

Smart Somerville: Environmental Justice Engagement Plan

City of Somerville, MA

Our team is comprised of the following members of the City of Somerville's Office of Sustainability and Environment:

- Christine Blais, Director | [Somervillema.gov/ose](https://www.somervillema.gov/ose)
- Garrett Anderson, Residential Decarbonization Program Manager | [Linkedin.com/in/garrettlanderson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/garrettlanderson)
- Naomi Gross, Community Engagement Specialist | [Linkedin.com/in/naomi-gross-mph-15803522a](https://www.linkedin.com/in/naomi-gross-mph-15803522a)
- Emily Sullivan, Climate Change Program Manager | [linkedin.com/in/emilysullivan](https://www.linkedin.com/in/emilysullivan)

Somerville, Massachusetts, a small, diverse city adjacent to Boston with 80,464 residents in a land area of 4.1 square miles, is the most densely populated municipality in New England. Fifty-one (72%) of Somerville's 71 census blocks meet the State's criteria for Environmental Justice qualification, and 59,054 (73%) of the city's residents live in those 51 census blocks.

Approximately 70% of housing units in Somerville are rentals, and more than 60% were built over 80 years ago. Increasing the adoption of clean energy technologies is particularly difficult for renters who have limited ability to influence decisions about a building's major systems but often are responsible for the utilities costs in their units. Landlords therefore have little incentive to make improvements that will reduce energy costs or dependence on fossil fuels. Rental households where English is not the primary language have the added hurdles of navigating programs and communicating with building owners about technical building issues in an often unfamiliar language and vocabulary.

Project Partners:

- City of Somerville SomerViva: Office of Immigrant Affairs
- Mothers Out Front
- Somerville Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change

