

What needs to happen next

State and federal agencies are finally listening to Somerville! But there are important milestones to be met in the next several months to keep the Green Line Extensions project on track.

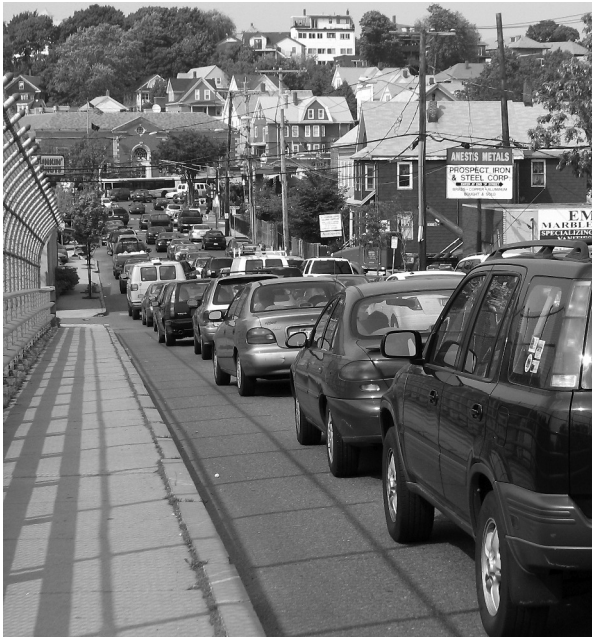
EOT must complete and submit an Environmental Impact Review to the state, and also submit an environmental review to the federal government to secure New Starts funding.

Decisions about the following Green Line project items need to be made:

- Location of each Green Line Extension station.
- How design and construction of the new Lechmere station will be managed.
- Location of the maintenance and storage facility.

EOT must include details for the Community Path in the design of Green Line stations that abut the planned path extension.

Somerville residents should continue to be involved in planning of the Green Line station locations and design and in the land-use planning around the stations to increase future transit access, preserve affordable housing, and encourage appropriate commercial development.



What you can do

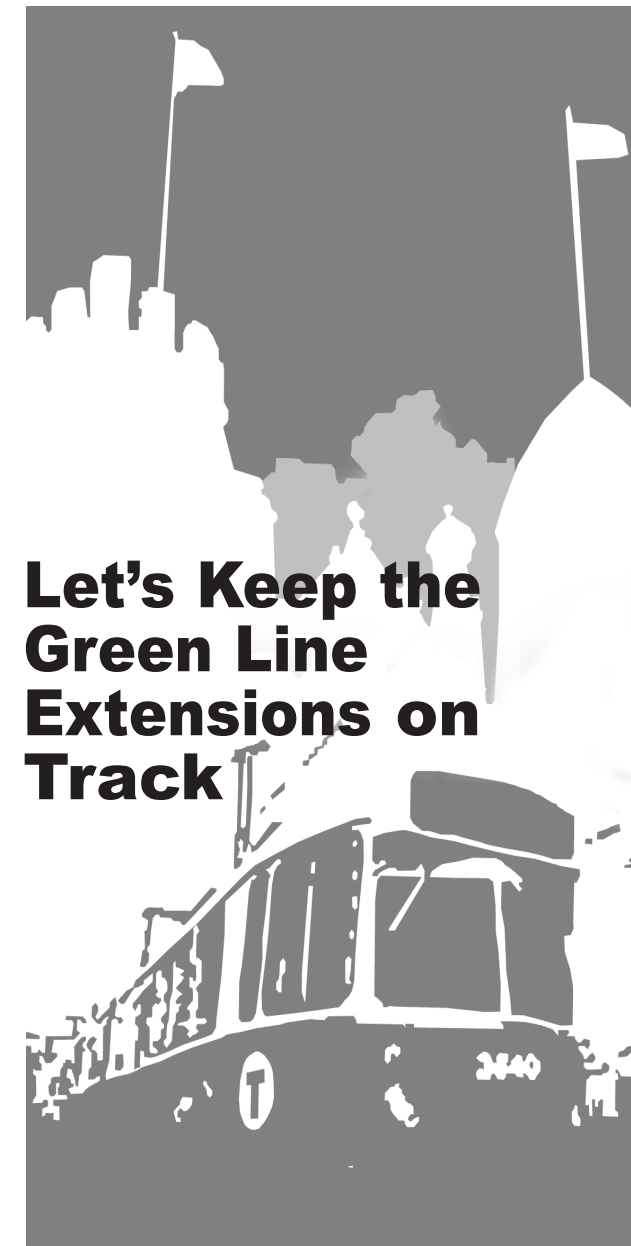
Help STEP's efforts to secure better public transit for all residents and advocate for a more walkable and bikeable Somerville.

Stay informed about actions you can take by attending meetings or writing letters by checking our website at www.somervillestep.org or signing up for the STEP listserv at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/S_T_E_P/. These resources also post information about upcoming meetings.

Participate in community, city, and EOT-sponsored meetings and hearings related to transportation planning and advocacy in Somerville. You can find out about these meetings and hearings from the STEP listserv, the Somerville city website, or local news media. Follow transportation issues in the news. Check the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) website about the Green Line at www.greenlineextension.org, the MBTA website at www.mbta.com, and the Boston MPO website at www.ctps.org/bostonmpo for their latest news.

Make sure your local aldermen and state representatives know that you want better public transportation and cleaner air for Somerville. (If you are unsure about who represents you, you can find this information on Somerville city website at www.somervillema.gov or on the Massachusetts state website at www.mass.gov.)

Did you know that Somerville once had eight passenger train stops? The stops were on the Fitchburg and Lowell Lines, and the former Lexington Branch.



Let's Keep the Green Line Extensions on Track

SOMERVILLE
TRANSPORTATION EQUITY
PARTNERSHIP

www.somervillestep.org

What is STEP?

Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership (STEP) is a group of concerned residents advocating for greatly needed transportation improvements for Somerville. Our mission is to secure transportation that will increase social equity, environmental health, and economic opportunity. STEP started working on these issues five years ago. We welcome our neighbors, non-profits, businesses, and government to join in this work.

What STEP does

STEP advocates for public transportation improvements that will promote the best land uses and will reduce traffic in Somerville such as:

- Extending two branches of the Green Line: one to travel to the heart of Union Square to revitalize it and relieve traffic on the Rte. 28 Corridor, the other to travel along the Lowell commuter rail line, terminating at the Mystic Valley Parkway on the Somerville/Medford line.
- Locating an Orange Line stop at Assembly Square to serve economic and mixed-use development, and relieve traffic traveling to Assembly Square.
- Extending community ped/bike paths to transit stations and to communities along the Green Line extension routes and at Assembly Square.
- Raising awareness of the need to reduce mobile sources of pollution caused by heavy traffic on major highways and diesel trains, both of which pass through Somerville.

STEP actively participates in the MBTA Rider Oversight Committee and Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meetings, bringing attention to Somerville's transportation needs. We also attend Urban Ring meetings to advocate for Somerville connections.

What STEP accomplished this past year

STEP has rallied local, regional, state and federal support for the Green Line extensions with great success. The huge outpouring of Somerville citizens that attend and testify at key public hearings, and write letters and emails keep the ball rolling on ensuring the state stays on track to honor its long-standing commitment to extend the Green Line.

During the past year STEP has:

- Advocated for Governor Patrick to recommit the state to complete the Green Line Extension by 2014.
- Worked with our legislative delegation to get Green Line Extension funding into the 2008 Transportation Bond Bill.
- Actively participated in the Executive Office of Transportation's Green Line Advisory Group.



- Held joint meetings with East Cambridge Planning team on the new Lechmere station, focused on issues and impacts on the neighborhood and the Green Line Extension project.
- With Union Square Main Streets, held public meetings to present several alternatives for Union Square-bound Green Line route and station sitings, and land-use potential.
- Met with Brickbottom residents to hear concerns about station location and the proposed MBTA maintenance facility.
- Urged the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) to explore other possibilities for the site of new maintenance and storage facility rather than taking 11 acres of developable and taxable land in Innerbelt.
- Advocated for lowering the Fitchburg commuter rail line and proposed Union Square Green Line tracks to traverse beneath McGrath highway (similar to the Fitchburg commuter rail tracks at Porter Square) to make McGrath Highway more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- Participated in meetings to secure and plan an Orange Line station at Assembly Square.
- Secured a grant with Tufts Medical School to study health effects of mobile sources of pollution on people living near highways.

Why Somerville needs public transportation improvements

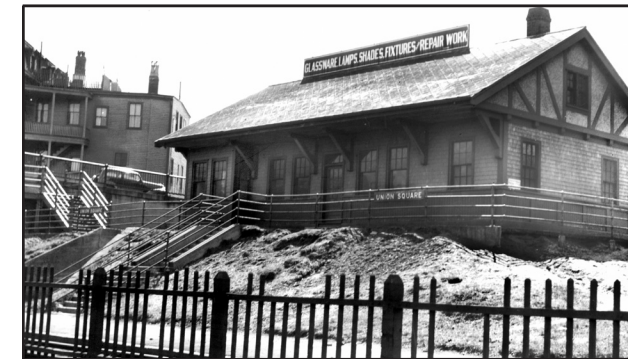
Obtain benefit for transportation infrastructure burdens. Seven passenger-carrying train lines (six of which are diesel-powered) cross the city without stopping. Each year 60,000 diesel train trips travel through Somerville. The MBTA uses a large piece of untaxed land in the city to repair commuter trains. With Somerville bearing so many transportation burdens, we deserve a greater share of the benefits.

Decrease traffic congestion. Traffic in many parts of Somerville is badly congested. Most of us leave the city to commute to work. Good public transportation would ease our commutes and personal trips, and would minimize trips by car.

Improve air quality. From 1994 through 2003, Somerville had 29% higher lung cancer and heart attack age-adjusted mortality rates than the Massachusetts population as a whole. From 1989 through 2003, Somerville had 291 excess lung cancer and heart attack deaths. Mobile pollution from regional traffic has a profound affect on our health.

Attract business, create jobs, increase tax base. As we have seen in Davis Square, rail service can help commercial districts grow and bring critical tax dollars to the city to pay for needed services.

Improve quality of life. In the densest city in the state with nearly 19,000 residents per square mile, 27% of Somerville's households don't own a car. Green and Orange Line service can anchor vibrant neighborhoods, encourage walking and bicycling, and improve our quality of life.



B&M station that was once in Union Square. (Photo courtesy of Walker Transportation Collection, Beverly Historical Society.)