



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MAYOR JAKE WILSON

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RACHEL NADKARNI
DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Date: May 11, 2026
To: Honorable City Council
From: Rachel Nadkarni, Director of Economic Development
Ed Bean, Finance Director
RE: Requesting approval to amend the Assembly Square District Improvement Financing (DIF) District Map and Program to include the Assembly Square Fire Station, 45 Middlesex Ave, and improvements to the intersection of Middlesex Ave and Mystic Ave.

Dear Members of the City Council,

The City has been using District Improvement Financing (DIF), authorized under M.G.L. Chapter 40Q, to provide the City with valuable borrowing tools to implement infrastructure investments in the Assembly Square neighborhood since December 2010.

There are two key current investments not captured in the Assembly Square DIF program and map – the purchase of the Assembly Square Fire Station and the improvements to the Middlesex Ave and Mystic Ave intersection that we are jointly pursuing with MassDOT.

The Assembly Square Fire Station was built in leased space at 122 Assembly Innovation Park Commercial Condominium-Fire Station Unit, with a street address of 45 Middlesex Avenue, opening in October of 2025. The arrangement with the developer at the time of construction was that the City would establish a long-term lease for the station, but with TransMedics coming into the Assembly Innovation Park master plan, the opportunity has arisen to purchase the Fire Station outright and secure condominium rights to the facility, reducing the City's liabilities in the long term. Incorporating the fire station into the DIF district will improve our borrowing terms and be the most advantageous for the City's capital plan in the short and long term.

The intersection improvements at Middlesex Ave and Mystic Ave have similarly arisen as an opportunity since the Assembly Square DIF District and Program were established 15 years ago. Because this intersection includes an on-ramp to I-93, the City is working closely with MassDOT on the design and implementation of improvements, with portions of the work on City property falling within our jurisdiction. Like with the fire station, incorporating this area into the DIF, will mean that the City will be able to apply the more favorable DIF borrowing terms to this important project, should it be needed.





To adopt an amendment to an existing District Improvement Financing Plan, the City, through the City Council, must approve an amended Development District and amended Development Program as defined in M.G.L. Chapter 40Q. For your consideration, this memo includes an attached copy of the previous map, the amended map, and related text changes.

Thank you,

Rachel Nadkarni

Director, Economic Development

Amendment #1 to the Assembly Row DIF
City of Somerville - Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and
Community Development
May 5, 2026

Amendment to Section 3.7: Maps (d) Existing uses and ownership of each parcel

122 Assembly Park Drive

Ownership:

BRE-BMR ASSEMBLY INNOVATION I LLC

Use:

Fire Station 10,000 SQ FT

Parking Garage 1247 Parking Spots

Retail 2,000 SQ FT

Middlesex Avenue & Mystic Avenue Intersection

Ownership:

City of Somerville

MassDOT

Use:

Public Right of Way

Amendment to Section 4.5 Goal Attainment

Infrastructure Improvements Component

Development activities and projects within the District and under the Program include: 1) Assembly Square Drive and associated intersections; 2) an internal street network within Assembly Row; and 3) a storm water outfall pipe that will discharge into the Mystic River. *As amended, 4) build and operate a branch fire station to improve response times and better serve Assembly Square during emergency situations.*

Assembly Square Fire Station (added section)

As part of the Assembly Innovation Park master plan development, the City built its first new branch fire station in 50 years to serve the Assembly Square neighborhood. The fire station was built with the expectation of a long-term lease, but the opportunity has arisen to purchase it outright and secure condominium rights to the facility. This project consists of acquisition.

Assembly Square Drive and Associated Intersections

Mystic Avenue at Middlesex Avenue (added subsection): This intersection will be reconfigured and reconstructed to enhance safety for all road users and incorporate new multimodal improvements. Middlesex Avenue will be realigned from its current shallow angle off of Mystic Avenue to meet Mystic Avenue at a perpendicular angle, significantly reducing the speed at which Mystic Avenue vehicles can exit onto Middlesex Avenue and decreasing the risk of vehicular crashes. This reconfiguration will result in a larger landscaped area and a new raised intersection where Middlesex Avenue will meet a connecting road to Mystic Avenue.