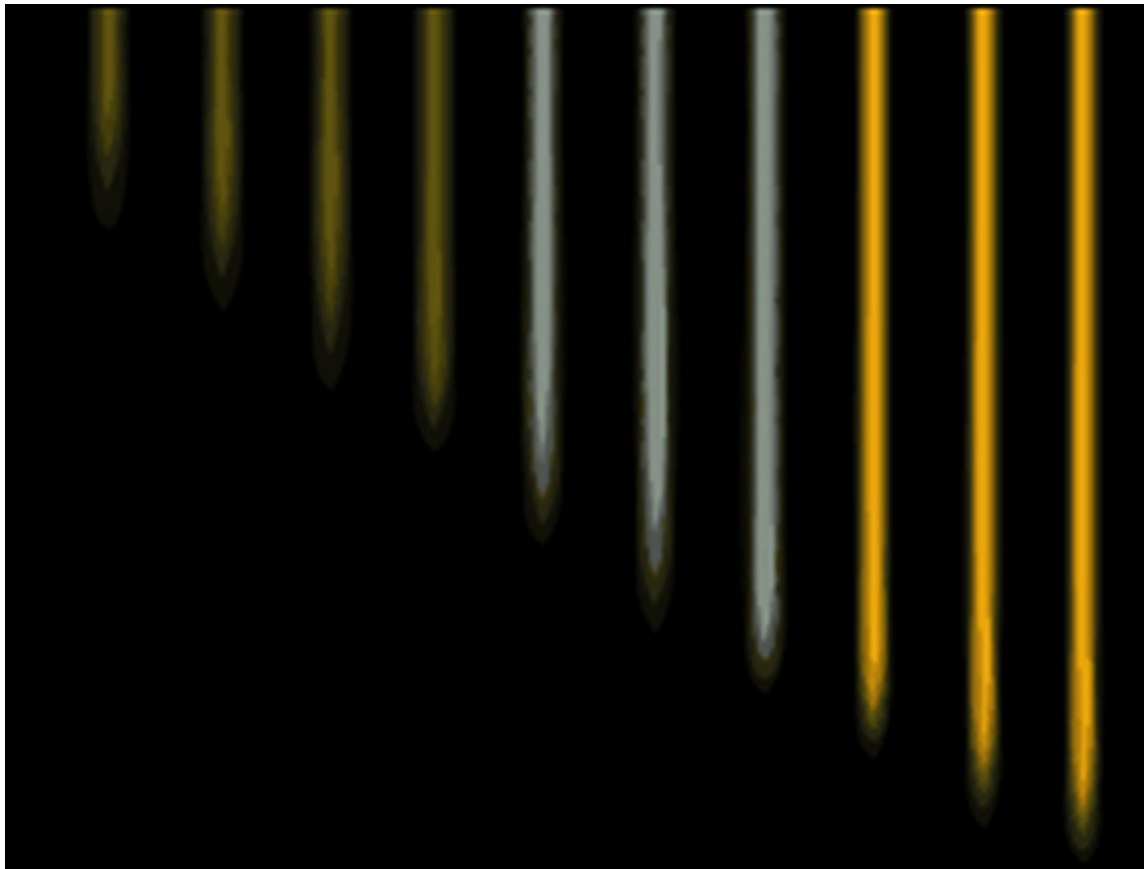


# Affordable Housing Development Navigator (AHDN) Project EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Good Society of Dartmouth & Partners

2021-2022



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

Thanks to our funder: The Community Housing Transformation Centre

## 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"> <li>● 10 residents and 10 nonprofit, public and private sector participants.</li> <li>● Nov 2018: 1 full day, Feb 2019: 3 full days, April 2019: 2 full days, Oct 2019: 1 full day follow up</li> <li>● 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.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>● Developing an RFI &amp; RFP process to support PGSD in recruiting the Navigator/Navigation Team.</li> <li>● Developing a hiring and contracting process to engage the professional navigation team.</li> <li>● Developing a governance structure: the Oversight Committee with responsibility delegated by the PGS Board of Directors.</li> <li>● Developing and implementing a nonprofit organization recruitment process.</li> <li>● Started with 6 organizations with 4 continuing to be active in the process.</li> <li>● 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.</li> <li>● Development and delivery of 16 * 2 hour workshops, with videos recorded, and filed.</li> <li>● Biweekly meeting of Oversight Committee for over 15 months.</li> <li>● Development and strengthening of relationships between organizations that were previously unfamiliar with each other, particularly in the context of housing or development.</li> <li>● Developmental evaluation processes occurring throughout.</li> </ul>
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.