

Working Together in New Ways for Social Impact in Dartmouth North

REPORT TO COMMUNITY

April 2020–March 2021



INTRODUCTION

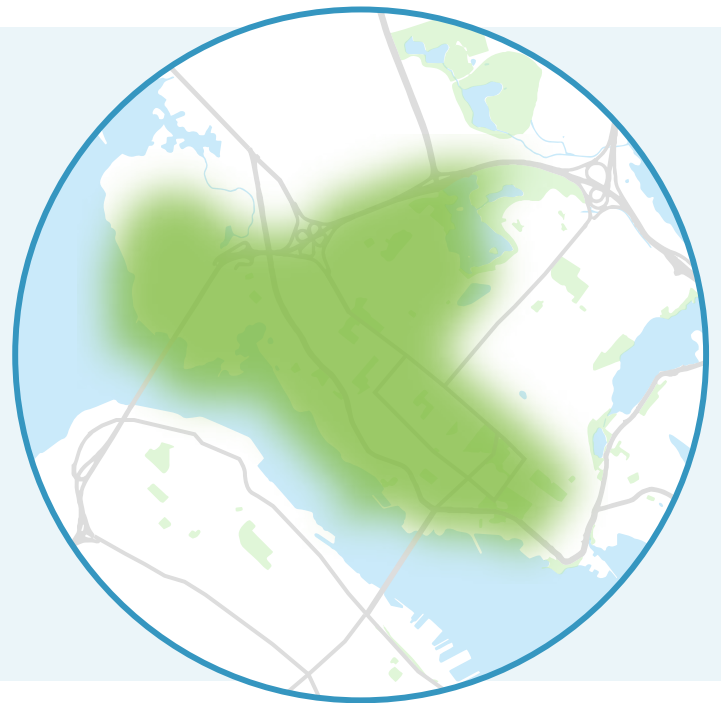
Land Acknowledgement

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the community of Dartmouth North is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq, Wəlastəkwiyyik (Maliseet), and Passamaquoddy Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wəlastəkwiyyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

(source: CAUT Guide to Acknowledging First Peoples & Traditional Territory, found at www.caut.ca)

Between the Bridges

Between the Bridges (BtB) is a community development initiative taking a **Collective Impact** approach to addressing complex social issues identified by the community of Dartmouth North. Collective Impact involves meaningful support and engagement of people with lived experience to work equitably with leaders from government, not for profit organizations and business. Their shared goal is to identify what needs to change and how they can work together, often in new ways, to generate solutions and take collective action. The complex social issues identified in Collective Impact require a long-term mindset for change and impact that can be measured in a variety of ways that are meaningful to the stakeholders.



The Community of Dartmouth North

Dartmouth North is a vibrant and resilient community with many diverse, talented and committed residents and community leaders who have been working tirelessly for many years and up to the present. All of the successes and learnings are only possible as a result of the determination of many people; open and willing to work together in new ways to make a difference in their community.

Elements for Success in Collective Impact¹

Each of the following elements have been identified as critical to support *Working Together in New Ways for Social Impact*. It is understood that there must be ongoing, active attention and adaptation to each of these elements as the initiative progresses:



BACKBONE STRUCTURE

Focusing time and attention of a staff team on process design, relationship building and inclusive culture that supports all of the other elements for success.



SHARED GOAL(S)

Identifying priority topics for action, with shared understanding of definition, meaning and purpose.



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Designing processes that strengthen and support relationships of trust and respect among people with lived experience together with leaders from the community, public and private sector.



ALIGNMENT

Focusing resources, subject matter expertise and lived experience towards ideas and action that address shared goals.



CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING

Working towards consensus, whenever possible, that deepens shared understanding and strengthens ownership of the stated goal(s).



EVALUATION FOR LEARNING & ADAPTATION

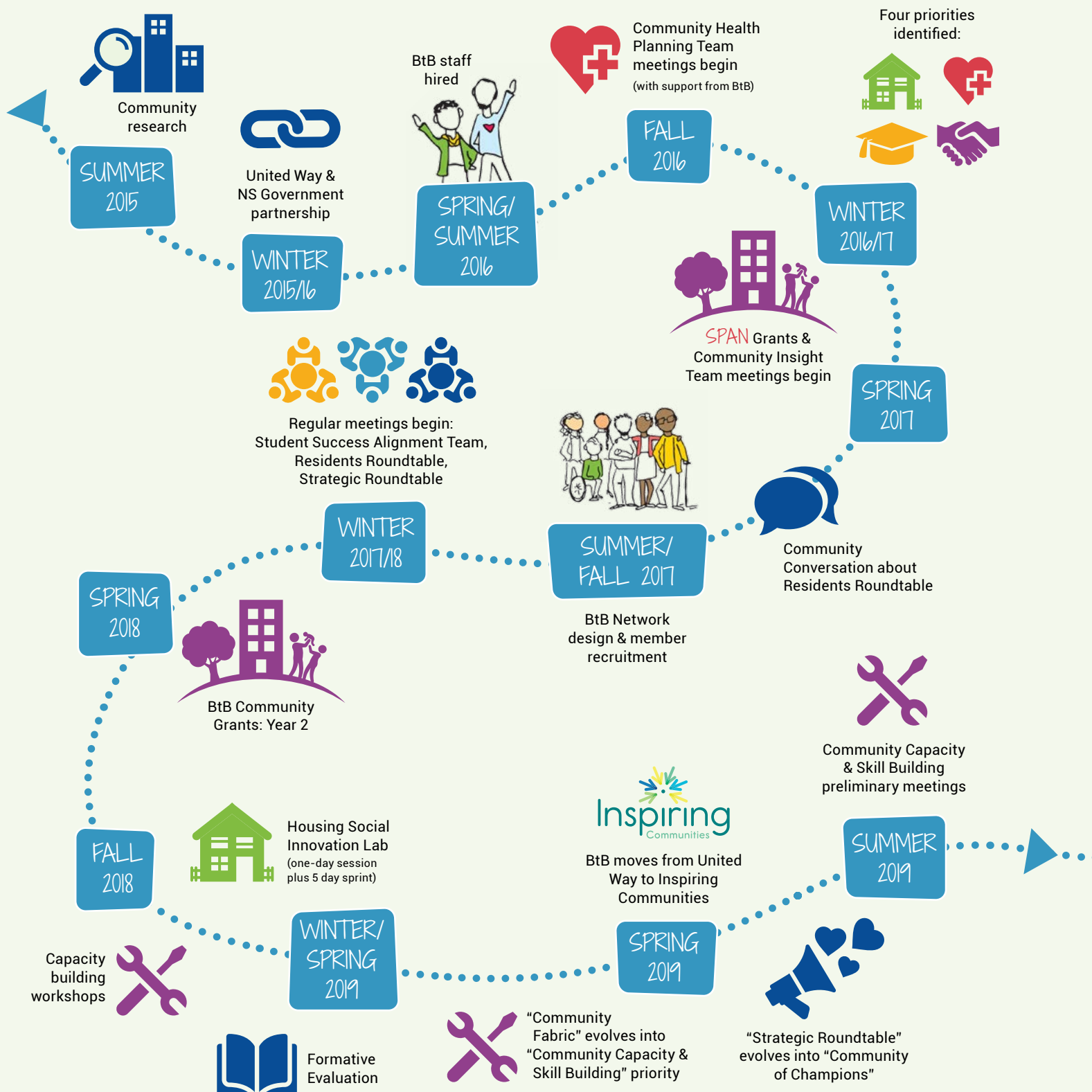
Championing a culture of asking questions, staying curious, embracing failure, and changing course as needed in order to progress towards stated goals.

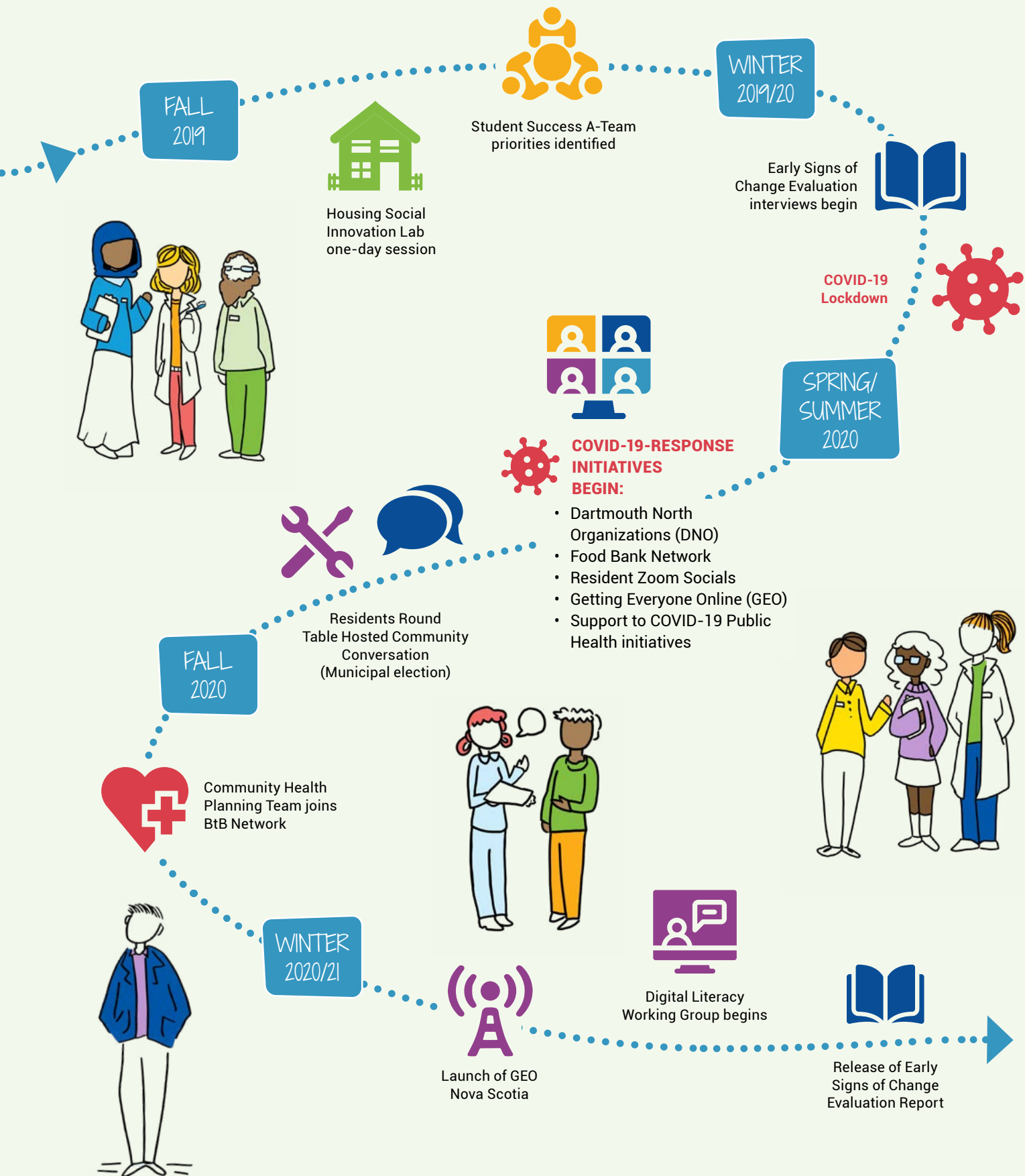


¹ Adapted from the work of [Tamarack](#) and [FSG](#)

MILESTONES

This timeline is an overview of the BtB journey from inception in summer 2015 to March 2021.





OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR

Focus on trust and process

A consistent focus on processes that build and strengthen relationships served the community of Dartmouth North well in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“*They manage to continue to build relationships even during COVID.*”

- Dartmouth North Resident

The relationships formed and strengthened in the initial years of Between the Bridges enabled residents, community organizations, government and business leaders to move quickly in working together on the emerging needs with COVID-19 and pivot to figure out how to continue working virtually on previous and still important agendas.

“*Between the Bridges has been shifting since the COVID crisis. Everyone has become isolated and they have immediately asked 'how do we support people now?' They are just working to keep connecting people. They've been hosting DNO meetings, weekly now instead of monthly. Social zooms for residents. They have a great ability to respond to what's happening.*”

- Public Sector Leader



Voices from the BtB Network

The **quotes** in this document are from the voices of people in the Between the Bridges Network who were engaged in the recent “**Early Signs of Change**” evaluation process. This impact evaluation engaged **32 members of the Between the Bridges Network** (9 public sector, 11 community/non-profit sector members and 12 residents), who shared their voices to help us understand the early evidence demonstrating the positive impact of working collectively. For the full evaluation findings see our [reports page](#).



The Between the Bridges Network

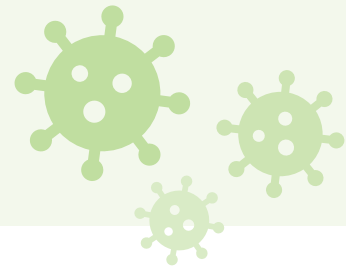
Leading up to and during 2020-2021, the following organizations were involved in the Between the Bridges Network, along with a diversity of community members:



Overview of Activities & Structures



Highlights: Selected successes from the BTB Network



“Communication was always present with Between the Bridges by emailing and keeping in touch with scheduled Zoom meetings or telephone. Being isolated did not stop in any way being updated and informed.”

- Dartmouth North Resident

“They're there and they figure out how to work with community in very creative ways, especially with the pandemic - how to support an idea and move with that idea.”

- Dartmouth North Resident

“We were all thrown into this huge uncertainty. And it was helpful just to have people to help with problem solving the issues that we were facing as organizations, and I've seen some best practices from what people were doing.”

- Community Sector Leader

Hosted **50** x 1 hour sessions of Residents Zoom Socials when COVID-19 hit



“I've been doing the Socials on Tuesdays. This has been extremely helpful for me. I have clinical depression. The Socials give me contacts with people, with friends, and it helps tremendously for me.”

- Dartmouth North Resident

In May 2020, BtB network members worked together to loan and deliver 58 Chromebooks to Dartmouth North students until September 2020.



BtB network members developed the GEO Project (Getting Everyone Online) creating a collaboration of 7 referral partners who worked together to distribute:



40
internet
accounts



50
computers
plus
accessories

“ [BtB] got everyone online quickly after lock-down began. ”

- Dartmouth North Resident

“ ...people just didn't have access to the internet during the COVID lockdown. And it was a huge problem... And a lot of people didn't have computers. And lo and behold, [BtB]... got a hold of LakeCity and they started providing computers... that wouldn't have happened if we didn't have those Between the Bridges meetings. ”

- Community Sector Leader

In response to COVID-19, between April and December 2020, BtB network members worked together in delivering:



526

food bank boxes

and

335

gluten free food packages.

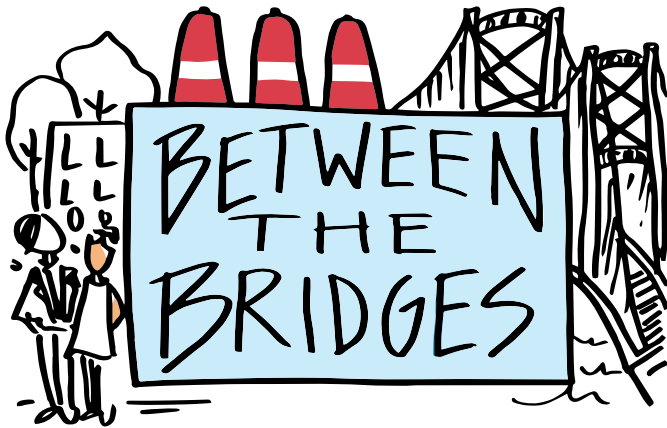


“ It's been really great to have this extra support throughout this [Pandemic]... it would have been tougher to try and figure out things on my own. ”

- Food Bank Coordinator

“ The coordination of the food delivery system has allowed us to... reach clients in a more efficient and a more effective way. ”

- Community Sector Leader



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