

# **CULINARY COMMONS**

**Public Kitchens &  
Shared Food Futures**

**2025 Global Food+ Symposium**



# MEET THE TEAM:

## EquiTable



### Mark Araujo

- 4 years in the food space, with 9 years of leadership experience
- Brown University & RISD | MA Design Engineering, Concentration: Civic & Social Innovation
- Formerly @ Mayor's Office of Food Justice
- Currently Community Engagement Manager with the Boston Food Forest Coalition

### Andrea Catania

- 19 years in the food space with 14 years of leadership experience
- The Culinary Institute of America | AOS Culinary Arts, BPS Culinary Arts Management
- Boston University | MA in Gastronomy, Concentration: Food Policy



# Defining the Problem

What's missing?

1. Third spaces (spatial justice)<sup>1</sup>
2. Food-focused public infrastructure<sup>2</sup>
3. Dedicated spaces equipped for free, food related interactions and knowledge exchange

Areas affected by food apartheid and other inequitable systems are impacted with greater health disparities<sup>3</sup> and social isolation, leaving marginalized groups without the resources or spaces to gather, cook, and share meals.

Many traditional models...

- create stigma and reinforce hierarchies
- force BIPOC folks to live in someone else's imagined world
- "service" communities instead of co-designing with actual stakeholders<sup>4</sup>

1. Miodha, *Pop-up Food Provisioning as a Sustainable Third Space*, 2021.

2. Mikkelsen, *The Public as a Foodscape*, 2007.

3. Iacovou, *Social Health and Nutrition Impacts of Community Kitchens*, 2013.

4. Rodman, *Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality*, 1992.



# **SOLUTION: CULINARY COMMONS**

---

**COMMUNAL KITCHEN SPACE  
THAT IS FREE AND OPEN TO  
THE PUBLIC**



**UPHAM'S CORNER 2024**

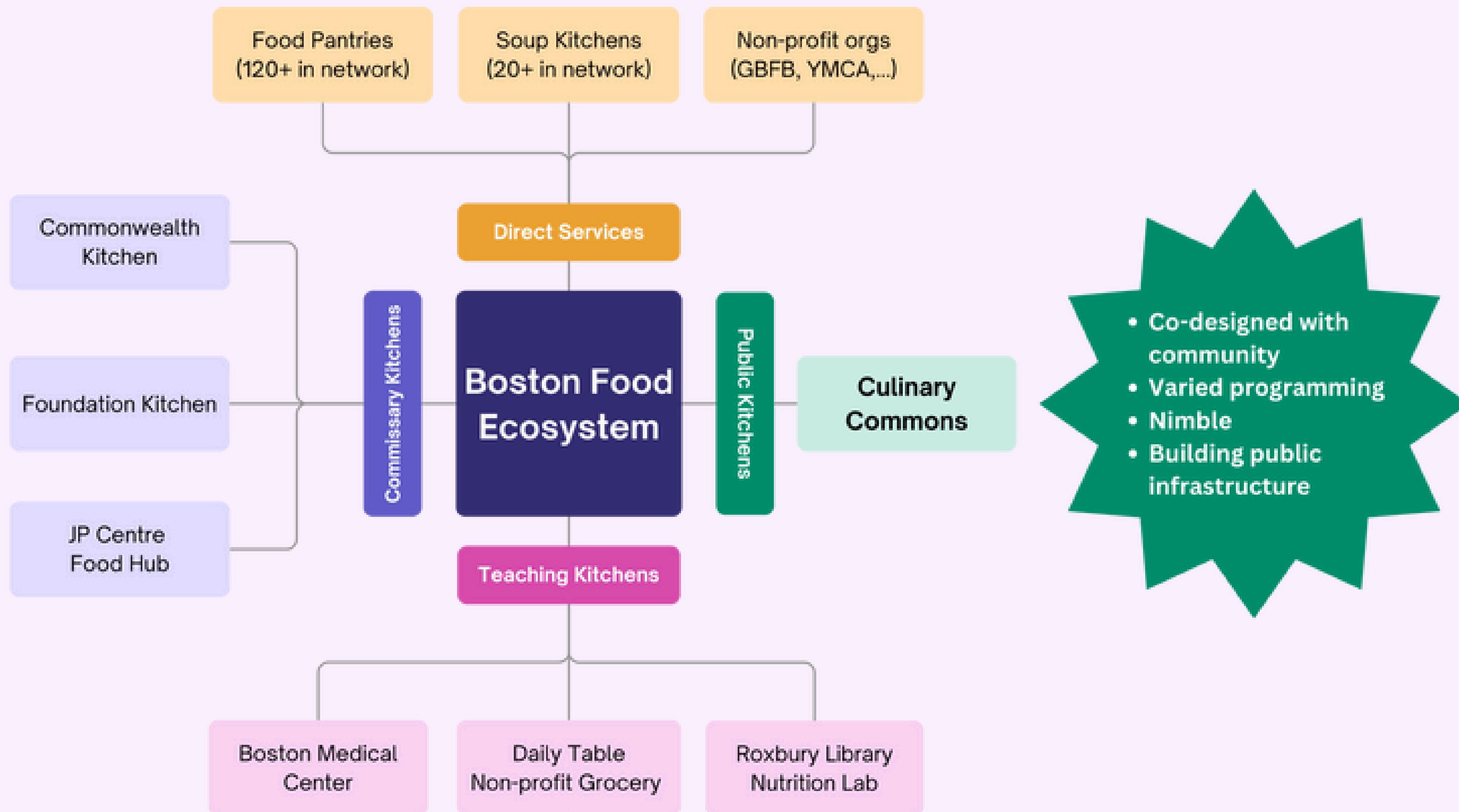


# What is a Public Kitchen?

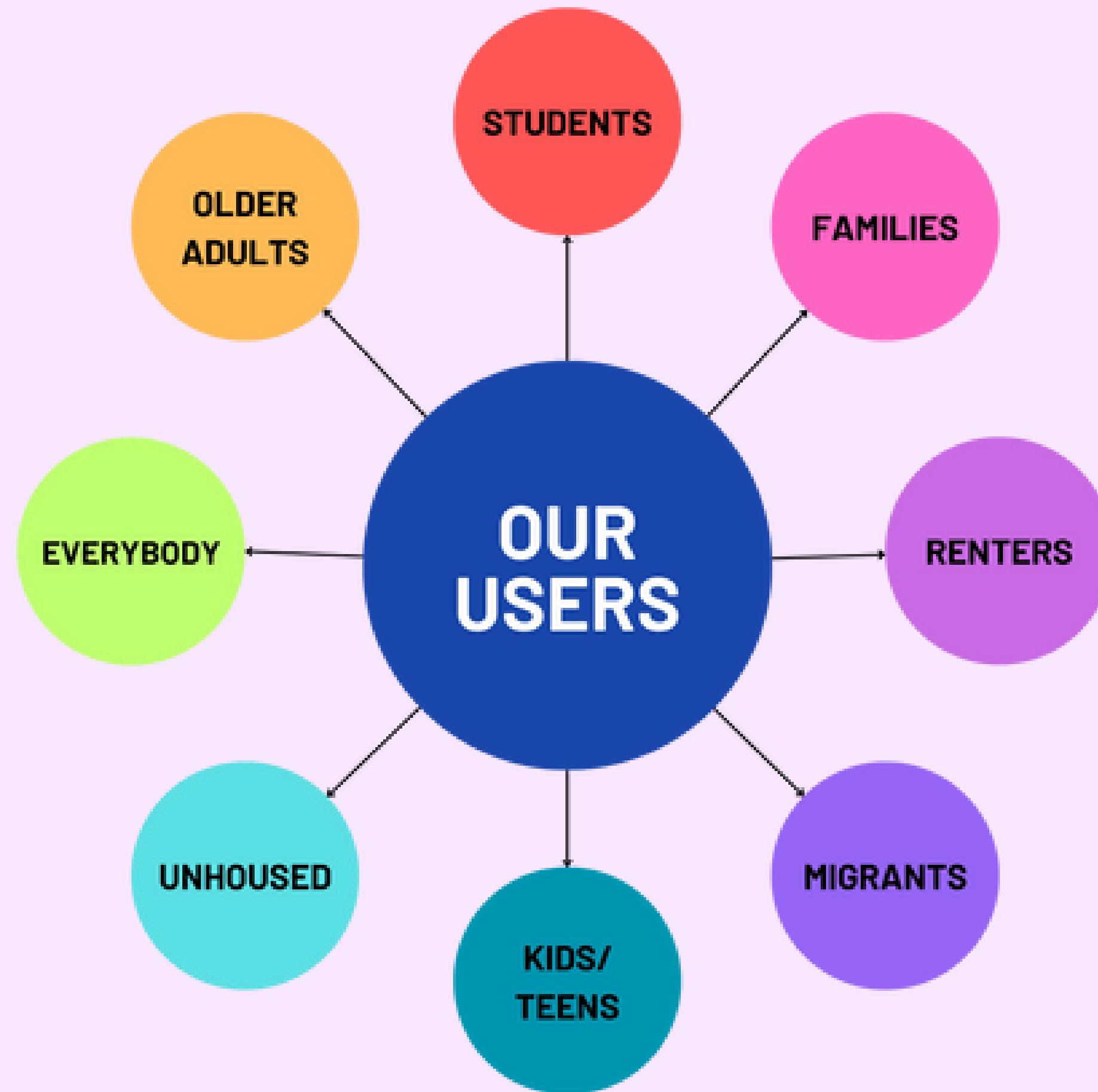
- Similar to other 3rd spaces such as parks, libraries, and community centers
- Embodiment of food justice principles
- PK's serve as communal spaces where everybody can utilize cooking facilities, participate in food programming, share meals, access food resources, and organize for a more just food systems



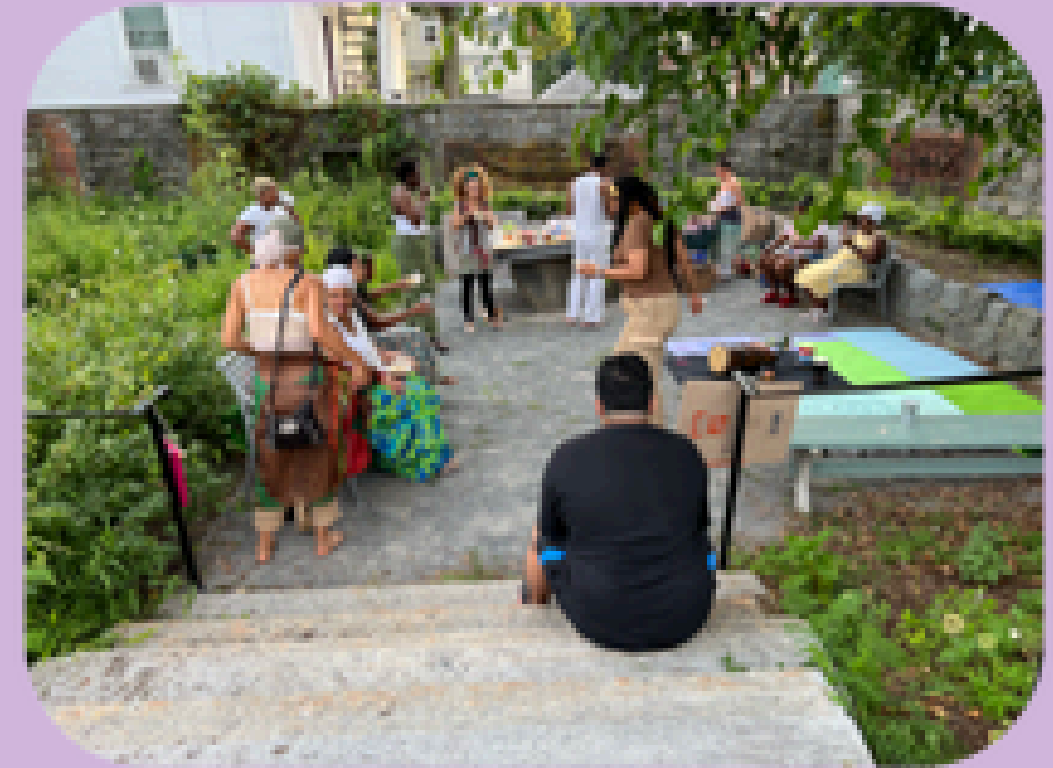








# WHAT WE'VE ALREADY DONE: 2023



- 7 pop up public kitchens w/7 community based food organizations
- Over 150+ community members
- Community engagement, feedback, and co-design at each pop up PK

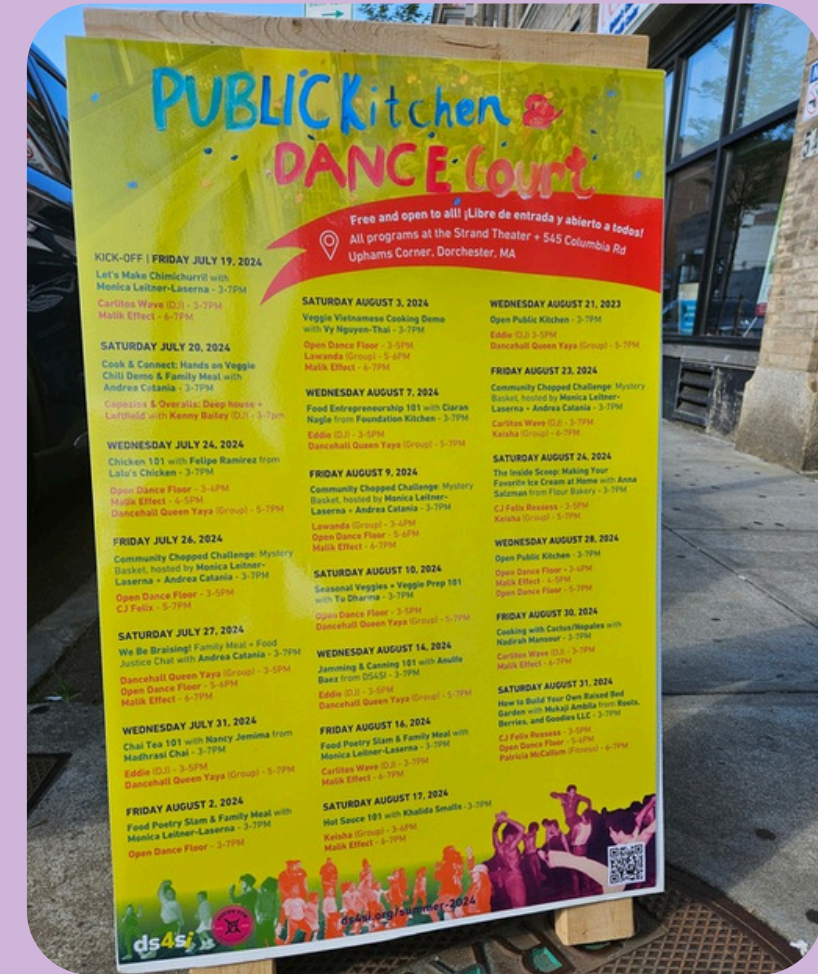


## Learnings/next steps:

- Want/need for multi-programmed semi-permanent and permanent PK's
- Co-design and iteration is integral to our model



# WHAT WE'VE ALREADY DONE: 2024



- 3 month PK in Upham's Corner w/ds4si
- Over 1000+ community members
- 25+ activators
- Open PK, cooking demo's, food poetry slams, food justice chats, co-design



- Learnings/next steps:**
- Permanent PK in Upham's corner
  - Increased community led activations
  - Increased programming for youth/teens







# WHAT WE'RE DOING: 2025



- Permanent PK in collaboration with the Harvest on Vine Food Pantry in Charlestown
- Located next to Bunker Hill Housing Development
- Serves 720+ families per month



# SUSTAINABILITY

---







PK's are **highly scalable** just like public libraries, public pools, and community centers

**We're in communication with:**

**-NYC**

**-Mexico City**

**-Providence**

-  Permanent PK (2025)
-  Semi-permanent PK (2024)
-  Pop-Up PK (2023)
-  Organizing for Permanence (Ongoing)

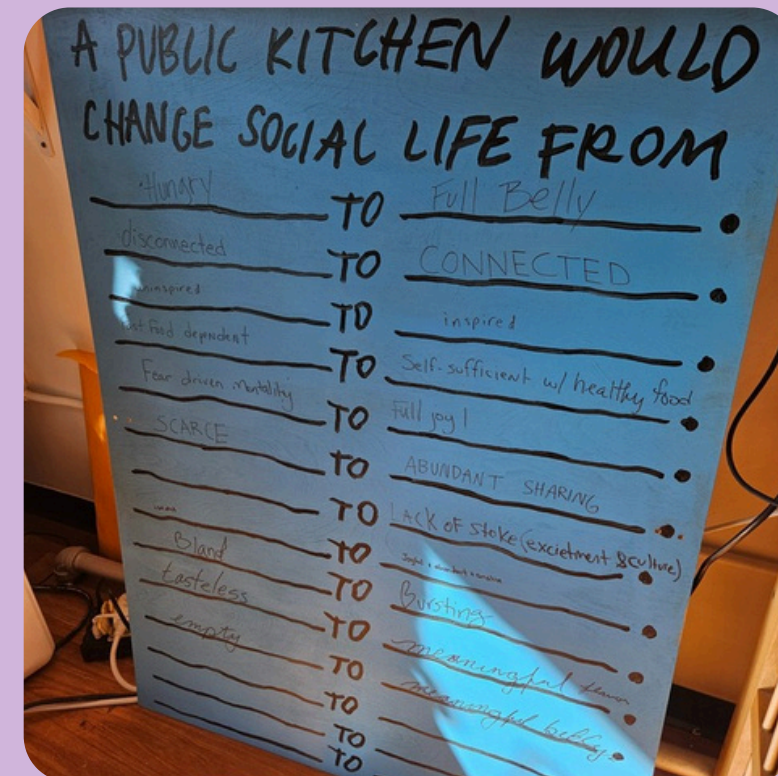
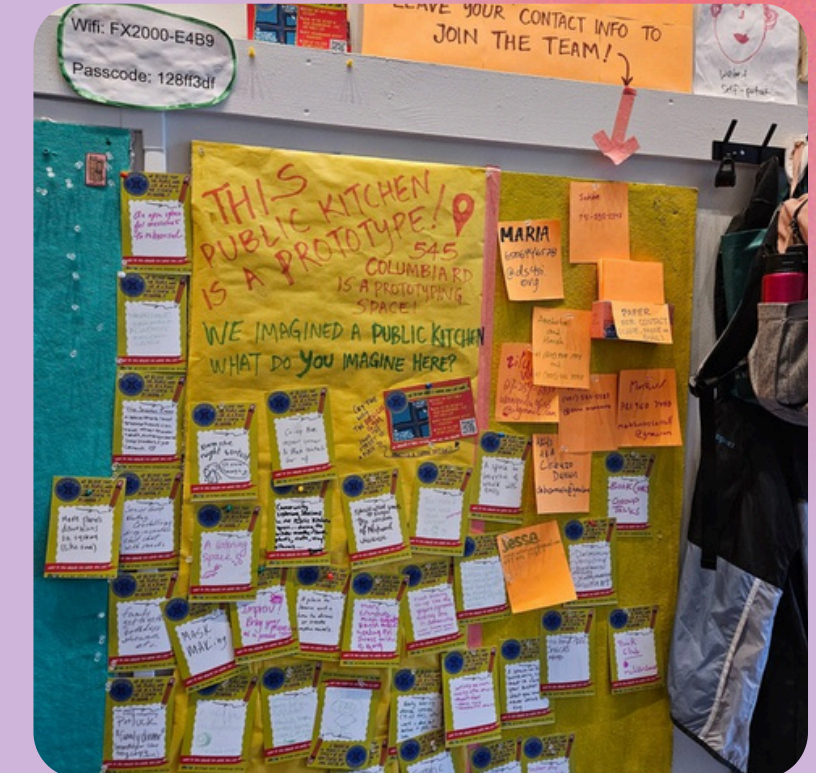
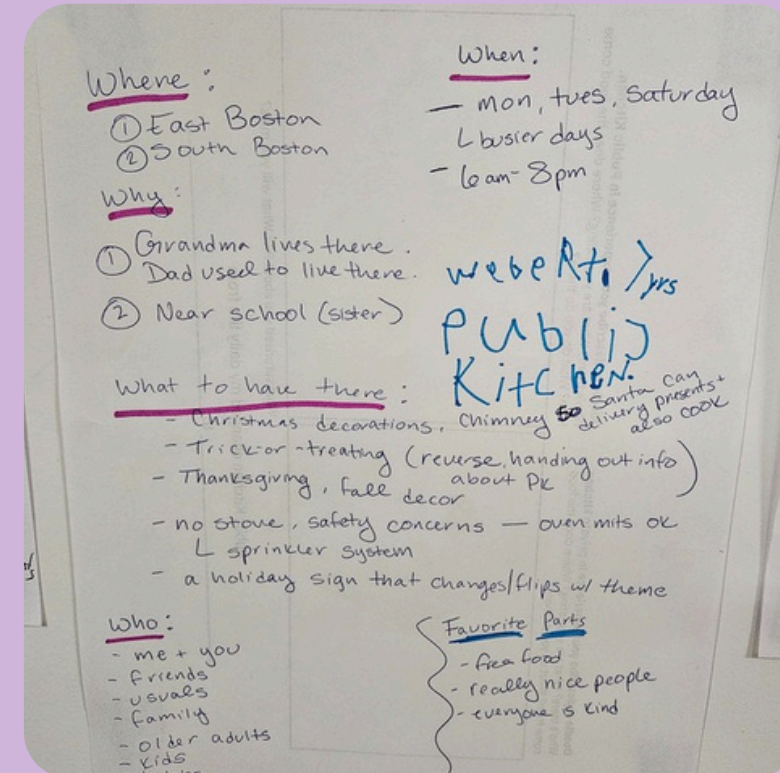
# CO-DESIGN

- **Collaborative and participatory** approach to creating solutions, in which all stakeholders are treated as equal collaborators in the design process
- Designing **with** and not for
- Challenges typical power dynamics
- Co-design is **equity** in action





# DESIGN RESEARCH



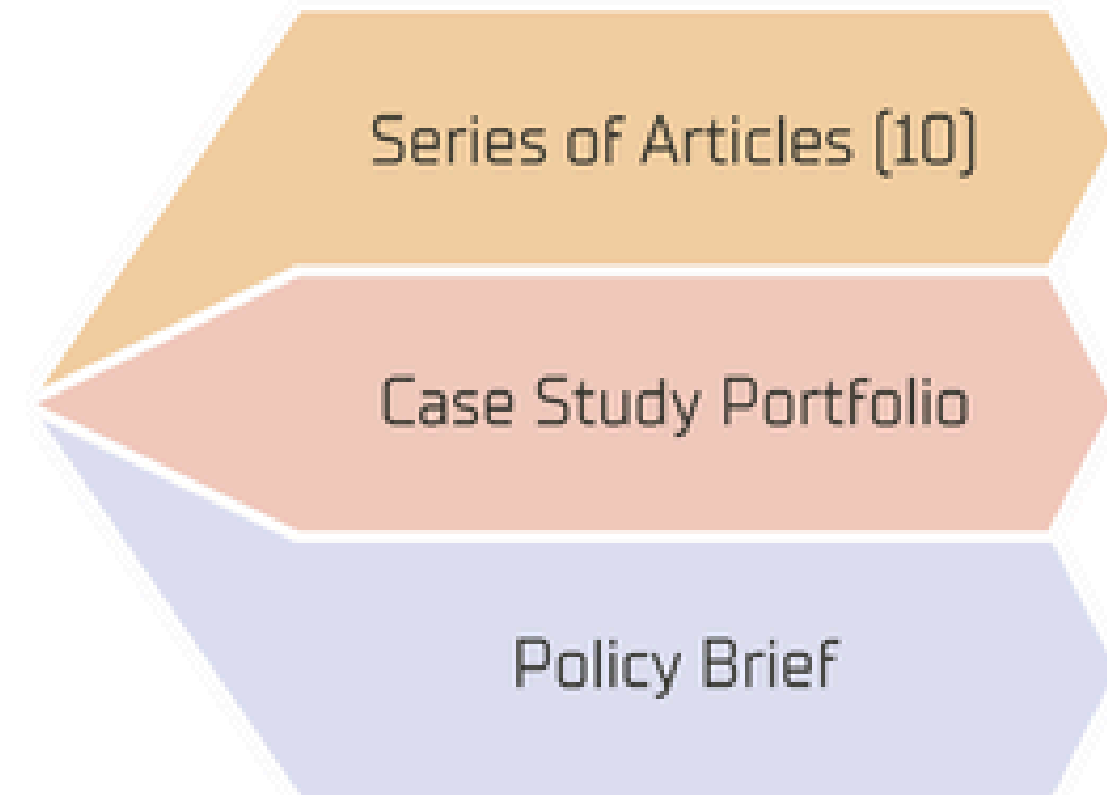


# DIRECTED STUDY GOALS

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ✓ How do public kitchens foster community engagement, address food insecurity, and promote equitable food access?
- ✓ What cultural, social, and spatial dynamics emerge in public kitchen environments, and how do these affect the relationships between participants, food, and place?
- ✓ What are the design and operational strategies that contribute to the success or challenges of communal kitchens?
- ✓ How do communal kitchens reflect or challenge traditional food norms, hierarchies, and power dynamics within communities?
- ✓ In what ways can public kitchens serve as a model for sustainable and inclusive food systems development?

## DELIVERABLES





# **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

**DIRECTED STUDY**



# STRATEGIC PARTNERS

---

## **Food Recovery**

Food Rescue US

## **Nonprofit Consulting**

M3 Fundraising

## **Graphic Arts**

Claire Pawlecki Design

## **Research**

Menus of Change University  
Research Collaborative

**Women-led  
Entrepreneurship**  
Les Dames d'Escoffier

**Legal**  
BU/MIT Law Clinic

**Architecture & Design**  
PAYETTE

**Social Impact  
Venture Resources**  
Innovate@BU

**Community Development**  
Boston Food Forest  
Coalition

**Academic**  
Food Studies Programs  
at BU MET

**International (Mexico City)**  
La Combi Rosa Laboratorio  
de Gastronomía



# THANK YOU!

let's keep in touch

## EquiTable



[equitablefoodsystems.org](https://equitablefoodsystems.org)



[@equitablefoodsystems](https://www.instagram.com/equitablefoodsystems)



[equitablefoodsystems@gmail.com](mailto:equitablefoodsystems@gmail.com)

## The Team



Mark Araujo | Andrea Catania



[@bunchofmarks](https://www.instagram.com/bunchofmarks) | [@leftyatthefork](https://www.instagram.com/leftyatthefork)



[markaraujoq@gmail.com](mailto:markaraujoq@gmail.com)

[andrea.h.catania@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.h.catania@gmail.com)



# APPENDIX

**Hygiene & Safety**

**Co-design Approaches**

**Design Research & Impact**

**Strategic Partnerships**

**Financials Expanded**

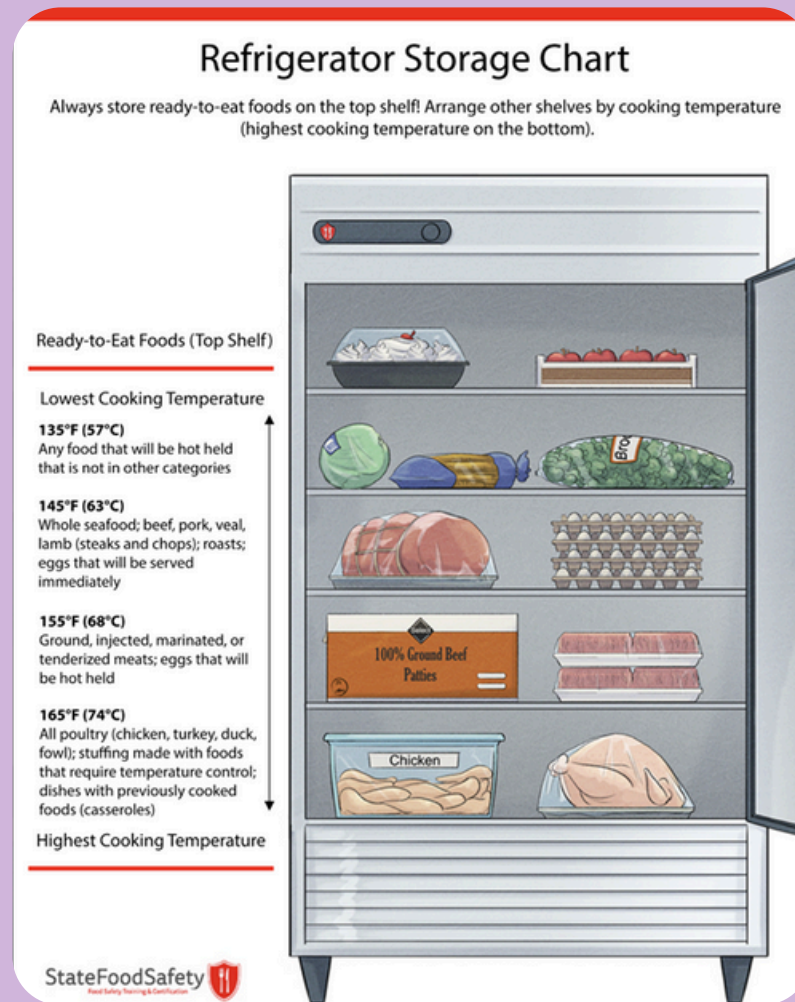
**Renderings**

**Scalability**

**Other Projects**



# HYGIENE & SAFETY





\_\_\_\_\_

Project Expenses	Total Project Expense
<b>Personnel</b>	
Project Co-Leader #1	\$20,000.00
Project Co-Leader #2	\$20,000.00
Operations Manager	\$12,000.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
<b>Subtotal Personnel</b>	\$52,000.00
Tax & Fringe Expense (Formula = 27% default; please adjust accordingly)	\$14,040.00
<b>Total Personnel Expense</b>	\$66,040.00
<b>Non-Personnel Expense (Include allocations to Partners/consultants in this section, please list name of each partner/consultant individually)</b>	
Activities	\$20,000.00
Culinary Equipment	\$0,000.00
Eating/Drinking Equipment	\$4,000.00
Cleaning/Maintaining Supplies	\$2,000.00
Storage	\$0,000.00
Food and Ingredients	\$2,000.00
Interpretation	\$0,000.00
Translation	\$0,000.00
Community Co-Design Sessions	\$0,000.00
Air Needs	\$0,000.00
Engagement Materials	\$0,000.00
Logistics	\$2,000.00
Risk Needs	\$0,000.00
<b>Total Non-Personnel</b>	\$24,000.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	
	\$150,040.00
<b>Total Amounts</b>	<b>\$150,040.00</b>

## Semi-Permanent

Project Expenses	Total Project Expense
<b>Personnel</b>	
Project Co-Leader #1	\$75,000.00
Project Co-Leader #2	\$75,000.00
Operations Manager	\$50,000.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
	\$0.00
<b>Subtotal Personnel</b>	<b>\$200,000.00</b>
Tax & Fringe Expense (Formula = 21% default please adjust accordingly)	
	\$54,000.00
<b>Total Personnel Expense</b>	<b>\$254,000.00</b>
<b>Non-Personnel Expense (Include allocations to Partners/consultants in this section, please list name of each partner/consultant individually)</b>	
Activities	\$50,000.00
Culinary Equipment	\$100,000.00
Baking/Serving Equipment	\$20,000.00
Cleaning/Textiling Supplies	\$5,000.00
Storage	\$5,000.00
Food and Ingredients	\$75,000.00
Interpretation	\$5,000.00
Translation	\$7,000.00
Community Co-design Sessions	\$20,000.00
Art Needs	\$0,000.00
Engagement Materials	\$50,000.00
Wool Needs	\$100.00
	\$0.00
<b>Total Non-Personnel:</b>	<b>\$215,000.00</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	
	<b>\$469,000.00</b>
<b>Total Amounts</b>	<b>\$469,000.00</b>

# Permanent

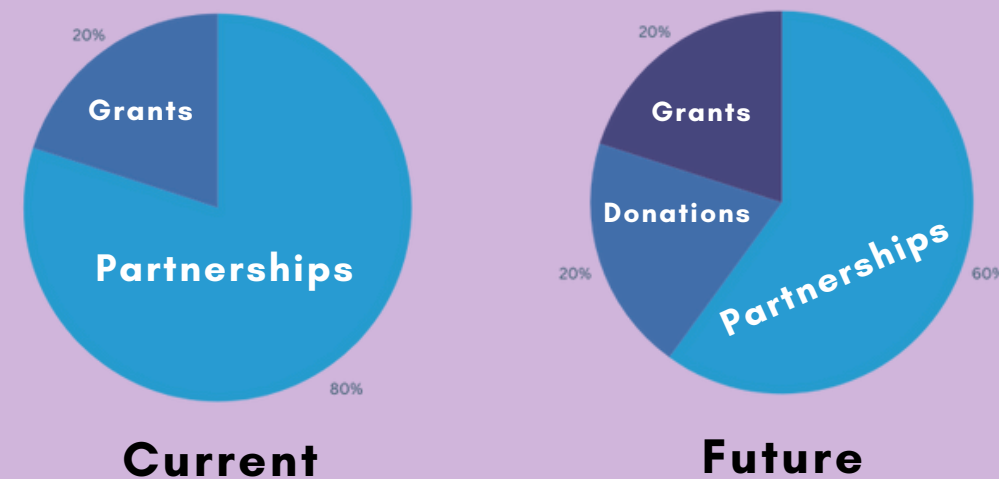
# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

## Social Impact Metrics

Community Building | Food Justice |  
Health & Wellbeing | Sovereignty & Empowerment

**Methods:** Design research, ethnography, raw numbers for SIA reporting and SROI\*

## Funding Models & Sources



## Sustainability & Scalability

Raise **3yr** runway, continue developing multi-sector strategic **partnerships**, innovative physical assets, toolkit building, storytelling

## MODELS

JUST PROGRAMMING

~50K

SEMI-PERMANENCE  
(Existing Assets)

~150K

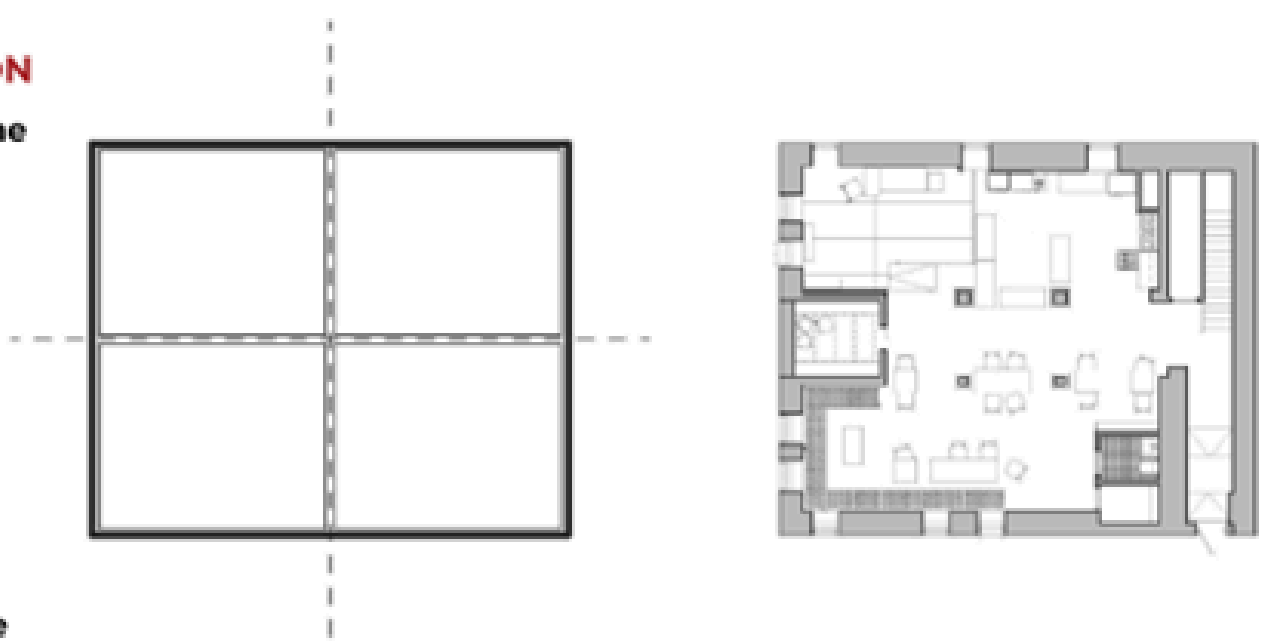
PERMANENCE  
(Retrofit)

~500K

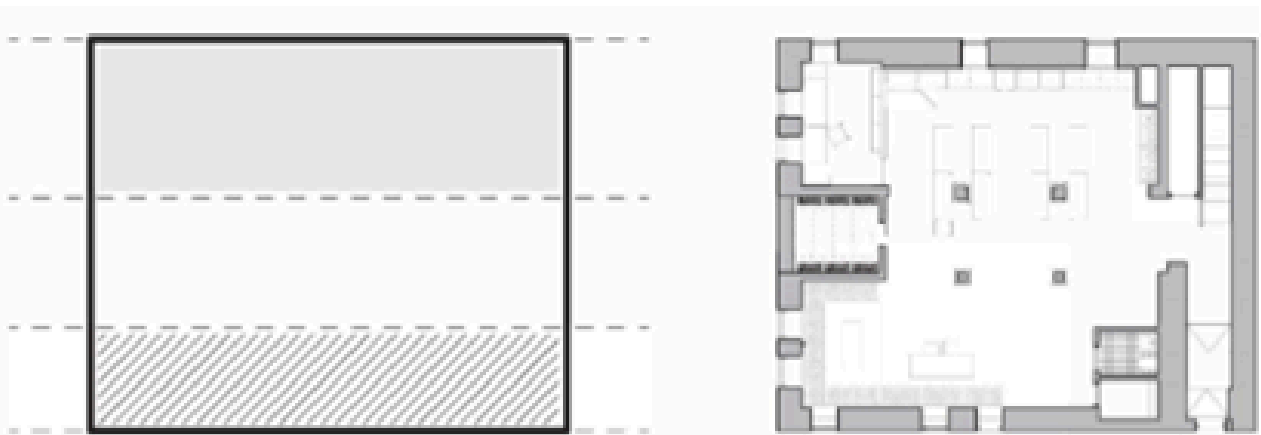


INTERIOR RENOVATION

Option 1: Quadrant Scheme

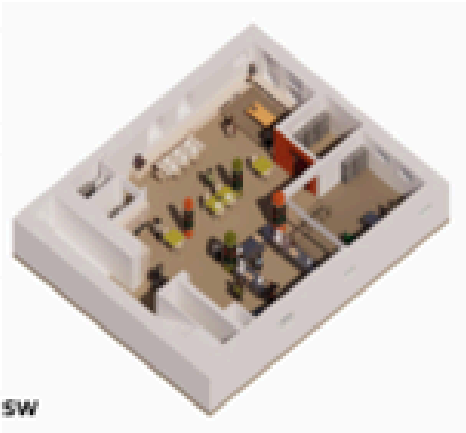


Option 2: Layered Scheme

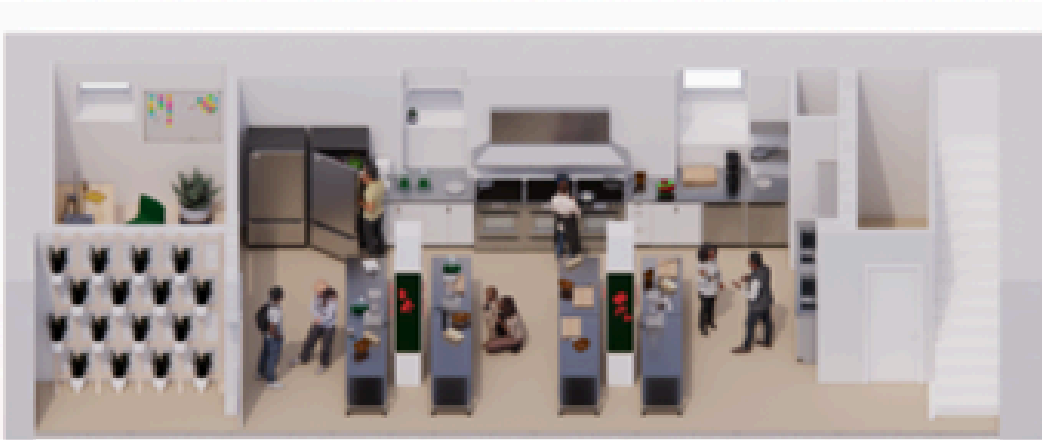


INTERIOR RENOVATION

Option 1: Maintaining the Existing Layout



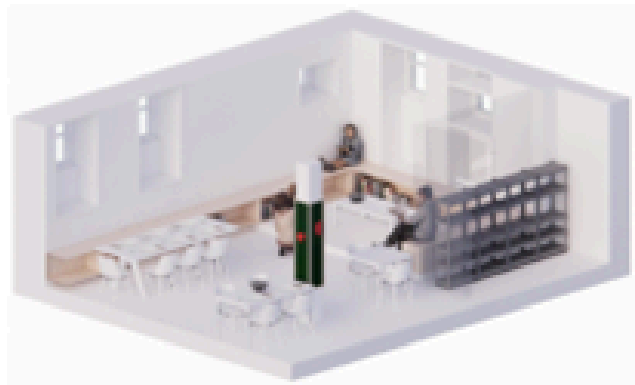
Option 2: Compact Office, Expanded Kitchen



INTERIOR RENOVATION: STORAGE DISPLAY/ READING NOOK & DINING

① STORAGE DISPLAY, SPICE COLUMNS

② VERSATILE SEATING & BOOKSHELVES



INTERIOR RENOVATION

Option 1: Maintaining the Existing Layout

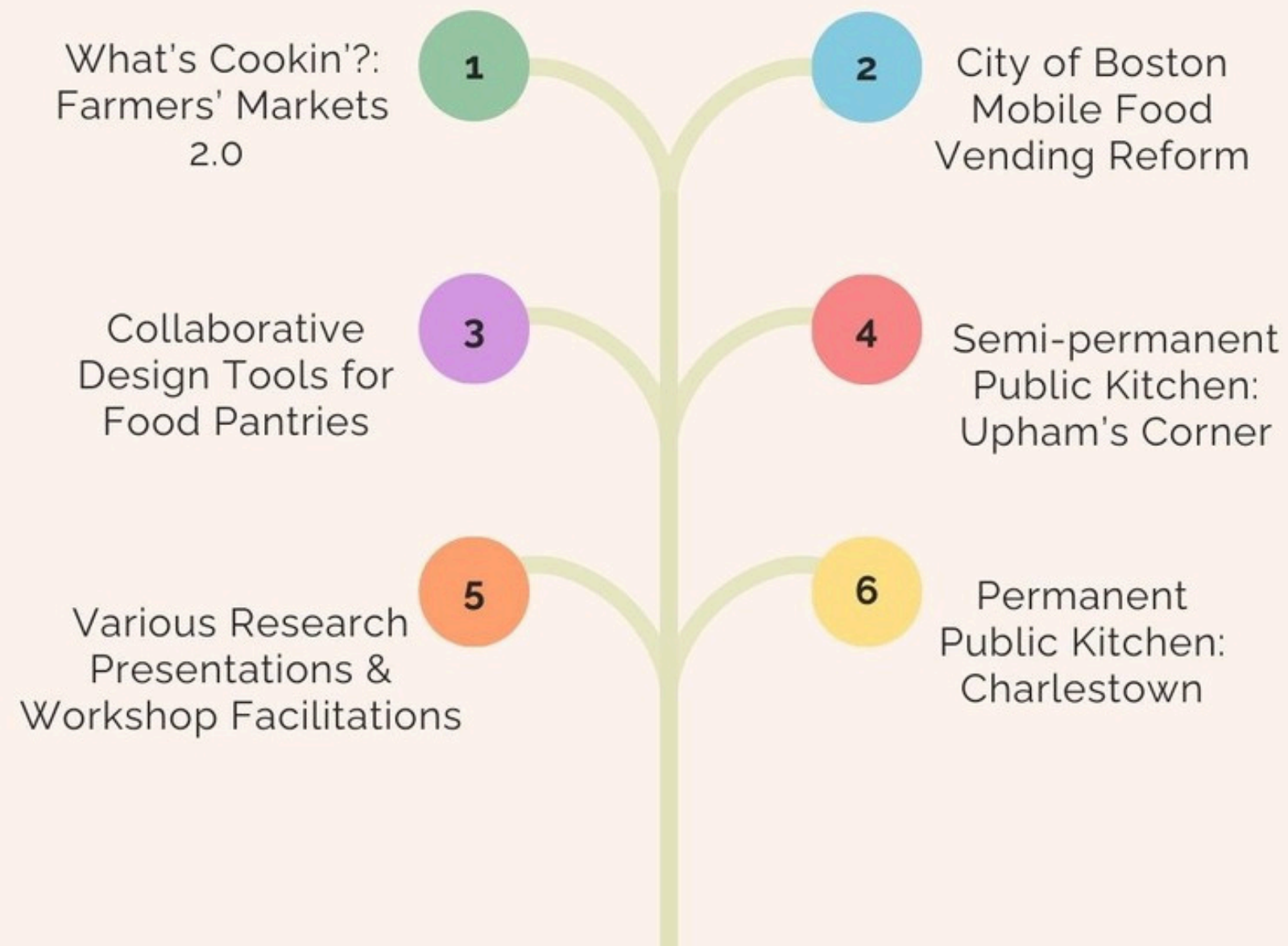


Option 2: Compact Office, Expanded Kitchen





## A FEW EXAMPLES OF *OUR PAST PROJECTS*



# EquiTable's Body of Work