



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
MAYOR
KATJANA BALLANTYNE

MEMO

To: Finance Committee, City Council

From: Rachel Nadkarni, Director of Economic Development, OSPCD

Date: November 19, 2024

RE: Item# 24-1649 – Requesting the appropriation of \$340,000 from the Union Square Community Benefits Stabilization Fund Account, with \$200,000 for Workforce Development Services and \$140,000 for Small Business Technical Assistance Services.

cc: Alan Inacio, Director of Finance and Community Development, OSPCD
Ed Bean, Director of Finance, Auditor

As mentioned last year at this time, for the last several years the City of Somerville has been working with developers of large projects on voluntary contributions to the City for the purpose of advancing shared goals that benefit new development and current residents and businesses alike. During the peak of the pandemic, the City Council discussed and approved funding investment in workforce development services and small business technical assistance services for the Union Square area, noting these were important efforts to get underway in the context of the pandemic. The appropriations also align directly with priorities outlined in the Community Benefits Agreement made between the Union Square Neighborhood Council, an independent community group, and Union Square Station Associates (US2).

This is the fourth appropriation to this goal, out of a five-year goal in the Community Benefits Agreement. One of the concerns raised by the organizations who have fulfilled this work is that the annual nature of the grants has meant time intensive administrative work and made it difficult to account for fluctuating workloads, aligning with their fiscal years which differ from the City's, and overall staffing needs. **This request is for the final two years of payments to be distributed at once to give the organizations fulfilling these functions great flexibility on the timeline of service delivery and use of funds and reduce the administrative load associated with this appropriation.**