

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Engaging Private Property Owners

Somerville, MA

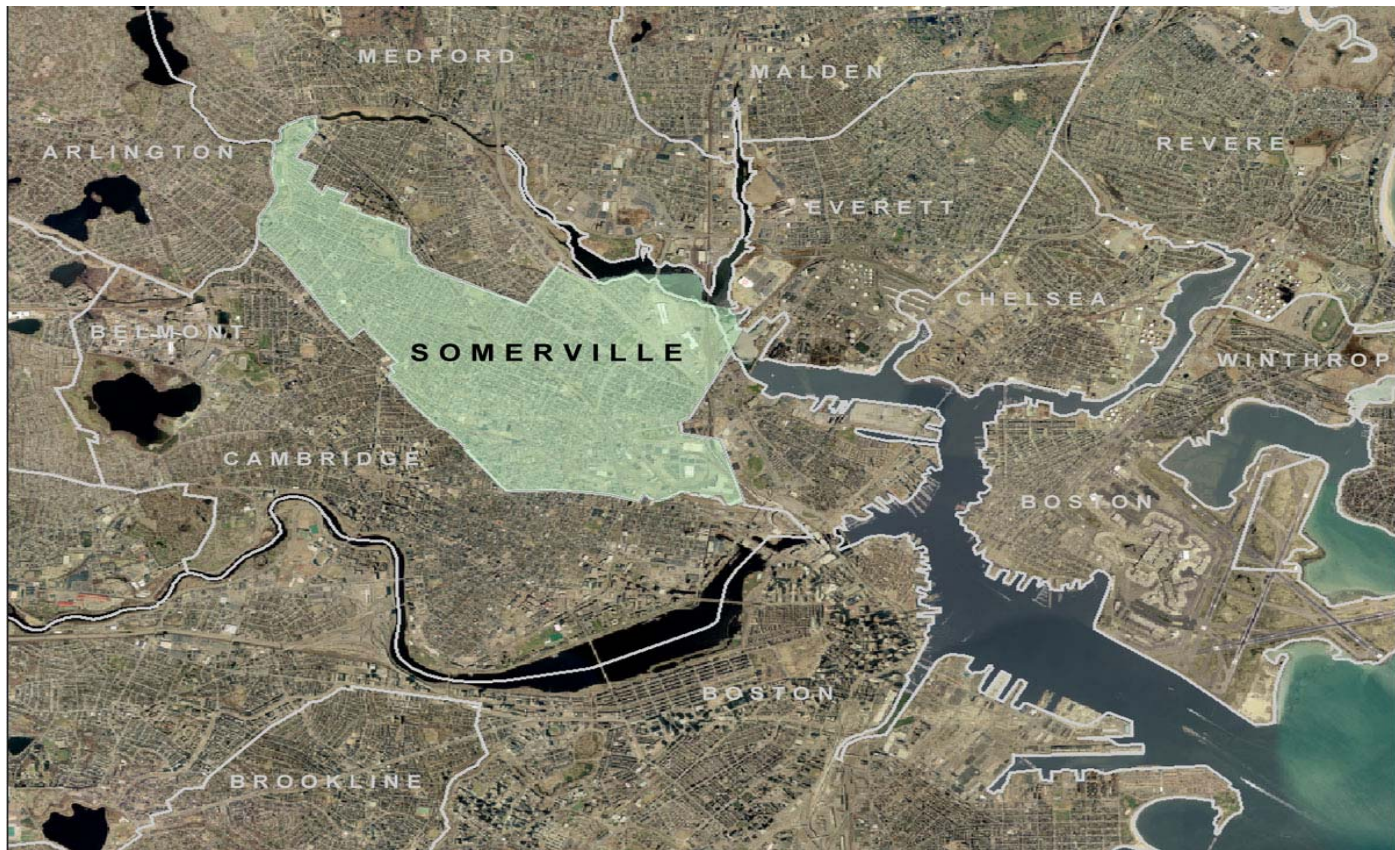
Environmental Protection Agency
Grantee Workshop
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Somerville, MA



Somerville At-A-Glance

- Established as town in 1842, a City in 1872
- Closer to downtown Boston than most parts of Boston
- 77, 478 residents within 4.2 square miles
- Most densely populated City in MA, 5th in U.S
- Over 350 sites listed with DEP, contaminated sites are spread throughout the City.
- Old industrial city with brickyards, railyards, meat packing, etc.

Marketing Brownfields Program to Private Entities

- Banks (local and regional)
- Current Brownfields Property Owners
- Brokers
- Real Estate Agents
- Real Estate Developers
- Other City Departments

Working with City, State and Federal Governments

- In MA, would have to follow the same DEP rules and regulations even if did not participate in EPA program
- EPA provides the funds but is not the enforcing agency
- For Assessment, Quality Assurance Project Plan adds to the process
- For Revolving Loan Fund, the public comment period and Davis Bacon rates add to the process

Working with City, State and Federal Governments

- Not the first project to use public funds. Successful projects have already been completed using EPA funds
- Public participation required by EPA can be included as part of other public meetings about the site. This makes the meeting schedule less cumbersome

What Worked Well

- Share EPA regulations with private entity, determine very early in the process eligible expenses and non-eligible expenses
- Use existing templates from other EPA grantee communities
- Access Agreements
- Rush laboratory charges, if needed
- Continuously use EPA Staff and resources

What Worked Well

- Be flexible, each site is different
- Focus on private entity time-frame
- Set up a triangle for communication, environmental firm, government, and private entity. Allow environmental firm to communicate directly with private entity but “cc” government on all interactions.
- Take photos at each stage of project, you never know if a site will be chosen as a Success Story

Challenges and Solutions

- Developer time frame - Rush charges, expedite City approvals
- City Vendor not private entity's Vendor – Involve private entity in selection, check references, other projects
- Interpretation of EPA rules and regulations, do not assume something is this way or that way - Ask EPA

Challenges and Solutions

- Major changes in environmental strategy need a new public comment period– Did not make loan, private entity funded cleanup using project amenity funds
- Gaining access to site during Purchase and Sale period – Access Agreements that protect current owner's property
- Short Purchase and Sale period, – request private entity to extend period

Challenges and Solutions

- If contamination is found, entered into DEP system – most banks for prospective buyers will require some type of assessment data so will end up in DEP eventually
- Procure a new environmental firm for each site – procure one environmental firm for 2-3 years

Working with Government versus Private Funds

- Schedule
- Public Process
- Additional Rules and Sequence
- Vendor Selection

Words of Advice

- Meet early and meet often
- If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try, try, try . . . again
- A Brownfields program is a tool – the program will not create a development by itself. Program must be part of an overall development strategy

30 Allen Street Site Testing- Head Start Facility



Allen Street Remediation



Allen Street Head Start Facility



259 Lowell St. Before



259 Lowell St. Demolition



259 Lowell St. Assisted Living Facility for Low Income Persons



Additional Assessment Projects Still to be Constructed

Yard 21 – 9.2 acre former Rail Yard

- Initial assessment was performed by City on behalf of owner using EPA funds.
- Part of the overall Assembly Square redevelopment plan. Yard 21 will be a mixed use project with a proposed new Orange Line transit station

Additional Assessment Projects Still to be Constructed

56R Webster Avenue former Salvage Yard

- Assessment was performed by City on behalf of owner using EPA funds.
- Remediation and construction will be performed simultaneously.
- End use will be a designed loading bay and parking area for an institutional laundry facility that had inefficient loading bays and little parking.

Additional Assessment Projects Still to be Constructed

395R Alewife Brook former Public Elementary School

- Assessment was performed by City on behalf of owner using EPA funds.
- Remediation is almost complete.
- End use will be another low income assisted living facility with a partnership to redevelop adjacent public housing development.