

Keep Cool Somerville Community Projects Final Report

Prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council
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INTRODUCTION

About Keep Cool Somerville

As climate change continues to warm our planet, our neighborhoods can expect hotter summers and more frequent and severe heat waves. However, these impacts are not just expected in the future. Somerville residents are already feeling the heat. The ten warmest years on record have all occurred since 2000, and summer 2021 concluded as the hottest summer the contiguous United States has ever experienced.^{1,2} Somerville recorded twice as many days over 90 degrees as the historical average (22 days vs. 11 days over 90 degrees).^{3,4} Rising temperatures are a growing threat to the health of our communities and already result in more deaths than any other weather-related hazard. During heat waves, heat-related deaths spike and hospitalizations for a range of heat-sensitive health conditions rise. Warmer summers also affect our environment and quality of life in ways that can worsen health and wellbeing over the long term.

Keep Cool Somerville is an initiative to improve community resilience to heat. The initiative began in 2020 as a collaboration between the City of Somerville (“the City”) and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to address the health impacts of climate change. The project team researched heat preparedness strategies and conducted a series of community engagement activities, which included stakeholder interviews, a photovoice project with resident participants, resident focus groups, and a public survey. The City and MAPC sought to understand Somerville residents’ and organizations’ perceptions of heat-related climate impacts, heat coping mechanisms, and interest in and capacity for heat health interventions. The project team used these engagement findings to inform the development of a [toolkit of evidence-based and community-supported strategies](#) for long-term summer heat preparedness, with a particular focus on populations most likely to be impacted by extreme heat.

In 2021, the initiative built upon the findings of earlier community engagement and research to focus on supporting community solutions to address heat through the implementation of a Community Projects Grant Program. Community organizations and groups were invited to propose small-scale, pilot projects to improve resilience to heat and a handful of projects were funded and implemented over the summer. The Community Projects Grant Program had three goals:

- Build capacity for collaborative heat resilience planning and action among residents, community organizations, and City staff.
- Learn community concerns and preferred solutions for longer-term planning.
- Reduce heat health risk and discomfort for vulnerable Somerville residents during the summer of 2021.

¹ Climate Central (2021). 2020 in Review: Global Temperature Rankings. Retrieved from:

<https://medialibrary.climatecentral.org/resources/2020-in-review-global-temperature-rankings>

² National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (2021). Summer 2021 neck and neck with Dust Bowl summer for hottest on record. Retrieved from: <https://www.noaa.gov/news/summer-2021-neck-and-neck-with-dust-bowl-summer-for-hottest-on-record>

³ Union of Concerned Scientists (2019). Killer Heat Interactive Tool. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/killer-heat-interactive-tool>

⁴ MAPC (2021). MAPC calculation of Weather Underground summer 2021 historic data from Union Square Station. Retrieved from: <https://www.wunderground.com/weather/us/ma/somerville>

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Six projects were chosen for mini grant funding and implementation in summer 2021:

Somerville Fresco!

Somerville Fresco! consists of a team of immigrant parents and grandparents who met regularly throughout the spring and summer to build their knowledge and advocacy skills to protect their neighbors and families from the health impacts of extreme heat. The team met with healthcare providers, City staff, and an elected official as part of their learning and advocacy journey. They advocated for improvements in local cooling spaces, including parks, and undertook two outreach projects to share their knowledge with the community. Somerville Fresco! developed and distributed 150 bilingual booklets containing tips, recipes, and information to help families in Somerville find ways to keep cool this summer. They are also distributing cooling kits containing the booklets, hats, insulated water bottles, and small coolers to 100 students participating in a Somerville English Language Learner summer program.

Somerville Housing Authority

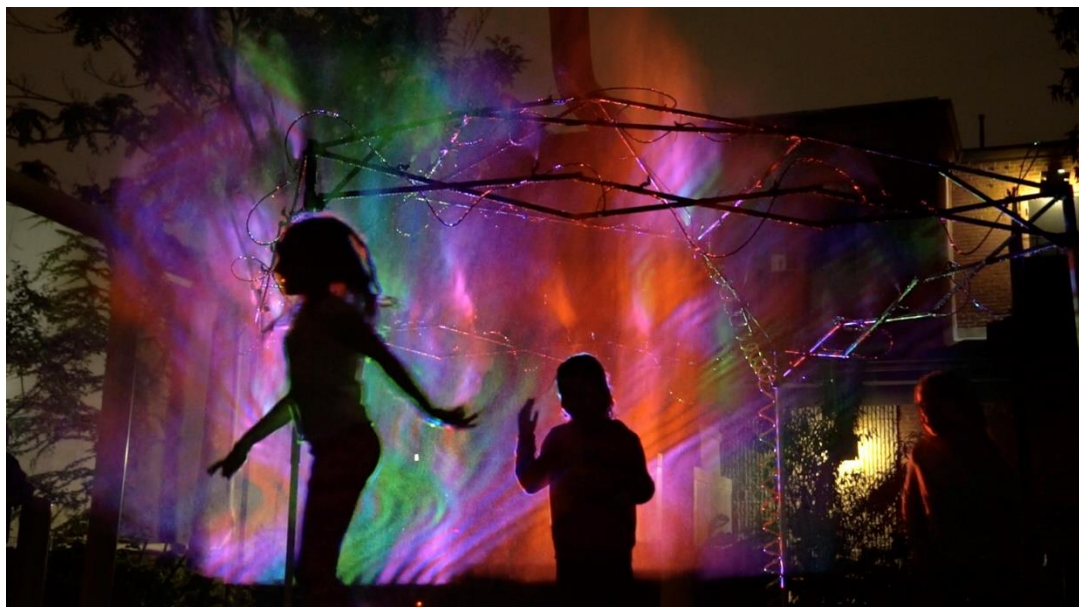
Somerville Housing Authority (SHA) is piloting an Air Conditioner Lending Program that will conclude in the fall. As part of the project, SHA distributed and helped install 18 air conditioning units for families, older adults, and people with disabilities living in low-income housing. The Lending Program complemented other Housing Authority community cooling efforts, including distribution of Keep Cool Toolkits, containing heat safety information. SHA partnered with the Mystic and Clarendon Provider's Group and Elder Services to conduct outreach to residents in need of cooling assistance.

Community Action Agency of Somerville

Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) distributed 17 air conditioning units and connected people to utility bill assistance and repayment plan programs to help them overcome cost barriers associated with home cooling. Several households were able to have their AC units shipped to their home address due to either disability or lack of transportation to come pick up the unit. Seven households received utility bill assistance ranging from \$165 to \$480, allowing these families to pay their balances in full or to a level they could better manage through a repayment program. CAAS leveraged their Housing Advocacy Program and Head Start Programs to identify households in need of cooling assistance. They also partnered with the Cambridge Health Alliance and Somerville Office of Housing Stability on outreach to families.

Clarendon Hill Towers

Clarendon Hill Towers Resident Services Coordinators (RSC) distributed 150 fans via lottery to older adult households. Windows at Clarendon Hill Towers do not accommodate most standard type of air conditioning units, which makes window units prohibitively expensive. The RSC decided to distribute fans to maximize the number of assisted households and to provide residents with a lower cost option to AC, which is more likely to increase households' utility cost burdens. Along with fans, the RSC also shared heat health safety information with all other residents.



Mystery Machine at Chuckie Harris Park, August 29th, 2021 (Photo Credit: Bent/Haus)

Bent/Haus Arts

Bent/Haus Arts developed and hosted two free, outdoor, and interactive cooling art installations on the evenings of Friday, August 20th at South Street Farm and Sunday, August 29th at Chuckie Harris Park. The interactive artwork, *Mystery Machine*, incorporated music, cooling mist, and colorful animations that were refracted and reflected in the mist. A goal of *Mystery Machine* was to pilot the use of art as a heat resilience strategy. The two events drew a diverse audience, including families with children, and helped spread awareness of Keep Cool Somerville and heat safety information - which accompanied images of the installation on social media – to a much larger audience. Bent/Haus conducted extensive outreach via social media and partnered with the Secret Boston blog, Boston Institute of Nonprofit Journalism, Groundwork Somerville, East Somerville Main Streets, and Friends of Chuckie Harris Park on outreach for the events. Bent/Haus is currently in conversation with potential partners for future *Mystery Machine* installation events.

Groundwork Somerville

The Groundwork Somerville Green Team consists of local youth, ages 14-19, who work at Groundwork's urban farm and school gardens, learn about environmental justice issues, and develop their advocacy and leadership skills. This summer, the Green Team focused on heat health issues. They developed and disseminated heat health education and outreach materials, including presentations, flyers, and short videos with testimonials from youth on their experiences with heat and ideas for actions to mitigate heat impacts. They conducted outreach at a *Mystery Machine* event they co-hosted with Bent/Haus at the South Street Farm and at the Groundwork mobile market, where they also collected surveys on customers experiences with heat. Collectively, these activities reached an audience of over 200 people. This summer's heat and moisture created many challenges to keeping crops and youth workers healthy. The Green Team was able to use mini grant funding to purchase equipment to help youth keep cool while working at the farm, such as fan misters, shade structures, and sprinklers. The Green Team also plans to update their crop plan to account for future climate conditions.

GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Participatory Grant-Making Approach

The Project Team strived to design a participatory grant-making approach that effectively leveraged the diverse expertise of Somerville residents, city staff, and community representatives. The Project Team established two platforms through which they could participate in the grant-making process: an Advisory Committee and two Heat Health Action Teams.

Keep Cool Somerville Advisory Committee

The Project Team first established the Advisory Committee in 2020 to support the research and engagement activities from the first phase of the Keep Cool Somerville initiative. The Advisory Committee reconvened with additional members in early January 2021 to help shape and implement the Community Projects Grant Program. Advisory Committee members helped identify the grant-making priority areas and populations, provided feedback on the application process and materials, and supported outreach to potential applicants. A subset of Advisory Committee members also joined the application review team and participated in the selection of awardees. Advisory Committee members helped spread awareness of grant-funded activities and resources over the summer. Several members also participated in the Community Projects Celebration event, where grantees and Advisory Committee members were brought together to reflect on lessons learned and priorities for future resilience activities.

Heat Health Action Teams

The Project Team supported two community-based organizations that formed Heat Health Action Teams consisting of Somerville residents from populations at higher risk of experiencing heat-related health impacts. The Somerville Family Learning Collaborative recruited an action team of Spanish-speaking immigrant parents and grandparents (a.k.a. Somerville Fresco!). The second action team consisted of two cohorts of Groundwork Somerville Green Team members, Somerville youth who work on acquiring farming, leadership, and advocacy skills through a paid internship. The Action Teams met regularly throughout the spring and summer to develop their knowledge of heat health issues, identify community cooling needs and resources, and propose interventions to address heat impacts affecting their community. The Project Team and other project stakeholders provided guidance and information, as requested (e.g., by conducting a heat health 101 presentation). Both teams focused heavily on community education, outreach, and advocacy. Action Teams used newly acquired advocacy skills to address cooling needs with City of Somerville staff and elected officials. By the end of the summer, both teams had also developed and implemented community projects supported through action team or mini grant project funding.

Grant Program Priorities

Priority Areas

The Advisory Committee identified several priority areas, leveraging their own observations and findings from the first phase of the initiative. Applicants were required to address at least one of the following priority areas through their project:

- **Affordable access to cooling at home.** Projects that promote people's ability to cool off at home regardless of their ability to pay utility costs, their rental arrangement, any mobility impairments, or other access barriers.
- **No-barrier access to cooling spaces or creation of new cooling features.** Projects that promote access to shade, water, or air-conditioned spaces independent of a person's ability to enter, use, or stay. Projects that activate cooling spaces or make these spaces more inviting to priority populations (see list below).
- **Education and awareness building of heat risks and adaptation measures.** Creative communications and education projects that uplift local knowledge and are culturally and linguistically inclusive.
- **Community connectedness and empowerment.** Projects that engage and uplift the lived experience and knowledge of people most likely to be impacted to heat. Projects that foster community connections to promote mutual aid during heat events and other times of community stress.

Priority Populations

The Advisory Committee also identified a list of priority populations. Again, findings from the first phase of the Keep Cool Somerville initiative informed the selection of priority populations. The Project Team asked applicants to identify the potential beneficiaries of their project activities and encouraged to target benefits to the following priority populations:

- Immigrant individuals and families with children
- Low-income renters
- People experiencing homelessness
- Older adults
- Youth
- People with pre-existing health conditions

Application Process

Application

The Project Team developed a brief funding application that underwent several revisions, with feedback provided by the Advisory Committee, to ensure that the application itself was not a barrier to equitable participation by applicants. The Project Team provided several opportunities for applicants to receive assistance in filling out the application and feedback on their proposal prior to submitting. The application questions are included in the Appendices.

Eligible Applications

Any resident, group, or organization with a community project in Somerville was eligible to apply (e.g., resident- or community-led group, advocacy or arts group, neighborhood or apartment associations, non-profit service providers).

Applicant Outreach and Assistance

The Project Team used several outreach methods to spread awareness of the Community Projects Grant Program. Flyers and social media posts about the mini grant opportunity and outreach events were translated into several languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole. The Project Team disseminated these materials using the City's different outreach platforms, including website, social media, and newsletters, and by leveraging Advisory Committee member networks. The Project Team also revived the **Photovoice Outdoor Exhibit** developed during the first phase of the Keep Cool Somerville initiative and installed it at three City of Somerville parks across the city, which accompanying signage publicizing the mini grant opportunity. The Project Team hosted a **Keep Cool Idea Workshop** virtual event on Tuesday, May 4th, to provide an opportunity for residents and community groups to come together to share ideas for potential mini grant projects and to receive feedback and technical support the Advisory Committee and other City of Somerville staff. After the Idea Workshop, the project team hosted three virtual **Idea Cafes** on May 7, 12, and 18 to provide applicants with another space to receive feedback and support with their mini grant project idea and application.

Application Review

Proposals for the Keep Cool Somerville Community Projects grant program were required to adhere to the following criteria:

- Target at least one of the Grant Program priority areas;
- Demonstrate ability to be completed before September 6, 2021;
- Confirm support for the proposed project if on a facility or private property (e.g., written support from the property owner, letters of support from users or abutters, minutes of a community meeting, etc.);
- Be designed and implemented to provide benefits to populations that are most likely to be impacted by extreme heat (see priority populations);
- Create opportunities for learning, replication, and development of best practices.

The grant application review team consisted of a subset of Advisory Committee members and the MAPC and City of Somerville Project Team. Collectively, this team decided which proposals to award grant funding. The scoring rubric used by the review team is included in the Appendices.

Funding Awards

Applicants were invited to submit proposals from a few hundred dollars for smaller, short-term activities to just under \$10,000. The grant program received ten applications totaling \$40,300 in funding requests. The Project Team distributed \$21,750 in funding to five applicants, an increase from the original \$18,500 set aside for mini grant funding. Additionally, Groundwork Somerville was able to leverage Action Team funding to support its summer 2021 project activities.

COMMUNITY PROJECT EVALUATION

Evaluation Activities

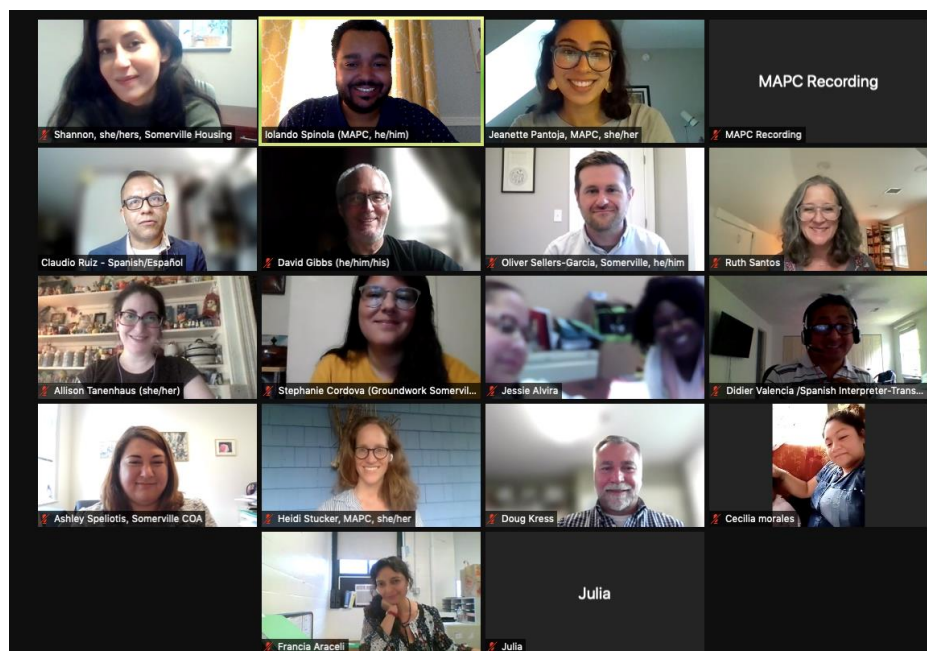
The Project Team conducted mid-point check-ins with each grantee in July and asked grantees to complete an end of project reporting survey and to participate in a meeting with other mini grant project leads at the end of the summer to collectively share learnings from their implemented projects.

Reporting Survey

The Project Team developed a short survey to encourage grantees to report project activities and outcomes and to provide feedback on their experience with the mini grant program. Grantees were able to fill out the survey online or over the phone with a member of the Project Team filling out survey responses on their behalf.

End of Summer Community Projects Celebration and Debrief

The Project Team held a grantee convening on September 9th, 2021, to celebrate project accomplishments and to facilitate a discussion about lessons learned throughout the summer. Advisory Committee members were also invited to participate. Each grantee gave a short presentation on their project and shared project highlights and accomplishments. Event attendees then participated in breakout discussion groups to collectively reflect on lessons that emerged from the completed projects and on opportunities to enhance heat resilience through additional planning, programming, and policy change.



Screenshot of some of our virtual Community Projects Celebration attendees.

Findings

Project Impacts

All six project teams reported meeting most or all their goals. Projects deployed a broad range of strategies to help advance heat resilience among diverse populations of Somerville residents, including children and youth, older adults, low-income individuals and families, and immigrants. Community project teams and advisory committee members observed the following impacts:

- **All projects increased public awareness of risks associated with climate-driven heat and of heat adaptation strategies and resources.** Both Action Teams dedicated time to developing their members knowledge of heat health issues and adaptation strategies. They then leveraged this learning into developing community education and outreach materials. However, every mini grant project included some sort of community education component. Project teams developed and/or distributed heat safety informational flyers, videos, and booklets, gave presentations on heat health topics, and/or posted heat safety information on social media. Specifically, Mistery Machine, effectively leveraged art to raise awareness of the Keep Cool Somerville initiative across several media platforms and among people who engaged with the installation at South Street Farm and Chuckie Harris Park.
- **Several projects fostered social cohesion and civic engagement around issues affecting the condition and availability of cooling resources in Somerville neighborhoods.** The Action Teams, specifically, functioned as spaces where Somerville neighbors with a shared identify (youth, immigrant parents and grandparents) could build relationships and collectively develop their knowledge, leadership, and advocacy skills. Action Team members reflected on ways in which heat impacted their work and wellbeing, identified changes to address these impacts, and met with city staff and elected officials to advocate for changes. Project teams also collaborated across their projects to implement shared activities. For example, Groundwork Somerville and Bent/Haus co-hosted a Mistery Machine installation event on August 20th.
- **Several projects increased access to cooling equipment and resources.** Grantees were able to use mini grant funding to purchase and distribute 35 air conditioning units, 150 electric fans, and 100 cooling kits consisting of hats, insulated lunch boxes, and water bottles. Grantees prioritized older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income households for air conditioner and electric fan distribution. Somerville Fresco! distributed cooling kits to children participating in a summer English Language Learner program. Additionally, Groundwork Somerville was able to purchase fans, sprinklers, and shade structure to provide cooling relief to youth doing urban farming work at the South Street Farm and across several school gardens.

“Great diversity of projects – across ages, thinking of different barriers and impacts, including impacts to youth farmers. This is what climate justice looks like.”

“One of the things we all agreed on from the beginning is that we didn’t know how to make change, learned we could also make change, can contact our counselors, speak to the city about what is not working for our families.”

- **One project helped families resolve or significantly reduce utility bill arrearages, a common barrier to access to cooling in the home.** CAAS helped seven families pay down utility bill arrearages, ranging from \$165 to \$480, by providing direct financial assistance and/or helping families enroll in utility bill repayment and assistance programs.
- **One project activated public spaces using a creative, nighttime cooling installation.** Bent/Haus's Mystery Machine demonstrated the use of art to provide cooling refuge and activate public spaces. The Somerville Fresco! team had expressed concerns that Chuckie Harris Park is underutilized by families as a cooling space because of issues related to loitering and maintenance. The Keep Cool Somerville Project team encouraged Bent/Haus to use the park as a site for Mystery Machine, hypothesizing that the installation could activate the space and make it more inviting to families in the evening. The installation ultimately worked as a source of activation and attraction for families. Additionally, the creative use of cooling mist, music, and animation resulted in an installation that provided cooling relief, reminiscent of a pop-up splash park.
- **Project teams are motivated to continue working on heat preparedness.** Project teams strengthened their capacity to partner with the City of Somerville on future heat preparedness activities, and several teams expressed interest in continuing to work with the city on these issues and/or applying to implement projects again next summer. Bent/Haus is already in conversation with several interested parties on future Mystery Machine installation events, and Groundwork Somerville is making plans to update their crop plan to account for future heat conditions.

Project Enablers and Challenges

Several factors contributed to the project teams' ability to achieve their goals and to generate impact. These factors include:

- **All projects leveraged partnerships and conducted significant outreach to reach a larger audience for their interventions.** Project teams partnered with many different types of organizations to increase awareness about project related information, resources, and events. These partners included tenant and business associations; neighborhood groups; environmental, arts, media, and advocacy organizations; healthcare and social services providers; schools and city departments, etc. Project teams also posted on social media and conducted person-to-person outreach with their families and among neighbors and participants interacting with grantee run programs (e.g., CAAS Head Start and Housing Advocacy Program, Groundwork mobile market).
- **Projects built upon the knowledge and experiences of the communities they intended to serve.** The Action Teams relied heavily upon members' knowledge and experiences as immigrant and youth urban farmers, respectively, to identify community cooling needs, uncover tested heat coping strategies, and develop their interventions. Somerville Fresco! specifically, began with a reflection on members' observations of environmental and climate changes from their home country in order to develop an appreciation for how climate change is affecting them as Somerville residents. The booklet they developed lists recipes, locations, and activities that have been effective in keeping members cool.

- **Common barriers to the use of cooling equipment, such as utility cost burdens and mobility impairments, factored into project teams' approach.** CAAS focused on helping families address utility bill arrearages and better manage utility bill costs to facilitate affordable access to cooling at home. Additionally, Clarendon Towers RSCs distributed electric fans in consideration of both the cost of operating an air conditioning unit and structural barriers to installation of window units in the building's windows. Direct delivery to people's homes and support with installation was included in some projects to improve access to cooling equipment for people with mobility impairments and transportation barriers.
- **Projects also considered common barriers to accessing cooling spaces.** Bent/Haus described how the fact the installation was free, didn't require ticketed entry or specific knowledge or skills to participate (e.g., participants didn't have to know how to swim), and used instrumental music rather than music in a specific language, made the installation much more accessible to people of all ages and demographics. Anyone walking by the installation could easily engage with it. Somerville Fresco! and Groundwork Somerville also focused their advocacy on issues pertaining to cooling spaces, such as lack of shade along walking and biking routes and the impact of safety and maintenance issues on families' ability to use local cooling spaces.

Two teams described barriers they encountered as part of their general program feedback:

- Clarendon Hill Towers reported vendor-side delays to the delivery of cooling equipment, but they were still able to distribute cooling equipment by early August.
- Bent/Haus had to overcome several obstacles related to public event licensing/permitting and navigating and coordinating across different City departments. They recommended providing more information about how to set up public events, including by distributing a checklist of required steps, an inventory of amenities at each public facility (e.g., water, electricity), and contact information for each organization or office involved, to make the process smoother for future applicants with proposals for activities on public property. Project leads expressed gratitude for the opportunity to learn from these logistical challenges, but acknowledge that the difficulty and uncompensated time required could be a serious deterrent to other artists engaging with these types of projects.

Recommendations for Future Heat Resilience Activities

Project teams identified heat preparedness needs and ideas for future interventions as an activity within their projects, in reporting survey feedback, and during breakout discussions at the end of summer Community Projects Celebration event. The following list of interventions include activities that community groups and the City can spearhead as well as actions that will require state and/or federal advocacy. Some of these interventions are also already listed within the Cooling Strategies Toolkit:

- **Increase funding to support individuals and families with utility cost burdens.** For many households the cost of utilities is a bigger barrier than the lack of cooling equipment. As stated by one project team, "Low-income households struggle to manage utility bills

and often face shutoff notices during critical months (mid-summer and mid-winter). As the effects of climate change worsen, MA is likely to experience more heat waves each summer, which will drive up the cost of these bills, making them unbearable to pay.” The Keep Cool Somerville Project Team has heard this concern repeatedly through both phases of the initiative. The MA Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is the primary funding source for utility bill assistance, but currently only provides financial assistance to address winter heating needs. Expanding the program to also assist households with summer cooling costs requires a logistically simple administrative change but would necessitate an overall increase in funding resources to both meet heating and cooling needs. The program is currently underfunded.

- **Adopt maximum temperature standards for rental buildings and/or require landlords to provide air conditioning.** Grantees were able to distribute cooling equipment to a significant number of Somerville households, but they acknowledged that the need for cooling equipment is far greater. They proposed requiring cooling in residential buildings, just as heating is required, as a necessary preparedness action. The Massachusetts sanitary code currently requires residential building owners to provide heating from September 15th to June 15th and within that timeframe adhere to both minimum and maximum temperature standards. The sanitary code is silent on air conditioning or cooling season standards. Several cities across the country have adopted residential cooling standards in response to rising temperatures, but there has been little to no action reported on this issue within Massachusetts. Grantees suggested that cooling requirements could be connected to renewable energy requirements (e.g., solar), which can then be leveraged to power cooling within the building.
- **The City should work with and through existing groups when seeking to increase access to cooling equipment and address energy cost burdens.** SHA, CAAS, and the Clarendon Hill Towers RSC’s were able to use their existing relationships to residents and program networks to quickly identify and assist individuals in need of cooling equipment and assistance. Collectively, they distributed almost 300 units of air conditioners and fans and helped seven households eliminate several hundred dollars’ worth of unpaid utility bills. Many more households received heat safety and utility bill assistance information. These partners also developed nuanced approaches to providing cooling assistance by leveraging their deep knowledge of common barriers experienced by residents.
- **Preserve and expand the urban tree canopy and implement other shading improvements.** Multiple grantees and action team participants identified the need for increased shade especially along popular pedestrian routes, at parks and playgrounds, and in commercial districts. While most people focused on the need to preserve and expand tree canopy, several also suggested structural shade features, such as shade sails, as a needed intervention in places where expanding tree canopy may be more difficult.
- **Ensure public cooling spaces are accessible, well maintained, and inviting to families.** The Community Projects activities underscored the importance of activating public spaces to ensure they feel safe and inviting, especially for families with children. The Somerville Fresco! team focused a considerable amount of their advocacy on Chuckie Harris Park, which is underutilized by families as a cooling space due to loitering and maintenance

issues. The group gravitated towards the idea that better activating and programming that space would make it more inviting to families, a hypothesis which was tested by the Mystery Machine art installation. The art installation was effective in bringing families to the park.

- **Increase access to drinking water in public spaces by installing more hydration stations.** Prioritize access to drinking water in parks, public squares, commercial districts, transit stations, and along pedestrian routes. Install hydration stations that include a water bottle filling feature as a more hygienic alternative to traditional drinking fountains.
- **Continue to support resident capacity building efforts, like the Heat Health Action Teams, to promote social cohesion and advocacy in service of climate preparedness.** Somerville Fresco! members, especially, spoke to the value of the Action Team space as a place to build cohesion with other immigrant parents and grandparents, develop their advocacy skills and knowledge of climate issues and local government, and as a space for collective action. A distinct feature of the Action Team space is that organizing activities occur among participants with a shared identity, in this case Spanish-speaking immigrant households with children.
- **Repeat the Community Projects Grant Program, while supporting projects responsive to multiple climate hazards.** Several grantees have expressed interest in continuing their heat preparedness activities, and shared ideas for improving future iterations of the Grant Program. However, the effects of Hurricane Ida and lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are a reminder that communities are susceptible to experiencing multiple compounding hazards. The Project Team could be more intentional about encouraging future grantees to consider strategies to enhance multi-hazard resilience.

APPENDICES

Mini Grants Application Questions

1. Enter name of individual, group, or organization submitting the application.

2. Enter names of partnering group or organizations (if any).

3. Enter contact information for primary point of contact for funding request (name, position, email, and phone number).

4. Based on the list below, which of the priority areas does your project address? Check all that apply.

- Affordable access to cooling at home
- No-barrier access to cooling spaces
- Creation of new cooling features
- Education and awareness of heat risks and adaptation measures
- Community connectedness and empowerment

5. Please provide a brief description of the proposed project and how you would undertake the work? (three to five sentences)

6. How much funding are you requesting for your project and how did you determine the requested amount? (three to four sentences) **Note:** The City of Somerville may award less funds than requested, so please be prepared to discuss how you would scale down your project if asked.

7. Please list your expected costs for this project, including costs for materials, project team or staff time, and any stipends.

Budget Item (Description)	Amount \$
Total Project Cost	

8. Who will benefit from this project and how will you involve them in completing this project? (two to three sentences)

9. Is this project planned for a specific neighborhood or part of the city?

- Yes
- No

(If answered yes to question 9) Please describe the location of this project?

10. Will this project be located/take place on a private property?

Yes

No

(If answered yes to question 10) Do you have permission to install your project on your proposed site? Please describe any necessary permissions or permits needed for your project, what you have already obtained and how you plan on obtaining any outstanding permissions or permits.

11. (Optional) Please upload (or attach) any materials relevant for your project (e.g., drawings, letters of support, meeting minutes, etc.).

12. (Optional) What help might you need from City staff for your project?

Mini Grants Review Rubric

Mini Grant Applicant:	
Reviewer	
What you like about the project:	
Concerns you have about the project:	
Other notes/recommendations:	

	Scoring guidance: 0 = no, 1 = somewhat meets expectations, 2 = meets or exceeds expectations	Comments
Soundness of Project		
Application is complete (including budget)		
Project can be reasonably completed by the end of summer (roughly September 6)		
Budget is realistic and adequate to complete the proposed project (inc. has capacity, plan to manage reimbursement process)		

Subtotal		out of potential 6 points
Impact to Grant Priorities		
Has as a well-defined goal (clearly describes proposed project, path to completing the project, and how funding will be used)		
Addresses at least one or more priority areas (affordable access to cooling at home, no-barrier access to cooling spaces, creation of new cooling features, education awareness or heat risks and adaptation, community connectedness and empowerment).		
Creates opportunities for learning, replication, and development of best practices.		
Subtotal		out of potential 6 points
Equity and Community Engagement		
Benefits populations most likely to be impacted (immigrant individuals and families with children, low-income renters, people experiencing homelessness, older adults, youth, people with pre-existing health conditions)		
Demonstrates that the community that will be affected by the project is involved in decision-making and/or implementation of the work		
Subtotal		out of potential 4 points
TOTAL		out of potential 16 points

Reporting Survey

Q1. Thank you for leading a Keep Cool Somerville mini grant project this summer! We have prepared this short survey to collect some basic information related to your completed projects. The project team is available to fill this survey out with you over the phone if that is easier. Please complete this survey by Friday, September 10th. We look forward to discussing all this summer's projects at the Grantee Convening on September 9th, 2021. And thank you again for your great work!

Q2. Please select the project for which you are completing this survey (*drop down menu*).

- Somerville Fresco!
- Somerville Housing Authority

- Community Action Agency of Somerville
- Clarendon Hill Towers
- Bent/Haus Arts
- Groundwork Somerville
-

Q3. Contact information for survey respondent or primary point of contact (name, email, phone number).

Q4. To what extent did you meet your goals for the project (*multiple choice*)?

- Met all goals.
- Met most goals.
- Met some goals.
- Did not meet most goals.

Q5. Please provide a brief description (3-4 sentences) of your projects' impact or accomplishments.

Ex. # of education materials distributed, # of outreach events, people reporting increased awareness or knowledge of heat issues, increased resident participation in heat-related community change efforts, # of fans or AC units distributed, # of people enrolled in energy program, etc.

Q6. Please provide a brief description (2-3 sentences) of the populations served by this project and their role in project's activities.

Ex. # of people assisted, participants, or visitors; type of people assisted or participating (older adult, families with children, youth); other demographic information.

Q7. Did you use any surveys, screening tools, or other data collection instruments to support your project or to track who your project served?

- Yes
- No

Q8. (*If yes was selected*) Please upload any surveys, screening tool, or other data collection instrument you used in support of your project. We hope to compile these tools and share across grantees to support future extreme heat preparedness efforts.

Upload Button

Q9. Please provide a brief description (2-3 sentences) of how you shared information about the grant funded activities and resources with potentially impacted populations?

Q10. Please upload any communications materials (e.g. flyers, factsheets, etc.) you used in support of your project and any photos you have of your project (in progress, finished products, events, etc.). We hope to compile these materials and share across grantees to support future extreme heat preparedness efforts.

Upload button

Q11. Please rate your experience with the **mini grant application process**. (1 = worst: application was difficult to complete, the project team provided no/poor support; 6 = best: application was easy to complete, the project team was supportive).

- 1,2,3,4,5,6

Q12. Please rate your experience with the **Keep Cool Project Team as you completed your project this summer**. (1 = worst: poor communication, did not feel supported; 6 = enough communication, team was accessible, supportive).

- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Q13. Is there any other information or feedback you would like to share with us related to this project?
