



SOMERVISION2040

Sustainability • Diversity • Opportunity • Connectivity • Community

Haitian Creole Speakers

Date of the event: Sunday, June 23

Attendance: 12

Target participants: Haitian immigrants

Language of forum: Haitian

Location: Church at 404 Broadway

What do you love about the Somerville Community? What aspects of Somerville do we want SomerVision 2040 to enhance or preserve?

- Somerville feels like a safe space for immigrants where ICE is not welcome
- Somerville is doing well in terms of commercial development and bringing in movie theaters, and nice restaurants, there is a lot to do
- The city is open to immigrants joining boards and commissions
- The council on aging does a lot of the community
- Haitian cultural festivals help the Haitian community feel included
- City staff is usually friendly and helpful
- The arts council throws great events, and all the festivals around the city do a lot to celebrate our art and culture
- Somerviva goes far and above with helping immigrants, not just with information or translation but also helping them find jobs and get situated
- Historical sites give the city character
- Somerville's Sanctuary policies help the immigrant community feel like the community cares about them



What problems and challenges affect the Somerville community? Which are the most important to you personally?

- Parking near the Haitian churches for weekend events is consistently a problem
- Housing affordability is the number one problem, many Haitian families who have lived here for many years are getting displaced
- Many Haitian families are living in unsafe situations by having to share living spaces with too many people
- The city needs to do more to inform and help the immigrant community access healthcare and get flu shots
- Wages are too low for workers without college degrees
- Too many people need to commute to other communities to work
- Public meetings don't feel welcoming for the immigrant community
- We don't have enough families in Somerville anymore

What are some ideas you would like the community to explore? These could be solutions to some of the problems we identified or other programs or initiatives?

- Make sure places for public gathering like churches have enough parking
- The city should further explore sister city relationships with Haiti to increase cultural exchange
- The city could have even more festival and events that are culturally themed with entertainment to see, people will go
- We need to make policies that attract and encourage raising families in Somerville more of a priority, our population of family with kids is disappearing
- As the city attracts more wealthy people everything is becoming more expensive, it's not just housing cost, we need to address the affordability of our retail too
- We should have more public meetings aimed directly at immigrants
- We need to create more jobs locally, so less people have to commute

