



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

Somerville CPA



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

MINUTES
MARCH 5, 2014

MEMBERS

- Michael A. Capuano, Chair
- Dick Bauer, Vice Chair
- Tanya Cafarella
- Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello
- Michael Fager
- Arn Franzen
- Ezra Glenn
- Courtney Koslow
- Uma Murugan

STAFF

- Emily Monea

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) held a meeting at 7:00pm in the Board of Aldermen Committee Room at City Hall at 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143. An audio recording of the meeting is available upon request.

- Members Present** Chair Michael Capuano, Vice Chair Dick Bauer, Tanya Cafarella (arrived late), Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello, Michael Fager, Arn Franzen, Ezra Glenn, Courtney Koslow, and Uma Murugan
- Members Absent** None
- Staff Present** Emily Monea
- Others Present** Aldermen Matthew McLaughlin, Dana LeWinter, Hayes Morrison, Brad Rawson, and Amie Hayes

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:00.

Agenda item 1: Presentation to and discussion with Board of Aldermen

Ms. Monea presented and the Committee and Aldermen McLaughlin discussed the material in the presentation attached at the end of these minutes.

Agenda item 2: Presentation from and discussion with Dana LeWinter, Hayes Morrison, and Brad Rawson from the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development

Mr. Rawson arrived at approximately 7:30. He presented and the meeting attendees discussed the material related to SomerVision in the presentation attached at the end of these minutes.

Ms. LeWinter and Ms. Morrison arrived at approximately 7:45.

Ms. LeWinter led a discussion about affordable housing issues in Somerville.

Ms. Cafarella arrived at approximately 8:00.

Ms. Morrison presented and the meeting attendees discussed the material related to parks and open space in the presentation attached at the end of these minutes.

Ms. Hayes spoke briefly about historic preservation in Somerville.

Agenda item 3: Public comment period

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Agenda item 4: Community Preservation Plan

The Committee will hold two public hearings for the plan on Wednesday, May 7th at the West Somerville Neighborhood School and on Monday, May 12th at the East Somerville Community School.

Ms. Monea is continuing to work on a rough draft of the plan. The Committee will work on the plan and plan for the public hearings at its April meeting.

Agenda item 5: Other business

Ms. Monea requested that the Committee members encourage their friends and colleagues on relevant boards, commissions, and community groups to attend the CPA information sessions on Monday, March 10th.

Agenda item 6: Approval of minutes from February 11th meeting

Upon motion from the Vice Chair, seconded by the Chair, the Committee voted 8-0 to approve the minutes, with Ms. Murugan abstaining as she was not present at the February 11th meeting.

Agenda item 7: Next meeting: Wednesday, April 2nd at 7pm at City Hall, third floor conference room

Meeting Adjournment

Upon motion from the Chair, seconded by Ms. Duclos-Orsello, the Committee voted 9-0 to adjourn at 9:00.

Somerville CPA

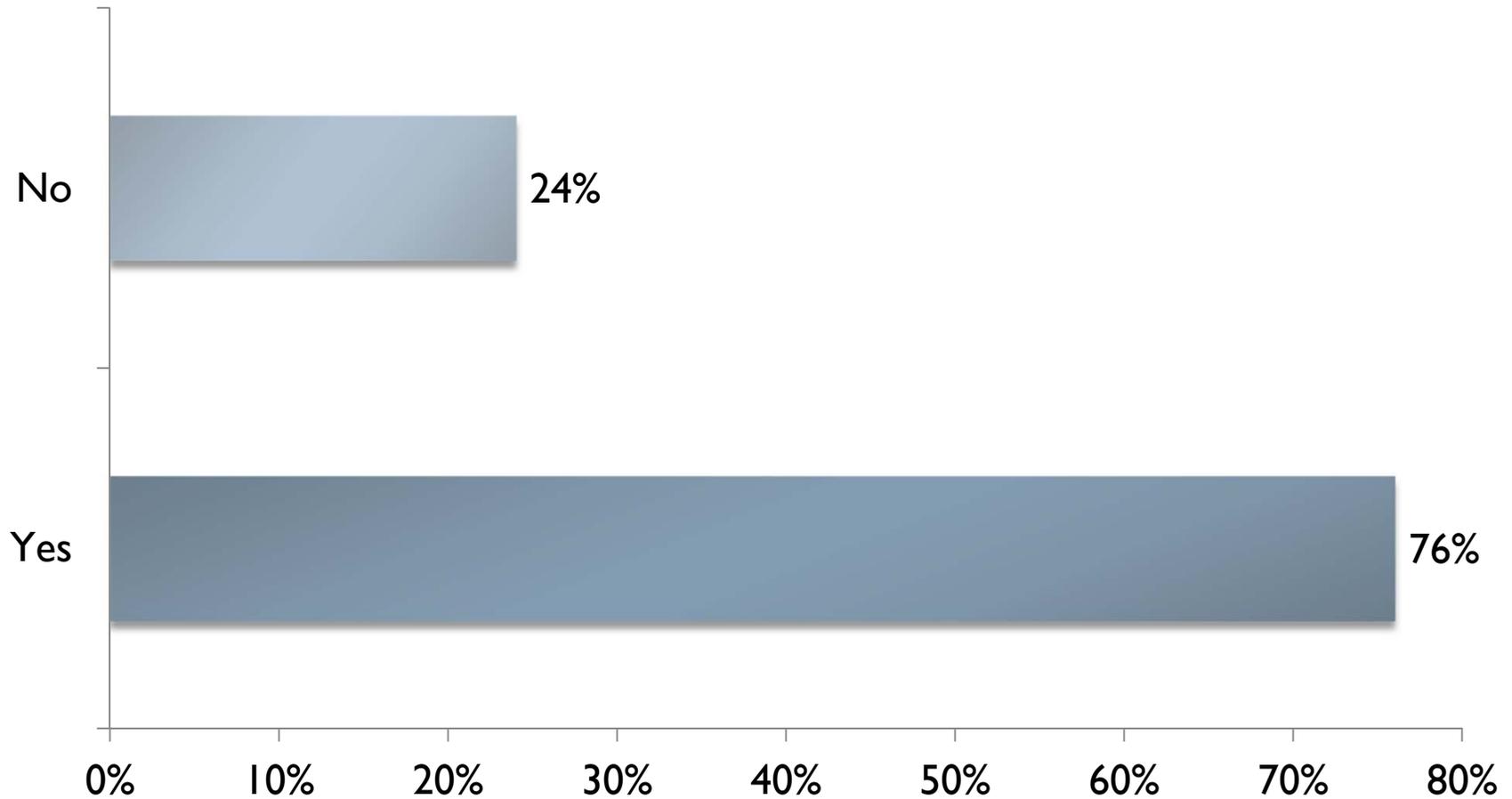


Community Preservation Committee

March 5, 2014

CPA Passage in Somerville

November 2012 Election Results



Committee Members

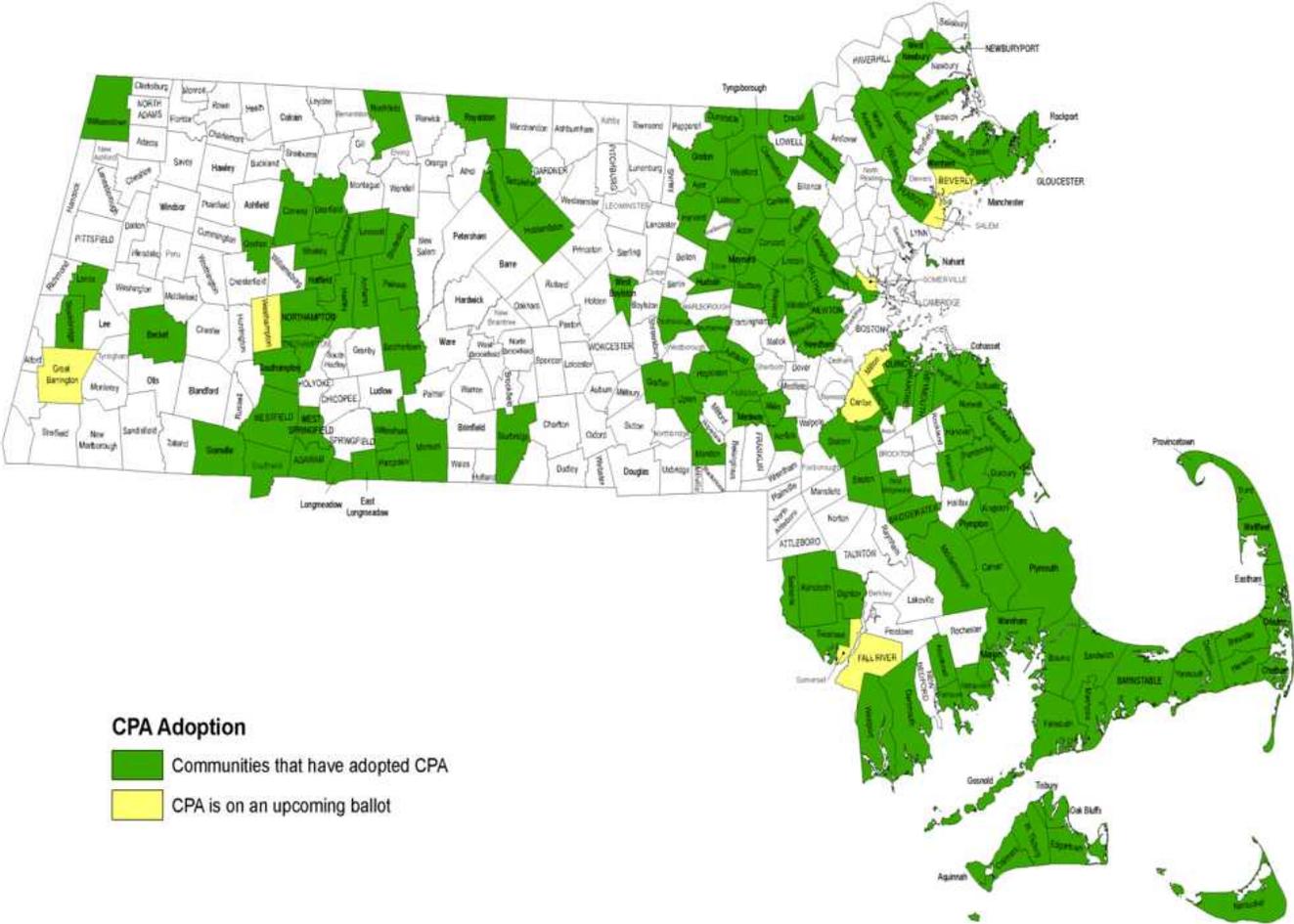
Member	Representative From	Initial Term Length
Michael Capuano, Chair	Planning Board	2 years
Dick Bauer, Vice Chair	Historic Preservation Commission	3 years
Tanya Cafarella	Housing Authority	2 years
Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello	General public	2 years
Michael Fager	Conservation Commission	3 years
Arn Franzen	Parks & Open Space Department	1 year
Ezra Glenn	General public	1 year
Courtney Koslow	General public	1 year
Uma Murugan	General public	3 years

CPA Manager: Emily Monea

emonea@somervillema.gov

617-625-6600 x2118

155 CPA Communities



Accomplishments

- ▶ 19,200 acres of open space preserved
- ▶ Funding for over 7,300 housing units
- ▶ 3,200 separate historic appropriations
- ▶ Over 1,000 appropriations for recreation
- ▶ Over a billion dollars raised for CPA projects (surcharge + match)

Accomplishments



How do CPA Projects Happen?

Project applicants submit applications to
Community Preservation Committee (CPC)



CPC reviews projects, gets input



CPC recommends projects to Board of
Aldermen (BOA)



Majority vote of BOA required for projects
to receive funding

Allowable Projects

	Community Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space	Outdoor Recreation
Acquire	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Preserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	Yes	No	No	No
Rehabilitate and/or Restore	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds	Yes	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds	Yes

Community Preservation Plan

- ▶ Plan establishes Committee's priorities for funding projects & criteria for evaluating them
- ▶ Process & requirements
 - ▶ Study “needs, possibilities, and resources” of Somerville regarding affordable housing, historic preservation, open space, and outdoor recreation
 - ▶ Hold at least one public meeting
 - ▶ Consult with relevant boards and commissions
 - ▶ Update annually

Key Funding Sources

- ▶ **Surcharge revenue**
 - ▶ FY14 estimate: \$1.15 million
- ▶ **City appropriation**
 - ▶ Discretionary, up to \$1.15 million
- ▶ **State match**
 - ▶ ~25-50% on surcharge revenue and City appropriation
 - ▶ First match in November 2014

Estimated November 2014 Match			
	Without City appropriation	With \$1.15 million City appropriation	Difference
Low match rate	\$344,000	\$740,000	\$396,000
High match rate	\$586,000	\$1,264,000	\$678,000

Annual Budget

- ▶ Required minimum spending (or reserve):
 - ▶ 10% for affordable housing projects
 - ▶ 10% for historic preservation projects
 - ▶ 10% for open space & recreation projects

- ▶ Optional:
 - ▶ Up to 5% for administrative expenses
 - ▶ Additional project appropriations
 - ▶ Balance goes in a “budgeted reserve”

Borrowing

- ▶ Can bond against surcharge revenue and City appropriation, not state match
- ▶ 2/3 vote of BOA needed to pass bonded projects
- ▶ Cannot pay debt service on non-CPA bonds

Borrowing Scenarios		
Scenario	CPA revenue dedicated to debt service	Estimated supportable debt
1	\$2.3 million	\$28.7 million
2	\$1.15 million	\$14.3 million
3	\$575,000	\$7.2 million

Summary of Responsibilities

Community Preservation Committee	Board of Aldermen
Create Community Preservation Plan & application	Approve City appropriation into CPA fund
Prepare annual CPA budget for BOA	Approve annual CPA budget
Make project recommendations to BOA	Approve project recommendations

Tentative Timeline

Year	Month	Meeting
2014	March	Work on CP Plan & plan for public hearings
	April	Work on CP plan & plan for public hearings
	May	Public hearings
	June	Debrief public hearings & work on CP plan
	July	Work on CP plan, pre-application, and application
	August	Approve & post CP plan, pre-application, and application
	September	Respond to pre-applications
	October	Respond to pre-applications
	November	
	December	Applications due; review
2015		Review & vote on applications; send recommendations to BOA

somer villema.gov/cpa

Public Hearings

- ▶ **Dates & locations**

- ▶ Wednesday, May 7th at West Somerville Neighborhood School
- ▶ Monday, May 12th at East Somerville Community School

- ▶ **Process**

- ▶ Presentation?
- ▶ Activities?
- ▶ Extend public comment period?
- ▶ Release draft plan in advance?



Somerville Vision

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Comprehensive Plan | 2010-2030



Endorsed by the
Somerville Board of Aldermen
April 12th, 2012

Adopted by the
Somerville Planning Board
April 19th, 2012

*Somerville: an Exceptional Place to
Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Family*



Foreword: Our Shared Values

Somerville Vision

It's all about values.

In 2009, a series of public workshops gave Somerville residents the opportunity to articulate what is most important to them. Even though our neighborhoods and backgrounds are unique, there is a remarkable consensus as to what matters most in our community.



In Somerville, We:

Celebrate the **diversity** of our people, cultures, housing and economy.

Foster the unique character of our residents, neighborhoods, hills and squares, and the strength of our **community** spirit as expressed in our history, our cultural and social life, and our deep sense of civic engagement.

Invest in the growth of a resilient **economic base** that is centered around transit, generates a wide variety of job opportunities, creates an active daytime population, supports independent local businesses, and secures fiscal self-sufficiency.

Promote a dynamic urban streetscape that embraces public transportation, reduces dependence on the automobile, and is **accessible**, inviting and safe for all pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.

Build a **sustainable** future through strong environmental leadership, balanced transportation modes, engaging recreational and community spaces, exceptional schools and educational opportunities, improved community health, varied and affordable housing options, and effective stewardship of our natural resources.

Commit to continued **innovation** and affirm our responsibility to current and future generations in all of our endeavors: business, technology, education, arts and government.

Somerville: an Exceptional Place to Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Family



Massachusetts Laws

[Massachusetts Constitution](#)

[General Laws](#)

[Rules](#)

[Session Laws](#)

General Laws

[Print Page](#)

PART I	ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT (Chapters 1 through 182)	 PREV NEXT
TITLE VII	CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS	 PREV NEXT
CHAPTER 41	OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS	 PREV NEXT
Section 81D	Master plan; economic development supplement	 PREV NEXT

Section 81D. A planning board established in any city or town under section eighty-one A shall make a master plan of such city or town or such part or parts thereof as said board may deem advisable and from time to time may extend or perfect such plan.

Appendix 4

The SomerVision Process



Process Flow Chart

The three-year public process yielded an incredible amount of buy-in from the SomerVision Steering Committee, and from the hundreds of community members who gave their time planning for Somerville's future. More than sixty public meetings were conducted as part of the SomerVision process. Thousands of volunteer hours were recorded. The result is truly a Comprehensive Plan.





O Prefeito Joseph A. Curtatone convida você:



O SomerVision Open House

Os interessados em saber sobre a extensão da Linha Verde? O estado do desenvolvimento de Assembly Square? O futuro da União Square? O zoneamento da Broadway? Você quer saber as últimas atualizações em esforços da sustentabilidade de Somerville? Como o planejamento da Estrada Comunitária está processando? Que sobre o projeto do hotel no Davis Square?

Por favor, junte-se a nos e a nossos parceiros na comunidade para ouvir sobre o que estão acontecendo nas vizinhanças através da cidade e como você pode ser envolvido.

Quando: Sábado, 25 de Abril de 2009 11:00AM - 3:00PM
Onde: Escola Argenziano, 290 Washington Street, no Cafetorium



Para obter mais informação, contate:

O Departamento do Planejamento Estratégico e Desenvolvimento Comunitário
Prefeitura de Somerville
(617) 625-6600 x2500, kcraig@somervillema.gov
O visite <http://www.somervillema.gov>



El Alcalde Joseph A. Curtatone le invita a :

Exhibición SomerVision

¿Cómo es la **visión** que usted ayudó a crear aplicada?
¿Cómo se verá influida su **calidad de vida** por el Plan Integral?
Únase a amigos y vecinos en esta informativa **conversación comunitaria** sobre la dirección que estamos estableciendo para nuestro futuro.

¡Venga a uno o más de estos eventos!

Martes, **Marzo 1, 2011** - Argenziano School, 290 Washington Street

Martes, **Marzo 15, 2011** - Holiday Inn, 30 Washington Street

Lunes, **Marzo 28, 2011** - TAB Building, 167 Holland Street

Jueves, **Marzo 31, 2011** - The Armory, 191 Highland Avenue

Todos los eventos - 6:30pm - 9:00pm

Por favor confirme a:
somervision@somervillema.gov

O
(617) 625-6600 x2500
Por favor llame si necesita traducción
Por favor, visite:
<http://www.somervillema.gov>



Únase a una conversación sobre el futuro de Somerville





Somerville's
only independent
community
newspaper

THE Somerville News

www.TheSomervilleNews.com



Founded 1969

News@TheSomervilleNews.com

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Planning Somerville's Future

William C. Shelton

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

(The opinions and views expressed in the commentaries of The Somerville News belong solely to the authors of those commentaries and do not reflect the views or opinions of The Somerville News, its staff or publishers.)

If you don't know where you're going, any path will take you there. That was too often the case in the past, when city officials did not set clear goals for the city's future guided by an agreed-upon vision for the future.

They approved developments that generate relatively low city revenues on land that could support higher-value uses. They approved conversions of commercial properties with high tax rates and low municipal costs, to residential uses with low tax rates and high costs. The result was a structural fiscal deficit.

Now, the mayor wants to set destinations and define the paths that will take us to them, and he wants to involve as many Somerville residents as possible in doing so. Leading the effort are staff from his Strategic Office of Planning and Community Development (SOPCD).

Keith Craig, who is guiding the effort, explains that a provision in Massachusetts General Law authorizes municipalities that wish to, to prepare a comprehensive plan. It's comprehensive because it includes plans for economic development, housing, open space, city services, recreation, and transportation; and because it must account for how each of those elements interacts; and because it must anticipate future trends.

Imagine the nested Chinese boxes or carved Russian dolls that are sold in gift shops. You open one to find another. You open the next to find yet another, and so on through a dozen boxes.

Now imagine that Somerville is the middle box. Within it are boxes that represent the elements being planned for and conditions shaping them within the city. Surrounding it, boxes range outward, from regional dynamics to global economic forces. Finally, imagine that each box is in a state of continual change, affecting and sometimes transforming the boxes around and within it.

60-member committee to plan for Somerville's future

By [Meghann Ackerman](#)

Wicked Local Somerville

Posted Jan 09, 2010 @ 12:50 PM

Somerville — Over the next 20 years, there will be a lot of change in Somerville and some of it, the city hopes, can be planned for.

During December and January, the city held a series of "visioning" meetings where residents could give their opinions on how they would like to see Somerville develop. The final meeting was held Tuesday night.

By late fall, there will be a draft of the Somerville Comprehensive Plan, a document that will include plans and goals for the city over the next 20 years, said Office of Strategic Planning and Development Executive Director Monica Lamboy.

One of the biggest changes Somerville will see is an increase in T access. An Orange Line stop is planned for Assembly Square and by 2014, Somerville is supposed to see an extension of the Green Line with several stops in the city. Lamboy said the new stops would put 85 percent of Somervillians within a half-mile of mass transit, as opposed to the 15 percent who are now.

"I think the transportation is one of the reasons we're here," she said. "How do we integrate this new system into the city, and how do we take advantage of opportunities that will arise?"

At Tuesday's visioning meeting, participants sat at tables and shared their ideas. A popular concern seemed to be affordability, but Lamboy said a variety of ideas and concerns have come out of the four meetings like appreciating Somerville's diversity, keeping neighborhoods intact, creating jobs and open space.

With the "visioning" piece of the planning process over, a 60-member steering committee will be taking ideas from those meetings to write a vision statement in January. In February, Lamboy said the committee would start working on the goals and policy that would be in the Somerville Comprehensive Plan and more community meetings would be held to get resident feedback. A draft of the plan should be done in the late fall, she said.



3. Our Vision: The SomerVision Numbers

SomerVision *It's all about aspiration.*

Successful communities set goals that are both ambitious and achievable. The SomerVision Steering Committee worked to translate shared values into the SomerVision Numbers: a series of aspirational targets for economic development, open space improvement, housing growth, transportation and land use. The SomerVision Numbers were carefully tested to make sure that they are consistent with the community's shared values: balance, sustainability, affordability and vitality.



30,000 New Jobs as part of a responsible plan to create opportunity for all Somerville workers and entrepreneurs



125 New Acres of Publicly-Accessible Open Space as part of our realistic plan to provide high-quality and well-programmed community spaces



6,000 New Housing Units - 1,200 Permanently Affordable as part of a sensitive plan to attract and retain Somerville's best asset: its people.



50% of New Trips via Transit, Bike, or Walking as part of an equitable plan for access and circulation to and through the City.

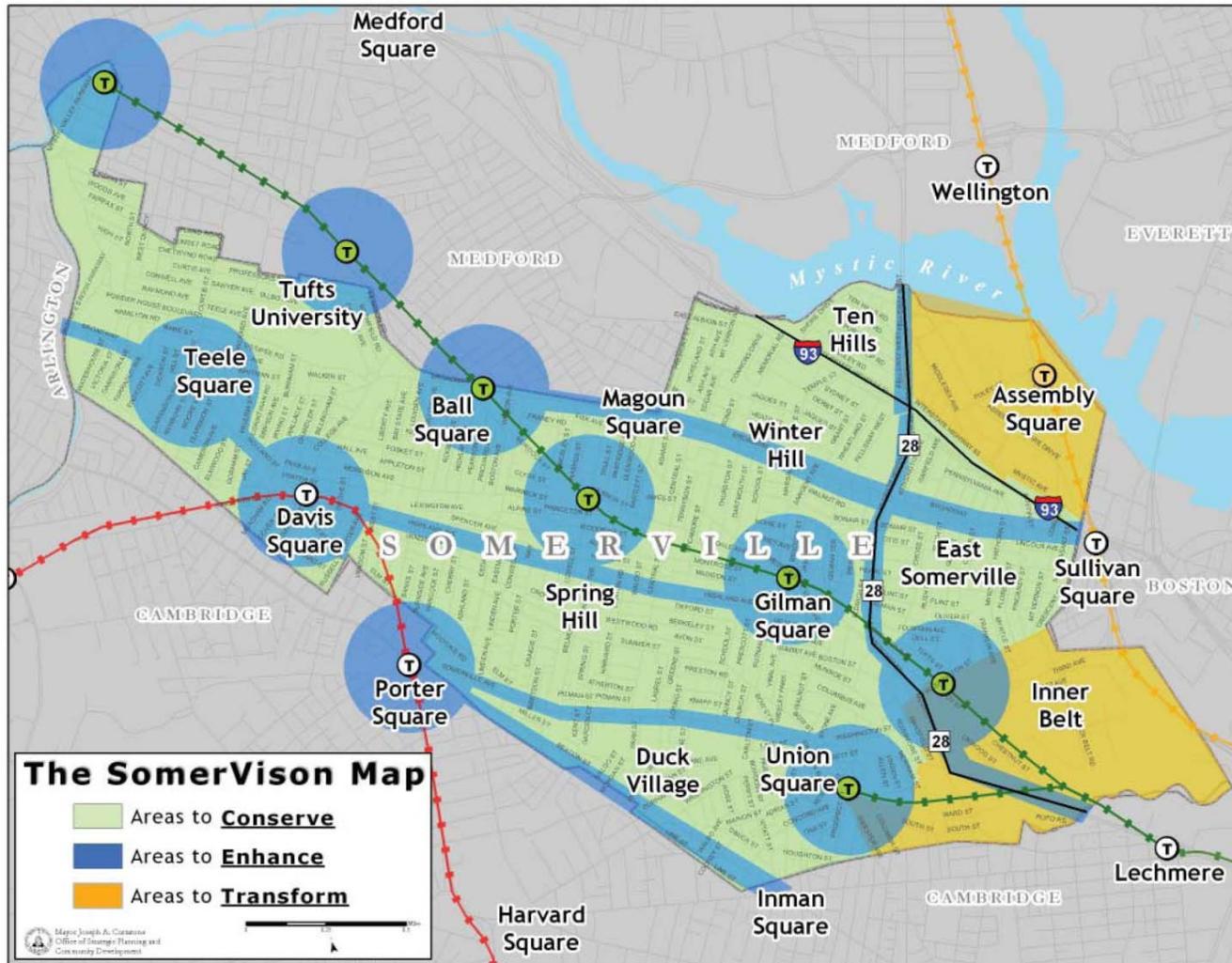


85% of New Development in Transformative Areas as part of a predictable land use plan that protects neighborhood character

The SomerVision Numbers cannot be separated into parts and cannot be separated from the SomerVision Map in order to advocate for a specific action by the City. They must be viewed in the context of entire Comprehensive Plan including the backup information in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Somerville: an Exceptional Place to Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Family

Our Vision: The SomerVision Map



The SomerVision Map illustrates our Vision for the community to:

Conserve

our great residential neighborhoods

Enhance

our funky squares and commercial corridors

Transform

opportunity areas on the eastern and southern edges of Somerville.



Photo: Juliette Melton

Appendix 2

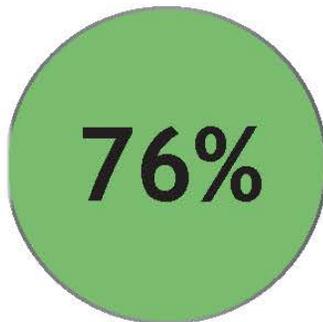
The SomerVision Numbers: Areas to Conserve, Enhance & Transform

Land Area

Somerville only covers about 4 square miles of land area, which translates to roughly 2,640 acres of land. The SomerVision Numbers are based upon the SomerVision Map, which is a simplification of the Future Land Context Map into three key concepts: Areas to Conserve, Areas to Enhance, and Areas to Transform.

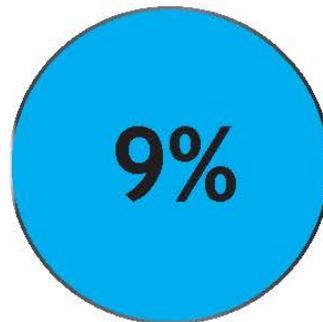
The SomerVision Map identifies Assembly Square, Inner Belt, Brickbottom, Boynton Yards and the southeastern part of Union Square as Areas to Transform. Together, the Areas to Transform cover approximately 365 acres of land, or 15% of Somerville. Roughly 9% of the City is located in Areas to Enhance, along corridors and key squares. The remaining 76% is located in Areas to Conserve. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that 85% of new development over the next twenty years should occur in the Areas to Transform.

Areas to Conserve



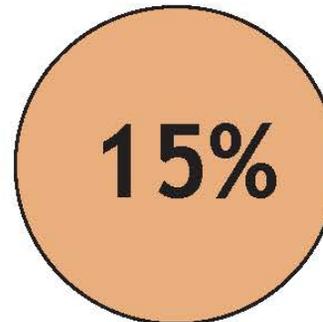
2,000 acres

Areas to Enhance



237 acres

Areas to Transform



365 acres

SomerVision

What's it all about?

The SomerVision Comprehensive Plan is both a neighborhood preservation plan and a plan for growth. The three-year public process confirmed that our residents want to conserve our great residential neighborhoods, enhance our funky squares and commercial corridors, and transform opportunity areas on the City's eastern and southern borders.



Appendix 2

The SomerVision Numbers: Share of Housing Growth

How Much Housing?

Housing growth will help us to continue to meet demand and preserve affordability. The SomerVision Comprehensive Plan lays out an expectation that Somerville needs more commercial development than residential development. But the plan also recognizes that our Areas to Transform need housing development to become true neighborhoods with an attractive mix of daytime and nighttime activity. The plan assumes an average of 1,100 square feet per unit. Based on this, approximately 38% of new development should be residential.

Housing Development

What's it all about?

Our nation is experiencing an urban renaissance, and there is a tremendous demand for housing in places like Somerville. A recent study by the national research group Reconnecting America estimates that market demand for new housing close to rapid transit exceeds 600,000 housing units for metro Boston. That translates to roughly 2,000 new housing units for every existing and new station on the MBTA system. While Somerville cannot meet that demand, it can support new transit-oriented housing.

	Share of City Growth	New Housing	New Residential Square Feet
Assembly Square	29%	2,500 units	2.75 million
Inner Belt	26%	1,000 units	1.1 million
Brickbottom	15%	750 units	0.82 million
Boynton Yards	8%	500 units	0.55 million
Union Square	6%	350 units	0.38 million
Total	85%	5,100 units	5.6 million

Appendix 2

The SomerVision Numbers: Changing the Status Quo on Housing

Why Does it Matter?

Between 2000 and 2010, Somerville grew by roughly 1,500 housing units. The vast majority of these were built in our Areas to Conserve, and controversial projects have pitted neighbor against neighbor. The SomerVision Comprehensive Plan proposes to change the status quo by channeling market forces away from Areas to Conserve, and toward Areas to Enhance and Areas to Transform. This strategy could slow the pace of development in areas where growth is not a priority of the plan.



Status Quo
2000 - 2010
(10-year period)

+ 1,250 units + 250 units +/- 0 units

SomerVision
2010 - 2030
(20-year period)

← + 900 units → + 5,100 units





American Planning Association
Massachusetts Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

2012
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
AWARD

hereby recognizes...

SOMERVISION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

...for a plan, program or process of unusually high merit.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Felipe Schwarz'.

Felipe R. Schwarz, AICP
APA-MA Chapter President

Neighborhoods

Neighborhood Character



Somerville's architectural history is one of our greatest assets. Several properties on Summer Street recently received historic preservation awards.



Historic homes on Columbus Avenue have been preserved, adding character and value to the neighborhood. Owners have restored original siding, trim and windows, or installed historically-accurate replacements.

B. Policy: The City should ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents, while respecting the character of the neighborhood.

1. Action: For small home improvement projects such as windows, dormers and small additions that currently require special permits, establish a more efficient design review system that will reduce review time but continue to ensure that neighbors are protected from impacts of these improvements.
2. Action: Establish design standards for new windows, dormers and small additions that use illustrations and clear language to explain project impacts and project review processes.
3. Action: Establish guidelines that use illustrations and clear language for residents seeking to change fences, add landscaping, install replacement windows, and change siding materials.
4. Action: Establish clear design standards for circumstances where more intensive housing development would meet community needs while reflecting neighborhood context.

C. Policy: The City should continue to protect and preserve its architectural history.

1. Action: Continue to pursue Historic District designation for properties worthy of protection from impacts of exterior changes.
2. Action: Ensure that designated properties have access to grants, loans, and zoning opportunities that will allow for contextual rehabilitation and upgrades while minimizing financial impact on owners.
3. Action: Support state and federal historic preservation tax credit programs, and encourage the establishment of more tax credit options for small historic properties, while encouraging owners to participate in the designation of appropriate structures to the National Register to make them eligible for federal credits.
4. Action: Use Neighborhood Preservation Districts where appropriate to prevent the demolition of residential properties that contribute to neighborhood context, while ensuring that contextually appropriate change is defined and facilitated.

Commercial Corridors, Squares and Growth Districts

Financial Self-Sufficiency



Historic interpretation centers can help tell the story of our heritage and attract tourists to Somerville.



SomerStreets celebrates neighborhoods with a series of festivals throughout the summer.

D. Policy: The City should expand the local economy by leveraging the arts and historic and cultural tourism.

1. Action: Increase the number of out-of-town visitors by promoting arts, cultural and other civic events.
2. Action: Document historic structures, places and events and incorporate into promotional and marketing efforts.
3. Action: Expand Local Historic District designation and encourage application for National Historic designation of significant properties to preserve our shared history and sense of place.
4. Action: Develop historic interpretation centers at Prospect Hill, Powder House and other significant historic sites in Somerville.
5. Action: Convene a working group to develop a Tourism Action Plan.
6. Action: Seek to increase the inventory of hotel and bed & breakfast rooms.



Hotel Development in Somerville

Hotels, inns, and bed & breakfasts are important economic engines. In addition to bringing visitors to shop and dine in Somerville's local business districts, hotels generate substantial tax revenues for the City. Today, only two hotels and one bed & breakfast operate in Somerville, but market research has shown that demand exists for additional facilities. To meet this demand, projects are planned in Assembly Square, Davis Square and Porter Square.

Neighborhoods: Success Story!

Making Somerville an even more exceptional place to Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Family

Preservation Awards Program

Somerville's history is one of our greatest assets. The American Revolution began here, and our urban environment tells powerful stories from every period of history. The City has developed a series of creative partnerships to publicize Somerville's story, including the well-known Preservation Awards Program.

Recognizing Preservation Efforts

Each fall the City identifies properties that have been rehabilitated or renovated in a manner consistent with the structure's architectural history. The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) reviews all projects and selects the winning entries.

The Preservation Awards Program includes a unique element for career development for Somerville High School students. Photographs of the winning properties are provided to high school teachers in the Art Department and the Pre-Engineering Program. Students are given an assignment to interpret and reproduce images of winning properties using their chosen media. Visual artists use watercolors or chalk; students with an interest in traditional architecture might prepare pencil drawings; and aspiring engineers prepare digital models using Computer Aided Design and Drafting (CADD) software. All students are encouraged to perform site visits with City staff, property owners and local architects and engineers.

Celebrating Preservation

Through partnerships with local businesses, winning artwork is professionally framed and displayed around the City. An annual Preservation Awards ceremony is held to honor property owners, students, faculty members and community volunteers for their roles in this unique partnership. The Somerville Preservation Awards Program illustrates how public education, historic preservation and economic development go hand in hand in Somerville, and how effective stewardship of our cultural legacy depends on our ability to get future generations excited about Somerville's past.



2010 Awards Ceremony



2011 Student Project



2011 Awards Ceremony

Resources

Parks & Recreation

Recreation

What's it all about?

Public spaces bring Somerville residents together, and serve as a stage to showcase our legendary civic pride. They also encourage our residents and children to lead healthy and active lifestyles. We must continue to build new parks, plazas and gardens, while maintaining older public spaces and making sure that they are actively used.



VI. Goal: Create and program a network of vibrant public open spaces and shared use paths throughout the city that are multi-purpose, promote healthy living, and reflect changing recreational interests and cultural opportunities.

A. Policy: The City should partner with local neighborhood organizations on the design, programming, and increased volunteer participation in public parks and open spaces.

1. Action: Analyze existing parks and recreation spaces for cultural relevancy, changing neighborhood demographics and needs, and site-specific ecological, social and recreational opportunities.
2. Action: Notify community members and stakeholder groups of opportunities to participate in the design and renovation of parks and recreation facilities.
3. Action: Increase multilingual announcements and publicity for public events in parks and recreational areas.
4. Action: Partner with neighborhood community organizations, the Somerville Police Department, local businesses and interested residents to establish “Friends of the Park” groups to help with maintenance, neighborhood security, and parks programming.

Shape Up Somerville

America’s cities and towns can play an important role in improving people’s health. Shape Up Somerville was created in 2004 as a partnership between the City of Somerville, Tufts University and the Cambridge Health Alliance. The program has earned national recognition for its work to reduce childhood obesity, increase physical activity in public schools, and promote access to fresh food for all Somerville residents.



Resources

Public Realm



VII. Goal: Design and maintain a healthy and attractive public realm that fosters community connection, including streets, sidewalks, and other public spaces.

A. Policy: The City should plan public realm renovations with attention to energy efficiency, environmental design, visual clarity and ease of maintenance.

1. Action: Continue to increase the number of streets that bury electric utilities.
2. Action: Consider City ordinances to minimize visibility of satellite dishes and telecommunications equipment, enforce wire takedown when a communication service is discontinued, and improve visual appearance of infrastructure placed on public poles by private companies.
3. Action: Ensure that all street renovation projects create opportunities for planting trees to increase the city's urban tree canopy and that each tree has an adequately-sized tree pit to encourage tree health.
4. Action: Base tree selection on recommendations from the City's 2009 Urban Forest Management Plan.
5. Action: Design public school grounds to ensure quality recreational space, native wildlife habitat/ outdoor classrooms, plant biodiversity, reduced stormwater runoff, and energy efficiency.

B. Policy: The City should continue to increase opportunities for urban agriculture.

1. Action: Create safe soil quality specifications.
2. Action: Consider creating public greenhouse(s) for year-round growing opportunities and/or partner with groups doing such work.
3. Action: Continue to explore opportunities to add community gardens while developing plans to rehabilitate existing or add new parks.

Resources: Success Story!

Making Somerville an even more exceptional place to Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Family

Ed Leathers Park

Edward L. Leathers Community Park, which opened in August 2008, is the exemplary result of active community participation, sound city planning, and creative “green” design. Situated on the former site of the old Kemp Nuts Factory, the one-acre park is located in one of the most economically- and ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Somerville.

Community Vision for a New Park

When the City acquired the Kemp Nut property in 1997, it began an extensive community outreach program to gauge residents’ preferences for how the space should be developed. The residents who attended the community meetings (many of them low-income immigrants who speak English as a second language) consistently opposed designs that would focus on active recreational uses such as basketball courts, baseball fields, skateboard parks, or playgrounds. Instead, the community preferred more “passive” green space in which residents could “escape” from the bustle of their urban surroundings to an open, tree-filled landscape. As a result of this public participation in the park design, the vision of a “green park” was pursued.

Design and Construction

The new Edward L. Leathers Community Park includes a large grassy open space, sixty shade trees, hundreds of shrubs and groundcover plantings, a variety of play opportunities for children, and several walking paths which transition into surrounding neighborhoods and provide circulation within the park. Among the many notable design elements, there is an embankment along the rail corridor that serves as a viewing platform, a place to picnic, and a stage for community events and neighborhood cultural festivals. There is also an off-leash recreation area for dogs. Today the park is a hub of activity for the Gilman Square neighborhood, with a design that has truly reflected the desires of the dedicated residents who volunteered their time to improve our community.



Former Kemp Nut Factory Site



Completed Ed Leathers Park

Housing Displacement

Impacts of Transit

What's it all about?

Somerville has always been a diverse community, and our residents value that diversity. New transit service often makes neighborhoods more desirable, and therefore more expensive. To help keep Somerville affordable for all residents, the City and its partners can buy and preserve residential properties around the new Green Line and Orange Line stations for residents with low and moderate income levels.



III. Goal: Mitigate displacement of low and moderate income residents by retaining the existing affordable housing stock and by creating policies that allow residents to remain in their homes in the face of a changing city.

A. Policy: The City should encourage preservation of affordability, especially in the vicinity of transit stations.

1. Action: Conduct a community dialogue about neighborhood change and the importance of encouraging existing residents to stay in the City.
2. Action: Consider establishing a tenant purchase and/or rent-to-own program with ready access to transit lines.
3. Action: Consider expanding the length of time units proximate to transit must remain affordable when they receive funding through Somerville housing programs such as lead abatement, down payment and housing rehabilitation.
4. Action: Provide technical and financial support to non-profit and for-profit developers seeking to acquire “expiring use” properties to maintain long-term affordability.
5. Action: Actively seek outside funding to support the preservation of “expiring use” properties.
6. Action: Encourage collaboration between for-profit and non-profit agencies to expand affordable development opportunities.
7. Action: Encourage area universities to work with the City to create more housing on campus.
8. Action: Publicize and explore ways to expand the “Take the T” Home Mortgage Program.
9. Action: Create a land bank to acquire strategic properties around transit stations, and collaborate with for-profit and non-profit agencies to preserve and develop affordable housing.
10. Action: Seek additional funding to support land banking efforts.
11. Action: Participate in studies by academic groups and other partner organizations around displacement and how to mitigate its impacts.

Housing Resources & Capacity

Resources

What's it all about?

The City has invested more than \$15 million in affordable housing since 2000, but to achieve our goals, we need additional funding sources. Private funds, as well as innovative municipal financing tools can help ensure that if federal and state funding decreases, we are still able to build and preserve affordable housing in Somerville.



Commercial developments like the proposed Self Storage Facility at 50 Middlesex Avenue trigger the Somerville Linkage Ordinance and provide funds for affordable housing.

V. Goal: Expand financial, organizational, programmatic, and other resources available for housing.

A. Policy: *The City should actively seek creative and expanded funds for affordable housing development after careful study and consideration.*

1. Action: Consider a District Improvement Financing program for the purpose of affordable housing, particularly along the Green Line Corridor and proposed transit stations.
2. Action: Consider a real estate transfer tax to support the development of affordable housing.
3. Action: Consider establishing a local bank task force to explore ways of expanding the Community Reinvestment Act to encourage local banks to invest in the Somerville community.
4. Action: Conduct a public education program to encourage passage of the Community Preservation Act.

B. Policy: *The City should ensure that there is an established basis for fees on development.*

1. Action: Conduct an updated nexus study of Somerville's Linkage Fee Ordinance every five years.
2. Action: Review model linkage ordinances from other cities and towns, and consider revising the City's linkage fee ordinance to lower the threshold for participation, while also taking into account use and size of activity.
3. Action: Review and update the linkage fee and square footage thresholds every five years.

What is a Linkage Fee?

The Somerville Linkage Fee Ordinance was passed in 2000 to increase the supply of long-term affordable housing and mitigate the impact of large-scale development on the supply and cost of housing in the city. The ordinance is triggered by commercial developments seeking a special permit for space over 30,000 square feet, and requires a fee of \$3.91 for every additional square foot of space. Fees are administered by the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust for the creation of affordable rental and home ownership units.

Housing: Success Story!

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St. Polycarp Village Phase I

Somerville's nonprofit organizations play a key role in affordable housing development, and are well-known both regionally and nationally for their excellent work. The St. Polycarp Village apartments on Temple Street are a recent example. Built in 2009 by the Somerville Community Corporation, the project's first phase was given the prestigious national 20th Anniversary Door Knocker Award as a model of sustainable design in affordable housing using the HOME investment partnership program administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Affordable Housing

St. Polycarp's Phase I includes 24 affordable apartment units, including a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units to ensure opportunities for families with and without children. Three of the units are reserved for families earning less than 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), nine units are targeted for families earning less than 50% of AMI, and twelve units are for families earning less than 60% of AMI. Of these, four units are reserved for clients of the Department of Mental Health and two units are reserved for formerly homeless individuals. The project also includes a mixed-use component, with roughly 6,000 square feet of retail space providing convenience shopping for nearby residents.

Creative Finance and Sustainable Design

Like most affordable housing projects in Somerville, the St. Polycarp's development leveraged public funding, with nearly \$1 million from federal sources and the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund. To help keep costs low for residents, cutting-edge energy and water conservation technologies were used. And since Interstate 93 (and the 250,000 cars it carries every day) are located just across Mystic Avenue, sophisticated air filtering systems were included to protect residents from unhealthy air pollution.



Appendix 3 Implementation Plan



Banner: Meagan O'Brien

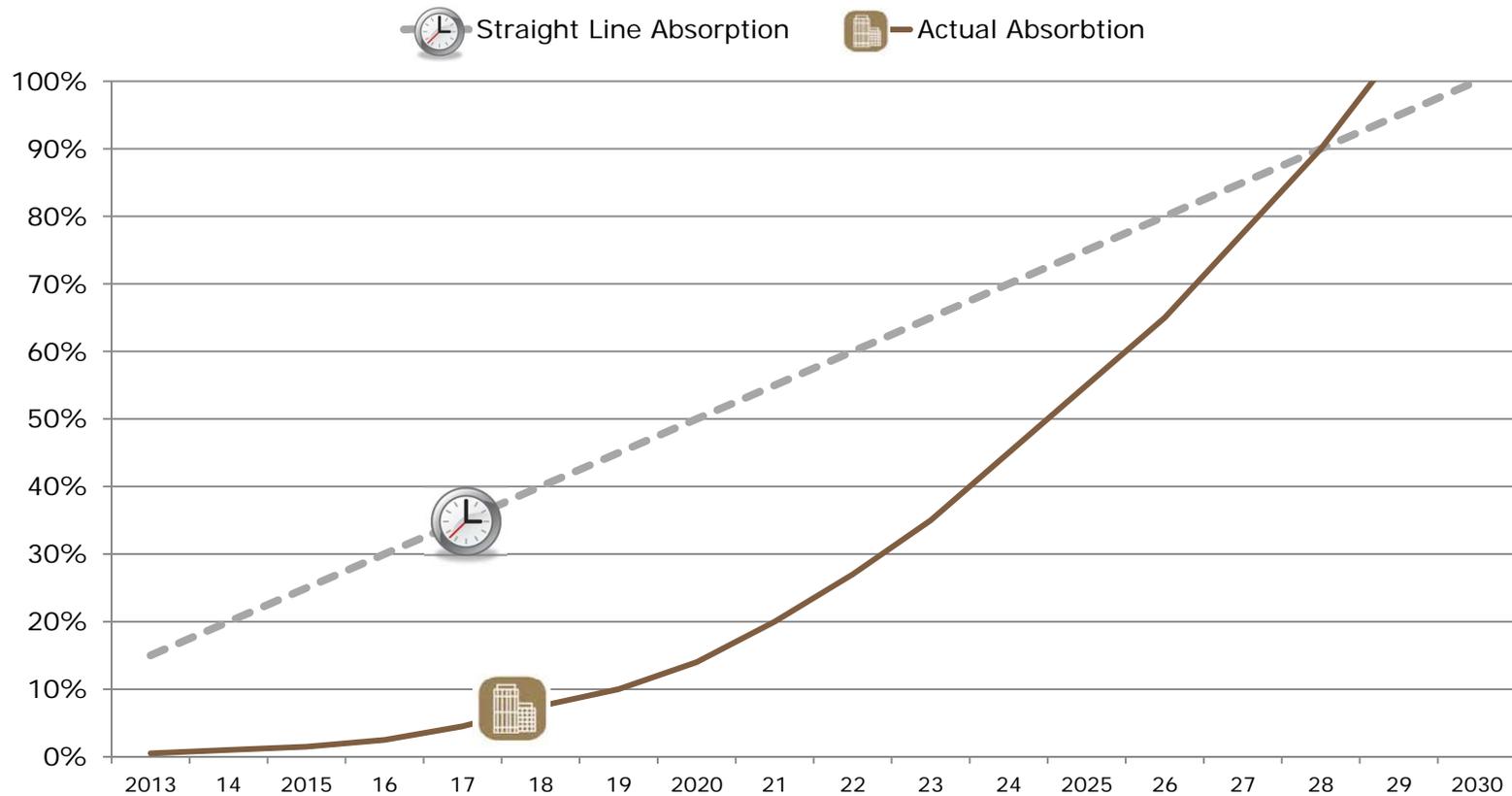
Metrics for Measurement

To be most effective, Comprehensive Plans should include performance management strategies. In Somerville, municipal performance management has been revolutionized by the SomerStat program, which helps elected officials, city staff and residents to measure progress using cutting-edge statistics.

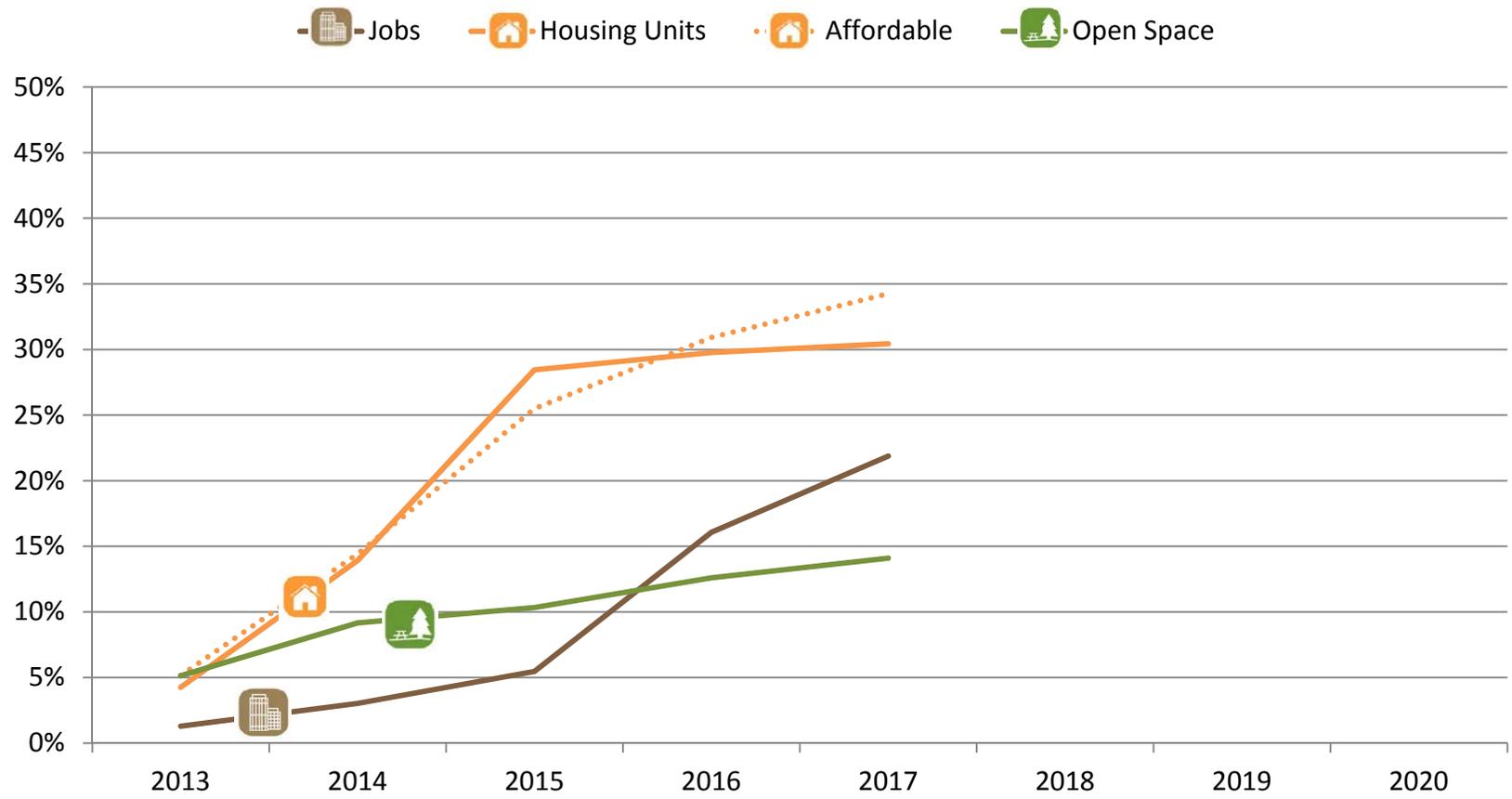
The primary metric for measuring the Comprehensive Plan's success is the SomerVision Numbers. These aspirational targets for job and housing growth, access to open space, and management of transportation and land use have been carefully calculated to be ambitious, practical and complementary. They balance our city's diverse needs, and remind us that progress towards each target will be best achieved by thinking about all simultaneously.

The second set of metrics are the six SomerVision Implementation Priorities. These priorities also reflect a framework for decision-making that will ensure we continue to think about the big picture. They are also designed to help policymakers to build upon the progress we have already made as a community, and to implement the most creative solutions possible.

The SomerVision Numbers: Progress Benchmarking



The SomerVision Numbers: Progress Benchmarking





Somerville Vision

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Comprehensive Plan | 2010-2030



Endorsed by the
Somerville Board of Aldermen
April 12th, 2012

Adopted by the
Somerville Planning Board
April 19th, 2012

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The SomerVision Numbers



30,000 New Jobs as part of a responsible plan to create opportunity for all Somerville workers and entrepreneurs



125 New Acres of Publicly-Accessible Open Space
as part of our realistic plan to provide high-quality
and well-programmed community spaces



6,000 New Housing Units - 1,200 Permanently Affordable as part of a sensitive plan to attract and retain Somerville's best asset: its people.



50% of New Trips via Transit, Bike, or Walking as part of an equitable plan for access and circulation to and through the City.



85% of New Development in Transformative Areas as part of a predictable land use plan that protects neighborhood character

City Team:

Hayes Morrison, Director Transportation & Infrastructure

Arn Franzen, Director of Parks and Open Space

Rachel Kelly, Green Infrastructure Planner

Luisa Oliveira, Senior Planner for Landscape Design

Sarah Spicer, Senior Transportation Planner

Somerville Open Space and Recreation Plan 2008-2013

City of Somerville, Massachusetts



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Playgrounds: Data

36 Playgrounds

3,620 elementary-school-age children

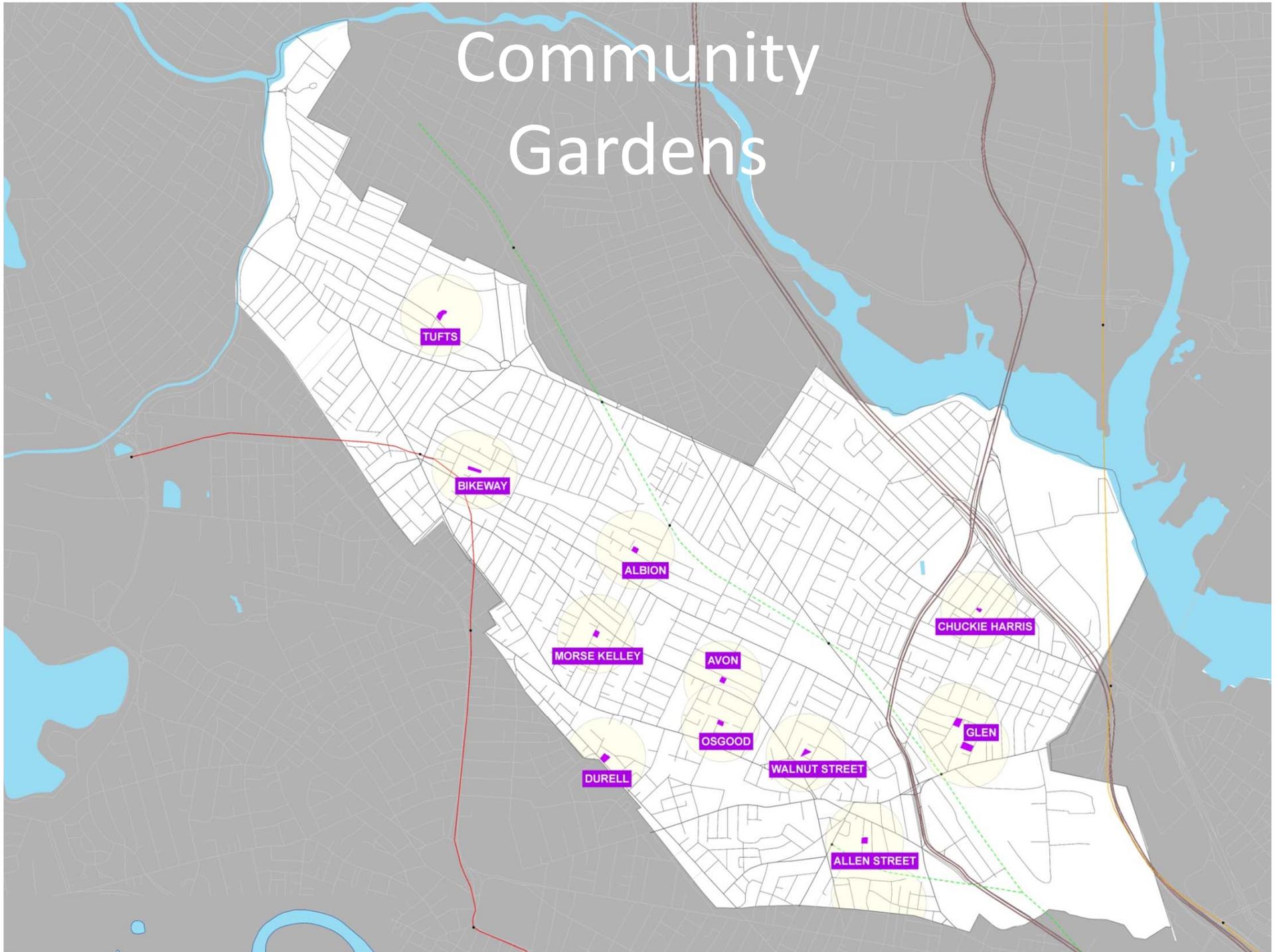
1 playground for every 100 children

50% of Somerville Parks have been fully renovated in the past 10 years.

Playgrounds: Analysis

- Well served: within .25 miles (5 min walk)
- Traditional: play equipment, court games, divided age areas
- Opportunities
Schoolyards, unstructured play, public play like “playborhoods”, shared-use spaced, creative play

Community Gardens



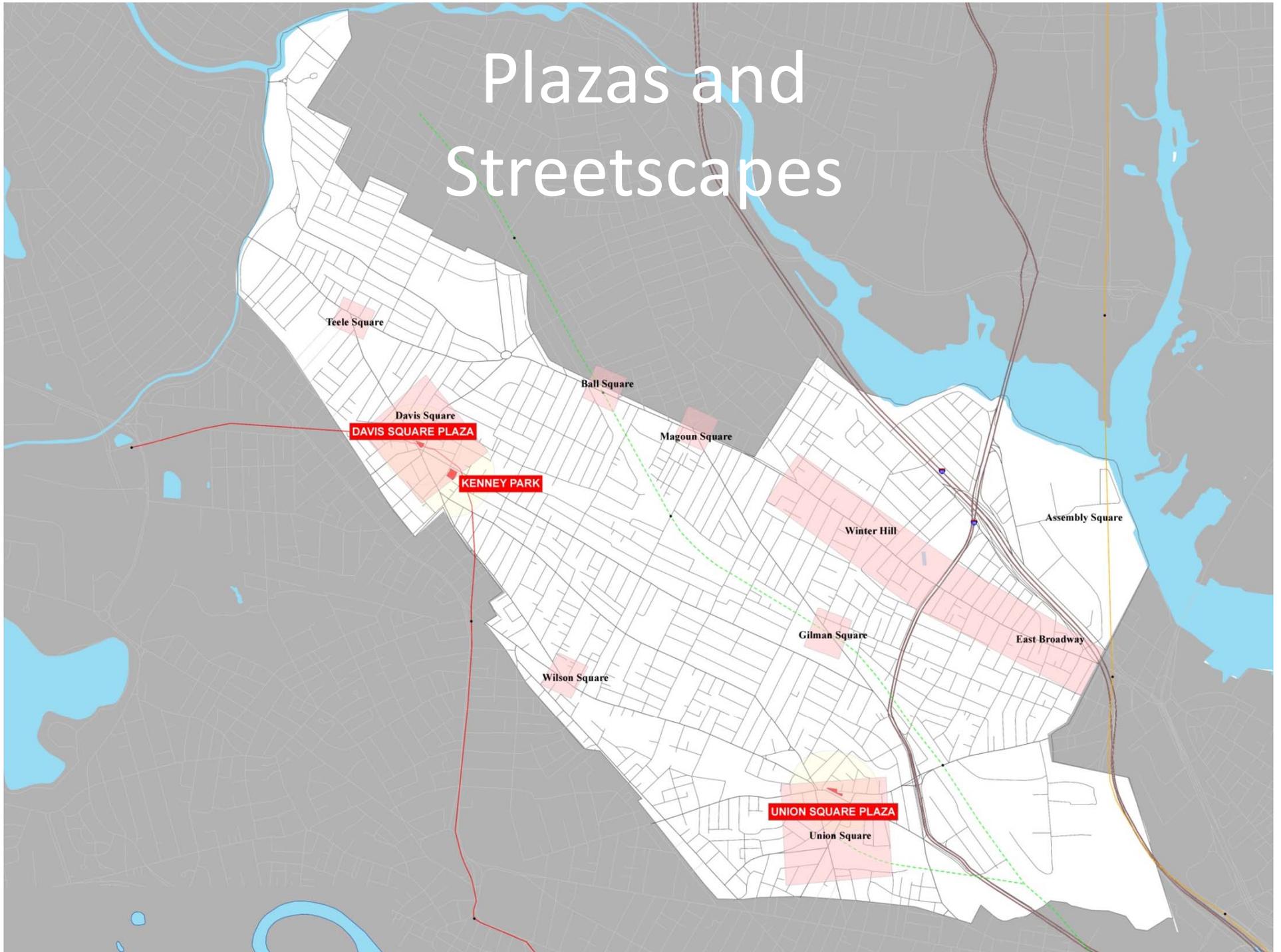
Community Gardens: Data

- Number of gardens: **11**
- Number of plots: **225**
- Acres: **0.82** / Square feet: **35,700**
- People on waitlists: **457**
- Average annual fee: **\$23**
- Time limit on plot: **none**
- Plot size: **vary, some as large as 170 square feet**

Community Gardens: Innovation



Plazas and Streetscapes



Plazas and Streetscapes: Data

In addition to Somervision, documented via NSRP, Safe-Starts, and Complete Streets

- In a 4 square mile city, we have...
- 93 miles of roadway
- 7 squares, ~15 neighborhoods
- 6.5 million sf of sidewalks

How many do you frequent regularly?

In which do you like to spend time?

If so – where?

Plazas and Streetscapes – Innovation



Pop up plazas



Shared Space

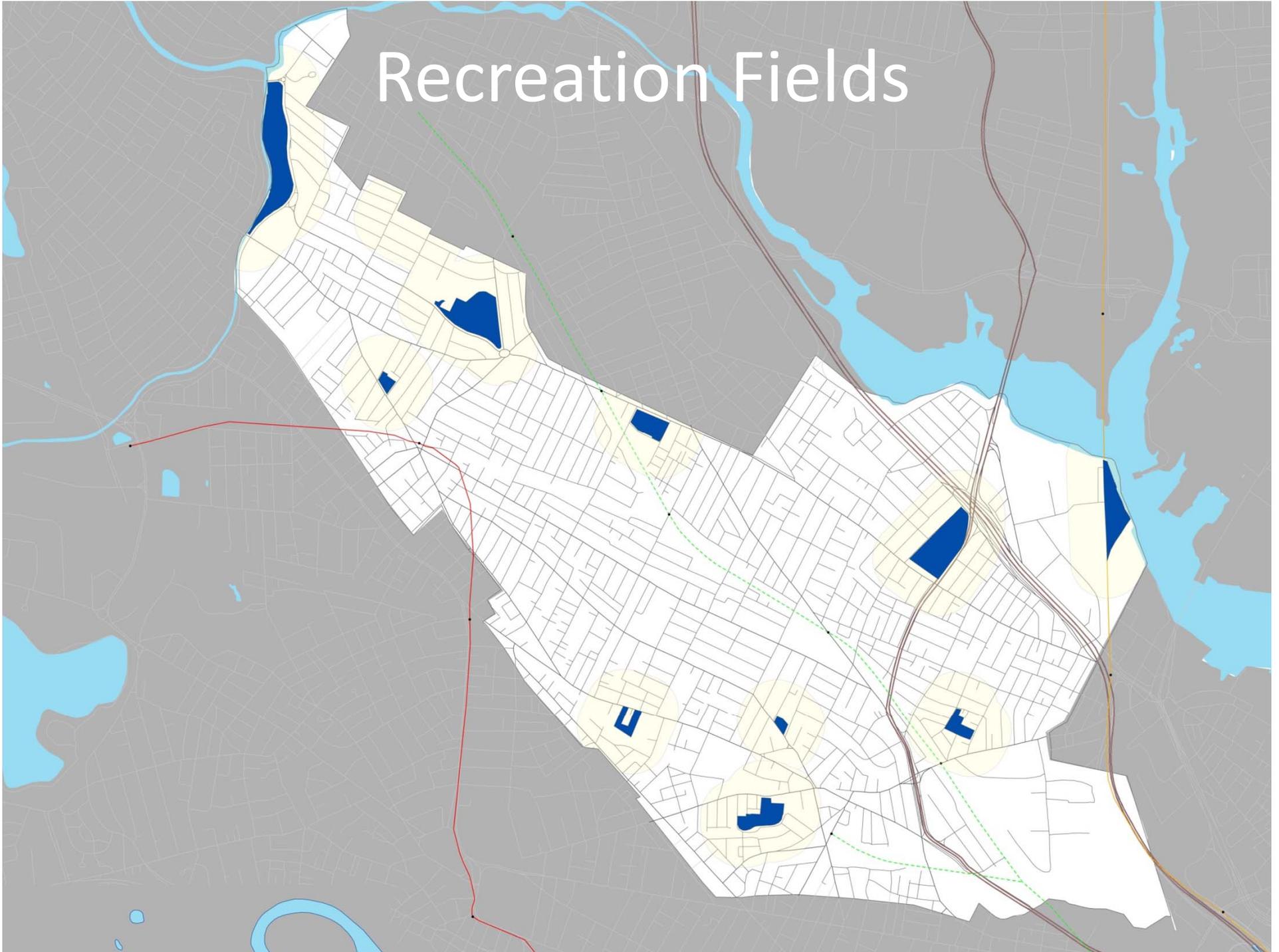


Pocket Spaces

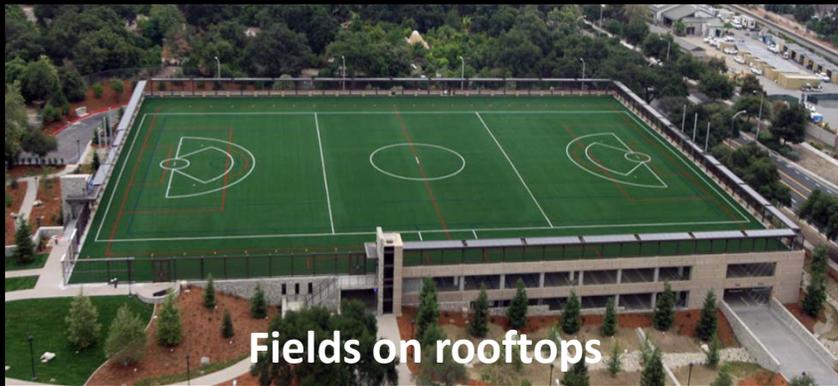


Programming

Recreation Fields



Recreational Fields – Innovation



Upcoming Events:

- Public meeting on March 6 in E Somerville
 - Public meeting on March 11 in W Somerville
 - Public meeting on Symphony Park (March?)
-
- Somerville by Design Blog:
somervillebydesign.com