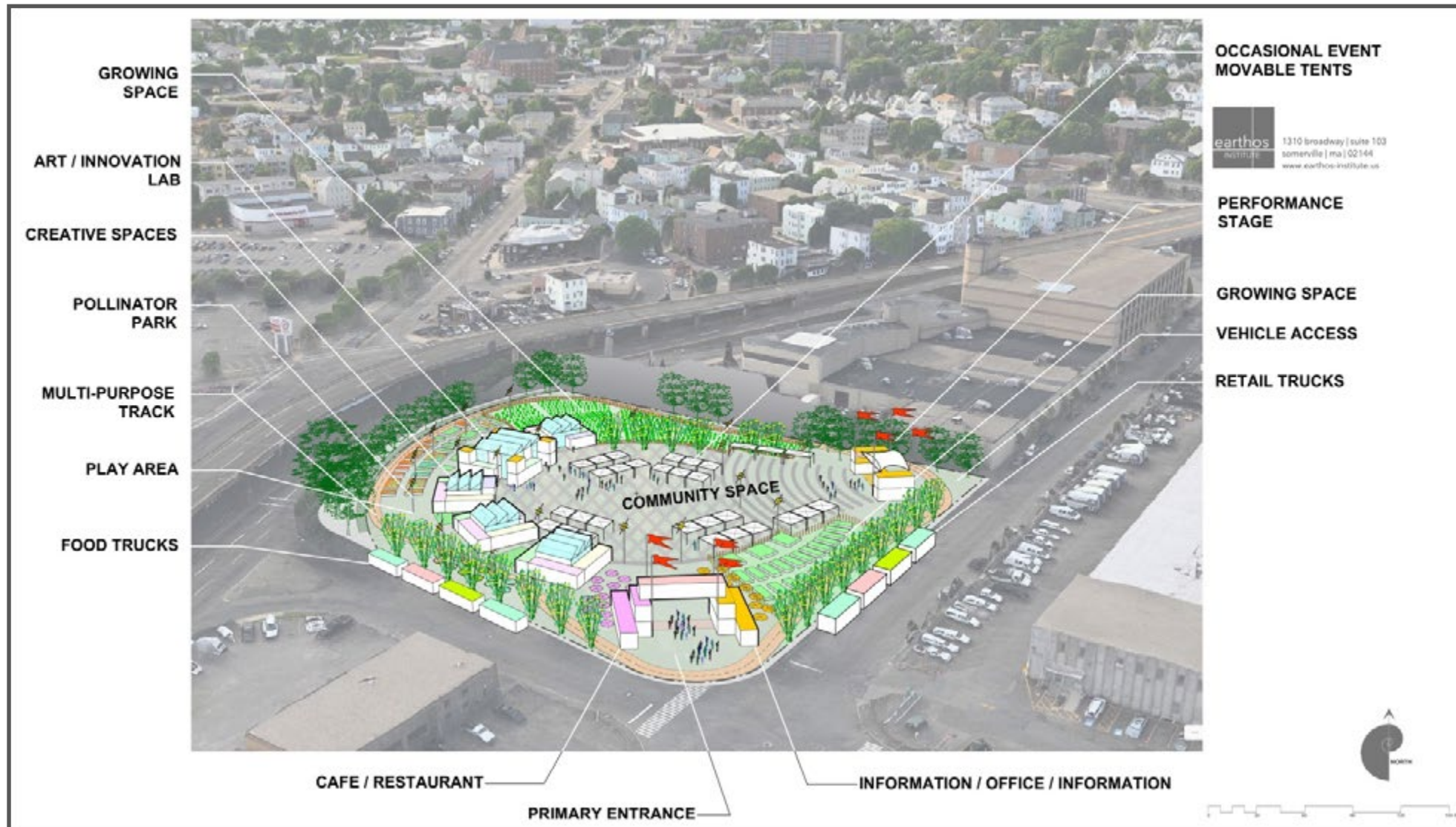


Somerville ARTFarm for Social Innovation Community space cultivating social innovation through art, urban agriculture, and cultural diversity

Somerville, MA (population 77,000) will see a new subway station open in 2016/17, which will be transformative for a community that has not had as many public transportation options as other neighborhoods. The Somerville Arts Council (SAC) has proposed converting a former 2.2-acre waste transfer station and incinerator site into a self-sustaining creative common, market and growing space. Using facilities largely built from reused shipping containers, SAC and its community partners will transform the site into a center for community and art-based social, economic and educational innovation. Building on Somerville's historic concentration of artists and immigrants, this project would co-locate multiple creative uses, including farm- and food-related activity, as well as create a welcoming open space that serves as a new gateway to the community.



ARTFarm for Social Innovation will house special events, performances and green space, while creating a community space where ideas and activities that improve the quality and experience of life in Somerville can be developed, tested and implemented. Combining open space, urban farming and multi-use creative work-space with art, performance and educational programming, ARTFarm aims to spark and excite the diverse community it serves.

Somerville, MA (population 77,000) will see several new subway stations open in 2016/17. This will be transformative for a community that has lacked public transportation options since many of its trolley stations were closed 50 years ago. Unless mitigated, the market-driven development that will follow the new stations could reduce the availability of open space and the prospects for imaginative, community-driven activity for Somerville’s diverse population.

To address these concerns, the Somerville Arts Council (SAC), Brickbottom Artist Association, Earthos and many community partners are working in conjunction with the city of Somerville to transform a former 2.2-acre waste transfer station into a self-sustaining center for community and art-based social, economic and educational innovation.

What is Social Innovation?

At the ARTFarm, Social Innovation means a commitment to the development/ implementation of new strategies, ideas and organizations that meet a variety of social needs — from education to community development and health — that extend and enrich life in Somerville.

With financial support from the ArtPlace Foundation and other contributors, the ARTFarm for Social Innovation will house and develop the several key activity incubators.

GrowLab

A new model for community gardens that integrates urban farming with community engagement, art, culinary entrepreneurship, performance and health programs

ARTLab

The Somerville ArtLab will integrate educational activities with projects that explore social betterment through the arts. The lab will host a multi-function indoor community space.

ARTShow

The ARTShow gallery, workspace and performance spaces will link the creation and delivery of culture with direct and positive social impacts. These facilities will, wherever possible, be constructed using recycled material (such as old shipping containers) to reflect the area's industrial past.

The SAC will use its successful ArtsUnion Producers Call model (in which we support/fund independent cultural producers who represent distinct communities) and Nibble food & cultural programming to develop exciting community-centric workshops, dinners and cultural events.

Building on Somerville's tradition of creativity and social engagement, ARTFarm will co-locate multiple creative spaces within a welcoming open space that will serve as a striking physical and artistic gateway to the community.



ARTFarm: Six Activity/Functional Spaces

ARTFarm will create six distinct and integrated functional spaces to support community enablement through artistic and social innovation. The spaces are:

An Activity Space that will provide a home for creative events, markets and fairs

- Via a centralized creative common area

A Performance Space that will host performances that reflect and enrich Somerville's diverse community

- Via a stage area

A Play Space that connects people to the outdoors and benefits of recreation in an urban environment

- Via a walking path and an adult fitness park

A Creative Space where new works and art-based community projects are developed with the goal of improving Somerville's quality of life

- Via an ARTLab and gallery space

A Grow Space that broadens the scope and uses of urban agriculture with programs that explore activities that positively impact the lives of local residents

- Via community gardens and an urban agriculture space (This key activity will be implemented with educational partners, such as the Tufts Institute for the Environment)
- Via a GrowLab that develops and tests new techniques for urban farming and art integration

A Commercial Space that will support economic activity and development

- Via small artisan businesses

ARTFarm is committed to incorporating social innovation and into all six of these functions



About the Location

The site is located between two working-class neighborhoods abutting a transit corridor that feeds Boston. New construction is expanding along this corridor into the Brickbottom District. In the past two decades artists have developed this otherwise industrial landscape by creating Joy Street Artists and the Brickbottom Artists Building. In 2016-17 a new Brickbottom/Washington Street T station will open, changing the nature and character of the area both physically and economically.

West of the site is Union Square, an established center for cultural events and food-based entrepreneurship and a catalyst for economic innovation. East of the site is East Somerville, the most diverse neighborhood in the city. Located between these areas, ARTFarm will link two very diverse neighborhoods, creating a lively cultural corridor in an often-overlooked part of the city.

Today, the site represents the only city-owned parcel in the area and offers a remarkable opportunity to create a vibrant community space. The ARTFarm team, the city of Somerville and other partners recognize this unique opportunity to establish art and social innovation as part of the area's character, even as market pressures reshape the area.



Working with partners

ARTFarm will bring together local artists, residents and businesses to establish a new community-focused art and culture-enabled neighborhood with a focus on sustainability, small business, education and social innovation. Key partners working on this exciting project include:

- The City of Somerville
- Somerville Arts Council
- Somerville Department Economic Development
- Brickbottom Artist Association
- Groundworks Somerville
- Somerville Community Corporation
- Tufts Institute for the Environment
- Earthos Institute
- Somerville Community Corporation
- Kitchen Inc.
- Link Somerville
- Green City Growers
- Union Square Main Streets
- East Somerville Main Streets

If you or your organization is committed to education, community development and art as a vehicle for positive social change we'd like to hear from you. There are opportunities to contribute and participate. Let's explore how we can work together.

For more information: info@Somervilleartfarm.org

