

# Union Square Main Streets Candidate Questionnaire

This questionnaire will give you a chance to weigh in concepts and challenges faced by small businesses in Somerville. After the September preliminary, we plan to issue a second questionnaire which will dive deeper into more in depth questions and issues that our small business community faces.

Email \*

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What is your name? \*

Steph Aman

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What position are you running for? \*

Ward 2 city councilor

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## Section 1 | The role of small business

The section below will focus on the role you feel small businesses should play in Somerville

1) In what practical ways, if any, do you think the City of Somerville should treat locally-owned, independent small businesses differently than other sized or formula businesses? \*

With respect and care. These owners decided to open their business in Somerville providing our city with income. We handle them with care by making sure their business is safe and has plenty of business.

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2) Should business owners and employees receive the same level of support and responsiveness from the city as residents receive? \*

Of course they spend a large portion of their lives within our city

3) Explain how you align with the premises of the 15-minute city \*

The 15-minute city is based on the idea that "everyone living in a city should have access to essential urban services within a 15 minute walk or bike." Learn more at [15minutecity.com](https://www.15minutecity.com)

It's an amazing concept and within a city our size we should be looking at a five min city plan.

4) Describe the ideal role of business support groups in Somerville. \*

Last year proved that there is a need for strong business support groups. We lost a lot of small businesses and many were due to a limited network in the business world.

5) Have you ever been responsible for someone else's paycheck? Please explain. \*

Yes, we all play a role in what someone makes. Deciding to buy small business helps provide money for local business owners. Me paying my rent, the landlord pays the light bill, the electric company pays the light tech.

6) Do you believe increasing the price of metered parking will help, hurt, or not affect businesses? Explain your thinking. \*

It could do all three, the real question is why do we need so many meters and where is that money going?

## Section 2 | Ranking small business priorities

The section below asks you to rank certain priorities from 1 -3. We recognize that you may be in favor of (or not in favor of) many of these choices; after each set of choices, you'll be able to explain your answer. The end of this section will allow you an opportunity to explain your priorities without having to rank them against one another.

7) Please rank the following in order of priority

	1st	2nd	3rd
Reducing the time it takes for all businesses to get their city permits and licenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Ensuring that the licensing and permitting process is equitable	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating a business focused version of SomerStat	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices

You first want to find a business that fits our city. Now that Somerville has elevated in worth we'll have our choices of what businesses we want in our city. Second we secure and provide everything needed for that business, then reduce the paperwork by providing services in a timely fashion.

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8) Please rank the following in order of priority

	1st	2nd	3rd
Increasing the commercial tax base	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing the overall number of jobs available in Somerville	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decreasing the number of employees in Somerville who make less than the current 100% Area Median Income (AMI)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices

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9) Please rank the following in order of priority

	1st	2nd	3rd
Using city funds to pay for permanent public art created by artists from marginalized communities	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating multi-language wayfinding	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating infrastructure for festivals like stages and lighting systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices

Let's first continue to build on our inclusive city , then use funding to beautify our city. Last let's celebrate our inclusive beautiful city with festivals!

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10) Please rank the following in order of priority

	1st	2nd	3rd
Creating specific affordable commercial spaces, similar to inclusionary housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fining landlords who hold property vacant for two long	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Rewarding landlords who lease to small businesses	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices

Let's first reward landlords who are helping us achieve a better city. Then create the space for other businesses. Last let's not go after landlords for unused property but rather ask them what they'd like to do and if we can help.

11) Please rank the following in order of priority

	1st	2nd	3rd
Creating more dining parklets/pedestrian streets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Creating more bus lanes	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating more bike lanes	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices

More bike lanes to provide a lane for bikes. Bus lanes have been very helpful last the restaurant space.

12) Which of the following statements best represents the most important goal of zoning?

	1st	2nd	3rd
Protecting the character of Somerville's neighborhoods	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating economic opportunity	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting equity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices

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13) Please rank the following ways for improving the appeal of Somerville's business districts

	1st	2nd	3rd
Decreasing construction noise, dust, and detours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Decreasing rodent activity	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investing in maintenance and upkeep of public infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices

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14) Besides the cost of rent, please rank the following in order of the greatest challenge to small businesses in Somerville:

	1st	2nd	3rd
Hiring locally	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competing with national brands	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rising operational costs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please use this space to explain your choices.

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15) Please use this space to list your top priorities without the need to rank them against one another.

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16) Should you wish, please use this space to share other thoughts you feel are relevant to our small business community.

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This form was created inside of Union Square Main Streets.

