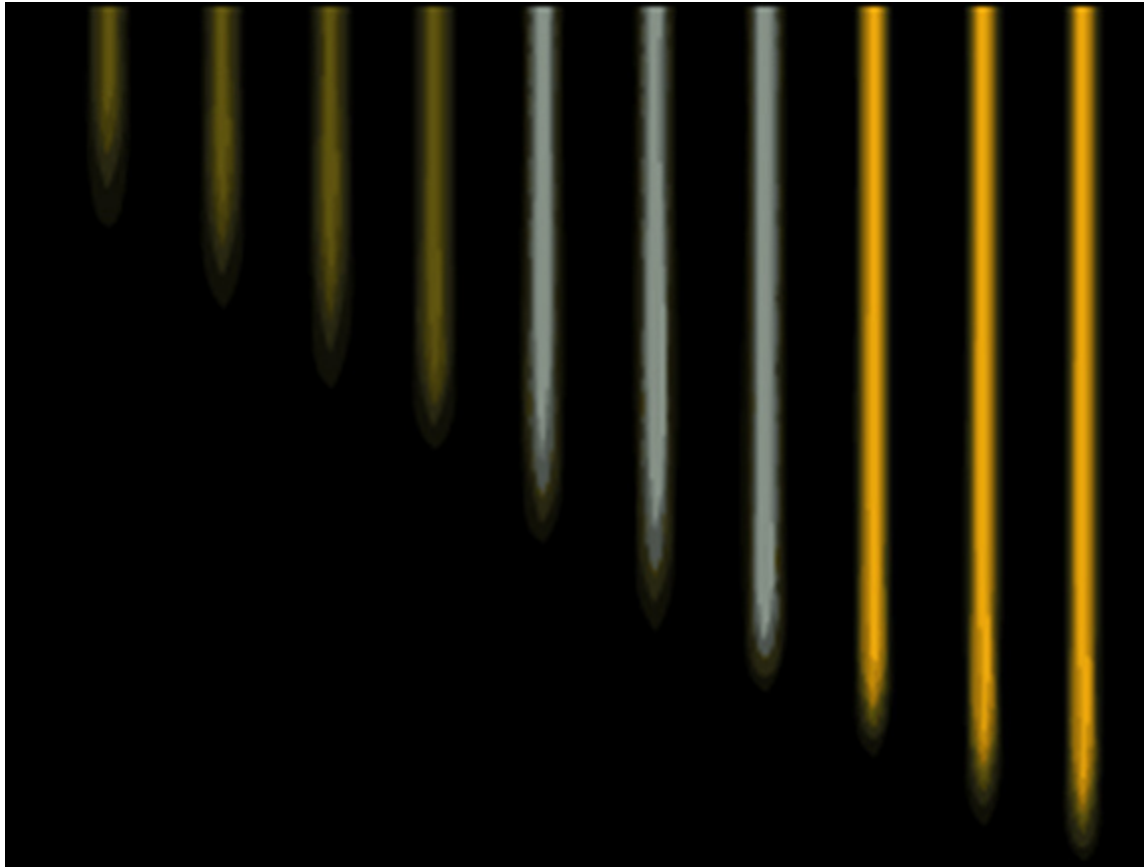


Affordable Housing Development Navigator (AHDN) Project

The Public Good Society of Dartmouth & Partners

2021-2022



Contact: publicgoodsociety@gmail.com

<https://www.publicgoodsociety.ca/affordable-housing-development-navigator>

Thanks to our funder: The Community Housing Transformation Centre

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Introduction

The Affordable Housing Development Navigator Project supported five non-profit agencies in Dartmouth North to advance their ideas, plans and proposals for the development of new affordable housing units, and generated new information resources, tools, and lessons for the benefit of the Community Housing Sector in the region and the province. This document tells the story.

The Team

Core Project Team

Role	Organization	Skills/responsibilities brought to the effort...
Project Lead & Co-lead (volunteers)	Public Good Society (PGS)	Accountability, project directions, relationships
Backbone support	Between the Bridges transitioned to Consultant	Scheduling, setting agendas, facilitating, bringing key resources to support the process (e.g., ToR template, interview guide), relationship building, networking
Learning and Evaluation	Inspiring Communities transitioned to Consultant	Documentation, processes to support ongoing reflection and learning, rapid feedback cycles for informed decision-making, report writing

The Navigators

Benjie Nycum, Nycum & Associates Limited
 Hadrian Laing, Nycum & Associates Limited
 Marcel Tarnogorski, Tarnogorski Consulting

Community non-profit organizations

YWCA
 LakeCity Works
 Christ Church
 Farrell Benevolent Society
 Welcome Housing
 Freedom Foundation (withdrew)

Timeline & Activities 2016-2022

This project is one step in a larger story with many pre-conditions leading to the launch and overall progress. The key foundation of this work is genuine relationships of trust and respect.

Date	Description
2016-2018	Between the Bridges (BtB) conducted an extensive community survey in 2016 which identified access to affordable quality housing as a top issue in Dartmouth North, along with student success, access to health care, and community fabric. Working with a collective impact model, BtB backbone staff supported ongoing, intentional relationship building of trust, respect and safety across sectors and among community partners while concurrently working on priority topics.
2018-2019	Between the Bridges Social Innovation Lab on Housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10 residents and 10 nonprofit, public and private sector participants. ● Nov 2018: 1 full day, Feb 2019: 3 full days, April 2019: 2 full days, Oct 2019: 1 full day follow up ● Catalyst for 3 new prototype working groups including an idea around some kind of “Development Navigator” who could help bridge the capacity gap between nonprofit organizations who have a vision for new affordable housing and where government funding and project partners will engage.
2019-2021	The Public Good Society of Dartmouth worked with Housing Nova Scotia and then the Community Housing Transformation Centre, looking to fund a pilot project to bring a “navigator” to Dartmouth North that could help community organizations interested in developing new affordable housing with respect to capacity, knowledge, and sustained access to subject matter expertise for the pre-development work.
2021	\$100,000 in funding was approved for the Public Good Society of Dartmouth by The Community Housing Transformation Centre for an “Affordable Housing Development Navigator” to support plans for the development of new affordable housing units in Dartmouth North and the creation of materials to help other organizations with similar aspirations.
2021-2022	Implementation of the Dartmouth North Affordable Housing Development Navigation Project. Key Capacity Building Elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing an RFI & RFP process to support PGSD in recruiting the Navigator/Navigation Team. ● Developing a hiring and contracting process to engage the professional navigation team. ● Developing a governance structure: the Oversight Committee with responsibility delegated by the PGS Board of Directors. ● Developing and implementing a nonprofit organization recruitment process. ● Started with 6 organizations with 4 continuing to be active in the process. ● Co-designing the initiative with the Navigation Team, leading to a workshop model to orientate, educate, and train in the various aspects of developing affordable housing. ● Development and delivery of 16 * 2 hour workshops, with videos recorded, and filed. ● Biweekly meeting of Oversight Committee for over 15 months. ● Development and strengthening of relationships between organizations that were previously unfamiliar with each other, particularly in the context of housing or development. ● Developmental evaluation processes occurring throughout.
August 2022	Conclusion of Navigation Team contract and workshops
August-November 2022	Final collation and reporting on learnings and outcomes, with the Oversight Committee and other related parties co-designing a Phase 2 proposal, building on the learnings and strengths developed to date.

Top Impacts

On participating nonprofit organizations:

1. Relationship and trust building:

(a) with other nonprofits in the sector: “It’s nice to have a sense of togetherness.” “It’s not just me being overwhelmed by this, we’re all in the same boat.”

(b) with private sector and government partners such as the Navigator team of architects and government representatives from Housing Nova Scotia.

2. Knowledge and skill development around how to develop affordable housing. Nonprofits understanding the scope & scale of housing development: “We’ve learned way more than we thought we ever would, it’s been extremely helpful, it’s been very eye-opening.”

3. Access to information & resources: A major impact for participants is the curated information and resources being offered by the Navigator Team for immediate use and also for future reference.

On the Public Good Society of Dartmouth:

1. The Public Good Society has a wealth of resources that can be referenced and shared to support nonprofits interested in developing affordable housing.

2. The Public Good Society has increased their understanding of and their practice with developmental evaluation.

3. Deepening of relationships in the affordable housing sector: nonprofits based in Dartmouth North, the private sector and government partners.

4. Sense of joy and accomplishment with what we’ve been able to do collectively, through bringing in process to support adaptation and flexible action.

5. This project has resulted in a clear direction for the next phase of the work.

On the community of Dartmouth North:

1. Strengthened affordable housing sector more able to create affordable housing units in the future.

2. Strengthened trust and relationships between client-serving organizations who are often serving the same people in the community.

3. Higher profile of Dartmouth North with partners in the private and public sector.

On other partner organizations:

The Navigators learned a lot about working collectively in community and about participatory approaches and processes.

PART 1

Initiation Phase: March - September 2021

Laying the foundations and building the team

Narrative

This story is a continuation of the narrative about the Social Innovation Lab on Housing (SIL) hosted by Between the Bridges (BtB) which sparked the AHDN project.

In March of 2021 a grant was secured by the Public Good Society of Dartmouth (PGSD) based on the concept of an Affordable Housing Development Navigator. After a brief celebration, the group came to the question of 'ok, now what?' At this stage the group consisted of the PGSD Housing Subcommittee: 3 members from PGSD, 1 of which was also from BtB.

The first instinct was to go a traditional route: put together a job description based on the proposal, send it out through their networks, and hire the best applicant who came forward. Then the group began to wonder: how well are people going to accept this? "*Who hired you? Who are you anyways?*" There was concern of falling into the trap of having someone come from outside, that the community mistrusts, based on many past experiences of people coming in to "*help*". The group knew they needed the support and ownership of the community to be successful.

"What we wanted... was to say to the community who sparked this project: 'You're part of this. This is our project collectively. How do we want to proceed is together?'" shared the PGSD lead. As this project had emerged from the Social Innovation Lab on Housing, they decided to invite those same people, plus a few other relevant folks, to offer their wisdom and set a strong foundation for this project.

In April 2021, a half day virtual Zoom event was hosted, including community sector organizations and all three levels of government. Community organizations were asked about their strengths and assets, and where they need the most support in their affordable housing goals. Public sector individuals were asked about information and resources they could contribute. All participants shared any skills, competencies and experience they felt would be needed for this project to be a success. The day was a resounding success with participants sharing how meaningful it was to be involved in this way and their commitment to the journey of this work. A sense of ownership was continued from the SIL.

After the gathering, the original small group tried to put together a strong job description, and were introduced to the idea of using a Request for Proposal (RFP). They learned that an RFP was industry standard for the types of people they were looking to hire for the role. An RFP in this case, could lay out the goals of the initiative (rather than a list of skills in a job offer) and then have an individual or possibly a team come back with proposed ways of reaching those goals. Starting with a fixed cost and a list of desired outcomes with no clear plan to achieve them was considered a unique approach for this sector, and one that could spark some creative responses.

The other consideration that arose around the RFP process, was that PGSD is an all-volunteer-led Board. The group considered ways to create a successful project given the limited organizational capacity to directly supervise an “employee”. A key component to the hiring process was whether the individual or group had the capacity to self-manage to a degree, i.e., did they demonstrate project-management skills? and did they have a conducive environment for success in this project?

The RFP was collectively drafted and finalized, and a hiring committee of three was formed, with two members from the PGS housing subcommittee and one representative of a community organization that was involved previously.

Five proposals were received, two from individuals and three from teams. The hiring committee conducted interviews with the leading applicants and decided to offer the opportunity to a team of three planners/architects. The result of the successful search process was then shared with the past-participating people and organizations.

Reflecting back, it was observed that there is power in the discomfort of sitting in the chaos and the unknown. That’s where innovation is born. Being able to say “I don’t know. The only thing I know is if we do it the way we normally do it, it isn’t going to work.”

The PGSD lead concluded: “This process is so different from what generally happens: a community organization is awarded funding and just goes ahead and hires somebody, not necessarily knowing what they want. The process-to-date is innovative. Maybe this story would help other community organizations right now devising their strategies for how to hire and manage projects.”

Principles and values held by the project team during this time:

- Getting the right person/people is the most important part we play in this process.
- Let’s give it due diligence, and be thoughtful.
- Give it the time it needs/takes. This is too important to rush.
- Relationships building and engagement need to be embedded through each stage of the process/project: This process is a representation of how this work is done; bringing together different voices to build it strong from the foundation up; building buy-in to the process; it needs to have collective ownership or it won’t work.
- Backbone support is needed to support momentum and bring in needed capacity (e.g., convene meetings, scheduling, agenda setting, facilitation, note-taking, due diligence such as ToRs for Steering Committee, capacity to take an idea and run with it, share information).
- “The only thing I know is if we do it the way we normally do it, it isn’t going to work.”
- Trust and respect in the community.
- Inclusion: making sure that the people who are impacted are actually involved in the process and ownership in the decisions: “How can we do this in a way that the community will feel a part of it?”

Major steps in the process

1.1 Proposal writing & fund exploration:

Two proposals to different funders were written based on the directions of the Social Innovation Lab's (SIL) Housing Navigator group. Staff with Between the Bridges and volunteers with the Public Good Society stewarded the process.

1.2 Collective building of the AHDN role and competencies

SIL participants and other voices were invited to gather together to discuss the potential role of a Navigator, collectively sharing ideas about competencies needed based on the different needs of the stakeholders.

Purpose of the session

The Public Good Society of Dartmouth has been awarded a grant to create an Affordable Housing Development Navigator (AHDN) as imagined in the Social Innovation Lab hosted by Between the Bridges in 2019. Goals of our time together include:

- helping to identify the priority skills, competencies and experience needed for this role, prior to developing a job description and initiating a hiring process;
- creating a shared understanding of the intentions of this initiative;
- identifying skills and resources that exist in the community and among partners that can strengthen and support the initiative; and
- strengthening existing and building new relationships.

Attendance

Many of the attendees were participants in the Social Innovation Housing Lab, and others were invited based on their role and organization's relevance for the project.

- Core team members for the project as well as
- Public Sector: representatives from Municipal (HRM Planning), Provincial (Housing Nova Scotia) and Federal (CMHC: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation) affordable housing bodies.
- Community Sector: representatives from organizations interested to work with an AHDN (Freedom Foundation, Farrell Benevolent Society, Welcome Housing and LakeCity Works), and other interested parties (Dartmouth North Landlord and researcher).

Discussions

Community organizations were asked: What are your organization's strengths/assets? And What areas might you need the most support?

Public sector individuals were asked: What can you/ your organization contribute to this initiative? (Resources, \$, people, information, etc)

Both were asked: What are the skills, competencies and experience needed for this position?

Outcomes:

- Robust list of skills and competencies that are being sought by the community sector organizations who are seeking to build more affordable housing in DN; and those seen as important for this role by public sector individuals working in the housing sector. This helped to create the RFP and role description for the Navigator.
- A clear picture of where each community organization is at in terms of strengths/assets and needs on the journey to providing/building affordable housing in DN. This helps to inform both the skills that are needed in a Navigator and as context to support orientation of the Navigator(s).
- A list of potential resources (e.g.,\$, people, information) available through the public sector individuals and organizations. This information will be provided to the Navigator(s) to follow up with.
- Relationship building with stakeholders. This strengthens the foundation for the work and sets it up for success.
- Increased information shared about the project with interested parties, increased understanding about the project and increased buy-in. This strengthens the foundation for the work and sets it up for success.
- Others??

1.3 Developing and carrying out the recruitment process

Working with experts in the field, the team came up with a process that suited the sector in order to invite the right person/people into the role:

- RFP development, with feedback rounds. (See Appendix 1 for the full RFP)
- Building a hiring committee with representation from key stakeholder perspectives.
- Vetting, shortlisting and building the interview questions/process.
- Interviews and deliberation.

Realization

A volunteer project lead/organization has limits on capacity. The Public Good Society as the host of this project is a 100% voluntary organization.

Response / Pivot

The backbone team stepped up their backbone role to fill in capacity needs.

1.4 Building an Oversight Committee to support the project team

- Ensuring a good breadth of perspectives/stakeholders
- Building Terms of Reference to clarify roles/responsibilities/structures etc. from the outset

See Appendix 2 for the Terms of Reference for the Oversight Committee.

PART 2

Execution Phase: October 2021 - August 2022

Capacity building sessions for community nonprofits

Narrative

At this point in the process, with the Navigator Team hired, some preliminary discussions were held between the Navigator Team and the Project Team about what this process could look like. A major shift at this stage was a turn towards capacity building rather than direct/specific one-on-one organizational support. Together it was discovered that foundational capacity is the starting point because the organizations needed to understand the process, and they were not yet ready to dive into the specifics. Therefore, the focus shifted to sharing information and building capacity, rather than taking action. For example, not diving into helping an organization to raise money as there wasn't a defined project, instead holding conversations in order to understand the project and process. The participants shared excitement and support for the idea of learning about the process, pulling back the curtain and showing how the sector actually works. Early on in the process it resulted in a sense of empowerment for the community organizations.

Major steps in the process

2.1 Workshops

The Navigation team developed and hosted 16 x 2 hour intensive and interactive educational workshops between October 2021 and August 16, 2022. Session topics included aspects like: City planning, zoning, bylaws, project charters, cost planning, and exploring funding streams.

Attendance was very close to 100% and all the sessions were recorded so in the event a participant could not attend, they were diligent in viewing the video and arrived at the next session caught up.

2.2 One-on-ones

Additionally, the Navigation Team facilitated two rounds of individual and focused working sessions (60-90 minutes) with all five of the nonprofit organizations to support specific relevant learning, based on where they were in their capacity and learning journey.

2.3 Evaluation

Developmental Evaluation was ongoing during this process in order to capture learnings. Mid-way through the project a full 360° evaluation was conducted, including interviews with each person involved from the Project Team, Navigator Team and community nonprofits. See results of that evaluation in the document ***AHDN Mid-Way Project Reflections***. Content includes:

- FINDINGS: Strengths to-date, Challenges to-date and Impacts to-date
- MOVING FORWARD: Ideas for this project
- REPLICATION: Ideas for replicating this project
- OUTCOMES: Reflection leading to change

2.4 Oversight Committee

The Oversight Committee met bi-weekly through the project. This was a space for the Navigators, the Project Team and members from the community nonprofits to explore ideas, stages of the project and make decisions about how best to build the path forward. Examples of what was covered: allocation of resources, reviewing developmental evaluation findings and pivoting in actions, translation in the culture and processes between the private sector (The NAvigator Team) and the community sector (community nonprofits).

2.5 Backbone support

Due to unexpected changes at Between the Bridges, backbone staff support ended in February and March 2022. As a result, additional funding was successfully sought from The Community Housing Transformation Centre for the backbone staff and this role returned to the project on August 1, 2022. Some activities included:

- a. Provided administrative, coordinating, co-design and facilitation support to the final Housing Development Navigation workshop, on August 16, 2022 which was inclusive of a variety of processes for bringing the initiative to a close.
- b. Provided administrative, coordinating, note taking and facilitation of the bi weekly Oversight Committee meetings.
- c. Connected with relevant organizations and projects in the sector such as:
 - i. [Build Together II](#): to learn more about the initiative, and to share the goals and outcomes of the Affordable Development Navigation Project. Participated in a 2 hour Build Together II session to learn more about the initiative specifically to ensure that any future Dartmouth North initiatives are complementary, not duplicating or competing.
 - ii. [Cahdco](#), an Ontario based nonprofit housing development organization. Learned about their journey, their mandate and most specifically their advice for organizations trying to develop affordable housing.
- d. Subsequently to the Developmental Evaluation interviews carried out by the Evaluation Lead, developed further consultation questions and then interviewed all five organizations, members of the Oversight Committee and the Navigation Team to further understand what future opportunities they needed, hoped for to build on the foundations developed from this initial phase. The questions were:
 - *“Who are you wanting/needing to connect with for further dialogue (in the near term and/or looking out further in your strategy) to move your initiative forward that additional backbone support might be of assistance?”*
 - *“Where are the potential opportunities for collaboration that supports your goals? E.g. something that is challenging to do alone. What makes them important to your next steps? What is getting in the way of connecting with them so far?”*

- e. Facilitated multiple ongoing conversations with the five organizations, the Oversight Committee and the Public Good Society volunteer project lead, to discuss the potential opportunities identified from the Developmental Evaluation and the 1:1 interviews. Using Mural to present and update the information during each of the conversations.

A note on the importance of the Backbone Role

“Backbone” support, whether provided by a dedicated person in an organization or a specific role that is funded, is critical when there are multiple organizations trying to work together for social impact - in this case increasing affordable housing. The nonprofit sector does not have existing capacity to design, convene and administer collective initiatives. The “backbone” is a facilitator, coach, champion, as well as “critical friend” for the project who recognizes the complexity of bringing leaders together from the diverse cultural and policy contexts of nonprofits and cross- sector including public, private & community. They can co-design a process that builds & strengthens trust, respect & safety for working together in new ways for shared social impact.

Some examples of impacts from having a dedicated backbone staff include:

- **Impacts on participants of the project:**
 - Timely, accurate information to support their participation through co-design of meeting agendas, accurate notes with actions, hosted meetings that started and ended on time.
 - Opportunity for 1:1 conversation and thought partnership time to hear their ideas, perspectives, and hopes for the current and future projects.
- **Impacts on the Public Good Society:**
 - Allowed the Public Good Society (100% voluntary charity) to have the peace of mind that once again there was professional capacity and experience to keep the project moving forward in a professional and effective manner (as had been the case prior to the Between the Bridge contribution being pulled out unexpectedly)
 - An excellent example of alignment of a project with the mission of the PGS: *“To work with partner agencies serving Dartmouth and to share our resources and knowledge to better understand and address complex social issues facing our community members.”*
- **Impacts on partner organizations:**
 - In having a part time backbone staff responsible for active engagement and inclusion of all of the parties through proactive process design, the project was more accessible as they all had a say, all voices were heard - multiple times, the workshops went better than planned and there was effective communication about meetings and follow up actions.

PART 3

Closure Phase: September - December 2022

Sensing what's needed next

Narrative

Throughout all stages of this project, there has been ongoing “sensemaking” of what this might mean going forward for a next phase or stage of the Affordable Housing Development Navigator Project. These ideas were captured through the DE process and shared with the backbone staff when they rejoined the initiative in August. In order to proactively and collectively understand the potential opportunities for “what might be next” a number of engagement processes were carried out during the ‘Closure Phase’ including:

- The backbone staff reconnecting with each of the members of the initiative, including the Navigators to further discuss their individual perspectives on what would have value to them, to future initiatives and ultimately to have a positive impact in growing the # of affordable housing units in Dartmouth North.
- Collating this information into a Word document and then a Mural Board for engaging insights, feedback and consensus decision making at the biweekly meetings of the Oversight Committee.
- Regular “touch points” with the Public Good Society as the current backbone organization for the current initiatives.

Major steps in the process

3.1 Insights and themes from one-on-one discussions were summarized and shared

A. Background & Purpose

The following information was gathered from 1:1 interviews with the parties participating in the current Dartmouth North Affordable Housing Development initiative, coupled with insights from the developmental evaluation process as well as ongoing discussions in the Affordable Housing Development Navigation workshops and Oversight Committee meetings. The potential use, at this time, for this information is to guide the priority current focus for the part time project backbone staff as well to explore what a next project phase for continued funding for beyond October 2022 and into 2023 might look like.

B. Discussion Questions

Two questions were posed in the one-on-one 30-minute interviews with participants and organizers of this initiative:

- *Who are you wanting/needing to connect with for further dialogue (in the near term and/or looking out further in your strategy) to move your initiative forward that additional backbone support might be of assistance?*

- *Where are the potential opportunities for collaboration that supports your goals? E.g. something that is challenging to do alone. What makes them important to your next steps? What is getting in the way of connecting with them so far?*

C. Assumptions

The following assumptions are emerging:

- a. Having strong and multiple partnerships is something that is needed in affordable housing as this model provides the diversity of knowledge, skill and expertise, resources that one non-profit organization may not have alone. This does not mean that there are not non-profit organizations that do have the capacity to undertake development projects alone, however in Nova Scotia based on the number of small-mid sized organizations, there are many that do not have the internal capacity for development projects.
- b. Partnership not only has benefits to non-profit organizations but it is being demanded by funders for a variety of reasons including reducing competition for funding.
- c. When working with multiple parties that may not have worked together before, it is important to ensure there is a balanced focus on ongoing relationship building (trust, respect, safety) between the parties, concurrently with the tactical work of developing strategy and moving ideas into action that lead to increased affordable housing.

D. Emerging Themes for the Focus of Current and Future Work

The following four themes are emerging from the insights and ideas shared through these interviews as well as ongoing conversations as highlighted below:

To continue to build on the relationships and learnings to date from the initial phase of this Affordable Housing Development Navigation initiative through continued support and structure to:

- i. Ongoing Applied Learning & Education - “An Affordable Housing Development Learning Lab”
- ii. Affordable Housing Coalition Building
- iii. Thought Partnership on an As Needed Basis
- iv. Community Engagement & Research

Each of these ideas are described with a bit more detail below:

i. Ongoing applied learning & education - “An Affordable Housing Learning Lab”

Designing and convening ongoing educational sessions, workshops, learning opportunities based on identified priority interests and needs for community sector organizations and leaders in Dartmouth North as well as potentially other jurisdictions that might be interested in this learning opportunity and to also create a larger community of practice. Integral to the Learning Lab would include some form of repository for the learning materials such as documents,

templates, videos of presentations, etc. Some current topics that have been identified to date include:

- ❖ Understanding the “lingo” of development (and HRM development officers) to feel confident and competent in meeting with these subject matter experts.
- ❖ Learning and understanding all the various elements that are needed to know about being an operator or partnering with an operator of affordable housing.
 - What needs to be in place to be effective as well as sustainable?
 - What are the specific elements of operating supportive housing and regular subsidized housing?
- ❖ Deepening understanding of the various sources of funding, intended purpose, \$\$ amounts, process/timing to access, support to applications etc.
- ❖ Deepening knowledge and understanding of the various roles in governance of and the legislative parameters for non-profit development projects.
- ❖ Identifying options for how organizations can further develop their business plans.
- ❖ What are the various professional roles that are needed to support development projects and what are the roles and relationships with volunteer governance?
- ❖ Revisiting in more depth the topics covered already by the Navigation Team.

ii. Affordable housing coalition building

Building on the relationships that have been developed with the current participating organization, plus engaging other organizations with shared mandates and interests in increasing affordable housing in Dartmouth North, to:

Co-design processes to move forward incrementally in the prototyping of a Dartmouth North Affordable Housing. To initiate steps towards a coalition, to learn and adapt from trying and to see what is possible on a small, yet geographic regional level, with the potential purpose and benefits as outlined below:

- ❖ Creating a coalition of parties that is knowingly wanting to work together on some form of green space affordable housing opportunity.
- ❖ Leveraging knowledge that already exists in the current group for multiple organizations working together.
- ❖ Prototyping on a small scale and sharing the learnings with other interested parties including the emerging provincial housing organization.

- ❖ Setting this up without any project or land in mind so there is time and process to further establish relationships, terms of reference, agreements for working together, decision making processes etc.
- ❖ Being prepared in a variety of ways, with a diversity of parties involved in the coalition, to respond to opportunities such as funding, land for sale, new priorities and opportunities with government or other partners.
- ❖ Building capacity that can support ongoing work of individual organizations, while preparing to take advantage of opportunities and not starting from behind.

iii. Thought partnership on an “as needed” basis

Providing thought partnership/coaching, by a backbone staff, with nonprofit organizations about the “what, why, who, how and when” of strategy and implementation of engaging with potential partners. Potential partners could include:

- ❖ Other non-profit and community sector organizations
- ❖ Departments of government such as health, planning community services, housing, justice
- ❖ Strategic officials, others?

Additionally, based on need, providing core administration to these meetings such as providing zoom account, facilitating conversations, note taking.

iv. Community engagement & research

- ❖ Carrying out market research (quantitative and qualitative) based on current, and emerging needs. E.g. What are the current and emerging needs for social housing in Dartmouth North? Demographic, types of design needs.
- ❖ Tapping into the experience of people with lived experience. Facilitating conversations around nuances around design features (safety, security, and dignity). Sharing learnings about the aspects of how design can support effective social housing.

3.2. Prioritizing next phases through engagement & iterative processes

For this engagement an interactive online Mural Board was created to share the above ideas so that the Oversight Committee and members of the initiative could share insights, ideas and priorities.

The final iteration of the Mural Board is in Appendix 1, which illustrates the ideas, potential scenarios and the consensus prioritization of positioning the redevelopment of the Farrell Benevolent Society as a “prototype” and “case study” to increase the # of affordable housing units in Dartmouth North so the processes, outcomes of strategic investments and learnings can be shared more widely to other community organizations and funders.

Through a series of conversations, and always going back to the challenge of increasing the # of affordable housing units in Dartmouth North, the group landed on a priority project focus as outlined:

- To pursue the unprecedented opportunity of developing the land in Dartmouth North, that is owned by the Farrell Benevolent Society, so that they may continue their mission of benevolence by building new units of affordable housing on the corner of Windmill and Wyse Road in Dartmouth; and,
- To continue to build on the culture, relationships, trust and learning outcomes from the previous Transformation Centre Project (Housing Development Navigation) to position the FBS project as a “prototype” or case study so that the developmental learnings can be shared with the Centre, with Build Together and with other community organizations trying to build new housing.

3.3. Ongoing processes and steps: working together to access resources (funding & expertise) to develop a Class C estimate and schematic design

It has become very clear through the many previous steps, that in order to address funders comments of “bring us a project and we can try to fund it”, the FBS needs a Class C estimate based on schematic design.

As the FBS is virtually a 100% voluntary organization, other than the part time coordinator, whose salary is dependent on BINGO income, the next challenge is to secure adequate funding to engage the professionals and personnel in order to develop a Class C estimate. The hope is that the Nova Scotia Growth Fund will be able to fund this next step.

It is anticipated the Nova Scotia Growth Fund will be launched in November 2022, with a goal to make an application for funds to support the development of a Class C estimate for the Farrell Benevolent Society property redevelopment. (**Applications were submitted to the Nova Scotia Growth Fund in December 2022*).

APPENDIX 1 - Request For Proposals (RFP)

Affordable Housing Development Navigation Pilot for Dartmouth North

Scope of Work -

The [Public Good Society of Dartmouth](#) and its project partners are seeking an individual or team to fulfill the role of Affordable Housing Development Navigator in an exciting opportunity to initiate new Affordable Housing developments in Dartmouth North, and test new ways to support the community housing sector across Nova Scotia.

The Affordable Housing Development Navigator (AHDN) will work in Dartmouth North over a twelve-month period (with the possibility of extension), alongside a part-time embedded Evaluation and Communication Lead from [Inspiring Communities](#). Project oversight will be provided by a committee led by the Public Good Society.

The ADHN will work with and support at least three non-profit organizations in the community, applying their expertise to advance the planning and processes needed for successful development of new affordable housing units, such as development and business plans, exploring funding opportunities, and working with the Municipal government regarding land use rules.

Local organizations have already been identified to work with. Each is interested in creating new Affordable Housing in Dartmouth North and each has been engaged in the collective processes behind the development of this initiative, which is being coordinated by [Between the Bridges](#).

Outcomes include progress reports and evaluation of the overall process and activities. The Evaluation and Communications Lead will also produce and support the dissemination of new information resources and tools for the benefit of the Community Housing Sector in the region and the province, based on the experience of the ADHN.

Qualifications -

The successful proponent will have the following skills and qualifications: Project management skills, experience with affordable housing development in HRM, and a strong ability to work with the community.

Budget -

For this engagement, we are stipulating the fee/ amount we can pay to the successful proponent (navigator) in the amount of \$50,000 + HST.

We request proponents provide proposals that define the service and value that they can provide in exchange for this fee amount to complete the goals and achieve results.

Additional funds are available to support the work of the ADHN as follows:

Discretionary Fund for Project Costs (as authorized by the Oversight Committee): \$15,000 Approved Reimbursable Expenses: \$2,500

Proposals -

Please email a pdf to publicgoodsociety@gmail.com by midnight June 25, 2021 including the following information:

Fit

- Why are you a good fit for this initiative?
- What is your anticipated approach?
- Please give examples from your related experiences and lessons learned.

Competency

- Background of individual or team members, with emphasis on relevant experience (e.g., certification etc.)
- Project experience: List of relevant projects indicating size and date of completion (bulleted list)

Length of submission:

- Proposals should not exceed 10 pages plus appendices
- Please keep the file under 10MB

Scoring:

- Fit: 40%
- Competency 20%
- Interview 40%

Process and estimated timeline -

The top 3-5 scoring proponents on the non-interview elements will be invited to an interview. Proposals should be reviewed by the ADHN hiring committee and interviews completed by July 16 with a final decision and negotiations to be concluded by July 23.

Additional Information -

If you would like more background on the Affordable Housing Development Navigator initiative, please email publicgoodsociety@gmail.com

APPENDIX 2 - Terms of Reference

Oversight Committee Terms of Reference for the Affordable Housing Development Navigator Project (Aug 2021)

A. Background

Following the Social Innovation Lab on Housing, convened by Between the Bridges in

In 2019, one of the “lab teams” moved forward to prototype what might be made possible through a strategic investment in an Affordable Housing Development Navigator in Dartmouth North. As several members of this lab team were involved with the Public Good Society of Dartmouth (PGS), a registered local charity already focusing on affordable housing, the PGS developed a proposal for funding. The proposal was submitted to and eventually approved by the [Community Housing Transformation Centre](#). These Terms of Reference, at a minimum will outline the purpose, scope and authority of the group.

B. Group Name

This group is called the Oversight Committee for the Affordable Housing Development Navigator Project.

C. Type

At the present time this committee is an Ad Hoc committee of the Public Good Society including additional members from the community, created for the sole purpose of working on the Affordable Housing Development Navigator project.

D. Purpose

This group is a voluntary entity. The primary purpose will be to steward this initiative in meeting the deliverables as outlined in the contract with Community Housing Transformation Centre. This includes providing strategic oversight and guidance to the Affordable Housing Development Navigator Team (“Navigator Team”), a coalition of 3 professionals working together. Additionally, to monitor progress, comply with all reporting requirements, disburse funds according to the contract parameters and liaison with community partners as needed.

E. Roles & Authority

The Oversight Committee will be responsible for the following:

- a. Provide ongoing strategic supervision and direction to the Navigator Team including creating effective processes for regular meetings, clarifying roles and responsibilities and identifying lines of communications;
- b. Providing initial introductions and ongoing liaison with the organizations that initially have expressed interest in being part of this initiative and introducing them to the Navigator Team;
- c. Receive and review regular progress reports from the Navigator Team and provide insights and feedback to the Navigator Team to support the success of the initiative;
- d. Receive and approve reimbursable expenses (up to a total of \$2500) submitted by the Navigator Team and submit to the Public Good Society for processing;
- e. Receive (from the Navigator Team or other related sources) recommendations and authorize expenditures from the Discretionary Fund for Project Costs (up to a total of \$15,000);
- f. Work closely with the Evaluation Lead to confirm the scope and focus of evaluation, and actively engage in any evaluation processes requiring the insights and experience of the Oversight Team;
- g. Ensure all required reports are complete and delivered to the funders on time, via the Evaluation Lead;
- h. Managing any other relational issues with and/or among stakeholders as they may arise.

F. Liaison to the Public Good Society

There will be an appointed member of the Public Good Society who will be responsible for chairing meetings, providing ongoing communications and progress reports to the Board of the Public Good Society and the funder. In the event they are unable to fulfill this role, they will delegate, as needed, to another member of the Public Good Society.

G. Membership

A minimum 5 and maximum 7 members to be recruited by the official liaison to the Public Good Society. The initial term to be for the 12 months of the project currently funded. Renewal of the Terms of Reference and membership may be revisited based on status of future funding.

The Membership of the Oversight Committee includes:

- i. Two (2) representatives of the Public Good Society, with one of these members to be the official liaison to the Public Good Society Board of Directors;

- ii. Two (2) members who bring information related to the local context of Dartmouth North and have an interest in affordable housing and this initiative; and,
- iii. Up to three (3) other members who bring skills, experience, relevant networks that can support the navigation and success of this initiative;
- iv. Between the Bridges will provide “backbone” support to the Oversight Committee in the cocreation of agendas, hosting and convening meetings, taking summarized notes and facilitating connections within the community as appropriate.

May provide community engagement support and/or insights and perspectives about the local context and processes as requested, however does not hold a decision-making authority;and,
- v. The Evaluation Lead will work actively with the Oversight Committee, based on the scope of the Evaluation Plan, however, does not hold a decision-making authority.

Additions to the Oversight Committee may be made as needed at the discretion of the committee, on a consensus basis.

H. Meeting Arrangements

The following structure will be initiated and adapted along the way as needed:

- Meetings of the Oversight Committee will take place biweekly for the first three months and may continue or move to monthly based on the decision of the group.
- Between the Bridges will provide convening support so all parties may focus on bringing their voices to the meeting.

I. Decision Making

The Oversight Committee will make decisions based on the following terms:

- The Board of Directors of the Public Good Society has delegated to the Oversight Committee all decisions that adheres to the principles/objectives of the Affordable Housing project funding agreement including financials.
- A consensus decision making process will be the preferred method and if not possible will work with a majority of 50% +1.
- Quorum for decisions will require a minimum of 3 members of the committee present with a minimum of 2 of the 3 members being from the Public Good Society.

J. Reporting

The Oversight Committee reports to:

- The Board of Directors of the Public Good Society on a regular basis as defined by the Board.
- The Project Funder, and in concert with the required timelines and format for providing progress updates against the funded deliverables.
- The Public Good Society has delegated to the Oversight Committee the responsibility of ongoing communications to the diversity of engaged stakeholders including the funder, partners from the social innovation lab, the broader community and other identified stakeholders.
- The Oversight Committee will, in consultation with the Navigation Team, have the sole authority to communicate with the diverse stakeholders/community on the substance, nature and participants involved, when deemed appropriate in a manner consistent with our principles of transparency, respect, privacy and accountability.

K. Evaluation

An Evaluation Framework will be co-created by the Evaluation Lead working with the Oversight Committee. This may include some form of self-evaluation for the Oversight Committee to monitor their own effectiveness.

**APPENDIX 3 - Mural Board - PGSD Affordable Housing Next
Phase Brainstorm Fall 2022**

Public Good Society (PGS) & Partners

Dartmouth North Affordable Housing Development Navigation Initiative

Key Milestones 2016 - 2021 - 2022



2016 - 2018

Between the Bridges, a collective impact initiative, with community identified in 2016 that access to affordable quality housing is the # 1 social issue in Dartmouth North. Working with a collective impact model, including backbone staff, 2 years of intentional relationship building of trust, respect and safety while concurrently working on other topics related to student success, health and community fabric.

2018- 2019

Between the Bridges Social Innovation Lab on Housing. 10 residents and 10 nfp public and private sector participants. 1 full day, a 3+2 day Social Innovation Lab "Sprint" and 1 day 6 months later follow up. Landed on 3 prototype working groups with PGS volunteers, with BtB staff, carrying forward one of the ideas around bridging the capacity gap between nfp organizations having a vision and where funding and project partners will engage.

2019- 2021

Public Good Society of Dartmouth working to access funding by continually working with Housing Nova Scotia and then Housing Transformation Centre to fund a project that meets a need that emerged from the Social Innovation Lab; This need being "Closing the Gap" between what the housing funders are needing from community organization to approve funding and where community organizations actually are with respect to knowledge, and sustainable access to subject matter expertise for the pre development work, construction and sustainable operations.

2021

Funding approved by Community Housing Transformation Centre to try to fill some capacity "gaps" between nfp vision and ideas related to knowledge and capacity strengthening to over time support the development of additional affordable housing units in Dartmouth North

Implementation of the Dartmouth North Affordable Housing Development Navigation initiative

Key Capacity Building Elements

2021- 2022

- 💡 Developing an RFI & RFP process to support PGS in recruiting professional capacity to train and educate nfp leaders;
- 💡 Developing a hiring and contracting process to engage the professional navigation team
- 💡 Developing governance structure - Oversight Committee with responsibility delegated by the PGS Board of Directors
- 💡 Developing and implementing a nfp organization recruitment process. Started with 6 organizations and ended up with 4 active organizations. 1 of the 4 is currently in nfp housing. The other 3 have land.
- 💡 Co-designing with the Navigation Team the design of the initiative. Leading to a workshop model to orientate, educate, train in the various aspects of developing affordable housing.
- 💡 Development and delivery of 16 workshops, video recorded and filed
- 💡 Biweekly meeting of Oversight Committee for 15 months
- 💡 Development and strengthening of relationships between organizations that had never known each other or worked together, particularly within the context of housing or development
- 💡 Developmental evaluation processes throughout

August 16 2022

Conclusion of Navigation Team contract and workshops

August - October 2022

With Oversight Committee final collation and reporting on learnings and outcomes. With Oversight Committee and other related parties to codesign a Phase 2 proposal, building on the learnings and strengths developed to date.



Public Good Society (PGS) & Partners

Affordable Housing Development in Dartmouth North Initiative

Brainstorm and Discussions for Ideas** for Phase 2 Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

Overview

Through the first phase, nfp organizations involved in this project, have learned what they need to know and do, and are ready to move forward on the problem statement:

"Where and how can the resources be invested to bring a project to fruition and increase # of affordable units in a timely a manner as possible?"

** All of the below ideas were identified through the Developmental Evaluation processes throughout the Housing Development Navigation Workshops and further developed and understood from the 1: 1 interviews facilitated by the backbone staff, with further discussions at the Oversight Committee. and were further detailed in the interview process with the addition of a backbone staff.

Discussion Questions

- ❓ Which of the ideas noted to date are resonating most for you for this proposal and why?
- ❓ What might be other specific ideas, action or perspectives to be added and why?
- ❓ Which of the ideas feel most timely to getting to more affordable housing units and why?



Public Good Society

Currently the "backbone" organization and legal entity for funding, finance & human resources. What is needed for ongoing sustainability and reduced vulnerability as is 100% voluntary organization.

"There needs to be a focused point of access for any of these ideas for organizations to be able to participate. How could PGS be that focused point.?"

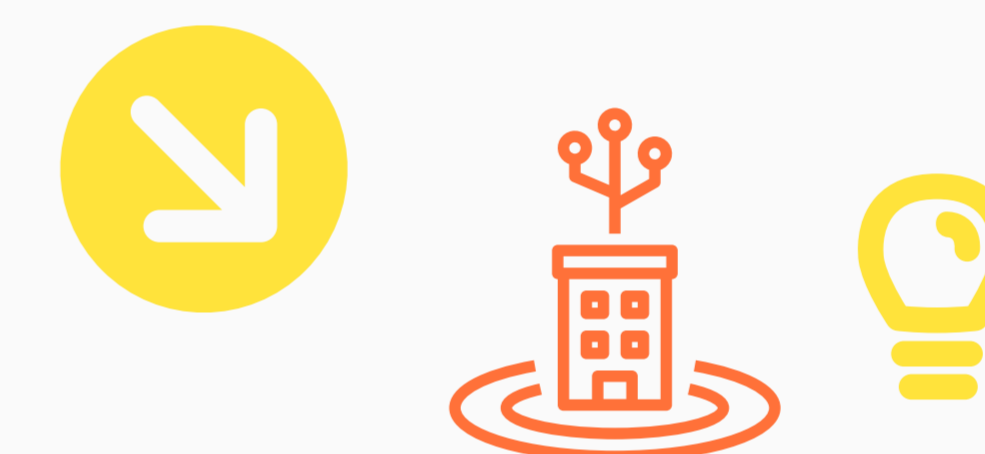
"In order to move forward PGS needs sustainable staff capacity "

"PGS is the "hub" for seeking opportunities, connecting dots, making connections as they emerge."



Affordable Housing Impact & Evaluation

It is essential that we are carrying forward what we have learned and developed, to date. The elements on this mural board reflect the ideas, opportunities and critical needs for a further phase towards adding more affordable housing units in Dartmouth North.



Prototype a Case Study for Learning and Sharing

The Farrell Benevolent Society FBS) has prime land in Dartmouth North, an approved motion from the Board and the Membership to develop it for public good, including affordable housing. FBS been an active member of the Housing Development Navigation journey to develop organizational knowledge capacity.

What might be possible by making the Farrell Benevolent Society development opportunity a "case study" as the focused element of a next phase. To use this unprecedented opportunity to carry forward the learnings, networks and capacity developed to date.

"As another 100% voluntary organization, FBS are faced with the message that you can apply to us to hire consultants but not organizational staff. Who is going to fill out the application and supervise the consultants and administer the funding?"

"The FBS case study is going to be requiring partnerships on many fronts so coalition work might happen more organically?"



Affordable Housing Development "Coalition" Building

What might be ways to go about creating processes and structures for more intentional working together on a "greenfield" site and/or being ready together seize on opportunities for affordable housing development tenders.

"This is perhaps too fraught at this stage to construct something like this as this time. Back burner at this time. "



Housing Development "Thought" Partnership

"Being able to talk out or share learnings about various elements of a development."

Providing coaching and thought partnership for leaders working on housing to be "thinking aloud" in a safe confidential setting with some accountability structures that support forward movement.



Affordable Housing Development "Learning Lab"

"The value and importance of skills, language etc build knowledge and confidence."

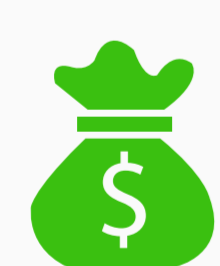
Building on the success of the AH workshops. Bringing new & relevant topics and subject matter experts to a larger group of housing organizations. Increasing professional capacity concurrently with intention on relationship building and partnership opportunities.

"Might this overlap with Build Together?"

"Identify what might be next learning steps for the current cohort or repeat the same workshops with a new cohort?"

"Support group style, specific needs, tough challenges."

"Developing a larger Community of practice ?"



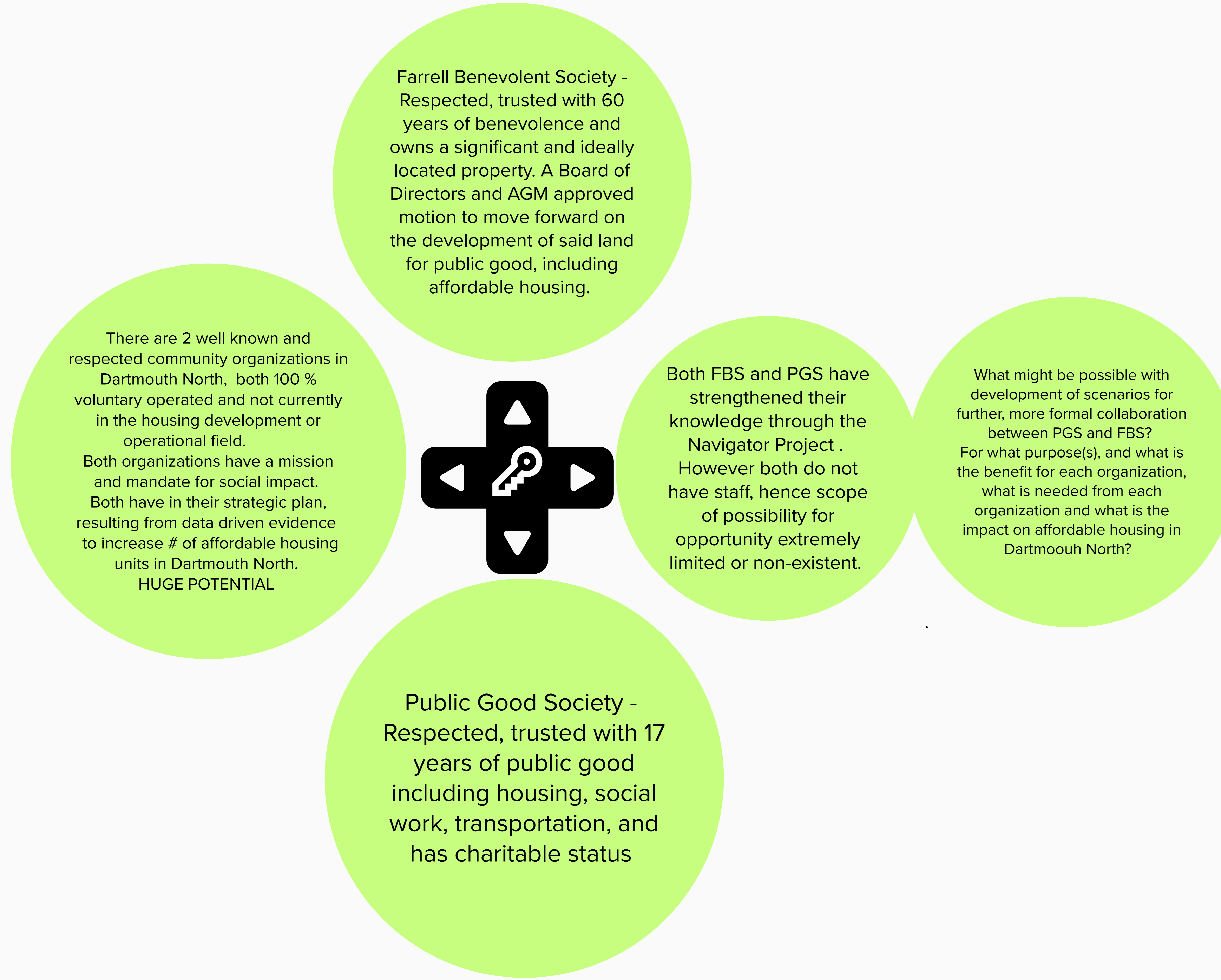
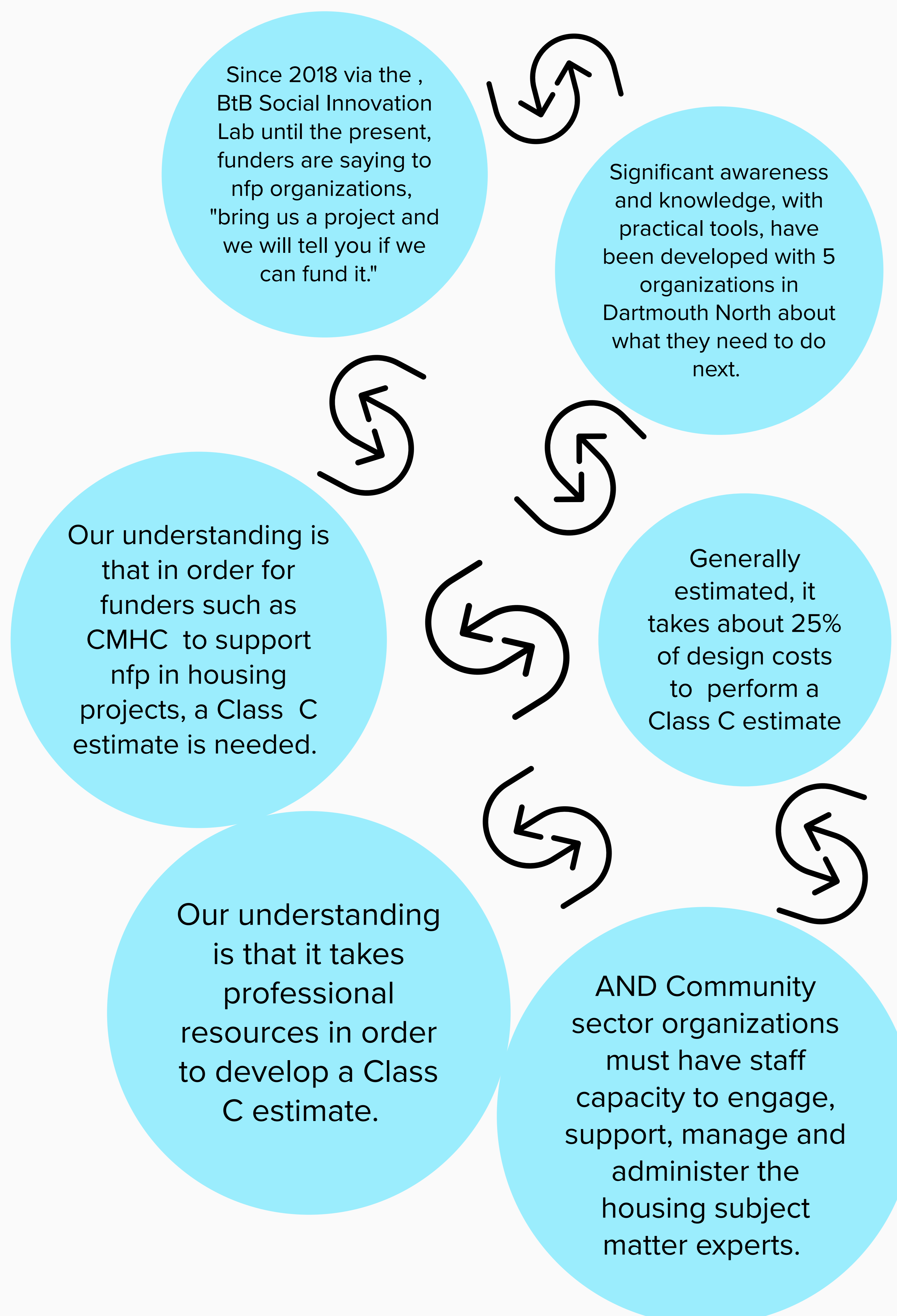
Funding Brokeridge

PGS is provided with the funding, that can then be applied for in a "light" way for nfp to be able to access the professional resources they need, when they need it.



Working Together for Increasing the # of Units of Affordable Housing in Dartmouth North
Draft for Ongoing Discussion Purposes!

Our Aspiration of Where We Next Need to Get To Next The Opportunity in Front of Us & What We Currently Have



What is the Needed & Necessary Investments to Get to a Class C estimate ?

