

# LINK SOMERVILLE EQUITY STANDARDS

Connecting people, policy, and place



## FOREWORD

After meaningfully engaging over 1000 people to create and prioritize community principles for the Green Line Corridor through our CCP initiative (as displayed on the next page), the Link Somerville Advisory Team is excited to introduce the Link Somerville Equity Standards – a set of community-generated metrics for good development in Somerville with respect to local jobs, open space, mobility, affordable housing, and land use. The Link Somerville Equity Standards bring together different groups over a common agenda so that important work in our community is not done in isolation, but instead reinforced through collaboration. These standards serve as an accountability tool for the City of Somerville and partner organizations to measure equity over time and achieve equitable outcomes in relation to new development.

We define equity as just and fair inclusion with the purpose of creating conditions that allow all to reach their full potential to participate and prosper, borrowing from the national action institute Policy Link.

By graphically representing our shared issues with data-driven visuals, we will be able to show which neighborhoods are changing dramatically and which areas remain underserved. This in turn can help inform future campaigns, local fiscal investments, and emerging partnerships, as well as standardize a system by which to measure development in our city. While we are concerned with growth citywide, we are directly focusing on areas most prone to change in the next 20 years, including: Assembly Square, Union Square/ Boynton Yards, East Somerville, Winter Hill, and Inner Belt/Brickbottom. As stewards of a community vision for equitable growth, we hope that you will support our effort by endorsing these principles and commit to help us reach our collective goals.

The Link Somerville Advisory Team would like to extend deep gratitude to our partners who helped develop this vision for equity including: Friends of the Community Path, Groundwork Somerville, Somerville Community Corporation (Affordable Housing Organizing Committee, Jobs for Somerville, Land Use Committee), and Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership.

This is a working document to be updated over time with stakeholder input. Apart from contributions from our core partners, the Link Somerville Equity Standards are informed by the following data sources: U.S. Census Bureau (American Community Survey, 2010); MAPC's "The Dimensions of Displacement" Report; SomerVision; HUD; MassGIS; and MassDOT.

For more information, please contact Mashaal Majid at 617-776-5931 ext.228 or mmajid@somervillecdc.org.

## Core Community Principles for Neighborhood Development Along the Green Line Corridor

As part of Community Corridor Planning, a grassroots initiative to engage Somerville residents in the land use planning of the Green Line Corridor, community members ratified a list of eleven core principles. The principles listed here were chosen from a larger list of principles generated by over 300 residents who participated at various community meetings held between April and October, 2009, which were then prioritized and ratified at a community meeting attended by 150 people on October 28, 2009. The community members engaged with CCP would like to see all decisions related to the planning of the Green Line and the land use in the half mile areas around the 7 proposed stations to reflect this list of Corridor Core Principles.

- **More Local Jobs:** We want a fixed percentage of respectable jobs of all types with good wages and benefits for Somerville residents, from construction to permanent.
- **Increase Commercial and Economic Development:** We want to see the creation of squares as destinations, with careful attention to mixed use of commercial/residential, reuse of buildings, and economic development to increase the tax base.
- **Keep and Add Local Businesses:** We want locally owned, culturally diverse, clean businesses in commercial areas with employees who live in Somerville.
- **Keep Somerville Affordable:** We want to make sure people of all economic means have the ability to afford housing and living costs, so that Somerville residents, such as child care workers, cab drivers, local business employees and others can stay here affordably.
- **Maintain Our Diversity:** Preserve and encourage economic and ethnic diversity of residents and businesses.
- **Improve the Green Environment:** We want a safe, environmentally friendly neighborhood with more green space, trees, and gardens; reduction of noise; avoidance of light pollution; and prevention of toxic chemicals in the air.
- **Encourage Walking and Biking:** We want to encourage walking and cycling, through safe, bike/pedestrian friendly design of streets and paths around and between stations.
- **Create Community Gathering Spaces:** We want both indoor and outdoor safe, public gathering spaces for community members.
- **Improve Access:** We want above standard, safe access to and between stations for people with disabilities, strollers, and pedestrians in general
- **Community Involvement:** We want to make sure residents are included on an ongoing basis in the planning, design, and zoning changes to the stations and areas around them. Youth, artists, and others should help design stations, with attention to amenities. We need an easy and clear process for residents to address problems as they come up, with ways of immediately resolving unseen impacts.
- **Connecting Buses and Trains:** We want to ensure inter-modal access between neighborhoods and stations, for new train service to be adequate and speedy, and for existing bus lines to continue to serve areas not connected by train.

Contact Community Corridor Planning at:  
(617) 628-9988, or (617) 776-5931x 230 or  
CommunityCorridorPlanning@GroundworkSomerville.org

A partnership of Groundwork Somerville, the Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership (STEP), the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) and the Somerville Community Health Agenda, CCP is a grassroots, non-profit coalition committed to resident participation in planning for a livable, equitable Somerville.



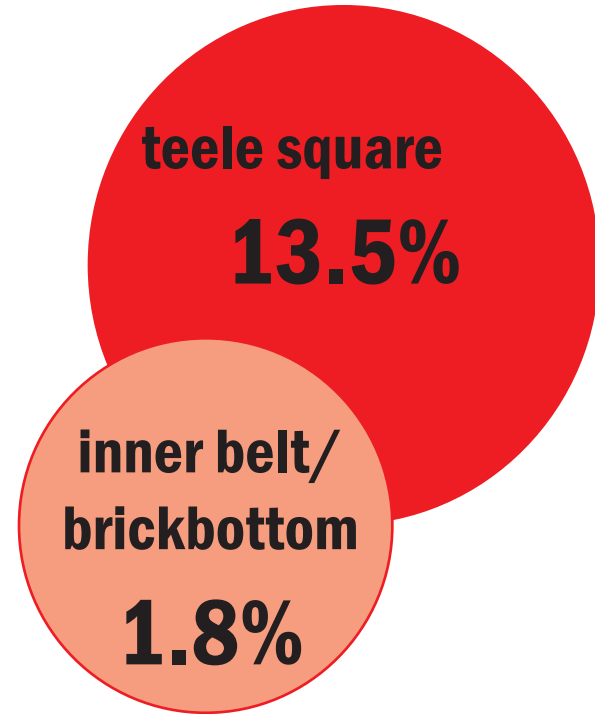
Cambridge Health Alliance  
A COMMUNITY OF CARING

### SOMERVILLE AT A GLANCE

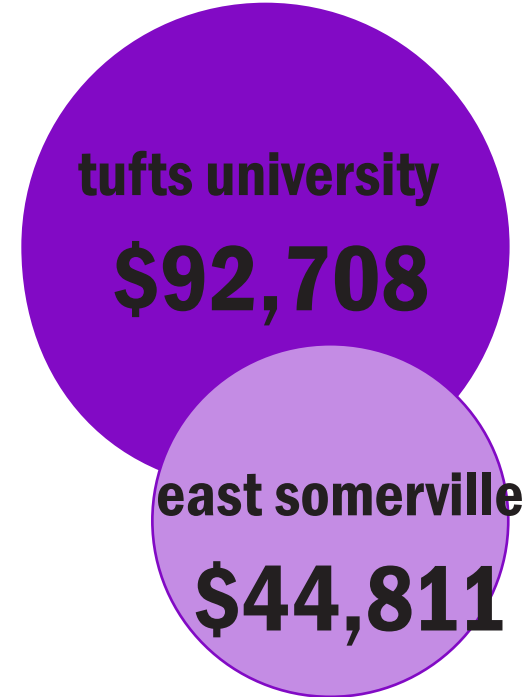
**32%** of somerville jobs are held by somerville residents



unemployment rate



median household income



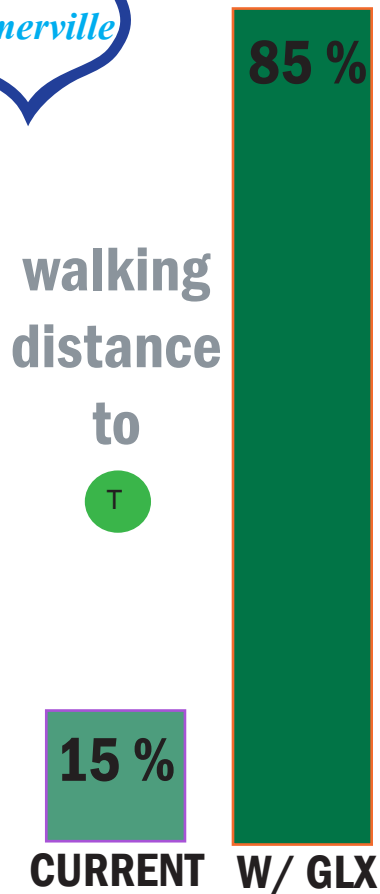
housing need

**67%** of households are renters

**44%** cost-burdened\*  
\*(pay >30% of income for housing)

**50%** severely cost-burdened\*  
\*(pay >50% of income for housing)

**83%** of somerville residents work outside of the city



local workers commuting from our city

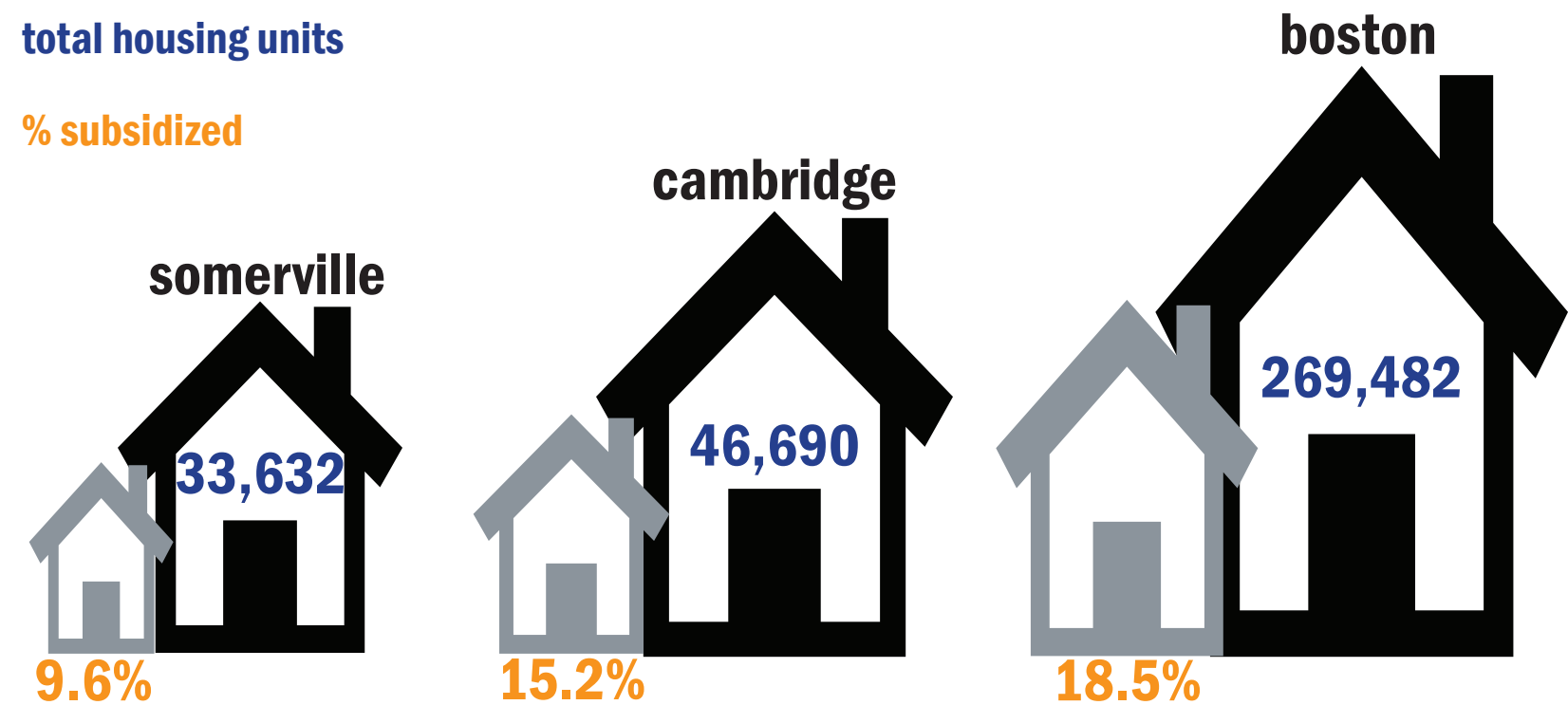
somerville to: **boston 29%**  
**cambridge 20%**

somerville's outside workforce

**4%** from cambridge  
**10%** from boston

total housing units

% subsidized



# EQUITY GOALS



## Local Jobs: 30% of new jobs in Somerville go to Somerville residents

- These should be good jobs with a living wage, full benefits, full-time schedule, and career opportunities
- Developers contribute to a jobs trust fund in order to provide residents with adequate training, including ESL training and job counseling
- Employers use a first source program to provide Somerville residents with opportunities for all new jobs

30% of new jobs in Somerville go to Somerville residents



## Local Businesses: Keep and add local businesses

- Mitigate the negative impacts of construction on businesses
- Preserve the current mix of small businesses and minimize turnover
- Maintain strong, diverse, stable, and safe business districts

20-35% of new housing units are permanently affordable



## Affordable Housing: Of new housing production, 20-35% should be permanently affordable for low-and moderate- income households

- Most new units should be in a transit walkshed
- Increase the amount of new housing dedicated for families of four or more

125 acres of new open space



## Open and Green Space: New acreage of accessible open, green, and growing space in environmental justice (EJ) neighborhoods

- Increase open space proportional to EJ communities
- Preserve and expand existing open space in EJ communities
- Encourage urban farming at new parks, gardens, and rooftops
- Improve public access, programming and interactive activities at city parks

Improve and increase mobility options in transforming areas



## Mobility: Improve and increase mobility options in transforming areas as identified in SomerVision's Transportation Goals

- Complete build-out of the Community Path Extension as part of the Green Line Extension
- Guarantee funding for complete build-out of the Green Line Extension
- Create a north-south bus route connecting Temple and Broadway to Somerville Avenue and Washington Street
- Improve and extend bike infrastructure and pedestrian-oriented walkways
- Replace McCarthy Overpass with at grade boulevard

Keep and add local businesses



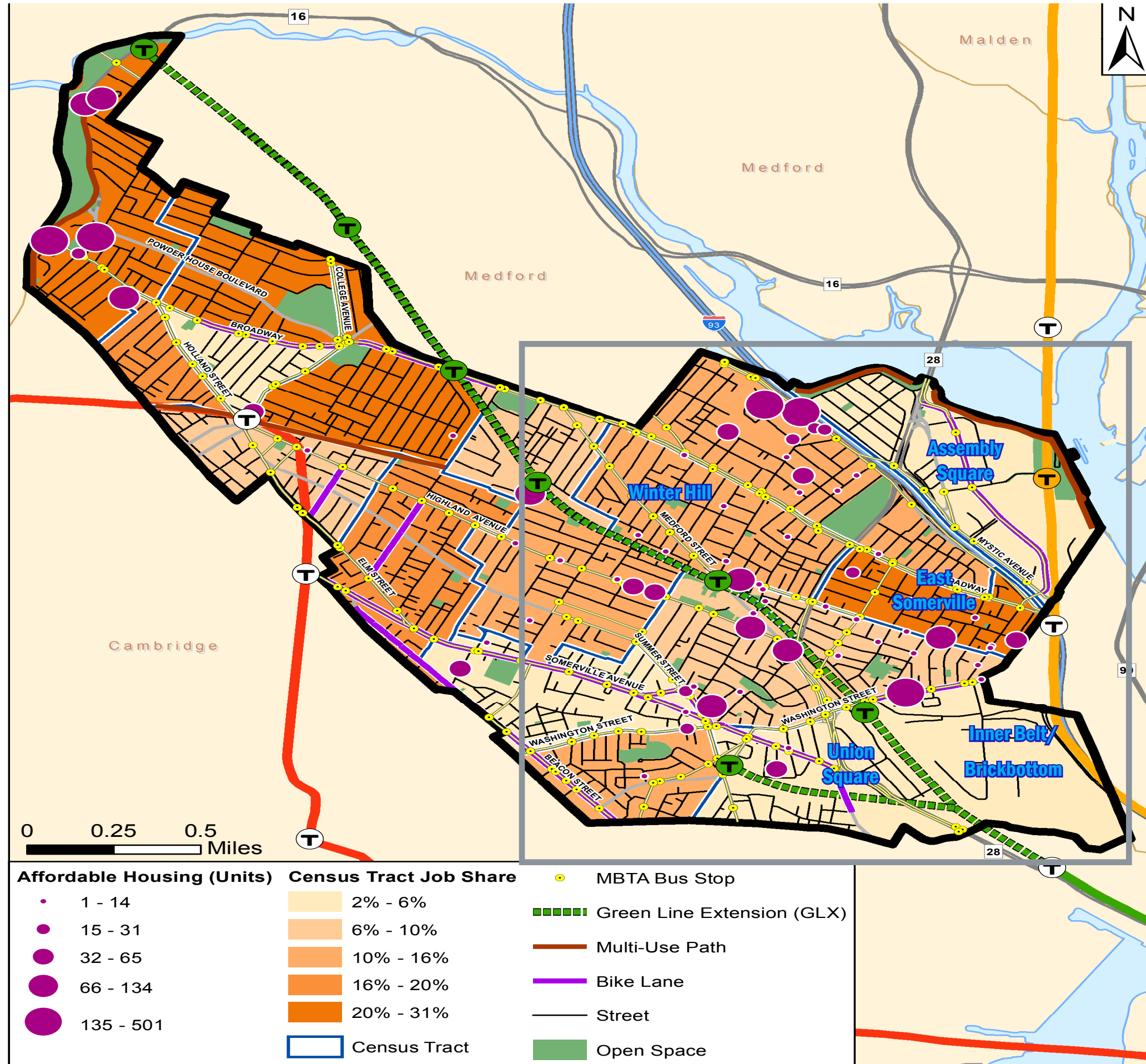
## Land Use: Community decision-making for public and neglected properties

- Increase community participation in planning discussions, especially among new immigrants, working class residents and communities of color
- Work with negligent property owners to improve or release their property
- Obtain community amenities for disposition properties, prioritizing uses reflected in Equity Standards

Community members engaged in process for public and neglected properties



# SOMERVILLE BASELINE INDICATORS



**Equity Standards Neighborhoods:**

**Areas most prone to change:**

- Union Square
- East Somerville
- Inner Belt/Brickbottom
- Winter Hill
- Assembly Square

**Affordable Housing:**

Housing that costs no more than 30 percent of a household's monthly income

**Job Share:**

Percentage of Somerville residents employed in jobs available in the selected census tract

<b>Affordable Housing (Units)</b>	<b>Census Tract Job Share</b>	<b>●</b> MBTA Bus Stop
● 1 - 14	■ 2% - 6%	■ Green Line Extension (GLX)
● 15 - 31	■ 6% - 10%	■ Multi-Use Path
● 32 - 65	■ 10% - 16%	■ Bike Lane
● 66 - 134	■ 16% - 20%	— Street
● 135 - 501	■ 20% - 31%	■ Open Space
	■ Census Tract	