

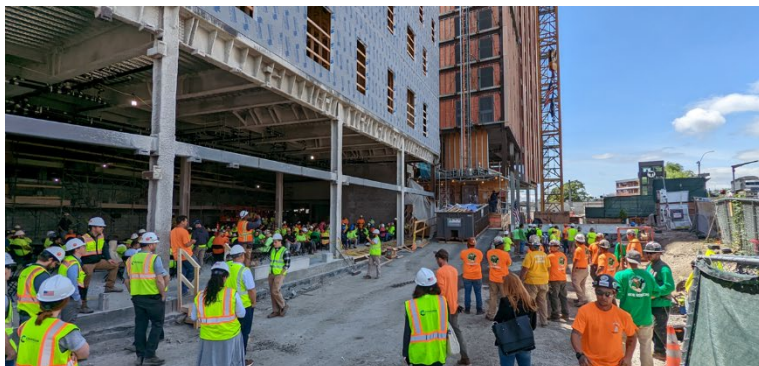
May 4, 2023

Somerville City Council
Land Use Committee
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

Chair McLaughlin,

We appreciate the opportunity to update the Land Use Committee on our efforts to employ a diverse construction workforce during the first phase of the Union Square Revitalization Project (D2), a priority outlined in the project's Development Covenant. Building a diverse workforce that includes women, minorities, local residents and veterans takes diligence, commitment and resources. US2 would like to commend our contractor partners, community partners and labor partners who have worked so diligently to build a diverse and representative workforce throughout the D2 construction process.

Consistent with our CBA commitments, we require all of our contractors and subcontractors to use best efforts to hire 20% of its workforce from qualified Somerville residents (worker hours), 20% from qualified minorities and 8% from qualified women. Our contractors have been tracking local, women and people of color worker-hours across the project monthly and have been working to achieve our participation targets. The tracking forms and reports developed for this purpose were informed by examples provided by members of the **Union Square Neighborhood Council's CBA Implementation Committee**. As the construction has progressed, we have provided monthly reports produced by our contractors to the USNC as part of our quarterly project updates. City staff have also been provided copies of these summary updates.



31 Union Square
Somerville, MA 02143

A project by Union Square Station Associates LLC (US2)

DiscoverUSQ.com



RESULTS TO DATE

To date, we have achieved the following diversity results on D2:

622,000 worker hours have been performed to date (through January 2023).

These worker-hours have offered opportunity to local and regional workers and provided a boost to local businesses through the purchasing of goods and services.

232,000 worker hours have been performed by **People of Color**

37.3% of project worker hours vs. 20% CBA goal

42,000 worker hours have been performed by **Somerville residents**

6.8% of project worker hours vs. 20% CBA goal

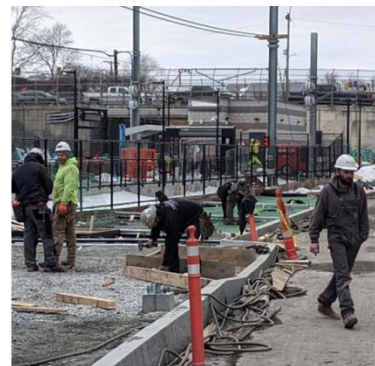
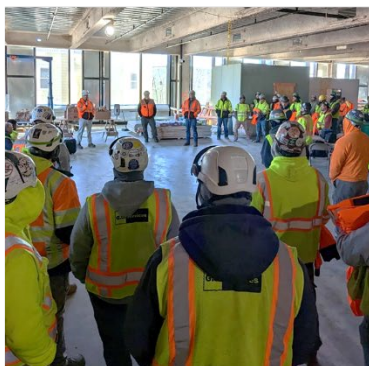
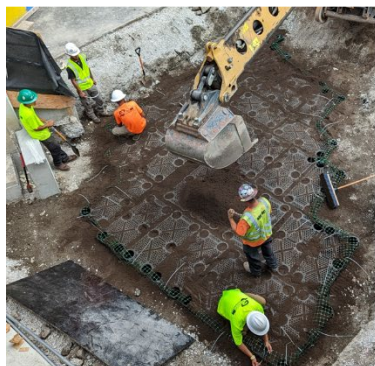
26,000 worker hours have been performed by **Women**

4.2% of project work hours vs. 8% CBA goal

Note: values have been rounded to nearest 1,000

We are very proud that the first Union Square Revitalization construction project is on track to make significant progress towards these ambitious diversity goals. To our knowledge, this is the first project in Somerville to track employment across this breadth of diverse worker categories and to target these percentages. By way of comparison, the Somerville High School Building Project, which was constructed with public investment, achieved approximately 26.6% people of color (10.8% less than D2); achieved approximately 3.6% women (0.6% less than D2); and did not prioritize or track local workers.

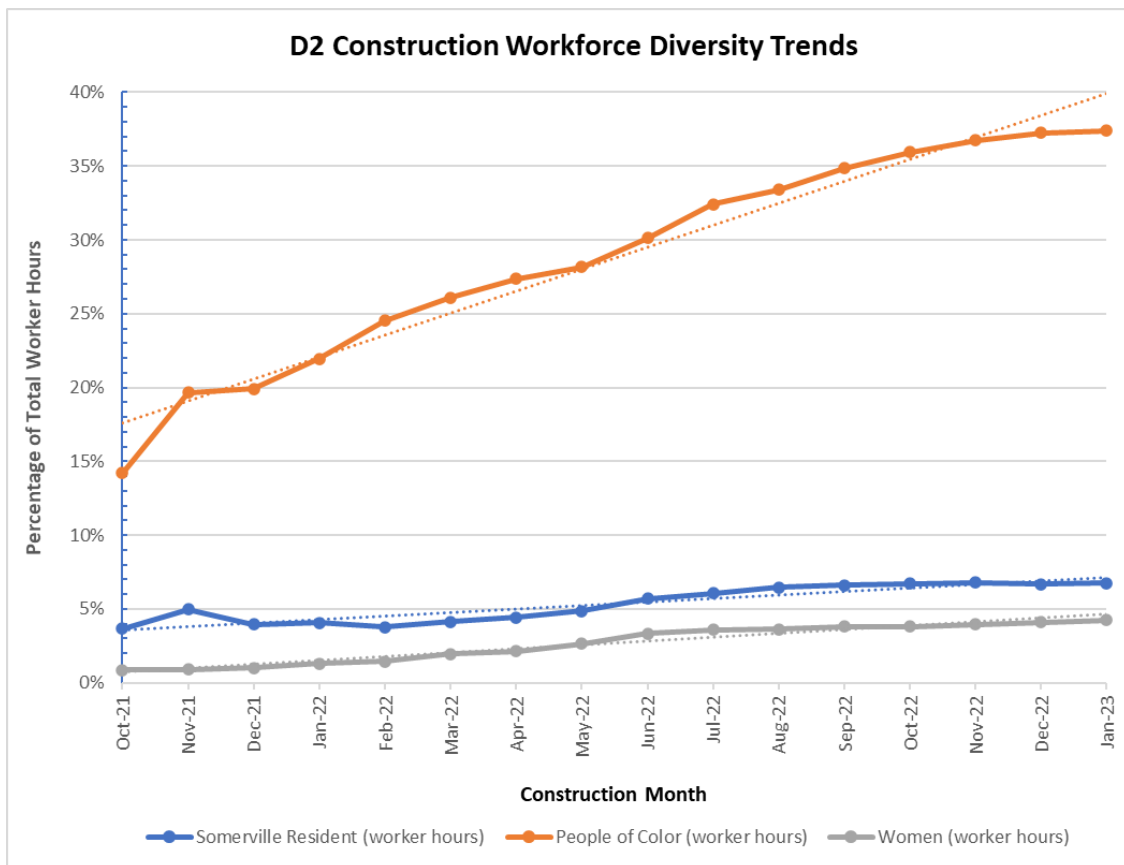
Our contractors have also been proud to employ military veterans at both the general contractor level and with sub-contractors. In late 2022, there were approximately 12 reported veterans onsite. As of March 31, 2023, there were 20 reported veterans onsite (a significant increase).





PROGRESS OVER TIME

The following chart also describes how diverse construction worker participation has trended over the course of the first construction project. The dashed trend lines demonstrate that the share of diverse workers performing work on the project has increased as the project has progressed for each of the categories we are tracking as more trades have been involved and more worker hours have been performed.



Note: the chart starts in October 2021, when more than 5% of project-wide work hours had been performed.



ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

This workforce diversity achievement is the result of a sustained effort and a significant commitment of resources focused on improving workforce diversity over the course of the construction process. US2 has worked closely with its contractor partners, local non-profits, the City and the trades throughout. Early on during construction, US2 established monthly virtual meetings with its contractor partners and jobs coordinators to discuss the collective efforts around diverse workforce goals. These virtual meetings have continued throughout project construction. Actions resulting from these meetings have included follow-up directly with potential jobs candidates, communication with potential jobs candidates, outreach to one or more trades unions, trouble-shooting processes that aren't working (e.g., Gilbane moved from monthly hours reporting to weekly hours reporting in order to help stay ahead of the data), planning for jobs fairs, general contractor outreach to underperforming sub-contractors, etc.

Beyond US2's engagement with the general contractor, the general contractors each developed their own management approach to prioritize diversity hiring. This included regular communication with subcontractors regarding diversity hiring expectations as well as a cadence of touchpoints (in some cases, as often as weekly) with subcontractors on the job to monitor performance, project workforce needs and take corrective actions as required. Each subcontractor was required to submit their hours across diverse participant categories on a monthly basis.

The general contractors also contacted specific subcontractors and their related labor unions to share the goals of the project relative to workforce diversity and to ask for cooperation regarding the same. Beyond prioritizing members of their own crews that fit diverse hiring categories, subcontractors also sought to augment their workforce with new workers from diverse backgrounds. These efforts included placing ads in the **Somerville Times**, **Indeed.com** and **Somerville Patch** encouraging residents and women to apply for construction jobs; reaching out to the **Somerville High School Career and Tech Ed** program for potential candidates; and calling or emailing prospective women, local or people of color prospects.

Some additional highlights of the contractors and subcontractors efforts include:

- For the project laborers that were hired directly by Cranshaw Construction, 90% of the workers were people of color.
- Gilbane Construction Company added [Danielle Skilling](#), Economic Inclusion & Community Affairs Manager, to the project team to lead their diverse workforce participation effort. Danielle leads efforts to promote a diverse and inclusive construction workforce across MA for Gilbane.
- Bent Electric employed three (3) Somerville High School graduates on the project.
- The carpentry subcontractors worked closely with the Carpenters Union to enable Somerville carpenters to continue to work in Somerville by moving them from one Somerville job to another or by having them perform carpentry work for different subcontractors on the job.

- Recently, the **International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT)** expressed concern about two sub-contractors (a painting contractor and a drywall contractor) on the D2.1 project and their contributions toward the diversity hiring goals for the project. Collectively, the two contracts represented roughly 1% of the total worker-hours logged on the project to date. The painting contractor was tracking 53% minority participation and the drywall contractor was tracking 100% minority participation (both were accretive to overall performance on workforce diversity).

Despite this performance and in an effort to improve local workforce participation, US2/Gilbane offered a portion of the painting scope to several union sub-contractors. We are finalizing this process now and are hopeful that it can contribute positively to the diversity goals and local participation on the project.

EXPANDING THE BASE AND IMPROVING DIVERSE WORKER PARTICIPATION

During the CBA negotiation, we collectively discussed how the target participation goals, particularly the local and women participation goals, were viewed as “stretch” goals because of the limitations of those workforce populations in the construction industry and in Somerville. For that reason, our team has taken broader actions aimed at expanding the pool of potential participants in the construction industry with emphasis on Somerville residents, women, or people of color.

- In the summer of 2020, US2 and its contractors, **Gilbane Building Company** and **Cranshaw Construction**, proactively created a list of 27 prospective Somerville-based merit shop and union sub-contractors which was compiled with input from Somerville stakeholders, including the **Somerville Chamber of Commerce**, the **City** and known local contractors and general contractors. Each local sub-contractor on the list was contacted to be qualified and to bid on the project. Somerville-based businesses **Recover Green Roofs**, **SRP Signs**, **Bent Electric** and **Metropolitan Pipe & Supply** have all contributed to the project’s success.



- In the summer of 2020, US2’s general contractors placed ads in the **Somerville Times** soliciting local sub-contractor participation in the bidding process (images above).
- During the CBA negotiation, USNC identified **Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) First Source** as a critical local non-profit partner relative to workforce development services and programming. In recognition of this, the US2 connected with the SCC First Source team in



mid-2020 and has collaborated with **SCC First Source** team (Blake Roberts Crall, Danyal Najmi and now Renee Taylor/ Gonzalo Puigbo) on local workforce development since then. The most intensive of these efforts included close coordination over an extended period to identify local candidates, better understand their skills and interest, and connect them with construction opportunities. This included regular monthly coordination calls and regular follow-up with one or more prospective job candidates and potential hiring partners.

- In order to further advance SCC First Source’s workforce development efforts, USQ funded \$100,000 per year for the last two years to support a position at SCC that will provide career navigation, career-readiness training, and job placement support services that connect Somerville job seekers with the skills, training and education necessary to qualify for family sustaining jobs with the potential for advancement. These funds were provided over a year earlier than contemplated in the CBA to help support First Source early on in the project and during the pressures of Covid.

- Through our work with **SCC First Source** to identify and place construction worker prospects, US2 noted that one of the challenges to placing prospects in the construction trades is the variety of processes and entry points among the various trade unions. It can be overwhelming and confusing. To address this challenge, US2 researched and developed a list of a dozen trade union intake programs or apprenticeship programs to document their intake process, schedule and contacts/forms. It included information regarding the **Boilermakers, Ironworkers, Electricians, Carpenters, Laborers, Elevators, Painters, Sprinkler Fitters, Roofers, and Plumbers** unions. The tool was provided to SCC First Source for use with their job prospects and has been updated periodically as the project as progressed.

Trade Union	Intake Program	Website	Contact	Phone	Address
Boilermakers	Boilermakers Union of America	www.boilermakers.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Ironworkers	Ironworkers Union of North America	www.ironworkers.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Electricians	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	www.ibew.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Carpenters	United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America	www.ubca.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Laborers	International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers	www.iuabc.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Elevators	International Union of Elevator Constructors	www.iuec.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Painters	International Union of Painters and Allied Trades	www.iuofpa.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Sprinkler Fitters	International Association of Fire Sprinkler Fitters	www.iaff.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Roofers	International Brotherhood of Roofers	www.ibr.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109
Plumbers	United Brotherhood of Plumbers and Pipe Fitters	www.ubpfa.org	Human Resources	617-552-1234	100 State St, Boston, MA 02109

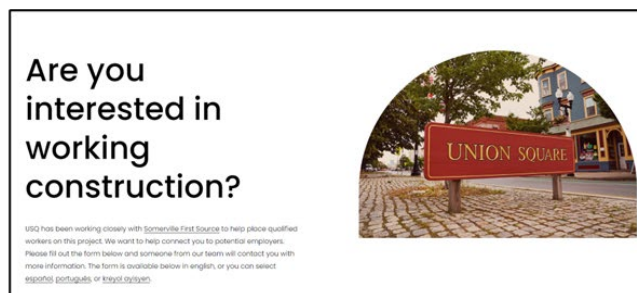
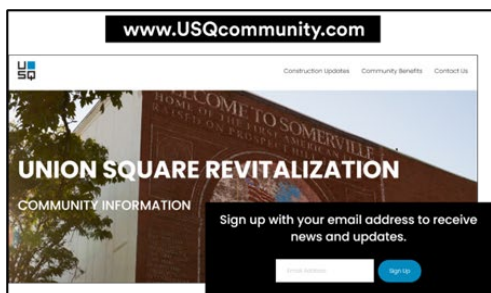
- US2 participated in several **SCC First Source Employer Advisory Committee Meetings** aimed at increasing local hiring efforts (including October 2020, April 2021 and Feb 2022). The committee meets with the goal of helping inform the SCC program model, review job readiness training curricula, keeping program staff up-to-date on your current hiring and staffing needs and trends, and connecting with peers across sectors working to support local hiring in their organizations.

- In May 2021, US2 and its general contractors collaborated with **SCC First Source Jobs** to host a virtual project-wide job fair in May 2021 to engage local workers. The event was broadly promoted by US2 and SCC, including paid advertising via the Somerville Times ads, Facebook paid ads, emailed event flyers and social media (Instagram and Facebook). Language support for four languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese and Haitian Creole) was offered to improve participation. The event details were also shared with **USNC**.



Thirty-nine (39) individuals registered and eighteen (18) participated. As part of the job fair, individuals were asked to complete a form to express their interest and outline their skills relative to the construction industry. US2/SCC followed up with each thereafter.

- In August 2021, US2 set up the **USQcommunity.com** website and subsequently added a construction job interest form to make it more convenient to connect with interested parties. The form is available in four (4) languages. This website was promoted via direct email and at public meetings related to future project components (e.g., 50 Webster/D3.1 and 600 Windsor).



- In September 2021, US2 connected with Jennifer Mancina, a new Senior Planner focused on economic & workforce development at the City of Somerville, to share our workforce development efforts to date and to find points of collaborations with the City efforts. This engagement led to a stronger relationship with the Somerville High School Career and Tech Ed program and a more thoughtful approach to the second jobs fair. The City suggested a jointly hosted jobs fair rather than having several fairs from various parties would be make easier for prospects to engage and would ultimately make it more successful.
- US2 coordinated closely with several labor unions (e.g., the Carpenters and Electricians) to increase diverse participation in the project. This included direct outreach to the unions outside of the contact the subcontractors and general contractors were having with the unions.
- US2 collaborated with the **Carpenters Union** to distribute promotional flyers in English and



Spanish for their apprenticeship program in the neighborhood including in the job site trailer, at US2's offices at 31 Union Square and at the **SCC First Source** offices.



- Throughout construction, US2 and its contractors have welcomed “walk-ins” to the job trailer or US2 office that are interested in construction and qualified. Workers have been placed on the jobs via this process. Most recently, a female Somerville carpenter was placed on the job after arriving at 31 Union Square looking for work.

- US2 participated in a forum in October 2021 that was organized by **IBEW 103** and the **City of Somerville** and **Mayor Curtatone** to discuss “Economic and Workforce Development – Partnership Opportunities for Sustainable and Equitable Growth”. At the forum, members of the private sector, public sector and unions discussed means for improving workforce diversity and expanded connections.



- US2 collaborated with **SCC First Source**, the **City** and others to host another jobs and resource fair in May 2022 at the **Mystic Activity Center**. 100 job seekers registered and over 200 attended. US2 promoted the event through direct emails to neighborhood partners (including **USNC**) as well as through social media channels. In addition, US2 recruited the **Council of Carpenters** and the **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers** to participate in the job fair.



US2 offered assistance to connect SCC First Source with **MassBio** to include the biotech industry in the Job Fair but the job fair was oversubscribed (i.e., there were 41 employers participating and only 40 tables to house them). SCC indicated that it was the most employers to

attend an SCC Job Fair in recent history.

- At USNC’s suggestion, US2 reached out to **MA Build a Life** in Spring 2022 with an interest in collaborating on workforce diversity initiatives. MA Build a Life was unwilling to help.
- In June 2022, US2 participated in the **City of Somerville and Mayor Ballantyne’s** Labor Forum organized to discuss pressing workforce needs in the construction industry. Participants included representatives of the city, labor unions, developers and workforce training providers and focused on ideas for increasing participation in the construction trades by Somerville residents.
- US2 hosted four (4) “learning lab” sessions with students in the **Somerville High School Career and Technical Education Program** to share the project with them and demonstrate practical application of their studies and encourage them to become involved in the industry. One of these sessions was a project construction tour of the 10 Prospect Street lab building for seniors, another focused on the life of an architect and yet another highlighted the use of technology in construction.



- US2 employed a graduating student from the **Somerville High School Career and Technical Education Program** in spring 2023 to learn more about the industry and help advance their career interests.
- Throughout the process, we have been open to construction worker suggestions from **USNC** and have tried to place individuals that have been brought forward. For the next building project, we’d like to discuss with USNC how they might work with us to improve our outreach and help generate viable candidates.



PLACEMENT RESULTS

The outcomes from the collection of efforts described above demonstrate the challenges of building diverse workforce capacity. Overall, 28 job seekers were identified that were interested in a new career path: Job Fairs (yielded 8 job seekers); SCC First Source (yielded 12 job seekers); Union (yielded 2 job seekers); Walk-In's (yielded 4 job seekers); and Website/Online (yielded 2 job seekers). Of those 28 job seekers, only 18 job seekers were interested in the trades. We successfully placed 7 individuals, 86% are Somerville residents.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

There's no doubt that building a diverse construction workforce and helping Somerville residents take advantage of local construction opportunities is a long-term endeavor. Upon the conclusion of D2 construction, US2 will be hosting a "lessons learned" sessions with its contractor, SCC First Source and labor partners to identify lessons learned from this first project that can be applied to the next projects in hopes of continued improvement.

We remain committed to working with our contractors, community partners and the trades to ensure a diverse construction workforce and one that benefits the residents of Somerville. We believe the information herein is demonstrative of our commitment to the same. Thank you.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. Karczewski".

Greg Karczewski
US2