

BNT

August 2006



As we celebrate BNT's twentieth year of strengthening Bridgeport neighborhoods, we reflect on both our past and our future.

As demonstrated by our name, the concept of "neighborhood" is central to all of our programs and services. Throughout the last two decades, BNT has stuck to its task of meeting affordable housing and community development needs, but our ways of fulfilling this mission have continually evolved.

From redeveloping contaminated brownfields to sponsoring a community festival, the years testify to BNT's diversity of involvement throughout the city. When we think about the bulk of these activities, we're continually astonished with how much BNT has accomplished with such a limited budget.

Looking forward, we see Bridgeport burgeoning with opportunities and activity in the housing arena. As market rate developments increase throughout the city, it is more critical than ever for non-profit developers to create affordable housing for low income families. BNT is committed to helping build Bridgeport's supply of quality affordable housing.

Throughout this anniversary year, and into the future, we will continue to apply our experience and energy to strengthening neighborhoods throughout Bridgeport.

20 Years

Bridgeport
Neighborhood
Trust, Inc.

BNT's mission is to strengthen neighborhoods by embracing a holistic revitalization approach through advocacy, education, investment, and technical support.

Hand in Hand

For BNT, the idea of housing and homes always go hand in hand. Strong neighborhoods depend on this connection - a place where people can find a sense of home in any housing type, whether a one bedroom apartment, a condo, a single family cape, or a victorian duplex.

BNT helps build homes in many ways, including counseling first time home buyers, developing affordable homeownership opportunities, creating quality rental units, and now, helping relocate families to places where they can feel at home.

The demolition of the Pequonnock Towers displaced many families; some are still residing in temporary housing. Recently, the City of Bridgeport selected BNT to provide relocation services for these families. BNT will coordinate their moves from temporary housing to new units, rehabilitated units and other qualified housing authority properties. The process is expected to take two years.

BNT is also working with the City of Bridgeport to develop 60 units throughout Bridgeport to replace apartments lost in the Pequonnock demolition. In 2007, BNT expects to create more than a third of these units. To date, 17 of these units have been identified. Primarily new construction, these 17 units will be built as two family duplexes and townhouse style units.

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Elizabeth Torres

joined BNT a year ago. As the Housing Development Manager, Elizabeth oversees the development of various rental and homeownership initiatives in Bridgeport, including the South End Redevelopment (Pequonnock Replacement Housing) and the East End Homeownership Initiative.



Before joining BNT, Elizabeth worked as project manager for the Community Builders, Inc.

"Bridgeport is positioning itself to be one of the most prominent cities in the State and we are excited about doing our part to contribute to its success. This year is our 20th anniversary and we are thrilled with how far we've come. Looking into the future we see a lot of challenges but we'll work hard to make a difference and provide affordable housing opportunities one house at a time."

-Elizabeth Torres





Lead Free Families

Drive down any Bridgeport street and you'll see the city's rich past reflected in the architecture of its housing stock. Unfortunately this history, and some hard times, have also left many urban houses with the health hazards of lead paint. BNT is working with the City to remediate lead hazards in houses throughout Bridgeport. Enabled by a \$3 million HUD grant given to the City, up to 275 lead contaminated units will be remediated in the next few years. BNT is assisting the process by procuring contractors, creating a bid process, coordinating payments to landlords and contractors, and inspecting units before and after cleanup. To date, BNT has inspected 27 units and begun remediation.

Recent Grants

\$25,000 grant from Enterprise Foundation for capacity building and technical assistance

\$21,000 design grant from Fanie Mae to design a model green home in conjunction with Yale University School of Urban Design

Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields grants totaling \$400,000

What's the hottest new color in Bridgeport?

Green.

The Park City is proudly embarking on an environmentally-friendly planning mission, and BNT is leading the pack. While the need for "greener" strategies is not a new topic, citywide response to this issue has increased significantly this year.

Administered by BNT, the Park City Partnership initiated a process, at the end of 2005, to implement a Green Development Strategy for the City of Bridgeport. To support the development of this comprehensive strategy, BNT's Green Development Fund received \$5,000 from the City of Bridgeport Grants Office and \$7,500 from the Greater Bridgeport Area Foundation.

On Feb. 15 2006, Mayor Fabrizi expressed his commitment to green planning in an address to the Bridgeport business community. "As we work to clean up our city, it is incumbent upon us to plan for our future. As mayor of the Park City, it is only right that we turn our sights to environmentally friendly programs and green initiatives. Since taking office, my administration has been successful in securing nearly seven million dollars in green grants and we plan to do much more. To that end, I am creating a Blue Ribbon Task Force on Green Strategies that will work with my administration to develop a comprehensive, eco-friendly plan for Bridgeport."

With support from city government, business leadership, and the non-profit community, the Green Initiative Task Force has begun creating a comprehensive green development strategy with three focus areas: healthy neighborhoods, green planning, and development and energy.

Jointly managed by BNT and the City Grants Office, the Task Force will move forward by identifying goals, initiatives, programs and funding sources to redirect planning and development initiatives, rethink energy alternatives and reduce carbon emissions, implement healthy neighborhood initiatives, and generally remake Bridgeport as the Green City in Connecticut.

Hand in Hand continued...



Plans for the construction of new low-income units to replace apartments from Pequonnock Towers.

On the homeownership side, BNT recently renewed focus on its Homeownership Initiative Program (HIP), created in 1993 to provide homeownership opportunities for first-time home buyers who have low and moderate incomes. In partnership with the Fairfield County Housing Partnership, BNT is building a home at 35 Alex Street.

BNT is also working with Mutual Housing Association to renovate 101 Barnum Avenue, an East side Victorian Gothic Villa built in 1853. The building has suffered considerable fire and water damage, leaving it in need of substantial rehabilitation. Assisted by historic tax credits and City Home dollars, BNT will develop the property into two units for first-time homeowners whose income does not exceed 80% of the Area Median Income. Each of these homeowner units will include an attached two-bedroom rental apartment. For the low-income homeowners, this rental income will provide a built-in source of revenue that helps make their new homes affordable.

The rehabilitation of 101 Barnum Avenue will make the dream of homeownership possible for low-income families, and help increase stability and revitalization in the surrounding neighborhood.

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