



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR

To: Board of Aldermen  
From: Mayor Joseph Curtatone  
Subject: Mid-year Staffing Request for Construction Oversight & Associated Issues  
Date: January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

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**Executive Summary:**

The City of Somerville has experienced a tremendous amount of growth over the past decade. While this growth has brought many benefits to the City, we have all felt the strain and growing pains associated with the increasing volume and complexity of construction projects in our neighborhoods and streets.

Thanks to our neighborhood planning processes, we have collectively set in place the framework for continued transformation to realize the ambitious community goals established in SomerVision. As a result, we are on the cusp of an even larger surge of construction activity in our community.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that we have sufficient staff capacity to manage all facets of this growth. Ensuring proper planning, budgetary management, boots-on-the-ground construction oversight, project communication and regulatory compliance, and meeting community expectations for related issues like our tree canopy and traffic calming will require more staff. I am therefore submitting a mid-year staffing request for your consideration, which includes positions for Water & Sewer, Engineering, Capital Projects, OSPCD, and Communications.

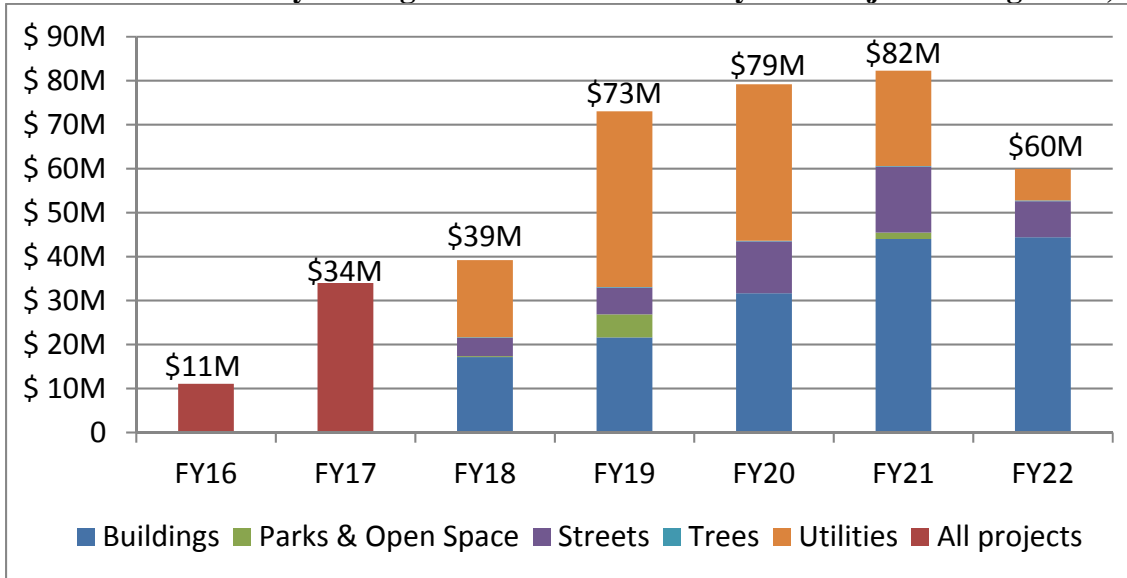
**Background and Context:**

The City's Capital Investment Plan (CIP), last updated in October 2017, lays the foundation for addressing our legacy infrastructure issues and meeting community needs and goals. As the chart below demonstrates, the anticipated contract value of work called for in the Plan – excluding Unscheduled Projects and vehicle requests – increases significantly over the next four years.

Other construction activity is expected to grow at a similar pace over the same period. Most notably, both the GLX and US2's D2 project are anticipated to break ground in the spring of 2018, while other private and state-led building and roadway construction projects, including the completion of Beacon Street, continue across the City.

Simply put, current staffing levels are inadequate to manage not only the volume and complexity of the City-led projects but also the associated services the City provides to mitigate the impact of this heightened construction activity on the community.

**Chart 1. Value of City-Managed Construction Activity and Project Management, FY16-FY22**



Notes: 1) Excludes Unscheduled Projects & vehicle requests; 2) FY16 and FY17 values derived from First Southwest bond issuance reports; 3) FY18 to FY22 values derived from October 2017 Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

**The Request:**

We have identified 13 new positions, plus the previously submitted Environmental Health Liaison, that will allow the City to address this need. Nearly all of these positions fill gaps in the City’s organizational structure, and each one falls into one of four groups. Most important among these is Group 1, which is a team of individuals dedicated to construction management, oversight, coordination, and communication plus ordinary maintenance (OM) funds for construction translation services. Group 2 consists of positions that are needed to plan for and manage the many upcoming projects called for in the CIP. Group 3 contains positions that will provide the associated services necessary to meet community expectations and mitigate the challenges of construction activity, including traffic calming, protection of our tree canopy, vector control, and zoning plan review. Finally, Group 4 includes two positions, the Director of Financing & Administration for the Water & Sewer Department and the Assistant Director of Capital Projects, both of which are essential for providing the internal management capacity that will be crucial for ensuring the success of these projects.

A summary of each of the positions is included in the table below and complete job descriptions are attached to this memo. While the Administration believes that all of these positions are necessary to manage the surge of growth that will occur across the City over the next several years, we have categorized the positions below according to our current level of need.

- Critical: Necessary for managing the upcoming 2018 construction season or, in the case of the Director of Finance & Administration, to address a substantial operational need for the Water & Sewer Department.
- Highly Recommended: Necessary to manage major upcoming projects, like the revamp of the Union Square Plaza, the planning and design for which must begin now.
- Recommended: Necessary to remain responsive to community concerns and responsibly manage and meet our ongoing capital and planning needs.

Department	Position Title	Main Duties and Responsibilities	Priority
<b>GROUP 1 - Positions necessary to provide dedicated construction management, oversight, coordination, and communication:</b>			
Engineering	Construction Liaison and Compliance Manager (field position)	Provides community engagement and impact mitigation services for public infrastructure projects and private construction activities in the public right of way. Responsible for monitoring contractor and utility compliance and tracking and coordinating engineering follow-up on all service requests/complaints. Will serve as primary public contact for Engineering Dept. <i>Position will work closely with the Construction Information Coordinator.</i>	Critical
Engineering	Construction Project Manager (field position)	Oversee and manage active construction sites for conformance with general construction practices and city requirements, to minimize disruption to residents and businesses by confirming proper contractor execution of mitigation (e.g., detour signage, pedestrian safety, dust management, noise control, maintenance of utility services, driveway and delivery access).	Critical
Communications	Construction Information Officer	Responsible for gathering and disseminating essential information and establishing two-way communication for community needs regarding a wide range of governmental, utility, and related construction projects—and construction-related impacts and efforts—citywide, including schedules, impacts to Somerville residents and businesses, project updates, tree impacts, opportunities to engage, and other relevant needs. <i>Position will liaise with outside partners and work closely with Engineering, T&amp;I, Capital Projects, DPW, T&amp;P, and other interdepartmental partners.</i>	Critical
Communications	Construction Translation	Contracted translation services for construction projects.	Critical
OSPCD T&I	GLX Project Liaison (field position)	Responsible for interagency coordination, stakeholder engagement, construction-phase customer service coordination for the four-year construction cycle of the MBTA Green Line Extension through Somerville. Existing staffing patterns do not permit the Administration to provide the granular level of boots-on-the-ground construction oversight on this 4.5 mile, \$2 billion transit extension through Somerville’s dense neighborhoods. This position is a temporary position that would sunset upon completion of the GLX to Tufts / College Avenue and Union Square stations.	Critical

<b>GROUP 2 - Positions necessary to manage projects called for in CIP:</b>			
Capital Projects	Project Manager	Responsible for managing capital projects through design, permitting and construction. This position coordinates and directs all activities and personnel involved in the implementation and completion of projects and contracts including but not limited to design, scheduling, permitting, construction, legal procedures, budget and construction compliance. Major planning renovation projects for this position include 1895 Building, City Hall, and the Public Safety Building.	Highly Recommended
OSPCD T&I	Streetscape and Public Space Planner	Manages urban design and landscape architecture projects relating to streetscape reconstruction, park and playground rehabilitation, schoolyard upgrades, public plaza planning, riparian zone enhancement and other public spaces. Responsible for facilitating public engagement in the design and planning of projects such as USQ plaza, and ensuring that public and private investment advance the City's goal of becoming the most walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented city in the nation.	Highly Recommended
Engineering	Project Manager (for large civil projects)	Manages scope, schedule, budget and coordination for Water & Sewer CIP projects, in both design and construction phases. Ensures that City consultants and contractors meet project benchmarks, coordinates interdepartmental meetings and provides regular project updates. Responsible for review of contractor payment requisitions and other project documentation, assists with onsite job inspection and quality control oversight.	Recommended
Engineering	Junior Project Manager (for ongoing infrastructure improvement programs)	Manages scope, schedule, budget and coordination for public way infrastructure projects, in both design and construction phases. Ensures that City consultants and contractors meet project benchmarks, coordinates interdepartmental meetings and provides regular project updates. Responsible for review of contractor payment requisitions and other project documentation, assists with onsite job inspection and quality control oversight.	Recommended
<b>GROUP 3 - Positions necessary to meet community expectations for associated services:</b>			
OSPCD T&I	Senior Urban Forestry & Landscape Planner (Arborist)	Evaluates all requests for new trees, tree complaints/concerns, oversees the citywide planting strategy for growing the urban tree canopy. Responsible for field schedule and best deployment of City resources, coordination of efforts with DPW, and public education re: green infrastructure. This position will increase the urban forestry staff to two positions, which will provide adequate office coverage and meet needs for site visits/tree assessments and increase educational neighborhood outreach.	Highly Recommended

OSPCD T&I	Transportation Planner	Will meet growing need for additional transportation planning, project development and design, construction, and/or traffic operations. Responsible for evaluating and responding to traffic calming requests; assists with conducting community planning efforts associated with increasing traffic safety and access and utilization of multimodal transportation.	Recommended
OSPCD P&Z (ISD)	Senior Zoning Review Planner	Will meet significantly increased demand for critical building permit and project design review. Senior Planner will review more complex projects and set standard for zoning interpretations; primary designee of the ISD Director for building plan compliance with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. This position will increase the zoning planner staff to two positions, which will provide required office coverage and meet needs for field visits and compliance checks.	Recommended
Health & Human Services	Environmental Health Liaison (previously submitted)	Responsible for developing and implementing programs and policies related to environmental health issues in the City of Somerville. Primarily focused on vector control, but will contribute to policy discussion around other environmental health issues confronting the City. Lead public outreach to residents and businesses on environmental health issues and serve as a liaison to the Board of Aldermen.	Recommended
<b>GROUP 4 - Positions necessary to provide essential internal management capacity:</b>			
Water & Sewer	Director of Finance & Administration	Provides budget management and long-range planning for Water & Sewer Enterprise funds, revenue analysis, and oversight of all customer billing/payments and outside contracts.	Critical
Capital Projects	Capital Projects Assistant Director	Responsible for assisting the Director of Capital Projects and Planning in developing and implementing strategic decisions regarding investment in the City's facilities. Provides technical guidance, public outreach, and is responsible for all approvals, decisions and communication for department in the absence of the Director.	Highly Recommended

**Budget:**

The Administration is requesting an appropriation of \$332,250 from free cash for the anticipated salary and benefits associated with these positions for three months. Should the Board approve this request, the positions will be posted immediately with the intention of hiring by the end of March 2018.

**Conclusion:**

The growth the City has experienced over the last several years and anticipates for the foreseeable future brings challenges and benefits. A key benefit is that the City now has the financial capacity we need to address our legacy infrastructure issues and make progress on community goals and priorities. We must provide the adequate staffing capacity to manage these projects, protect our assets and investments, improve interdepartmental and interagency coordination, communicate with our resident and business communities, and protect the health of our City.

FY2018 Midyear Staffing Request  
 Budget Detail  
 January 19, 2018

Department	FTE	Type	Position Title	Classification	Salary Range	Annualized Salary	Benefits (Estimated)	FY18 mid-year request	Priority	Notes
Water & Sewer	1	RFT	Director of Finance & Administration	NU06	\$90,000-\$121,128.15	\$90,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$27,000.00	Critical	
Engineering	1	RFT	Construction Project Manager	NU08	\$80,000-\$107,669.47	\$80,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$24,500.00	Critical	
Engineering	1	RFT	Construction Liaison & Compliance Manager	NU10	\$65,000-\$87,481.44	\$65,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$20,750.00	Critical	
Engineering	1	RFT	Project Manager (Major Infrastructure Improvement Programs)	NU07	\$85,000-\$114,398.81	\$85,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$25,750.00	Medium	
Engineering	1	RFT	Junior Project Manager (Ongoing Infrastructure Improvement Programs)	NU08	\$80,000-\$107,669.47	\$80,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$24,500.00	Medium	
Capital Projects	1	RFT	Capital Projects Assistant Director	NU04	\$110,000-\$148,045.52	\$110,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$32,000.00	Medium	
Capital Projects	1	RFT	Project Manager of Capital Construction	NU07	\$85,000-\$114,398.81	\$85,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$25,750.00	High	
Communications	1	RFT	Construction Information Officer	NU10	\$65,000-\$87,481.44	\$65,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$20,750.00	Critical	
Communications	0	OM	Construction Translation (contracted services)					\$10,000.00	Critical	
OSPCD T&I	1	RFT	Senior Urban Forestry & Landscape Planner	NU07	\$85,000-\$114,398.81	\$85,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$25,750.00	High	
OSPCD T&I	1	RFT	Streetscape and Public Space Planner	NU09	\$75,000-\$100,940.13	\$75,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$23,250.00	High	
OSPCD T&I	1	TFT	GLX Project Liaison	NU09	\$75,000-\$100,940.13	\$75,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$23,250.00	High	3-year position
OSPCD T&I	1	RFT	Transportation Planner	NU09	\$75,000-\$100,940.13	\$75,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$23,250.00	Medium	
OSPCD P&Z (ISD)	1	RFT	Senior Zoning Review Planner	NU07	\$85,000-\$114,398.81	\$85,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$25,750.00	Medium	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>					<b>\$1,055,000.00</b>	<b>\$234,000.00</b>	<b>\$332,250.00</b>		