



# TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE TRENDS FACTSHEET

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City of Somerville  
Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development

## Introduction

The Transportation & Infrastructure Trends Report was prepared by the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) in order to establish a solid foundation of data from which to assist preparing a Comprehensive Plan for the city.

Additionally, with major transportation and infrastructure projects proposed for the coming decade, such as the extension of the Green Line and the station addition on the Orange Line at Assembly Square, an understanding of previous transportation and infrastructure trends will be critical to ensure an accurate understanding of Somerville's mobility patterns and development potential.

## Topics of the Report:

- Infrastructure trends pertaining to: sewers, water, telecommunications, utilities, tunnels and bridges, roadways and reconstruction projects, and green infrastructure.
- Transportation trends including: vehicular traffic and accidents, commute to work, buses, rail service, paratransit, registered vehicles, car availability and car sharing, bicyclists and pedestrians, accidents, truck routes, water transportation, and parking.

## Infrastructure Finding 1:

The majority of Somerville's active sewers were constructed by 1920, and are combined with storm water drainage. Somerville's twelve original combined sewer outfall sites have been reduced to only two.



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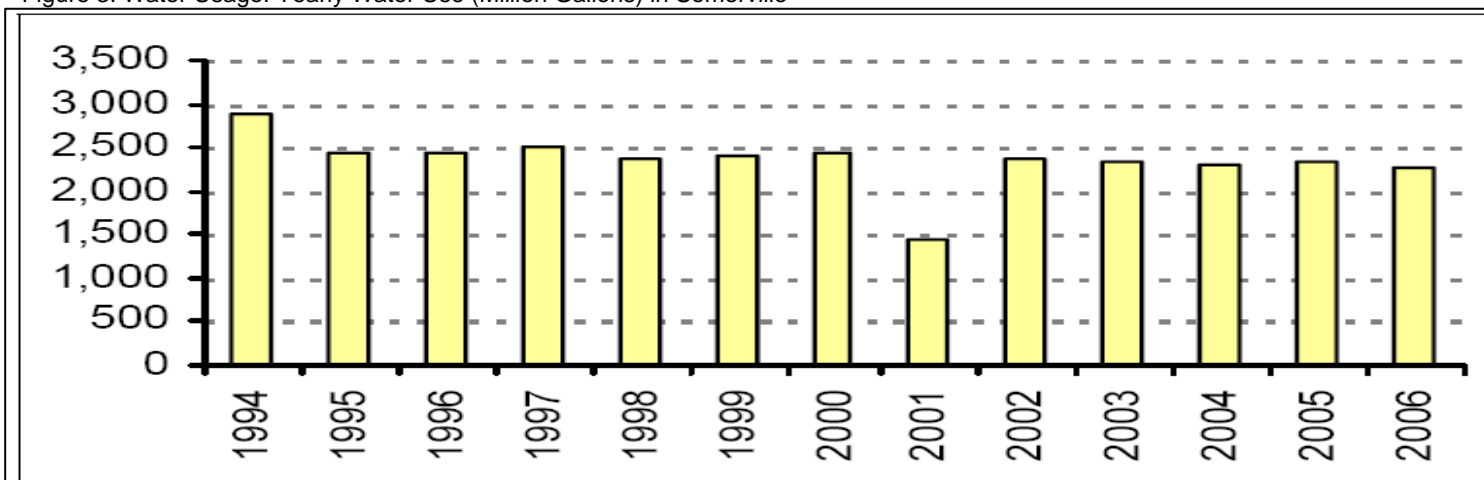


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## Infrastructure Finding 2:

Average daily consumption of water in Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) communities has been steadily decreasing, from about 8 million gallons per day in 1992 to just over 6.3 million gallons per day in 2007 (-21.25%); water use in Somerville declined by roughly 20% during the approximate same time period. Since January of 2008, however, water use in Somerville has decreased an additional 10% due to a citywide meter replacement program and more frequent leak testing.

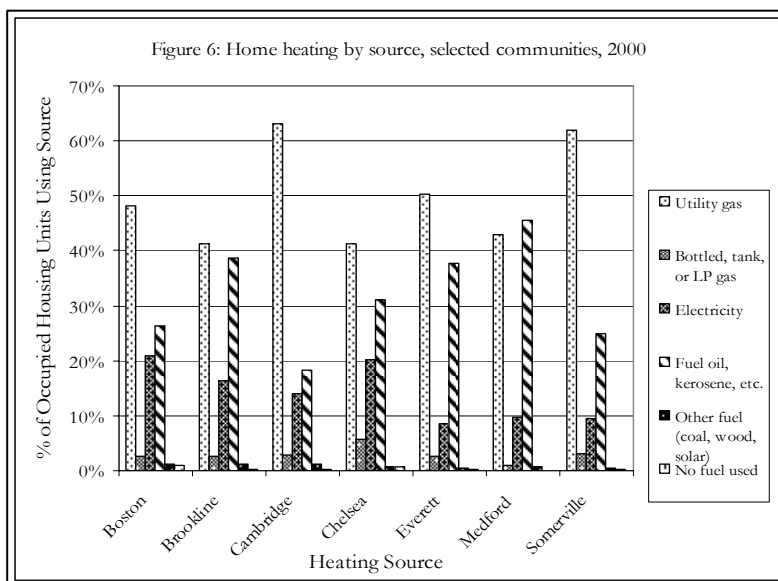
Figure 3: Water Usage: Yearly Water Use (Million Gallons) in Somerville



Source: Massachusetts DEP

## Infrastructure Finding 3:

The majority of Somerville's home heating comes from utility gas (62%), significantly more than many of its neighboring cities: Boston (48%), Brookline (41%), Cambridge (63%), Chelsea (41%), Everett (50%), and Medford (43%).



Source: US Census, 2000.

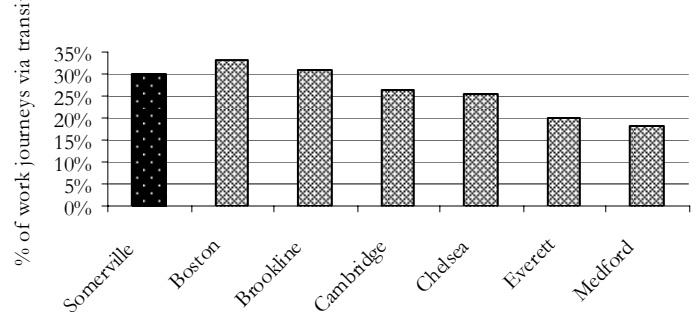


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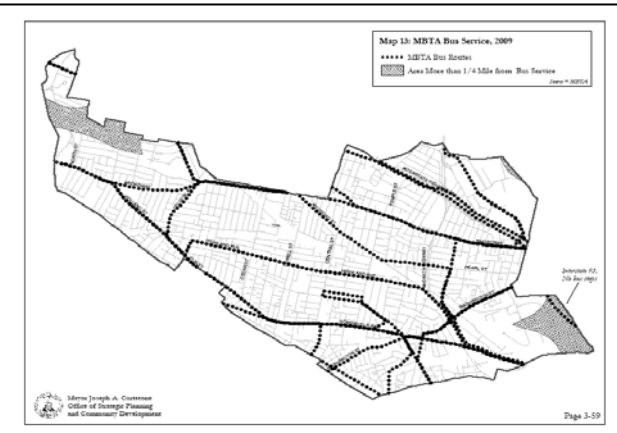
## Transportation Finding 1:

Given Somerville's limited access to public transportation (compared with other nearby cities/ towns in the inner core of Boston metro), Somerville residents use public transportation at high levels—nearly one in three commuters use public transportation to commute to work. This is on par with ridership levels in transit-rich Brookline, and above public transit usage levels in Cambridge.

Figure 23: Public transit share of commute, 2000



Source: US Census, 2000.



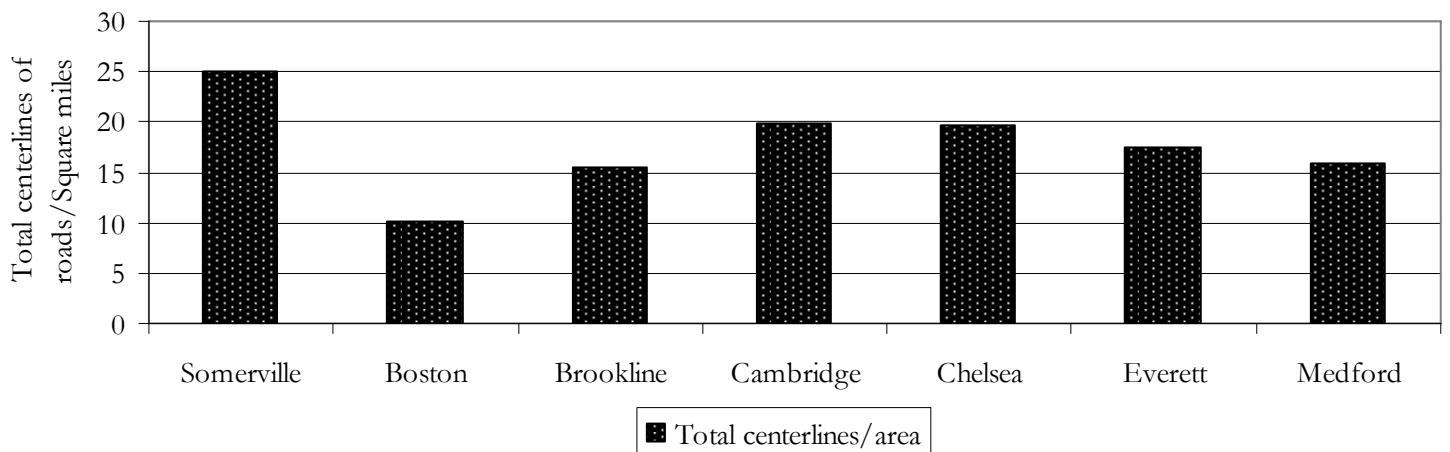
## Transportation Finding 2:

The MBTA bus network provides most of Somerville's access to public transportation (along with Davis Square T stop, and nearby Porter and Sullivan Square T stops). Bus reliability is a major concern in Somerville, as on-time service is a problem for nearly half of the 15 bus routes that run through Somerville.

## Transportation Finding 3:

Somerville has more miles of roads per land area than any other surrounding community - approximately 25 miles of road per square mile of land.

Figure 11: Miles of roads per town/city land area



Source: EOT, Office of Transportation Planning. (2008). Road Inventory Year End Report 2008. "Centerline Miles Table 5: City/Town by Jurisdiction", pp.19-24. and US Census Bureau, Summary File 1: GCT-PH1. Population, Housing Units, Area, and Density: 2000



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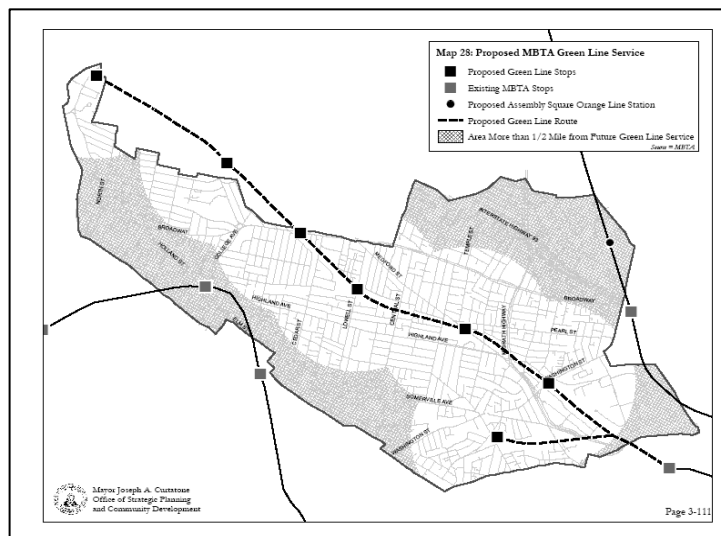
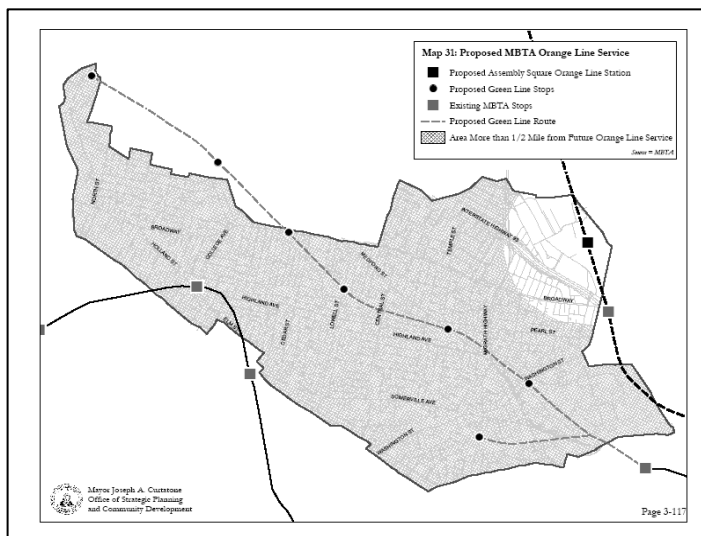
## Transportation Finding 4:

Somerville homeowners are less likely than most surrounding communities to have access to a vehicle, while Somerville renters are more likely than most surrounding communities to have access to a vehicle.

Auto Availability by City and Tenure										
	% Occupied Housing units with No Vehicle Available		% with one vehicle available		% with two vehicles available		% with three or more vehicles		Vehicles per household	
	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent
Somerville	15%	26%	43%	48%	31%	20%	10%	6%	1.4	1.1
Boston	15%	45%	50%	42%	29%	11%	7%	3%	1.3	0.7
Brookline	7%	31%	50%	52%	37%	12%	6%	4%	1.4	0.9
Cambridge	12%	35%	56%	50%	28%	13%	5%	3%	1.3	0.8
Chelsea	13%	40%	51%	46%	26%	12%	11%	2%	1.4	0.8
Everett	13%	28%	42%	50%	35%	19%	11%	3%	1.5	1.0
Medford	8%	21%	38%	47%	42%	26%	12%	6%	1.7	1.2

## Transportation Finding 5:

After years of taking on burdensome transportation infrastructure (elevated highways, heavy rails), Somerville is now poised to benefit from mass transit investment, developed in partnership with the federal and state governments.



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