

City of Somerville
Mayor Katjana Ballantyne



*Office of Strategic Planning
and Community Development
& Somerville Arts Council*

THE ARMORY

Future Governance



***MAY 15
COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
31 COLLEGE AVE***

Goals



GOALS OF THIS MEETING SERIES

- **How does the Armory function 50 years from now?**
- **How does the Armory reflect the needs of the Community?**
- **Are we on the right track?**

MEETINGS IN THE SERIES

Our Arts Ecosystem

January 24 | 6 pm

Warehouse XI

11 Sanborn Ct, Somerville MA

Our Community Spaces

February 27 | 6 pm

Connexion

149 Broadway, Somerville MA

The Armory: Existing

March 26 | 6 pm

Somerville High School

81 Highland Ave, Somerville MA

The Armory: Future

May 15 | 6 pm

Community Baptist Church

31 College Ave, Somerville MA

GOALS FOR TONIGHT

The Armory Future Governance

- Review possible governance pathways.
- Review the opportunities and challenges of different governance pathways.
- How do we operate the Armory to achieve its Vision.

Group Agreements

- Please **speak for yourself, use “I” statements**
- Please **take space and make space**
- Please **stay on topic** as best as possible
- Please be aware that not everyone has the same level of knowledge about this process

Armory Master Plan



Why?

MAY 15, 2024

The City of Somerville acquired the Somerville Armory by eminent domain in June 2021 in order to preserve its use as an **artistic center** and **public asset**.

The Armory Master Plan, through community input and research, will guide the City for successful governance of the Armory as a **public art center** emphasizing **public access** and **serving community need**.

Work to Date

MAY 15, 2024

RESEARCH

Research conducted includes an environmental scan of **46 local arts organizations** and **6 in-depth case studies** on national organizations.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Interviews were one-on-one conversations conducted with stakeholders with a **wide array of backgrounds and affiliations** with the Armory building.

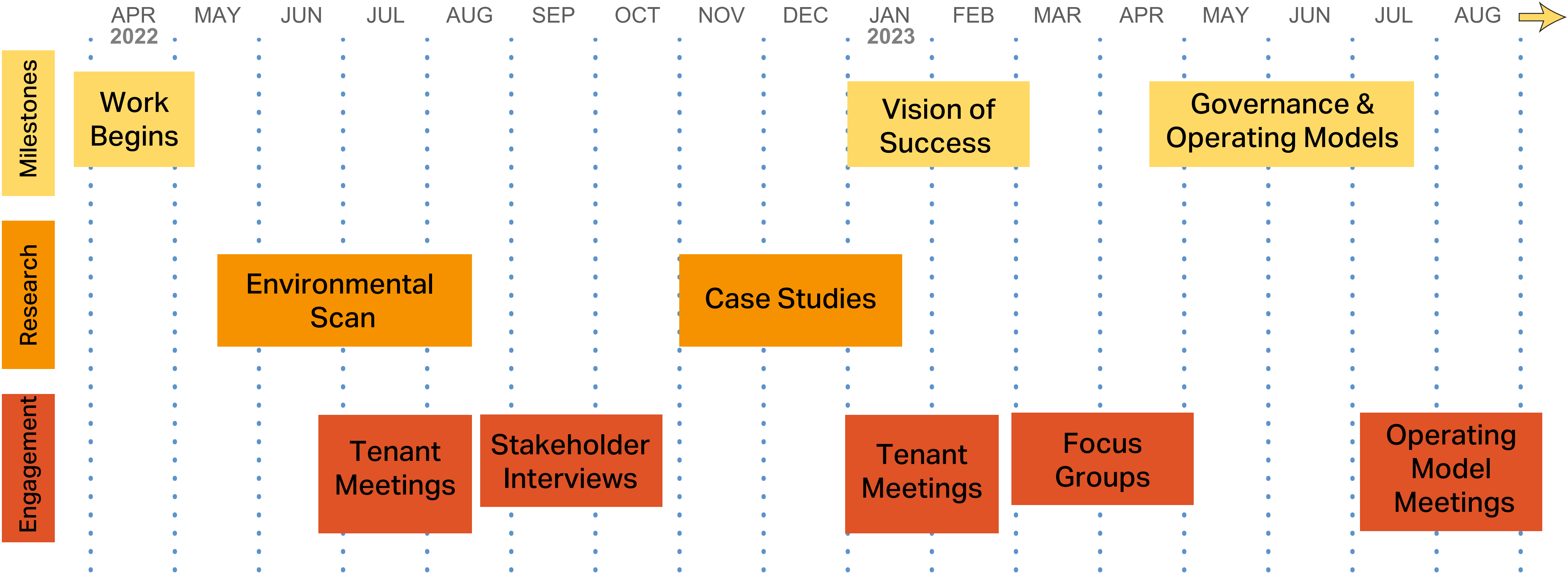
FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups were small group meetings with participants of similar affiliations. These groups included various **artists, tenants, residents, and building neighbors.**

OPERATIONAL MODEL MEETINGS

Three meetings, two in-person and one online in which **operational models** of the Armory were **presented to the public.**

Work to Date



BACKGROUND WORK DURING THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

Integrating day to day management & maintenance of the building into City systems.

Developing the policies needed to manage public access

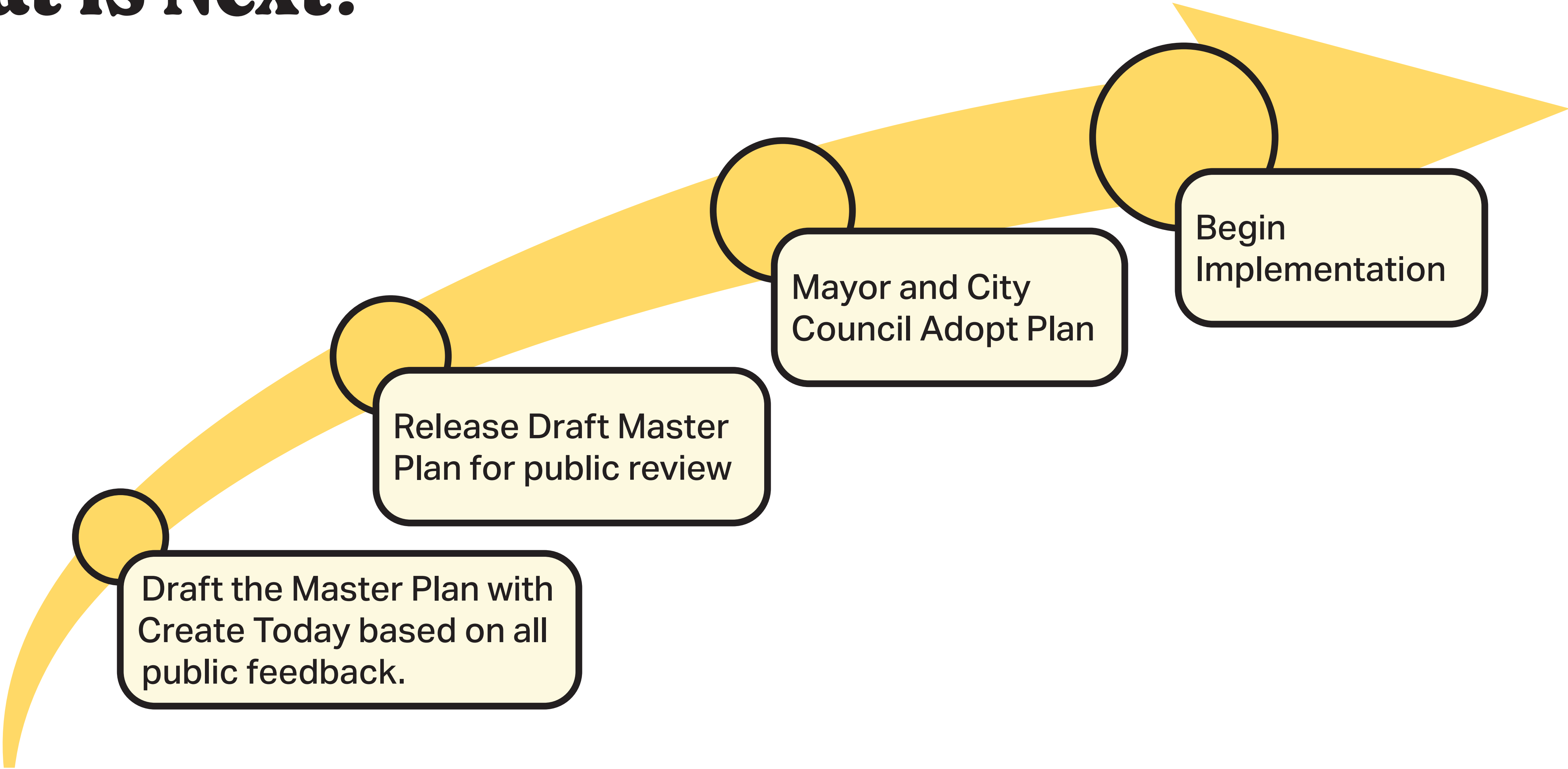
Exploring alternative models for governing the building

Developing an understanding of the financials to operate the base building

Piloting City-led programs in non-tenanted spaces

What is Next?

MAY 15, 2024



AMORY MASTER PLAN

DRAFT

Vision of Success

Draft Vision for Success

MAY 15, 2024

HAND-OUT

A

ACTIVE THINKING:

While we review the **draft vision** and the last **three meetings**. Reflect on these draft vision statements and think about what might be missing — **note it for later.**

Draft Vision for Success

The City's planning team used research and stakeholder feedback to draft a **Vision for the Armory**, where it serves as a successful public asset by serving as an arts center where:

- The Armory is an affordable, stable, supportive home for artists to focus on work.
- The Armory is a welcoming, inspiring place where visitors enjoy diverse programming.
- The Armory is accessible with transparent and equitable governance where neighbors are appreciated and engaged.

Draft Vision for Success

MAY 15, 2024

In the first meeting, we discussed the Armory's place in the **local arts community** and this is what we heard.

- The Armory is a center for art, community and culture where:
 - A broad range of arts programming is offered to the community
 - Tenants and users are complementary but diverse
- Governance of the Armory equitably and transparently considers a broad range of arts-related tenants and programming to ensure diversity and compatibility with the Armory's vision.

Draft Vision for Success

MAY 15, 2024

In the second meeting, we discussed the Armory's place in the local community space needs and this is what we heard.

- The Armory should serve the community but maintain an artistic focus
- The Armory should remain flexible for the needs of the community and the tenants.
- The Armory should contain a mix of long term tenanted spaces and short term rental spaces.

Draft Vision for Success

In the most recent meeting, we discussed the Armory's existing conditions and this is what we heard.

- Tenants and programs at the Armory should be curated iteratively to produce a complementary, but diverse, group of tenants and activities.
- Issues of sound bleed, building capacity, and other physical constraints should be considered when selecting tenants.
- Management should anticipate and address conflicting needs promptly.

REFLECTION

**Take a minute to
review the Draft Vision
Statements**

IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

Developing a Governance Structure for the Future

What is Governance?

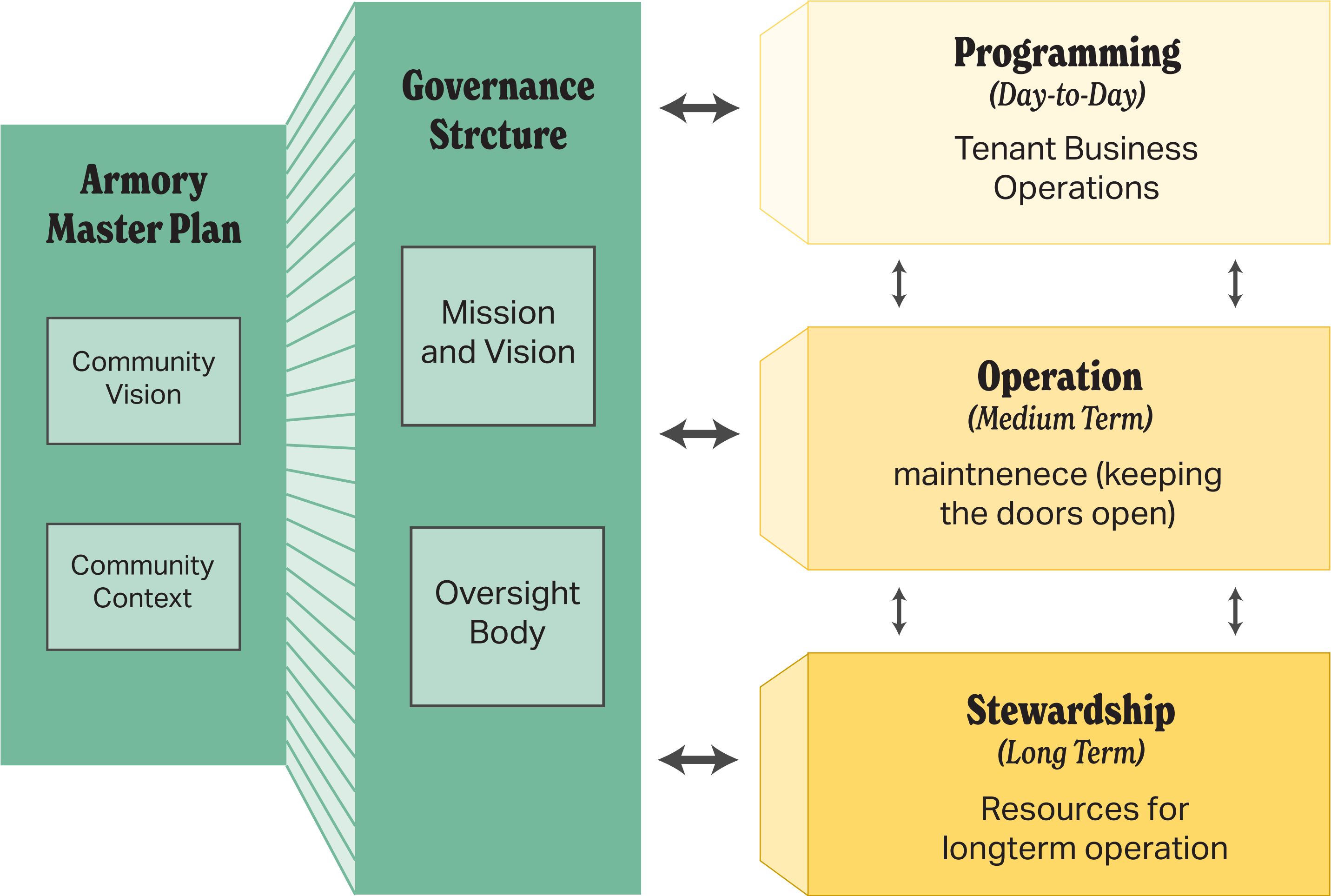
IN THIS CONTEXT:

Governance is the **process of making and enforcing decisions** to operate the Somerville Armory according to the Master Plan Vision.

It encompasses **decision-making, rule-setting, and enforcement mechanisms** to guide the building as a successful Arts Center and public asset.

Governance & The Master Plan

The Armory Master Plan will provide the framework for the governance structure of the Armory.



Governing the Armory

MAY 15, 2024

Based on what we have heard from the community, research conducted, and the draft vision statement we have compiled a **"governance wish list"** that represents an ideal governing structure.

These wish list items will be used to help illustrate potential benefits and drawbacks of different governance pathways.

Governance Wish List

MAY 15, 2024

HAND-OUT

B

ACTIVE THINKING:

While we review the **governance wish list**.
Follow along on your worksheet and think
about which items are the most important
to you — **rank their importance**.

Governance Wish List

MAY 15, 2024

**Transparent,
equitable, and goal
oriented**

**Independent and
objective body**

Ability to manage
short-term uses
alongside **long-**
term tenants

**Financial Flexibility
& Access to
Diverse Resources**

Preserve **Low Cost**
Space for Art

REFLECT

**Rank wish list items on
order of importance.**

IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

Governance Pathways

Achieving the Wish List

MAY 15, 2024

To achieve the items on the wish list, **3 Governance Pathways** were identified as potential solutions.

Non-Profit Organization

Quasi-Municipal Trust

City Department

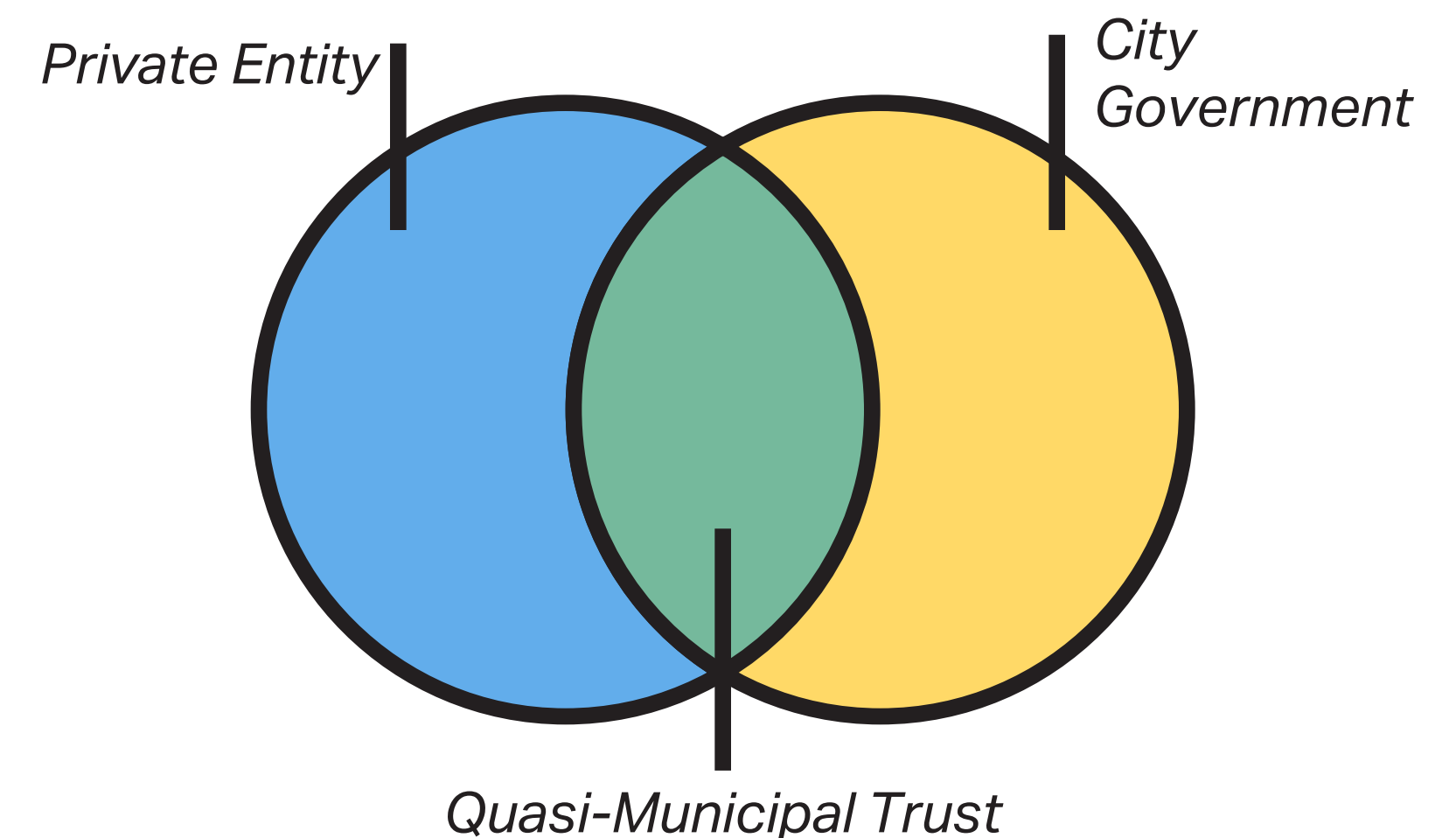
What is a Quasi-Municipal Trust?

IN THIS CONTEXT:

A Quasi-Government Trust is an entity that provides a service for the City, but operates by a community board.

The board retains independent processes and decision making, with support and assistance from the City.

A Trust is an entity or agreement that holds and manages assets, including property.



Potential Pathways

MAY 15, 2024

Non-Profit Organization

HOW

City helps create a specific non-profit to operate and/or govern the Armory

TIMELINE:

Medium Term

Quasi-Municipal Trust

HOW:

City creates a quasi-government trust to operate and/or govern the Armory

TIMELINE:

Longest, may require Home Rule Petition.

City Department

HOW:

City hires/delegate staff to operate the and/or govern the Armory full-time

TIMELINE:

Short Term

Governance Pathways & Wish List

MAY 15, 2024

HAND-OUT

C

ACTIVE THINKING:

While we review the details of the **governance pathways**. Follow along on your worksheet and think about which pathway option, per category is your ideal— **track the best options to you.**

Transparent, Equitable, & Goal Oriented

	Non-Profit Organization	Quasi-Municipal Trust	City Department
<i>Clear Mission and By-Laws to ensure continuity</i>	Non-Profit Board holds Power. Least mission durability.	Mission set at creation. Strong mission durability.	Mission set at creation. Strong mission durability.
<i>Staff Management and Support</i>	Board oversees staff.	Board may share staff oversight with City.	Staff report to the Mayor. Advised by community advisory group.
<i>Public access to regular governance board meetings</i>	Low public access, unless voluntarily allows access	Strong public access, subject to open meeting law	Strong public access, subject to open meeting law
<i>Financial Performance Review</i>	Least public. Not required to share outside of federal regulations.	Most public. State and City budgetary disclosure requirements.	Most public. Part of the public City budget process.

Independent & Objective Body

	Non-Profit Organization	Quasi-Municipal Trust	City Department
<i>Board Composed of Diverse Voices</i>	By-laws can dictate diversity of seats	Trust formation documents can outline the diversity of seats	Committee charter can outline the diversity of seats
<i>Ability to Separate Governance Decisions from Operations Decisions</i>	Most independent.	Semi-Independent	Least independent
<i>Speed and Flexibility in Long-term Governance Decision Making</i>	Most flexible	Flexible	Least flexible and slowest
<i>Harness Community Member Participation & Enthusiasm</i>	Most Flexible	Moderately flexible	Most formal

Ability to manage short-term uses alongside long-term tenants

	Non-Profit Organization	Quasi-Municipal Trust	City Department
<i>Leasing Efficiency for Long Term Tenants</i>	Most efficient	Most efficient	Least efficient
<i>Conflict resolution</i>	Most efficient	Most efficient	Least efficient
<i>Booking for short term spaces</i>	Managed by staff, may not be able to leverage municipal systems.	Managed by staff. Can leverage municipal systems.	Managed by staff. Can leverage municipal systems.
<i>Central communications & marketing</i>	Managed by staff. May not be able to leverage City resources.	Managed by staff. Can leverage municipal website and Communications infrastructure	Managed by staff. Can leverage municipal website and Communications infrastructure

Preserve Low Cost Space for Art

	Non-Profit Organization	Quasi-Municipal Trust	City Department
<i>Subsidize Rents for Long-term Tenants and User Fees for short-term spaces</i>	Anticipating least ability to subsidize	Anticipating moderate ability to subsidize	Anticipating moderate ability to subsidize
<i>Rent/Art Production Sponsorships</i>	Most flexible	Moderately flexible	Least flexible

Financial Flexibility & Access to Diverse Resources

	Non-Profit Organization	Quasi-Municipal Trust	City Department
<i>Flexible and Nimble Leasing</i>	Most flexible and nimble	Potentially flexible and nimble	Least flexible, not nimble
<i>Access to Private Funding</i>	Most eligible	Eligible	Limited
<i>Access to Public Funding</i>	Eligible for some	Flexible	Eligible
<i>Use of City Budget for Operations?</i>	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Use of City Budget for Capital Projects?</i>	Dependent on lease	Yes	Yes
<i>Economy of Scale</i>	No	Can access City resources	Access to City resources

REFLECT

**Which pathway seems the
most promising?**

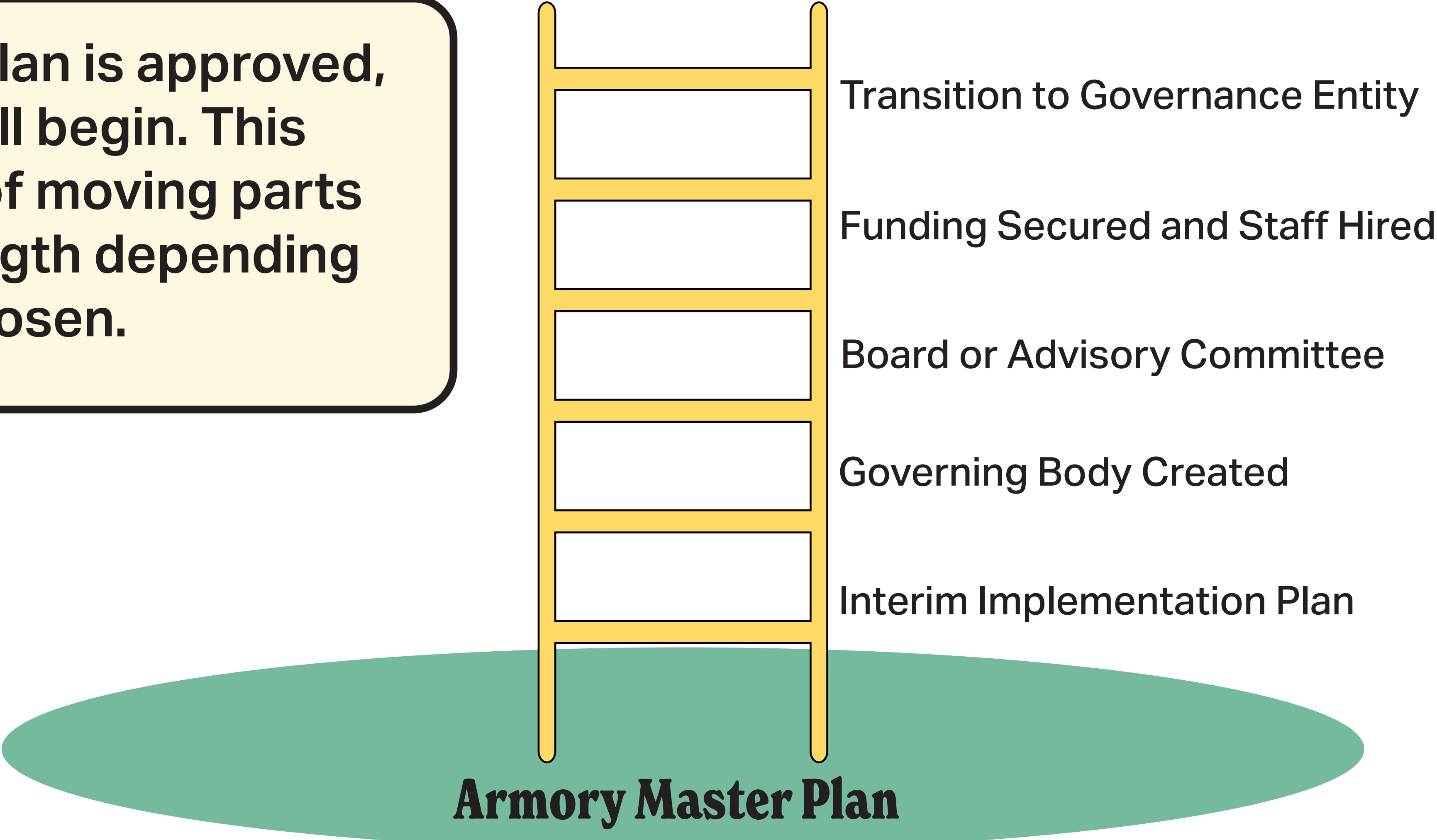
Three stylized white clouds are positioned on a yellow background. One cloud is on the left side, another is in the center-right, and a third is in the bottom right corner.

MOVING FORWARD

After the Master Plan

Implementation Steps

Once the Master Plan is approved, Implementation will begin. This process has a lot of moving parts and can vary in length depending on the pathway chosen.



Are We Missing Anything?

Are We on the Right Track?

City of Somerville
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Thank You

PLEASE TURN IN YOUR WORKSHEETS