A photograph of a large, multi-story brick building with a classical portico supported by columns. An American flag flies on a tall pole in front of the building. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

# MALDEN CENTER FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

**Concept Plan**

Steering Committee Meeting

March 2, 2022

# Project Overview



# 2022 Project Meetings and Activities

- ▶ Feb SC Meeting: Identify principles and priorities based on survey and case studies

- ▶ Design team develops program scenarios

- ▶ **March SC Meeting: Preview program scenarios for feedback before interactive public engagement**

- ▶ Focused engagements to supplement survey
  - ▶ Interactive engagement about program scenarios

- ▶ April SC Meeting: Discuss synthesis of findings

- ▶ Draft concept plan

- ▶ May SC Meeting: Review draft documents

- ▶ Present final deliverables at public meeting



# Engagement Overview

Survey Review

Focused Engagement

Design Team Engagement



# Survey Review

- ▶ Released December 1, 2021
- ▶ Closed January 21, 2022
- ▶ Translated into **6** languages
- ▶ **689** responses
- ▶ Respondents by race:
  - ▶ 65% White, 15% Asian, 6% Black/AfAm, 1% Native American, 6% Other
- ▶ Respondents by language spoken at home:
  - ▶ 71% English, 7% Cantonese, 6% Mandarin, 5% Spanish

# Emerging Trends:

## Preferred activities

▣ → ! Take classes and workshops

→ ! Attend live performances

→ See work from local artists

→ Host or attend cultural events

→ Art-making: hands-on activities (e.g. ceramics, printing, photography) and performing arts



# Emerging Trends:

## Preferred artistic work program



**Performing arts:** rehearsal and performance space for music, dance, theater



**Making and learning:** studio space, access to specialized classes and equipment

# Emerging Trends:

## Equity considerations



**Cultural equity:** Cultural events and classes that celebrate Malden's diverse communities; Professional development for artists and creatives from underrepresented groups



**Financial accessibility:** Free or reduced cost programming and admission for low-income residents; Free or reduced cost space for community groups and organizations



**Welcoming, community-centered atmosphere and amenities:** Comfortable seating in public areas; Language access; Free WiFi; Teen and kids' programs



# Focused Engagements

- ▶ Engagements facilitated and co-developed with community-based organizations:
  - ▶ Asian Community Development Corporation (Feb 24)
    - ▶ A facilitated workshop with youth on their dreams for arts & culture in Malden and their vision for the center
  - ▶ Malden Community Organizing for Racial Equity (March 1)
    - ▶ Small group conversation on equity priorities for the center
  - ▶ Immigrant Learning Center
    - ▶ Asynchronous prompt for ESL students to share their vision for the center
  - ▶ Greater Malden Asian American Community Coalition (March 9)
    - ▶ In-person event with elders at First Parish Church to share their priorities and needs around cultural programming

# Emerging Findings

- ▶ Engagement is not reaching full community
- ▶ Robust multicultural programming and engagement
- ▶ Importance of management of center being open to multicultural programming and centering representation from many different cultures (especially those that are not as heavily represented in Malden)
- ▶ Interest in acknowledgement of history of courthouse and/or potential note on transition of the space (from a space of trauma to a space of healing).

# Design Team Engagements

- ▶ In development
- ▶ Intended to engage public in conversation about the program scenarios under discussion tonight
- ▶ Dates TBD

# A

office space is not very flexible for arts uses -- for example the need for a hardwood/suspended floor to do dance classes as opposed to concrete

I like this concept.  
EP

this feels a little like the Senior Center 2.0 (AL)

## Community multicultural center

A hub for cross-cultural exchange that shares, celebrates, and preserves the diverse cultures of Malden and neighboring communities.

It serves as a community anchor, a base of operations for a diverse array of cultural organizations in Malden, a destination for community events, and a space for local creators to showcase their work through classes, workshops, performances, exhibitions, and retail opportunities.

"If we create 1, 3 will happen organically" NB

Resonates: offices for cultural orgs, creating a hub, exclusive of someone who doesn't get an office due to limited space. NB

### Goals and Needs

- Inclusion and equitable access across cultures
- Flexibility and adaptability to accommodate many sizes and types of events, as well as changing community needs
- Community-oriented programming that promotes healing and cross-cultural exchange

### Key Pains and Constraints

- Competing ideas of who counts as "the community"
- Space for organizational operations may detract from other uses
- Trying to be all things to all people
- Need for frequent, market-rate rentals of larger spaces to help support subsidized rents and community programs (will require dedicated staffing)

## Use sticky notes to share reactions

+1  
(EYR)

this feels least connected to helping local artists make a living by working or teaching, or fill gaps in the regional arts space inventory (AL)

I like this idea, but am afraid the building would turn very "office-y" very quick. I'm hoping for vibrant activity not quite offices you would feel uncomfortable walking into/ exploring - EYR

Art not mentioned here. (DS)

### Anchor Uses

- Multipurpose event and meeting space
- Offices for cultural organizations
- Classroom space
- Performance space

### Key Programmatic Features and Activities

- Cultural performances and festivals
- Community meetings and events
- Classes and workshops
- After-school programming

### Revenue Generation:

- Rental of office and event/meeting space
- Rental of outdoor space for events and markets
- Rental of performance space

### Operations and Building Access:

- Most space devoted to tenant organizations and class/workshop attendees
- Meeting, event, and classroom space available on a rented and/or scheduled basis

### Auxiliary Services and Features:

- Loading dock and storage for performances
- Tech for hybrid meetings and classes

miro

What resonates? What would you keep from this story? What would you change? What isn't working?



# B

this one resonates very strongly with me for what I hear the community wanting, and being flexible for various uses

I strongly prefer this scenario (AL)

I would combine A and B because the media aspect is clutch especially for youth as well as opportunities for learning and growing with visual performing arts opportunities...EP

the most exciting option and at the same time can incorporate the important aspects of A, C (incubator component, visual arts, multi-cultural events, etc). I like all of the options and feel that they are related, but Performing Arts

+1 (EYR)

and Needs

## Visual, media, and performing arts center

A destination for cultural innovation, expression, and experiences across diverse media and cultures.

The space spans contemporary visual and performing arts, media, and civic action. It offers world-class experiences that are rooted in the fabric of Malden's cultural diversity. And it welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds, elevating diverse voices to the foreground and drive culture forward

+1 (AL)

This one seems like it is more flexible to add in aspects of A and C - HT

B strikes me as an option that would invite people from outside of the Malden community that could be a potential source of revenue, not only to the center, but also to local restaurants, etc. (DS)

Most aligned with my personal vision for the space. Fills a huge need in Malden for a first class, diverse performance space. NB

A focus, I think, would be fostering LOCAL theater, dance, opera, cirque, spoken word etc groups as opposed to renting out as a touring house. (some touring is great for revenue gaps of course) - EYR

### Key Pains and Constraints

- Market competition from cultural spaces and venues in neighboring communities
- Intensive focus on events requires extensive staffing and operational capabilities
- Balancing desire to welcome community and attract outside investment

- Dynamic space capable of simultaneously hosting multiple activities and events at different scales and across an array of artistic media
- Culturally inclusive and responsive programming that is rooted in the diverse communities of Malden and highlights both emerging and traditional forms of creative and cultural expression
- Access to world-class cultural events and opportunities across a range of media and price points

+1 (AL)

There is not a lot of local competition performance venue wise. There is not a performing arts center for theater or dance in Medford, Somerville, Everett, Melrose, Wakefield, or Revere. - EYR

### Anchor Uses

- Performance and exhibition space(s)
- Studios and rehearsal space
- Classroom space
- Multipurpose event and meeting space

### Key Programmatic Features and Activities

- Cultural performances
- Studio-based art-making
- Classes and workshops
- After-school programming

### Revenue Generation:

- Rental of performance space
- Rental of flexible and/or outdoor space for events and markets

### Operations and Building Access:

- Most space devoted to events (performances, cultural events)
- Meeting, event, and classroom space available on a rented and/or scheduled basis

### Auxiliary Services and Features:

- Loading dock and storage for performances
- Storage
- Tech for hybrid meetings and classes
- HVAC and venting

Would love to see retail space added to this scenario as a revenue generator. An art gallery or coffee shop can be lucrative when drawing people in for performances - EYR

miro

What resonates? What would you keep from this story? What would you change? What isn't working?



# C

curious about  
financial  
viability of C?  
(DS)

Love the experimental  
nature of this one.  
Non-profits won't be  
able to pay market  
rate rents and without  
the performance  
focus how will it  
sustain itself? NB

I am not a fan of this  
option at this time,  
possibly because I  
don't have enough  
context to  
appreciate this  
option. EP

## Use sticky notes to share reactions

### Non-profit arts and culture incubator

A creative community catalyst for Malden  
and a site of collaborative creativity and  
learning.

It gives emerging artists, creative talent,  
and cultural organizations access to  
resources and training to build their  
organizational capacities and careers,  
while also offering ongoing arts  
educational opportunities for community  
members and youth in local schools.

#### Key Goals and Needs

- Opportunities for artists to experiment with, grow, and share their creative practice through exhibition/performance, classes, and retail
- Spaces and services to accommodate many types of art-making, both visual and performance-based
- Resources and mentorship for BIPOC artists and creatives and BIPOC-led cultural organizations

#### Key Pains and Constraints

- Maintaining an active and welcoming presence in the community
- Need for frequent, market-rate rentals of larger spaces to help support subsidized rents and community programs (will require dedicated staffing)

The goal/ feel  
of this use as  
described, is  
the least clear  
to me. - EYR

I think we  
need an  
incubator  
space in town,  
but not at this  
building!

#### Anchor Uses

- Studios and rehearsal space
- Classroom space
- Offices for cultural organizations
- Multipurpose event and meeting space
- Performance space

#### Key Programmatic Features and Activities

- Studio-based art-making
- Classes and workshops
- After-school programs
- Cultural performances and exhibitions
- Creative retail space

#### Revenue Generation:

- Rental of studio space
- Rental of office space and meeting rooms
- Rental of performance space

#### Access and Operations:

- Most space devoted to tenant organizations and individuals
- Classroom, event, and meeting space available on a rented and/or scheduled basis

#### Auxiliary Services and Features:

- Hazardous waste storage and disposal
- Supply storage
- Tech for hybrid meetings and classes
- Loading dock and storage for performances

miro

What resonates? What would you keep from this story? What would you change? What isn't working?

# Please use the dots to rank the stories by your preference



## Community multicultural center

A hub for cross-cultural exchange that shares, celebrates, and preserves the diverse cultures of Malden and neighboring communities.

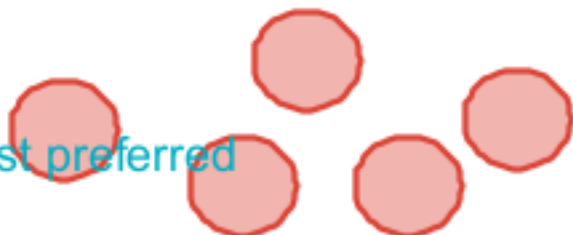
1 most preferred



2



3 least preferred



## Visual, media, and performing arts center

A destination for cultural innovation, expression, and experiences across diverse media and cultures.

1 most preferred



2



3 least preferred



## Non-profit arts and culture incubator

A creative community catalyst for Malden and a site of collaborative creativity and learning.

1 most preferred



2

3 least preferred

