations. Federal, state and local government agencies provide a significant portion of funding and support for affordable housing and community development activities and guide these activities through their policies, program guidelines, and the direct provision of housing units and services. The various government agencies often act as principal funders of the housing and community development services provided by nonprofit and for-profit organizations.

The nonprofit and for-profit developers and service providers, in turn, develop affordable housing projects, offer supportive services and influence the type of affordable housing projects built and the services offered. Private lenders also play an important institutional role within the delivery system by providing additional financing and by providing a conduit for the delivery of housing services to low- and moderate-income households.

The relationship between these three groups of stakeholders forms the basis of the housing and community development delivery system and plays a significant role in the housing and community development efforts within Somerville.

### ***ROLE OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS***

#### **Municipal Public Institutions**

In Somerville, OSPCD staff members work with a number of stakeholders at the municipal level in order to deliver effective programs to low- and moderate-income residents. All of these actors play a crucial role in Somerville's institutional framework.



City of Somerville OSPCD staff (which includes Housing, Planning & Zoning, Parks & Open Space, Transportation & Infrastructure, Inspectional Services, and Historic Preservation) coordinates with the staff of other municipal departments to ensure that the various City organizational units work together on issues that directly affect the provision of housing, neighborhood improvements, accessibility improvements and public service programs. These departments include Department of Public Works, School Department, Council on Aging, Arts Council, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Office of Sustainability and Environment, and Health Department. The staff collaborates closely with their colleagues in OSPCD on housing and economic development, neighborhood improvement and accessibility projects and to ensure that any planning efforts such as the Consolidated Plan and other long-range planning efforts are coordinated, consistent and coherent.

Many other organizations play an important role in community development efforts at the municipal level. These include:

- Somerville Housing Authority
- Somerville Redevelopment Authority
- Somerville Planning Board
- Somerville Disabilities Commission
- Somerville Fair Housing Commission
- Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Somerville Homeless Providers Group (administers the Somerville Continuum of Care)
- Somerville Community Corporation (designated Community Housing Development Organization)

### **State Public Institutions**

The City of Somerville relies on several state agencies to help carry out their housing and community development missions. The most important of these are the Department of Housing and Community Development, MassHousing, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation, the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, the Architectural Access Board and the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation.

### **Federal Public Institutions**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the federal agency with which the City of Somerville works most closely on their housing and, if applicable, community development programs. Mandates from other federal departments, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) are all communicated to local jurisdictions through HUD. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers the CDBG, HOME and ESG programs on a national basis and awards grants annually to entitlement communities including the City of Somerville. HUD also provides technical assistance and training, collects and disseminates housing and community development information and monitor's the Division's performance in administering funding. HUD also administers a number of additional programs from which the Somerville community residents benefit, including the McKinney Act Homeless programs, which help to fund Continuum of Care providers, and Section 8 vouchers administered by local housing authorities.

### ***ROLE OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS***

The City of Somerville works regularly with community-based nonprofit housing developers and social service agencies and organizations. These organizations offer an efficient structure for constructing new low- and moderate-income housing projects, delivering essential services, are flexible in developing and adapting programs, provide services in a culturally responsive manner and have an in-depth understanding of the people they serve. Due to the large number of agencies that assist the City in carrying out the housing and community development mission, the non-profit developers and social service agencies are not mentioned individually.

### ***ROLE OF PRIVATE INDUSTRY***

The principal private sector participants in the housing arena include lending institutions, for-profit developers, realtors, and the construction industry. These organizations provide financing and technical resources to low- and moderate-income housing projects, allowing housing developers to leverage government funding with conventional loan products. Local lending institutions provide mortgages to housing developers that, in conjunction with CDBG and/or HOME funds, allow for affordable housing development. Developers who undertake comprehensive permit (40B) projects in Somerville work closely with housing staff. In addition, private developers of residential properties are required to produce or make cash payments towards the development of affordable units under the City's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO).

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## **APPENDIX C: MONITORING**

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The Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSCPD) monitors its performance against the goals and objectives set forth in its Consolidated Plan. This monitoring is done annually when the City's prepares its annual performance and general production reports. However, it is also triggered by the following activities:

- A new program is created
- An existing program is modified
- New housing development activities are undertaken

OSPCD operates a variety of programs that are designed to meet its goals of stabilizing rents, maintaining and improving the existing housing stock, increasing the supply of affordable rental units, abating hazardous materials in residential properties, transitional assistance out of homelessness, and increasing home ownership opportunities.

### ***INCREASING HOME OWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES***

Program requirements compliance for rehab, down-payment assistance, and first-time homebuyer activities is accomplished through a variety of methods including:

- Intake
- Activity scope
- Financing analysis (done by the Project Manager)
- Review by the Housing Director, Programs Director and Director of Special Projects where applicable

Homeownership activities are monitored for owner occupancy. Enforcement of program requirements is accomplished by calling loans to property owners who are non-responsive or whose activities are non-compliant and unable to be brought back into compliance.

### ***HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS***

Program requirements compliance for CHDO and other housing development activities is ensured through an intensive review of the developer's proposal. This review is completed by the Housing Director with assistance of the Program Manager, Grants Manager, Director of Special Projects, OSPCD Contract Administrator and OSPCD Special Counsel. To ensure that all program requirements are met, the following items are reviewed:

- Labor rates
- Procurement outreach
- Affirmative marketing
- Tenant and homebuyer selection
- Funding limits
- Activity expenditures (as applicable)

The Housing Inspector, Grants Manager and Housing Director monitor the work in progress and authorize all construction payments through construction completion ensuring compliance with the construction contract and the HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS).

Affordable housing restrictions are recorded with the Registry of Deeds for all HOME rental activities and investor-owned CDBG activities to ensure that the affordability requirements will survive a sale of the property prior to their expiration.

### ***AFFORDABLE RENTAL ACTIVITIES***

Rental and home ownership activities are tracked in a database and monitored annually throughout the affordability period by the Project Coordinator. Maximum rent levels, appropriate rent increases, tenant income requirements, and HQS compliance are monitored. The Grants Manager reviews Tenant Based Rental activity requisitions, client eligibility, and rent subsidies to compliance with program requirements. In addition, on a monthly basis, the Grants Manager monitors expenditure levels and timeframes to ensure timely expenditure of HOME and CDBG funds.

### ***SUB-RECIPIENTS***

CHDO and sub-recipient activities are monitored during activity funding and construction phases as described above. Thereafter, once annually during the affordability period, the Grants Manager monitors rental activities through a site visit and review of a variety of documents including:

- The owner's affirmative marketing
- Tenant selection
- Individual tenant files

The Grants Manager then submits a report to the activity owner and identifies any areas of concern. These issues are then monitored for correction at the next monitoring visit.

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## APPENDIX D: ANTI-DISPLACEMENT / RELOCATION POLICY

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### ***Permanent Relocation:***

Except for urban renewal projects, the City of Somerville does not typically engage in projects that displace people or businesses. It has been many years since a federally assisted urban renewal project resulted in permanent displacement, and the City does not anticipate any such projects during the next five years. However, should this occur, it is the policy of the City of Somerville Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) programs to take all reasonable steps to minimize displacement as a result of CDBG- and HOME-assisted projects, including:

- Considering whether displacement will occur during feasibility determinations
- Identifying potential relocation workload and resources early
- Assuring, whenever possible, that residential occupants of buildings rehabilitated are offered an opportunity to return
- Planning rehabilitation projects to include “staging” where this would eliminate temporary displacement
- Following notification procedures carefully so that families do not leave because they are not informed about planned projects or their rights

When a project does require relocation, in order to ensure the timely issuance of information notices to displaced households, etc., staff of the City of Somerville’s Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development will ensure that all notices are sent in compliance with both the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA).

### ***Temporary Relocation:***

Temporary relocation often occurs as the result of lead abatement and other rehabilitation activities in renter- and owner-occupied units. Although the City of Somerville Mayor’s Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development is not required to, in most cases it pays for the temporary relocation of displaced renters and/or homeowners whose residences are being rehabilitated and advisory services.

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**APPENDIX E:**  
**CPMP LIST**

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| Housing Needs Table   |        |                 |                           | Grantee:  |                               |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    | Households with a Disabled Member |  | Disproportionate Racial/Ethnic Need? | # of Households in lead-Hazard Housing | Total Low Income/HIV/ AIDS Population |
|---|--------|-----------------|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|-----------|----------------|---------------|-------------|------------|--------|---------|---------|--|----|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
|   |        |                 |                           | Only complete blue sections. Do NOT type in sections other than blue. |                               |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
| Housing Needs - Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data Housing Problems |        |                 |                           | Current % of House-holds  | Current Number of House-holds | 3-5 Year Quantities |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        | % of Goal | Priority Need? | Plan to Fund? | Fund Source |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 |                           |   |                               | Year 1              |        | Year 2 |        | Year 3 |        | Year 4* |        | Year 5* |        |           |                |               |             | Multi-Year |        | % HSHLD | # HSHLD |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 |                           |   |                               | Goal                | Actual | Goal   | Actual | Goal   | Actual | Goal    | Actual | Goal    | Actual |           |                |               |             | Goal       | Actual |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
| Household Income <=30% MFI  | Renter | Elderly         | NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS      | 100%  | 1560                          |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             | 100%       |        | N       |         |  | 24 |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Any housing problems      | 60.3  | 940                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      | H              | Y             | H           |            | 0      |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden > 30%         | 59.3  | 925                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden >50%          | 37.5  | 585                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        | Small Related   | NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS      | 100%  | 960                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         | N       |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | With Any Housing Problems | 81.3  | 780                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      | H              | Y             | H           |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden > 30%         | 77.1  | 740                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden >50%          | 59.4  | 570                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        | Large Related   | NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS      | 100%  | 258                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         | N       |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | With Any Housing Problems | 94.6  | 244                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      | H              | Y             | H           |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden > 30%         | 77.1  | 199                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden >50%          | 50.4  | 130                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        | All other hshld | NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS      | 100%  | 1584                          |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         | N       |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | With Any Housing Problems | 75.4  | 1194                          |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      | M              | Y             | H           |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden > 30%         | 75.4  | 1194                          |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden >50%          | 70.3  | 1114                          |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   | Owner  | Elderly         | NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS      | 100%  | 699                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | With Any Housing Problems | 90.7  | 634                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      | H              | Y             | H           |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden > 30%         | 90.7  | 634                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden >50%          | 69.4  | 485                           |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        | Small Related   | NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS      | 100%  | 99                            |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         | N       |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | With Any Housing Problems | 89.9  | 89                            |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      | H              | Y             | H           |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden > 30%         | 89.9  | 89                            |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | Cost Burden >50%          | 59.6  | 59                            |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      |                |               |             |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        | Related         | NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS      | 100%  | 49                            |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |        |           |                |               |             |            |        |         | N       |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |
|   |        |                 | With Any Housing Problems | 91.8  | 45                            |                     |        |        |        |        |        |         |        |         | 0      | ####      | H              | Y             | H           |            |        |         |         |  |    |                                   |  |                                      |  |                                       |



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**Jurisdiction****Housing Market Analysis***Complete cells in blue.*

|  |  | Vacancy Rate | 0 & 1 Bedroom | 2 Bedrooms | 3+ Bedroom | Total | Substandard Units |
|--|--|--------------|---------------|------------|------------|-------|-------------------|
| Housing Stock Inventory                              |  |              |               |            |            |       |                   |
| <b>Affordability Mismatch</b>                        |  |              |               |            |            |       |                   |
| Occupied Units: Renter                               |  |              | 7941          | 9041       | 4789       | 21771 | 205               |
| Occupied Units: Owner                                |  |              | 734           | 2563       | 6160       | 9457  | 25                |
| Vacant Units: For Rent                               |  | 1%           | 89            | 166        | 61         | 316   | 0                 |
| Vacant Units: For Sale                               |  | 1%           | 48            | 22         | 36         | 106   | 0                 |
| Total Units Occupied & Vacant                        |  |              | 8812          | 11792      | 11046      | 31650 | 230               |
| <b>Rents: Applicable FMRs (in \$s)</b>               |  |              | 1,164         | 1,366      | 1,634      |       |                   |
| <b>Rent Affordable at 30% of 50% of MFI (in \$s)</b> |  |              | 736           | 841        | 946        |       |                   |
| <b>Public Housing Units</b>                          |  |              |               |            |            |       |                   |
| Occupied Units                                       |  |              | 722           | 243        | 133        | 1098  | 0                 |
| Vacant Units   |  |              | 0             | 0          | 0          | 0     | 0                 |
| Total Units Occupied & Vacant                        |  |              | 722           | 243        | 133        | 1098  | 0                 |
| <b>Rehabilitation Needs (in \$s)</b>                 |  |              | 0             | 0          | 0          | 0     |                   |

Continuum of Care Homeless Population and Subpopulations Chart

| Part 1: Homeless Population               |  |       |                     |     | Sheltered         |                      |              |          | Un-sheltered | Total    | Jurisdiction                            |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
|---|--|-------|---------------------|-----|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|---|---|--------|----------|-------|----------|------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------|-----------|----|---|----|---|---|------|
|   |  |       |                     |     | Emergency         |                      | Transitional |          |              |          | Data Quality                            |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 1. Homeless Individuals                   |  |       |                     |     | 55                | 67                   |              | 15       |              | 137      |   | (A) administrative records <div>▼</div> |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 2. Homeless Families with Children        |  |       |                     |     | 9                 | 24                   |              | 0        |              | 33       |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
|   | 2a. Persons in Homeless with Children Families |       |                     |     | 24                | 50                   |              | 0        |              | 74       |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| Total (lines 1 + 2a)                      |  |       |                     |     | 79                | 117                  |              | 15       |              | 211      |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations           |  |       |                     |     | Sheltered         |                      |              |          | Un-sheltered | Total    | Data Quality                            |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 1. Chronically Homeless                   |  |       |                     |     | 41                |                      |              |          | 0            | 41       | (A) administrative records <div>▼</div> |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 2. Severely Mentally Ill                  |  |       |                     |     | 31                |                      |              |          | 0            | 31       |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 3. Chronic Substance Abuse                |  |       |                     |     | 34                |                      |              |          | 0            | 34       |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 4. Veterans                               |  |       |                     |     | 1                 |                      |              |          | 0            | 1        |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 5. Persons with HIV/AIDS                  |  |       |                     |     | 0                 |                      |              |          | 0            | 0        |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 6. Victims of Domestic Violence           |  |       |                     |     | 27                |                      |              |          | 0            | 27       |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| 7. Youth (Under 18 years of age)          |  |       |                     |     | 0                 |                      |              |          | 0            | 0        |   |   |        |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| Part 3: Homeless Needs Table: Individuals |  | Needs | Currently Available | Gap | 5-Year Quantities |                      |              |          |              |          |   |   |        |          | Total |          |      | <a href="#">Priority H, M, L</a> | <a href="#">Plan to Fund? Y N</a> | <a href="#">Fund Source: CDBG, HOME, HOPEWA, ESG or Other</a> |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
|   |  |       |                     |     | Year 1            |                      | Year 2       |          | Year 3       |          | Year 4                                  |   | Year 5 |          |       |          |      |                                  |                                   |   |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
|   |  |       |                     |     | Goal              | Complete             | Goal         | Complete | Goal         | Complete | Goal                                    | Complete                                | Goal   | Complete | Goal  | Complete | Goal |                                  |                                   |   | Actual | % of Goal |    |   |    |   |   |      |
|   |  |       |                     |     | Beds              | Emergency Shelters   | 143          | 67       | 76           | 5        | 0                                       | 5                                       | 0      | 5        | 0     | 5        | 0    |                                  |                                   |   | 5      | 0         | 25 | 0 | 0% | M | Y | ESG  |
|   |  |       |                     |     |                   | Transitional Housing | 124          | 69       | 55           | 5        | 0                                       | 5                                       | 0      | 5        | 0     | 5        | 0    |                                  |                                   |   | 5      | 0         | 25 | 0 | 0% | M | N | HOME |
| Permanent Supportive Housing              | 395  | 68    | 327                 | 5   |                   | 0                    | 5            | 0        | 5            | 0        | 5                                       | 0                                       | 5      | 0        | 25    | 0        | 0%   | M                                | N                                 | HOME  |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| Total                                     | 662  | 204   | 458                 | 5   |                   | 0                    | 5            | 0        | 5            | 0        | 5                                       | 0                                       | 5      | 0        | 25    | 0        | 0%   | H                                | Y                                 | HOME  |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |
| Chronically Homeless                      |  | 173   | 27                  |     |                   |                      |              |          |              |          |   |   |        |          |       |          |      | H                                | Y                                 | HOME  |        |           |    |   |    |   |   |      |

| Part 4: Homeless Needs<br>Table: Families |                              | Needs | Currently Available | Gap | 5-Year Quantities |          |        |          |        |          |        |          |        |          | Total |        |           | Priority H, M, L | Plan to Fund? Y, N | Fund Source: CDBG, HOME, HOPEWA, ESG or Other |
|---|------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-----|-------------------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|-------|--------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|---|
|   |                              |       |                     |     | Year 1            |          | Year 2 |          | Year 3 |          | Year 4 |          | Year 5 |          |       |        |           |                  |                    |   |
|   |                              |       |                     |     | Goal              | Complete | Goal   | Complete | Goal   | Complete | Goal   | Complete | Goal   | Complete | Goal  | Actual | % of Goal |                  |                    |   |
| Beds                                      | Emergency Shelters           | 62    | 29                  | 33  | 5                 | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 25    | 0      | 0%        | M                | Y                  | ESG   |
|   | Transitional Housing         | 88    | 50                  | 38  | 5                 | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 25    | 0      | 0%        | M                | N                  | HOME  |
|   | Permanent Supportive Housing | 182   | 42                  | 140 | 5                 | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 5      | 0        | 25    | 0      | 0%        | H                | N                  | HOME  |
|   | Total                        | 332   | 121                 | 211 | 15                | 0        | 15     | 15       | 0      | 0        | 15     | 0        | 15     | 0        | 60    | 15     | 25%       | H                | Y                  | HOME  |

Completing Part 1: Homeless Population. This must be completed using statistically reliable, unduplicated counts or estimates of homeless persons in sheltered and unsheltered locations at a one-day point in time. The counts must be from: (A) administrative records, (N) enumerations, (S) statistically reliable samples, or (E) estimates. The quality of the data presented in each box must be identified as: (A), (N), (S) or (E).

Completing Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations. This must be completed using statistically reliable, unduplicated counts or estimates of homeless persons in sheltered and unsheltered locations at a one-day point in time. The numbers must be from: (A) administrative records, (N) enumerations, (S) statistically reliable samples, or (E) estimates. The quality of the data presented in each box must be identified as: (A), (N), (S) or (E).

Sheltered Homeless. Count adults, children and youth residing in shelters for the homeless. “Shelters” include all emergency shelters and transitional shelters for the homeless, including domestic violence shelters, residential programs for runaway/homeless youth, and any hotel/motel/apartment voucher arrangements paid by a public/private agency because the person or family is homeless. Do not count: (1) persons who are living doubled up in conventional housing; (2) formerly homeless persons who are residing in Section 8 SRO, Shelter Plus Care, SHP permanent housing or other permanent housing units; (3) children or youth, who because of their own or a parent’s homelessness or abandonment, now reside temporarily and for a short anticipated duration in hospitals, residential treatment facilities, emergency foster care, detention facilities and the like; and (4) adults living in mental health facilities, chemical dependency facilities, or criminal justice facilities.

Unsheltered Homeless. Count adults, children and youth sleeping in places not meant for human habitation. Places not meant for human habitation include streets, parks, alleys, parking ramps, parts of the highway system, transportation depots and other parts of transportation systems (e.g. subway tunnels, railroad car), all-night commercial establishments (e.g. movie theaters, laundromats, restaurants), abandoned buildings, building roofs or stairwells, chicken coops and other farm outbuildings, caves, campgrounds, vehicles, and other similar places.

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| Non-Homeless Special<br>Needs Including HOPWA |  | Needs | Currently<br>Available | GAP   | 3-5 Year Quantities |          |        |          |        |          |         |          |         |          | Total |        |           |
|---|--|-------|------------------------|-------|---------------------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|-------|--------|-----------|
|   |  |       |                        |       | Year 1              |          | Year 2 |          | Year 3 |          | Year 4* |          | Year 5* |          |       |        |           |
|   |  |       |                        |       | Goal                | Complete | Goal   | Complete | Goal   | Complete | Goal    | Complete | Goal    | Complete | Goal  | Actual | % of Goal |
| Housing Needed                                | 52. Elderly                              | 4241  | 1265                   | 2976  | 0                   | 0        | 45     | 0        | 50     | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 95    | 0      | 0%        |
|   | 53. Frail Elderly                        | 500   | 194                    | 306   | 49                  | 0        | 50     | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 99    | 0      | 0%        |
|   | 54. Persons w/ Severe Mental Illness     | 200   | 70                     | 130   | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 55. Developmentally Disabled             | 200   | 55                     | 145   | 2                   | 0        | 2      | 0        | 2      | 0        | 2       | 0        | 2       | 0        | 10    | 0      | 0%        |
|   | 56. Physically Disabled                  | 500   | 113                    | 387   | 2                   | 0        | 2      | 0        | 2      | 0        | 2       | 0        | 2       | 0        | 10    | 0      | 0%        |
|   | 57. Alcohol/Other Drug Addicted          | 150   | 62                     | 88    | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 58. Persons w/ HIV/AIDS & their families | 10    | 0                      | 10    | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 59. Public Housing Residents             | 3940  | 1455                   | 2485  | 0                   | 0        | 45     | 0        | 50     | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 95    | 0      | 0%        |
|   | Total                                    | 9741  | 3214                   | 6527  | 53                  | 0        | 144    | 0        | 104    | 0        | 4       | 0        | 4       | 0        | 309   | 0      | 0%        |
| Supportive Services Needed                    | 60. Elderly                              | 10000 | 2600                   | 7400  | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 61. Frail Elderly                        | 2500  | 1250                   | 1250  | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 62. Persons w/ Severe Mental Illness     | 2000  | 1425                   | 575   | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 63. Developmentally Disabled             | 750   | 195                    | 555   | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 64. Physically Disabled                  | 500   | 165                    | 335   | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 65. Alcohol/Other Drug Addicted          | 3000  | 2660                   | 340   | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 66. Persons w/ HIV/AIDS & their families | 0     | 0                      | 0     | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | 67. Public Housing Residents             | 20500 | 20500                  | 0     | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |
|   | Total                                    | 39250 | 28795                  | 10455 | 0                   | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0     | 0      | ####      |

| Housing and Community Development Activities           |   |  |   | Needs | Current | Gap | 5-Year Quantities |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |            |        |
|--|---|--|---|-------|---------|-----|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------|--------|
|  |   |  |   |       |         |     | Year 1            |        | Year 2 |        | Year 3 |        | Year 4 |        | Year 5 |        | Cumulative |        |
|  |   |  |   |       |         |     | Goal              | Actual | Goal   | Actual | Goal   | Actual | Goal   | Actual | Goal   | Actual | Goal       | Actual |
| 01 Acquisition of Real Property 570.201(a)             |   |  |   | 2     | 0       | 2   |                   |        |        |        | 1      |        | 1      |        |        | 2      | 0          |        |
| 02 Disposition 570.201(b)                              |   |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0          |        |
| Public Facilities and Improvements                     | 03 Public Facilities and Improvements (General) 570.201(c)        |  |   | 3     | 0       | 3   |                   |        | 1      |        | 1      |        |        | 1      |        | 3      | 0          |        |
|  | 03A Senior Centers 570.201(c)                                     |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03B Handicapped Centers 570.201(c)                                |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03C Homeless Facilities (not operating costs) 570.201(c)          |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03D Youth Centers 570.201(c)                                      |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03E Neighborhood Facilities 570.201(c)                            |  |   | 5     | 0       | 5   | 1                 |        | 1      |        | 1      |        | 1      |        | 1      | 5      | 0          |        |
|  | 03F Parks, Recreational Facilities 570.201(c)                     |  |   | 7     | 0       | 7   |                   |        | 1      |        | 1      |        | 2      |        | 3      | 7      | 0          |        |
|  | 03G Parking Facilities 570.201©                                   |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03H Solid Waste Disposal Improvements 570.201(c)                  |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03I Flood Drain Improvements 570.201(c)                           |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03J Water/Sewer Improvements 570.201(c)                           |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03K Street Improvements 570.201(c)                                |  |   | 1     | 0       | 1   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        | 1      |        | 1      | 0          |        |
|  | 03L Sidewalks 570.201(c)  |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03M Child Care Centers 570.201(c)                                 |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03N Tree Planting 570.201(c)                                      |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03O Fire Stations/Equipment 570.201(c)                            |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03P Health Facilities 570.201(c)                                  |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03Q Abused and Neglected Children Facilities 570.201(c)           |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03R Asbestos Removal 570.201(c)                                   |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 03S Facilities for AIDS Patients (not operating costs) 570.201(c) |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
| 03T Operating Costs of Homeless/AIDS Patients Programs |   |  | 0 | 0     | 0       |     |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |        |            |        |
| 04 Clearance and Demolition 570.201(d)                 |   |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
| 04A Clean-up of Contaminated Sites 570.201(d)          |   |  |   | 1     | 0       | 1   |                   |        | 1      |        |        |        |        |        | 1      | 0      |            |        |
| Public Services  | 05 Public Services (General) 570.201(e)                           |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05A Senior Services 570.201(e)                                    |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05B Handicapped Services 570.201(e)                               |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05C Legal Services 570.201(E)                                     |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05D Youth Services 570.201(e)                                     |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05E Transportation Services 570.201(e)                            |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05F Substance Abuse Services 570.201(e)                           |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05G Battered and Abused Spouses 570.201(e)                        |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05H Employment Training 570.201(e)                                |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05I Crime Awareness 570.201(e)                                    |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |
|  | 05J Fair Housing Activities (if CDBG, then subject to 570.201(e)  |  |   | 10    | 10      | 0   | 2                 |        | 2      |        | 2      |        | 2      |        | 2      | 10     | 0          |        |
|  | 05K Tenant/Landlord Counseling 570.201(e)                         |  |   | 25    | 25      | 0   | 5                 |        | 5      |        | 5      |        | 5      |        | 5      | 25     | 0          |        |
|  | 05L Child Care Services 570.201(e)                                |  |   | 0     | 0       | 0   |                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | 0      | 0      |            |        |

|    |   |      |     |      |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |      |   |
|----|---|------|-----|------|-----|--|-----|--|-----|--|-----|--|-----|------|---|
| PJ | 05M Health Services 570.201(e)                                    | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 05N Abused and Neglected Children 570.201(e)                      | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 05O Mental Health Services 570.201(e)                             | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 05P Screening for Lead-Based Paint/Lead Hazards Poison 570.201(f) | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 05Q Subsistence Payments 570.204                                  | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 05R Homeownership Assistance (not direct) 570.204                 | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 05S Rental Housing Subsidies (if HOME, not part of 5% 570.204     | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 05T Security Deposits (if HOME, not part of 5% Admin c            | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 06 Interim Assistance 570.201(f)                                  | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 07 Urban Renewal Completion 570.201(h)                            | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 08 Relocation 570.201(i)  | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 09 Loss of Rental Income 570.201(j)                               | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 10 Removal of Architectural Barriers 570.201(k)                   | 5    | 0   | 5    | 1   |  | 1   |  | 1   |  | 1   |  | 1   | 5    | 0 |
|    | 11 Privately Owned Utilities 570.201(l)                           | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 12 Construction of Housing 570.201(m)                             | 560  | 300 | 260  | 24  |  | 95  |  | 60  |  | 40  |  | 41  | 260  | 0 |
|    | 13 Direct Homeownership Assistance 570.201(n)                     | 90   | 15  | 75   | 15  |  | 15  |  | 15  |  | 15  |  | 15  | 75   | 0 |
|    | 14A Rehab: Single-Unit Residential 570.202                        | 41   | 11  | 30   | 6   |  | 6   |  | 6   |  | 6   |  | 6   | 30   | 0 |
|    | 14B Rehab: Multi-Unit Residential 570.202                         | 70   | 30  | 40   | 8   |  | 8   |  | 8   |  | 8   |  | 8   | 40   | 0 |
|    | 14C Public Housing Modernization 570.202                          | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 14D Rehab: Other Publicly-Owned Residential Buildings 570.202     | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 14E Rehab: Publicly or Privately-Owned Commercial/Indu 570.202    | 12.5 | 0   | 12.5 | 2.5 |  | 2.5 |  | 2.5 |  | 2.5 |  | 2.5 | 12.5 | 0 |
|    | 14F Energy Efficiency Improvements 570.202                        | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 14G Acquisition - for Rehabilitation 570.202                      | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 14H Rehabilitation Administration 570.202                         | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 14I Lead-Based/Lead Hazard Test/Abate 570.202                     | 160  | 35  | 125  | 63  |  | 62  |  |     |  |     |  |     | 125  | 0 |
|    | 15 Code Enforcement 570.202(c)                                    | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 16A Residential Historic Preservation 570.202(d)                  | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 16B Non-Residential Historic Preservation 570.202(d)              | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 17A CI Land Acquisition/Disposition 570.203(a)                    | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 17B CI Infrastructure Development 570.203(a)                      | 1    | 0   | 1    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 17C CI Building Acquisition, Construction, Rehabilitat 570.203(a) | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 17D Other Commercial/Industrial Improvements 570.203(a)           | 1    | 0   | 1    |     |  |     |  | 1   |  |     |  |     | 1    | 0 |
|    | 18A ED Direct Financial Assistance to For-Profits 570.203(b)      | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 18B ED Technical Assistance 570.203(b)                            | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 18C Micro-Enterprise Assistance                                   | 30   | 0   | 30   | 15  |  | 15  |  |     |  |     |  |     | 30   | 0 |
|    | 19A HOME Admin/Planning Costs of PJ (not part of 5% Ad            | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 19B HOME CHDO Operating Costs (not part of 5% Admin ca            | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 19C CDBG Non-profit Organization Capacity Building                | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 19D CDBG Assistance to Institutes of Higher Education             | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 19E CDBG Operation and Repair of Foreclosed Property              | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 19F Planned Repayment of Section 108 Loan Principal               | 7    | 0   | 7    | 2   |  | 2   |  | 2   |  | 1   |  |     | 7    | 0 |
|    | 19G Unplanned Repayment of Section 108 Loan Principal             | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |
|    | 19H State CDBG Technical Assistance to Grantees                   | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |  |     |  |     |  |     |  |     | 0    | 0 |

|                       |  |      |     |     |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |
|-----------------------|--|------|-----|-----|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|
| 20 Planning 570.205   |  | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 21A General Program Administration 570.206                     | 5    | 0   | 5   | 1   |   | 1   |   | 1   |   | 1   |   | 1   |   | 5   | 0 |
|                       | 21B Indirect Costs 570.206                                     | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 21D Fair Housing Activities (subject to 20% Admin cap) 570.206 | 20   | 2   | 10  | 2   |   | 2   |   | 2   |   | 2   |   | 2   |   | 10  | 0 |
|                       | 21E Submissions or Applications for Federal Programs 570.206   | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 21F HOME Rental Subsidy Payments (subject to 5% cap)           | 200  | 50  | 150 | 30  |   | 30  |   | 30  |   | 30  |   | 30  |   | 150 | 0 |
|                       | 21G HOME Security Deposits (subject to 5% cap)                 | 100  | 50  | 50  | 10  |   | 10  |   | 10  |   | 10  |   | 10  |   | 50  | 0 |
|                       | 21H HOME Admin/Planning Costs of PJ (subject to 5% cap)        | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 21I HOME CHDO Operating Expenses (subject to 5% cap)           | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
| 22 Unprogrammed Funds |  | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
| HOPWA                 | 31J Facility based housing – development                       | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 31K Facility based housing - operations                        | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 31G Short term rent mortgage utility payments                  | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 31F Tenant based rental assistance                             | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 31E Supportive service   | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 31I Housing information services                               | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 31H Resource identification                                    | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | 31B Administration - grantee                                   | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
| CDBG                  | 31D Administration - project sponsor                           | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Acquisition of existing rental units                           | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Production of new rental units                                 | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Rehabilitation of existing rental units                        | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Rental assistance  | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Acquisition of existing owner units                            | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Production of new owner units                                  | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Rehabilitation of existing owner units                         | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
| HOME                  | Homeownership assistance                                       | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Acquisition of existing rental units                           | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Production of new rental units                                 | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Rehabilitation of existing rental units                        | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Rental assistance  | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Acquisition of existing owner units                            | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Production of new owner units                                  | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
|                       | Rehabilitation of existing owner units                         | 0    | 0   | 0   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   | 0   | 0 |
| Totals                |  | 1357 | 528 | 829 | 188 | 0 | 261 | 0 | 150 | 0 | 128 | 0 | 130 | 0 | 855 | 0 |

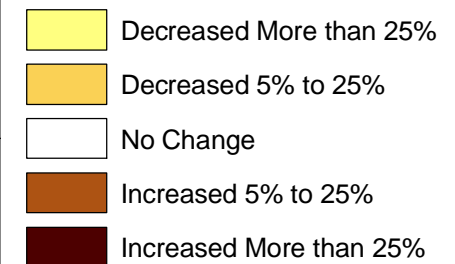
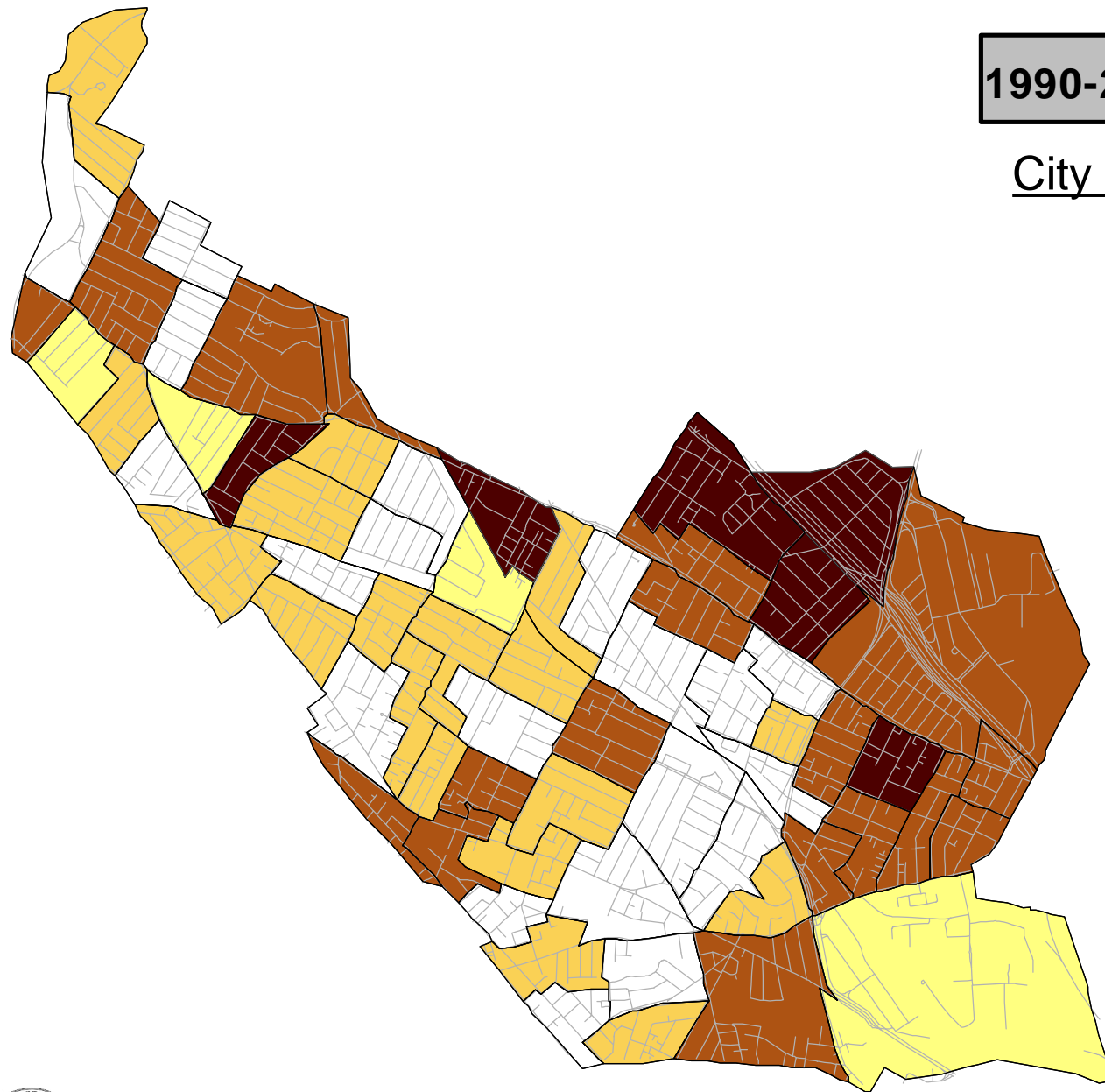
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**APPENDIX F:**  
**MAPS**

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# 1990-2000 POPULATION CHANGE\*

## City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000  
Data presented by Block Group

\* Total Citywide Population  
Increased by 1,828 persons



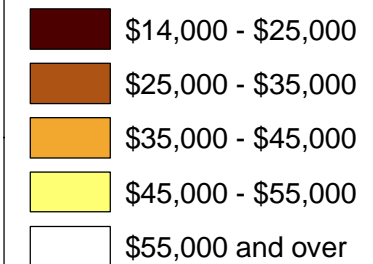
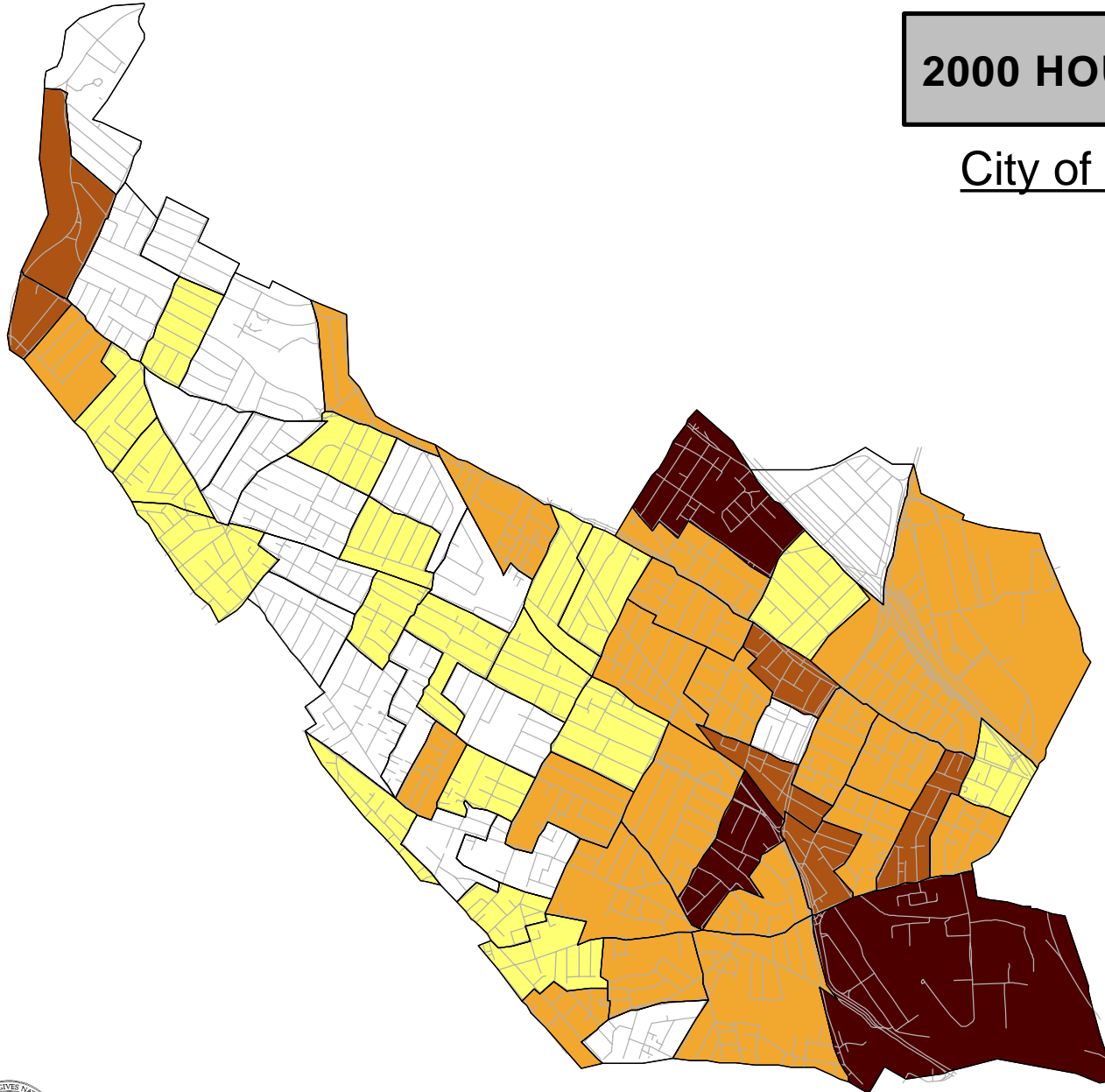
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville



Map - #

## 2000 HOUSEHOLD MEDIAN INCOME

### City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000  
Data presented by Block Group



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville

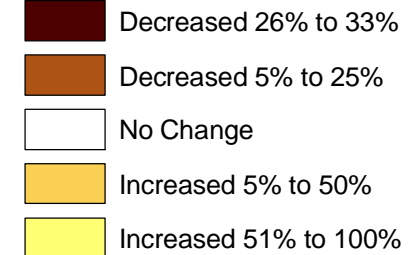
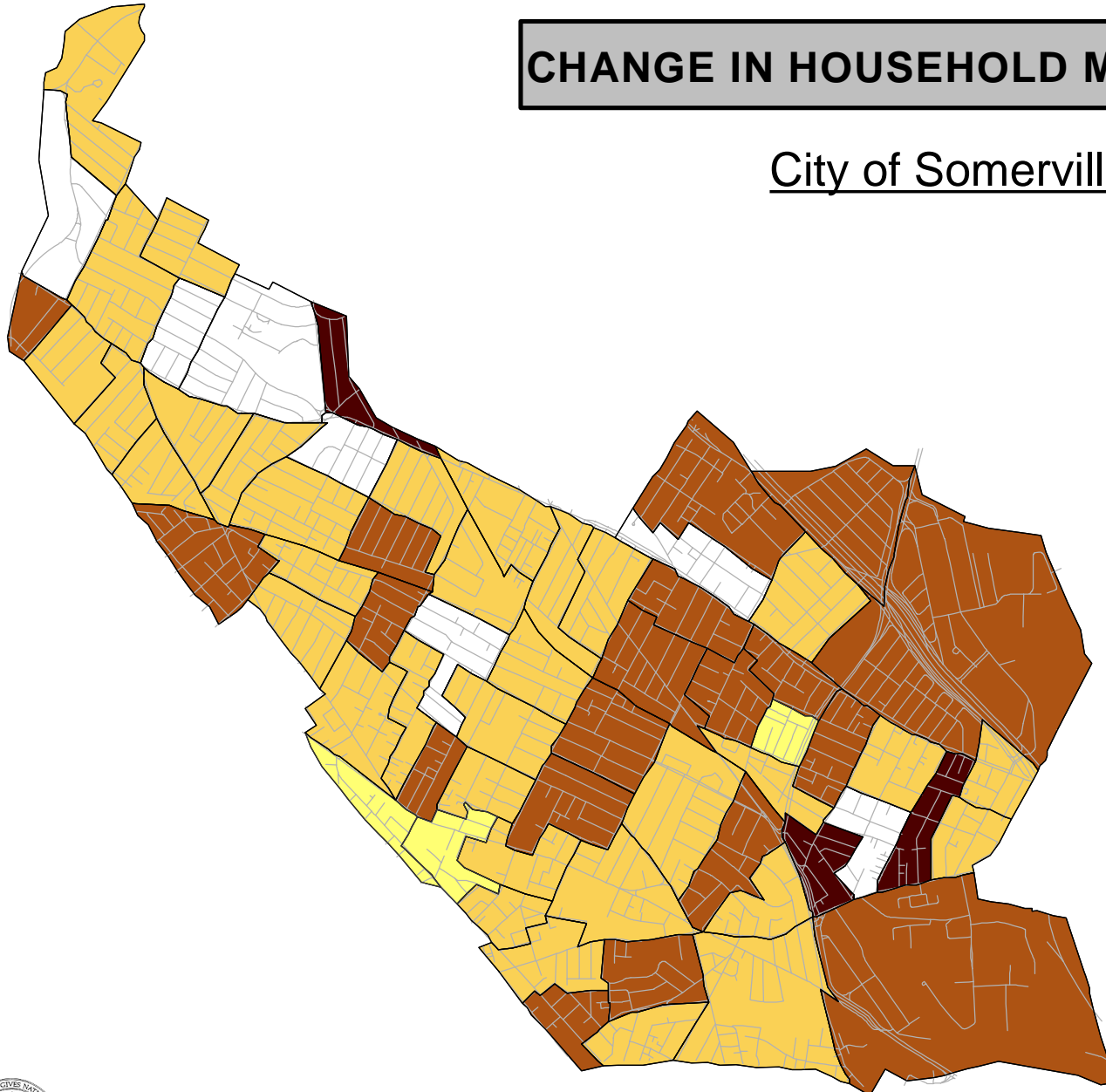


Map - 7



# CHANGE IN HOUSEHOLD MEDIAN INCOME, 1990-2000\*

## City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Data presented by Block Group

\* Adjusted for Inflation between  
1990 and 2000 (32%)



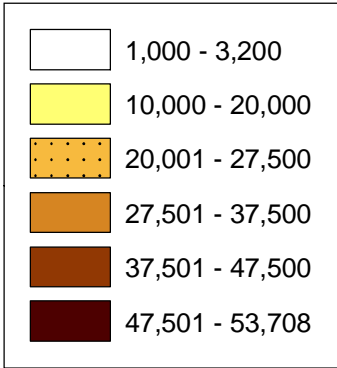
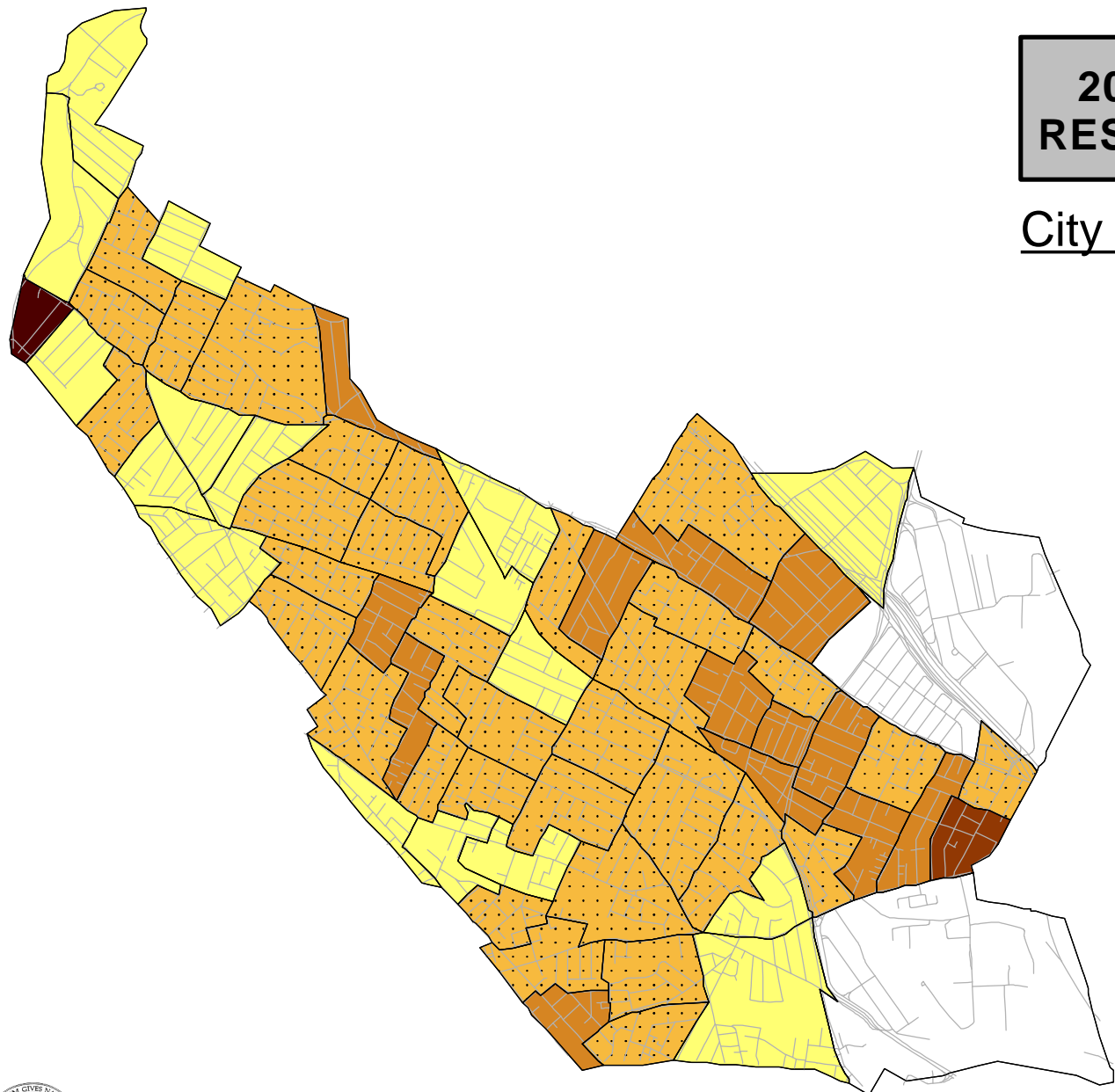
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville



Map - #

# 2000 POPULATION DENSITY RESIDENTS PER SQUARE MILE

City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000  
Data presented by Block Group



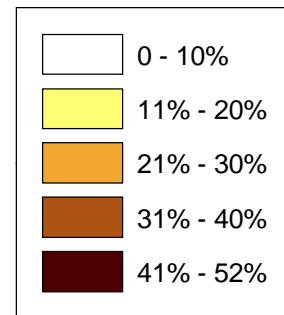
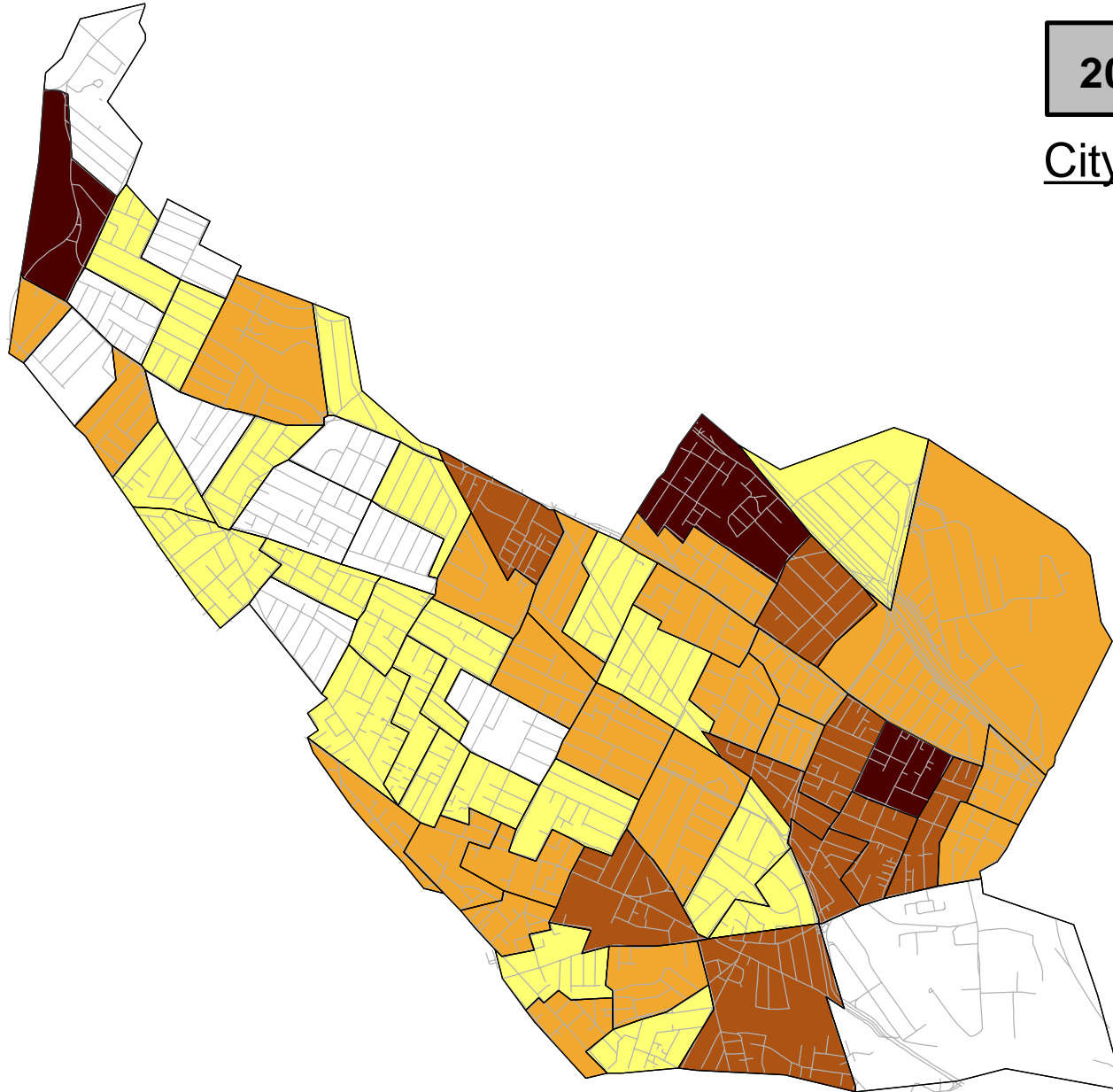
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville



Map - 8

## 2000 MINORITY POPULATION

### City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000  
Data presented by Block Group



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville

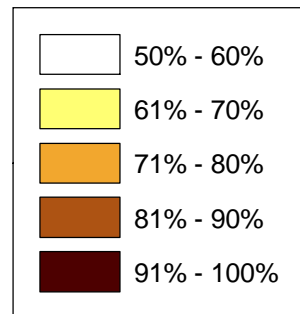
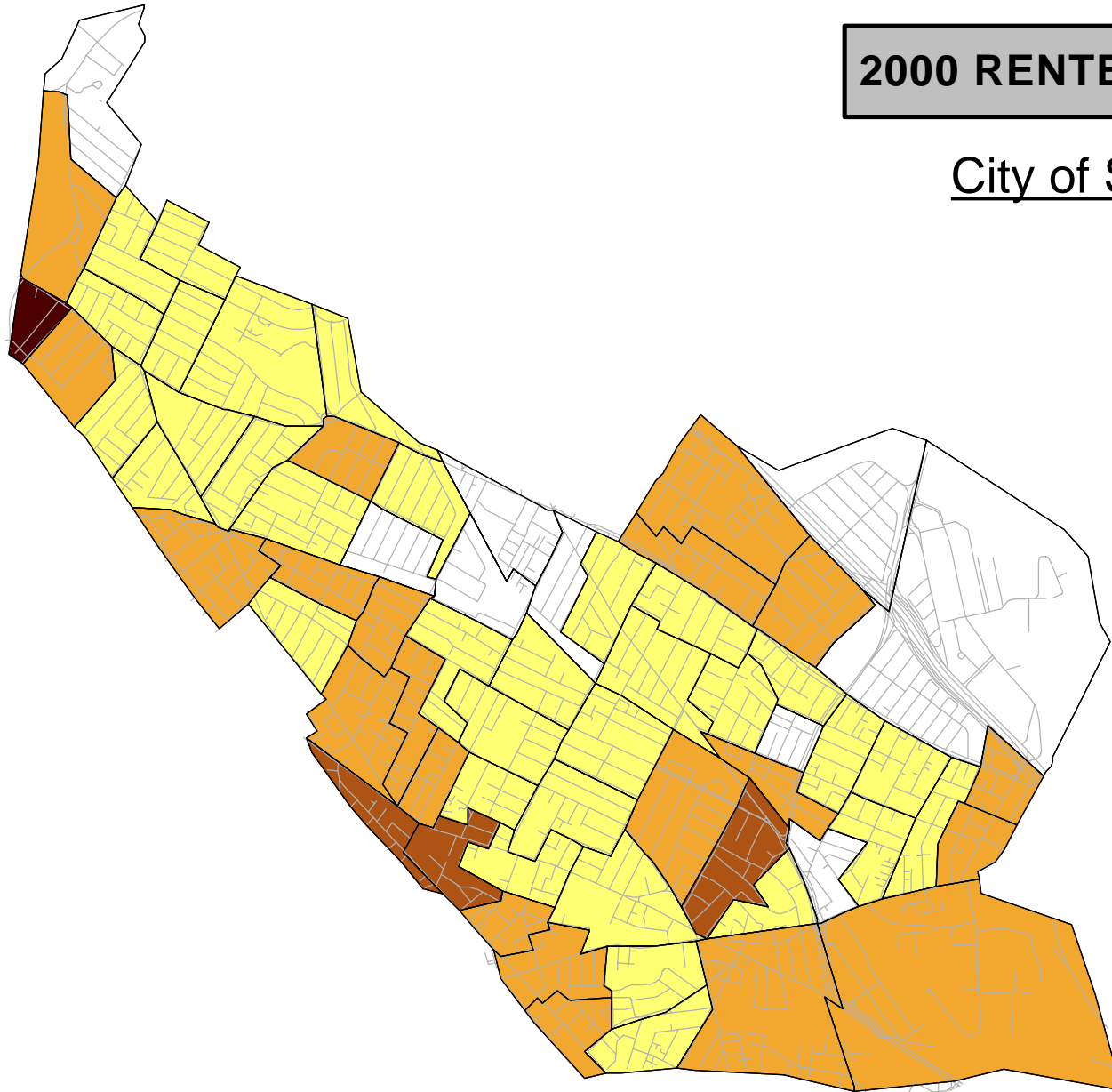
0.5 0.25 0 0.5 1 Mile



Map - 11

## 2000 RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS

### City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000  
Data presented by Block Group



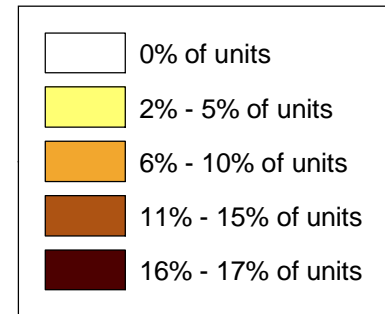
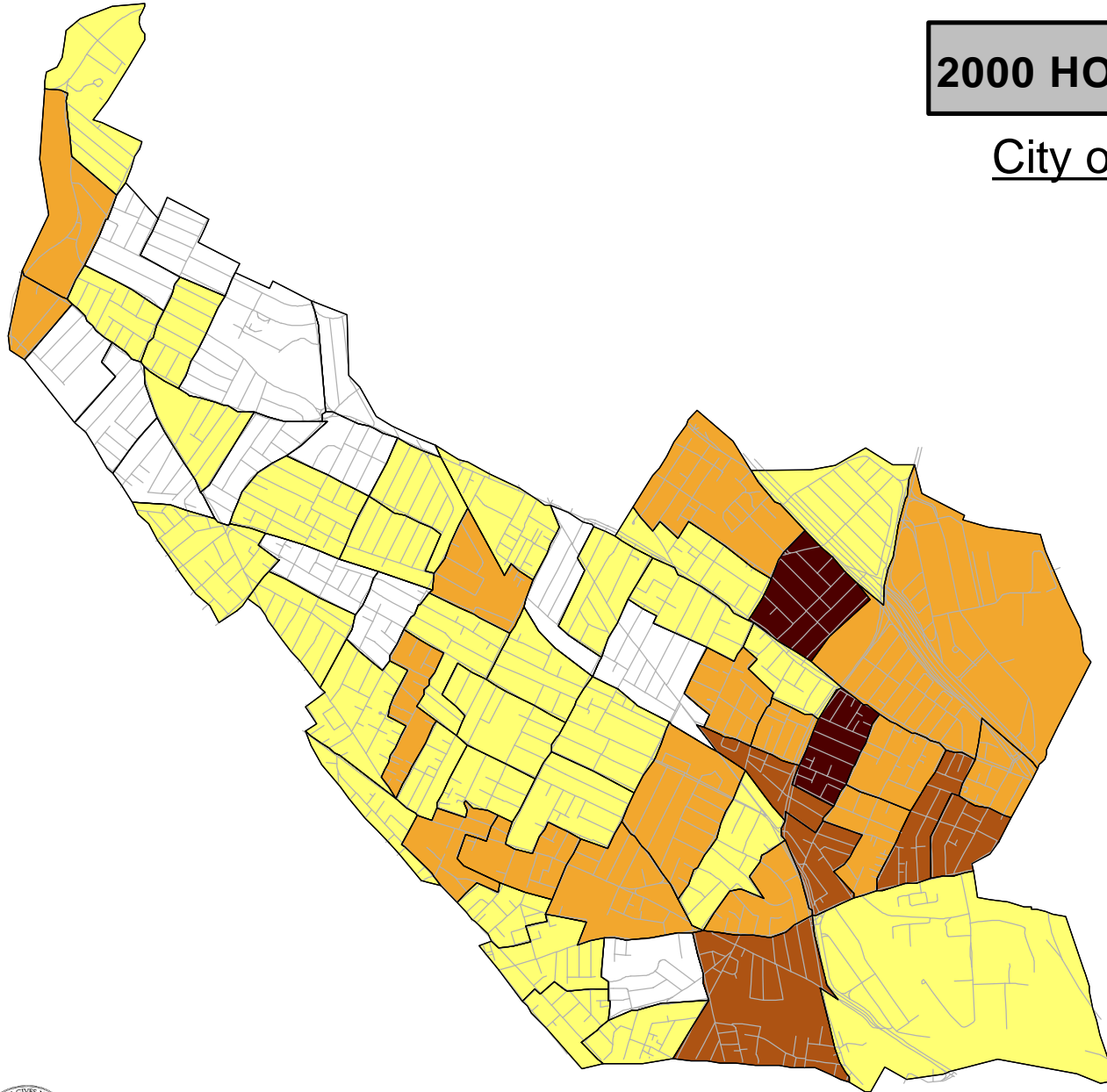
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville



Map - 9

## 2000 HOUSEHOLD OVERCROWDING\*

### City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Data presented by Block Group

\* Overcrowding is defined here as housing units with more than one occupant per room



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville

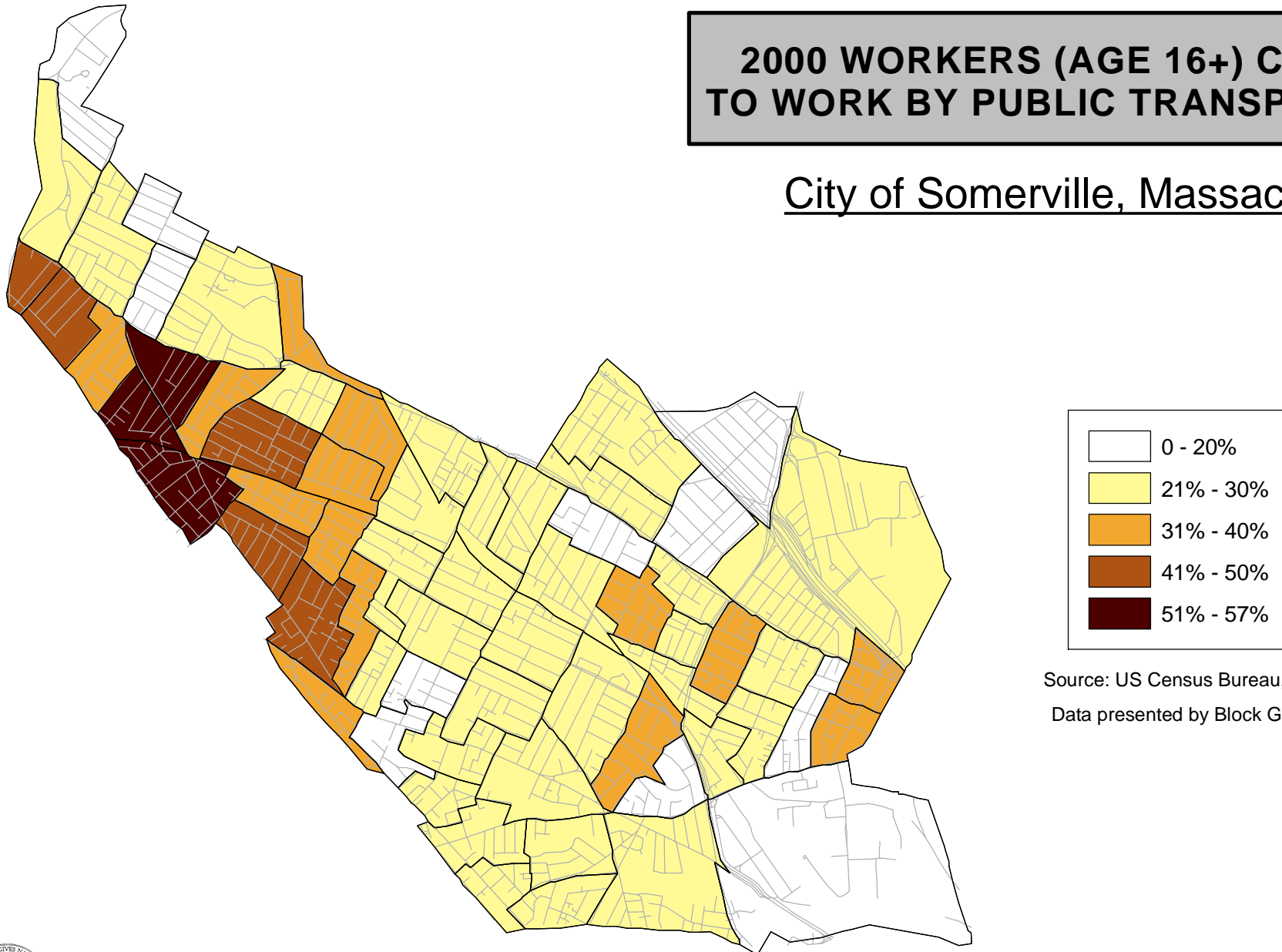


Map - #



## 2000 WORKERS (AGE 16+) COMMUTE TO WORK BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Data presented by Block Group



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Mapping prepared by City of Somerville



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