

Somerville Climate Forward Update

November 5, 2018

Somerville Climate Forward is Somerville's first climate action plan. This community-based plan is based on data from Somerville's climate baseline studies: the Greenhouse Gas Inventory (2016), Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (2017), and Carbon Neutrality Pathways Assessment (2017).

Priority Action Objectives

Somerville Climate Forward's scope is the whole Somerville community, not just City government operations. Our climate action objectives are to:

- Reduce Somerville's contribution to climate change and work towards carbon neutrality by 2050 (mitigation)
- Prepare Somerville for the unavoidable impacts of climate change (adaptation).
- Fairly distribute the opportunities created by climate action and work to alleviate the unequal burdens caused by climate change (equity).

Planning process

Somerville Climate Forward was created by community members, City staff, and consultants. Below are highlights of the planning process.

- The planning process began with a community meeting on June 26, 2018.
- Over 75 community members and City staff participated in nine working groups centered on different topics (e.g., buildings, transportation, health). Each of the nine working groups met three times over the one-year planning process.
- The Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change provided project guidance.
- The consultant team is composed of technical experts from Kleinfelder, AECOM, and JSI. The consultant team was responsible for developing the working groups' ideas into actionable strategies using quantitative analysis, research of leading practices from around the world, and creating the final plan document.

Plan release

Somerville Climate Forward will be released on November 26, 2018.

- The plan will be posted online at www.somervillema.gov/climateforward.
- The plan will be officially launched at a community meeting and celebration event on Wednesday November 28, 2018 at 6:00pm at Greentown Labs. This event will feature opportunities for attendees to start taking action, and to talk with working group members about the contents of the plan. More information on the event is forthcoming.
- Attached to this memo is a draft summary of the actions in the plan. For each of these actions, the plan presents an implementation plan, performance metrics, equity and cost considerations, and best practices.

DRAFT

THE PLAN AT A GLANCE

Somerville Climate Forward prioritizes 13 action areas supported by key priority actions that set Somerville on a path to be a resilient, carbon neutral city.

The identified areas of the priority actions are to be completed in 10 years and many to be significantly underway in the next 3 years. The plan integrates actions to reduce GHG emissions while also adopting measures for a resilient Somerville, as some of the projected climate change impacts are inevitable in the near future.

The proposed actions have been prioritized and developed through an extensive process involving technical experts, city staff, community members, and regional partners.


Somerville Climate Forward (SCF) prioritizes 13 action areas supported by key priority actions leading to a resilient carbon neutral City.

BUILDINGS

1. Net-zero and resilient new buildings standards

Explore the feasibility of a local net-zero energy based or net-zero emissions based performance standard.

Adopt flood and extreme heat resilience standards for new construction.



2. Improving energy performance in existing buildings

Enable a rental energy disclosure requirement through the creation of a rental licensing program.

Continue and expand thermal electrification programs (HeatSmart/CoolSmart).

MOBILITY

3. Equitable low-carbon mobility

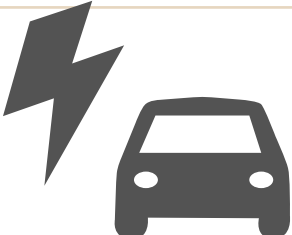
Work with MBTA on bus rapid transit and signal prioritization for buses.

Expand bicycle infrastructure and create more protected bike lanes.

Reconfigure parking to meet low-carbon mobility needs.

4. Accelerating the transition to electric vehicles

Develop electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy.



ENVIRONMENT

5. Stormwater management

Investigate a stormwater enterprise fund to enhance stormwater management.

Enhance stormwater management policies and develop design guidelines.

6. Expanding the tree canopy

Develop an urban forestry management plan including best practices and resilient species list.

Develop guidance and training for residents to care for trees on private property.



7. Reducing consumption and waste

Complete a consumption based greenhouse gas inventory and conduct community outreach on climate impacts of consumption.

COMMUNITY

8. Healthy and resilient community

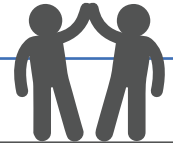
Establish an enhanced system of preparedness education and communication alerts from the city ahead of flooding events and extreme heat that employ community and social service networks.

9. Pathway to 100% renewable energy

Extend the community choice electricity aggregation program and increase share of renewable energy.

10. Culture of climate action

Organize community climate action and preparedness leadership program to educate the public and increase participation in climate programs.



LEADERSHIP

11. Leading by example: City facilities

Set progressive net-zero building standards for new municipal buildings and those undergoing major renovation; set renewable electricity goals for all existing and new municipal buildings.



12. State advocacy: working towards carbon neutrality

Advocate for building and energy codes that achieve net-zero energy performance.

Advocate for faster de-carbonization of electricity.

Advocate for more stringent regulation of utility gas leaks.

13. Regional collaboration for coastal resilience

Create a Mystic River Regional Coalition of neighboring municipalities to develop cohesive regional strategy and to push state action.

Assess potential intervention options to address flood risk along Mystic River.