



Somerville Fair Housing Commission: Community Engagement Capacity Building

Final Report

June 2026

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Introduction

Like many local boards and Commissions, the Somerville Fair Housing Commission faced challenges with reaching residents in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. By early 2025, the Commission was shifting from virtual events back to in-person engagements that had limited attendance. Through the Somerville Fair Housing Commission Community Engagement Capacity Building Project, the Commission and the city staff person who supports the Commission built skills, experience, and tools to improve their engagement efforts. The project was driven by relationship building between the Commission and community-based organizations whose work was relevant to Fair Housing. Learning from these new partners helped the Commission understand the need to go beyond “know-your-rights” information sharing to also providing actionable pathways to respond in instances of housing discrimination. It also resulted in the Commission shifting its focus from tenants alone to also educating small landlords who may be unaware of Fair Housing laws. The Commission navigated through a challenging context for engagement—including rapidly changing federal immigration policy and two Commissioners stepping away from their roles—to host two well-attended and well-received events during 2026 Fair Housing Month. The pathway that led to the Commission’s increased capacity to conduct successful engagement is documented in this report for reference and continued future improvement.

Background and Overview

In late 2024, the Somerville Fair Housing Commission reached out to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council’s (MAPC’s) Community Engagement team through the Technical Assistance Program for assistance with its community engagement and education efforts. The Commissioners and their new staffer, the Fair Housing and Inclusionary Zoning Specialist, expressed a need for support with building capacity to reach the members of the Somerville community most impacted by housing discrimination.

The Somerville Fair Housing Commission was established in 1985.¹ The Commission includes five members appointed by the mayor, including an administrator from the Somerville Housing Authority and a resident who qualifies as low-income. By ordinance, the Commission has two primary responsibilities. The first is to hear reports from Somerville residents about possible violations of federal, state, or local Fair Housing law and, as appropriate, offer mediation or refer them to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). This responsibility is supported by the City staffer to the Commission, who receives complaints from residents and presents them to the Commission during monthly meetings and annual reports. The Commission’s second major responsibility is to promote the understanding of fair housing laws among Somerville residents in order to reduce instances of housing discrimination. The second responsibility was the focus of this project.

The MAPC Community Engagement team began working with the Somerville Fair Housing Commission in April 2025 and concluded the collaboration in June 2026. The MAPC team worked with the Commissioners and staff to identify community engagement goals, prioritize groups for community

¹ [Somerville Code of Ordinances, Chapter 7, Article III.](#)

outreach, build relationships with local organizations associated with those priority groups, and design engagement materials and events tailored to the Commission's engagement goals and audience. Throughout the collaboration, MAPC staff introduced frameworks, tools, and templates that the Commission can continue using to expand its educational efforts across the Somerville community.

This report documents the process that the Commission, Somerville staff, and MAPC staff undertook throughout fiscal year 2026 to build the Commission's capacity for conducting effective community engagement. The following sections include documentation of the project goals and methodology. It also includes highlights from the Landscape Analysis conducted at the start of the project, as well as how it informed the Community Engagement Plan for Fair Housing month engagement events in April 2026. Changes in the engagement approach and the results of those changes are documented through comparison of the 2025 and 2026 April Fair Housing month events. Finally, recommendations for the Commission's future engagement efforts are included at the end. This report is accompanied by a [Community Engagement Toolkit](#), which includes contact lists, template engagement materials, evaluation tools, and more that the Commissioners and staff can use to continue building on these engagement efforts.

Methods and Approach

Achieving the vision and goals the Commissioners identified will be an ongoing effort, but this year-long project was intended to help the Commission build capacity and create a strategic approach to community engagement and education. The Commissioners believed that building relationships with local organizations and other City departments serving or otherwise connected with those residents facing housing discrimination should be the foundation of their community engagement approach. They believed starting with relationship building would help them improve their engagement and education efforts in two ways. First, those connections would help the Commissioners understand the current beliefs and challenges about Fair Housing among different parts of the Somerville community. Second, it would help the Commission understand how to better communicate with and engage those residents.

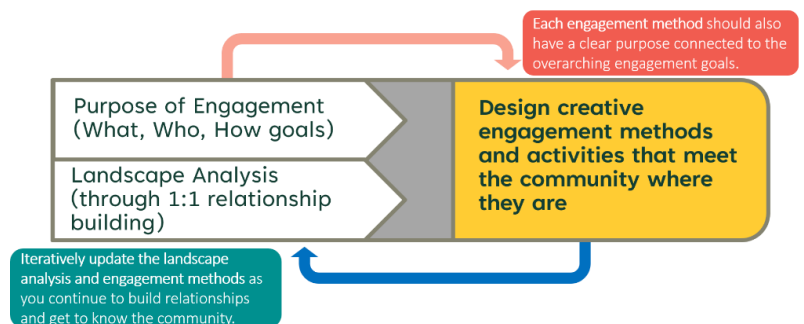
To accomplish this, MAPC staff introduced a community engagement process that has been refined and applied in other planning and policy-making contexts. The process starts with clarifying the **purpose of engagement**, including goals for what information needs to be communicated or collected through engagement, who needs to be involved, and how the engagement will be conducted. Next, the project team conducts a **Landscape Analysis** by having one-to-one conversations, getting to know the individual and the organization or group they represent. One-to-one discussions cover the project topic, experiences with community engagement methods that work well for their audience, and the individual's connection to Fair Housing in Somerville.

After completing a series of one-to-one discussions, the findings are analyzed to identify common beliefs and assumptions about the project topic, effective and ineffective outreach and engagement methods by audience, and any other themes relevant to the project. This analysis creates an understanding of **engagement methods and communication channels** that are likely to work well for engaging priority

groups by meeting them where they are. Lastly, the **capacity of the project team**—in this case the Fair Housing Commissioners and staff—is assessed to understand the scope and scale of engagement activities that are possible to complete in the project timeframe. Throughout the implementation of the community engagement plan, and especially at the conclusion of the project, the outcomes are **evaluated** against the engagement goals set at the start of the process. Additionally, before MAPC staff complete a project, they **connect municipal staff with any people and concepts** that have arisen throughout the engagement process for further collaboration.

The following sections document the results from implementing this approach in the context of the Somerville Fair Housing Commission engagement project.

Figure 1. MAPC's Community Engagement Strategy Creation Approach



Vision and Community Engagement Goals

The project started with developing a clear understanding of the Commission's vision and goals. This was achieved through individual meet-and-greet interviews with each of the Somerville Fair Housing Commissioners. These conversations revealed the past and ongoing engagement efforts the Commission had already tried, what was working and what they wanted to see changed, and which subsets of the Somerville community they were most interested in reaching.

Somerville Fair Housing Commission's Vision

The Somerville Fair Housing Commission and City staff have a shared vision for the Commission's impact and work. They seek to ensure that all Somerville residents know their rights under federal, state, and local Fair Housing laws. Tenants should be able to exercise their rights to find and keep housing, and landlords should understand and comply with these regulations.

The Commissioners see themselves playing a role in advancing toward this future in two main ways. First, they act as an educational and awareness-raising entity. They connect with community members and build knowledge of fair housing rights and resources across the Somerville community. Additionally, they are positioned to communicate and coordinate across the city, among other commissions like the Human Rights Commission, departments like the Office of Housing Stability, and community-based organizations and nonprofits who provide related services.

Somerville Fair Housing Commission's Community Engagement Goals

While the objectives for community engagement, education, and outreach will continue to evolve according to community composition and need, the Commission identified a set of goals for the duration of this project (April 2025-June 2026). The Commission's goals were to:

- Grow awareness of the Somerville Fair Housing Commission as a resource to residents.
- Increase the reach of educational engagement about Fair Housing rights and requirements, focusing on priority groups identified as part of this project.
- Build Commission capacity to continue expanding awareness-building and engagement work.

Across each of these goals, the Commissioners sought to expand their reach to different audiences. In addition to community-wide outreach, the Commission identified priority groups that would require dedicated efforts to get in touch with. Working with MAPC staff, the Commissioners identified demographic groups that represent state and federal protected classes that are more frequently affected by housing discrimination in Somerville. Commissioners further refined the priority groups they sought to reach by assessing which protected classes they did not have existing relationships with. They identified the following set of priority groups for outreach and engagement through a Landscape Analysis, a process for understanding key community resources, potential partners, and community sentiment on a project or topic.

- Faith-based communities (especially those serving immigrant populations)

- Low-income households, who earn incomes below 80% of the area median income (the income restricted seat on the Commission is often hard to fill)
- Section 8 voucher holders
- Staff at housing search agencies, such as SHC, CAAS, etc.
- Small or medium scale landlords

MAPC worked with the Commission to develop a plan to achieve these goals, using input from the Landscape Analysis. The plan is summarized in Table 1, below.

Table 1. Somerville Fair Housing Commission Community Engagement Goals

What <i>What do you need to educate or keep the community informed about? What power do community members have over decision making?</i>	Who <i>When you say “community” who exactly do you mean? Who are the priority community groups or stakeholders you will engage?</i>	How <i>What are the principles by which you plan to approach the community engagement work? How will you enact values like accessibility, transparency, equity, etc.? What methods will you use to achieve these goals?</i>
Awareness of the Somerville Fair Housing Commission as a resource	Community-wide	Awareness-building at community events (e.g., ArtBeat, Carnival)
		Weekly Facebook posts
	Priority Groups	Flyering with general information about Fair Housing (at Library, Council on Aging)
		Attending events in neighborhoods with high concentration of priority groups (e.g., East Somerville Main Streets events)
Education on Fair Housing rights and requirements	Landlords	April Fair Housing Month Events
		Presentations to priority groups (e.g., Council on Aging, Somerville YIMBY)
	Tenants	April Fair Housing Month Events
		Presentations to priority groups (e.g., Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) Movement Meetings, Somerville Nonprofit Collaborative, Padres Latinos)
		Training with amplifiers (e.g., Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) training, City social workers training)

Landscape Analysis and Relationship Building

The purpose of a Landscape Analysis is to identify key potential partners, opponents, and community resources that have an interest in or influence over the project and any proposed changes. The analysis integrates multiple different perspectives in an effort to build a well-rounded understanding of local community context. The full Landscape Analysis memo can be found in the Appendix of this report.

The Landscape Analysis started with a review of quantitative data related to Fair Housing in Somerville. MAPC and the Commission reviewed demographic data and information from Fair Housing Commission reports from fiscal years 2020-2023. These data showed that most instances of reported housing discrimination were based on source of income, disability, and race. Additionally, most of the complaints received in recent years came from Wards 1 and 6. Demographic data showed that the city is home to families at various income levels and many immigrant communities, with the majority of naturalized U.S. citizens and non-citizens being from Latin America, followed by Asia.

Based on these data, the Commission identified the priority groups for outreach and engagement, outlined in the [Community Engagement Goals](#). They reached out to organizations that served or worked with those priority groups, inviting them to participate in Landscape Analysis conversations. The objective of these meetings was to connect with community organizations and leaders that would help the Commission build relationships with those priority groups. Throughout Summer 2025, the project team conducted Landscape Analysis conversations with the following community members:

- Jordan Harris, Pastor at Connexions
- Meredith Gamble and team at Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs (SOIA)
- Lindsay Allen, Executive Director at East Somerville Main Streets
- Ashley Speliotis, Executive Director at Somerville Council on Aging (COA)
- Danny McLaughlin, at Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS)
- Regina Bertholdo and Jennifer Ochoa, Director of Basic Needs and Housing Support Services at Somerville Public Schools
- Chris Beland and other Board Members, Davis Square Neighborhood Council
- Joshua Michel, Somerville YIMBY

Landscape Analysis Themes and Findings

By the end of the Landscape Analysis conversations, a number of clear themes and trends had emerged.

- While the Commission is focused on Fair Housing, the broader context of lack of affordable housing heightens the risks tenants bear when they face instances of discrimination. This is especially true for those whose documentation status is unclear.
- There are more instances of discrimination occurring than are reported. This is due in part to a sense of distrust that immigrant communities have for government, either due to negative experiences in their countries of origin or in the United States.

- The Landscape Analysis was conducted in the summer of 2025, when rapid changes were being made to federal immigration policy and deportation activity. Somerville was a target of these activities, creating a great deal of fear among residents and heightening distrust in government.
- Participants highlighted the importance of meeting people where they are linguistically and with clear, actionable information. In addition to translating materials into languages other than English, content should be centered around how to take action in discriminatory situations as many tenants already know their rights. Partners also shared that there may be more opportunity in providing educational information to landlords.
- At the same time, landlords have their own difficult relationships with Fair Housing. Most large landlords understand and are equipped to comply with Fair Housing, but medium-size or smaller landlords might not understand the legal requirements.

Implications for the Commission's Engagement and Education Efforts

The Landscape Analysis conversations were designed to inform the Commission's approach to engagement and education going forward. A number of principles for guiding the community engagement work and planning emerged from the conversations.

- The Commission's engagement should be clear and actionable—dispel misinformation and build trust by providing useful and usable information.
- Meeting people where they are is important. The Commission should both go to places where people are already gathering, to avoid asking residents to come out to places that might be or feel unsafe, and communicate in their preferred languages.
- The Commission needs to develop messaging that is tailored to tenants and landlords, respectively. While it may be more impactful to target education to landlords in the short term, the Commission should also prepare materials and continue to provide information to tenants.
- Each of the community organizations that participated in the Landscape Analysis have built trusting relationships and extensive programming to serve their communities in Somerville. Each suggested opportunities that the Somerville Fair Housing Commission would be welcome to attend to engage and educate community members about topics related to fair housing. Those opportunities are documented in the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#).

Using the findings from the Landscape Analysis, including the set of community engagement events and outreach channels that one-to-one participants highlighted, MAPC worked with the Commission to develop a community engagement plan.

Community Engagement Planning

Having developed an understanding of community sentiments about Fair Housing and engagement preferences through the Landscape Analysis, MAPC and the Commission developed a community engagement plan to achieve the project goals. The Commission considered creating a plan for a series of engagement events leading up to April 2026 Fair Housing Month. However, at this point in the project, two of the five Commissioners stepped down from their roles. In response, the community engagement plan focused on preparing a more limited number of engagement events for the upcoming April 2026 Fair Housing Month programming and creating tools, templates, and processes to support the Commissioners in their more limited capacity.

Identifying Audiences: One of the major findings from the Landscape Analysis was that small landlords were an audience that the Commission should dedicate more efforts to engaging. Because they typically do not experience housing discrimination, Somerville’s small landlords have not been the target audience of communications from City entities like the Fair Housing Commission. However, the Landscape Analysis revealed that many small landlords may not be aware of Fair Housing laws and regulations, as renting out property is often not their primary means of income. At the same time, while immigrant communities are at risk due to federal immigration policy, landlords likely have more capacity to take in this type of information and take action accordingly.

The Commissioners decided that their second event would be open to the general public. One of the Commission's community engagement goals for this project was to build awareness of the group as a resource in Somerville. The Commissioners believed hosting their own event—rather than partnering with another community group—would help them advance toward that goal. Other discussions had begun exploring targeted engagement events with priority groups, but they were put on pause due to the limited Commissioner capacity and findings from the Landscape Analysis that indicated immigrant and low-income populations were not likely to be receptive to engagement at the moment. Based on these findings from the Landscape Analysis, the Commission decided to plan one Fair Housing Month event for an audience of small landlords and one event for the general public.

Designing Fair Housing Month Events: Once the Commission decided on the audiences they wanted to reach in the 2026 Fair Housing Month events, they worked on designing the events themselves and identifying partners to collaborate with. For the event aimed at small landlords, the Commission chose to work with the Somerville Council on Aging (COA), whose director participated in the Landscape Analysis. Based on the Landscape Analysis meeting, the Commission worked with the Director to design a resource event for seniors in Somerville who are small landlords that would take place at the Senior Center location at 167 Holland Street.²

For the second event, the Commission wanted to continue to host their signature Fair Housing Month event: an event based on the book, *The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein. The event typically includes a screening of the short film, “Segregated by Design,” which is based on and summarizes the book’s

² Somerville has a second senior center, the Ralph & Jenny Center, located at 9 New Washington Street. The Commission hopes to hold future events at that location, which serves a different racial and ethnic demographic.

exploration of the history of housing discrimination in the United States. They partnered with the Somerville Public Library and the Office of Racial and Social Justice to host and plan this event.

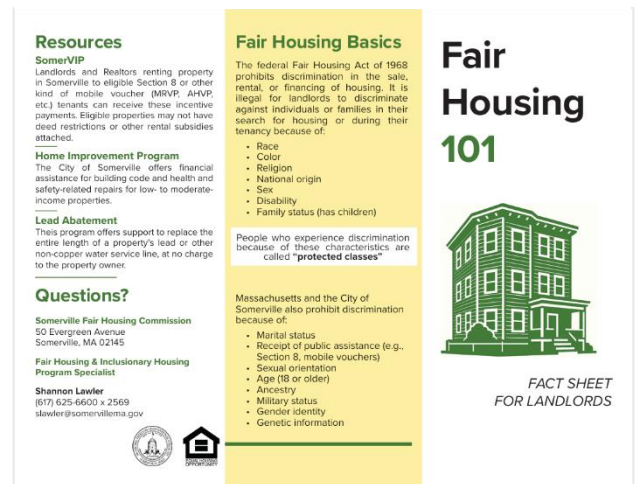
Given the Commissioners' limited capacity, much of the planning for these events occurred during the Commission's monthly meetings. In between meetings, the staff to the Commission advanced administrative tasks such as event logistics, coordination with partners, and outreach. Staff support was key to ensuring event planning tasks moved forward and occurred on time. The roadmap for planning Fair Housing Month events can be replicated in future years to ensure ample time is allowed for collaboratively planning and promoting engagement events.

Table 2. Community Engagement Event Planning Timeline

Month	In-Meeting Discussion or Decision	Commissioners' Tasks Between Meetings	City Staff's Tasks Between Meetings
November	Decide on the engagements the Commission wants to conduct for the upcoming Fair Housing Month (<i>number of events possible; target audiences; topics and partners to co-host events with</i>)	Reach out to partners to begin coordination about co-hosting events	Support Commissioners to reach out to contacts to begin coordination
December	Decide on dates and times for events; Commissioners sign-up to lead 1 event and support 1 event	Confirm dates and times with partners	Support Commissioners to confirm with partners
January	Develop facilitation plans and identify remaining content needs	Fill out facilitation plan templates	Create flyers
February	Launch event marketing and outreach	Send event information out to contacts	Coordinate with SomerViva to have flyers translated
March	Final outreach and event planning coordination	Put up event flyers in your neighborhood; Prep for facilitation or presentations at engagement events	Order food Send invite to partner organizations
April	Commission meetings are typically at the end of the month, so April's meeting can be dedicated to celebrating the accomplishments of that year's Fair Housing Month engagements, reflecting on how the events went, and identifying improvements for the next year.		

Creating Engagement Materials: MAPC developed materials for engaging the different audiences that the Commission wanted to reach. These materials included two versions of brochures with basic educational information on Fair Housing and City resources. One was tailored to landlords, while the other version was aimed at tenants with City resources for the respective audiences. MAPC also created presentation slides that matched the information from each brochure, and engagement activities that could be used at tabling opportunities outside of Fair Housing Month. These materials integrated findings and community input from the Landscape Analysis process.

Figure 2. Example of New Engagement Materials - Brochure for Landlords



Fair Housing Month Events

The intentional preparations resulted in two successful Fair Housing Month community engagement events in April 2026. The small landlord resource event took place on Friday, April 10th at the Senior Center, while the film screening and book event took place at the Somerville Public Library's Main Branch on the evening of Thursday, April 16th. Commissioners were pleased with both the number of participants and the level of energetic engagement at both events. They viewed both events as evidence of the Commission's improved engagement practices and capacity building efforts from the past year.

2025 Fair Housing Month Events

The Commissioners' goal for 2026 Fair Housing Month events was to increase the reach of their engagements when compared to the previous year. In 2025, the Commission also held two events for Fair Housing Month. Both events took place at the Somerville Public Library Main Branch, with the second event including a virtual option.

April 10, 2025, 7-8pm: Screening of Short Film *Segregated by Design* (based on *The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein)

About 11 participants attended the event, in addition to 4 City staff from various departments. The short film screening was followed by a panel discussion that included Commissioners and City staff. There was a Q&A session at the end, but not much two-way engagement.

April 17, 2025, 7-8pm: Hybrid Discussion on Section 8 Vouchers

This was a hybrid event with 15 participants in-person, including several City staff, with more on Zoom (there were 25 registrants in total according to the Library's event sign-up system). This event started with a presentation on Section 8 vouchers by a local housing legal expert. It was followed by a roleplaying activity in which participants were paired up to act as landlords and renters navigating discriminatory practices.

Attendance at the 2025 Fair Housing Month events was less than desired and did not reflect the priority groups the Commissioners had identified. This was one of the first times the Commission had held an in-person Fair Housing Month event since the COVID-19 pandemic. An exit survey was made available through a QR code at the end of both events. It was only filled out by three participants at the event on April 10, all of whom were renters, but otherwise did not identify with any other priority groups. While they generally provided positive feedback, one respondent commented, "I like the panelists and they seemed very well informed on the topics. The moderator's questions and comments seemed a bit disjointed and lacking flow and a strong central idea for the discussion."

2026 Fair Housing Month Events

The 2026 Fair Housing Month events exceeded the Commissioners' expectations and were an improvement from the previous year's events. Not only did the two events reach more residents overall, but they also reached more of the priority communities that the Commissioners sought to reach.

Additionally, the energy and excitement of participants to engage with topics related to Fair Housing was clear at both April 2026 events.

April 10, 2025, 10-11am: Small Landlord Resource Event at the Council on Aging

There were 17 participants, in addition to 5 City and COA staff at the event. Breakfast was served and the event started with a Bingo game that integrated Fair Housing trivia to gauge participants' knowledge about Fair Housing. This activity was followed by a presentation by Commissioner Janine Lotti on landlords' responsibilities for adhering to Fair Housing laws. After, City staff from the Office of Housing Stability and Home Improvement Program spoke to share about resources available to landlords for ensuring their rental units hold up to Fair Housing standards.

April 17, 2025, 7-8pm: Segregated by Design Short Film Screening and Discussion

This event included 19 participants, in addition to 3 City staff. The event featured a screening of the short film, "Segregated by Design," followed by small group discussions with question for guided reflection. There were enough participants to form three small groups. The discussion questions were developed in collaboration with the City's equity-focused planning staff. Refreshments were available from a local restaurant.

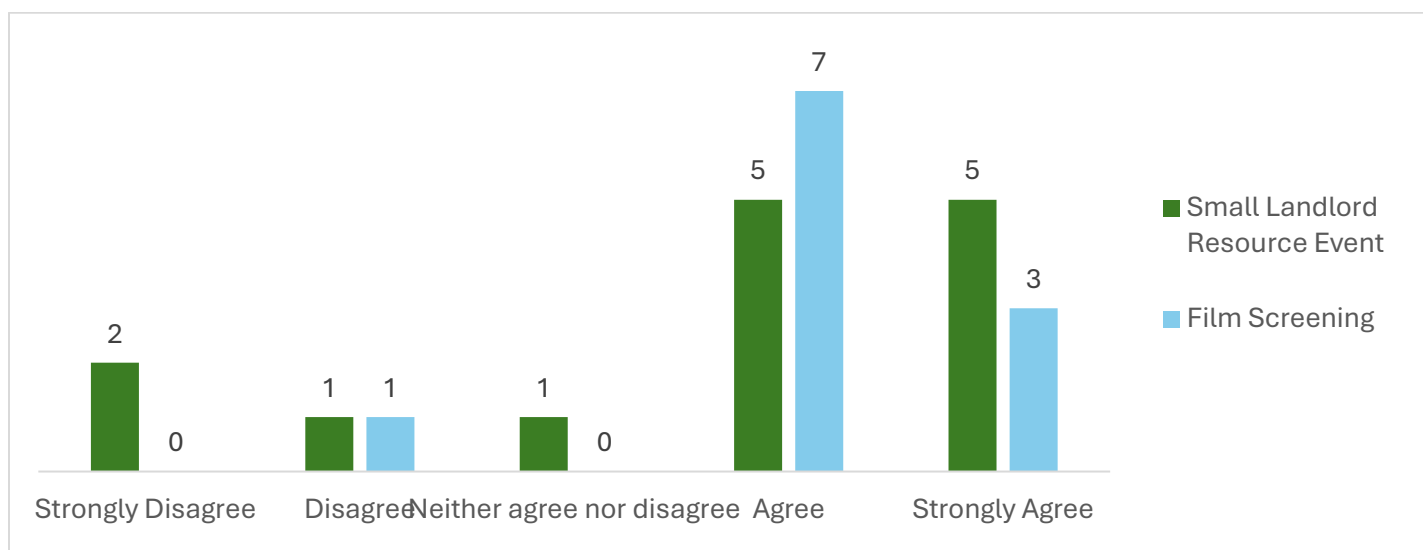


Photo of discussion groups after short film screening

A similar set of evaluative questions were posed to participants at the end of both April 2026 events. The full report of survey responses can be found in the [Appendix](#). Unlike the previous year, most event participants responded to the survey, with 14 responses from the Small Landlord Resource Event and 11 responses from the short film screening. These responses helped validate the Commissioners' and staff's observations of the relative success of the 2026 events. While it is not useful to compare the limited results of the evaluation surveys from 2025 events to those from 2026, looking at the results of the 2026 event series alone paints a useful picture.

Overall Participant Response: Participant evaluations surveys for both 2026 events were generally positive along spectrums of audience satisfaction, sense of welcome, and understanding the content. Survey respondents wrote comments like, "I was quite impressed with the energy + attempts of understanding!" (response to short film screening event).

Figure 3. Participants' Responses to the Statement, "I am satisfied with the event overall."



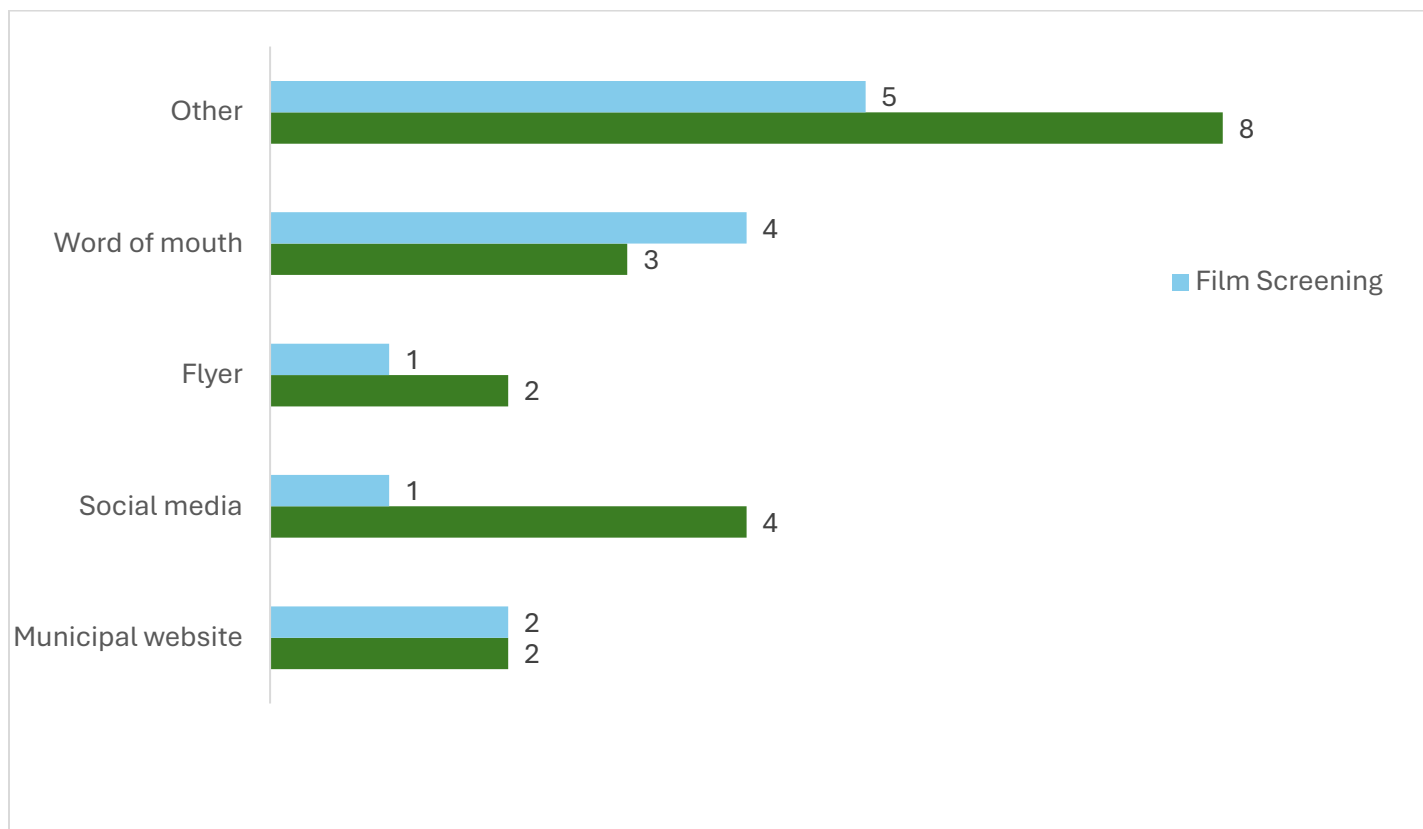
Some participants at each event did express dissatisfaction in areas that the Commission can address for future events. Open ended comments submitted in the evaluation forms help illuminate some areas for improvement. Some participants felt unclear about how to connect the discussions in the event with continued action, saying, "I wasn't sure what the next steps are but I appreciated the movie + discussion." Multiple attendees at the Small Landlord Resource event expressed a desire for more in-depth information: "You should differentiate in your presentation between landlords who live in the property versus investors. Most of us here probably fall into the former category." And "Didn't touch the nuts & bolts of landlord." As this was the first time that the Commission had run the Small Landlord Resource Event, some challenges and areas for improvement were to be expected.

Reach of Events: In addition to more participants overall, the 2026 event attendees were more diverse than those at the previous year's events. Total attendance increased from 26 to 36 participants from 2025 to 2026. More than half of participants across both 2026 events who responded to the survey identified as some race or ethnicity other than White. Participants also came from homes that speak languages other than English, including Spanish, Cantonese, and Mandarin. At both events, participants also represented a diverse range of household income levels, disabilities, and other protected classes, such as veteran status and sexuality.

The Commission was able to achieve this diversity of attendance by partnering with community organizations to promote the event. The Council on Aging shared the Small Landlord Resource Event widely through its newsletter, just as the library shared the film screening through its digital channels and library bulletin boards. The City staff to the Commission also shared information on both events with all of the partners that took part in Landscape Analysis conversations, who shared the event information out with their respective networks. The most-selected outreach channel through which participants reported hearing about the event in the evaluation survey was "Other," with written responses indicating the COA and library newsletters, respectively. The film screening was attended by partners developed through the Landscape Analysis, including CAAS and Somerville YIMBY. The Community Preservation Committee

even set up their own table at the film screening to take advantage of the gathering to share their own survey.

Figure 4. Communication Channels From Which Attendees Heard About the Event



In reflecting on the Fair Housing Month events during the April 2026 monthly meeting, Commissioners were pleased with the engagement efforts and felt like progress had been achieved over the past year. Even with two out of five seats open, the Commission, with the support of its City staff person, was able to plan, promote, and implement two well-attended, successful events. By the end of Fair Housing Month, the Commission even had additional community engagement events planned for later in the Spring and Summer.

Findings: Effective Engagement and Outreach Practices

The experience of implementing MAPC's community engagement approach to build the Commission's capacity for community engagement illuminated lessons and findings about the process.

Relationship Building Amplifies Outreach: The success of the April 2026 events and opportunity to have additional engagement beyond Fair Housing Month are a testament to the benefit of collaboration with partner organizations. Building relationships with organizations associated with priority community groups early on meant those partners understood the work of the Commission, who they were as individuals and neighbors, and why their work was relevant to the partner organizations themselves. At the same time, the Commissioners learned about partner organizations' experiences directly serving the priority groups they wanted to reach. The relationship-building efforts helped illuminate specific topics and ways of framing Fair Housing that would be most relevant to each audience the Commission sought to reach. Later, when the Commission or City staff asked for their support with event outreach, partner organizations understood the relevance and importance of the subject to their members or constituents and were willing to help. This increased the scale of the Commission's outreach messaging, attracting larger and more diverse audiences to the Fair Housing Month events.

Relationship Building Results in More Tailored Engagement: Developing relationships with local groups and organizations also ensured the Commissioners could better tailor the content of their outreach and engagement to the target audience. The Landscape Analysis process revealed concerns and priorities of each of the priority groups, which the Commission was able to draw upon to ensure the outreach and engagement contents were framed in a way that would resonate the intended audience. The Small Landlord Resource event, for example, was designed to respond directly to concerns and preferences of seniors that the Director of the COA shared during the Landscape Analysis conversation. The Director highlighted concerns of seniors who are landlords living in owner-occupied multifamily homes, their preferences for straightforward and descriptive outreach, and other insights that directly informed the design of the engagement. This degree of insight is key to creating engagement events that are enjoyable and capture participants' attention. Building relationships with the partners who hold this information was the most effective way for the Commission to gain the insight they needed.

Advanced Planning and Preparation are an Investment in Successful Engagement: By ordinance, one of the Commission's primary responsibilities is educating Somerville residents about Fair Housing. Investing time and sufficient resources in planning and preparing for these educational engagement opportunities is key. Compared to the 2025 Fair Housing Month events, the 2026 event planning started earlier, which resulted in outreach and communications materials being available with enough notice for residents to be aware of and attend events. Additionally, the Commission's focus on engaging immigrant populations means most of their materials need to be translated into languages other than English that are commonly spoken in Somerville. This service is available through the City's SomerViva department, but requires forward planning to complete ahead of scheduled events. The City staff person to the Commission holds the responsibility for advancing many of these planning, administrative, and logistical tasks and dedicated a significant portion of time toward it in the months leading up to Fair Housing Month. The staff person's time and attention were paramount to enabling the success of these events.

Connections Needed Between Information and Action: A theme that emerged in different ways throughout the project was the need for the Commission’s engagement to go beyond sharing information. Community members expressed a desire to take action based on the knowledge they learned. For example, one of the main lessons from the Landscape Analysis was that tenants have received a lot of “know your rights” communications already. Instead, they would benefit more from information on how to respond in situations when they believe their rights have been violated. Similarly, the participants at the short film screening expressed a desire to take action on the information they learned during the event about systemic discrimination. Discussions at the end of the event touched on what steps Somerville residents can take today to address the harm caused by historic exclusionary policies and practices.

While these findings only represent the experience of this project, some of the findings may prove to be generalizable to other contexts. Additional examples of implementing MAPC’s community engagement approach should be documented and analyzed to identify any patterns that emerge.

Recommendations: Continued Relationship Building and Engagement

As the Commission continues their community engagement efforts beyond the scope of this project, several continued actions should be considered.

Continue to Expand the Commission’s Network through Relationship Building: The Commission and its staff person have developed a strong understanding of how to approach relationship building with relevant partner organizations through the Landscape Analysis. The Commission should continue maintaining the relationships it now has, in addition to forging new relationships with partners that were not successfully reached in this project. Key partnerships established through this project, such as those with the Council on Aging (COA) and the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS), should be maintained. The Commission has already begun developing programming with CAAS for later in 2026, and has discussed working with the COA to continue and expand its programming for small landlords to its other senior center locations. The [Community Engagement Toolkit](#) includes a contact list of potential partners to engage and tools like a conversation guide for one-to-one meetings.

In particular, the Commission should consider reaching out to potential partners that have connections to populations that are at high risk for housing discrimination and that they do not currently have relationships with. Many of the instances of housing discrimination reported to the City cite disability as the protected class, so the Commission could identify disability justice organizations in Somerville to build relationships with. There was also interest in reaching the LGBTQ+ community and students at local universities, like Tufts. Finally, the outreach to small landlords was limited in the 2025-26 project, as there are no organizations that formally convene or serve that population directly. Continuing to build relationships with Neighborhood Associations and pro-housing groups is a good place to start.

Replicate and Refine the Engagement Planning Process: The Commission should replicate the approach that was implemented during this project to test its reliability, especially with two new Commissioners joining to fill the currently vacant seats. The Commission can repeat the steps described in the [Community Engagement Planning section](#) to prepare for next year’s Fair Housing Month events and assess whether it continues to work for the new configuration of the group. It may be valuable to use the approach for planning engagement events the Commission had discussed but has been unable to complete due to lack of capacity. For example, the Commission was interested in exploring a “train-the-trainer” event with City social worker staff and others who work with low-income or other vulnerable communities in Somerville. They may find that there are adjustments and improvements they want to make to ensure that the event planning and preparation works for both the Commissioners themselves and the City staff.

Consider Connecting Engagement with Structural Changes: Right now, the Commission provides one-way education and communication. In these educational engagements, they also hear from residents about their needs and concerns related to Fair Housing or housing affordability in general. These activities would benefit from additional staff capacity to support the extensive planning, outreach, and follow-up work necessary to make them effective. Additionally, the Commission should consider analyzing the comments it hears in a systematic way that might lend itself to making recommendations

to the City about planning, policy, or programmatic changes to further Fair Housing. For example, the community input that the Commission gathers through its educational engagement efforts may inform the City's annual Consolidated Planning process, where Fair Housing is concerned. Commission could also make recommendations to the City about when its Fair Housing Plan should be updated, adding protected classes to the City's Fair Housing ordinance, or advocating for certain state-level policies that advance local Fair Housing priorities. The Commission is well-positioned to make the connection between community sentiment and municipal policy. This could also help address event participants' feeling of being unsure of how to remain involved with the Commission's efforts, by providing channels for further and deeper engagement.

Community Engagement Toolkit

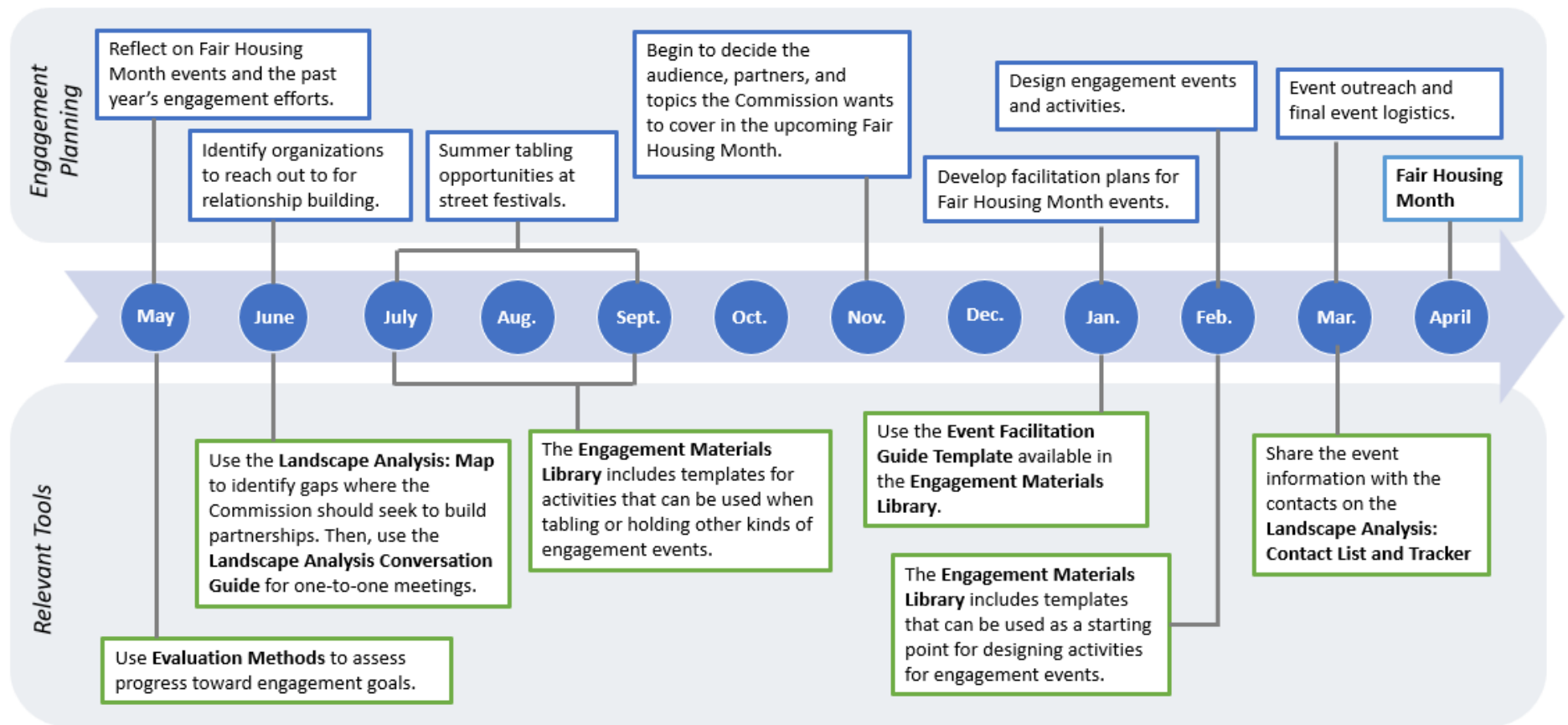
One of the primary goals of the project was to build the Commission's capacity for community engagement. In addition to building relationships and designing engagement events, MAPC staff created a set of tools and templates that the Commission will be able to continue using. The Community Engagement Toolkit includes the following sections:

[*View the Community Engagement Toolkit*](#)

- **Overview: Vision and Goals** – This section provides an overarching understanding about the Somerville Fair Housing Commission's engagement and public education efforts. This is a great resource to review when preparing to staff an engagement event.
- **Landscape Analysis: Map** – This visual representation of the Somerville Fair Housing landscape shows relevant organizations, the relationships among them, and other community resources. It should be periodically updated as the Commission's understanding of the landscape and relationships change over time.
- **Landscape Analysis: Tracker and Contact List** – The full list of contacts that the Commission has relationships with or wants to build relationships with is maintained here.
- **Engagement Planning** – Use this page to plan logistics, staffing, and document outcomes of engagement activities.
- **Engagement and Outreach Index** – Use this page to keep track of the many ideas and opportunities for community engagement and outreach that arise in Commission meetings or in Landscape Analysis conversations.
- **Engagement Materials Library** – Materials that the Commission can use for engagement and education, tailored for different audiences and settings.
- **Evaluation Methods** – Track how the Commission is advancing toward engagement goals with metrics and indicators from completed events.

The Commissioners and City staff should use these tools as they best fit in their work to achieve educational engagement goals. The timeline below provides an example of how these tools may be used throughout the year, at different points in the Commission's typical annual cycle of engagement events.

Figure 5. Alignment of Community Engagement Toolkit with Commission's Annual Engagement Cycle



Conclusion

The Somerville Fair Housing Commission plays an important role in mitigating housing discrimination in a community where housing is in high demand. The Commission and the City staff who support it developed relationships with local partners, gained experience with designing and implementing community events, and created new tools and materials to support their engagement over the course of this collaboration with MAPC's Community Engagement team. These efforts resulted in clear success when the Commission brought together residents and partners for community engagement events in April 2026 for Fair Housing Month. The Commission's work continues beyond the scope of this project. There are additional avenues to explore, from continued relationship building to further refinement of the newly created tools and processes. Most importantly, the Commission should continue conversations about its responsibility and ability to expand beyond educating the public on Fair Housing to more directly enable systemic change that reduce housing discrimination. This project leaves the Commission with more tools, resources, and experiences to continue—and perhaps expand—this work.

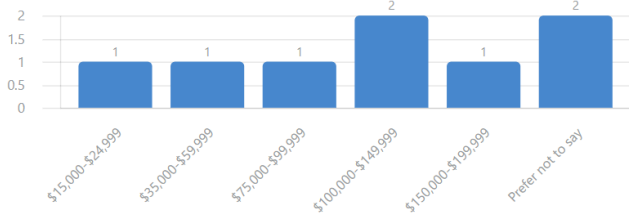
Appendix

Post-Engagement Event Participant Feedback Form Results

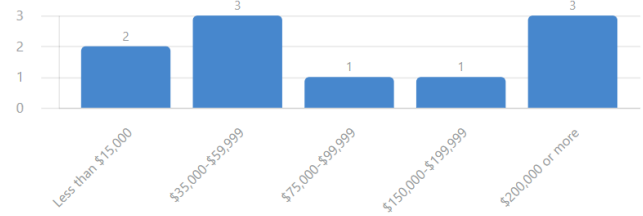
Who attended the 2026 Fair Housing Month events?



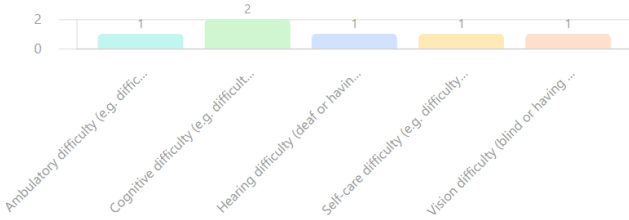
[COA] Household Income



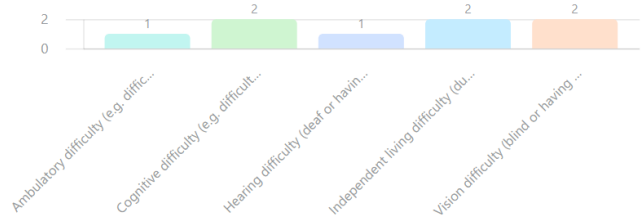
[Book Discussion] Household Income



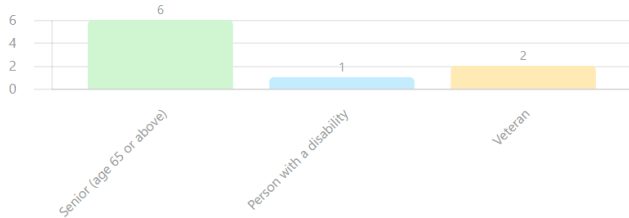
[COA] Chronic Conditions and Disability



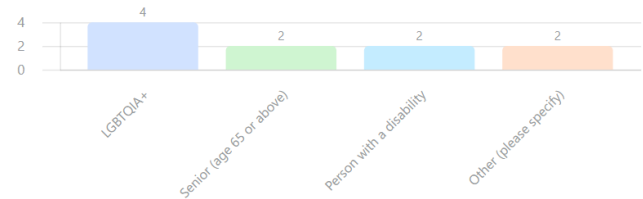
[Book Discussion] Chronic Conditions and Disability



[COA] Additional Information on Protected Class in Participant Households

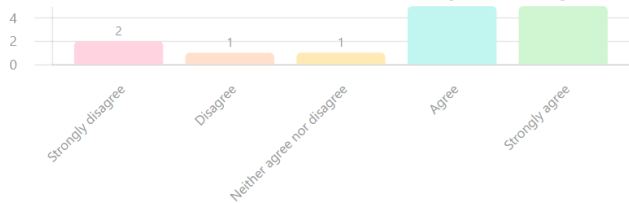


[Book Discussion] Additional Information on Protected Class in Participant Households

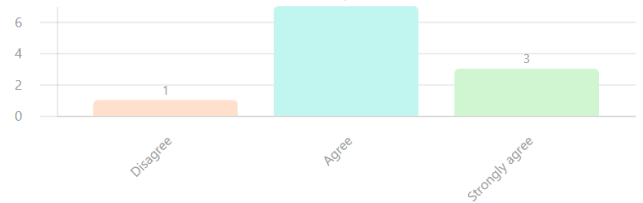


What did participants think of the 2026 Fair Housing Month events?

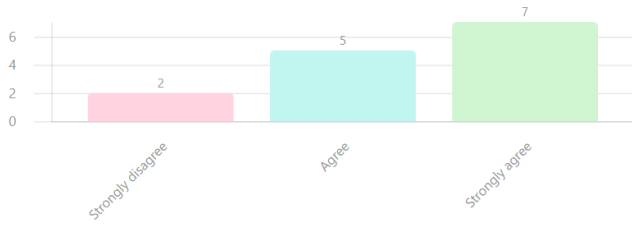
[COA] I am satisfied with the event overall.



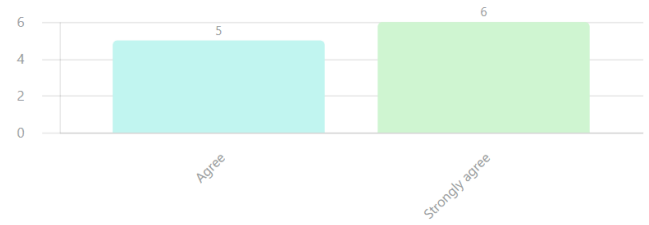
[Book Discussion] I am satisfied with the event overall.



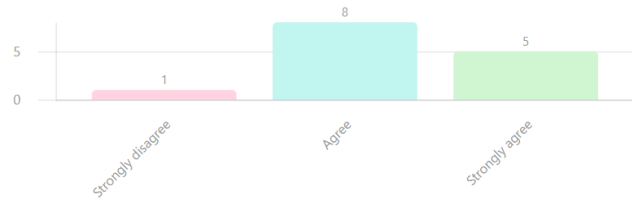
[COA] I felt welcome and able to share my perspective.



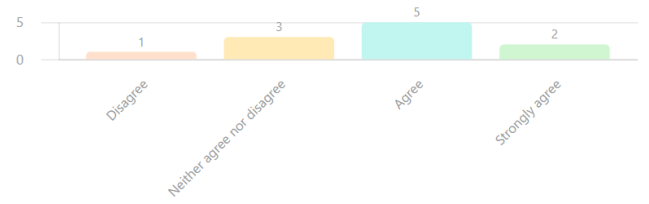
[Book Discussion] I felt welcome and able to share my perspective.



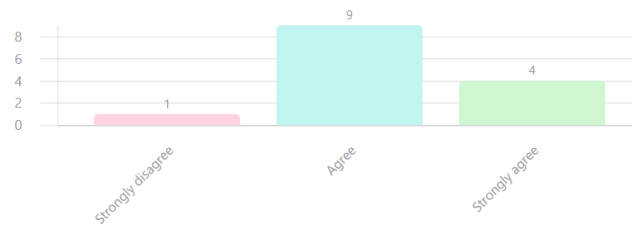
[COA] I understand how to remain involved in this process and feel welcome to continue being engaged.



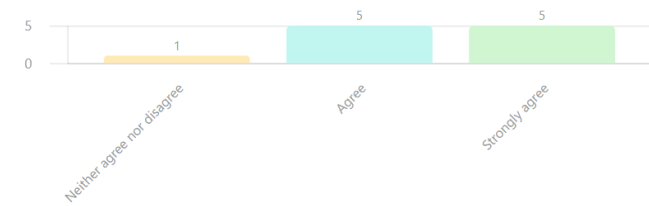
[Book Discussion] I understand how to remain involved in this process and feel welcome to continue being engaged.



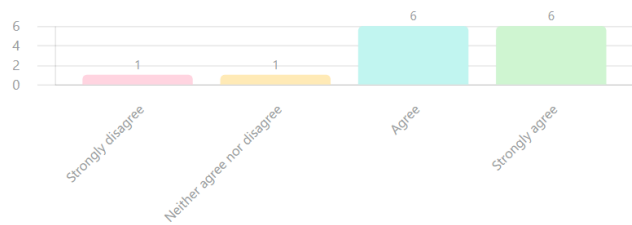
[COA] I could explain what this project is about to a friend or neighbor.



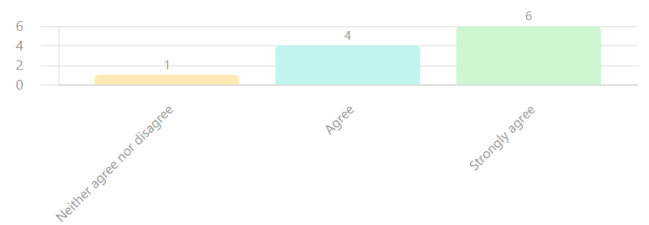
[Book Discussion] I could explain what this project is about to a friend or neighbor.



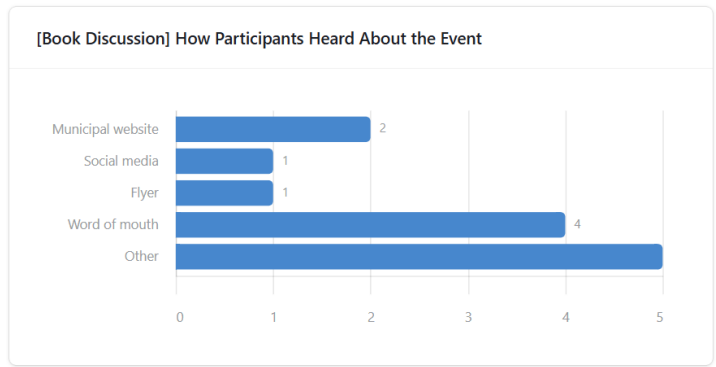
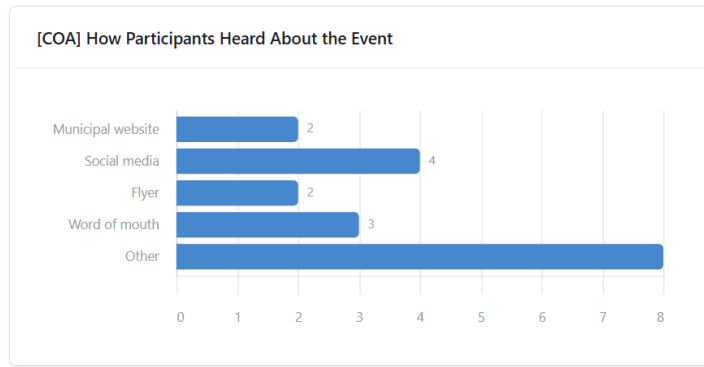
[COA] I feel like my comments and contributions were valued.



[Book Discussion] I feel like my comments and contributions were valued.



How did participants hear about the 2026 Fair Housing Month events?



Responses from those selecting “Other”

- Council on Aging
- COA
- Elder Service
- Elderly newsletter
- COA Bulletin
- Somerville Council on Aging
- Senior Center
- Serio Center Weekly Calendar

Responses from those selecting “Other”

- Library newsletter
- Facebook
- Direct email
- Library
- I come to the library
- system upstairs screen in hall
- Somerville Library website

Open Ended Comments

COA Event

- Thank you!! Very appreciated!!
- Specific to the theme: How to become a small landlord in Somerville? What about short-term renting?
- Great presentation - thank you! Please introduce the following topic in the future: (a) how to become a landlord? (b) how to start short-term rental in Somerville?
- About over 20 years ago I had difficulties resolving Sect. 8 tenant issues
- Didn't touch the nuts & bolts of landlord - [unreadable] recent changes to # of tenants allowed in unit, or changes in zoning law, eviction - prob need more than just Fair Housing @ event
- The Bingo wasted my time. This was NOT advertised as a social event. I came here to be educated.
- More of these housing information
- You should differentiate in your presentation between landlords who live in the property versus investors. Most of us here probably fall into the former category. These are our homes of many years and we happen to rent out another unit. I believe the landlords "Do's" and "Don'ts" are a little more flexible for owner occupants. Overall, this class should have been called "Tenant Resources" especially Section 8.

Book Discussion

- Great event - thank you!
- I wasn't sure what the next steps are but I appreciated the movie + discussion
- Shannon Lawler did a great job encouraging interesting, thought provoking discussion in our break out group!
- I was quite impressed with the energy + attempts of understanding!
- Maybe not tonight

Somerville Fair Housing Commission Landscape Analysis Memo

September 2025

Overview

The purpose of a Landscape Analysis is to identify key potential partners, opponents, and community resources that have an interest in or influence over the project and any proposed changes. The analysis integrates multiple different perspectives in order to understand local community context. These different perspectives are cultivated through a series of one-to-one conversations with community partners, which form the basis for long-term relationship-building. The Commission should continue to maintain the relationships built through this process and eventually expand to relationships with other community-based organizations and Fair Housing-related entities in Somerville.

Methodology

This Landscape Analysis process followed the steps outlined in MAPC's Landscape Analysis guide. It started with a discussion in the June 2025 Somerville Fair Housing Commission that used quantitative demographic data to inform the selection of priority groups and community organizations that serve or convene those priority groups. Following the Commission's initial discussion, the project team conducted one-to-one conversations with eight community-based organizations, municipal departments, and other community leaders. These conversations were structured around the [Landscape Analysis Conversation Guide](#) included in the appendix. They focused on fostering a relationship between the community-based organization (CBO) and the Commission, understanding CBOs' and priority communities' experiences with housing discrimination in Somerville, and learning about effective engagement and outreach methods for each audience.

Quantitative Data Analysis to Identify Initial Priority Groups

The initial discussion and analysis in the June Commission meeting was informed by the following quantitative data. The demographic data were used to identify which protected classes are most prevalent among the Somerville community. This data was also compared against the reported instances of housing discrimination received by the City staff person to the Commission. Based on these data, the Commission identified a set of priority groups for their current round of engagement efforts.

What are protected classes?

The federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, or financing of housing. It is illegal for landlords to discriminate against individuals or families in their search for housing or during their tenancy because of:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National origin
- Sex
- Disability
- Family status (has children)

Massachusetts and the City of Somerville also prohibit discrimination because of:

- Marital status
- Receipt of public assistance (e.g., Section 8, mobile vouchers)
- Sexual orientation
- Age (18 or older)
- Ancestry
- Military status
- Gender identity
- Genetic information

People who experience discrimination because of these characteristics are called "protected classes."

Protected Classes: Race, Color

Somerville has a total population of 80,608 residents, configured into 32,105 households. While nearly 70% of Somerville residents identify as White, **12% identify as Hispanic or Latino, 9% identify as Asian, and 5% identify as Black or African American.** Somerville received **11 complaints** related to race-based discrimination from FY20-23. It was the **3rd-most cited cause of housing discrimination.**

Figure 6. Somerville Population by Race

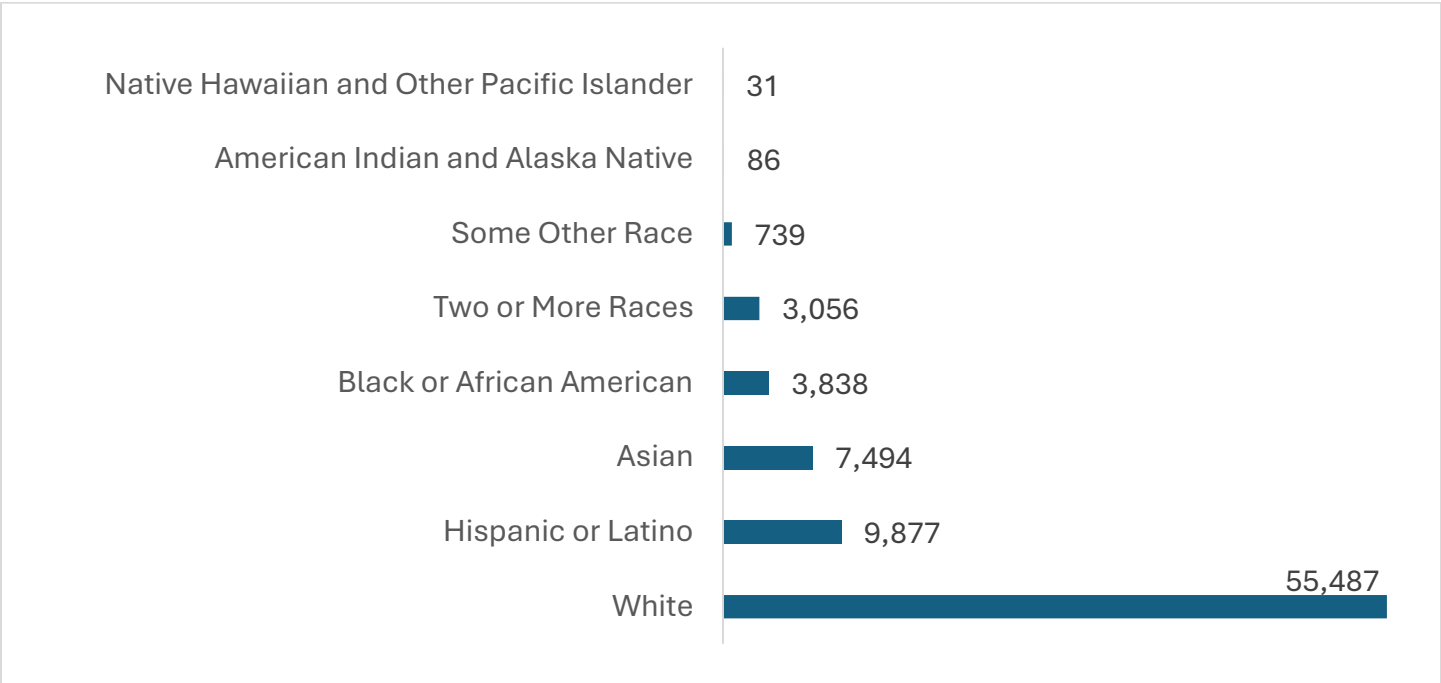
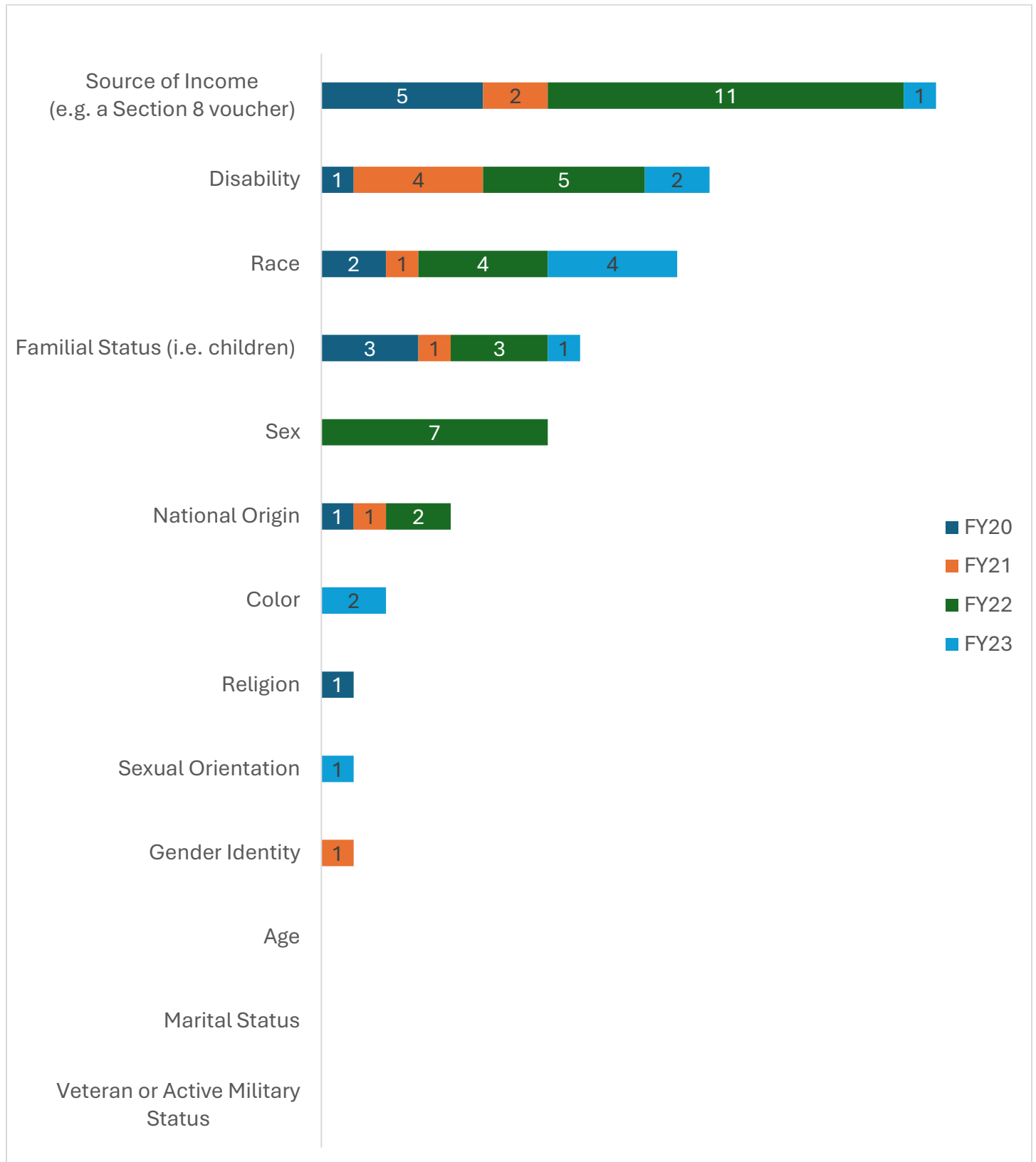


Figure 7. Somerville Resident Housing Discrimination Complaints by Protected Class



Protected Class: National Origin

Nearly a quarter of Somerville residents are foreign born (19,033 residents), while 61,431 are Native U.S. citizens. The majority of naturalized US citizens and non-citizens are from **Latin America**, followed by **Asia**.

Figure 8. Non-U.S. Citizens by Origin, Somerville

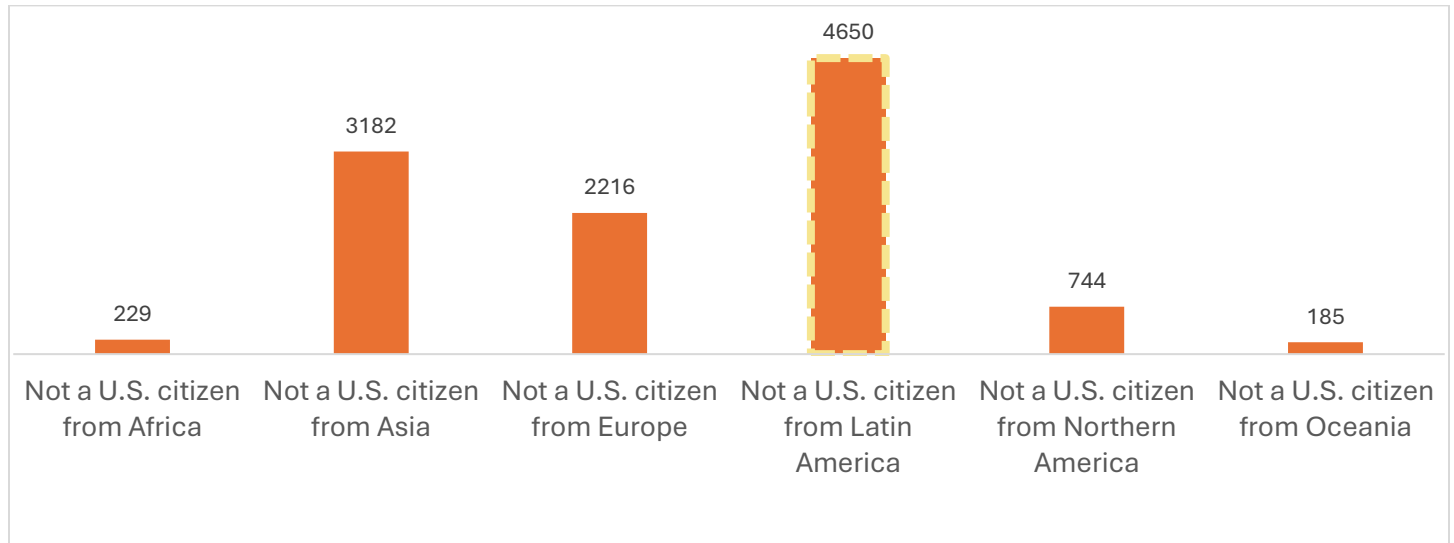
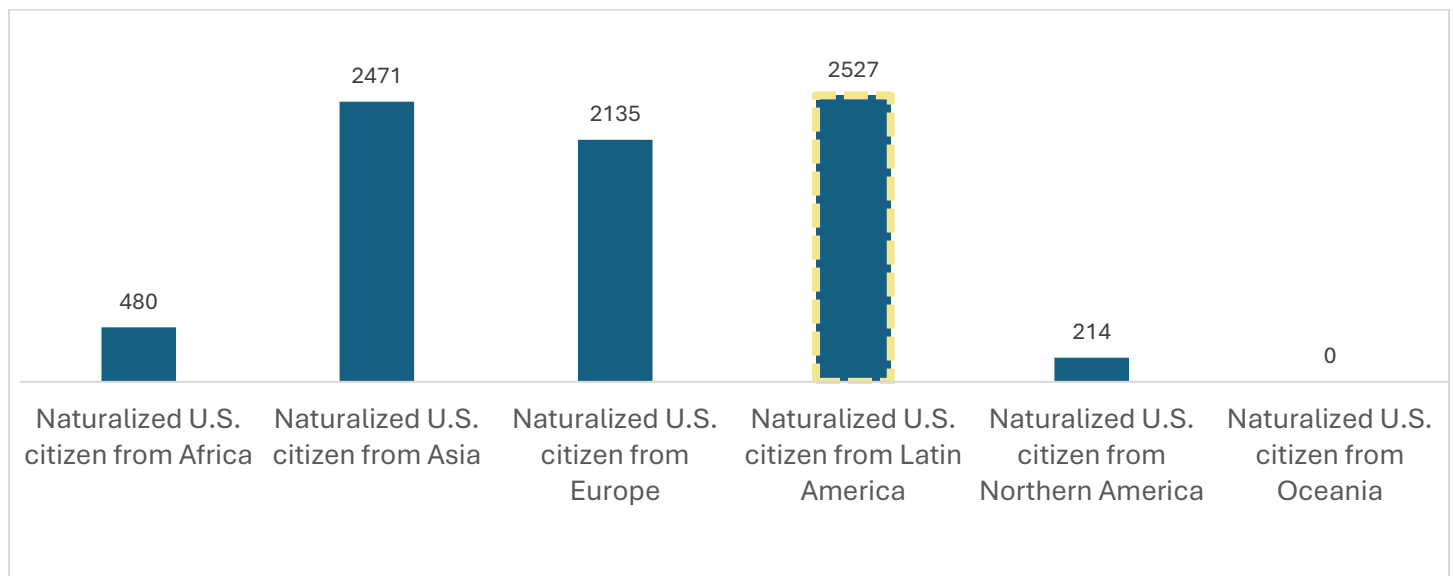


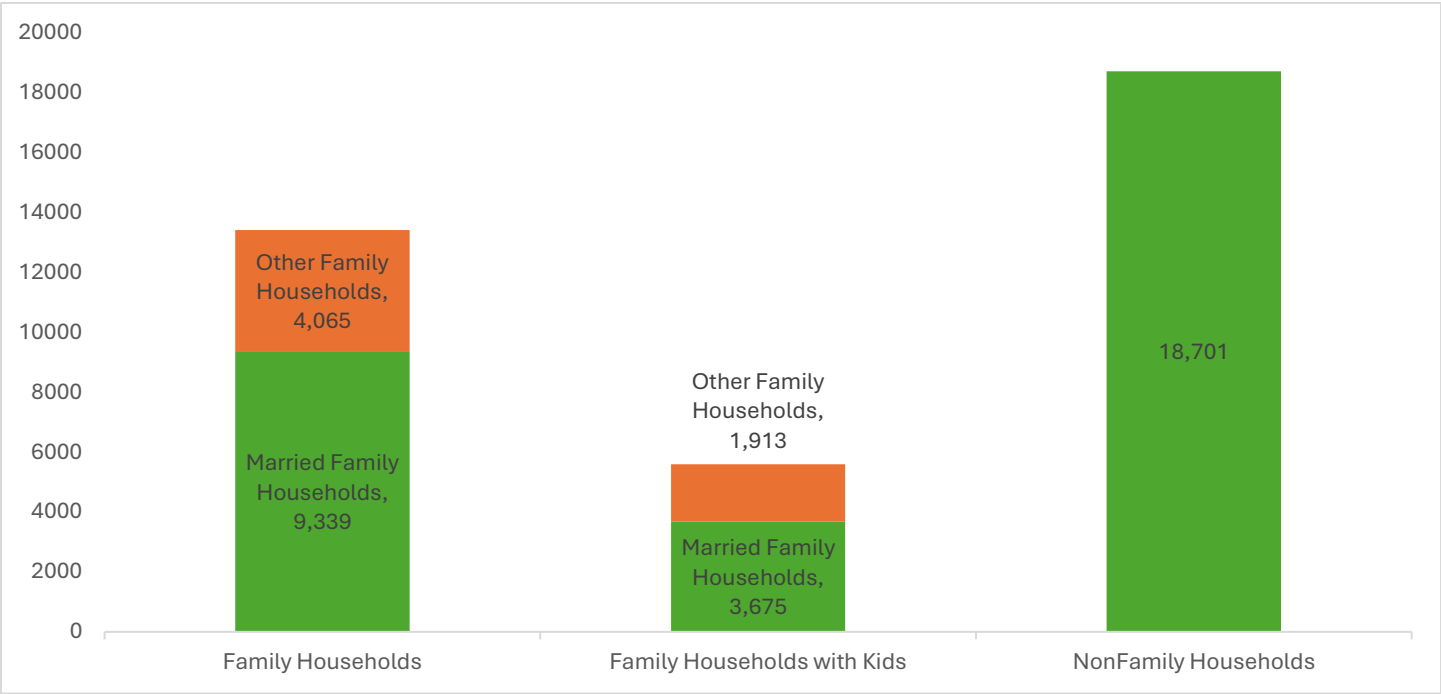
Figure 9. Naturalized U.S. Citizens by Origin, Somerville



Protected Class: Familial Status; Marital Status

About **42% of family households have kids**. About **70% of family households are married family households**. **58% of households in Somerville are non-family households**, likely representing groups like young professionals and college student.

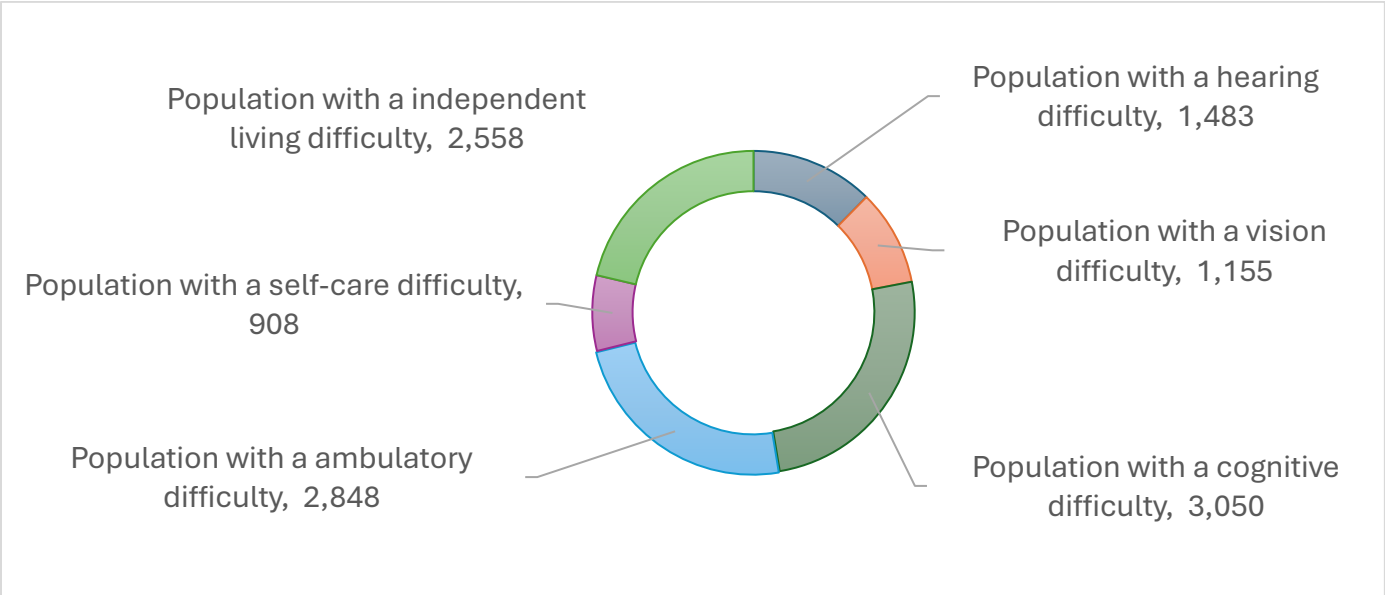
Figure 10. Household Composition, Somerville



Protected Class: Disability

Of the 8.5% of Somerville residents living with a disability, the most common disability is **cognitive difficulty**, followed by ambulatory and independent living difficulties. Somerville received **13 complaints** related to discrimination based on disability from FY20-23. While cognitive difficulty is the most common in the population, we may anticipate that **ambulatory** and **independent living difficulty** are more relevant to cases of housing discrimination.

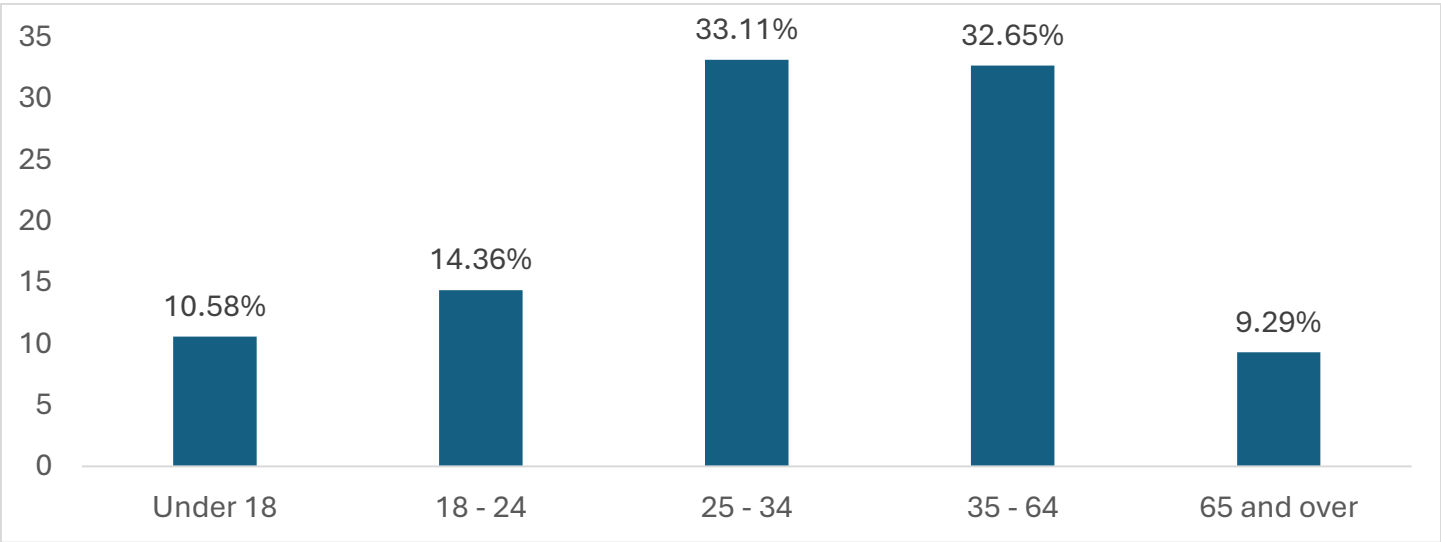
Figure 11. Population with Disability by Type, Somerville



Protected Class: Age

Somerville has a large population of young adults, **aged 25-34**.

Figure 12. Population by Age, Somerville



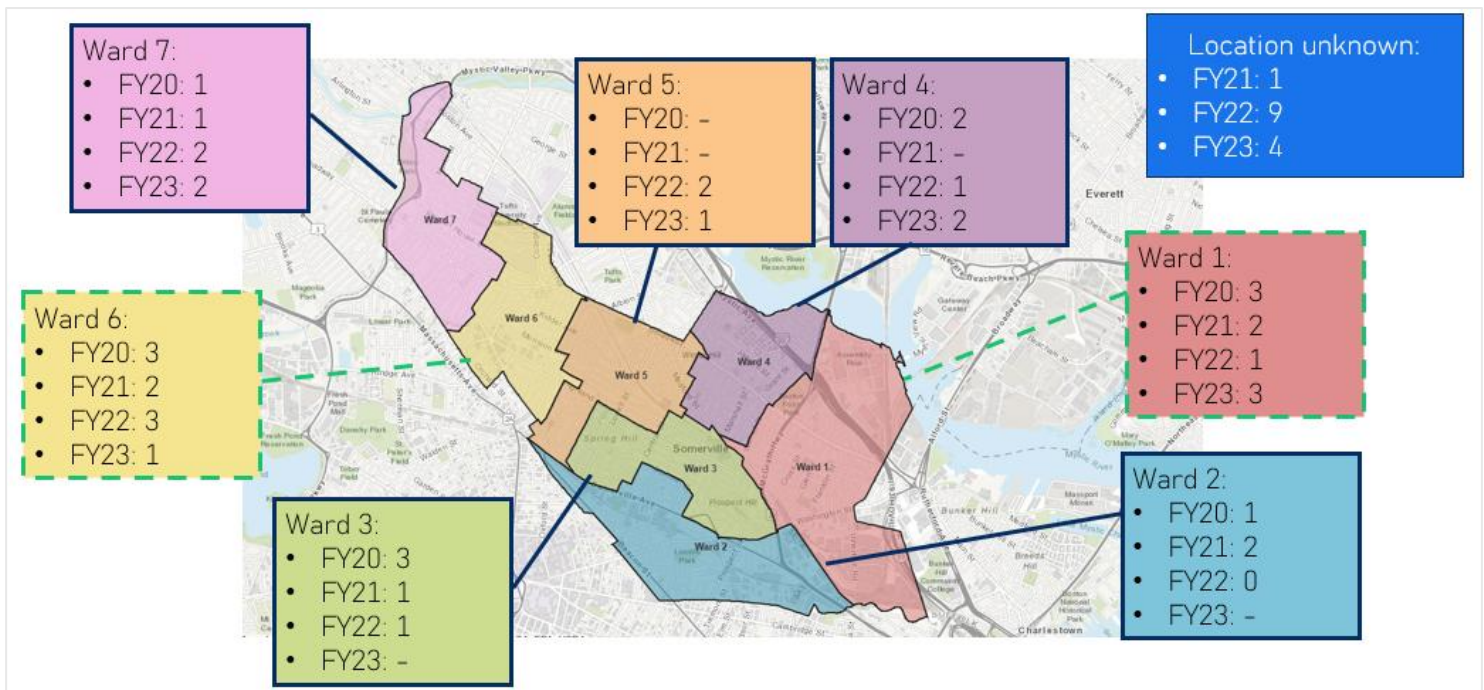
Limited or missing data

- Veterans, 2019-2023: **1,145** (ACS 2019-23)
- Religion
- *Gender Identity*
- *Sexual Orientation*
- *Source of Income (e.g., a Section 8 voucher)*
 - Somerville received **19 complaints** related to discrimination based on disability from FY20-23, making it the most frequently-cited cause for housing discrimination. We are seeking out data to understand the number of SHA, BHA, and other housing vouchers circulating in Somerville and who holds those vouchers. This information will help us better understand the scope of the problem and whether there may be correlations with other protected classes.

Reported Instances of Housing Discrimination in Somerville

Many Somerville residents report housing discrimination based on **Source of Income**. **Disability** and **Race** are also frequently cited in housing discrimination complaints. Most of the complaints received in recent years come from **Wards 1 and 6**.

Figure 13. Housing Discrimination Complaints by Ward



Based on this data, the Commission identified the following priority groups to reach out as part of this collaboration with MAPC:

- Faith-based communities (especially those serving immigrant populations)
- Low-income households (the income restricted seat on the Commission is often hard to fill)
- Section 8 voucher users
- Staff at housing search agencies, such as SHC, CAAS, etc.
- Small or medium scale landlords

The priority groups that the Commission focuses on will continue to change as Fair Housing needs and Somerville's community composition evolves. The Commission can revisit these data sets to update the priority groups they focus on.

Relationship Building Conversations based on Selected Priority Groups

The Commission and MAPC selected community organizations to reach out to based on the identified priority groups. Throughout Summer 2025, the project team conducted one-to-one conversations with the following community members:

- Jordan Harris, Pastor at Connexions
- Meredith Gamble and team at Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs (SOIA)
- Lindsay Allen, Executive Director at East Somerville Main Streets
- Ashley Speliotis, Executive Director at Somerville Council on Aging
- Danny McLaughlin, at Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS)
- Regina Bertholdo and Jennifer Ochoa, Director of Basic Needs and Housing Support Services at Somerville Public Schools
- Chris Beland and other Board Members, Davis Square Neighborhood Council
- Joshua Michel, Somerville YIMBY

At the end of these conversations, a number of themes and potential engagement opportunities emerged. They are summarized below and are being used to inform the Community Engagement Plan.

What We Heard

By the end of the 1:1 Landscape Analysis conversations, there are a number of clear themes and trends in what we heard.

Context of housing affordability heightens risk across the board: It was impossible to ignore the underlying issue of housing unaffordability in Somerville. A major driver for both tenants' challenges in finding housing and landlords' hesitations relate to the cost of housing. CBOs reported that many tenants, especially those in the most vulnerable positions, feel scared to raise issues with their housing to landlords, let alone report them to ISD or other City departments because they know they cannot

afford other homes in the city. The COA director also shared a sense of landlords feeling they are already contributing enough to the community by making their apartments available for rent in this pricey housing market. They bristle at the idea of having additional restrictions or requirements placed on them, such as being required to accept various forms of payment like Section 8 vouchers.

Distrust between priority communities and government, leading to lack of reporting: Furthermore, some of the priority communities that the Commission seeks to reach have an existing level of distrust for government. Most of the CBOs we spoke with in this series of 1:1s work with Somerville’s immigrant communities. As members of the SOIA team indicated, many of the immigrant community members come from places where they could not trust their government and this distrust remains. As the Director of Basic Needs and Housing Support for Somerville Public Schools said, “We have to convince them and then also file the report on their behalf.” Some immigrant communities have trusted relationships with the CBOs and specific municipal departments, such as the Office of Housing Stability (OHS), which have been cultivated through long-term relationship building. Those partners may present information to residents, but it is up to the individual to take action.

Heightened sense of fear since the start of 2025: All of these conversations happened in the summer of 2025, when federal policies were ramping up ICE activity. With rapid changes to federal immigration and deportation activity and Somerville being a target in particular, CBOs we spoke with reported a great deal of fear among community members. Every person we met with spoke extensively about the heightened sense of fear and the widespread sense that there was misinformation and uncertainty about immigration policy and rights. This has made it challenging for organizations like CAAS to get residents out to meetings and has enhanced the reluctance of residents to report housing concerns. While this has always been a concern, tenants have a renewed fear that their landlords will report them to ICE if they cause any issues.

Need for clear messaging and information: Multiple partners identified the need for clear, accurate, and actionable information about housing rights. If the Commission shares educational material, it should be translated into multiple languages (especially Spanish and Portuguese) to ensure it is accessible to immigrant communities. The SOIA team, Somerville Public Schools, and others also mentioned that residents often can sense when a situation is discriminatory or in fact already know their rights—the information they need is around how to take action. Even then, in the current political climate, tenants might not take action. Partners shared that there may be more opportunity in providing educational information to landlords.

Landlords’ relationship with the City and tenants is fraught: At the same time, landlords have their own difficult relationships with Fair Housing. Most large landlords should understand and be equipped to comply with Fair Housing, but medium-size or smaller landlords might not understand the legal requirements. Of the medium and smaller landlords, there are some that are more profit-driven than others, as reported by East Somerville Main Streets, Connexions’ Pastor Jordan, and others. Pastor Jordan also referenced some predatory landlords who intentionally spread misinformation among tenants to create a sense of fear that keeps tenants from reporting issues with their housing. In a tight housing market, many families are living in informal arrangements—renting rooms within a larger unit for a

whole family, sub-letting from family members. These informal arrangements are also ripe for discrimination and exploitation by landlords or the person formally on the lease.

Partners like the COA and Somerville Public Schools mentioned that landlords could benefit from education about Fair Housing and related programs. Landlords do not understand the potential benefits of programs like Section 8 vouchers and HomeBASE. They hold misconceptions about who participants in these programs might be that are rooted in racial and social bias.

Implications for the Commission's Engagement and Education Efforts

The 1:1 Landscape Analysis conversations were designed to inform the Commission's approach to engagement and education going forward. Based on the themes identified above, there are a number of principles for guiding the community engagement work and planning that emerge.

- Our engagement should be clear and actionable—dispel misinformation and build trust by providing useful and usable information
- Meeting people where they are is important—both going to places where people are already gathering and speaking in their languages, to avoid asking residents to come out to places that might be or feel unsafe
- We need to develop messaging that is tailored to both tenants and landlords. While it may be more impactful to target education to landlords in the short term, we should also prepare materials and continue to provide information to tenants.

Each of the community organizations that we met with have built trusting relationships and extensive programming to serve their communities in Somerville. Each suggested opportunities that the Somerville Fair Housing Commission would be welcome to attend to engage and educate community members about topics related to fair housing. Those opportunities are documented in the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#), which will be discussed in the upcoming Fair Housing Commission meeting. The Commission will narrow in on a set of engagement activities to complete leading up to and during Fair Housing Month in April 2026.

Landscape Analysis Conversation Guide

Discussion Guide

This document outlines the discussion questions and prompts for the landscape analysis conversations that the Somerville Fair Housing Engagement team will conduct. The purpose of these conversations is to develop a robust understanding of the social fabric of Somerville, with particular emphasis on the networks and relational dynamics between parties that engage with priority populations for the Fair Housing Commission. This could include information about individuals and organizations who should be involved, practices and norms that exist in the community, gathering places and outreach channels, and more. The landscape analysis will be used to develop a community engagement plan, including identification of who needs to be engaged/informed/activated and strategies for how to communicate with and engage them.

Principles of Engagement

- **Center people and relationships.** Do not get lost in process and structure. Focus on forming relationships to build trust, mutual respect, and collaboration.
- **Practice full-circle communication.** Proactively and regularly communicate and follow up with community, CBO, and municipal partners throughout the project.
- **Ensure accessibility.** Employ our best efforts at creating spaces that are welcoming and accessible for people with various physical, linguistic, financial or other abilities. Support participants' ability to share their experiences in ways that best suits them.

Before the Conversation

- **Outreach.** The initial outreach to the participants in landscape analysis conversations should come from someone with an existing relationship with the participant, if possible.
- **Define Purpose.** Participants should be fully informed on the scope of the project, the purpose of their participation, and how the conversation will be used or shared.
 - Use the following language to describe the project in your outreach: *The Somerville Fair Housing Commission reached out to MAPC to support their efforts to engage and educate Somerville residents about Fair Housing. We are working together to help the Commission build relationships with relevant partners in the community and develop an engagement plan to expand the Commission's reach. The information in the landscape analysis will inform an engagement plan for the Commission to reach top priority residents, most at risk of facing housing discrimination.*
- **Do Your Research.** Prepare in advance by learning about the history, current events, and context of the communities you'll be working in so that you are ready to listen, understand complexities, and ask thoughtful follow-up questions.
 - Review any notes from previous interactions with this participant (on this project or other projects) and identify any priorities or themes that arose.

- If this participant was introduced by a partner, review the notes from the partner to identify any context for why they recommended we speak with this person.
- If the conversation is with a CBO, review the organization's website to develop a preliminary understanding of who they serve, what programs they offer, the problems they are trying to address, etc.
- **Conversation Structure.** Consider the dynamics of the meeting and agree on what roles team members will play.
 - Roles: There should be 1 lead facilitator on each call and 1 notetaker.
 - Consider having no more than 2 MAPC staff on a call if there is only 1 partner joining.
 - If there are multiple partners joining the call, consider having 1 lead facilitator, 1 support facilitator, and 1 notetaker

Introductions and Setting the Container

- Start with introductions and some small talk!
- Share the context for the project and leave space to answer any questions or clarifications.

Discussion Questions and Prompts

About the organization(s) the participant is involved with

- Tell me about organizations you are a part of in Somerville —both the specific org you are representing in talking to us today and other groups (formal or informal) that you consider community gathering places.
- Can you share about the history of your organization?
- Who are the population your organization serves? Who are your members or constituents?
- How have you/your org(s) been involved in fair housing in Somerville? How will they continue to be involved after this process?

Networks in Somerville

- Describe past experiences working/collaborating with the City of Somerville. What other government entities do you interact with as a CBO?
- What CBOs do you work with?
- What groups/CBOs/government entities do the community members you work with interact with?
- Who else should we be talking to as we learn about the Somerville community involved in fair housing work for this project?

How to engage with the priority populations

- How does your organization engage community members?
- What are communication channels and formats that are effective?
- Where are the spaces community members gather?

Closing the Conversation

- Thank the partner for their time
- Note any next steps, resources you will share, etc.

After the Conversation

- **Stay in touch.** Within 1 week, send a follow-up thank you note with a summary of the meeting. Share any resources and complete and tasks you committed to
- **Organize your takeaways.** Write a summary of notes from your conversation, noting any learnings, or follow up tasks. Upload them to the Sharepoint (or whatever format we decide on as a team)
- **Complete the Landscape Analysis Tool.** Add any relevant details to the Landscape Analysis Tool