



CULTURAL FACILITIES NETWORK

TOWN HALL

BLANK CANVAS: HOW DEVELOPERS, GOVERNMENT, AND COMMUNITIES INCORPORATE THE ARTS INTO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

A discussion led by Michael Bobbitt, Executive Director, Mass Cultural Council & Annis Sengupta, Director of Arts & Culture, MAPC.

Moderated by Scott Butler, AIA.

We encourage all participants to share their ideas and experiences throughout the event!

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5
BOSTON CITY HALL, LOBBY
5:30-7:00 PM**



Michael Bobbitt, Executive Director, Mass Cultural Council



Annis Sengupta, Director of Arts & Culture, Metropolitan Area Planning Council



Boston Society for Architecture

*Arts Integration Projects –
Inspiration and Funding*

Michael J. Bobbitt, Executive Director



Power of culture

We Are Mass Cultural Council

2

Mass Cultural Council is the Commonwealth's independent state arts agency.

Our charge is to bolster Massachusetts' creative & cultural sector.

Our efforts:

- Advance economic vitality
- Support transformational change
- Celebrate, preserve, and inspire creativity across all communities



Isaura Oliveira's Power of Skirts in performance at Dance Happens Here: 2022 | Baby Viking Photography

Spurring Economic Development

3



Apollinaire Theatre, Chelsea.

Arts and culture are essential for economic prosperity, innovation, creativity, and good health. The sector is key to a strong state economy.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2022 arts and culture in Massachusetts:

- Generated \$28.6 billion in spending and economic activity
- Accounted for 4.1% of the state's gross domestic product (GDP)
- Supported 133,773 jobs

Grant Programs



Chelsea Summer Concert

Mass Cultural Council will offer the following grant programs in FY25:

- **Cultural Facilities Fund – *Now open!***
- **Gaming Mitigation Fund – *Now open!***
- **Operating Grants for Organizations – *Coming soon***
- **YouthReach – *Coming soon***
- **Creative Experiences – *Coming soon***
- **Local Cultural Council Program - *Closed***
- **Creative Projects for Schools - *Closed***
- **Grants for Creative Individuals - *Closed***

Introduction

5

Today's Focus

1. Creative and Successful arts integration in urban and public spaces.
2. Funding strategies and policies that support projects.

Why It Matters: Arts integration improves quality of life, attracts tourism, and stimulates local economies.

Architecture, design, programming, policy, and partnerships are key to success.

Enhancing Tourism

6



The Donkey Show at OBERON, American Repertory Theatre

Arts and cultural attractions help drive tourism. The AEP6 study, conducted by Americans for the Arts found:

- **30%** of attendees to an average arts or cultural attraction traveled from **outside the region** to attend
- **77%** of them said the attraction was the **sole reason** for being in the area
- Those who travel for arts and culture **outspend locals by nearly double** on other event-related spending including restaurants, lodging, shopping, transportation, etc.

Creating Jobs

Mass Cultural Council's Cultural Facilities Fund provides major improvement grants to nonprofit cultural organizations.

- Recipient organizations employ **1,200 full-time equivalents** representing **\$109 million** in wages and salaries
- The projects supported by these grants created more than **3,300 new jobs**
- These projects have employed more than **38,000 architects, engineers, contractors, and construction workers**



MASS MoCA, Solid Sound Festival

Wynwood Walls – Miami, FL

- Transformed an abandoned warehouse district into a vibrant hub of street art in 2009.
- Best Outcomes: \$12 billion annual tourism revenue, community pride, and business growth.
- Key Features: Outdoor murals, galleries, community events.
- Financing: Private funding from Goldman Properties; city support via Wynwood BID.
- Policy: Miami-Dade County Art in Public Places (APP) Program (1.5% of construction budgets for art).



High Line Park – New York, NY

9

Repurposed an elevated rail line into a 1.45-mile-long greenway in 2009.

Best Outcomes: \$2 billion in economic development; 8+ million annual visitors.

Key Features: Public art, gardens, sustainability, performance spaces.

Financing: \$150M from public/private sources; philanthropic support.

Policy: Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) allowing property owners to transfer rights to designated receiving sites and increased the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) allowing for the construction of larger buildings helped with financing



21c Museum Hotel – Louisville, KY

10

Opened in 2006, blending a boutique hotel with a contemporary art museum.

Best Outcomes: Revitalized downtown; inspired similar models nationwide.

Key Features: Rotating art exhibitions; community dialogue.

Financing: Private investment;

Policy: New Market tax credits and Historic Preservations tax credits.



The Arts District – Los Angeles, CA

11



Industrial area transformed into a creative hub of galleries, studios, and restaurants.

Best Outcomes: Cultural tourism and job creation; global arts destination.

Key Features: Live/workspaces, adaptive reuse of warehouses.

Financing: Public-private partnerships; California Arts Council grants, City of Los Angeles Creative Artist Business Tax Exemption

Policy: The Percent for Public Art (PWIAP) in Los Angeles requires that private development projects valued at \$500,000 or more pay an arts fee.

The Distillery District – Toronto, CA

12

Redeveloped historic distillery into a pedestrian-only arts district.

Best Outcomes: Top tourist attraction in Canada; boosted local business.

Key Features: Art studios, theaters, seasonal markets, festivals.

Financing: Private development; heritage conservation grants.

Policy: Ontario Heritage Act encouraged conservation and adaptive reuse, Commercial Heritage Properties Incentive Fund (CHPIF), Ontario regional opportunities investment tax credit, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) program, Ontario Business-Research Institute Tax Credit, Ontario Innovation Tax Credit.



Key Takeaways

13

Creative Ideas

Focus on placemaking to create vibrant cultural destinations with particular attention to traffic vs beautification (public art vs entertainment)

Repurpose industrial or heritage spaces for creative use.

Collaborate with artists, architects, and policymakers, early.

Engage communities through inclusive programming.

Financing Strategies

Diversify funding sources:

Public-private partnerships.

Philanthropic contributions.

Federal and state tax incentives, credits, concessions, policy, fees, and grants.

Districting.

Subsidy and Overmarket rate lease/sales deals.

Use arts projects to stimulate local economies and attract tourism.

Leverage existing cultural programming to sustain engagement.



**Blank Canvas: How
Developers, Government,
and Communities
Incorporate the Arts into
Development Projects**

December 5, 2024

Making Space for Art

*How local and regional government is
supporting arts in development projects*

Annis Sengupta, PhD
MAPC Director of Arts & Culture

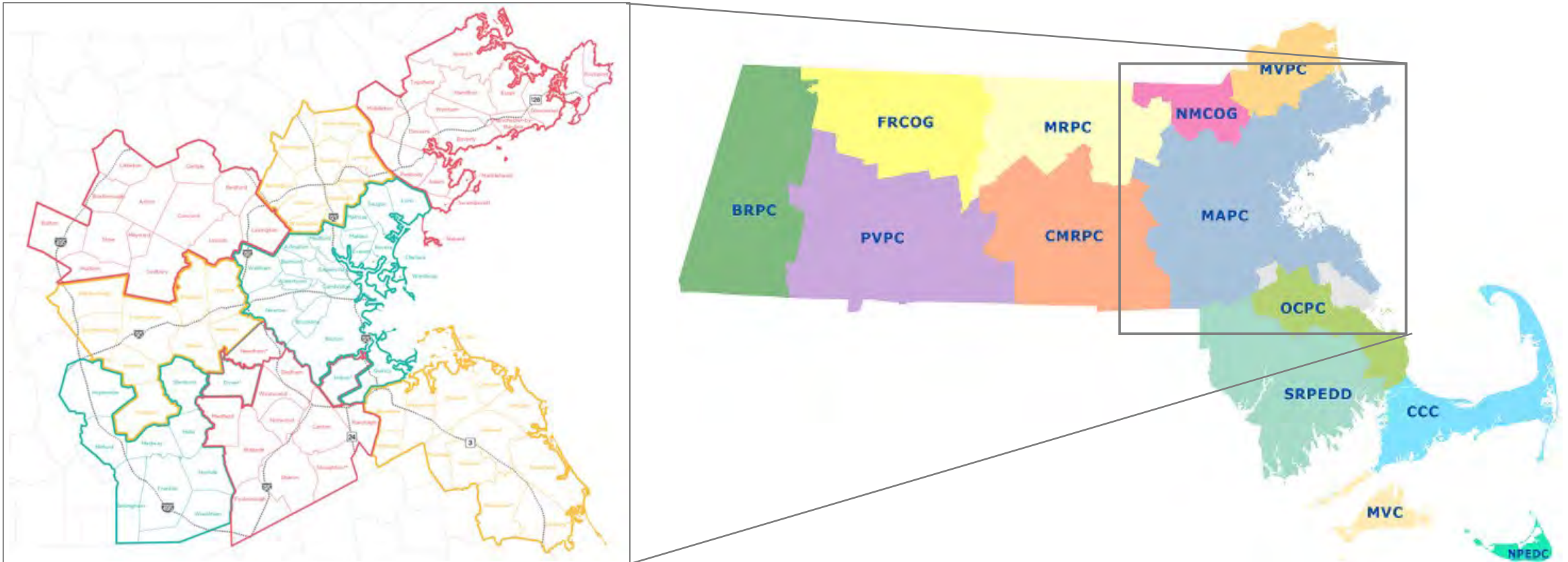


Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

One of 13 Regional Planning Agencies in Massachusetts

Vermont

New Hampshire





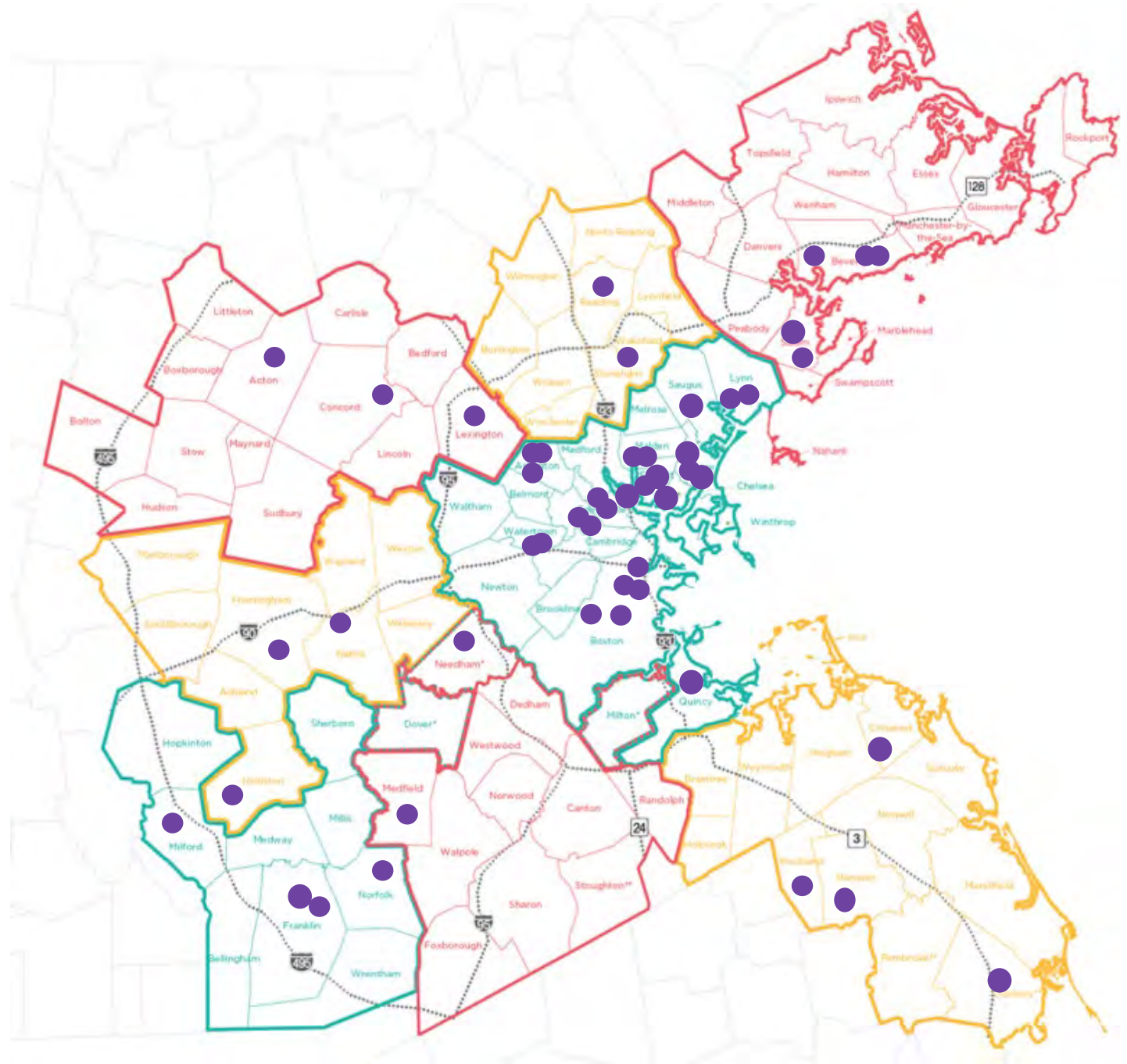
WHO WE ARE

MAPC Arts and Culture Department

Launched in 2017

Work in all 8 MAPC Subregions

● *Project location*



WHAT WE DO

- Work with municipal staff, subregions, arts and culture stakeholders, and others to support **cultural planning, creative placemaking, public art, and policy-making** to ensure that arts and culture can thrive
- Advocate on issues at the **state level** and work in collaboration with other **regional planning agencies** and **statewide partners**



WHY WE DO THIS WORK

- Arts, culture, and creativity are essential to **healthy, resilient, vibrant** communities.
- The **challenges we face as a society today require creativity** and require changes to how we understand what is possible
- Government must ensure that **creative and cultural career paths are available and equitable** for all and provide opportunities for the arts and culture sector to engage in planning efforts.



ARTS & CULTURE BRINGS ECONOMIC IMPACT



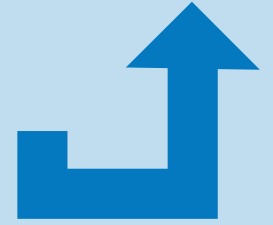
Arts & culture organizations are businesses.



The arts drive commerce to local businesses.



Arts travelers stay longer and spend more.



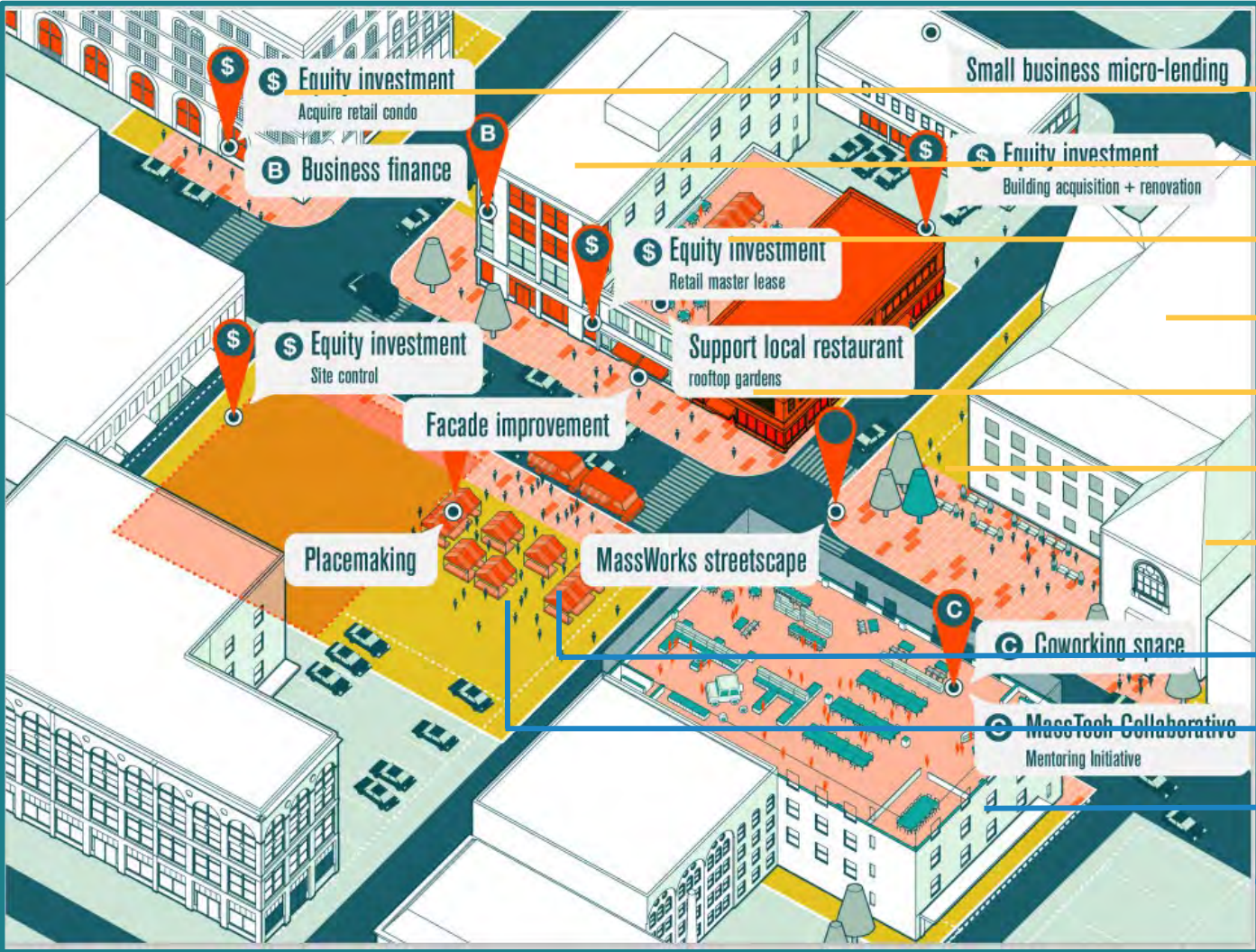
Small investments yield big returns.

Source: Americans for the Arts, "Arts & Economic Prosperity 6," n.d.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS ARE TIED TO PLACE

Facilities & Amenities

Programming

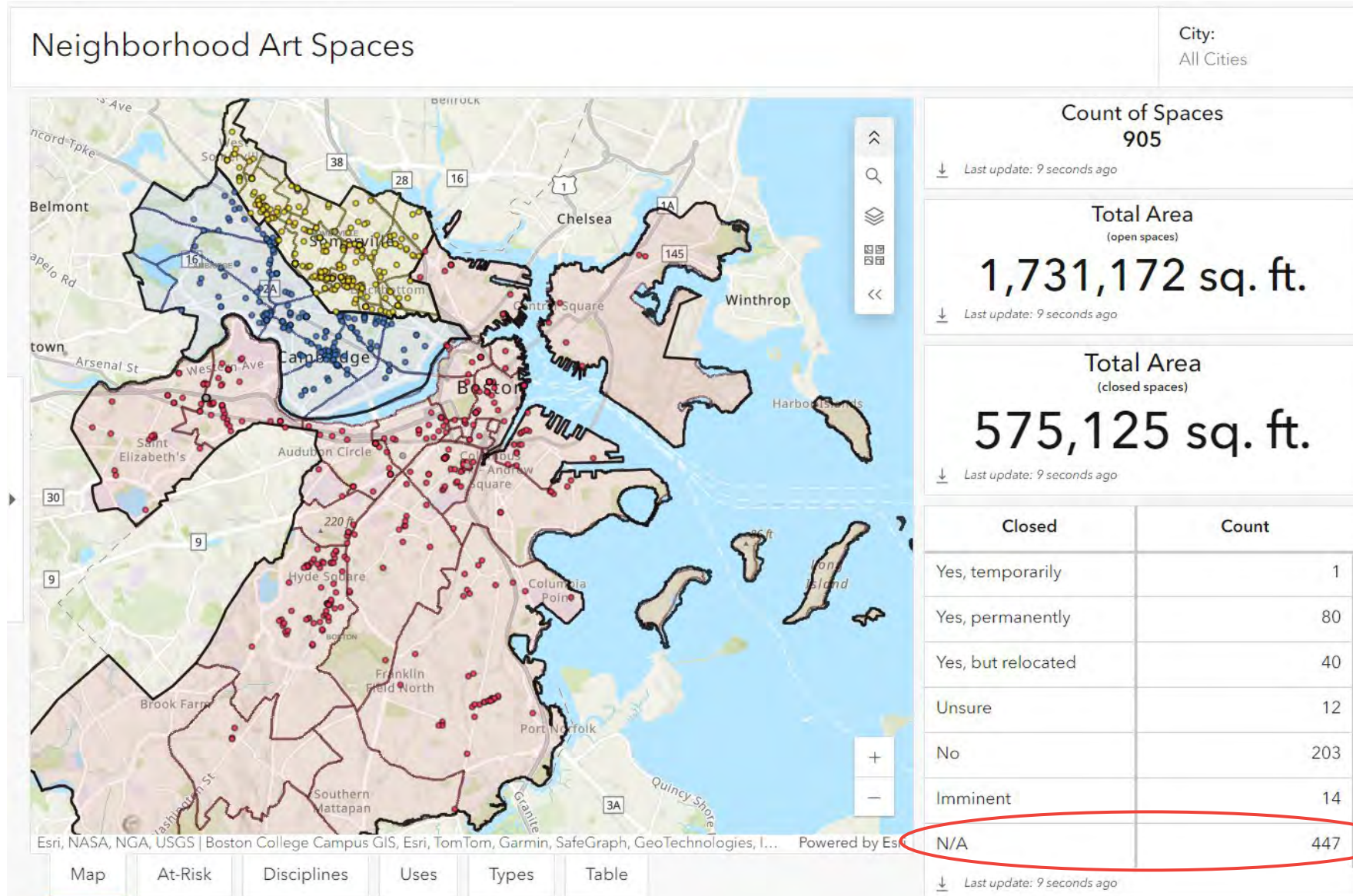


- ① PERFORMANCE SPACES
- ② MUSEUMS & GALLERIES
- ③ ARTIST STUDIOS & SHOPS
- ④ LIBRARIES & SCHOOLS
- ⑤ MURALS & PUBLIC ART
- ⑥ GARDENS & OPEN SPACES
- ⑦ HISTORIC ASSETS

- ① CREATIVE PLACEMAKING
- ② EVENTS & FESTIVALS
- ③ ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE
- ④ CAPACITY BUILDING

Source: MassDevelopment, "Transformative Development Initiative: Building a Culture of Co-Investment in Small Cities."
 Annotations added.

CULTURAL FACILITIES AND AMENITIES ARE VULNERABLE



Government has limited information about majority of cultural spaces

447 out of 905 identified spaces lack information beyond address

Somerville's ONCE Lounge And Ballroom Announces Permanent Closure

November 25, 2020 By [Jim Sullivan](#)



In Somerville, Affordable Studio Space For Artists Is Rapidly Disappearing

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

CAMBRIDGE DAY

News Business + Money Arts + Culture Opinion About this site About Cambridge SUPPORT LOCAL

Board decision will dismantle Starlight Square after three years of outdoor Cambridge events

By [Marc Levy](#)
Friday, March 10, 2023



THE BOSTON GLOBE

Atwood's Tavern in Cambridge announces it will close its doors at the end of March



Home // Local Coverage // Arts & Culture

'Wiped out by biotech': Musicians to lose giant practice haven in Allston-Brighton

Updated January 04, 2023 By [Amelia Mason](#)



Pending Sale Of Dorchester Studios Awakens Fears Of Artist Displacement

May 13, 2021 By [Amelia Mason](#)



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Charlestown Rehearsal Studios has an uncertain future and unclear past

January 25, 2023 By [Olivia Deng](#)

Boston's Indie Music Venues Are Disappearing

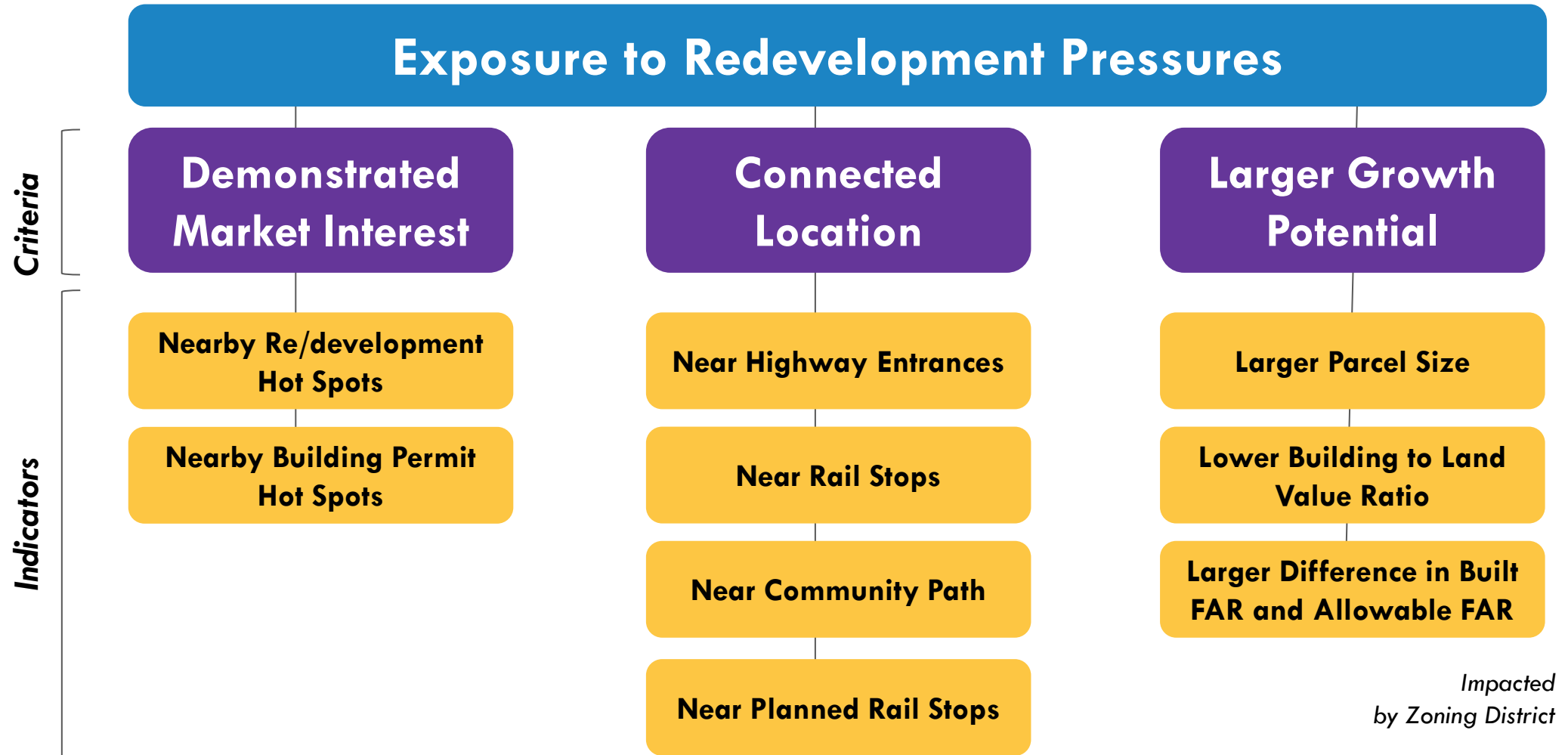
Boston's music scene has always been defined by the small clubs that provide a platform for everyone from rising artists to local legends. But, in recent years, they are disappearing even outside of pandemic-related challenges. The latest closure is Atwood's, a revered bar, restaurant, and music ...

Eater - Jennifer Henry • 1d

[Read more on eater.com](#)

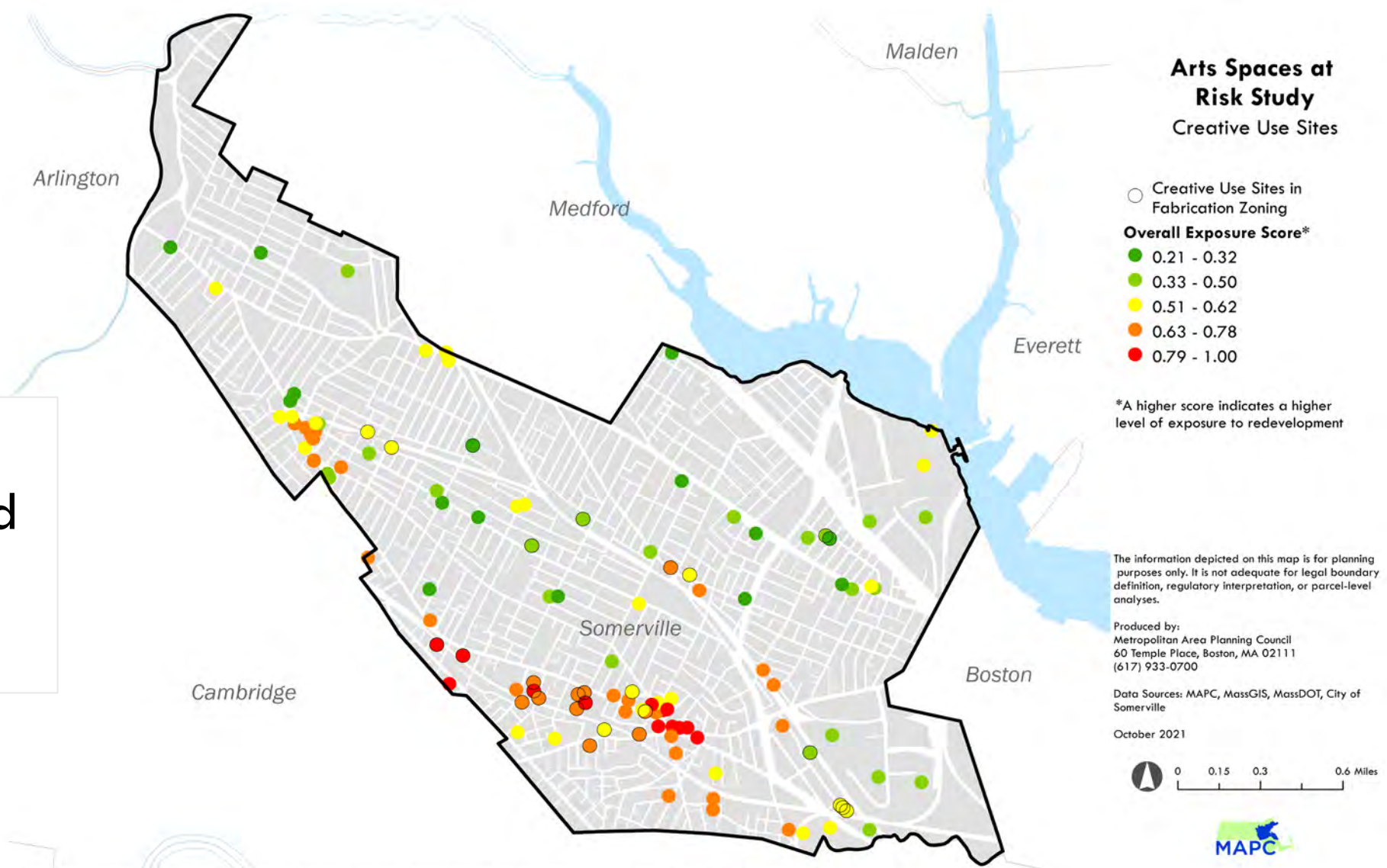


WHAT MAKES ARTS SPACES VULNERABLE?



HOW MUCH SPACE IS AT RISK?

Total Building
Area of High and
Highest =
2,786,383 sf



LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS TAKING ACTION

ARTS AND CULTURE AT 290 NORTH BEACON

We're working to secure the long-term future of affordable rehearsal space and other arts and culture space in Brighton.

Still have questions? Contact:

ARTS AND CULTURE

617-635-4445

SEND AN EMAIL

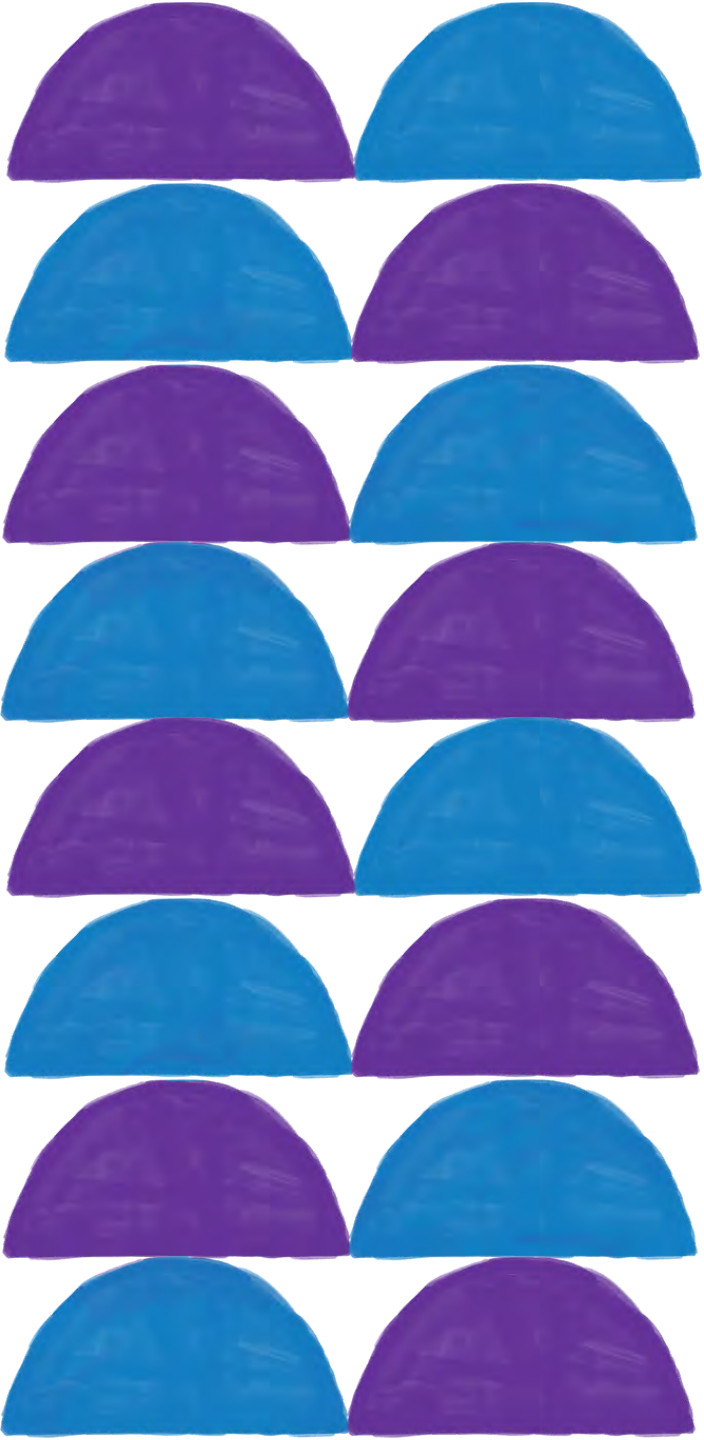
1 CITY HALL SQUARE
ROOM 802
BOSTON, MA 02201-2029

\$1.7 MILLION INVESTED TO PRESERVE AFFORDABLE ARTIST WORKSPACES, CREATE NEW HOUSING AT HUMPHREYS STREET STUDIOS IN DORCHESTER

The Draft Somerville Armory Master Plan is Here!

The City of Somerville is thrilled to release the draft Somerville Armory Master Plan, a roadmap of how to best preserve the Armory building as a thriving arts center for years to come. Read the Plan and provide your comments or feedback using the links below:





MAKING SPACE FOR ART:

Securing Cultural Infrastructure in Boston, Cambridge & Somerville

Municipalities can support cultural spaces through local policies and data

- Mapping and tracking cultural spaces to inform planning decisions
- Incorporating data into local planning and zoning (e.g., Fabrication District, Arts and Creative Enterprise as a use category)
- Identifying policies to protect and preserve existing spaces and incentivize new spaces (e.g., Agent of Change policies and set asides for arts and culture in new development)

*Informed by **30 interviews** and **7 focus groups** with cultural space stakeholders*

WHY ARE WE LOSING SPACE?

Arts and culture often lives in vulnerable 'leftover' space

77 artists

18 staff

SPACE IS EXPENSIVE

ARTS SPACES SUPPORT
MANY USES

ARTS SPACE IS NOT
DOCUMENTED

ARTS SPACE IS VULNERABLE
TO 'NUISANCE' COMPLAINTS

SPACE IS EXPENSIVE

Arts space struggles to compete with other uses

1

"We are dealing with the sustainability of our community – the whole area is being torn down and being rebuilt with **biotech**."

"Non-profits aren't focused on this because there's no money. Lots out there for affordable **housing**. It's hard to do these things without resources."

"Some **universities** had spaces for artists to use but these have disappeared."

"Studio owners and managers have hard time keeping prices down because they don't own spaces."

"We need affordable housing too! But don't make it a competition between housing projects and arts projects."

ARTS SPACES SUPPORT MANY USES

Each use has separate rules and regulations

Restaurant

Bar

Gallery

Studio

School

Event Space

Theater

Music Venue

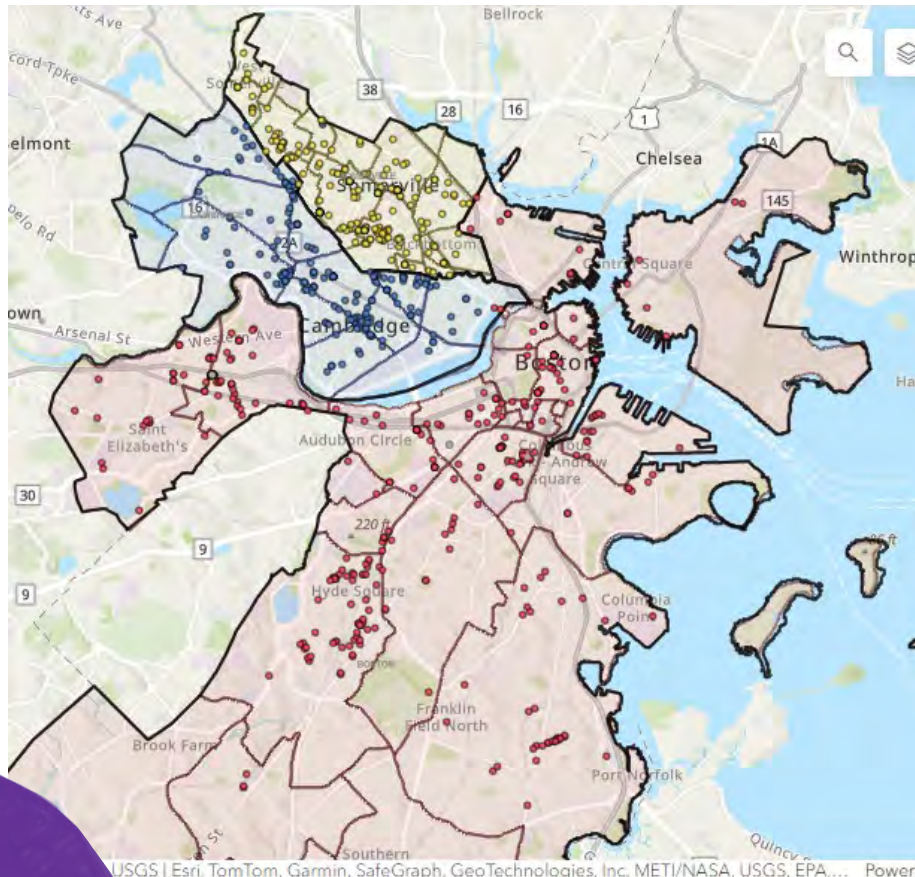
"We are not zoned for this use. It has been difficult."

"We needed a special permit to do a theater – theater spaces are always some kind of special exemption."

"You have to go to all the different departments individually – the City doesn't help connect applicants and departments."

ARTS SPACES ARE NOT DOCUMENTED

Planners cannot assess impacts of development on arts space



"[Cities] demand that the informal economy adapt in burdensome ways."

"People don't want [cities] to regulate these spaces and condemn the building and lose their space."

ARTS SPACES DRAW COMPLAINTS

Noise and parking are frequent points of conflict

4



"Noise ordinances [are a challenge]."

"Theaters have loud people and parking problems."

IN SUMMARY

- **ARTS & CULTURE** are foundations of meaningful, prosperous, healthy places.
- **SPACE** is critical to ensure that **ARTS & CULTURE** is an active and thriving part of our built environment.
- **REGULATIONS** and **FINANCIAL INCENTIVES** create barriers to building and maintaining space for **ARTS & CULTURE**.
- **PLANNERS** and **ARCHITECTS** have influence to change that.

ARTS SPACES MAKE MEANINGFUL PLACES

Where do you see **opportunities to increase and preserve spaces for arts, culture and creativity** in Boston and the surrounding region?

How can government help to **expand arts spaces and prevent displacement?**