



Cortney Kirk  
City of Somerville



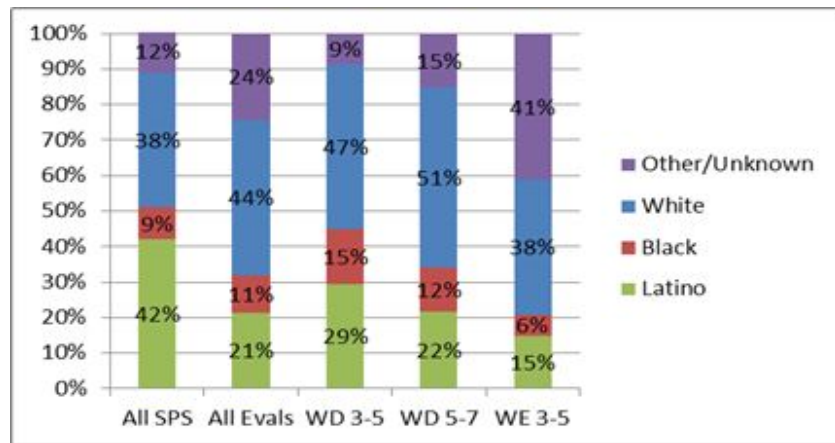
Lori Lobenstine  
Crystal Bi Wegner  
ds4si

# Participatory Action Research in Public Space Planning

*MAPC March 17, 2021*



**SOMER VIVA**  
CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
WE SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE  
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FALAMOS A SUA LÍNGUA  
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# What's working...what's not

# Participatory Action Research (PAR)

PAR emphasizes collective inquiry and experimentation grounded in experience and social history.

- **Deep engagement** with diverse stakeholders throughout the design process
- **Meeting people where they're at** (even during Covid!)
- Engaging people in collectively **imagining new possibilities** for public space
- **Building empathy** for other types of users and **deciding on design priorities** in transparent and just ways



# Community Outreach

Getting a diverse group of people to the table



Crossing Guard Tina Almeida

## Who we contacted:

- City departments + networks
- Community Based Organizations
- Youth Groups
- Advocacy Groups
- Food access/mutual aid groups
- Educational institutions/ESL language classes
- City + Local Committees
- Local Businesses
- Residents

# Digital Outreach

Digital newsletters, social media, email listservs, websites, etc.

## Jobs & Volunteer Opportunities in Union Square!

Looking for a job opportunity? Check out these postings for exciting positions available in USMS member and partner locations.

- **Design Studio for Social Intervention (ds4si)** • Union Square Community Design Team Members • [Apply here](#)
- **Greentown Labs** • Multiple Positions • [Apply online](#)
- **Liberty Cannabis** • [Wellness Guide](#) • Learn more here
- **RightHand Robotics** • Multiple Positions • [Apply online](#)
- **Tasting Counter** • Assistant General Manager or Farmers Market & Wholesale Coordinator • [Learn more here](#)
- **City of Somerville** • Multiple Positions • [Learn more online](#)

Looking for a volunteer opportunity?

- **City of Somerville** • Commission for Persons with Disabilities • [Learn more here](#)
- **City of Somerville** • Commission for Women • [Learn more here](#)

Looking to post here? Let us know at [jobs@unionsquaremain.org](mailto:jobs@unionsquaremain.org).

### ¿QUIERES AYUDAR A RE-IMAGINAR UNION SQUARE?

#### ÚNETE AL EQUIPO DE DISEÑO COMUNITARIO

¡Vives, trabajas o juegas en Union Square?  
Estamos buscando un grupo diverso de personas que quieren recoger,  
compartir e imaginar nuevas ideas para la plaza y  
las calles de Union Square.

### ¿QUER AJUDAR A RE-PENSAR A UNION SQUARE?

#### JUNTE-SE À EQUIPE DE DESIGN COMUNITÁRIO

Você mora, trabalha ou faz uso da Union Square?  
Estamos à procura de um grupo diversificado de pessoas que desejam  
coletar, compartilhar e imaginar novas ideias para a praça e as ruas da  
Union Square.

**Mutual Aid M...** Add a topic

**#general** 8:29 AM

**Crystal B. (she/her)** 8:29 AM

Hi all! Design Studio for Social Intervention (ds4si) is a community engagement portion of the Union Square project with the City. We're hoping to recruit folks as part of a Community Design Team.

**Community Design Team Details:**

- This is a paid position, 4-5 hours/week, \$20/year commitment)
- Open to ages 14 and up
- Open to folks who live, work, or play in Union Square
- Conversational English is required, being bilingual is a plus!
- Desire to talk with people in your community
- No design experience necessary!

\*Applications due March 26\*

Please find the job application with more information at this link: [bit.ly/UnionRedesign](https://bit.ly/UnionRedesign)

Feel free to reach out to me if you're interested! My contact info is on the flyer or you can reach me on Slack. Thanks!

Direct message to: Crystal B. (she/her), Amanda Zimmerman, Madison

**HELP RE-IMAGINE UNION SQUARE?**

**COMMUNITY DESIGN TEAM**

ds4si is a community engagement portion of the Union Square project with the City. We're hoping to recruit folks as part of a Community Design Team.

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**Somervillebike** @somervillebike

Want to help shape the future of Union Square's plaza and streets? Check out paid community outreach positions at [bit.ly/UnionRedesign](https://bit.ly/UnionRedesign) to collect, share and imagine new ideas. 4-5 hours/week, \$20/week (~1 year commitment). Applications are March 26th.

**WANT TO HELP RE-IMAGINE UNION SQUARE?**

**JOIN THE COMMUNITY DESIGN TEAM**

Do you live, work or play in Union Square?

We're looking for a diverse group of folks who want to collect, share and imagine new ideas for Union Square's plaza and streets.

**Retweeted by**

**Somerville Pedestrian and Transit** @SomervillePTAC  
Somerville's citizen pedestrian and transit advisory committee

**Shape Up Somerville** @ShapeUpSville  
Helping you live healthy in Somerville MA. Fan of the Mobile Market, Shape Up Approved, Mayor's Wellness Challenge, and Road Races. Great jumper. Apple eater.

**Somerville Bicycle Safety** @somerbikesafety  
Working to make streets safer and more enjoyable for people of all ages and abilities in all neighborhoods in Somerville, MA.

**Neighborhoodways Design** @neighborways  
Connected communities. Beautiful neighborhoods. Slow streets.

**gene** @whogene  
photos/words for @mastlinding, other things too. he/him.

# In-Person Outreach

Flying, visiting local businesses,  
and residents



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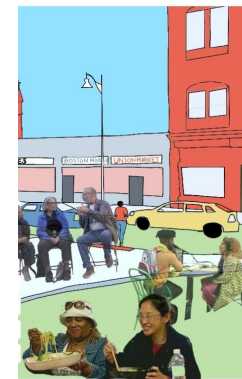
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Union Square?  
de pessoas que desejam  
para a praça e as ruas da

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गायर प्लाजा र यहाँका  
कलन गर्न, सार्वजनिक गर्न



APLICA ANTES DEL 2

equitos:

- Desejo de falar com as pessoas da sua comunidade
- Inglês para conversação necessário, se bilingue tem um forte diferencial
- A partir de 14 anos



Escanear el  
bit.ly/Unio  
para aplica  
información  
Preguntas?  
crystal@ds

APLIKE ANVAN 26 M



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१४ वर्ष वा सो भन्दा माथी

TOOLE DESIGN ds4s

Posição paga \$\$\$  
-5 horas/semana

TOOLE DESIGN ds4s

गी गरिने पद \$\$\$  
४-५ घण्टा

# PAR Team Roles

- **User research** about how people do and don't use the square, what people's hopes and fears are, what their experiences have been with recent planning processes (techniques: observations, surveys, focus groups, interviews, art projects)
- **Collecting and sharing knowledge** with design team and city team, sharing knowledge and skills back with community
- **Co-creating “productive fiction” pop-ups** to test design ideas with the community and engage community members in collectively imagining what is possible for Union Square

