



Charles Femino
Chief of Police

City of Somerville
Police Department
220 Washington Street
Somerville, MA 02143-1307



Municipal Road Safety (MRS) Grant Memo

Background

The goal of this grant is to interact with motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians in a positive manner so to provide education to the public while creating safer roadways for all.

The traffic safety program which includes both traffic enforcement education and engineering elements is designed to promote the safe, efficient and orderly movement of motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians in Somerville. Traffic enforcement and education programs are designed to change dangerous driving behavior and to promote voluntary compliance with the vehicle laws of the Commonwealth.

Grant locations are identified through the use of citation data, crash data, community and stakeholder input, and information conveyed by other City departments such as the Mobility Division. In addition, major commuting routes for motorized vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians as well as major business districts with increased foot traffic are considered.

Some example locations where the grant resources will be deployed are mid-block crosswalks identified by Mobility, direct requests from counselors & constituent services. We welcome the input of others and hope to meet with the bicycle coalition to discuss locations of concern. Areas include Highland Ave., Broadway, Somerville Ave., Washington St., Beacon St., corridors as well as Grand Union Blvd., Artisan Way, Union Square, Davis Square Powder House Blvd., and College Ave.

FY24 MRS Grant Award- *Somerville has been awarded the MRS grant in the amount of \$60,000*

The FY24 MRS grant is broken down into five sections-

1. Traffic Safety Enforcement- \$28,120.00
 - a. Includes: Educations topics such as winter impaired driving, distracted driving, click it or ticket, speed enforcement and summer impaired driving
2. Traffic safety equipment- \$8,815.90.
 - a. Includes: speed notification sign and 2 LiDar (handheld speed verification device) units
3. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Enforcement- \$17,480.000
 - a. Includes: crosswalk decoy, activities that promote bicycle safety including motor vehicle infractions that affect bicyclists such as blocked bike lanes, unsafe passing, j-hooking and bicycle infractions
4. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Items- \$1,851.47
 - a. Includes: 500 lighted bracelets and printed pamphlets
5. Pedestrian and Bicycle Non-Enforcement Safety Activities- \$3,800.00
 - a. Includes: events where officers can set up a safety booth and provide educational materials.



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FY24 MRS Grant Goals

1. Focus on major roadways and adjacent areas with high foot and bicycle traffic for speed enforcement.
2. Attend River Fest and several summer streets events to promote traffic safety (up to 5 events).
3. Increase enforcement of vehicles breaking bicycle safety laws (bike lanes, unsafe passing, j-hooking).
4. Conduct pedestrian crosswalk decoy operations including mid-block crosswalks and areas of high pedestrian traffic.
5. Purchase an additional 500 lighted bracelets for distribution.
6. Supplement and conduct enforcement outside of the SPD traffic unit scheduled hours.
7. Print and distribute focused safety pamphlets.
8. Purchase an additional speed warning sign.
9. Replace ageing speed monitoring equipment (LiDar) with 2 new units.

Our speed and pedestrian safety enforcement efforts start in mid-august, just in time for the start of the fall schools and college return.

FY23 MRS Grant Summary:

The FY23 Municipal Road Safety Grant ran from December (approved in April) until mid-September 2023. A grant award of \$65,000.00 was pledged to Somerville. The grant was broken down into five sections:

1. Traffic Safety Enforcement
 - a. Several traffic enforcement campaigns were accompanied by pamphlets on topics such as distracted driving, share the road and click it or ticket were employed and provided to motorists upon being stopped. Bicycle safety pamphlets were distributed during some bicycle stops as well.
2. Traffic Safety Equipment
 - a. Three pole mounted speed notification signs were purchased and given to Traffic and Parking for installation. There locations are Temple St. at Mystic Ave., Grand union Blvd. at MGB garage and Beacon St. at Kent St.
3. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Enforcement
 - a. Additional activities include crosswalk decoy, enforcement activities that promote bicycle safety such as motor vehicle infractions that affect bicyclists including blocked bike lanes, unsafe passing, j-hooking and bicycle stops
4. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Items
 - a. For example, SPD purchased 500 lighted rechargeable high visibility bands for distribution to walkers, runners and bicyclists in high traffic areas.
 - b. Several hundred Pamphlets were printed for distribution.
5. Pedestrian and Bicycle Non-Enforcement Safety Activities
 - a. Informational bicycle safety pamphlets and lighted rechargeable high visibility bands were given out to walkers, runners and bicyclists in high traffic areas in a non-enforcement consensual encounters.



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FY23 MRS Grant Data: Total violation encounters occurred -**1,655** (April-Mid September 2023)

Motorized Vehicle Stops:

1,349 total motorized vehicles stops- 1,273 warnings and 76 monetary citations

Categories of Infraction – Motorists	Stops
Speeding	672
Failure to Yield to Pedestrian in crosswalk	264
Hands-Free Violation	162
Failure to Stop -Red Light or Stop Sign	85
Overtaking Bicyclist Unsafely	9
Other	157
Total Stops	1349

Bicycle Stops:

306 bicycle stops- 305 warnings and 1 monetary citation

- With input from the community and stakeholders we evolved our strategy from focusing on bicycle red light violations to bicycle vs pedestrian encounters at crosswalks. This evolution of focus on protecting vulnerable road users will carry forward to FY24.

