

# Brickbottom Small Area Plan

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# Acknowledgments

There are many passionate people living, working, and thinking about how to enhance Brickbottom; this Plan would not be as informed and sincere as it is without their involvement and the gracious volunteering of their time and talents.

People create great places, not reports, and this important fact has informed the planning process as well as the writing and design of this document.

## *Special thanks to*

**The Brickbottom Lofts Trustees and Residents**

**The Joy Street Studios Artists and Community**

**Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone**

**Ward Councilor JT Scott**

***All the area workers, property owners and residents who engaged in our process!***

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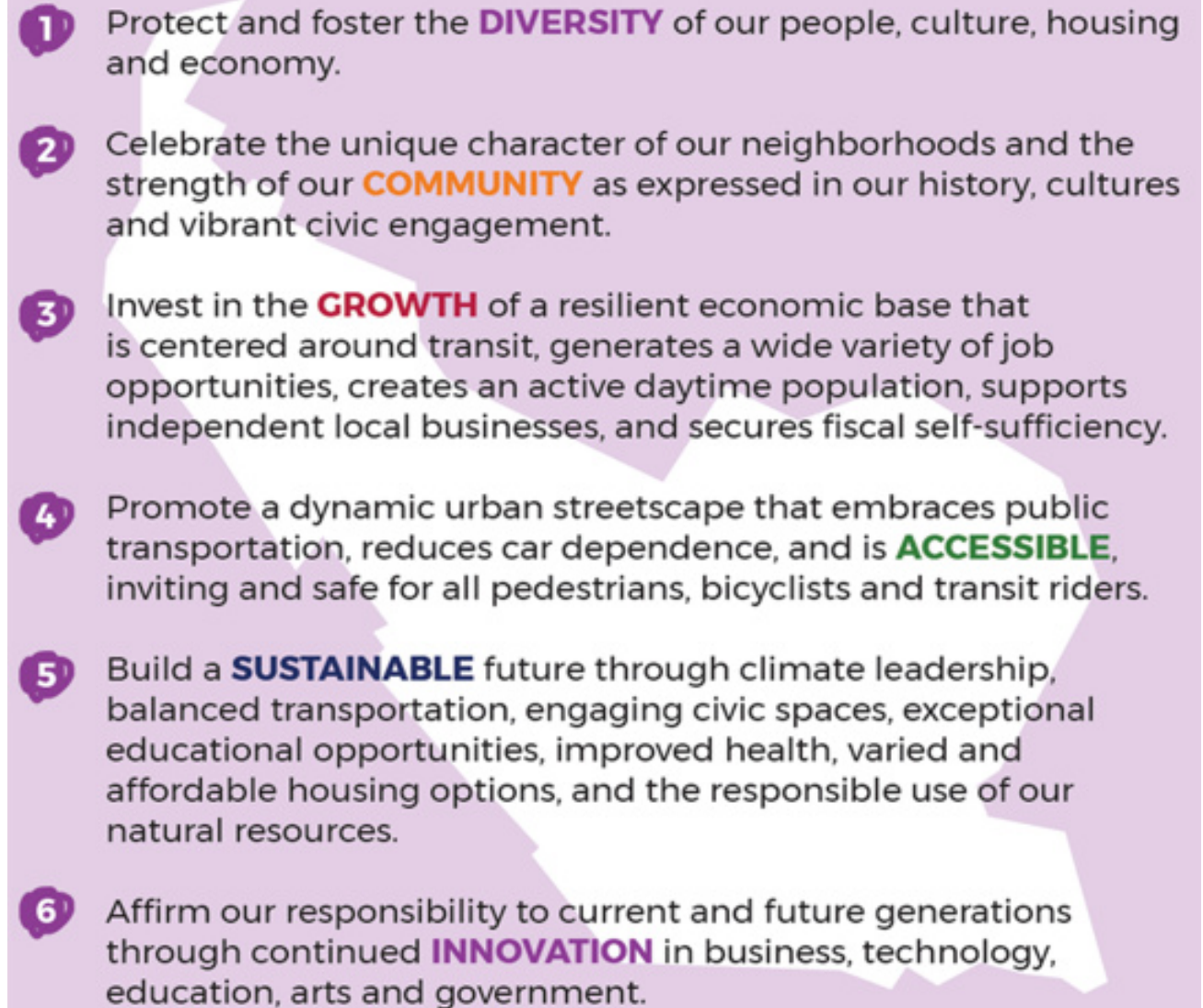
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# 1. Introduction

# Community Values

Beginning in 2009, Somerville began collecting the best and most ambitious ideas to develop the City's comprehensive plan, SomerVision2030. As the City's Comprehensive Plan, the document has a broad, City-wide scope, attempting to bring together a varied range of issues facing the entire community. SomerVision2030 originally set several goals to address employment, housing, character, open space, and mobility.

In 2019, the community engaged in a process to update the plan, assess progress, add new ideas, reconsider priorities, and extend the scope out to the year 2040.

- 
- 1 Protect and foster the **DIVERSITY** of our people, culture, housing and economy.
  - 2 Celebrate the unique character of our neighborhoods and the strength of our **COMMUNITY** as expressed in our history, cultures and vibrant civic engagement.
  - 3 Invest in the **GROWTH** of a resilient economic base that is centered around transit, generates a wide variety of job opportunities, creates an active daytime population, supports independent local businesses, and secures fiscal self-sufficiency.
  - 4 Promote a dynamic urban streetscape that embraces public transportation, reduces car dependence, and is **ACCESSIBLE**, inviting and safe for all pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.
  - 5 Build a **SUSTAINABLE** future through climate leadership, balanced transportation, engaging civic spaces, exceptional educational opportunities, improved health, varied and affordable housing options, and the responsible use of our natural resources.
  - 6 Affirm our responsibility to current and future generations through continued **INNOVATION** in business, technology, education, arts and government.

# Objectives

As development continues throughout Brickbottom on undeveloped and under-developed sites, it is essential to define a shared vision around neighborhood character, sense of place, and supportive infrastructure - both social and physical.

It supports development consistent and compatible with the adopted SomerVision policies, established goals, and the consensus of the stakeholders within the study area.

- The plan outlines recommendations for creating smaller block patterns with requirements for street frontages, appropriate building types within specific areas, and improving mobility and pedestrian connectivity.
- The emerging vision aims to establish unmistakable character and urban design attributes for the neighborhood while also creating a clear guide for development.

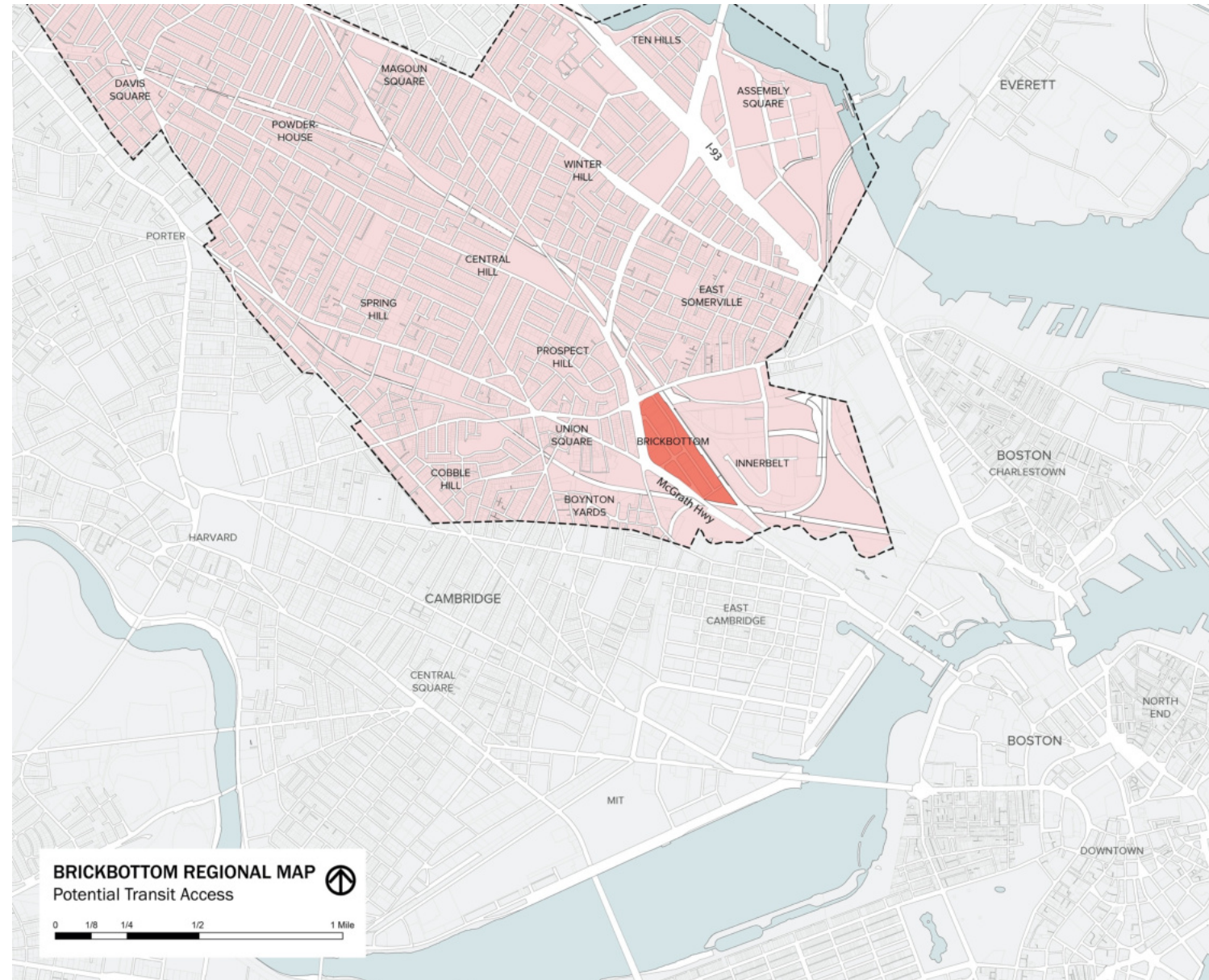
Three overall objectives have emerged that guide this plan. As the neighborhood continues to transform, more opportunities will arise that can further enhance these aspects of the vision for Brickbottom.

- Identify opportunities to create new Civic Spaces, tie to the Community Path and the GLX station, and improve bike and pedestrian connections to link neighborhoods together.
- Focus on neighborhood access and circulation patterns to keep streets safe, enhance the quality of life for residents and businesses, and preserve the uniqueness of the neighborhood character.
- Integrate new development and infrastructure into the inherited neighborhood patterns to produce a cohesive place with public and private investment.

# What is a Small Area Vision Plan?

A Small Area Plan is a neighborhood-level plan that addresses land use and visioning - to create an informed guide for infill, redevelopment, and growth in the defined area. A plan of this kind will be a guide to assist future decision-making regarding a specific location, in this case, Brickbottom, that brings together and expands upon citywide policies and goals with input from community members. The plan includes recommendations for the future through enhancing the existing built environment to ensure compatibility between land uses and the City's goals. One major component is to outline the citizens' top priorities and common visions for improvement, so the next steps of regulation writing are in place to guide the neighborhood's growth.

The Brickbottom Vision Plan results from a year-long engagement program led by the City of Somerville's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development and its consultant team. Like the broader SomerVision2040 Comprehensive Plan, this plan intends to guide the City Council and City Staff about public investments and guide private development to align with the City's priorities.



# Why Plan Now?

Brickbottom is a key area of the city to achieve SomerVision goals;

It is at the center of Somerville's transformational areas;

And it is seeing an important wave of changes in the last years, including:

- The MBTA Green Line Extension (expected to finally open in early 2022).
- The extension of the Somerville Community Path.
- Engineering of Poplar Street Pump Station and the ArtFarm.
- Development pressure and interest in the area is increasing.



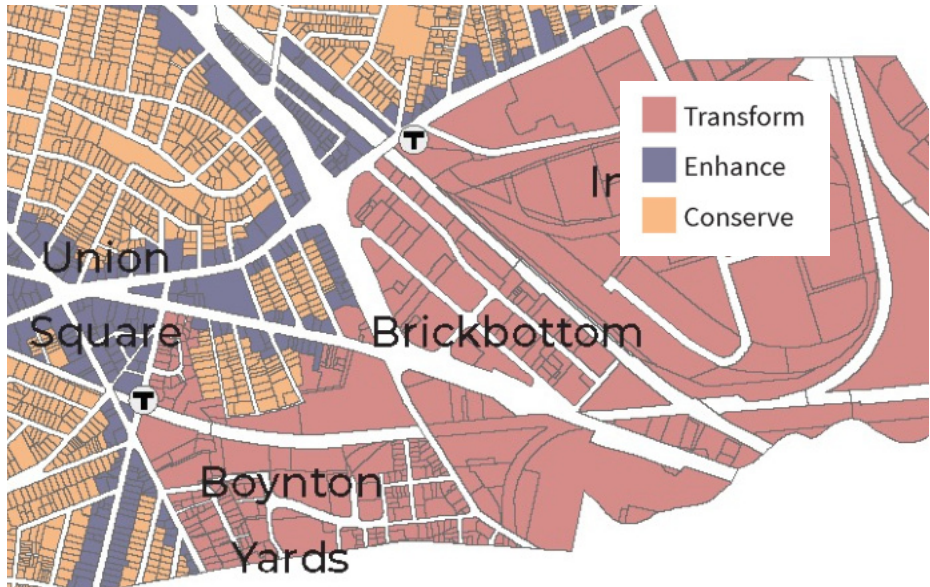


## Introduction

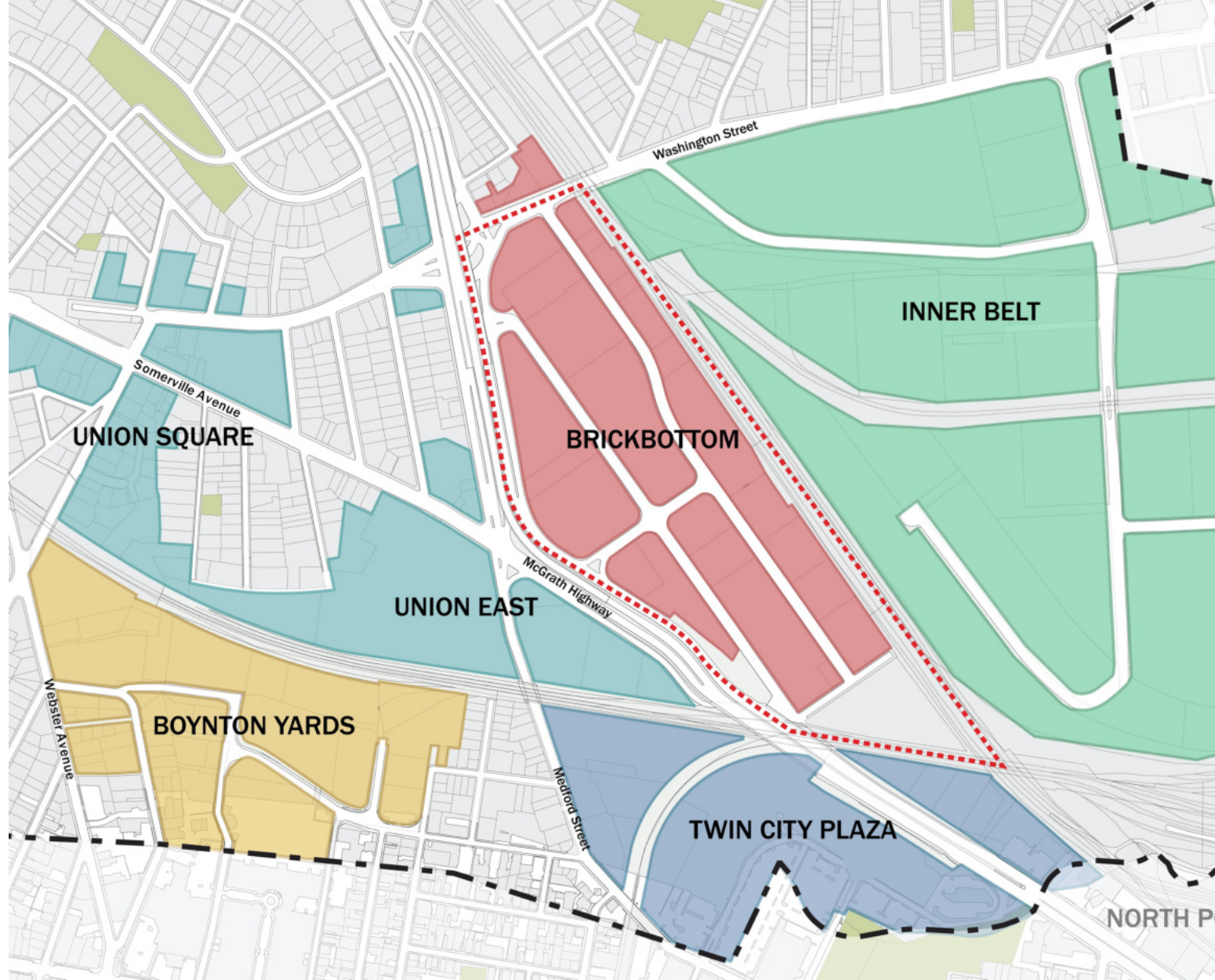
# Urban Center

Brickbottom is the core neighborhood for many of the SomerVision Transformation areas.

A Vision Plan for Brickbottom has been long overdue considering its location and relevance to address the SomerVision goals.



The SomerVision map



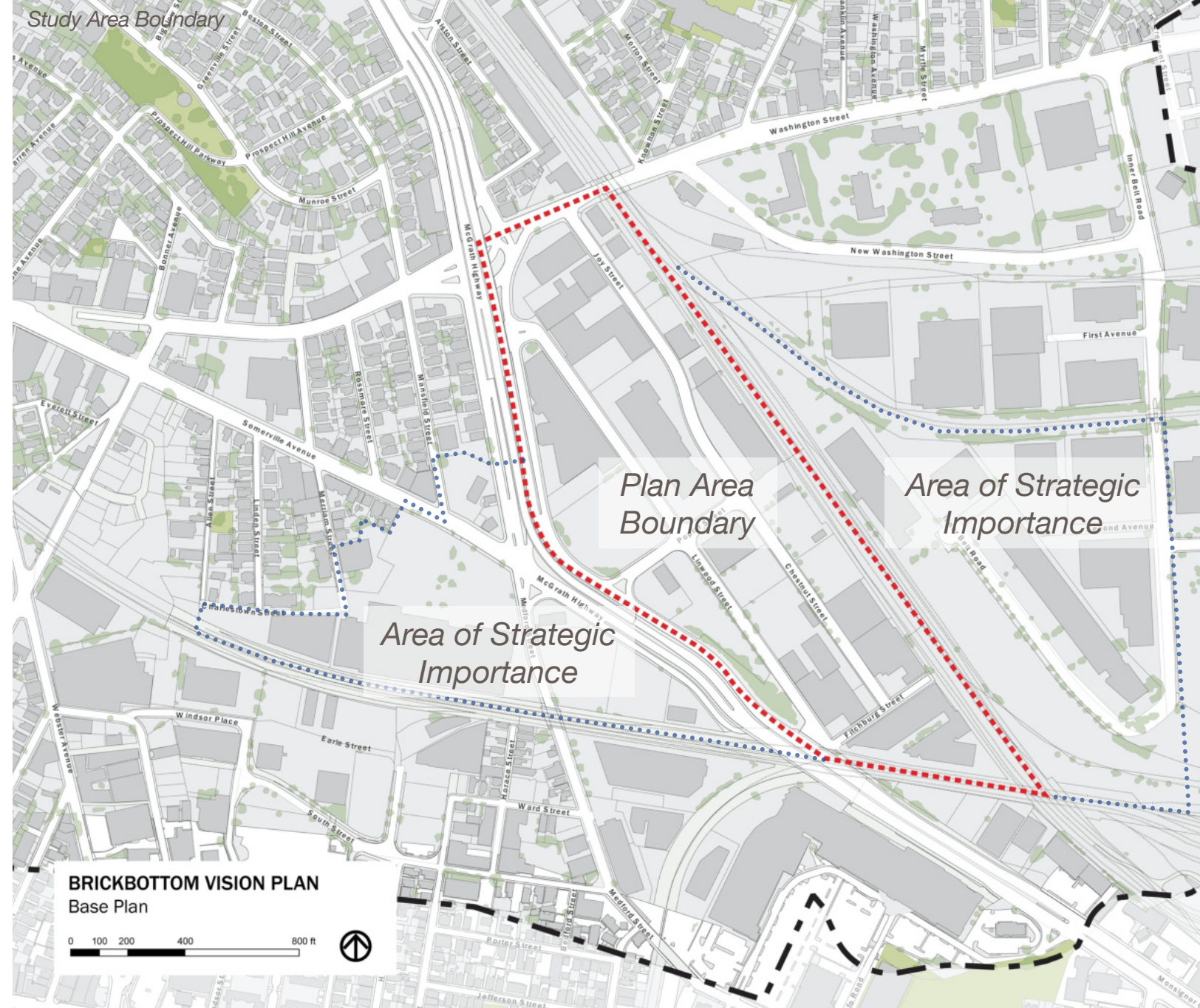
Brickbottom and the other SomerVision transformation areas.

# About Brickbottom

The area this Plan includes all parcels shown on:

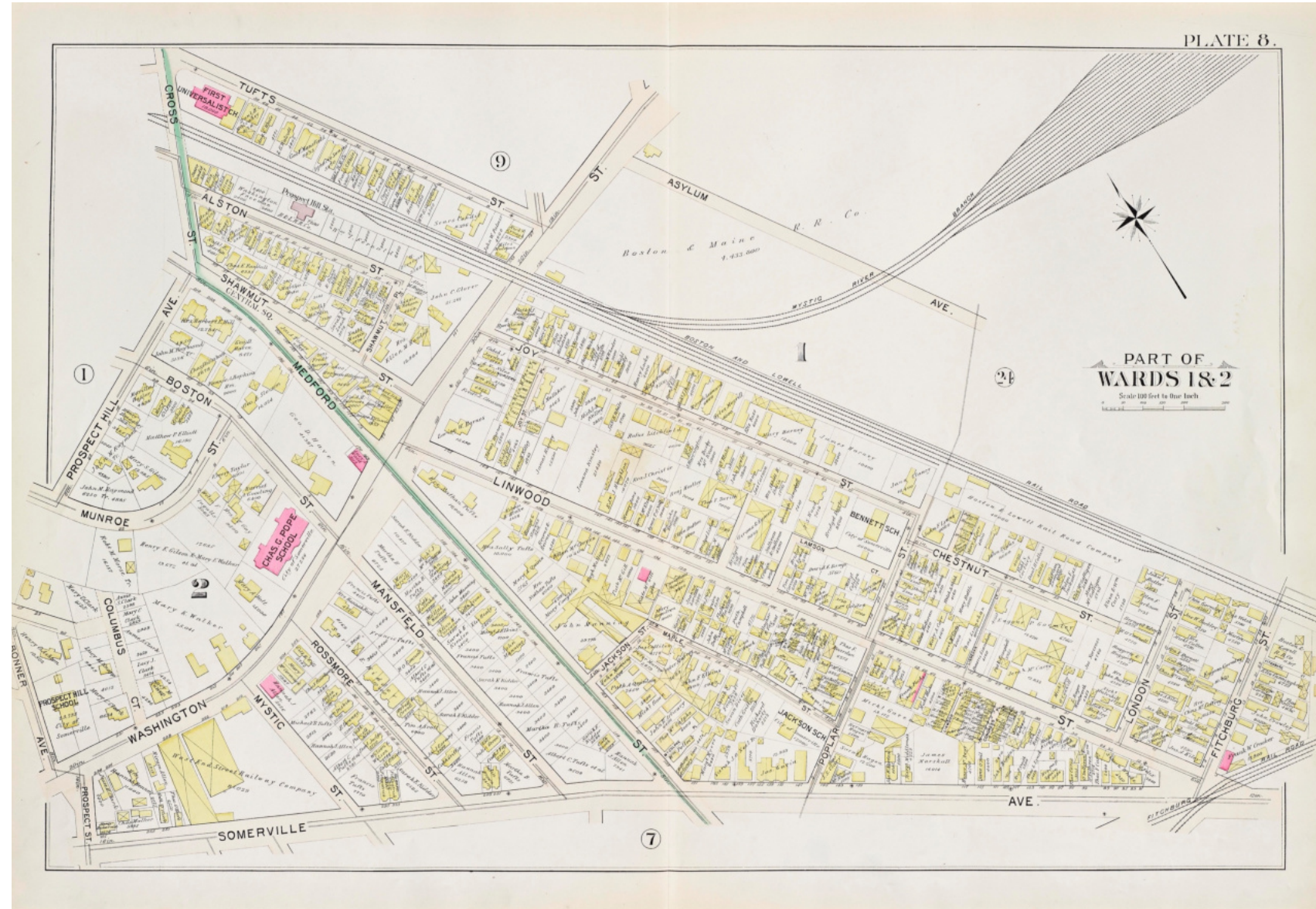
- City of Somerville Assessors Map 94, Blocks A, B, and C;
- Map 112, Blocks A, B, and C; and Map 115, Block C.
- All land southwest of the Boston and Lowell Railroad rail alignment;
- North of the Fitchburg Railroad rail alignment;
- East and northeast of McGrath Highway;
- And southeast of Washington Street.

During the study of this area, it became clear that there were opportunities to integrate the land directly east of the Boston and Lowell Railroad right of way within the Innerbelt area and the westside of McGrath Highway. This expansion of the study area aims to take advantage of existing land ownership patterns and strong consensus around the importance of establishing clear and easy connections between neighborhoods.



# Brickbottom, A Changing Neighborhood

Largely rural and pastoral through the Revolutionary War, much of the area was part of the Barrel estate with the main house located atop Cobble Hill in Inner Belt. Early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Barrel mansion was converted to a mental asylum, with much of the land being sold to the developing rail roads by the 1850's. While much of the development catered to the railroads, the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the beginning of a transition to a more residential neighborhood make up. Even so, the area's numerous slaughterhouses and industrial uses created such a pollution problem, the nearby Millers River was filled to address the issue. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the asylum had relocated, but in addition to the commercial and industrial uses, the resident population grew enough to require two schools in the neighborhood.



Brickbottom, circa 1895

## Introduction

# Brickbottom, A Changing Neighborhood

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century brought an influx of mainly Irish, Italian, and Greek immigrants, drawn by available housing and proximity to jobs. In 1923 A&P Food Distributors built what is now the Brickbottom Artists' Lofts. By the 1930's the construction of the McGrath highway had displaced a significant portion of the neighborhood and signaled the transition back to a more commercial and industrial character for the area. By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, neither of the schools remained in Brickbottom and among the now vacant lots and exclusively commercial uses was a municipal incinerator. Commercial uses remained the predominant users of the area through the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, though the conversion of the Brickbottom Artists' Loft may have heralded the development of a new chapter for the neighborhood.



## Introduction

# Brickbottom, A Changing Neighborhood

Brickbottom today is essentially an auto-oriented environment, a reality inconsistent with the community's desire. Brickbottom can become a place to walk, bike, and enjoy the public square. Achieving this vibrant mixed-use and arts neighborhood that the community sees for the future of this area will not be possible unless this auto-oriented nature is changed. The city has a truly unique opportunity to guide the creation of mixed-use, commercial, and arts-oriented buildings or public spaces to emerge from the existing parking lots and industrial storage yards.



## Brickbottom Today

The Brickbottom neighborhood currently lacks several components which healthy, vibrant communities require. Even specialized districts which cater to sectors like industry or logistics benefit from businesses and institutions which serve business and employee needs. While studying Brickbottom, it was looked for the presence of entities which serve basic needs—banks, health services, food and grocery, or hardware stores—as well as those which serve more complex needs—education, social, artistic, or historical.

While Brickbottom’s character has shifted over the years from industrial, commercial, or residential and back again, few basic support systems remain to serve current residents, employees, or businesses. There is no place for one to purchase food of any kind, no medical or community services, no genuine public space, and limited housing supply. The neighborhood components that are located within the neighborhood—art education, creative communities, fabricators, residents—should serve as the basis around which a community will be built.

**Median age: 37.1 years**

**74% Rent**

**Median annual income: \$46,506**

**72% White**

**12% Black**

**9% Asian**

**10% Hispanic of any race**

**55% Female**

**Median travel time to work: 27 min.**

**17% no vehicle homes**

**50% one vehicle homes**

**35% speak language other than English at home**

**20% speak English less than “very well”**

# Climate Change and the Brickbottom of Tomorrow

Priorities established by the Somerville Climate Forward Plan:

**BUILDINGS**

**1.** Net-zero and resilient new buildings standards

Explore the feasibility of a local net-zero energy or net-zero emissions-based performance standard.

Adopt flood and extreme heat resilience standards for new construction.



**2.** Improved energy performance in existing buildings

Enable a rental energy disclosure requirement through the creation of a rental licensing program.

Continue and expand thermal electrification programs (HeatSmart/CoolSmart).

**MOBILITY**

**3.** Equitable low-carbon mobility


Improve bus reliability and trip times.

Improve and expand bicycle infrastructure.

Assess parking policy and parking supply to meet low-carbon mobility needs.

**4.** Rapid transition to electric vehicles

Develop electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy.



**ENVIRONMENT**

**5.** Stormwater management

Update stormwater management policies and develop design guidelines.

Investigate a stormwater enterprise fund to improve stormwater management.

**6.** Expanded tree canopy

Formalize and implement a modern urban forestry management plan including best practices and resilient species list.

Develop guidance and training for community stewardship of trees.



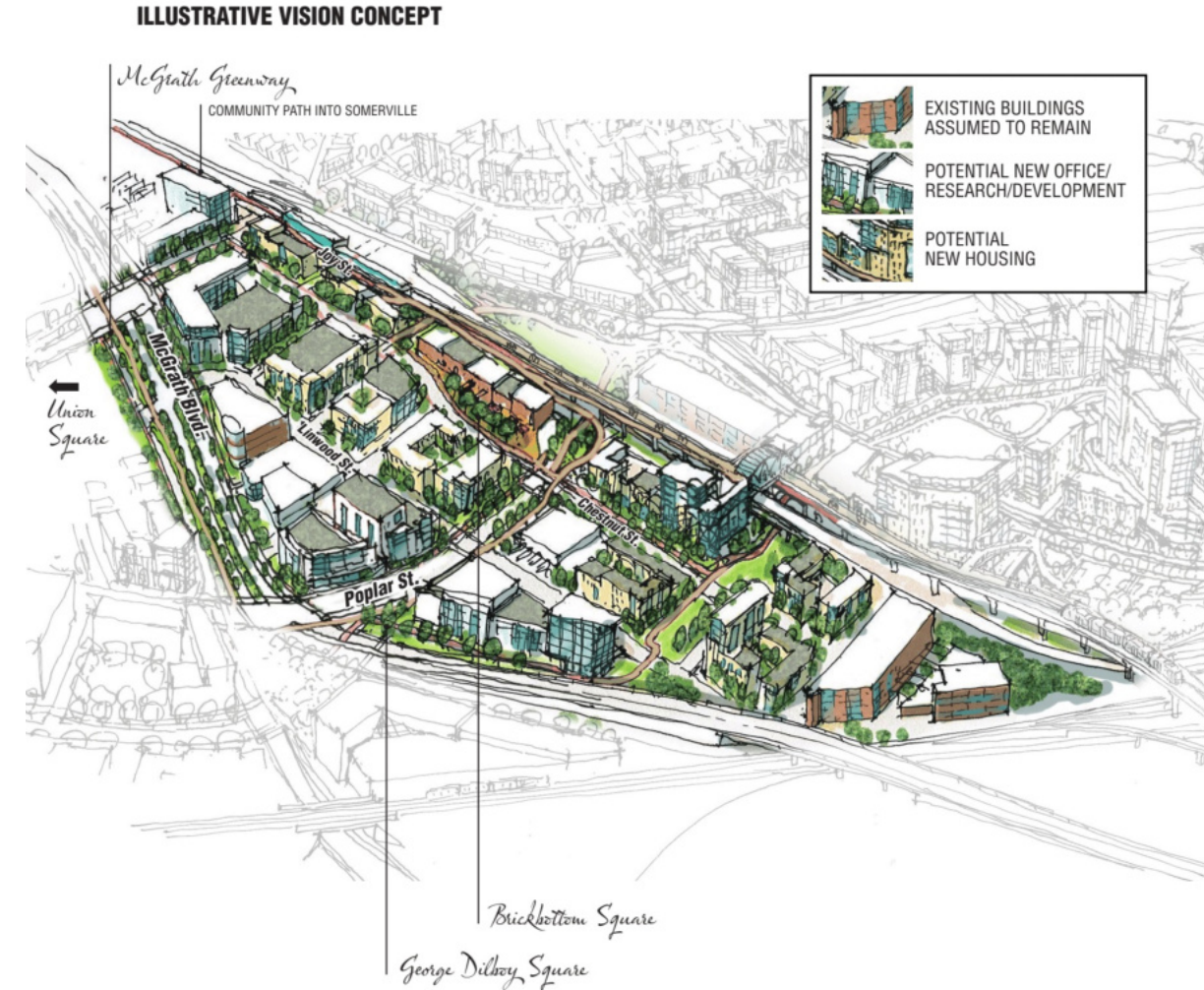
# Previous Planning Efforts

Brickbottom’s potential has been identified for a long time. The neighborhood has been included in previous visioning efforts. Residents spent invaluable time and energy in these previous efforts. Our team studied them in detail to ensure as much as possible was incorporated into version. This current vision plan builds on the previous planning work by the community.

## Inner Belt & Brickbottom Plan - 2013

The Inner Belt & Brickbottom planning process (2010-2012) was OSPCD’s first foray into transformational area planning. This plan addresses some of Brickbottom’s longstanding needs: Improving the neighborhood’s connectivity with Innerbelt and across the highway, block subdivision, connection to the Community Path, and the need of more civic and open spaces.

The community process was ongoing at the same time as SomerVision. Unfortunately, many SomerVision goals, policies, and actions weren’t incorporated into the plan draft. Due to this, OSPCD keeps the draft document available online but hasn’t proceeded in getting the plan adopted.



*Vision Illustration of the 2013 un-adopted plan*



# Previous Planning Efforts

## Making Brickbottom: 2015 Neighborhood Plan, MIT

Beginning in 2014, a team of graduate students from MIT worked with the City of Somerville to develop a plan to inform potential development within the Brickbottom area. Prompted by the potential from a de-elevated McGrath Highway overpass and the MBTA Green Line Extension, the goal was work with the community to develop a vision for the area's future. Through public workshops, academic research, and concept development, the MIT team formed an ambitious vision for what Brickbottom could become.

While the plan proposed significant residential and commercial development for the area, special attention was given to potential civic spaces. The MIT Plan recognized the opportunity represented by the gateway at Joy Street and a connection between Poplar and the Community Path.



## Overview

# Previous Planning Efforts

## Union Square Neighborhood Plan

The adopted plan for the adjacent area of Union Square included several items with influence in Brickbottom.

## Milk Square

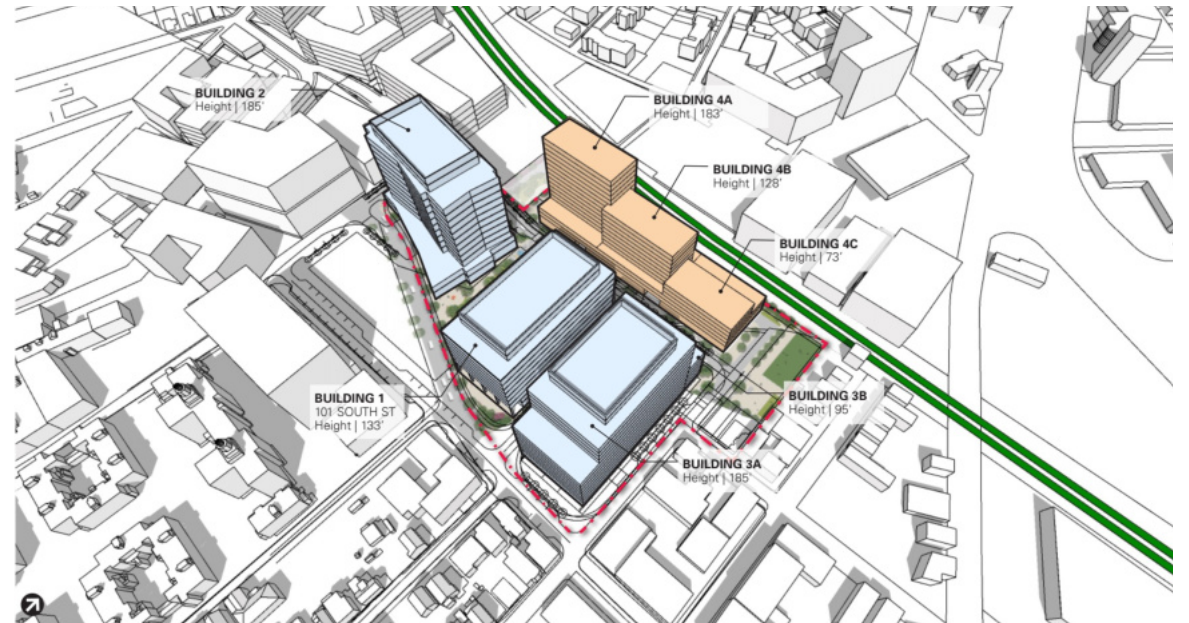
- Construction of a square in the intersection of Somerville Ave and the to-be grounded McGrath Hwy. This square would be the pivotal connection between Union Square and Brickbottom.
- As part of the Milk Square proposal, it was proposed to realign of Poplar and Medford St.

## Boynton Yards

- The Union Square Plan also gave the framework for the redevelopment of the Boynton Yards area. The Brickbottom Vision Plan looked at the currently proposed plan for Boynton Yards and consider its impacts for Brickbottom.



*Milk Square street network proposed in the Union Square Neighborhood Plan*



*Current Boynton Yards Master Plan*

## HR+A Market Study

The first major finding in the HR+A report is strong recent residential growth which is expected to continue to drive demand. Somerville is host to a large population between 18 – 34 years of age—a group expected to seek home-ownership opportunities in the short term. In addition, a large and growing population between 65 – 74 years of age may seek out more supportive housing types. Even with significant development, demand has been growing faster than the supply, driving vacancy rates as low as 4% in 2019. The expected demand in Brickbottom is for about 400-625 housing units. However, the desirability of the area could be significantly higher if McGrath Boulevard is grounded sooner than expected and other local improvements are implemented.

Compared to the state and country overall, a larger proportion of the population is employed in a professional field including technical services, life sciences, or the scientific and education fields.

The local employment information fits the larger trend of growing demand for lab space in the area. With low vacancy rates and rising rents, significant lab development is currently underway, but sizable demand is expected to remain into the medium term. The demand in Brickbottom is for between 525k – 700k square feet of life-sciences and light industrial development, corresponding to about 2,100 – 2,800 jobs.

HR+A found strong spending potential within the local walkshed in and around Brickbottom, especially with the potential for future development. While there is limited regional retail demand, local residents and employees will provide demand for retail goods and services, restaurants, and amenities. Major placemaking initiatives, especially driven by the existing local arts community could drive additional retail support as well.

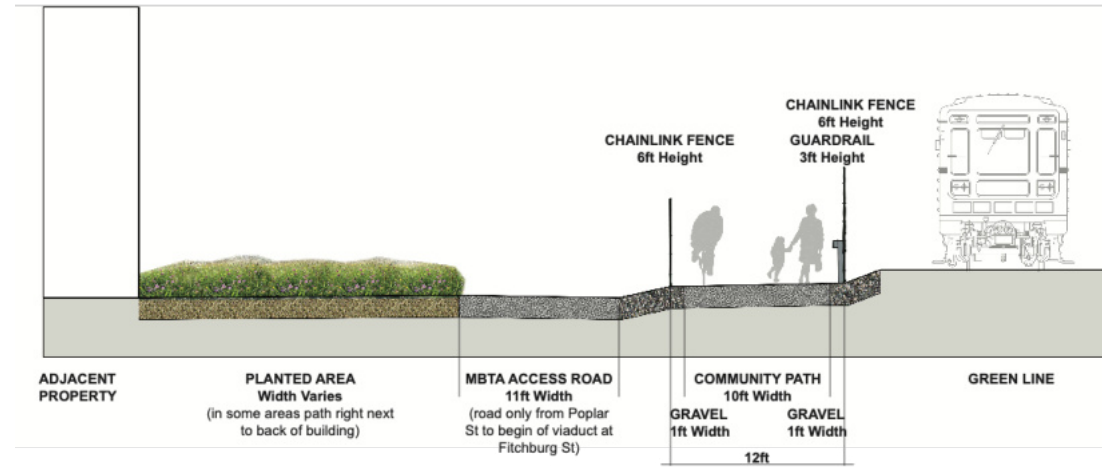
The long-term trend of industrial uses moving out of the core Boston metro area has left a dearth of available space for many users. There may be an opportunity to activate the ground level and provide space for industrial users like artists space, test kitchens, R+D, fabrication space, and “light-lab”.

# GLX and Community Path

With the opening of the new MBTA Green Line station in 2022 and the extension of the Somerville Community Path, Brickbottom will be better to the larger Boston Area, unlocking the potential of all the remaining underdeveloped parcels.



New MBTA Green Line station under construction

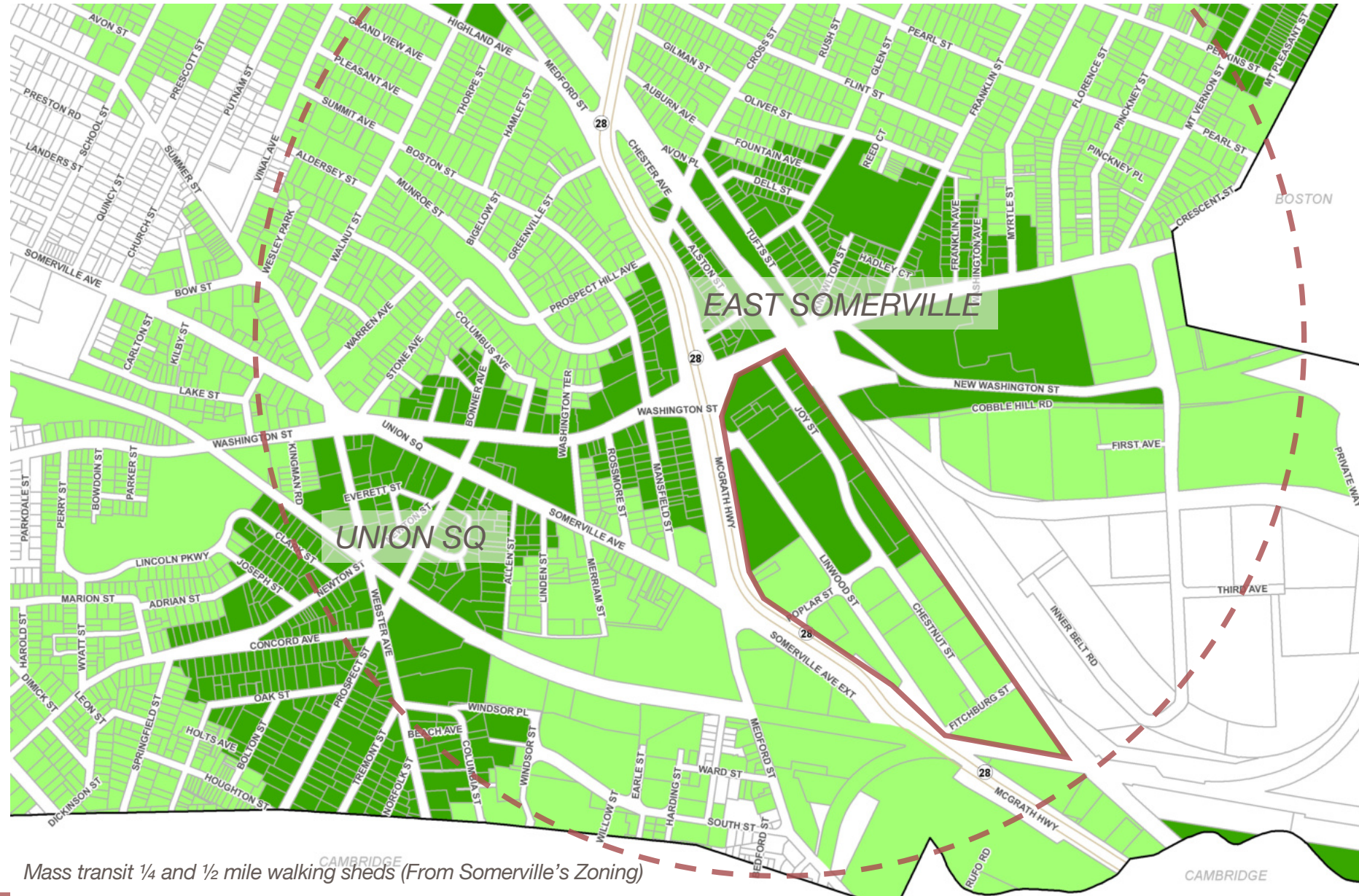


Section of Somerville Community Path

# Introduction

## GLX Transit Area

Brickbottom and the surrounding areas will now be within the 1/2 Mile Green Line service walkshed.



# Recent Developments

With the development of 100 Chestnut, redevelopment has already begun to bring new uses to Brickbottom. While investment is certainly welcome, ensuring all projects are well integrated into the neighborhood is essential. 100 Chestnut offers an opportunity to consider the types and character of interventions appropriate for the entirety of Brickbottom.



*Rendering of an envisioned 100 Chestnut St.*

# The Process

The Small Area Plan process begins with establishing the baseline of existing conditions. The neighborhood helped define the vision for the future through a series of public workshops, neighborhood walking tours, meetings with neighborhood residents, property owners, public officials, city leadership, and community stakeholders to help define the direction for the future. Following these discussions, goals and objectives have been developed to achieve the vision. Finally, this plan identifies specific action items ranging from policy creation or change, committee formation, and improvement projects that need further study and discussion with the community.

## Timeline of Community Involvement

<b>Fall</b>	<b>2020</b>	Existing Conditions Research
<b>Winter</b>	<b>2020</b>	Baseline Analysis
<b>Spring</b>	<b>2021</b>	Visioning Input + Workshop
<b>Summer</b>	<b>2021</b>	Goal Development
<b>Fall</b>	<b>2021</b>	Plan Drafting + Workshop
<b>Winter</b>	<b>2021</b>	Presentation of Plan + Revisions
<b>Spring</b>	<b>2022</b>	Approval Process
<b>2022 + Beyond</b>		Implementation

# Meet the Community Where It Is

Throughout this planning process, the City of Somerville maximized community engagement and input opportunities. This plan leveraged the wisdom of people who live and work in the community even though during the initial phase of the planning, the COVID-19 Pandemic was approaching a peak in case numbers, causing a significant reassessment of local, state, and national responses.

The realities of the Pandemic certainly made for a challenging planning process as at its start, vaccines would not become widely available for several months, and their potential impact was entirely unknown. Quarantines and travel restrictions were still active in many places across the country and worldwide. Even with these challenges, the planning team attempted to include voices of those most impacted by decisions as a critical part of this planning process and will help ensure that this Small Area Plan is an effective tool. The foundation of this approach involved meeting the community where it is and utilizing collaborative online technologies to make planning while at home possible. Despite the unforeseen challenges and disruptions, the adaptability of residents and City officials to a virtual format was relatively smooth.

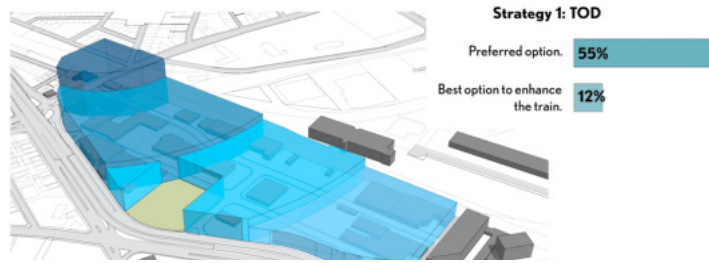
Despite the exceptional circumstances experienced during the development of this plan, the community provided clear direction and meaningful feedback. Perhaps, more so than is typically the case, primarily due to the improved communication technology that became essential to daily life during the Pandemic. People were considering a wide range of possibilities for the future.





# Winter 2020 Worksheet

As the team was constrained to remote participation, the first exercise was a worksheet to gather initial overview reactions from the residents, businesses, and property owners.



## CREATING CIVIC SPACE RESPONSES

### Main takeaways:

- One LARGE space VS many SMALL spaces
- Community/city led effort is preferred

### Strategy 1: Undevelopable Land

- Don't close Poplar: **16%**
- Maintenance/litter issues: **14%**
- Good Option: **14%**

### Strategy 2: Randomly Created

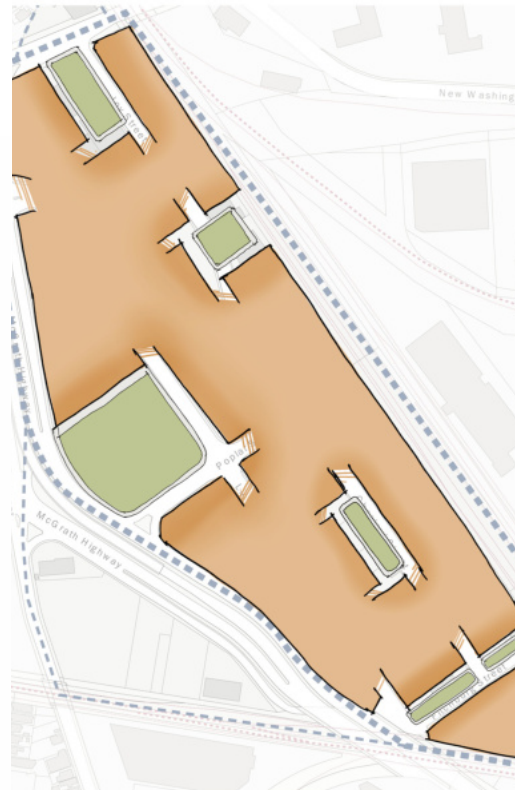
- Don't leave it to developers. City must lead: **14%**
- Spaces too small. Not usable: **9%**
- Good that spaces are small and distributed around: **7%**

### Strategy 3: Civic Space Plan

- Good option: **12%**
- Spaces too small. Not usable: **9%**
- Good that spaces are small and distributed around: **7%**

### Strategy 4: Central Park

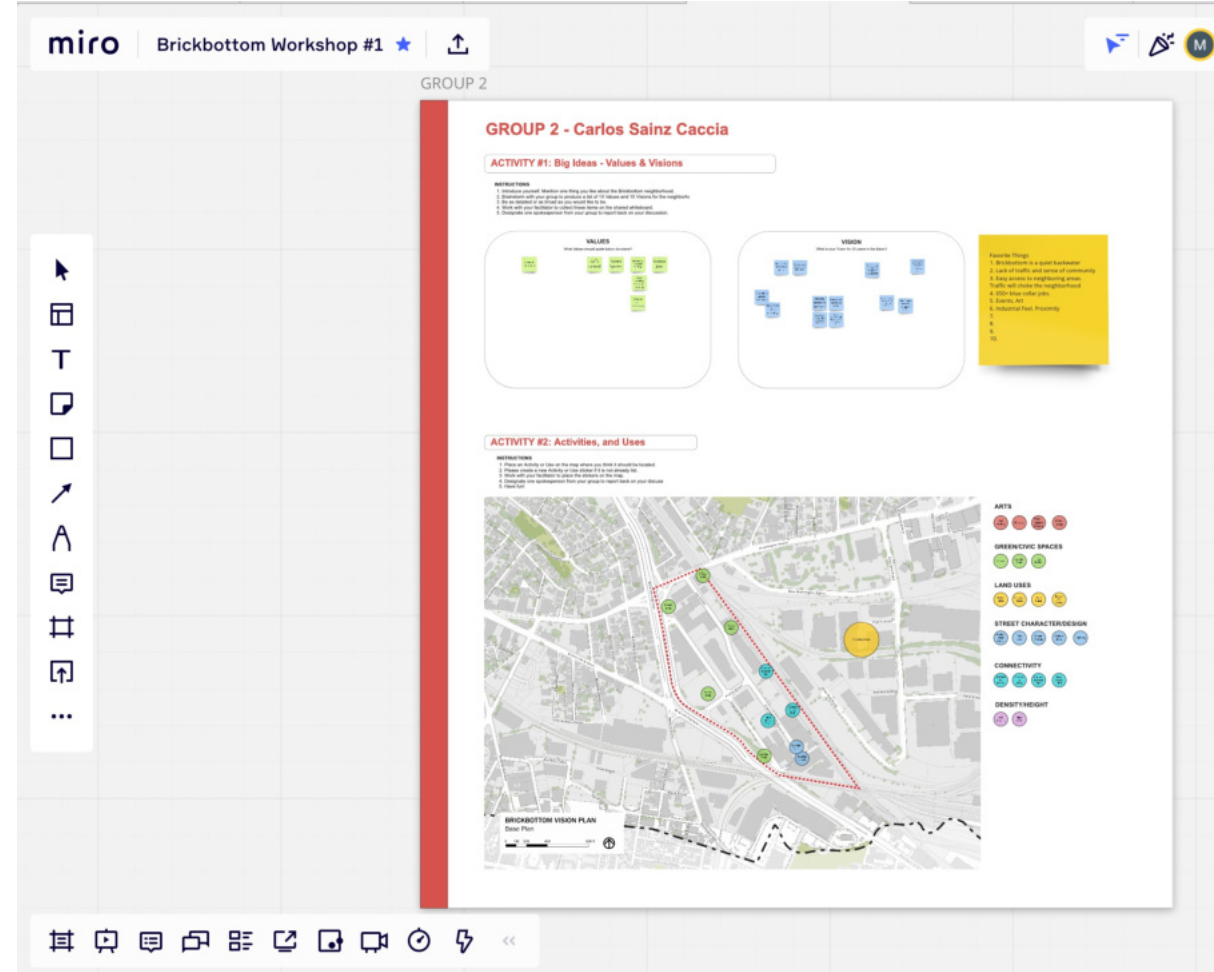
- Good option: **16%**
- Programming will be important. No fields. Too Large: **7%**
- Don't close Linwood: **7%**



Some Key results from the Winter 2020 Worksheet

# Spring 2021 Visioning Workshop

As the team was constrained to remote participation, the first exercise was a worksheet to gather initial overview reactions from the residents, businesses, and property owners.



# Ideas Workshop

October 2021

## Favorite Things About Brickbottom

- 1) Arts studio and spaces
- 2) Sense of community
- 3) Industrial history/gritty feeling
- 4) Openness and views
- 5) Quiet and lack of traffic
- T6) Diversity of businesses and creativity
- T6) Close and easy access to neighboring areas
- 8) Potential for transformation

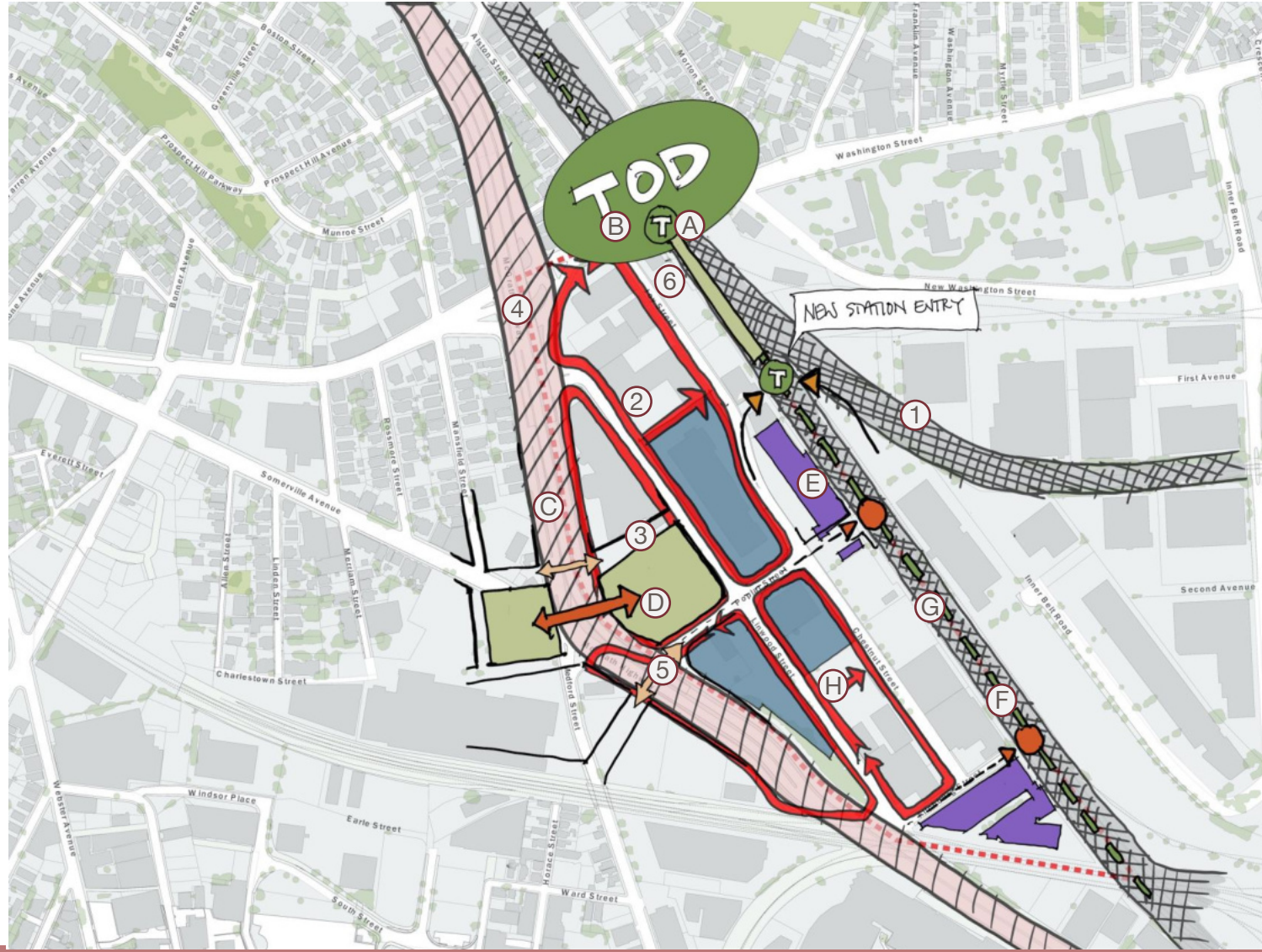
# Challenges and Opportunities

## Challenges

- 1. Physical Rail Barrier
- 2. Long Blocks
- 3. Lack Of Green Space
- 4. McGrath Highway
- 5. Limited Connectivity
- 6. Lack Of Public Amenities

## Opportunities

- A. MBTA GLX Service
- B. Transit Oriented Development Anchor
- C. McGrath Boulevard
- D. Improved + Expanded open space
- E. Local Arts + Creativity
- F. Connections with Inner Belt
- G. Community Path
- H. New Street Connections

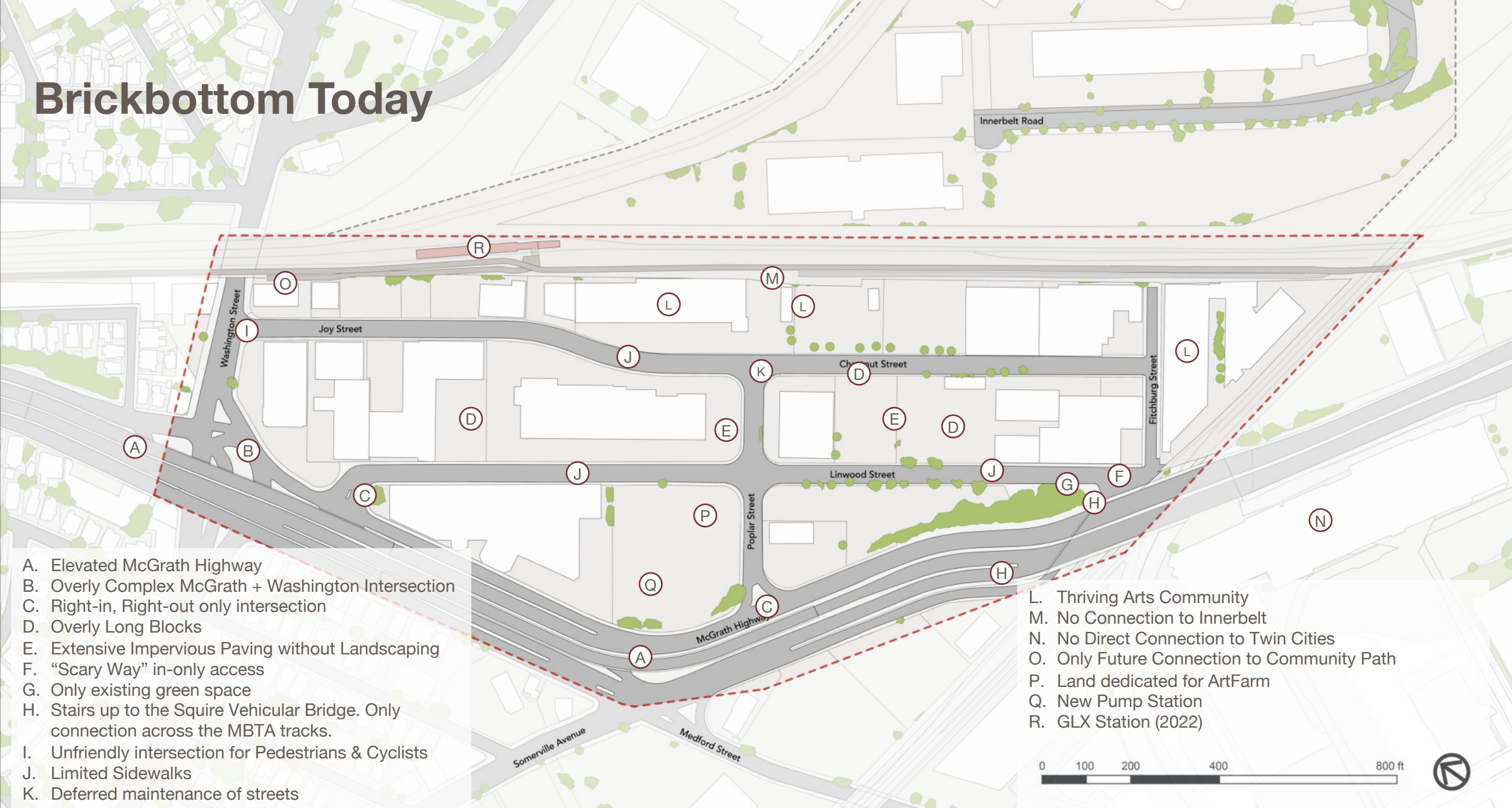


## **2. Vision for Redevelopment**

## Brickbottom Vision Statements

- 1. Create a Complete Neighborhood**
- 2. Support Arts & Creative Uses**
- 3. Improve Access and Connectivity**
- 4. Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design**
- 5. Support Economic Development**

# Brickbottom Today



- A. Elevated McGrath Highway
- B. Overly Complex McGrath + Washington Intersection
- C. Right-in, Right-out only intersection
- D. Overly Long Blocks
- E. Extensive Impervious Paving without Landscaping
- F. "Scary Way" in-only access
- G. Only existing green space
- H. Stairs up to the Squire Vehicular Bridge. Only connection across the MBTA tracks.
- I. Unfriendly intersection for Pedestrians & Cyclists
- J. Limited Sidewalks
- K. Deferred maintenance of streets

- L. Thriving Arts Community
- M. No Connection to Innerbelt
- N. No Direct Connection to Twin Cities
- O. Only Future Connection to Community Path
- P. Land dedicated for ArtFarm
- Q. New Pump Station
- R. GLX Station (2022)



**DRAFT**

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# A Vision for Tomorrow

## Overall Illustrative Plan

- A. Improved Intersection for Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Transit Riders
- B. New Transversal Street
- C. MBTA Green Line at-grade Station Access and Potential Crossing to Innerbelt
- D. Multi-modal Boulevard with BRT Stations
- E. ArtFarm
- F. Linear Pocket Park connecting to Art Farm
- G. Extended Poplar Street. Connection to Community Path/GLX Station
- H. Neighborhood Park
- I. Neighborhood Square with Arts Programming
- J. Pocket Park
- K. Plaza & Community Path Access

- L. Preserved Cobblestone Fitchburg St
- M. Redesigned "Scary Way"
- N. Arts Center & Gallery, Public Stair & Elevator to McGrath
- O. Station and Community Path Plaza & Traffic Calming
- P. Possible Commuter Rail Station & Access Bridges
- Q. Possible Street Connection Under Rail
- R. Plaza & Traffic Calming at the Intersection
- S. Possible Connection to Innerbelt over tracks



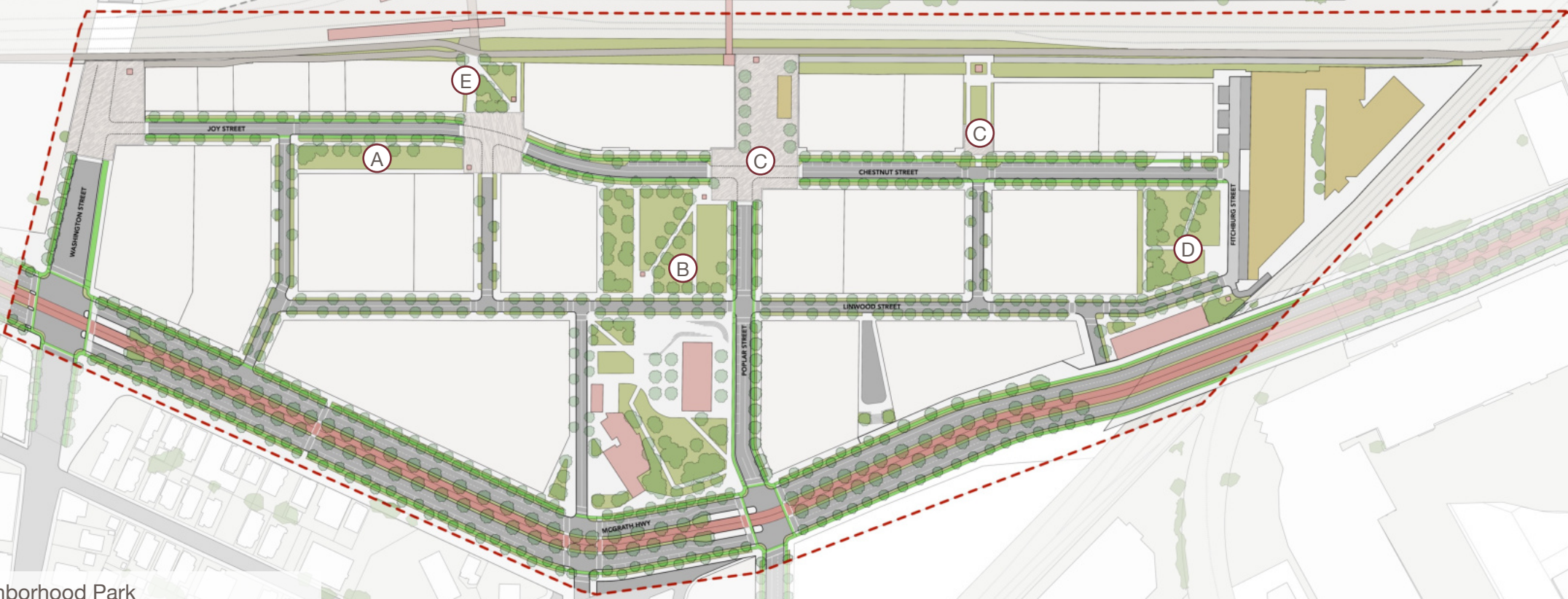
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A Vision for Tomorrow

# Alternative Illustrative Plan



- A. Small Neighborhood Park
- B. Expanded Art Farm Park
- C. Plaza & Community Path Access
- D. Neighborhood Park with Arts Programming
- E. Pocket Park & Subway Station Access





A Vision for Tomorrow

# Conceptual Massing

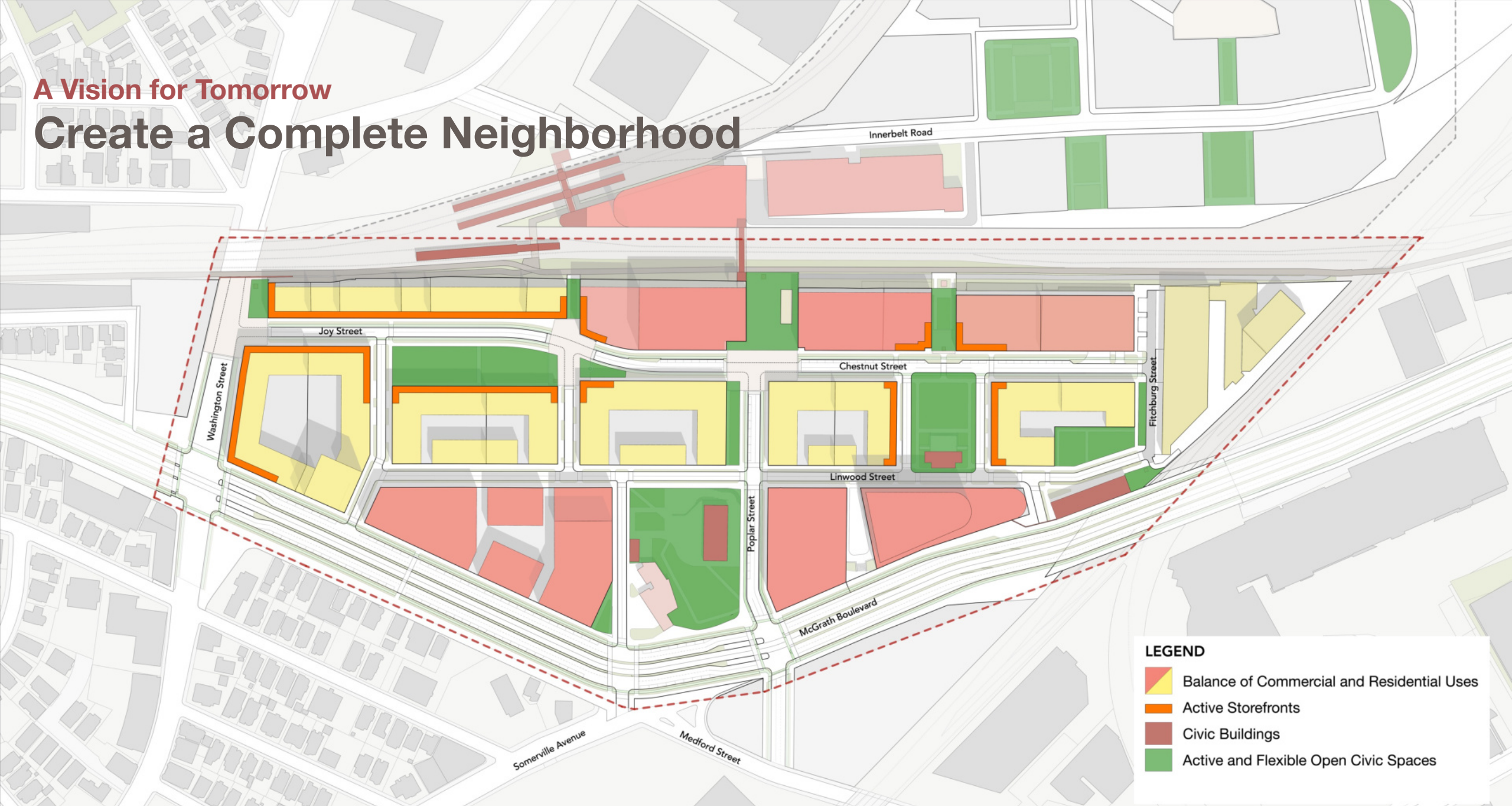


### - Possible Zoning Districts

# Rendering in Production

A Vision for Tomorrow

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

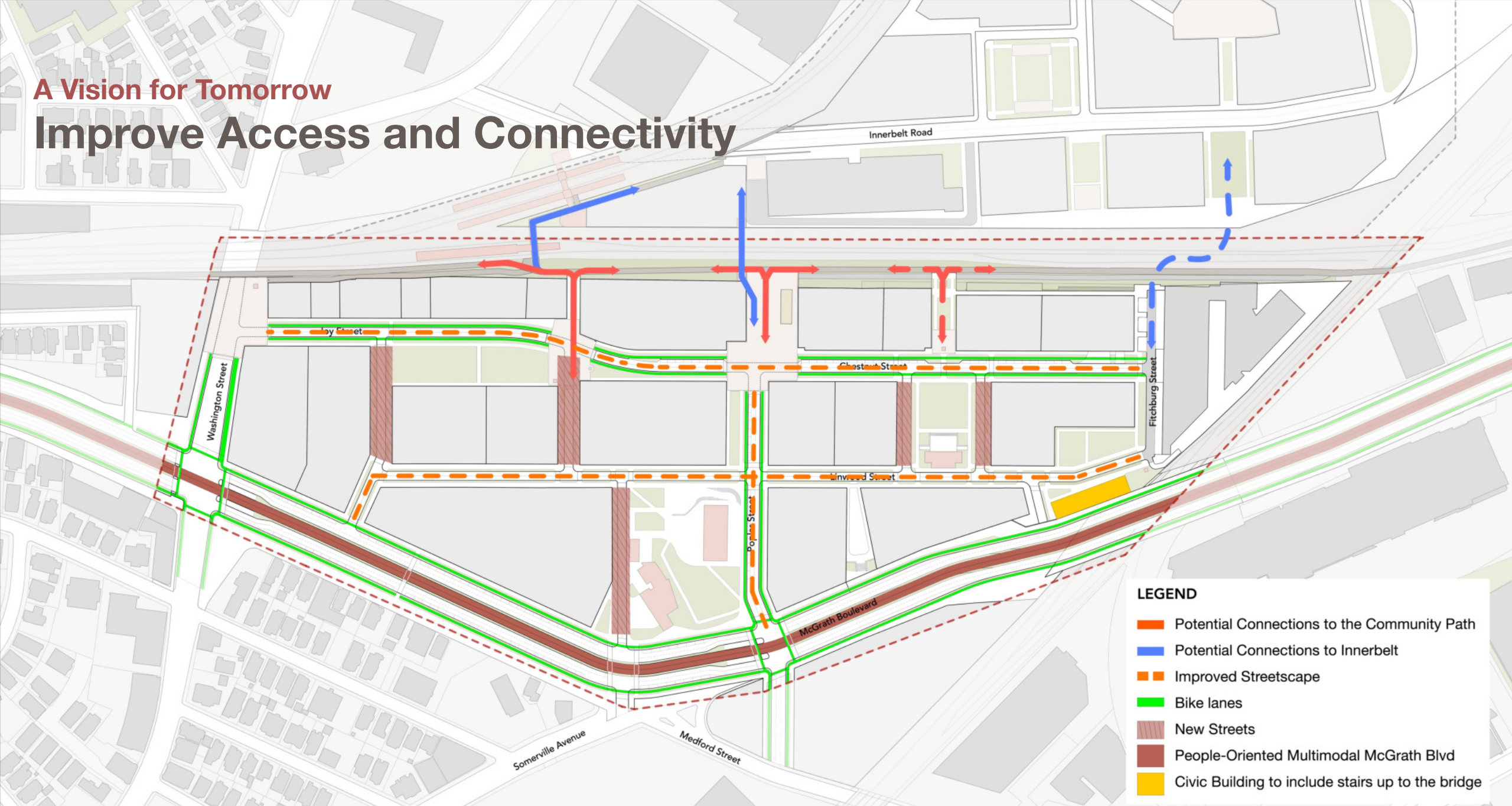


**LEGEND**

-  Balance of Commercial and Residential Uses
-  Active Storefronts
-  Civic Buildings
-  Active and Flexible Open Civic Spaces

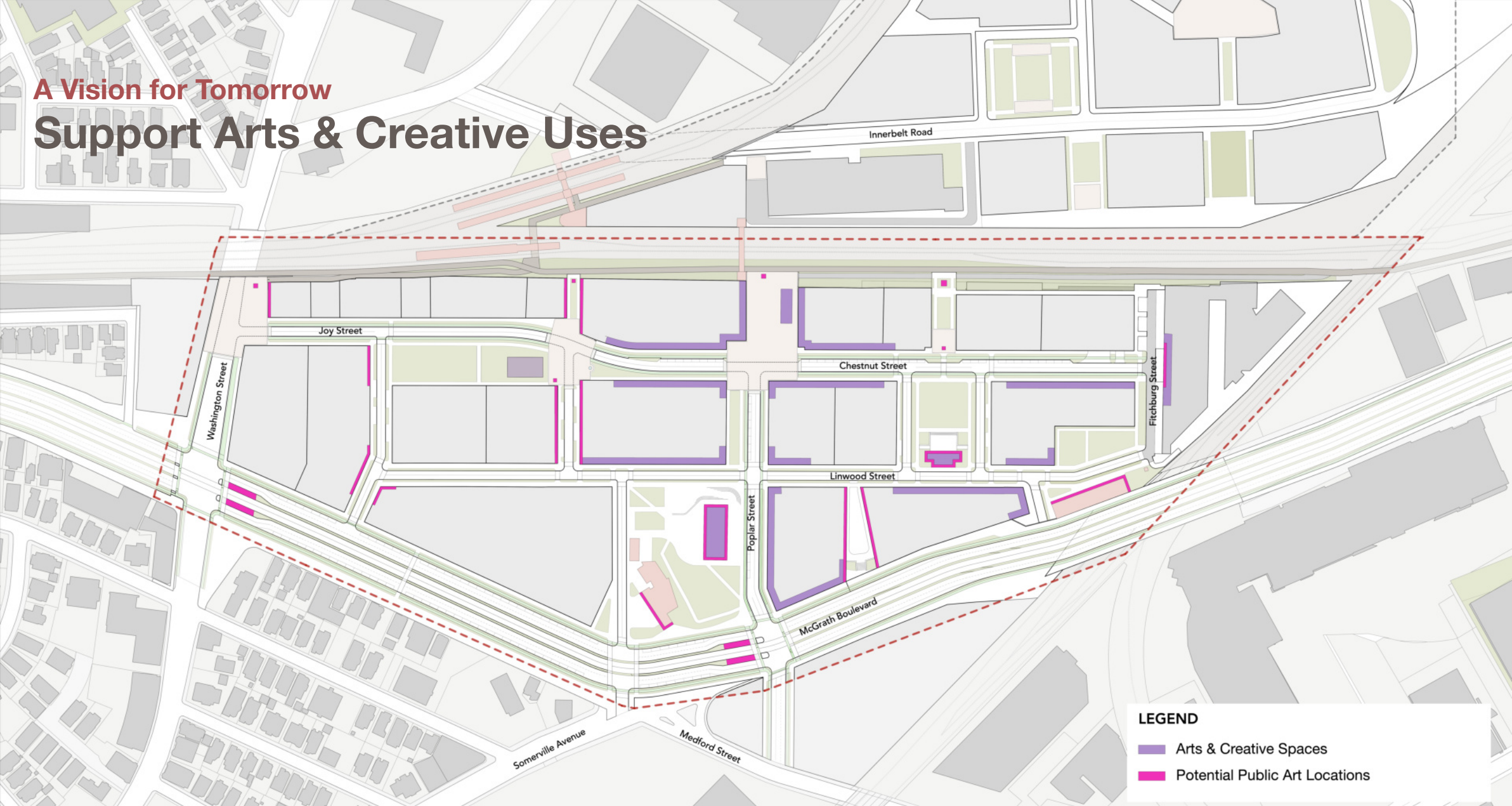
# A Vision for Tomorrow

## Improve Access and Connectivity



A Vision for Tomorrow

# Support Arts & Creative Uses



**LEGEND**

- Arts & Creative Spaces
- Potential Public Art Locations

A Vision for Tomorrow

# Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design

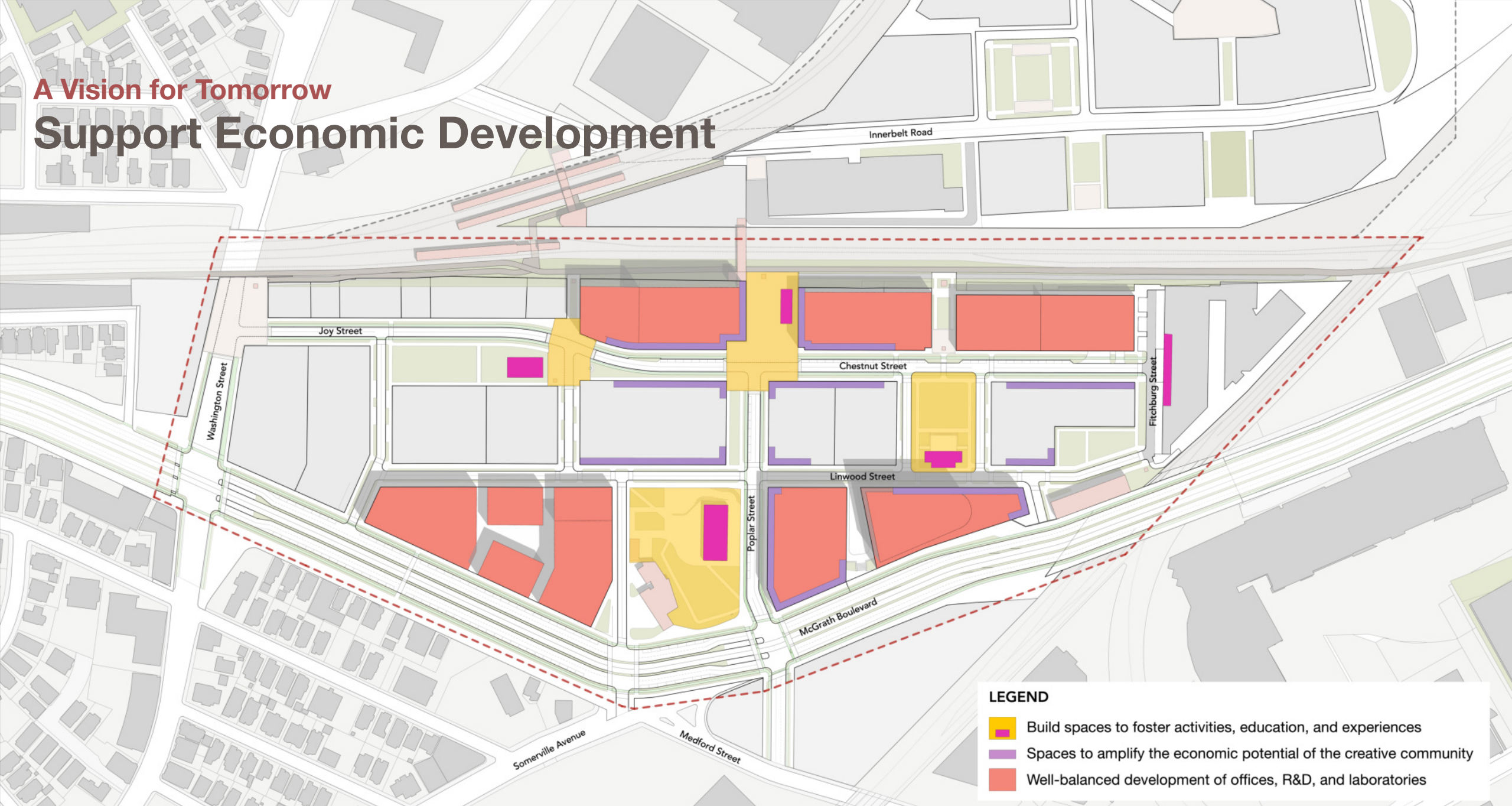


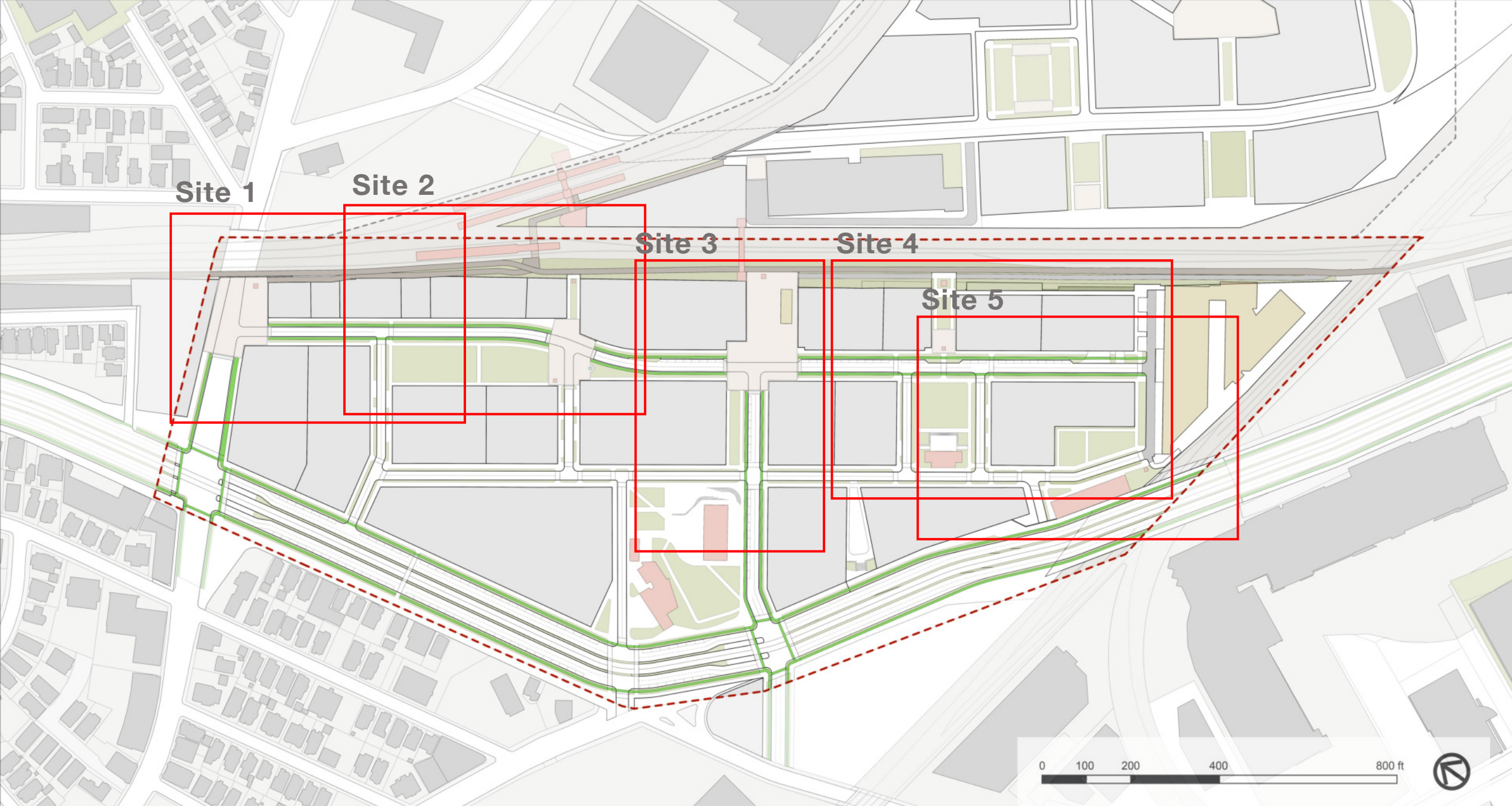
**LEGEND**

- New and Existing Tree Canopy Coverage
- Art Farm as Priority
- Minimize Shadows in Civic Spaces

A Vision for Tomorrow

# Support Economic Development





Site 1

Site 2

Site 3

Site 4

Site 5





## Brickbottom Catalyst Sites

**SITE 1: Washington + Joy Street**

**SITE 2: Joy Street Park**

**SITE 3: Poplar Street Corridor**

**SITE 4: Chestnut Street Corridor**

**SITE 5: Fitchburg + Linwood**

# Catalyst Site 1: Washington + Joy Street

## Site Background

Currently the main access point for Brickbottom, the intersection at Washington and Joy Street, is almost entirely auto-oriented and lacks space for pedestrians or cyclists.

This will be the location of the only available access to the East Somerville GL station and the Community Path from this area of the city. Even as new bike lanes and bus lanes are being installed following the rebuilding of the rail bridge over Washington street, the space does not act as a gateway, or connect the neighborhood to the surrounding area.



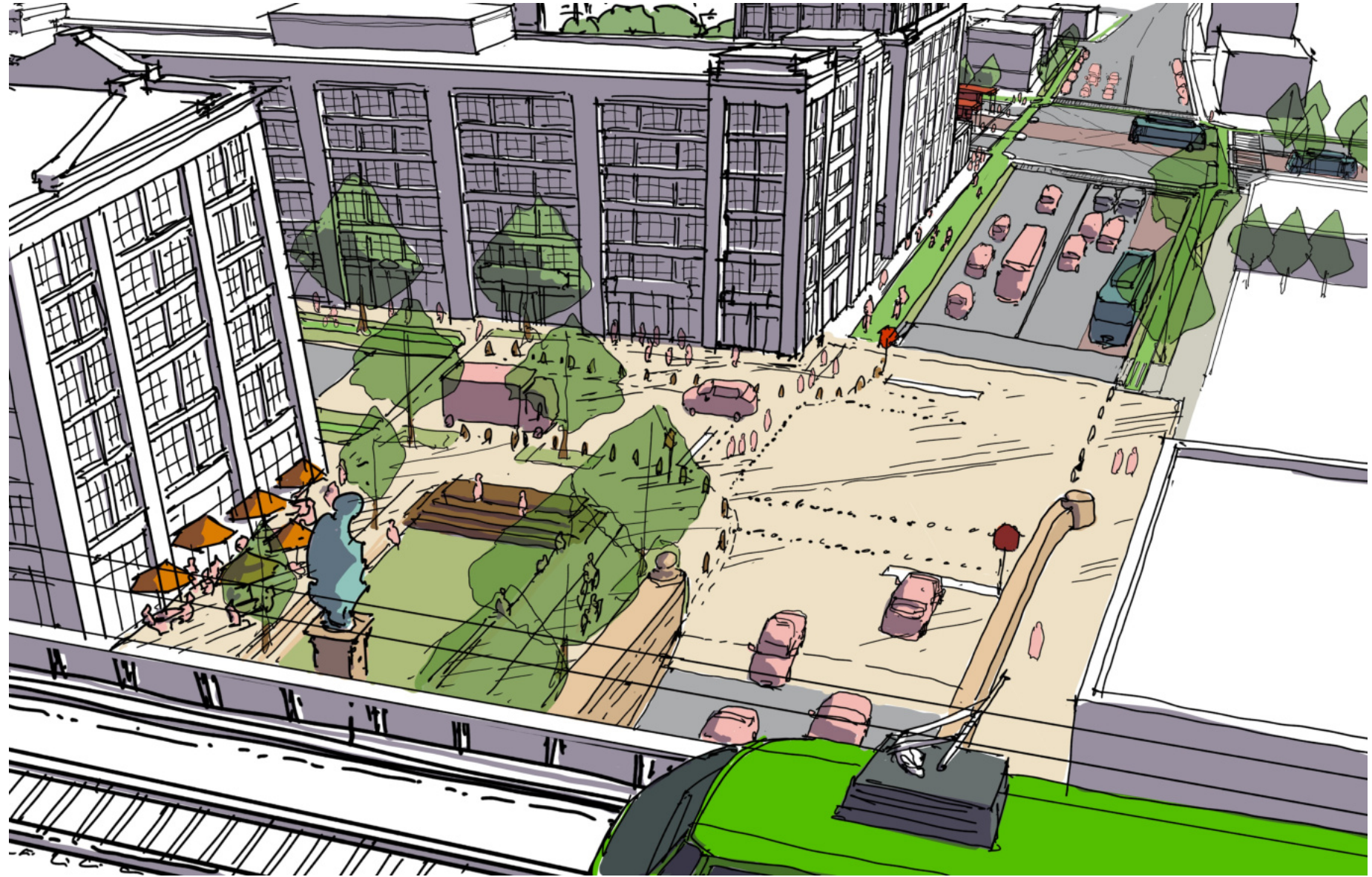
Existing conditions map locating Washington + Joy Street



Birdseye Photo of Washington + Joy Street

## Catalyst Site 1: Washington + Joy Street

The area is only increasing in importance as the MBTA station comes online and Brickbottom transforms. A calmed intersection and surrounding area will be the gateway for people arriving by train, foot, bicycle, or car, providing space for all, and allowing comfortable access to and from the neighborhood. The surrounding buildings will be functional and mixed-use providing space for workshops and studios, with ground floor stores to serve the community. The area will also serve to connect to the nearby McGrath Boulevard with potential future BRT service and tightened intersection.



*Rendering of Vision for Washington + Joy Street*

Elements: **Pedestrian Improvements** - **Bicycle Infrastructure** - **Placemaking**

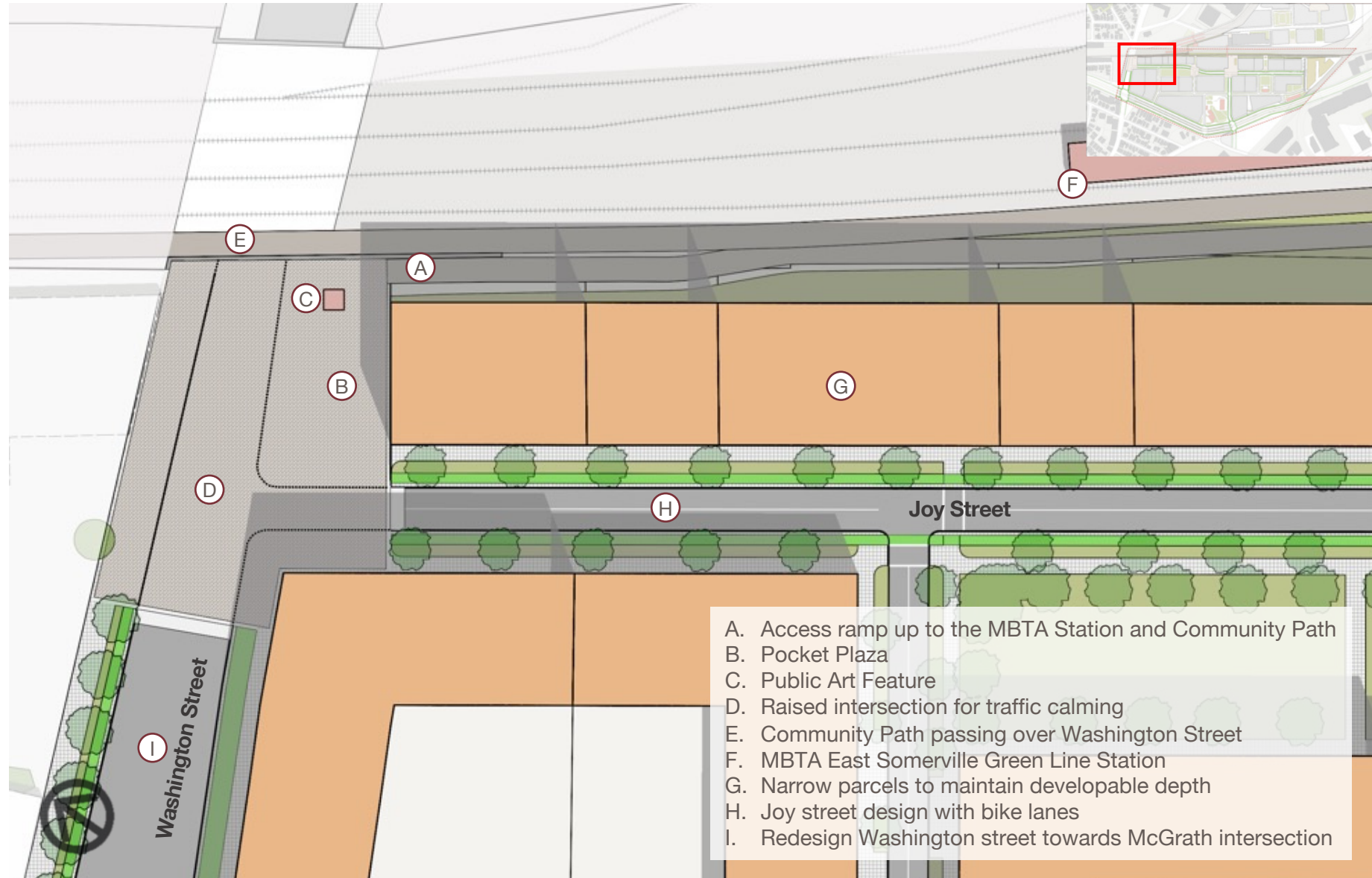
## Catalyst Sites

### Catalyst Site 1: Washington + Joy Street

#### Site Development Strategies

The parcels to the north of Joy Street are shallow in depth, making them less attractive to commercial development. The streetscape design for Joy Street needs to maintain a minimum acceptable lot depth to ensure these sites can accommodate more intense dense development.

Any redevelopment happening at the east corner parcel should be encouraged to setback and positively contribute to a pedestrian-friendly public space at the entrance to the East Somerville GL station.

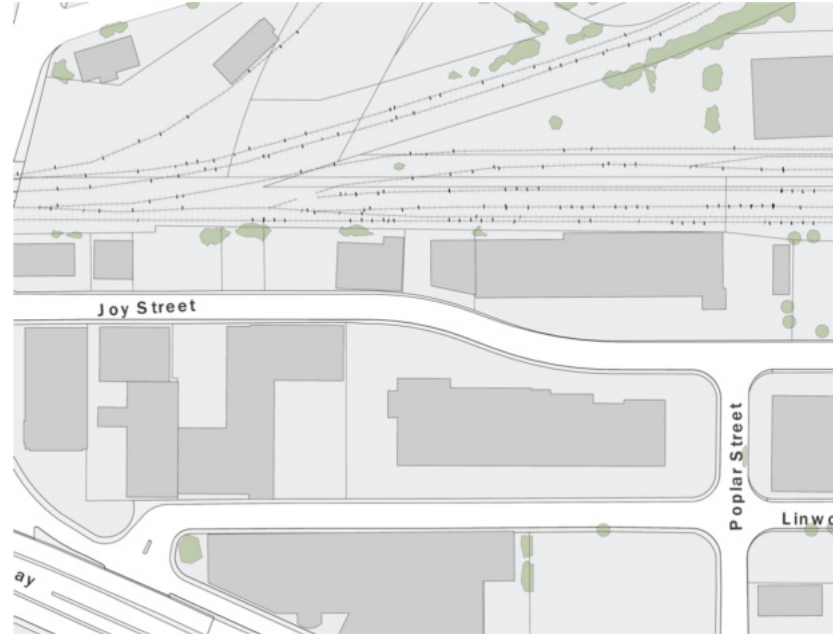


*Illustrative Plan of Vision for Washington + Joy Street*

## Catalyst Site 2: Joy Street Park

### Site Background

One of the first spaces most people will encounter in the neighborhood, whether arriving via the Washington and Joy Street gateway or by train, could be an area entirely transformed into a new park. A new Joy Street Park in this location can take advantage of a potential second entrance to the MBTA station, the change in grade, and the wiggle where Joy Street transitions to Chestnut Street. The space is an opportunity for an interesting focal point that can serve as a community gathering space to display public art, host performances, fairs, and other events, or simply provide some much-needed open green space.



Existing conditions map around Joy Street Park location.



Birdseye Photo of current conditions at Joy Street Park location.

## Catalyst Sites

### Catalyst Site 2: Joy Street Park

Imagined as a grand space which embodies the local culture, the space might also include porches or loading areas which serve nearby makers, arts, and fabricators. In addition to serving as a platform for local arts and culture, the space would complement the larger buildings locating in this northern area of Brickbottom and can tie together the new civic infrastructure with a new bus stop near the train station.

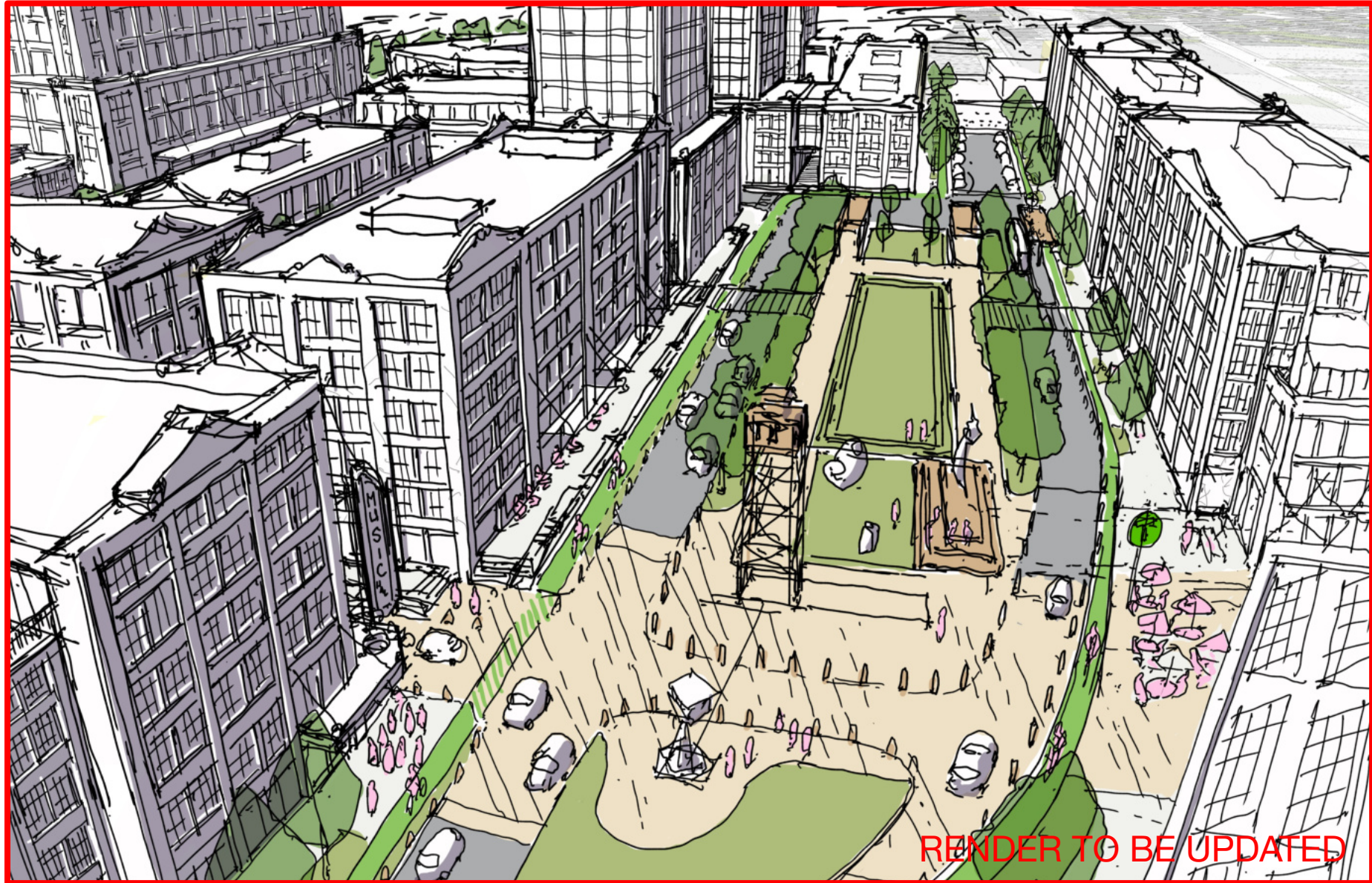


Plate: Rendering of Catalyst Site 2, Joy Street Park

**Elements: new open green space; public art, focus of civic infrastructure; relief from large buildings.**

## Catalyst Sites

# Catalyst Site 2: Joy Street Park

## Site Development Strategies

By setting buildings along the southwest side of Joy Street, a substantial open space can be created to serve as a kind of central square for Brickbottom. Located in what is expected to be the most intensely developed part of the neighborhood, Joy Street Park can provide an opportunity for people to spend time outside, for groups to gather, or for hosting events. A space of this kind can serve as an arrival point for people entering the area from Washington + Joy Street or from the new MBTA station.

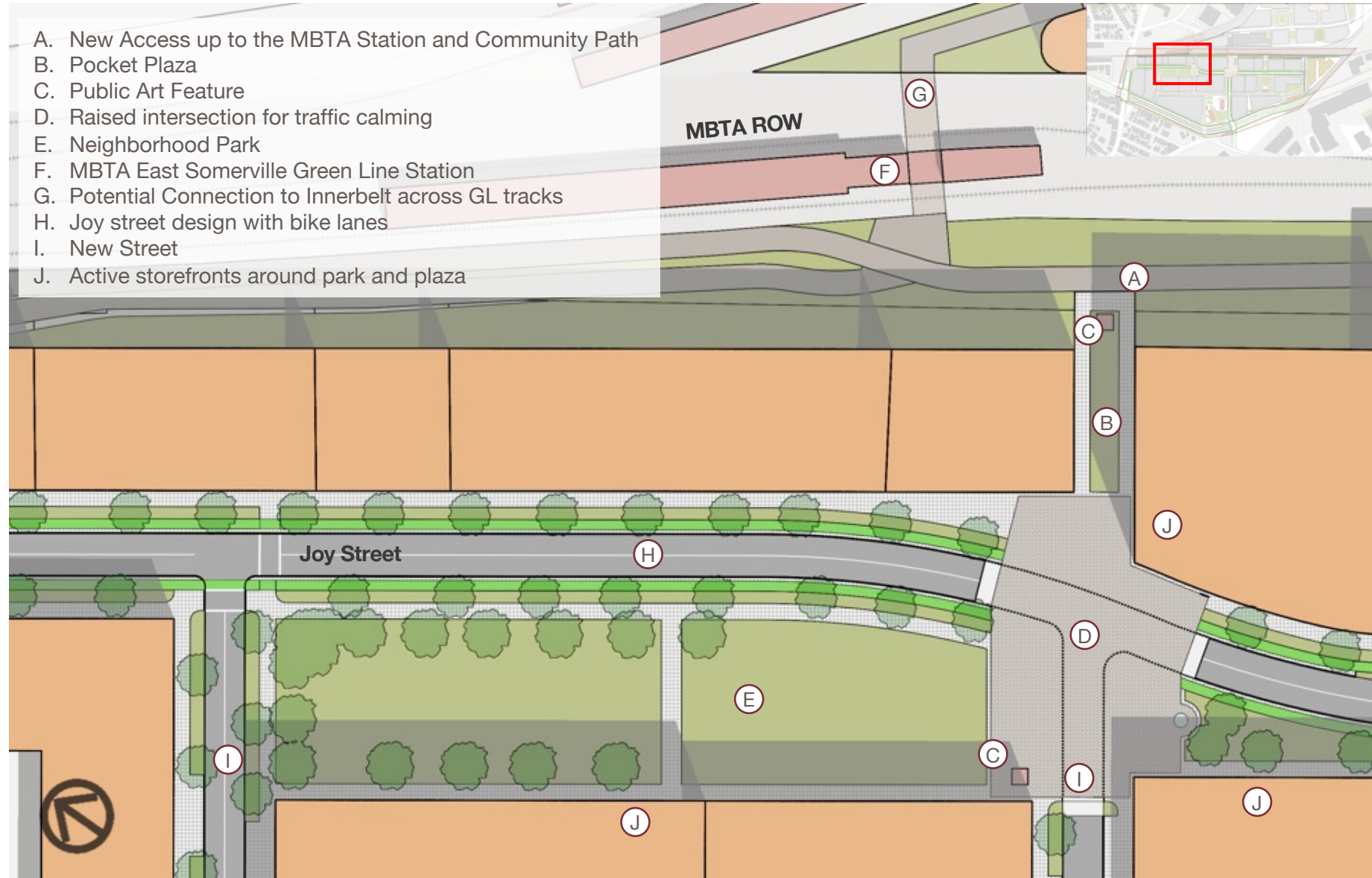


Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 2, Joy Street Park

## Catalyst Sites

# Catalyst Site 2: Joy Street Park

## Alternative Development Strategy

Permitting development to be located closer to the street on the southwest side of Joy Street may allow for better designed buildings. While open space along Joy Street can still be achieved, expanding public space across Joy Street and expanding the connection to the MBTA station could be a good alternative. Both spaces would allow people to have convenient access to open green space while also creating an enhanced pathway to and from the train.

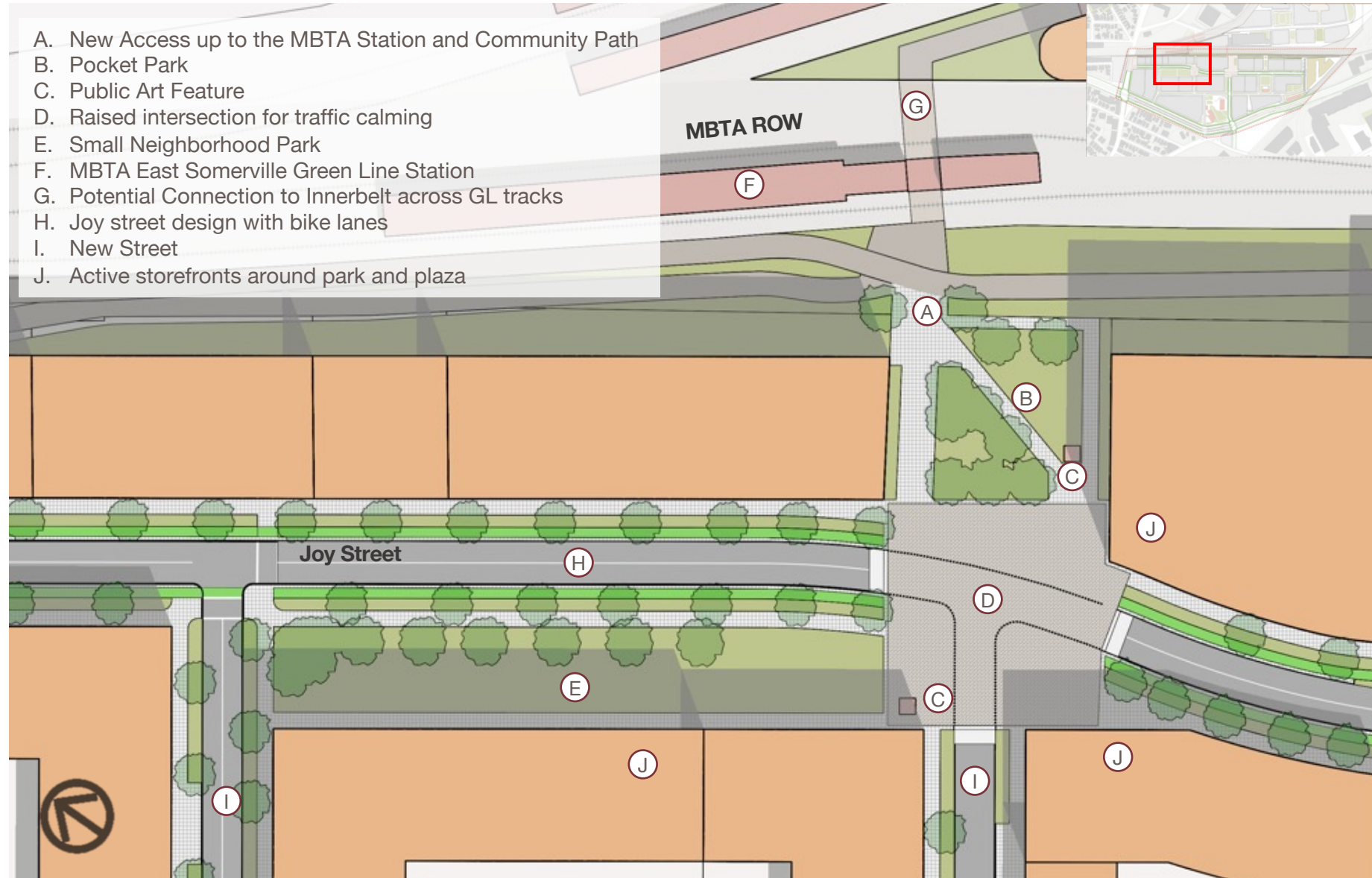


Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 2, Joy Street Park, Alternative



## Catalyst Site 3: Poplar Street Corridor

### Site Background

Poplar Street currently extends from McGrath Highway through to Chestnut Street but does not meet its potential as a functional corridor. The street has inadequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and underutilized adjacent properties. Additionally, with no pedestrian crossings and only limited turning movements at McGrath, significant improvements are needed. Investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure throughout the neighborhood will allow Poplar Street to become a gateway, connecting people from McGrath Highway to a reimagined Neon Williams Plaza and the Community Path.



Plate: Existing conditions near Poplar Street.



Plate: Birdseye photo of current conditions along Poplar Street.

## Catalyst Sites

### Catalyst Site 3: Poplar Street Corridor

#### Site Development Strategies

The spaces along Poplar Street can be activated with temporary or “pop-up” uses, open space amenities, or new development. Keeping buildings set slightly further back from the street will also allow a visual connection between McGrath Highway and the ArtFarm through to the Community Path access. Alternative paving options and expanded plantings can enhance the corridor and create a functional space where people enjoy spending time.



Plate: Rendering of Catalyst Site 3, Poplar Street Corridor

Elements: **Pedestrian + bicycle improvements; Access and visual connection to Community Path; Activat**

# Catalyst Site 3: Poplar Street Corridor

## Site Development Strategies

Long term redevelopment of Poplar Street should be built upon the the corridor serving as the main east-west connector for Brickbottom. The street level of buildings should house active uses ranging from retail, to creative space; light, clean industrial, to residential lobbies. The streetscape should be designed to accommodate all users with the implementation of large sidewalks, bike lanes, incorporated green stormwater management, and space for outdoor sales and dining.

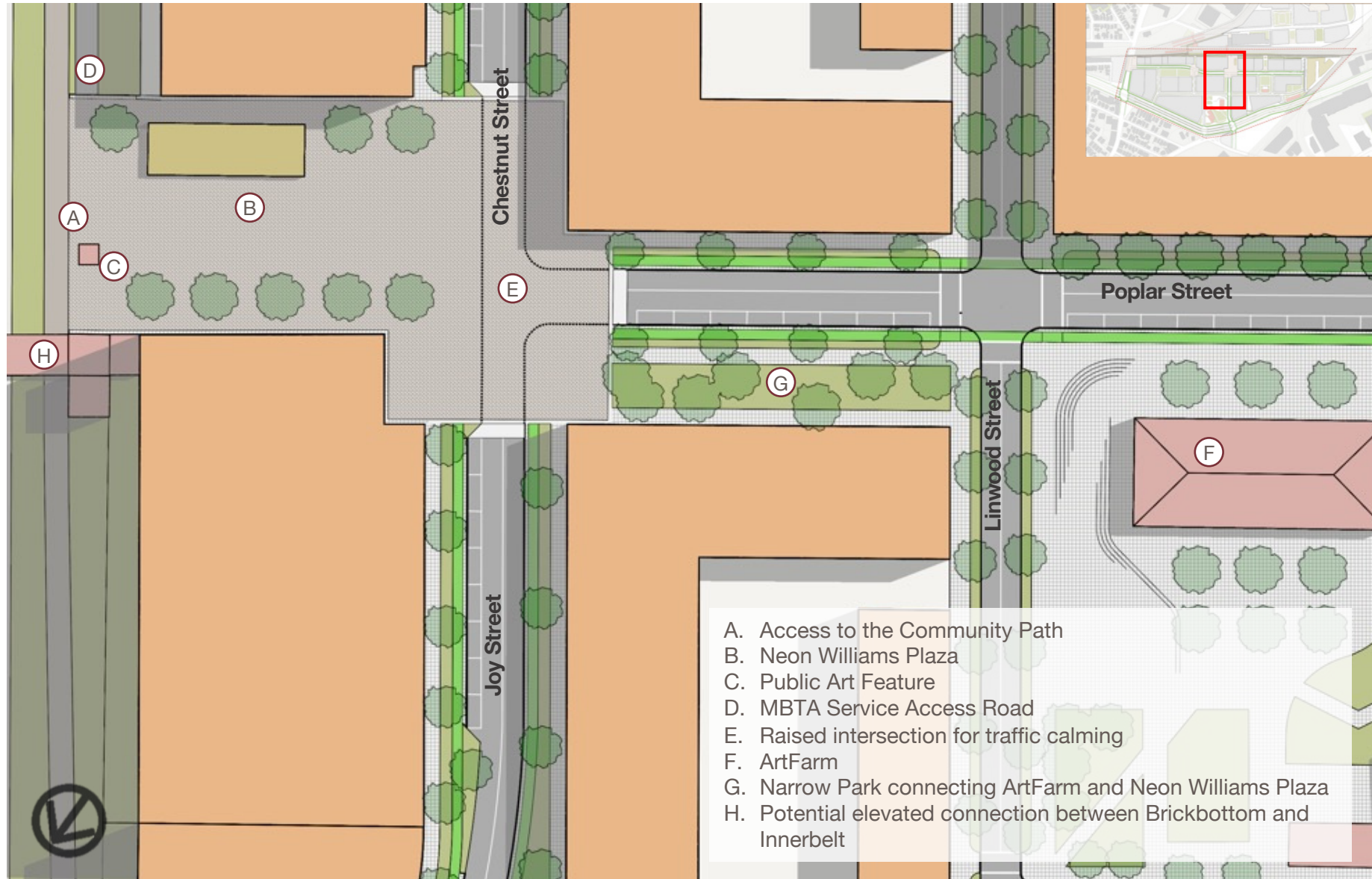


Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 3, Poplar Street Corridor

# Rendering in Production

*Plate: Rendering of Catalyst Site 3*

# Catalyst Site 3: Poplar Street Corridor

## Alternative Development Strategy

An alternative design for the area greatly expands the open space offering along the Poplar Street Corridor. Offsetting the reduction in size of the Joy Street Park alternative, this central open green space combines with the ArtFarm, enhanced streetscaping, and an improved Neon Williams Plaza to offer an amenitized corridor as well as significant, central greenspace in the heart of Brickbottom.



Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 3, Poplar Street Corridor, Alternative

# Catalyst Site 4: Chestnut Street Corridor

## Site Background

Taking what is currently an underutilized, and undeveloped space, we can imagine a neighborhood square stretching from Linwood Street to Chestnut Street. This space can serve as a kind of community front lawn for this southern section of Brickbottom. The existing long blocks, extensive impervious paving, and general low utilization of land can be remedied by creating a break in the block with a well integrated public green space.

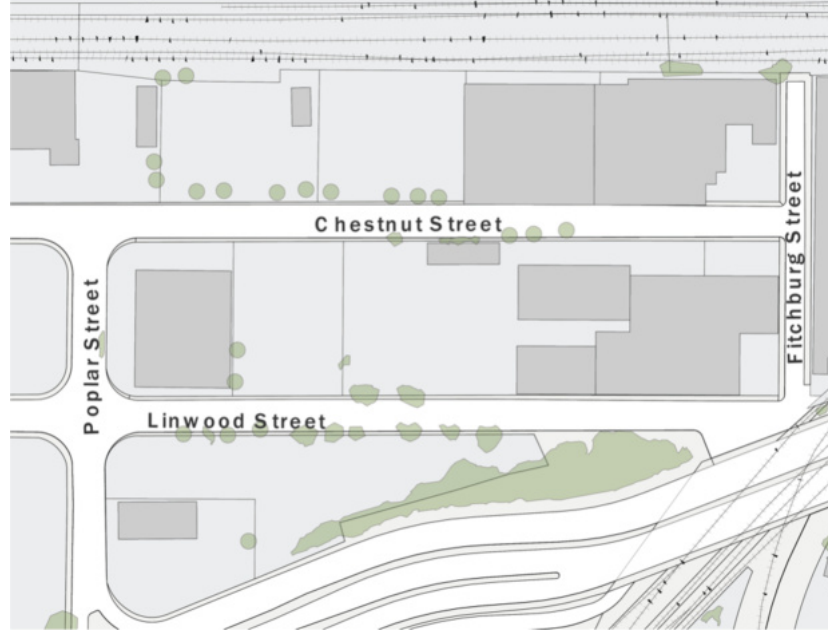


Plate: Existing conditions along Chestnut Street



Plate: Birdseye photo of current conditions around Chestnut Street

## Catalyst Sites

### Catalyst Site 4: Chestnut Street Corridor

The new neighborhood park should fit within the lower scale buildings envisioned for this part of Brickbottom. The space should be inviting for local businesses, studios, and workshops, to spill out into the public realm. The entire area should be enhanced with public art, whether mural, sculptures, live music, or any other form local creativity might take.



Plate: Rendering of Catalyst Site 4, Chestnut Street Park

**Elements: neighborhood lawn; scaled for lower building; draw out local studios + businesses**

## Catalyst Sites

### Catalyst Site 4: Chestnut Street Corridor

The vision for Chestnut Street is to allow the vibrancy from up the hill around Joy Street Park to flow down the hill but transition to a more residential character. The streetscape improvements will continue through to Fitchburg Street allowing convenient access for pedestrians, cyclists, and local motorists. By breaking up the long block, users can move through the space more easily and additional street frontage is created allowing for more functional uses.

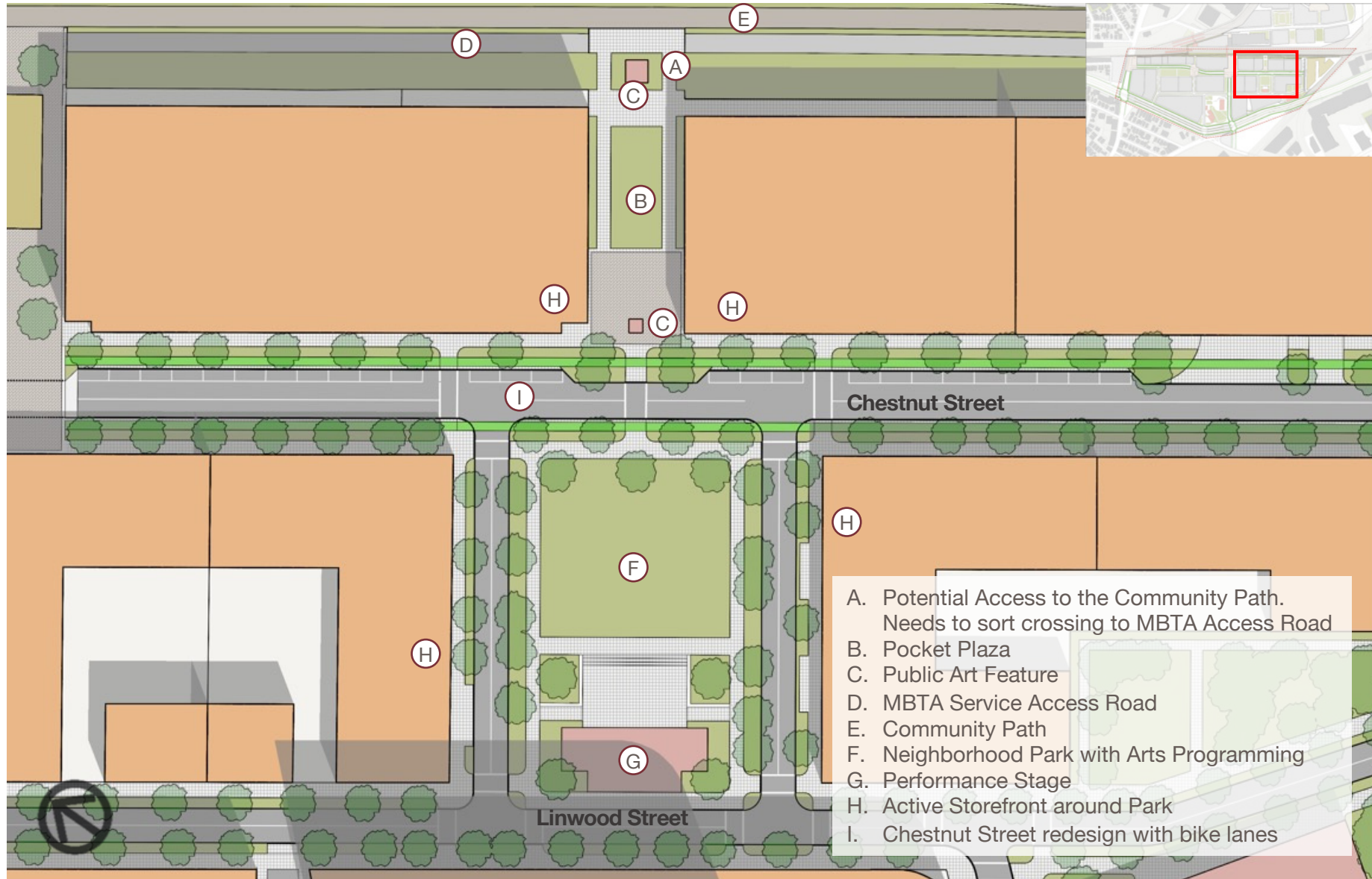


Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 3, Poplar Street Corridor



# Catalyst Site 4: Chestnut Street Corridor

Maintaining a new connection mid-block to allow for better network connectivity, an alternative vision moves the open space further to the south and combines it with space and improvements near Fitchburg + Linwood Street. Chestnut Street should still be a comfortable, amenitized street but the nature of the open space may shift to accommodate playgrounds, community gardens or other features which cater to families more than businesses.

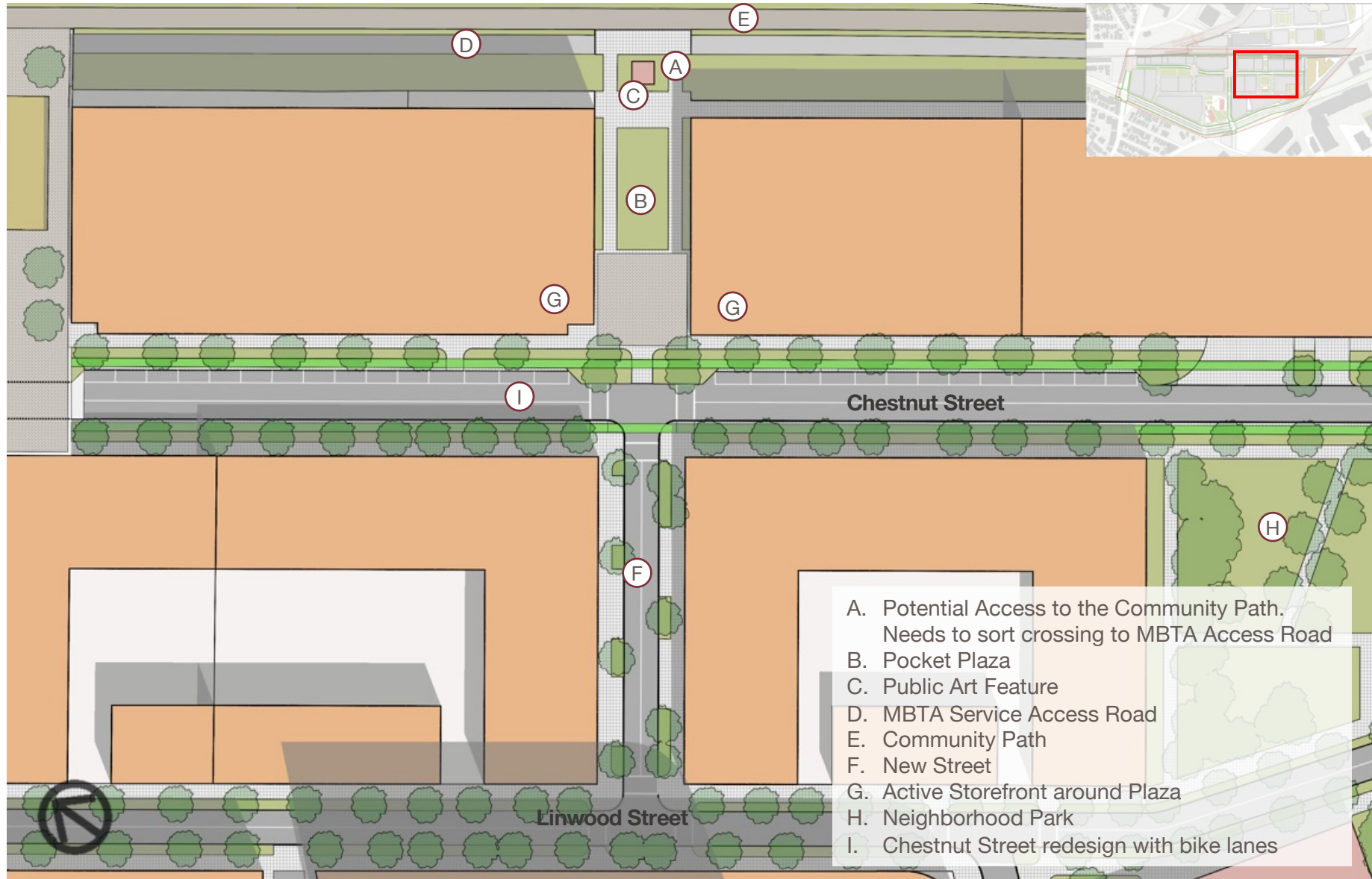
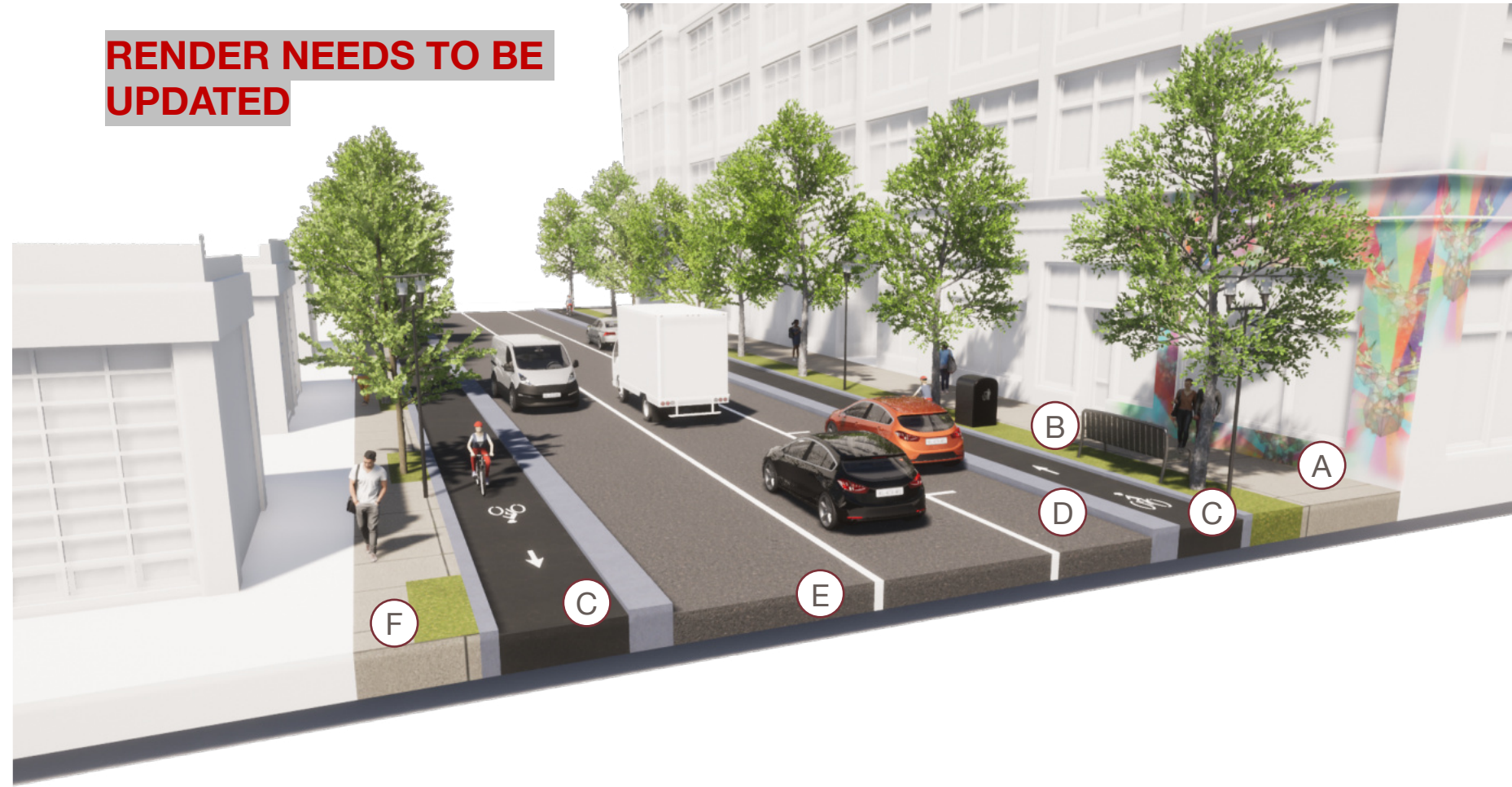


Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 4, Poplar Street Corridor, Alternative

# Catalyst Site 4: Chestnut Street Corridor

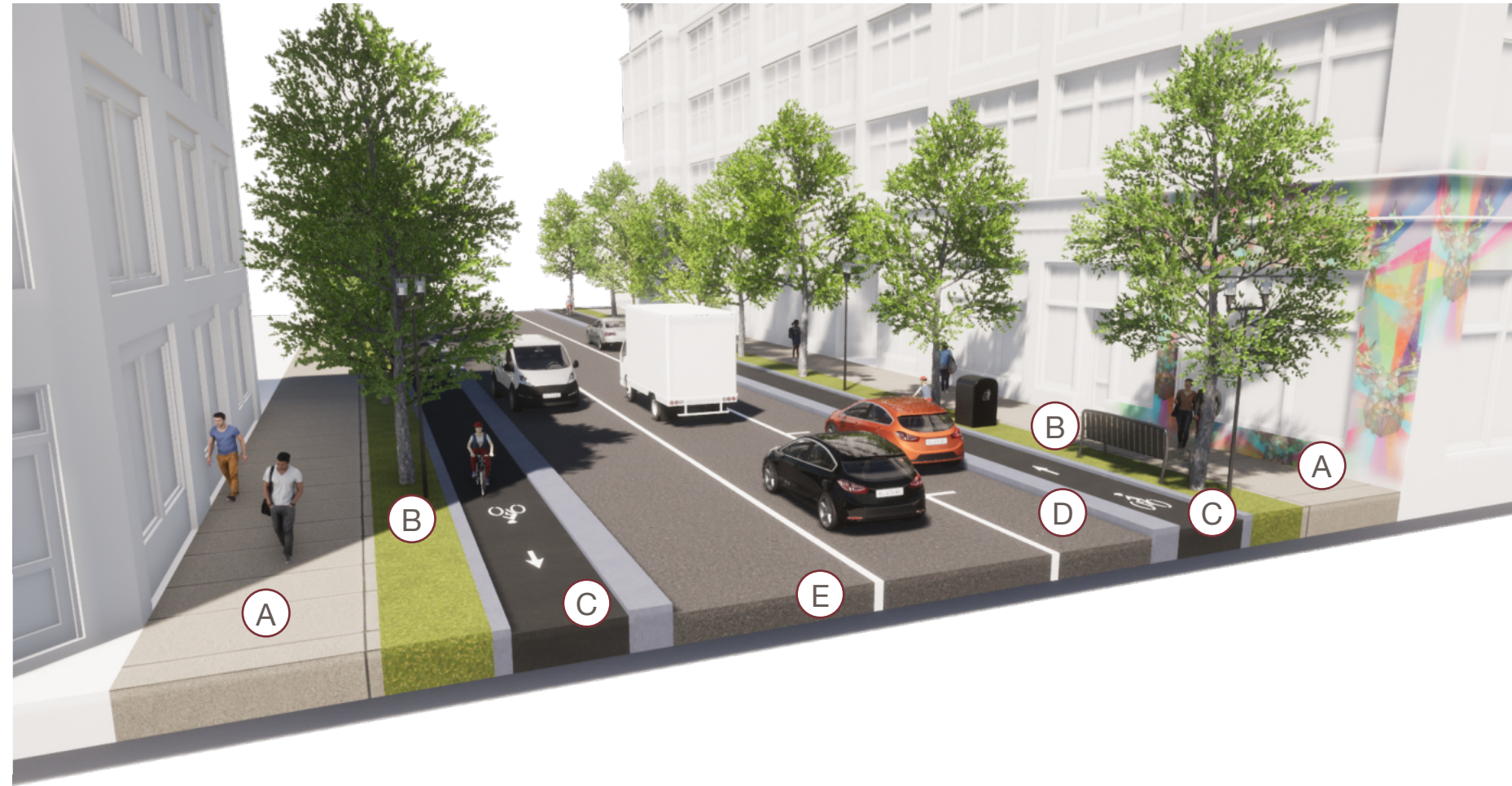
**RENDER NEEDS TO BE  
UPDATED**



## Interim Chestnut Street Design

- A. Expanded east sidewalk
- B. Furniture zone and landscape
- C. Bike lane on street with buffer
- D. Parking lane
- E. Drive lanes
- F. Existing sidewalk and curb location

# Catalyst Site 4: Chestnut Street Corridor



## Final Chestnut Street Design

- A. Expanded 10ft wide sidewalks
- B. Furniture zone and landscape
- C. Raised bike lanes with buffer
- D. Parking lane
- E. Drive lanes

# Catalyst Site 5: Fitchburg + Linwood Street

## Site Background

The raising of McGrath Highway over the rail tracks at the south end of Brickbottom creates several challenges. Access from McGrath is difficult and is currently limited to a neglected stairway. Access across (under) McGrath is also limited to a one-way single-lane entry road nicknamed “Scary Way” in reference to its character. Both issues should be addressed, with an intentional and well-designed vertical access up/down between McGrath Highway and the neighborhood, and redesigned access under the roadway.

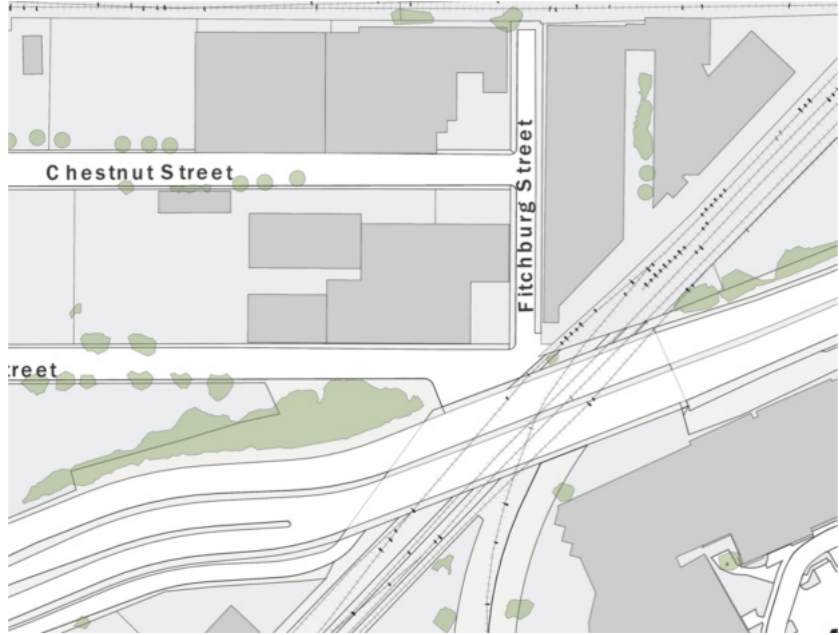


Plate: Existing conditions along Chestnut Street



Plate: Birdseye photo of current conditions around Chestnut Street

## Catalyst Site 5: Fitchburg + Linwood Street

A fully reimagined space, the necessary rising of the McGrath Highway and location of various rail tracks, the flawed intersection can be reworked to accommodate several amenities and become an enhancement to the neighborhood. Creating a connection between a rehabilitated McGrath Boulevard and the ground level will allow better access to the southern most section of Brickbottom. Relocating the vehicle and pedestrian underpass can allow for improved flow and better access in and out of the area. Finally, new green space will provide outdoor green space for residents.



Plate: Rendering of Catalyst Site 5, Fitchburg + Linwood Street

## Catalyst Sites

# Catalyst Site 5: Fitchburg + Linwood Street

The main vision for the intersection of Fitchburg with Linwood Street is to clean up the design of the space by relocating what is currently “Scary Way”, shifting the end of Linwood to more comfortably connect with Fitchburg, and creating open, amenitized space. A vertical connection up to McGrath Boulevard can be housed in a new civic building able to host events, public amenities, or anything the communities determines. The open space allows for a kind of pocket-park which could be the location of a dog-park, playground, or other neighborhood amenity.

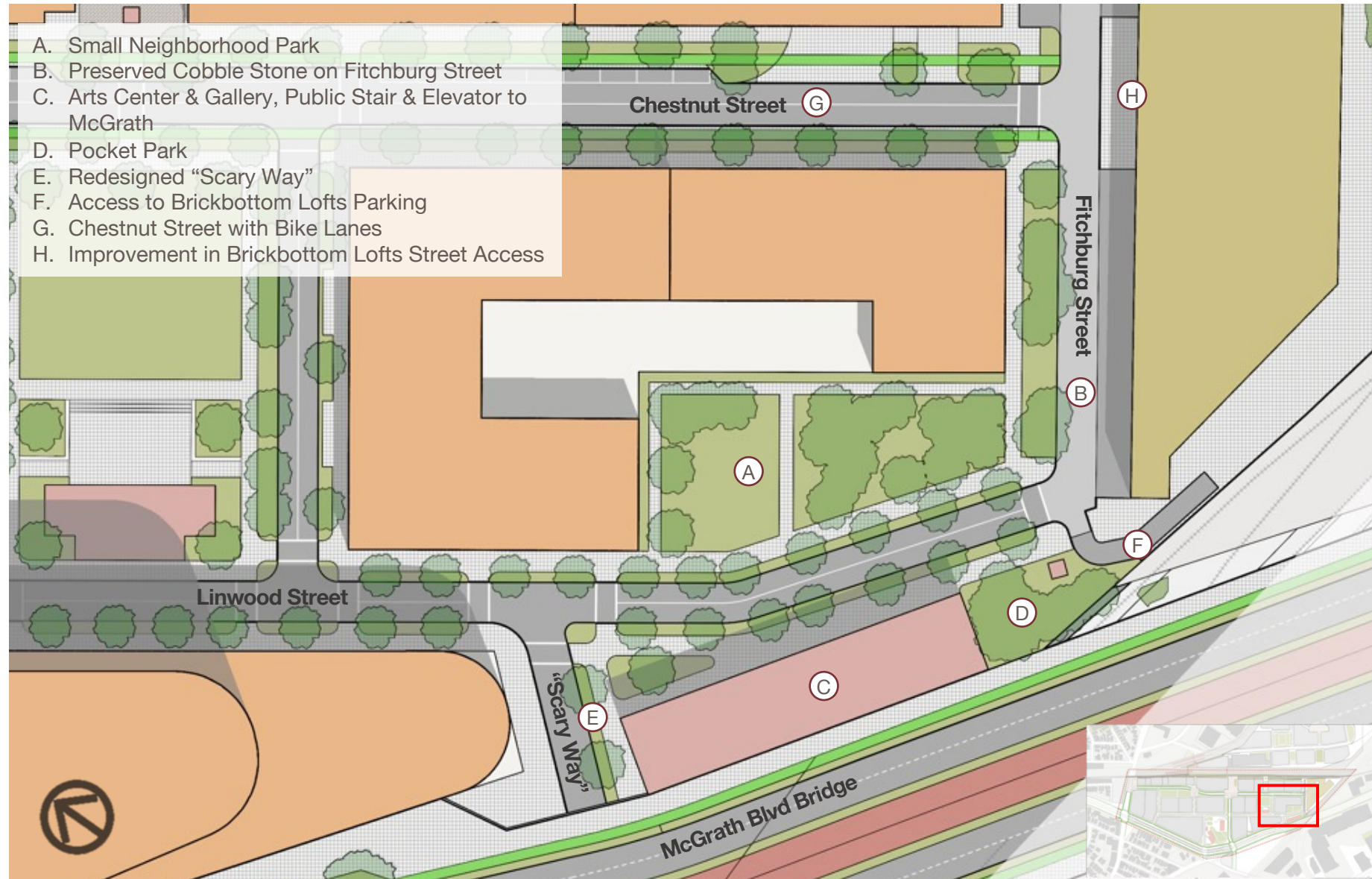


Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 5, Fitchburg + Linwood Street

## Catalyst Sites

### Catalyst Site 5: Fitchburg + Linwood Street

Expanding the open space at Fitchburg and Linwood Street would allow even more room for neighborhood amenities and flexibility in reworking the currently flawed tangle of infrastructure. An improved vertical connection up to McGrath Boulevard and improved access under the roadway is still integral but expanded open space can change the character of this area dramatically. In addition to a dog park, playground, or other neighborhood amenities, space for community gardens, gathering space, or anything else the community imagines can be accommodated.

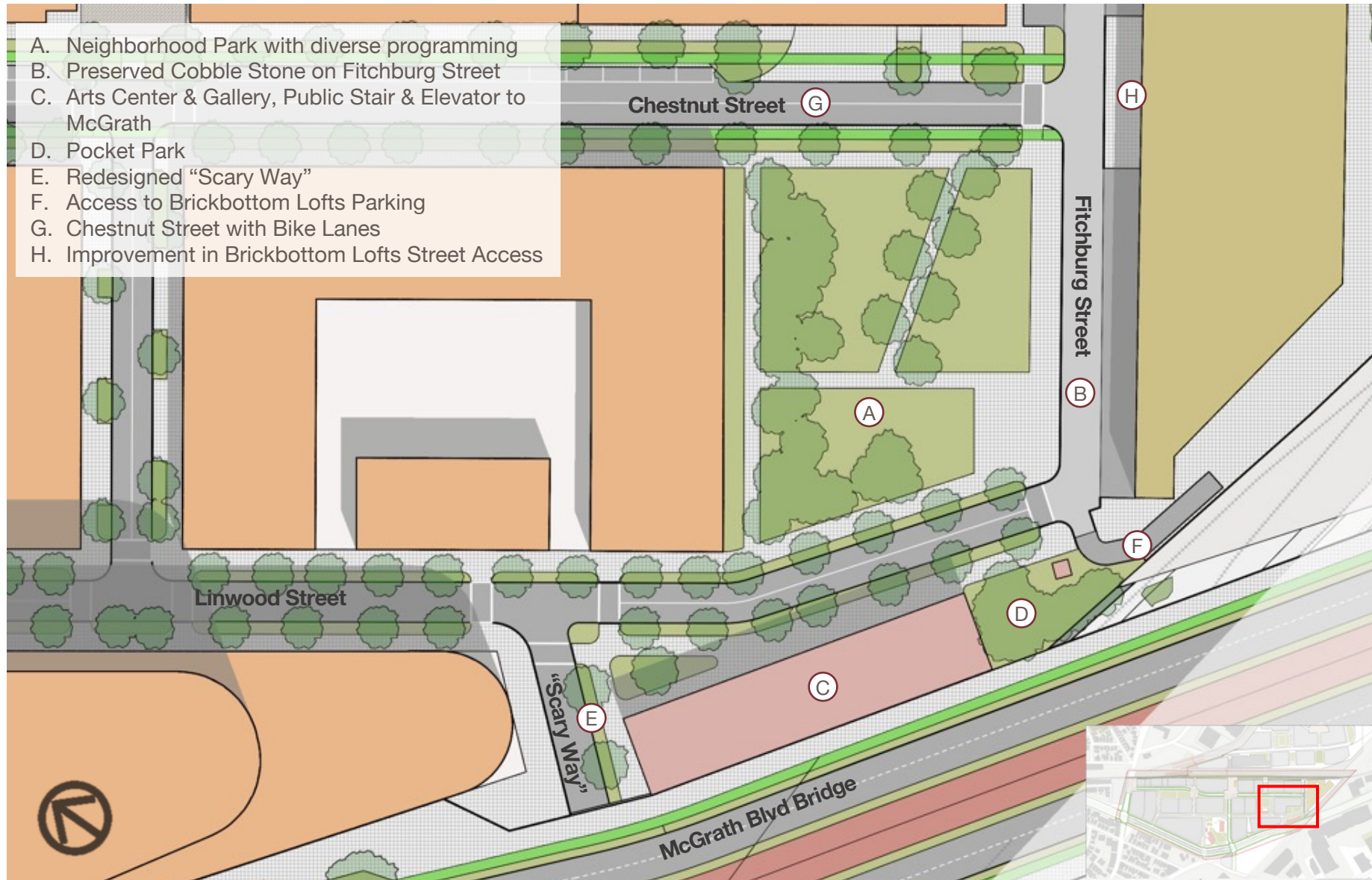


Plate: Illustrative Plan of Catalyst Site 5, Fitchburg + Linwood Street

## Catalyst Site 6: McGrath Highway

### Site Development Strategies

Improving the conditions along McGrath Highway is necessary. There are already plans laid out to implement a road diet in the short term, as well as plans to ground the elevated sections and transform the highway into a boulevard.

With the redesign of the highway there is also the opportunity to rethink the embankment of the Squires Bridge over the MBTA ROW, the infrastructure to climb up the bridge's sidewalks and the relationship of the abutting developable parcels.



Plate: Birdseye photo of current conditions along McGrath Highway



Plate: Existing conditions along McGrath Highway



### Catalyst Site 6:

# McGrath Highway

#### Site Background

The sites adjacent to McGrath Highway exist in a complicated setting.

Currently adjacent to an uninviting raised highway with little activity on either side and a primarily industrial neighborhood on the opposite side, this site will need to address several issues simultaneously. All the properties along McGrath, once redeveloped, can act as a buffer from the challenges created by the highway. However, the grounding of McGrath and its transformation into an urban boulevard will further enhance these critical sites.

Significant development opportunities like this one should address broad neighborhood goals and include parking for the area-wide 'Park-once' strategy or opportunities to carve out new streets. However, irregular block or parcel size and shape may not fit well with existing development regulations. The community should consider new building types or adjustments to existing ones to take full advantage of the community potential for these sites.

Rendering in Production

**Catalyst Site 6:**

# McGrath Highway

The grounding of the elevated sections of McGrath Highway will allow visual and physical connections across the highway. Unfortunately, at the southern end of Brickbottom, McGrath Highway must still rise several stories to cross over rail tracks. To minimize the negative aspects of this condition, rebuilding the embankment could have several benefits. A redesigned embankment could have a shallower slope to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists better and allow adjacent development to connect directly to the sidewalk. Additionally, a new embankment could enable the relocation and realignment of "Scary Way" to improve circulation for the area. Finally, a redesigned and grounded McGrath could be narrower, allowing more space for public improvements and a straighter path.



Rendering in Production

# 3. Community Priorities

# Introduction to Community Priorities

The future of Brickbottom will only be possible by breaking this plan down into smaller, more achievable goals. The following chapter lays out a series of strategies and tactics required to implement the community's vision for the neighborhood's future. The plan carries out these goals through a series of policies and action items that guide the public, planners, and officials in ultimately achieving the community's vision.

The plan's recommendations are based directly on input received during the public input process that included residents, property owners, business owners, and other community stakeholders. Through this process, participants defined a vision for the community's future, identified goals to reach this future, and developed a set of actions that the community and City can take to achieve these goals.

The community design principles provide general goals for public and private investment in the neighborhood, while the placemaking concepts call for new development to include more specific items. The principles and concepts will inform new design standards and guidelines that will need to be adopted.

# Brickbottom Vision Statements

- 1. Create a Complete Neighborhood**
- 2. Improve Access and Connectivity**
- 3. Support Arts & Creative Uses**
- 4. Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design**
- 5. Support Economic Development**

# **1. Create a Complete Neighborhood**

## Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

Create a neighborhood that supports people and accommodates a wide range of lifestyles through a variety of housing types and a mix of uses focused on the local community.

### GOALS:

1. Plan For A Future Centered On People, Not Vehicles.
2. Create New Quality Open Spaces.
3. Foster Places Where People Know Their Neighbors.
4. Promote Vibrant Daytime Street Life.
5. Pursue A Balance of Integrated Land Uses.
6. Preserve and Create Varied Housing Types.

*“Sustain a community that is creative and diverse”*

## SomerVision2040 Goals

### Support families and promote their longevity in Somerville.

Families have long been a building block of community in Somerville. Families often prefer to stay in one place longer and have more reasons to connect with the larger community (for example through schools, sports, activities) than the average individual. As a result, families can play an essential role in building the rich community fabric we value. We need to prioritize helping Somerville residents who want to stay in the city do so and devote significant resources towards supporting those communities who are most at risk of displacement.

**Help all residents connect.** The current reality is that Somerville’s population has seen high levels of turnover. In addition to resisting the displacement of current residents, we should actively welcome new residents and be deliberate about facilitating connections between all members of the community.

**Ensure diversity of the housing stock.** For Somerville to be a lifelong community, it needs housing for all stages of life. From infancy through old age, people’s individual and family needs change. This relates to the size of units, but also their location, type of building, and accessibility to name a few. Somerville has a fairly monotonous housing supply of 1, 2, and 3-family wood frame homes. We need to strive to create different types of housing suitable for the different stages in life, even if that does introduce differences in our housing stock.

**Promote continuity.** By increasing the diversity in our housing stock, we can better promote continuity of the community, increase the age diversity, and further enforce our overarching vision of making Somerville an exceptional place to live, work, play, raise a family, and grow older.

**Design.** Although people may think parks have one use, such as a playground or playing field, there are many users in one space because generally people use open space that’s within easy access to their residence. Park designs should include elements for a wide variety of user.

**Vision Statement 1**

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

## GOAL 1: Plan For A Future Centered On People, Not Vehicles.

When we plan our spaces and community around people, we get active vibrant places where people actually want to spend time. Especially in a vision plan such as this one, we should begin by imagining what kind of environment we want to live, work, and play in before limiting our vision to accommodate utilities. Engineering places to accommodate vehicles first, has often led us to inhospitable, unwelcoming environments. Vehicles are tools that assist in the quality of life in a neighborhood, but they should not be the primary focus of the urban design.

**Action:** Focus on creating places that are hospitable and welcoming to all people.

**Action:** Accommodate vehicles as needed to further the community’s vision and goals.

**Action:** Aim to create spaces that are flexible and multi-purpose so they can accommodate people at times and vehicles at others.





## Vision Statement 1

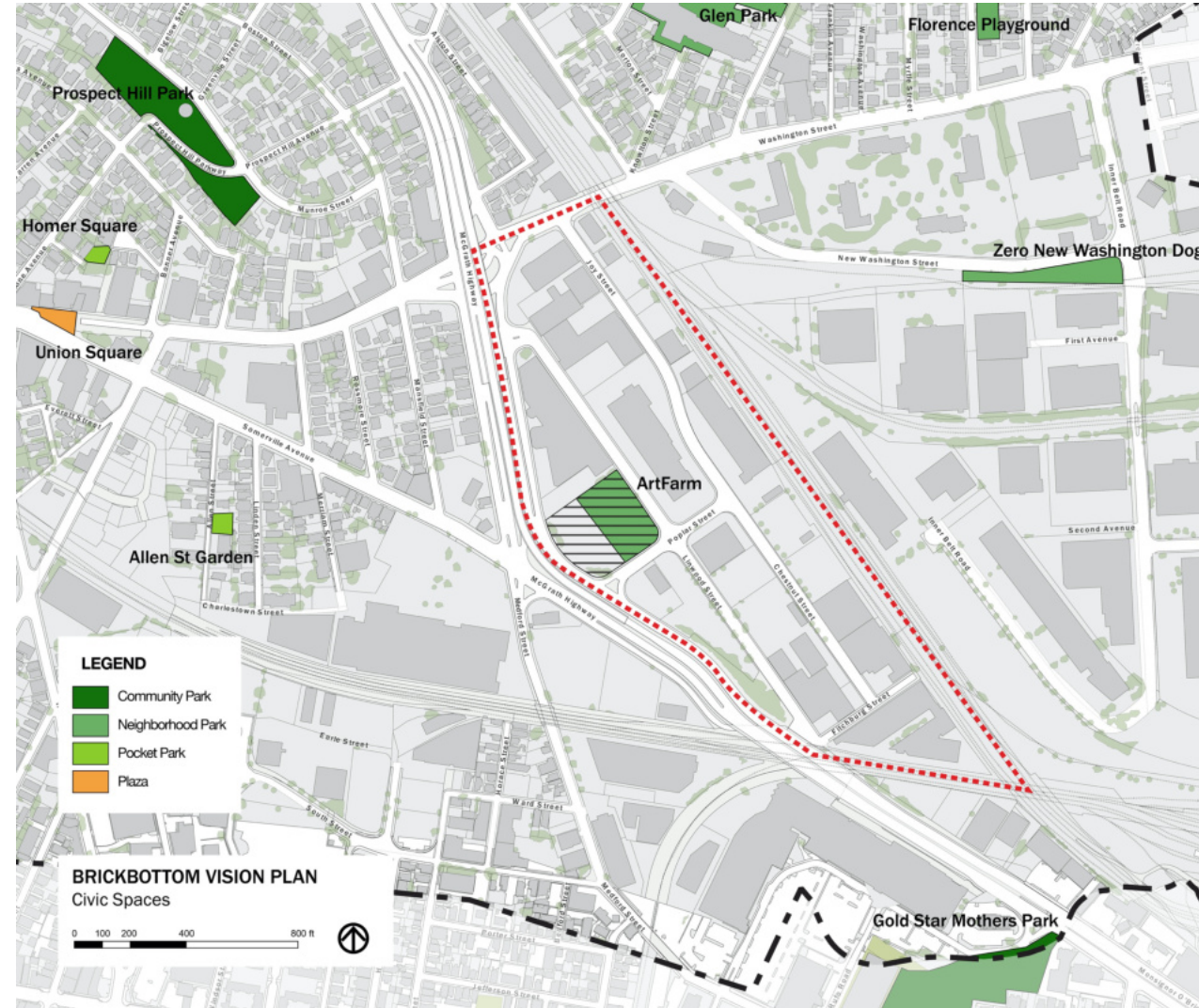
# Create a Complete Neighborhood

## GOAL 2: Create New Quality Open Spaces.

Brickbottom is a relatively compact land area that currently has no neighborhood parks or public civic spaces. The streets are also largely devoid of landscaping, creating a harsh environment. Besides the ArtFarm, there are currently no other planned green or open civic spaces. This document proposes new civic spaces throughout the neighborhood as an essential component in developing a complete neighborhood.

**Action:** Ensure that there is a small civic space within a 2.5-minute walk in addition to a medium civic space within a 5-minute walk of every building in Brickbottom.

*“Civic Spaces with grass and places to sit”*



Existing Open Civic Spaces surrounding Brickbottom

Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

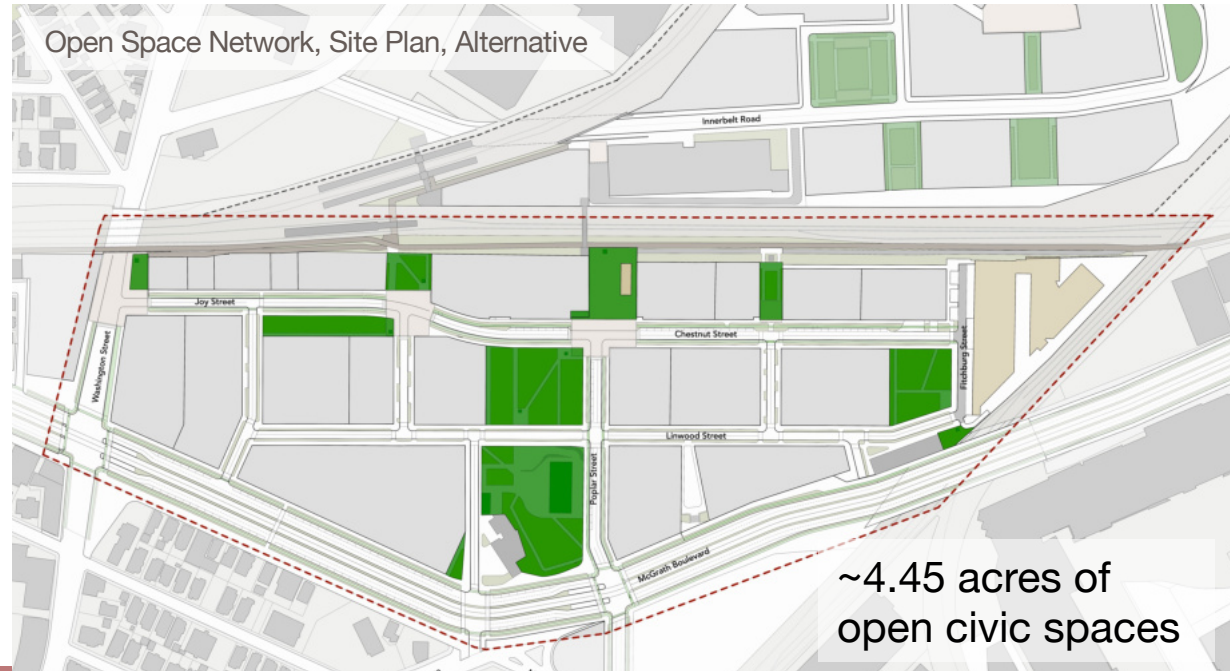
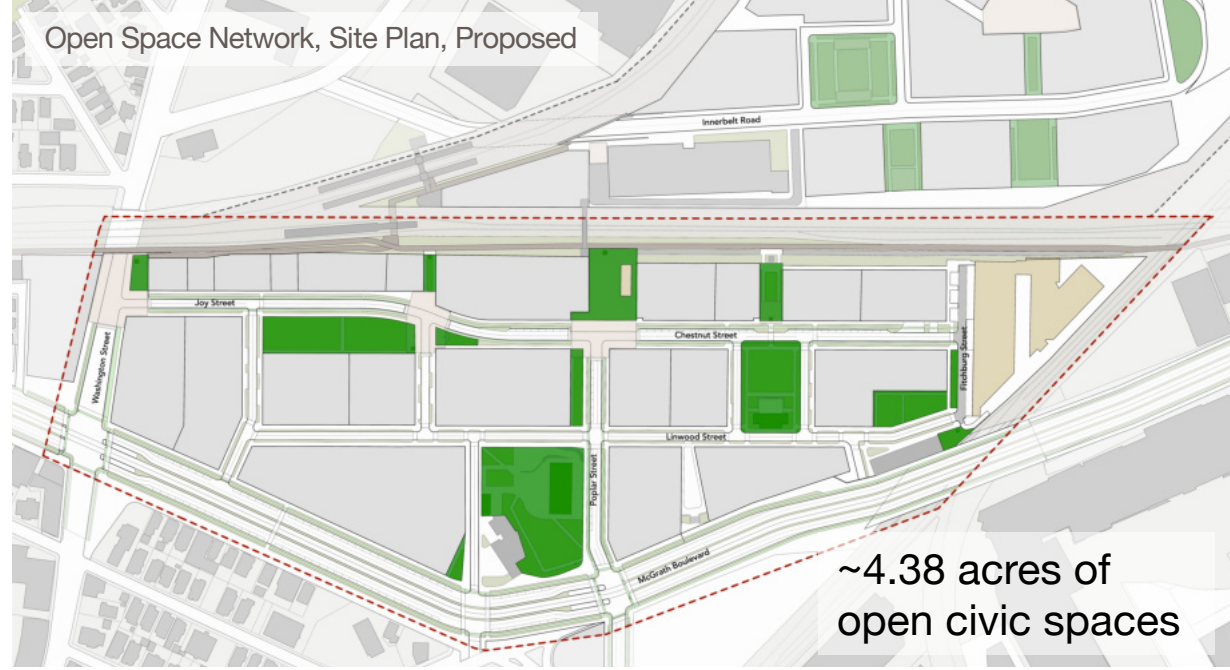
## GOAL 2: Create New Quality Open Spaces.

**Action:** Develop regulatory framework for implementing new civic spaces in an organized and coordinated fashion to ensure development of public space is not left solely to the private sector.

**Action:** Encourage large amounts of plantings and green space be included in the design of civic spaces in an effort to develop a more livable and sustainable environment.

**Action:** Develop a coordinated plan that defines activities, uses, and goals for civic spaces of different scales around the neighborhood.

*“(We need) Outdoor spaces to congregate”*



## Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

### GOAL 3: Foster Places Where People Know Their Neighbors.

The existing residents in Brickbottom enjoy a close-knit community. This social aspect of Brickbottom needs to be maintained and expanded. As the neighborhood grows, it is vital to bring daily services and businesses to within a close walk of residents and workers. The local cafe and the corner store will help create ‘third places’ where neighbors can bump into each other expanding and strengthening the social bonds within the neighborhood.

**Action:** Locate small, locally-oriented shops, restaurants, and ‘third-places’ throughout Brickbottom to create a convenient and functional neighborhood.

**Action:** Encourage friendly and welcoming environments where residents and workers in the neighborhood can engage socially.

**Action:** Establish a neighborhood group that is open to all living and working in the neighborhood. This group needs to host social functions and assist with leading the transformation of the area.

*“How do we keep youth here?”*



## Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

### GOAL 4: Promote Vibrant Daytime Street Life.

Today the streets are mainly empty of people in Brickbottom. Currently people fear the random quick-moving truck or car coming around the next corner, so the community wants their public realm to be more friendly to those not driving. There is also a desire for the streets in Brickbottom to be vibrant places filled with trees and people - dog walking, unloading gear for a performance, a group sitting enjoying each other's company, bumping into another painter or colleague working in the neighborhood can all be typical daily scenes in the community's life.

**Action:** Ensure that the civic spaces in the area are welcoming to neighbors and have places for people to linger in public which are not monetized or commercially focused.

**Action:** Encourage active ground floor uses and variety in uses along key pedestrian streets—like Chestnut, Joy, Linwood, and Poplar—through incentives and regulation.

**Action:** Make it easy for businesses and residents to use sidewalks and public spaces for sales displays, outdoor dining, art or creative installations, and other social uses.



## Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

### GOAL 5: Pursue A Balance of Integrated Land Uses.

The community envisions Brickbottom evolving into a more vibrant neighborhood while also maintaining some of its current industrial character. Great neighborhoods have a mix of different uses which complement one another. Many find the idea of maintaining the current funky vibe while adding new uses among the existing users a compelling vision. Making Brickbottom more inviting for residential, commercial, and other uses should help make a more balanced, functional neighborhood.

**Action:** Create policies and guidelines that will result in a mostly even split between residential and commercial land uses.

**Action:** Develop policies that foster arts and creative users throughout the mix of other uses to reinforce the artistic character envisioned for Brickbottom.

**Action:** Encourage a balance of neighborhood services to grow throughout Brickbottom which allow residents and workers to meet their daily needs locally.

Table summarizing the sub-totals for each land use in acres. Include the following in this table:

**Total study area – 47 acres**

**Commercial Use – approximately 7.9 acres**

**Residential/Mixed-use – approximately 8.8 acres**

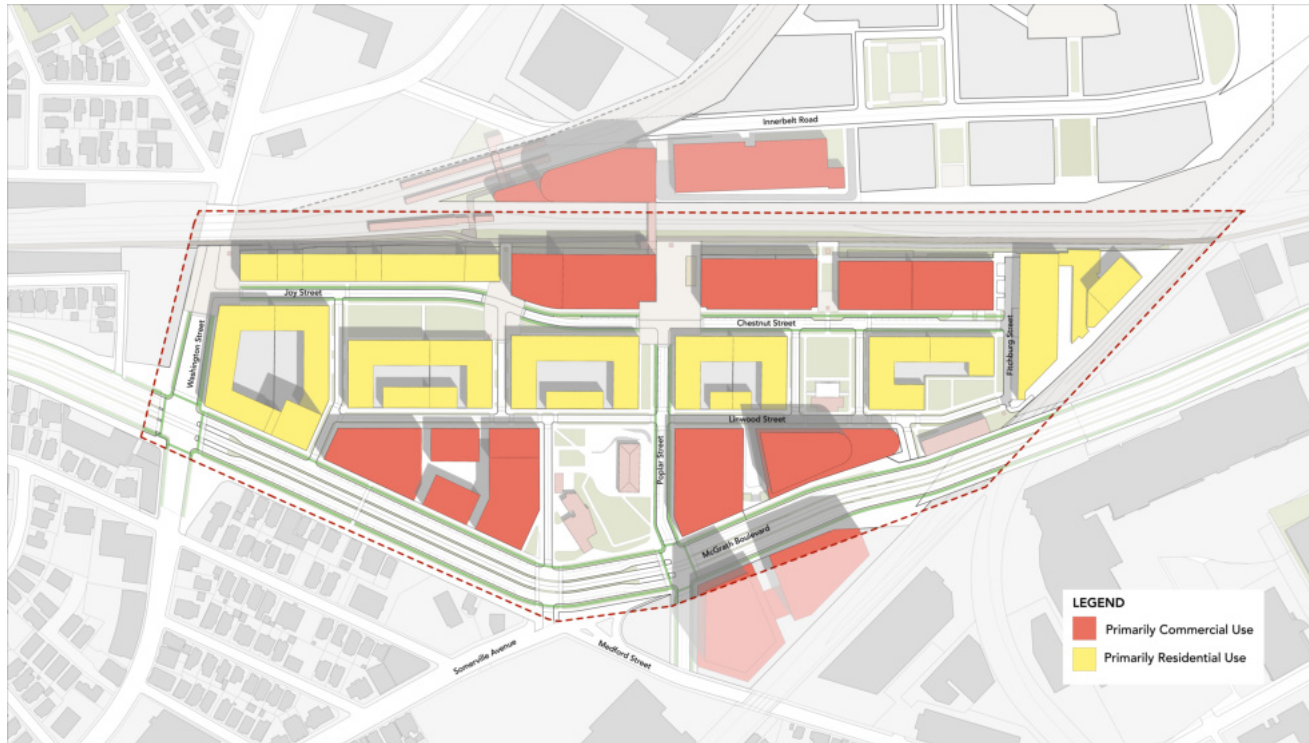
**Existing Civic Spaces – 0.1 acres + 1.4 acres ArtFarm**

**Proposed Civic Spaces – approximately 2.9 acres**

Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

Goal 3: Pursue A Balance of Integrated Land Uses.



Land Use Diagram – Preferred

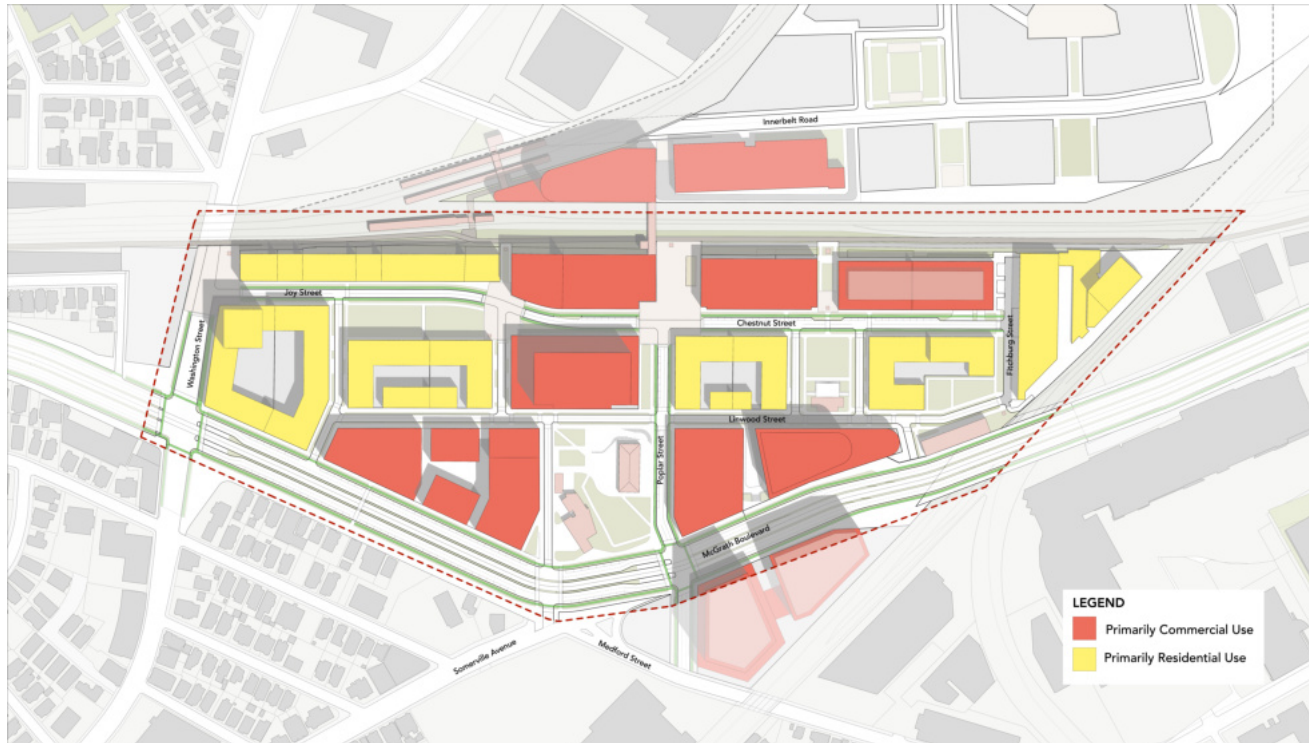


Land Use Axon Diagram – Preferred

Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

Goal 3: Pursue A Balance of Integrated Land Uses.



Land Use Diagram – Alternative 1



Land Use Axon Diagram – Alternative 1

## Vision Statement 1

# Create a Complete Neighborhood

### GOAL 6: Preserve and Create Varied Housing Types.

Brickbottom needs to contribute to the city's larger SomerVision 2040 goals for housing production. The creation of affordable homes, perhaps focusing on the arts, presents a significant opportunity for Brickbottom that can further enhance the area as a complete neighborhood. The area is relatively small, and focus is needed to integrate plans for range of housing early in the redevelopment.

**Action:** Work with the OPSCD's Housing Division, the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund, landowners, and other housing resources to create a housing implementation plan for the area.

**Action:** Create an economic and investment plan for preserving both affordable residential units and arts and creative enterprise spaces in the area.

**Action:** Allow and pursue a range of housing types which can accommodate a variety of lifestyles.

*“Artists are not all single people. Artists have families too.”*





## **2. Improve Access and Connectivity**

## Vision Statement 2

# Improve Access and Connectivity

Enhance connections within and around the neighborhood prioritizing safe & comfortable pedestrian and bicycle amenities, leveraging mass transit investments, and limiting parking.

### GOALS:

1. **New person-trips for new development must be about 75% by transit, rideshare, biking and walking.**
2. **Build a safer, inviting, and continuous environment for walking and biking.**
3. **Reduce block size.**
4. **Create pedestrian and bike connections between Brickbottom, the Community Path, Innerbelt, and Milk Square.**
5. **Avoid Vertical Cul-de-Sacs. Implement Park-once strategy.**
6. **Leverage and expand upon new & existing transit service.**

### SomerVision2040 Goals

**Increase transportation equity across the city.** Historically, marginalized groups – specifically low-income communities and communities of color – have been left out of planning processes. These groups tend to live in areas with inadequate and unsafe transportation infrastructure. The City should increase access in underserved neighborhoods.

**Reduce.** Minimize the overall space in Somerville dedicated to personal vehicles.

**Prioritize vulnerable road users.** When designing our streets, they must be safe for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities, children, roadway workers, and other vulnerable populations and may require dedicated infrastructure for these users.

**Prioritize walking, biking, and transit access.** Cities are more enjoyable, safer, and more economically prosperous when more space is dedicated to people than cars. Use reclaimed space to create new public spaces, safe infrastructure for sustainable mode users, and other community uses.

*“Connected to surrounding neighborhoods and transit”*

### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

In order to achieve the city-wide and neighborhood goals of attracting people and uses to Brickbottom, the streetscape needs to reflect its focus on people. Some of the street and urban scape needs include comfortable and enjoyable sidewalks, safe bicycle infrastructure, good and clear access to the transit options, walkable block sizes.

Define urban design and mobility measures that guarantee having people actively in the streets. In order to have a safe and enjoyable neighborhood, every resident, worker, and visitor needs to be a pedestrian. This also means that this is key to make sure that the private automobile is relegated to end of the list of priorities. People, not vehicles, is what makes a livable street.



### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

**GOAL 1: New person-trips for new development must be about 75% by transit, rideshare, biking and walking.**

One of Brickbottom main accessibility challenges is the limited connections to the larger city street network, resulting in limited in and out options. Furthermore, the neighborhood only has 4 entry and 3 exit points, all of them as right-in right-out only intersections.

The current Small Area Plan has been accounting for the transportation accessibility impacts that all the additional development happening in the surrounding Transformation Areas will have to this area of the city. Based on preliminary modeling, even with aggressive parking policies, all these areas could add over 6 or 7 thousand new parking spaces.

**Based on the network capacity, and in line with SomerVision 2040, only about 25% of new person-trips can be accommodated in the new parking**



### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

**GOAL 1: New person-trips for new development must be about 75% by transit, rideshare, biking and walking.**

**Action:** Improve walking and biking environment as soon and as tactical as possible in order to induce other modes of transportation from day one.

**Action:** Limit the allowable new parking in the neighborhood based on expected new person-trips for the area.

**Action:** Ensure that all streets are green and complete. Incentivize active and livable streets for all people.

See additional goals of this vision statement for further details.



### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

### GOAL 2: Build a safer, inviting, and continuous environment for walking and biking.

Most street frontages within Brickbottom lack any real sidewalks or other pedestrian amenities. While minimal sidewalks do exist along McGrath Highway, within the neighborhood many lots have laid macadam all the way to the curb, others lack even curbing. Intersections along Poplar have received some initial tactical intervention in the form of painted areas along the curb which do serve to connect crosswalks. Overall, pedestrian infrastructure is minimal and insufficient for even existing users.

**Action:** Center all design and infrastructure improvements in the neighborhood around people. This area needs to shift from an auto-oriented neighborhood to a place that guarantees safety and comfort for people.

**Action:** Design fast tactical design changes to existing streets to improve the streetscape conditions in the short-term. Use demonstration projects to quickly and inexpensively improve street safety.

*“Comfortable for pedestrians and bikes”*



**Vision Statement 3**

**Improve Access and Connectivity**

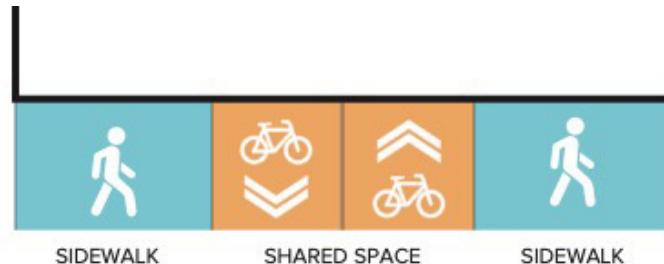
**GOAL 2: Build a safer, inviting, and continuous environment for walking and biking.**

**Action:** Redesign the existing and new secondary street sections to better accommodate good and comfortable pedestrian infrastructure within the current average right-of-way.

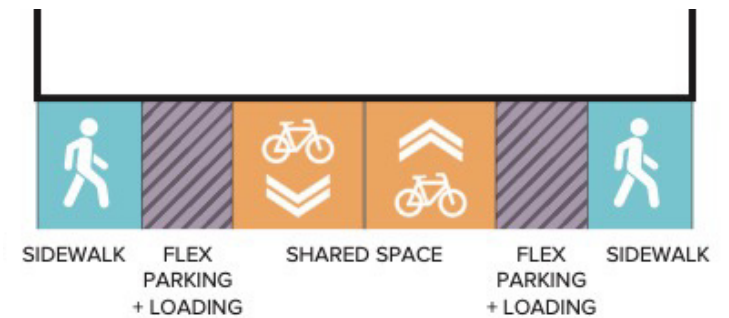
The following schematic designs are part of a set of alternatives that complement each other and should be considered by the City in case-by-case on each street.



Existing street section  
~50ft ROW



People street alternative:  
Wide sidewalks



Working street alternative:  
Flex space for loading activities

### Vision Statement 3

# Improve Access and Connectivity

**GOAL 2: Build a safer, inviting, and continuous environment for walking and biking.**

**Action:** Strengthen bike connections from the interior of Brickbottom into the Community Path.

**Action:** Build safe bike infrastructure, according to Somerville’s already successful examples, along key routes within and around Brickbottom.

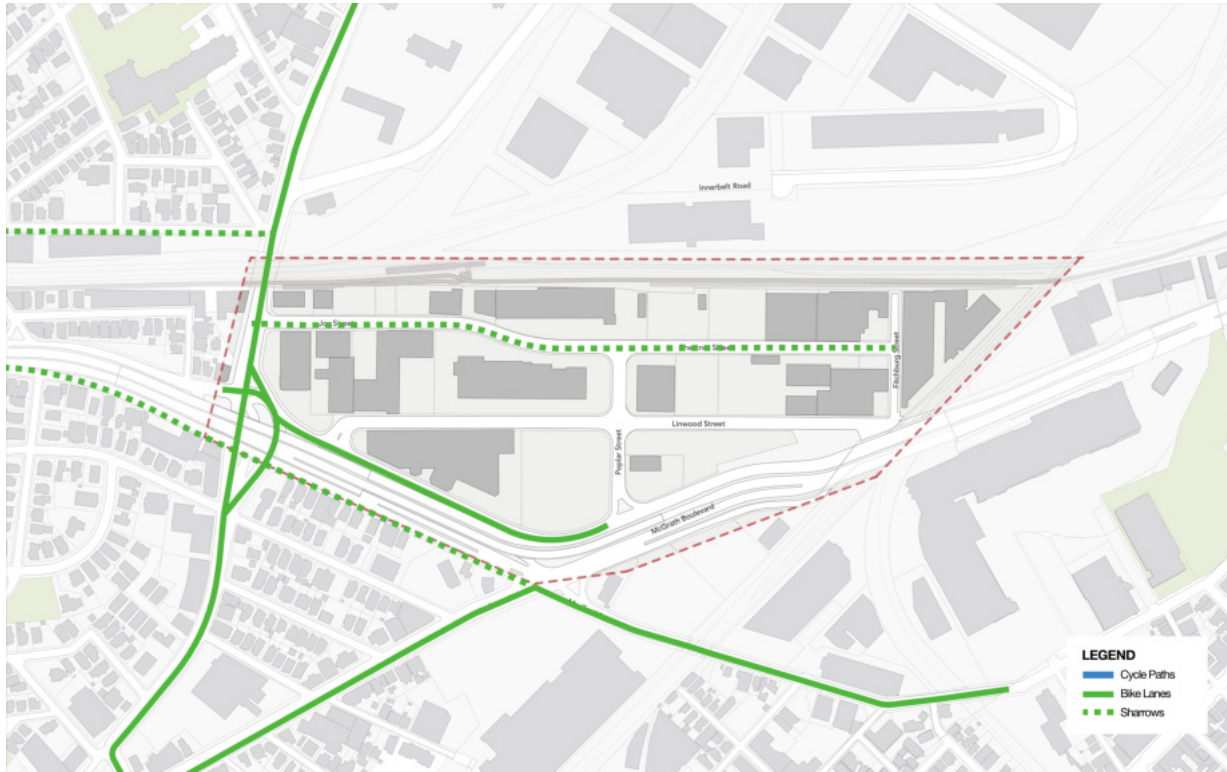




### Vision Statement 3

# Improve Access and Connectivity

**GOAL 2: Build a safer, inviting, and continuous environment for walking and biking.**



Existing Neighborhood Bike Network



Improved Neighborhood Bike Network

### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

### GOAL 3: Reduce block size.

The existing block structure is the result of a long history of changing uses and informal planning. The current layout is not ideal for local circulation—especially walking, with unusually long blocks (some over 1000 feet long) and few connections.

**Action:** Actively collaborate with landowners and developers to break down parcels into smaller walkable parts. The current block dimensions are narrow on the east-west alignment and very long in the north-south direction, meaning that several additional east-west thoroughfares are needed to connect Joy/Chestnut Streets with Linwood Street and McGrath Boulevard.

**Action:** Collaborate with MassDOT to define strategies to improve the connection up the Squires Bridge for better pedestrian connections across the MBTA tracks towards Twin City Plaza and East Cambridge



Existing Block Structure



Proposed Plan Block Structure

### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

### GOAL 3: Create pedestrian and bike connections between Brickbottom, the Community Path, Innerbelt, and Milk Square.

Due to the location of significant infrastructure, Brickbottom has largely been cut off from surrounding areas. Rail beds to the east and south prevent any access, and the McGrath Highway and overpass to the west reduces pedestrian and even automotive access significantly. The entire neighborhood functions much like a cul-de-sac with most access limited to Joy Street.

Creating connections with surrounding areas is a major goal of the community and is essential for the long-term success of Brickbottom. While Innerbelt has been disconnected from Brickbottom for as long as the railroads have existed in the area, tying the two areas together could provide both neighborhoods with significant benefits. Furthermore, the new GLX station currently only has an access on directly on Washington street increasing the walking distance from the inner part of Brickbottom.



**GOAL 3: Create pedestrian and bike connections between Brickbottom, the Community Path, Innerbelt, and Milk Square.**



**Action:** Study several potential connections on the east side of Brickbottom that would include:

- Connection(s) across the rail tracks into Innerbelt
- Connection(s) up to the Community Path and additional access to the GLX station

All of these have different degree of complexities and require further analysis.

- A. Potential new Community Path and Green Line Station Access off Joy Street
- B. At-grade connection to Innerbelt from Brickbottom and through the Green Line station
- C. Poplar Street connection to the Community Path
- D. Potential connection to Innerbelt over the rail tracks
- E. Potential connection to Community Path from Chestnut Street
- F. Potential connection to Innerbelt under the Green Line's and Community Path's viaducts.

### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

### **GOAL 4: Create pedestrian and bike connections between Brickbottom, the Community Path, Innerbelt, and Milk Square.**

#### Joy Street Community Path and MBTA Station Access + Crossing to Innerbelt.

Creating an additional access point to the MBTA directly off Joy Street would improve the service coverage of the station by decreasing the walking distance to the station entrance from the interior of the neighborhood. This path would also provide an additional access to the Community Path. Additionally, given the terrain grading, there is a potential at-grade connection Innerbelt through the Green Line station and tracks. This would require coordination with the MBTA.

#### Poplar Street Connection

Following an easement for stormwater infrastructure, a connection to the Community Path may be possible at the east end of Poplar Street through the proposed “Neon Williams Plaza”. This area should also be studied for a potential bridge connection to Innerbelt over the rail tracks.

#### Chestnut Street Connection

Similar to the Poplar Street access to the Community Path, a potential access off Chestnut street north of 100 Chestnut Street project should be explored. The access to the Community Path would need to cross the MBTA access road. A connection over the rail tracks into Innerbelt appears to be infeasible due to grade changes.

#### Fitchburg Street Connection to Innerbelt

Explore a connection at the east end of Fitchburg Street to Innerbelt. At this point the Community Path and the Green Line tracks are above the ground as viaducts. It may be possible to connect with Innerbelt but it requires further studies.

### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

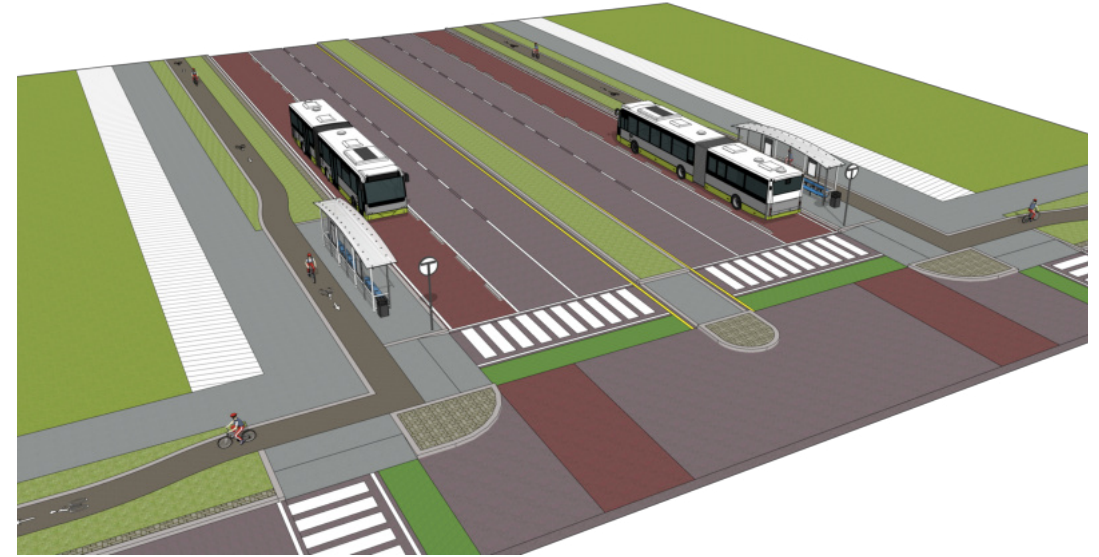
### GOAL 4: Create pedestrian and bike connections between Brickbottom, the Community Path, Innerbelt, and Milk Square.

**Action:** Support the implementation of the short-term improvements to McGrath Highway underway by MassDOT. A road-diet is expected to mitigate automotive hazards and include infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians.

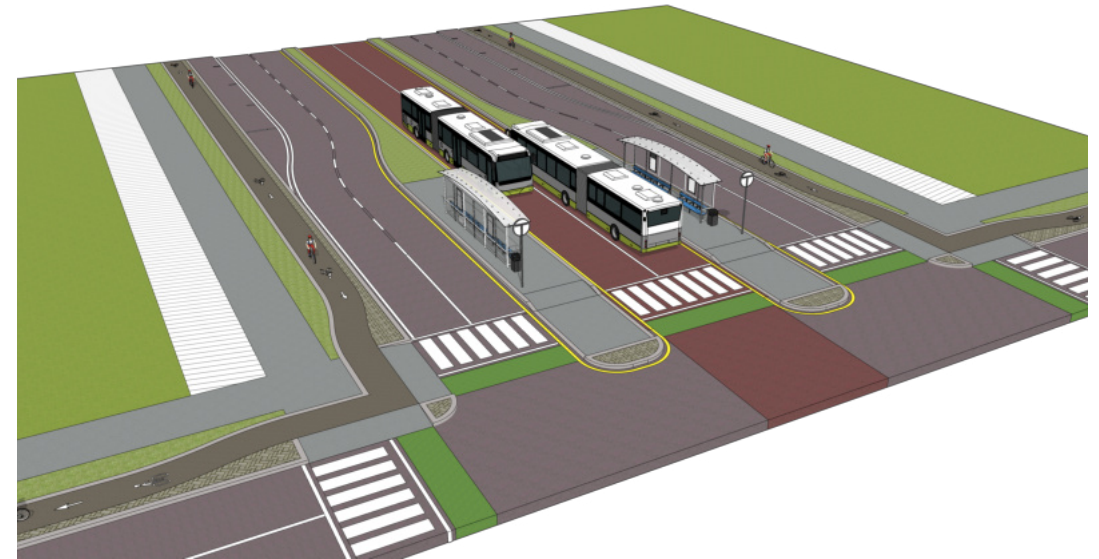
**Action:** Actively collaborate with state authorities to design a people-scaled multi-modal McGrath Boulevard. In the longer-term, McGrath Highway is expected to be grounded allowing a better visual and experiential connection across the boulevard and tying Brickbottom to the future Milk Square and the Union Square area.

**Action:** Analyze alternatives for rebuilding the Squires Bridge north embankment and softening the north ramp slope to better integrate the bridge to abutting parcels.

**Action:** Collaborate with MassDOT to define strategies to improve the connection up the Squire Bridge for better pedestrian connections across the MBTA tracks towards Twin City Plaza and East Cambridge



McGrath Blvd Design Alternative with side rapid bus



McGrath Blvd Design Alternative with central rapid bus

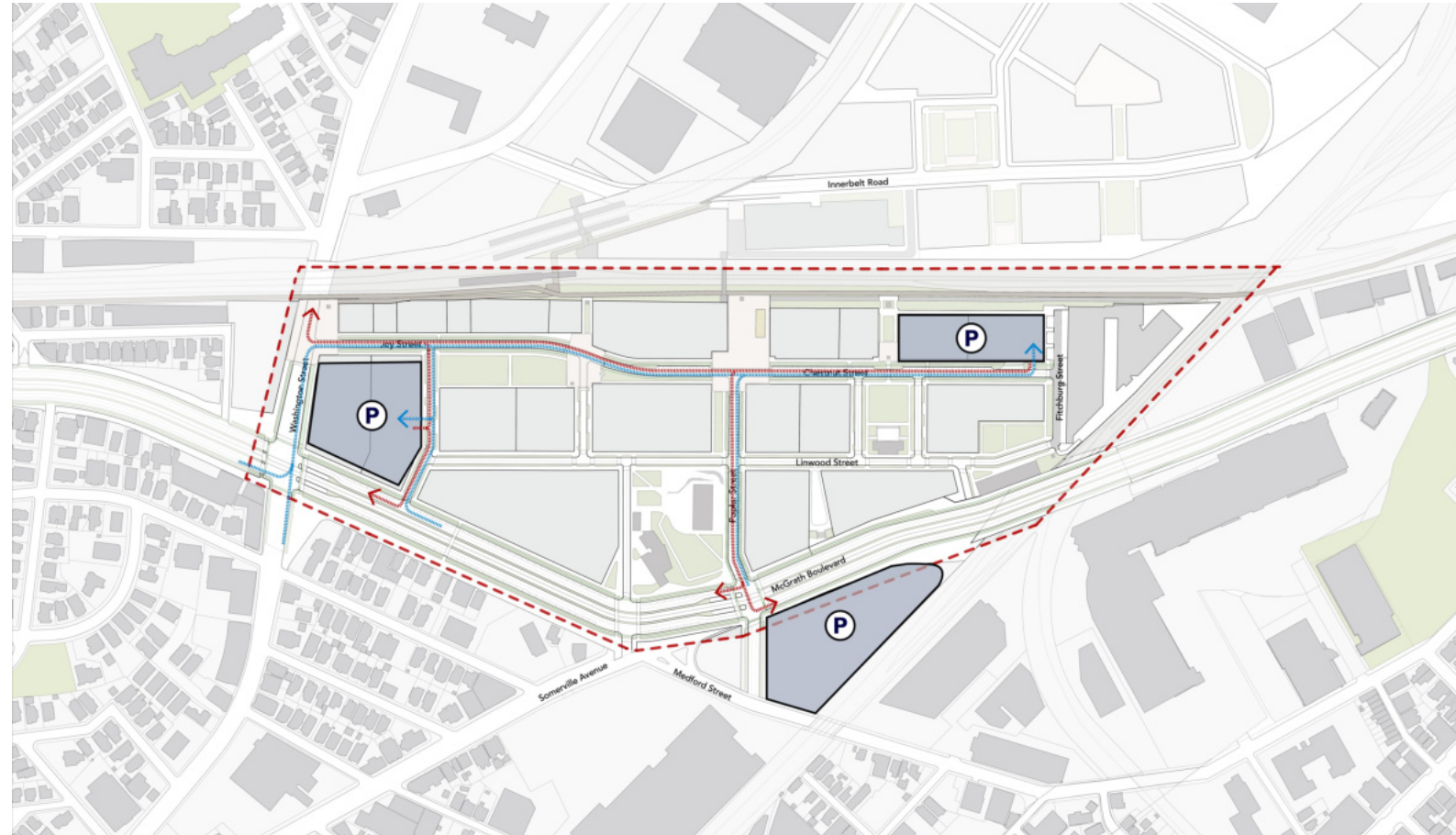
### Vision Statement 3

## Improve Access and Connectivity

### GOAL 5: Avoid Vertical Cul-de-Sacs. Implement Park-once strategy.

As mentioned previously, the Brickbottom neighborhood functions as a cul-de-sac currently – horizontally. As development occurs in this area, it is important to emphasize people on the street and not to create vertical cul-de-sacs of workers using only elevators to go from underground parking to an office.

Action: Create a parking plan for consolidating or centralizing structured underground parking facilities that are shared by residents and businesses across the district.



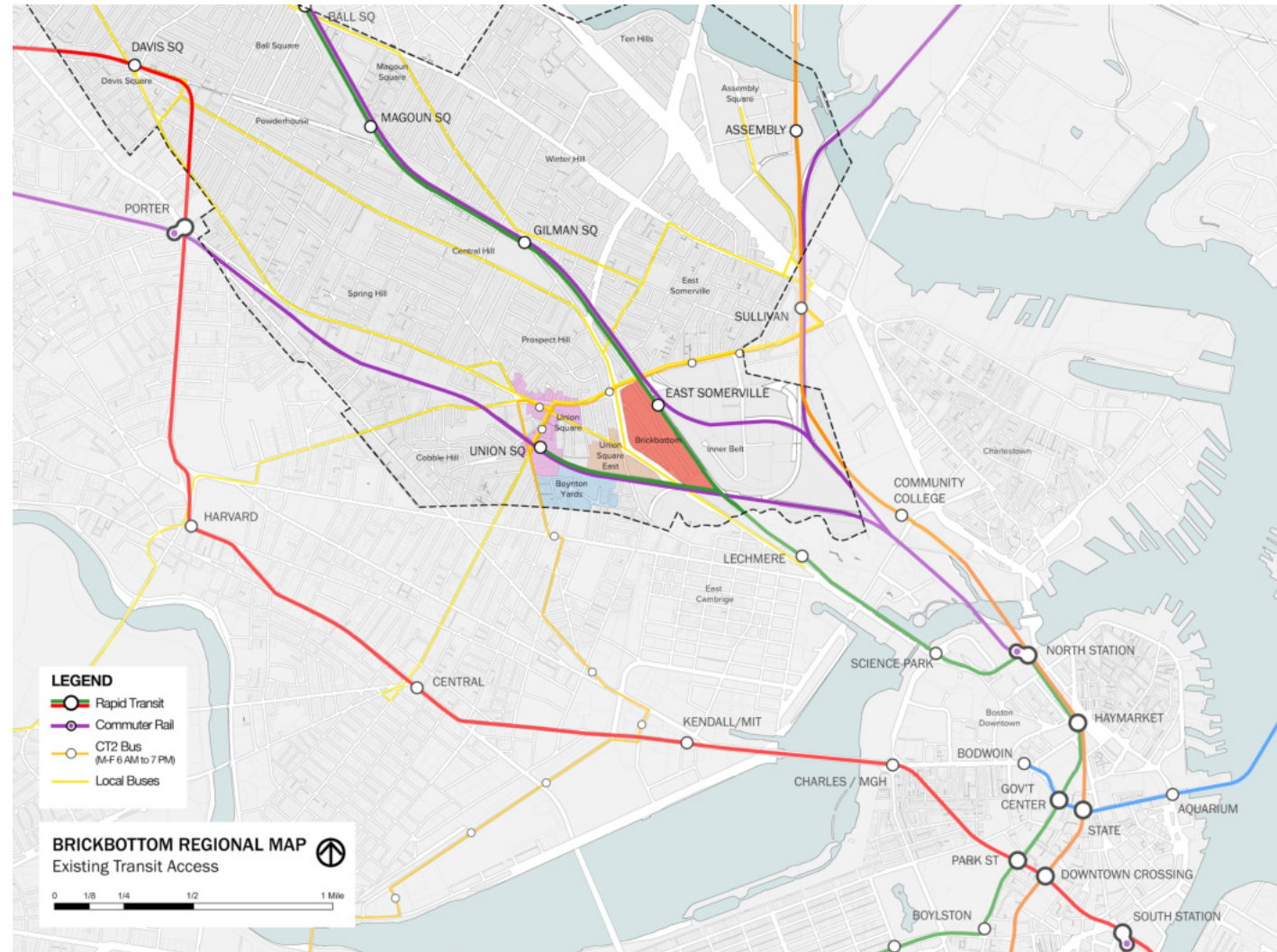
### Vision Statement 3

# Improve Access and Connectivity

## GOAL 6: Leverage and expand upon new & existing transit service.

With the extension of MBTA's Green Line (GLX) finally opening in 2022 the transit access for Brickbottom will drastically improve. Having the East Somerville station located directly adjacent to the neighborhood and the Union Square station at just over ¼ mile away the area will now be directly connected to Downtown Boston in just a few minutes.

While the GLX is a crucial improvement, there is still work to be done to strengthen connections to other parts of Somerville, areas of interest in Cambridge like Kendall Square, and outer areas of Boston. Further improvements in the transit connectivity would help reducing existing and future car-trips into the neighborhood.





### Vision Statement 3

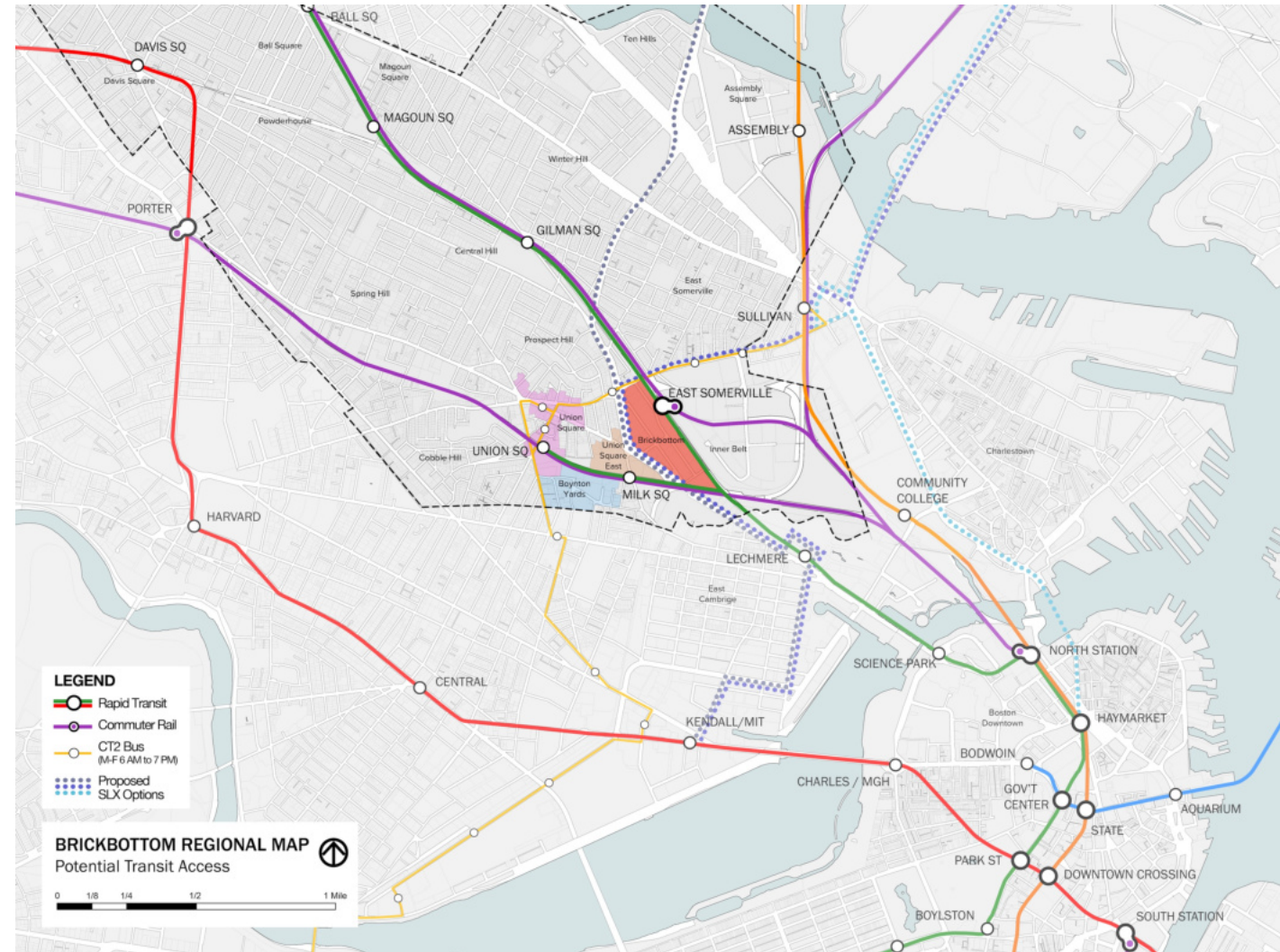
# Improve Access and Connectivity

## GOAL 6: Leverage and expand upon new & existing transit service.

**Action:** Actively collaborate with the MBTA with their analysis of the Silver Line Extension (SLX), which includes several alternatives that would utilize McGrath as part of the route.

**Action:** Consider an enhanced transit connection between Brickbottom, Boynton Yards and the Kendall Square area.

**Action:** Coordinate mobility management programs with developments in the surrounding transformation areas, especially in regard to micro-mobility of shuttle systems.



*“Better connection to the MBTA and community path”*

### Vision Statement 3

# Improve Access and Connectivity

**GOAL 6: Leverage and expand upon new & existing transit service.**

**Action:** Engage in conversations with the MBTA to analyze potential local bus service changes that better connect the neighborhood to the bus network. With the Green Line extension some bus route could modify their terminus from Lechmere station to the GLX station in Brickbottom. Further analysis would be needed.



Existing Transit Service in Brickbottom



Potential Modified and New Transit Service

# **3. Support Arts & Creative Uses**

### Vision Statement 3

## Support Artists and Creative Uses

Foster the existing arts community while expanding into new and related fields while developing a reputation as an arts destination.

#### GOALS:

1. **Prioritize Spaces for the Arts & Creative Activities.**
2. **Encourage Pop-up and Temporary Arts + Cultural Spaces.**
3. **Celebrate Art in Public Spaces.**
4. **Create Compelling Reasons to Visit & Stay.**
5. **Care for Brickbottom’s Identity.**
6. **Financial Support for the Arts.**

### SomerVision2040 Goals

**Support and protect artists.** With rising costs, special effort is needed to preserve and extend Somerville’s status as a home for artists and musicians.

**Find ways for commercial development to support small businesses.** Explore how to leverage new development to provide additional benefits including small retail spaces or more affordable space for new and existing independent, local businesses.

**Continue to support small businesses.** Work to create an environment that enables existing small businesses to thrive and produce entrepreneurial opportunities for new ones. Ensure that the regulatory environment supports the innovative business models necessary for businesses to adapt.

### Vision Statement 3

## Support Artists and Creative Uses

### GOAL 1: Prioritize Spaces for the Arts & Creative Activities

Brickbottom always needs spaces for art to be made, shown, sold, and enjoyed. As the neighborhood evolves, the creative community needs stable places to work to remain in the area instead of being displaced. The social bonds and relationships within the existing creative community are necessary to establish a vibrant arts scene in Brickbottom. There is a unique opportunity as Brickbottom redevelops to create space where artists and makers can do their work and create. There needs to be more than just artist studios such as performing arts theaters, practice spaces, workshops, galleries, or any other space where the creative process plays out.

**Action:** Cultivate a community that supports the Arts by focusing on fostering an arts scene to ensure a vibrant culture exists and maintains a sense of authenticity and genuine creative energy. An arts scene emerges when there are many different creative fields, all living, working, showing, and performing in the same neighborhood.

**Action:** Update the current zoning policies so that the percentage of arts and creative enterprise space required more specifically addresses the needs and economic conditions.

**Action:** Establish alternative pathways for large development projects to financially support the creation of arts and creative enterprise spaces.

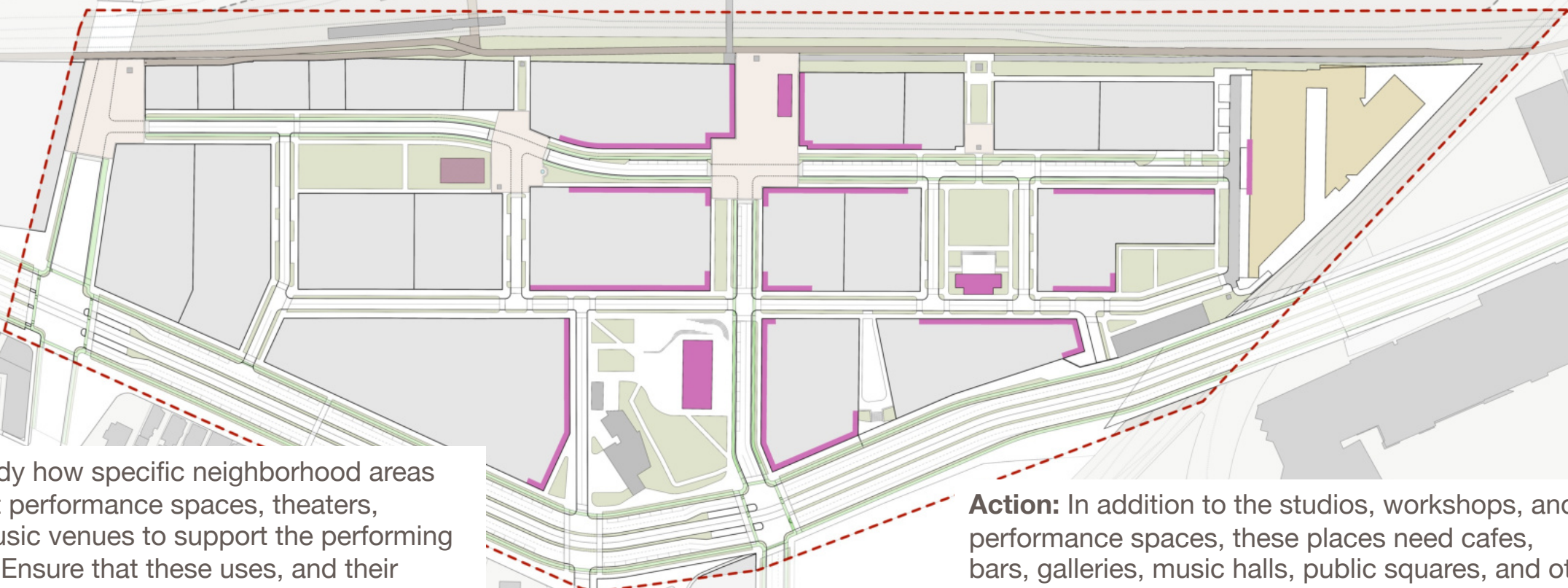
**Action:** Assist in creating artist led local organizations to support the existing arts community and to ensure a more open and productive dialogue occurs between this community, developers and property owners, and the City. Clear and frequent communication will help ensure the needs of all involved with the evolution of the neighborhood can participate in this growth.



Vision Statement 3

# Support Artists and Creative Uses

## Proposed Locations of Arts & Creative Spaces



**Action:** Study how specific neighborhood areas can support performance spaces, theaters, clubs, or music venues to support the performing arts further. Ensure that these uses, and their later operating hours, are appropriately coordinated with existing and future residential development.

**Action:** In addition to the studios, workshops, and performance spaces, these places need cafes, bars, galleries, music halls, public squares, and other "third spaces" that allow the creative community to bump into neighbors and colleagues - The Bump Factor.

### Vision Statement 3

## Support Artists and Creative Uses

### GOAL 2: Encourage 'Pop-up' and Temporary Arts + Cultural Spaces

The existing conditions in Brickbottom offer the community an opportunity to work with the industrial businesses and property owners to use the land in the neighborhood for more arts and creative activities sooner rather than later. With relatively minor changes to parking lots, service or work yards, and fencing, many of the streets in the neighborhood could have inexpensive temporary spaces installed that can provide seasonally or even year-round areas for the arts. The relatively low cost to install these containers, Quonset huts, or pole barns as temporary or pop-up facilities can help establish Brickbottom as a unique place that supports the arts. Starting this temporary or pop-up approach now can help establish a more collaborative approach to integrating the arts into more permanent infrastructure or buildings in development in the neighborhood.

**Action:** Create an implementation plan for methods the City can directly support the creation and operations of these temporary spaces. The City should treat these structures as "infrastructure" and plan to reuse them repeatedly as Brickbottom redevelops.



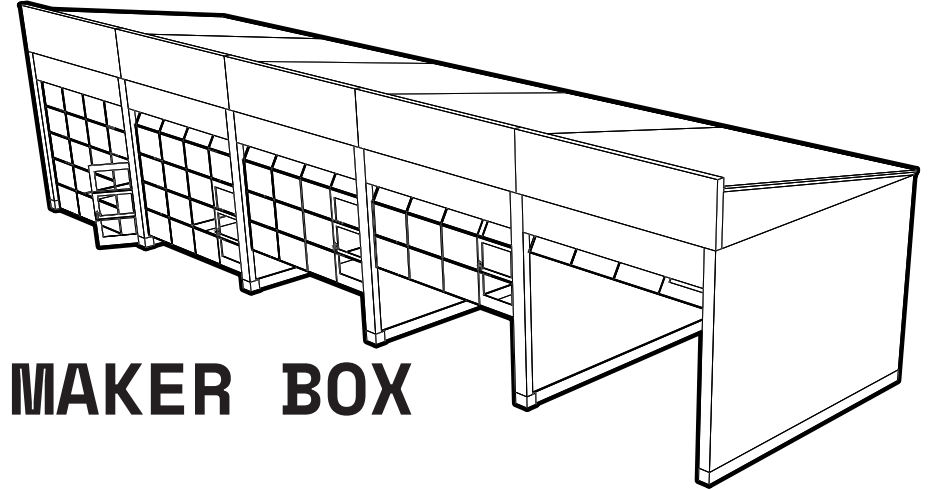
**Vision Statement 3**

# Support Artists and Creative Uses

## GOAL 2: Encourage 'Pop-up' and Temporary Arts + Cultural Spaces

**Action:** Work with property owners and developers to establish flexible leasing and occupancy programs to make pop-up spaces and temporary installations possible. The City can incentivize participation in these programs through tax benefits or other collaborative measures.

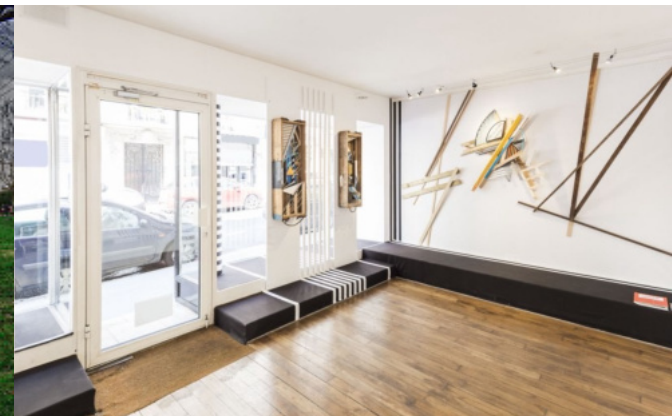
**Action:** Coordinate with the Somerville Art's Council to establish a working group to further develop this idea in parallel with the long-term space needs of the arts and creative businesses in the neighborhood. Use the short-term, temporary or pop-up spaces to test and refine the longer-term plans.



DRAFT



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### Vision Statement 3

## Support Artists and Creative Uses

### GOAL 3: Celebrate Art in Public Spaces

Displaying or performing art in public requires infrastructure. This infrastructure ranges from a simple electric outlet to power instruments to large sculpture installations with significant foundations. Many opportunities for permanent and temporary art displays throughout the neighborhood need to exist. These may range from painted murals, sculptures in parks, outdoor performances, or light shows.

**Action:** Create a public art plan for the neighborhood to encourage and guide property owners and developers in placing for public art.

**Action:** Support the Somerville Art's Council to fund and coordinate the creation of extensive public artworks.

**Action:** Establish a percentage for the arts in any public projects occurring within or surrounding the neighborhood. Ensure that this program involves artists as early as possible to guarantee that art is central to planning these projects and is not an afterthought.



### Vision Statement 3

## Support Artists and Creative Uses

### GOAL 4: Create Compelling Reasons To Visit & Stay

Brickbottom can play host to art festivals and other "spectacles" that well-known art districts play host to that help bring in audiences, visitors, and, ultimately, patrons for the arts. Creating these compelling reasons to spend time in Brickbottom sooner rather than later will help enhance the neighborhood's public life. Hosting seasonal and special events will lead to discoveries that can improve the future development of the civic spaces and facilities in the area.

**Action:** Produce more significant events that bring people together in Brickbottom and expose them to works of art.

**Action:** Create recurring events in the neighborhood that are attractive to the larger regional art scene. Establish the conditions to produce similar events in Brickbottom so that the district becomes a "venue" for the arts overall.

**Action:** Plan for places that the local community can come together to focus on wellness, host Yoga or other group exercise activities to ensure that the residents and workers in the neighborhood have opportunities to move their bodies. Creativity can benefit from exercise.



### Vision Statement 3

## Support Artists and Creative Uses

### GOAL 5: Care for Brickbottom's Identity

Many have mentioned the funky character as an endearing quality, and hope it remains as the neighborhood evolves. This gritty characteristic is part of Brickbottom's identity and work needs to occur to strengthen Brickbottom's identity further. Great art districts have iconic or recognizable identities, but care is necessary to ensure that this identity is authentic and sincerely emerges from the arts and creative community.

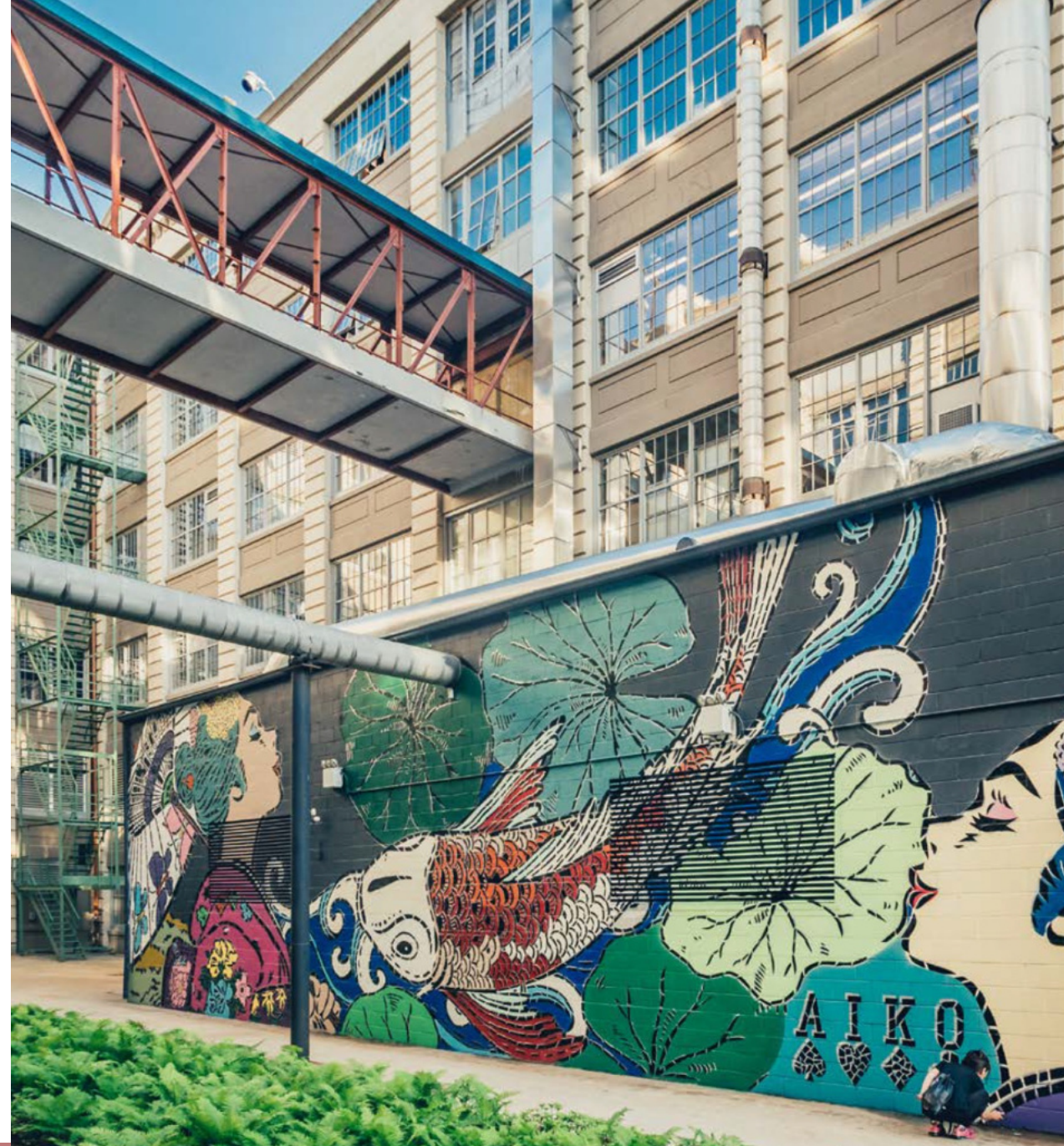
**Action:** Develop ways that artists and creatives can be part of the neighborhood's planning, design, and construction. Let the art define the place.

**Action:** Create opportunities for artists and local makers to design and fabricate the civic elements of the neighborhoods, such as street furniture, kiosk, and signage. The City can directly support creating jobs for artists and makers by making these items locally.

*"We value the [gritty, arts] character of the neighborhood"*

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## Vision Statement 2

# Support Artists and Creative Uses

## GOAL 7: Financial Support for the Arts

Creating conditions and opportunities where the public and private sectors financially support the arts requires leadership. There are great examples of places with vibrant arts scenes where direct investment in these efforts was essential to setting the conditions for success. There need to be Champions that help fund, fundraise, and organize the support for the arts. History has shown that investing in the Arts can produce cultural and economic returns on investment.

**Action:** Leverage the Somerville Art's Council expertise to lead and organize the funding for the arts in Brickbottom.

**Action:** Task the Somerville Art's Council and the City's Economic Development team with determining whether a Business Improvement District would be suitable to this area.

**Action:** Study establishing Brickbottom as an Innovation District focused on the arts, as well as what additional capacity the Somerville Art's Council and other City staff might need to ensure Brickbottom remains a long-term vibrant creative hub.



## **4. Implement Sustainable + Human-Scaled Design**

## Vision Statement 4

# Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design

Ensuring a sustainable path forward while keeping the people who live and work in Brickbottom at the center of future growth.

### GOALS:

1. Establish Incentives and Standards For Green Building Practices.
2. Support the Implementation Of ArtFarm.
3. Grow And Maintain A Robust Tree Canopy.
4. Minimize Shadows And Maximize Natural Light That Can Reach The Ground.
5. Implement Human-scale Design In Buildings And Civic Spaces.

## SomerVision2040 Goals

**Focus on our largest GHG contributor.** Buildings are the largest contributor to Somerville's emissions, and we need to continue to focus on them even though we have limited leverage.

**Promote sustainability in commercial development.** Ensure that commercial development uses sustainable design, technology, and practices.

**Utilize innovative and sustainable solutions.** Updating our water and sewer systems is integral to climate change mitigation in Somerville.

**Prioritize sustainability.** Our parks and public realm are designed with climate and sustainability in mind, which sometimes can be at odds with maintenance concerns or design aesthetic. We need to prioritize sustainability in every public space.



## Vision Statement 4

# Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design

## GOAL 1: Establish Incentives and Standards For Green Building Practices.

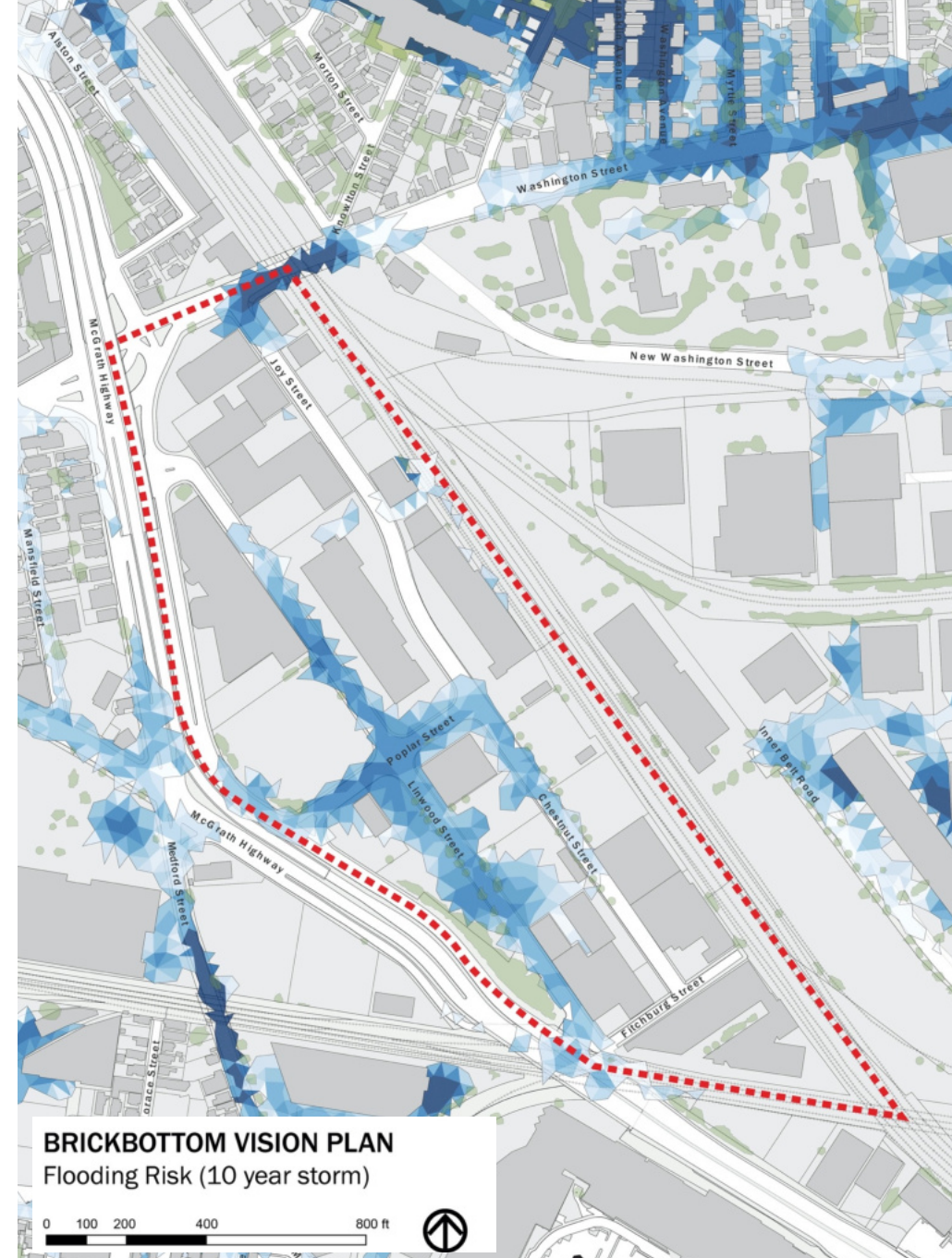
The new development in Brickbottom has an opportunity to set new standards for green building practices and sustainable urban design. Addressing sustainability issues related to buildings can be a major component in the reduction of GHG emissions.

**Action:** Incentivize green and sustainable building practices beyond the minimum zoning requirements with density or other bonuses and explore the feasibility of various LEED, ILFI, and PHIUS standards.

**Action:** Seek specific actionable standards to address community wide issues like the heat-island effect and storm water management.

**Action:** Consider requirements for the electrification of central heating systems and other means to reduce GHG produced by buildings themselves.

**Action:** Incorporate sustainability interventions throughout the private and public realm.



**Vision Statement 4**

# Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design

**GOAL 2: Support The Implementation Of ArtFarm.**

The completion of Art Farm is essential to the vision for the neighborhood. This space can be the center of the neighborhood and provide a unique space for the cultural activities envisioned to expand in the future of Brickbottom.

**Action:** Seek ways for the Brickbottom community to engage with the implementation of ArtFarm throughout the project to encourage support and optimal design.

**Action:** Use the Poplar Street Pump Station as an educational tool for climate change and flooding issues.

**Action:** Communicate to the community about the steps and interrelated activities occurring to finish ArtFarm.

**Action:** Build on the success of ArtFarm to set the stage for an extensive open space network within Brickbottom.



Diagram of the proposed Poplar Street Pump Station and ArtFarm



**Vision Statement 4**

# Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design

## **GOAL 3: Grow And Maintain A Robust Tree Canopy.**

Trees enhance nearly every aspect of city life. They moderate extreme temperatures, improve air quality, mitigate stormwater runoff, calm traffic, increase property values and retail sales, and provide habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, among countless other environmental, economic, and public health benefits. Since Somerville is a densely populated city with challenging growing conditions, a strategic plan is vital to managing the local tree canopy effectively.

**Action:** Coordinate all urban design and civic spaces with the Urban Forest Management Plan to ensure that the species and planting details are appropriate to increase the tree canopy.

**Action:** Implement complete and green streets. Make traditional water quality practices serve double duty by adding trees in or around roadside planters and other green infiltration-based practices to boost roadside cooling and shading.

**Action:** Seek opportunities to reduce hardscaping and expand plantings and green features within civic spaces.



**Vision Statement 4**

# Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design

## **GOAL 4: Minimize Shadows And Maximize Natural Light That Can Reach The Ground.**

Urban climate refers to climatic conditions in an urban area that differ from the climatic conditions of the surrounding rural area, and which is attributed to urban development. There are many different strategies to control solar access which are fundamental when it comes to designing buildings and urban areas. Outdoor spaces are equally important as these contribute to livability and vitality, so it is critical to ensure that people are comfortable from physical, environmental, economical, and social aspects.

**Action:** Carefully consider proposed locations of tall buildings in relation to civic spaces.

**Action:** Pay special attention to solar orientation and interior access to natural light when assessing building design.



*Photo: The courtyard at Brickbottom Lofts*

## Vision Statement 4

# Implement Sustainable and Human-Scaled Design

## GOAL 5: Implement Human-scale Design In Buildings And Civic Spaces

‘Human scale’ design means design that is optimized for human use. This approach can be applied to a range of issues, from physical to psychological. A walkable, bikeable city is a human-scale city, as is one with low energy consumption, low pollution, and low congestion. This kind of design can also be less expensive to maintain and can accommodate people of all abilities and ages.

**Action:** Adopt design guidelines which require ground-floor design treatments conducive to active and pleasant human use.

**Action:** Undertake wind studies to reduce the tunnel effect on sidewalks and surrounding areas. The way buildings affect the surrounding microclimate is an important consideration. Strong ground-level winds generated around high-rise buildings can cause pedestrian safety and comfort issues.

**Action:** Build green infrastructure improvements into regular street upgrades and capital improvement projects to ensure continued investment in heat-reducing practices.



# **5. Support Economic Development**

## Vision Statement 5

# Support Economic Development

Ensuring a sustainable path forward and keeping the people who live and work in Brickbottom at the center of future growth.

### GOALS:

1. Guide intentional office, laboratory, and R+D development and encourage a well-rounded business ecosystem.
2. Amplify the economic potential associated with the creative community.
3. Foster Activities, Education + Experiences.
4. Develop the larger ecosystem within which office, laboratory, artists, and creative users can all thrive.
5. Coordinate workforce development initiatives.

## SomerVision2040 Goals

**Add jobs.** Prioritize commercial development until the number of jobs in Somerville is equal to the number of working residents. This will build a fiscally healthier and more vibrant community. In Boston and Cambridge, the ratio of jobs to working residents is, respectively, 1.6 and 1.8. Currently the Somerville ratio is 0.5.

**Encourage more commercial development.** Develop sufficient commercial property to generate 50% of property tax revenue from commercial sources.

**Find ways for commercial development to support small businesses.** Explore how to leverage new development to provide additional benefits including small retail spaces or more affordable space for new and existing independent, local businesses.

**Promote Somerville as a forward-thinking place to do business.** Enhance Somerville's reputation as a center for technological and environmental innovation.



**Vision Statement 5**

# Support Economic Development

**GOAL 1: Guide intentional office, laboratory, and R+D development and encourage a well-rounded business ecosystem.**

Brickbottom has an opportunity to benefit from local and regional conditions, which are attracting office, laboratory, and R+D users. The community can leverage this demand to address local challenges and ensure a balanced approach while developing the local economy.

**Action:** Ensure precision in the location, amount, and form of office, laboratory, and R+D development within Brickbottom.

**Action:** Explore ways for apparently conflicting uses, such as lab with creative enterprises, to be incorporated into the local ecosystem.

**Action:** Require developers of office, laboratory, or R+D to subsidize the development of studios and light manufacturing (maker) space.

*“Collaboration between arts and science”*



**Vision Statement 5**

# Support Economic Development

## GOAL 2: Amplify The Economic Potential Associated With The Creative Community.

Places often overlook Artists and Makers as small businesses. Often individuals in these fields are small business owners or contribute significantly to the larger business ecosystem. Arts and creative industries should be developed and fostered as much for the economic benefits as for the cultural benefits.

**Action:** Recognize artists as small businesses and develop the economic sector like any other.

**Action:** Encourage the development of spaces that fit the physical needs and the financial and economic realities of a range of artists and creative users.

**Action:** Support increased capacity for the Somerville Arts Council to provide business services and assistance to the arts and creative industries.



**Vision Statement 5**

# Support Economic Development

## GOAL 3: Foster Activities, Education + Experiences

There are already creative people in Brickbottom that are offering classes, lessons, and other experiences to the public. These experiences represent an income stream for these creatives and an expanding platform to further establish Brickbottom as a place where the public can personally experience art and creative activities in an authentic creative place. The City and Community need to develop more opportunities, similar to Somerville Open Studios, for inviting and encouraging the public to visit the neighborhood to attend a class, play, live music, or festival.

**Action:** Encourage alternative business avenues, including educational and experiential services for both economic and cultural development.

**Action:** Build and program ArtFarm, establish Brickbottom’s reputation as an arts festival and live music venue. Streamline the permitting and the steps for planning these events to make producing them more affordable.

**Action:** Work with local artists and makers to produce temporary installations in the neighborhood to define Brickbottom’s evolving artistic character.

**Action:** Study what resources are needed to support creative businesses in Brickbottom.





**Vision Statement 5**

**Support Economic Development**

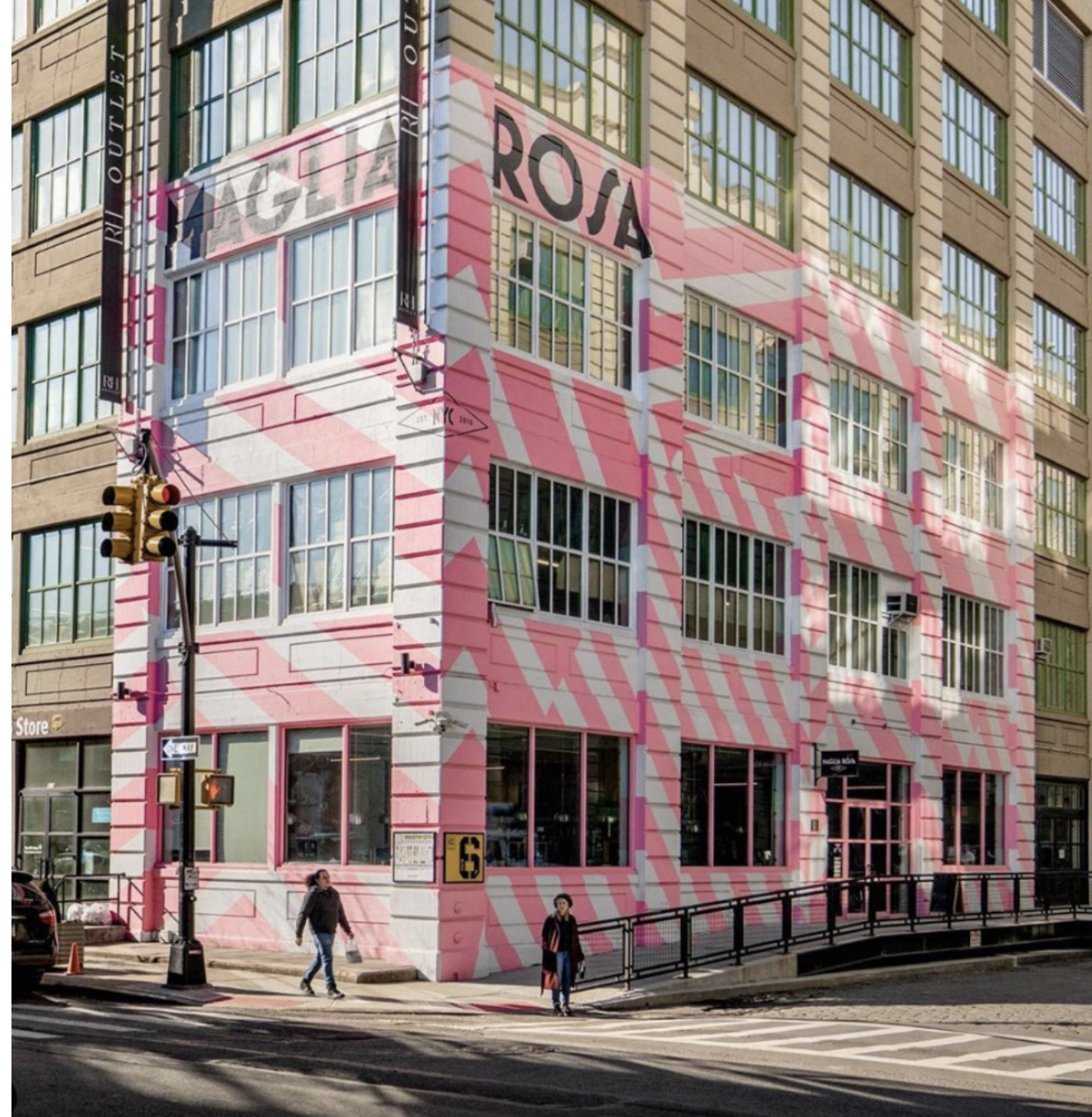
**GOAL 4: Develop A Larger Ecosystem Within Which Office, Laboratory, Artists, And Creative Users Can All Thrive.**

Brickbottom is already hosting a mix of uses that do not appear to belong together but coexist, mostly successfully. The neighborhood should maintain some of this diversity and strive to accommodate a broad mix of users with a range of needs.

**Action:** Encourage arts and creativity-related businesses to support the artists and makers, such as suppliers, conservators, repairs, etc.

**Action:** Implement flexible regulations that can accommodate various users, even some with potentially unique creative needs.

**Action:** Explore programs for ways in which seemingly conflicting uses may be able to coexist, if not complement one another.



## Vision Statement 5

# Support Economic Development

## GOAL 5: Coordinate workforce development initiatives.

Change to a neighborhood is inherent in redevelopment, but managing the change is essential. The City can expect some existing users to relocate out of Brickbottom, but the City is committed to supporting all local businesses and employees throughout the process. Connecting the local workforce to growth and development opportunities is a top priority.

**Action:** Task the Somerville Economic Development team with creating a transitional program to assist workers in the current auto and warehouse-oriented economy in getting additional training to find other good quality jobs in Somerville.

**Action:** Connect existing businesses and employees with workforce development services provided through the City.

**Action:** Engage with the Somerville Arts Council to foster job growth within the arts.

**Action:** Promote awareness of job and career opportunities within Lab and Research industries. Promote and make available clear pathways to the training needed for these positions.

