



April 2023 PTAC Meeting City Update

Agenda

- ❖ Safe Routes to School Update with Greg Hanafin, Transportation Planner
- ❖ Transit Pass Pilot Update
- ❖ City Updates
 - ❖ Code of Conduct
 - ❖ Start of construction!



Safe Routes to School

Greg Hanafin

What is Safe Routes to School (SRTS)?

MASSACHUSETTS SRTS PROGRAM

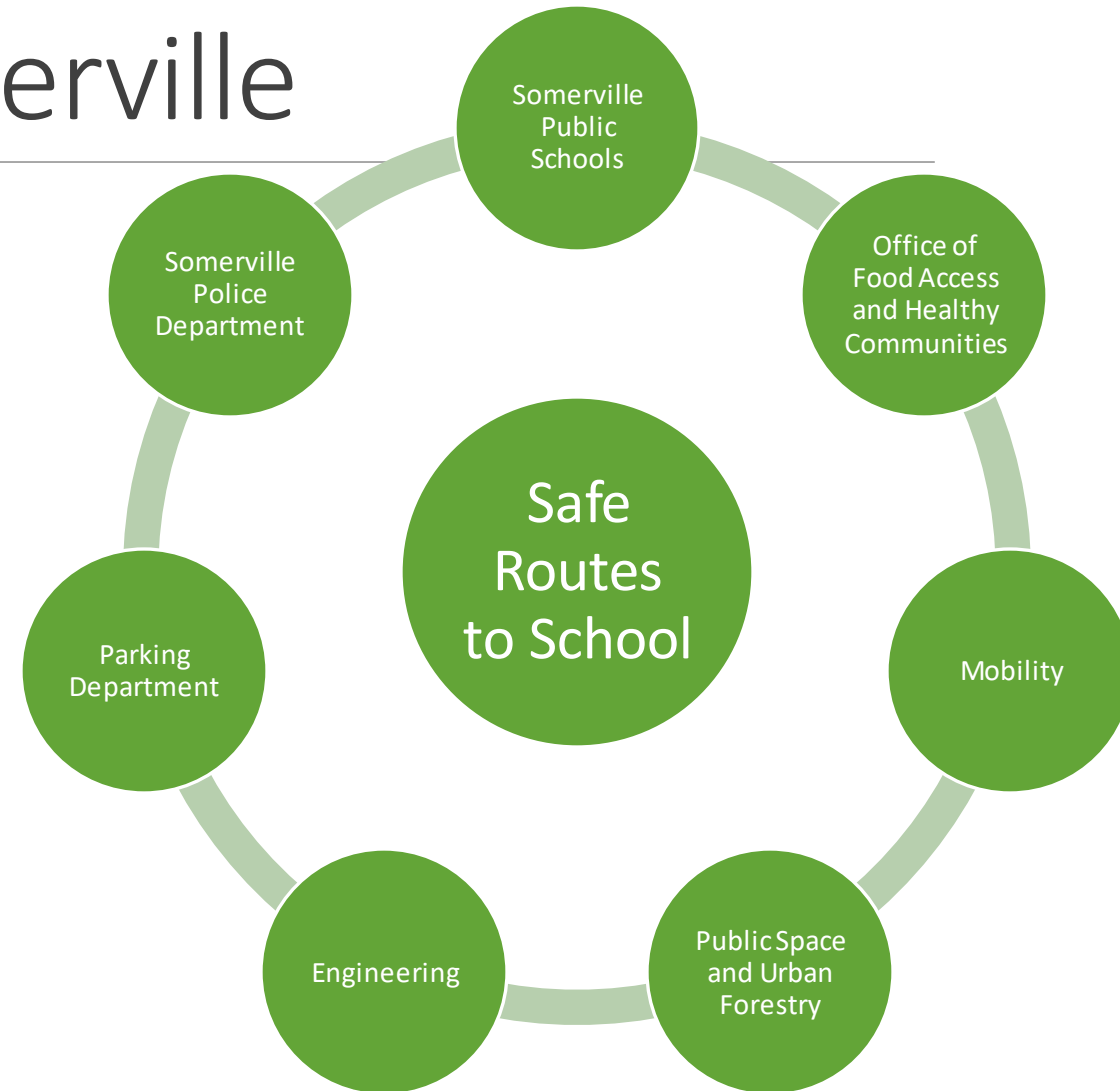
- Federally funded program administered by MassDOT.
- Provides resources and staff support to municipalities and schools with the goal of increasing safe walking, biking, and rolling among public elementary, middle, and high school students.
- Centered on the 6 E's:
 - **Education** - Getting the tools students need to be smart, aware walkers and rollers
 - **Encouragement** - Building excitement about active transportation through events, activities, and contests
 - **Evaluation** - Exploring data about surrounding environments and travel behaviors to improve walking and rolling
 - **Engineering** - Seeking opportunities for SRTS-related infrastructure funding
 - **Equity** - Accessing resources on implementing sustainable and equitable programs
 - **Engagement** - Cultivating relationships between schools, communities, and municipalities

SOMERVILLE SRTS PROGRAM

- All Somerville public schools are formal partners of the MA SRTS program.
- SRTS as a philosophy that drives planning and engineering decisions.
- Collaboration with the MA SRTS program.
- Inclusion of transit as a key element of SRTS.
- Interdepartmental SRTS working group provides structure and coordination.

SRTS leadership in Somerville

- SRTS working group formed in August 2022.
- Partnership between the Somerville Public Schools, Office of Food Access and Health Communities (OFAHC), Mobility, Public Space and Urban Forestry (PSUF), Engineering, Parking, and Police.
- Working group goal: Systematize City and School coordination with SRTS as the focus.
- Meet twice per month:
 - General coordination meeting.
 - Arrival/dismissal focus meeting.



SRTS Core Components



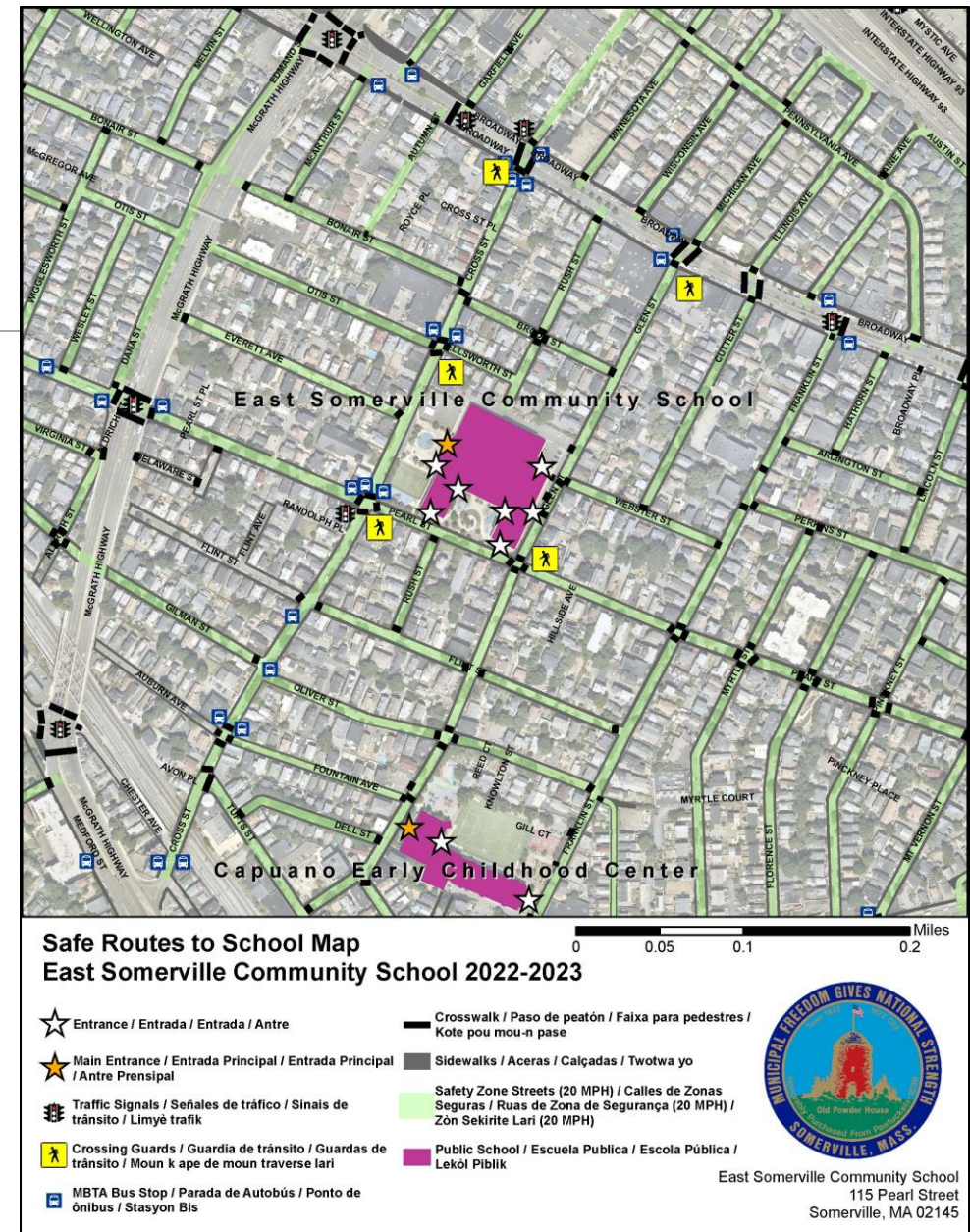
Programs

- In-school trainings
 - 2nd Grade pedestrian safety
 - 5th Grade bike safety
- Crossing Guard program
- Bike parking program
- Transit pass programs
- School bussing programs



Resources

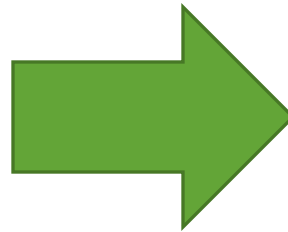
- [SRTS website](#)
- Walking maps
- Bike facilities map
- MA SRTS resources
 - Starting a walking school bus or bike train
 - Walking and biking tips
- Arrival/dismissal policies and plans
 - Coming Fall 2024



Streetscape Changes

PLANNING

- Data collection and analysis
 - Drone footage
 - On-the-ground observations
 - Student transportation surveys
 - Vehicle speeds, volumes, and crashes
- Project development & prioritization
 - Data, observations, feedback
 - Construction impacts
 - Advancing equity
 - # of students impacted



IMPLEMENTATION

- Quick-build toolkit
 - Pavement markings
 - Flex posts
 - Curb regulations and signage
 - Traffic patterns
- Construction
 - Speed humps
 - Curb bumpouts
 - Street and sidewalk reconstruction

Community Engagement

- School Events
 - iWalk – International Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day (October)
 - Massachusetts Winter Walk to School Day (February)
 - Massachusetts Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day (May)
- School communications
- PTA meetings
- Mobility newsletter





Transit Pass Pilot Programs

Program Motivation

Local Need

- 36% transit mode share, goal of 45% by 2040
- High local transportation costs
- 20% Somerville households under \$39,999
- > 24% of Somerville households do not have access to a vehicle

Regional Policy

- Means Tested Fare Discussion
- Free Bus Programs
- Local research

Opportunity

- ARPA Funding
- Political Momentum
- Aligns with Identified Community Values
- Transit as COVID recovery

State Policy: Means Tested Fares

- MBTA current reduced fares for Seniors, TAP program, Youth Pass and Students
- Gap in reduced fare access for low-income riders
- Proposal to introduce a new program on means-tested fare by MBTA
- \$5 million proposed in State budget to explore means-tested fare program

Executive Summary

Purpose

Low-Income Fares expands fare affordability across the MBTA modes, addressing an existing gap for the low-income population ages 26-64.

Development & Launch

Developing and launching a Low-Income Fare program is currently estimated to require at least 12 months with project implementation costs of approximately \$5 million. Key elements include the standard fare change process, changes to fare collection technology and fare media, the implementation of an online application, and onboarding of internal and partner staff in Community Based Organizations.

5-Year Cost

We expect \$2.4 million of ongoing annual administrative costs, with fare revenue losses and operating costs growing from \$22 million in year 1 through a steady state of \$53 million in year 5.

Broad MBTA Financial Context

Low-Income Fares are not currently in the MBTA budget. Implementing this would incrementally increase our funding gap and would require additional funding and/or reprioritization with other important initiatives impacting the Operating Budget.



Somerville Free Transit Pass Benefits

Student M7

- Free passes for Grade 7-12 SPS students get M7 pass
- 10 months
- 2nd year running
- Students in Grade 6 but >12yo can get an S-Card

Parents and Guardians Pilot

- Free passes for Parents and Guardians of SPS students of ANY age
- Needs based eligibility
- Launched Dec 2022 as an ARPA pilot

Low Income Pilot

- Free passes for low income residents of Somerville
- Partnering with CAAS
- Enrolled in benefit program (SNAP, MassHealth etc.) OR up to 200% Federal poverty line
- Applications open now, 500 passes available

Workforce Pilot

- Launched Jan 2023 as an ARPA pilot to test workforce TDM measures
- Free transit passes for SPS staff

Low Income Pilots

Funded by ARPA

Year to Date Findings

Student M7

- **1291** active cards
- Over 100,000 trips taken thru Feb
- 33% of trips on subway

Parents and Guardians Pilot

- **423** active cards
- 75% indicate income under \$30,000
- 58% in a no-car household
- 16% mainly subway, 39% mainly bus, 45% a combination of both

Workforce Pilot

- **632** active cards
- 28% commute by bus, 21% by subway, 15% by a combo
- 42% indicate spending over \$100/mo on transportation
- 31% commute over 45 minutes

Low Income Pilots Timeline

	Winter 23	Spring 23	Summer 23	Fall 23	Winter 24	Spring 24
SPS Parents and Guardians Pilot	<div>Launch</div>	<div>Usage Analysis</div>		<div>Phase 1 End</div>		
	<div>Intake Survey</div>		<div>Pilot End Survey</div>			
		<div>Micro Surveys, Focus Groups</div>				
CAAS Low Income Resident Pilot		<div>Launch</div>				<div>Pilot Ends</div>
		<div>Intake Survey</div>		<div>Micro Surveys, Focus Group</div>		
			<div>Usage Analysis</div>		<div>Pilot End Survey</div>	



General City Updates

Code of Conduct

- The goal is to ensure that every member has the opportunity to work in a safe, inclusive space where they are able to effectively participate
- We will send document after this meeting, signing is not required for PTAC members but could be required if on another board/commission/committee



City of Somerville

Code of Conduct for Board, Commission and Committee Members

The City of Somerville places a high priority on encouraging all residents to participate in our government's decision-making and planning processes. One valuable way for residents to do this is by becoming a member of Somerville's boards, commissions and committees. These bodies are tasked with a wide variety of duties and services. The city strives to ensure that residents from all demographic sectors are participating on our boards, commissions and committees, along with ensuring these are safe spaces where members can all contribute equally. Members are important agents of the city, and thus must uphold high standards of conduct and professionalism. In order to achieve this, all members must comply with the following Code of Conduct when serving on any board, commission or committee:

1. Members will strive to appreciate differences in approach and point of view and treat residents, city employees, partner organizations and other board, commission or committee members with courtesy, respect and professionalism.
2. Members must administer board positions with integrity, honesty, truthfulness and adherence to the absolute obligation to safeguard the public trust. Members are also expected to maintain professional working relationships with other members, City staff and members of the public.
3. Attendance and participation are an important part of appointment to a board, commission or committee. While it is understood that members have other obligations, the expectation is that members will make every effort to attend and participate in meetings, and whenever possible communicate any hardships to attendance.
4. In some instances, members may find that various laws may apply to boards, commissions and committees and to member participation, such as the Open Meeting Law and the Public Records Law. Members are expected to comply with the applicable laws, and may seek guidance from city staff, the City Clerk's office or the City Solicitor's office. Members are expected to have a basic understanding of these laws and how they apply to their membership.
5. The committee chair will be tasked with ensuring that all members have the opportunity to provide input and encourage the exchange of fair and balanced knowledge and perspectives.
6. Members cannot unilaterally act on behalf of a board, commission or committee without authorization from that board, commission or committee.
7. Members should commit to studying and analyzing the problems and issues that come before them, listen to requests/questions, ask for clarification if necessary, and provide complete, knowledgeable, accurate, precise information regarding inquiries.
8. The committee chair will be tasked with ensuring that members are adhering to the code of conduct.

Hybrid Meetings

Possibility to start hybrid/in-person meetings again:

Possible Accessible Meeting Locations

- Central Library
- Capuano School
- Healey School
- Argenziano School
- Somerville High School
- Winter Hill Community School
- West Somerville Neighborhood School
- West Branch Library
- Holland Street Center
- VNA Building

Mobility inquiring into more room specifics (i.e. room type and technical requirements)

Construction Season Underway

- Pearl sidewalks between Mt Vernon and Myrtle underway
- Powder House and Alewife Brook Parkway Intersection Redesign
- Bow and Grand Union Bike Lanes
- Crosswalks Refresh



East Broadway Bus Service and Crosswalk Improvements

- Outreach that has already been completed includes:
 - On-street pop up on Broadway/Cross and Cross/Everett
 - Virtual office hours last week
 - Multilingual block walking
 - Flyering
- Additional outreach will include:
 - One more on-street pop-up
 - Broadway at Franklin Street on April 27, 3pm - 6pm
 - A second virtual office hours on April 19, 4pm – 5pm
 - Partnering with East Somerville Main Streets and Economic Development for Business Outreach
 - Multilingual digital and print outreach materials, flyering in the neighborhood
 - Project website:
<https://www.somervillema.gov/eastbroadwaybus>
 - Traffic Commission (planned for May)
 - City construction and Mobility newsletters
 - CTY calls in advance of implementation



East Broadway Bus Service and Crosswalk Improvements

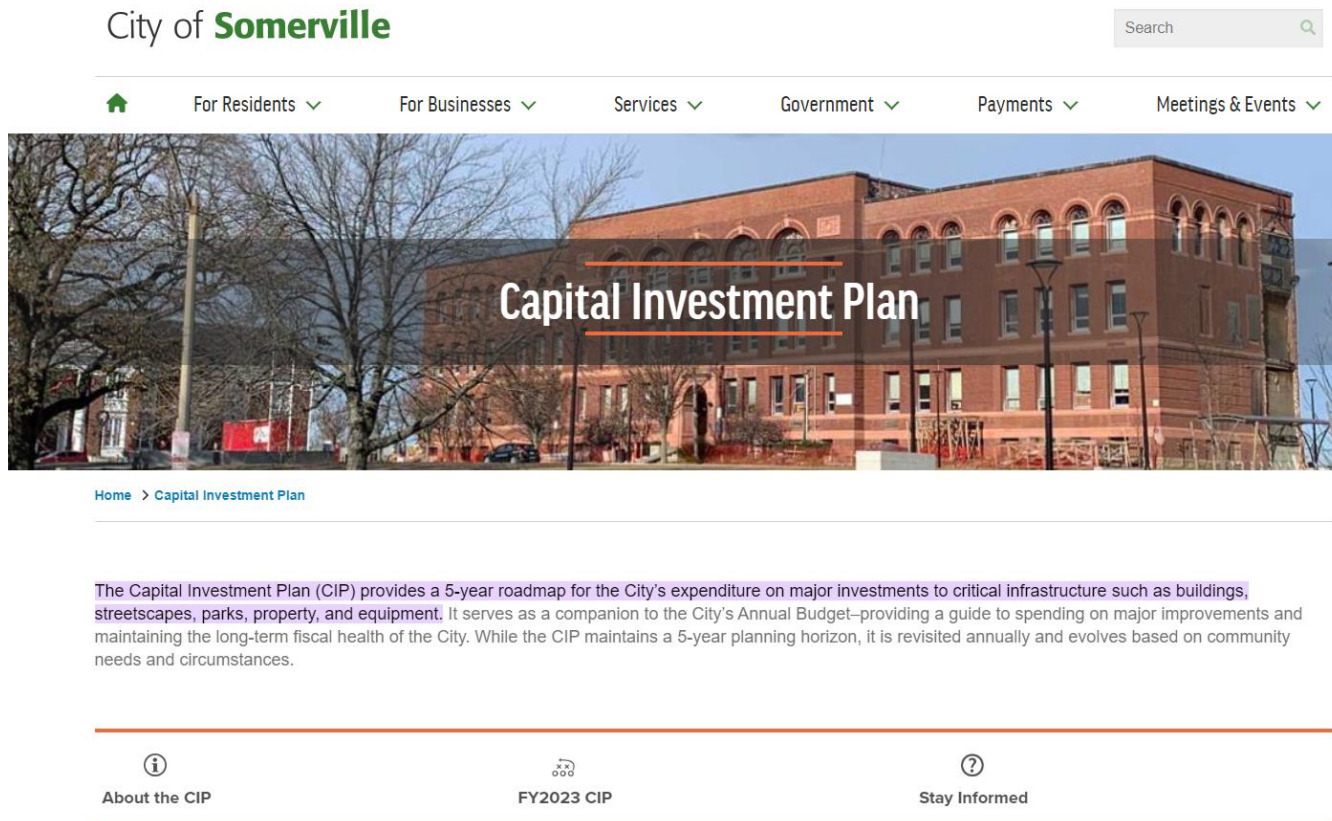


Policy Development – Bike Network Plan

- Bike Network Plan has been published!
- Next Steps: City Council Review
- <https://voice.somervillema.gov/somerville-bicycle-network-plan>



Citywide Capital Investment Plan



<https://www.somervillema.gov/cip>

- Capital Plan helps guide long-term planning for investments requiring borrowing (aka "bonding")
- Several safe streets projects included:
 - Completion of Somerville Avenue
 - Clarendon Hill housing, utility & streetscape
 - Boynton Yards utility & streetscape
 - Spring Hill / Highland Avenue
 - West Broadway
 - Annual street & sidewalk reconstruction
- Annual updates to this 5-year plan