



A COLLABORATIVE RESOURCE CENTER OPENING IN BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT - 2028



UNDER ONE ROOF

1085 MAIN STREET. LOCATED AT THE CORNER OF FAIRFIELD AVENUE AND MAIN STREET. DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM THE STATE COURTHOUSE IN DOWNTOWN BRIDGEPORT.

42,500 Square feet of collaborative resources for system-impacted individuals and their families.

A network of nonprofit and community partners delivering integrated, holistic services.

Workforce development programs, enriched by M&T Bank-powered training, to drive economic mobility and long-term success.

Premiere nonprofit job placement firm for system-impacted individuals.

Inclusive, accessible banking and financial empowerment education via Webster Bank.

Founding social venture staffed by the service population.

7,000+ square foot event space and commercial kitchen.

Connection to housing annex.



1085 MAIN STREET



Elm Street

Fairfield Avenue

Main Street

ABOUT 'THE BRIDGE'

The Bridge on Main, located at 1085 Main Street, is Career Resources' groundbreaking initiative to bring transformative change to Bridgeport's workforce, business sector, and community.

Utilizing an integrated service model, *The Bridge on Main* will enhance economic outcomes for the region by expanding pathways for career development, contributing to the revitalization of downtown Bridgeport, and building economic mobility for residents across Fairfield County.

This centralized hub of job training, employment placement services and small business development support will expand the region's workforce development capacity, provide employers with access to a steady stream of job-ready employees, and afford employable candidates access to key positions.

The Bridge on Main's model is rooted in purposeful collaboration to expand economic opportunity and empower individuals to reach their full potential. A myriad of programmatic partners, via a blend of nonprofit and community-based organizations, will establish main or satellite offices at *The Bridge on Main* to offer their services as part of a holistic, wraparound service model. The partners will collectively build a hub for workforce development, entrepreneurial growth, and social services.

In 2022, Career Resources launched a \$21 million capital campaign in the interest of creating a public-private investment to outfit 1085 Main Street into a collaborative resource center. Today, the project is generously supported by Mimi Sternlicht/MKRS Family Foundation, Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, Webster Bank, and M&T Bank, as well as bipartisan support from local, state, and federal leadership.

**“Career Resources is
a force of 180
compassionate, creative
problem solvers.
A remarkable model
of grit, clever thinking
and infectious
enthusiasm.”**

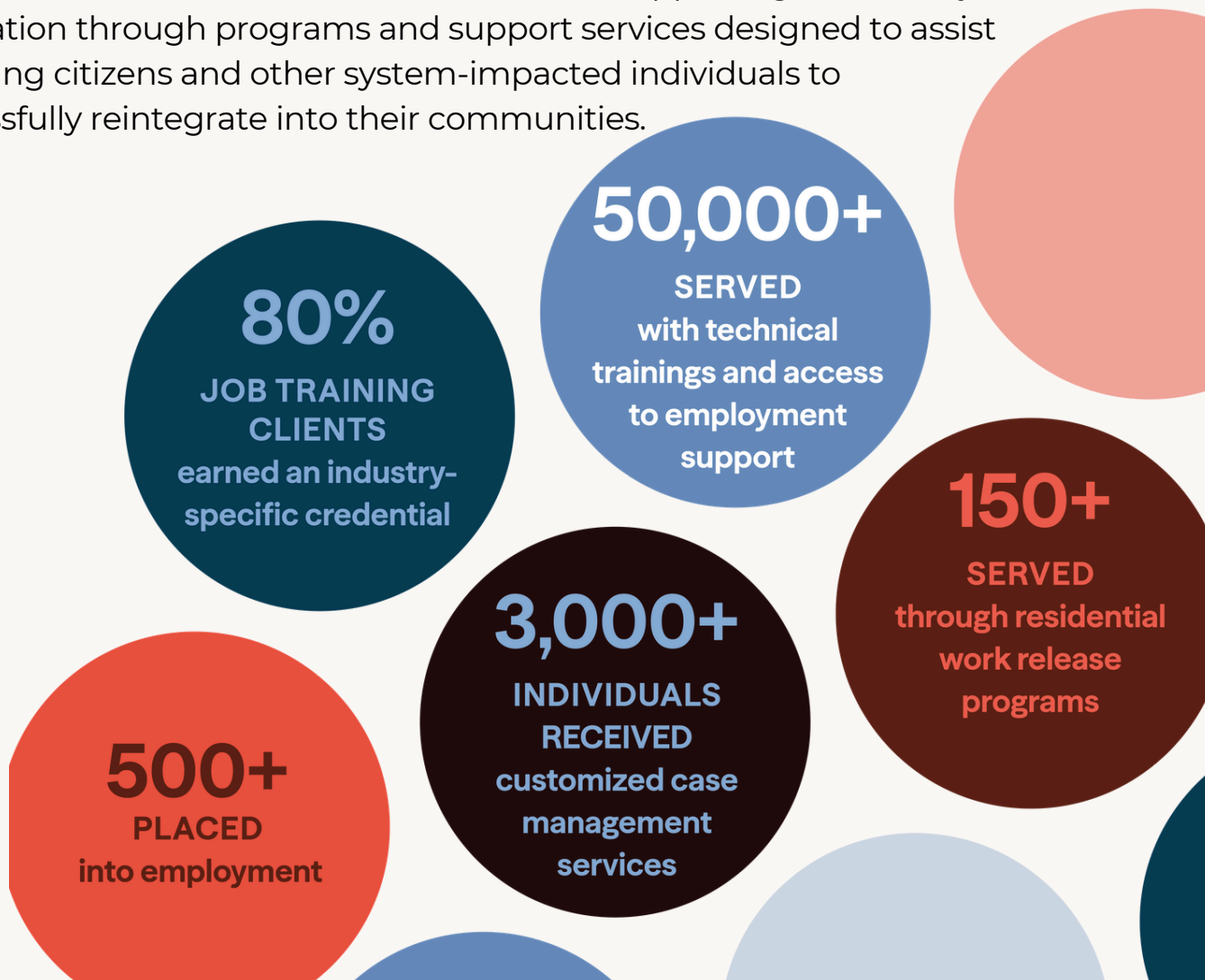
**-Mimi Sternlicht
Founding Partner of
The Bridge on Main**

CAREER RESOURCES: Managing Partner

Career Resources is Connecticut's pre-eminent workforce development nonprofit agency, with documented expertise in meeting the needs of both jobseekers and employers.

Founded in 1995 in Bridgeport, Career Resources serves communities across the state with a comprehensive array of workforce development programs to support youth and adults, many with significant barriers to employment, in obtaining the skills needed to enter the workforce and build a career pathway to economic self-sufficiency.

Career Resources is also a statewide leader in supporting the reentry population through programs and support services designed to assist returning citizens and other system-impacted individuals to successfully reintegrate into their communities.



Research shows that employees with history in the system often have lower turnover rates than other workers, indicating greater retention and loyalty.*

Excluding formerly incarcerated people from work costs the U.S. economy \$78–\$87 billion in lost GDP annually. *

*The Employment of Justice-Involved Persons | Institute for Emerging Issues / <https://iei.ncsu.edu/2023/05/22/the-employment-of-justice-involved-persons/>

**<https://www.abolitionistsanctuary.org/>

WHO THE BRIDGE ON MAIN WILL SERVE

The Bridge on Main's doors will be open to individuals facing the most critical barriers to a more fulfilling and healthier way of life. Utilizing an integrated service model, The Bridge will meet all individuals wherever they are on their way to economic independence.

A primary focus of programming will serve individuals and their family members who are impacted by the justice-system. This group disproportionately represents communities of color of which, in Bridgeport alone, accounts for 70% of the population. The significant inequity already faced when attempting to access employment opportunities is heightened by a past in the system.

Bridgeport is also home to over 3,000 youths considered to be disconnected or at-risk. They may have already committed minor delinquent acts, or are demonstrating troubling behaviors at home, in school or in the community. While these acts could result in a referral to juvenile court, if not worse, these youths can all receive diversionary programming at The Bridge on Main to help steer them in a safer direction.



**At The Bridge on Main,
learning and productivity
will reinforce one another.**

**Participants can develop
skills while contributing to
real operations,
transforming training time
into productive labor.**

**Employers can hire
workers, directly from
their own communities,
who are already proven,
trained, and culturally
aligned.**

ON-SITE SERVICES

Comprehensive
Reentry Services

Workforce
Development
Training

Job
Placement
Services

Substance Use
Disorder
Treatment

Mental Health
& Wellness
Services

Medical Needs
——
Healthcare

Education
Support

Digital Literacy

Housing
Support

Mentorship
——
Culinary &
Hospitality
Training

Veterans
Assistance

Banking
Assistance
——
Financial
Literacy

Small
Business
Training



FOSTERING COLLABORATION

Workforce opportunities at the coffee shop, commercial kitchen, and ballroom, will equip participants with the skills, resources, and pathways needed to thrive in hospitality, retail, culinary arts, and small business development—advancing long-term economic mobility and community impact.

Career Resources will relocate its administrative headquarters to The Bridge on Main. A multitude of its premiere workforce development programs, such as the Entry Point Staffing firm, and the Bridgeport Reentry Welcome Center, will operate in coordination with the programs and services of the tenants that take occupancy as tenant partners.

According to a 2024 report generated by the Community Spaces Network, community organizations operating from shared spaces experienced stronger achievement of goals and service quality, as well as heightened staff morale, recruitment and retention.

Being in a “nonprofit shared space” has tremendous value to tenants, such as affordability, lower operational costs related to rent and backbone services, which lend themselves to generating stronger focuses on efficiency and effectiveness of programs and, in turn, a stronger impact on the community being served.

The Bridge on Main’s wide array of educational classes will assist clients in pursuing their chosen career pathway or building their own business. Examples of classes include:

- Adult education for clients seeking to improve their education status and/or secure their GED.
- Digital literacy instructions leveraged through Career Resources’ operation of the Southwest American Job Center.
- Business and personal financial literacy classes provided by two corporate banking partners (M&T Bank and Webster Bank, respectively).
- Collaborations with local colleges to provide access to educational opportunities.
- Entrepreneurial training to help individuals achieve their personal and career goals.



A residential work-release program housing up to 20 **women** who are transitioning back into the community from incarceration.

A residential work-release program housing up to 40 **men** who are transitioning back into the community from incarceration.

A row of 4 properties along Clinton Avenue - one mile from 1085 Main Street - provides supporting housing for up to 40 individuals.

ADDRESSING HOUSING INSECURITY VIA THE BRIDGE ON MAIN **HOUSING ANNEX**

A study conducted by the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, matched with CT Department of Correction facilities, found that half of the people who used homeless shelters were formerly incarcerated, and that 1 in 5 people who used homeless shelters had been released from prison in the past three years.

The struggle to find stable housing post-incarceration is primarily due to lack of financial resources, lost or disrupted connections to families and friends, and discriminatory practices by public housing authorities and private landlords due to their previous incarceration.

The Bridge on Main will provide integrated housing support services to address this critical barrier via a network of temporary housing units located just one mile away along Clinton Avenue, as well as larger unit on Union Avenue (pictured).

Further, Career Resources is planning, in coordination with Connecticut's Department of Housing, to outfit these collective properties as temporary homes for up to 100 people.

The Bridge on Main will provide transportation to and from the ANNEX so individuals can have a place to safely live while taking advantage of The Bridge on Main's integrated services.



A CYCLE OF INNOVATION

The Bridge on Main service model will integrate experiential technical training with direct, on-site employment placement, creating a sustainable pipeline of skilled talent and continuous innovation.

A public private partnership with Just Creative Partners, Oppo Coffee is a mission-driven coffee shop that provides job training for system-impacted individuals. Oppo will serve exceptional coffee while creating an inclusive community for staff and customers.



Launched by Career Resources in 2020, Entry Point Staffing is the first-of-its-kind workforce training and temporary staffing program for system-impacted individuals in Fairfield County.



The Commercial Kitchen is a state-of-the-art, multi-use facility designed to support both programming and operations across The Bridge. It functions as a catering kitchen for the Event Space, a prep kitchen for Oppo Coffee, a working kitchen for entrepreneurs, and a teaching kitchen for up to 20 students, ensuring seamless service throughout the building.



The Bridge Ballroom offers 11,000 square feet of flexible, venue space designed for community gatherings. Located on the lower level and anchored by a state-of-the-art commercial kitchen, the space is ideal for fundraisers, corporate meetings, and celebrations of all kinds.



THE BRIDGE ON MAIN

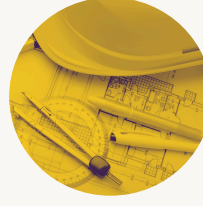
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION IMPACT

Connecticut, Over 18-Month Construction Period



56

Full-Time
Equivalent Jobs



\$7MM+

Direct Labor Income
for Construction



\$21MM

Public-Private
Partnership Total Funding



42,500 sq ft

Revitalized Urban Core
City of Bridgeport

ANNUAL OPERATIONS IMPACT

Connecticut, Each Year in Full-Capacity Operation



500+

Full-Time Jobs for
System-Impacted Individuals



\$24MM+

Total Labor Income for
Connecticut Residents



\$1.8MM

State and Local
Tax Revenue

THE BRIDGE *BY THE NUMBERS*

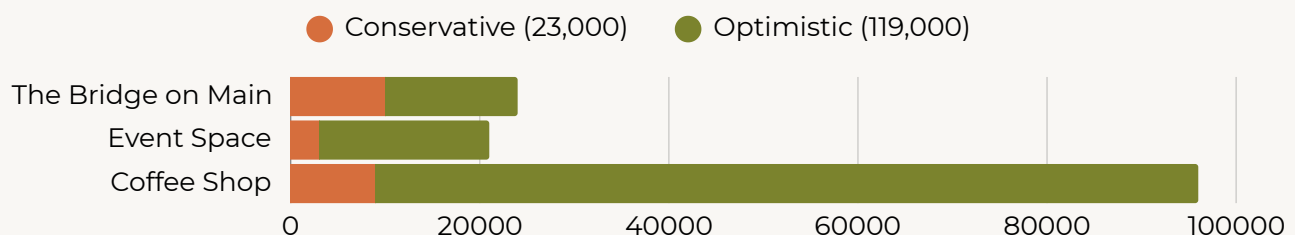
Upon reaching full operational capacity in 2028, The Bridge on Main will annually support over 500 jobs for system-impacted individuals, with average wages exceeding \$16.35 per hour. These positions will contribute to more than \$16 million in gross income for participants each year.

The facility will additionally create over 20 new full-time programmatic and administrative positions paying \$45,000-\$50,000 annually, while supporting work functions for an additional 120 full-time and part-time staff working within the 42,500 square foot building. These positions include comprehensive wraparound services staff, workforce development professionals, and social enterprise employees.

The Bridge will also directly create over 260 permanent full-time equivalent jobs in Bridgeport and approximately 560 jobs statewide, generating \$24 million in annual labor income and \$54.3 million in total statewide economic output. Operations will yield an estimated \$6.2 million in annual public revenues, including \$1.8 million to state and local governments.

The project's ancillary components - a ground-level coffee shop, a 7,000+ square foot event space, and a commercial kitchen - will further enhance the center's impact by stimulating foot traffic and supporting new business formation. Under conservative assumptions, the facility is expected to draw 23,000 trips annually (such as visitors to the coffee stop, clients at The Bridge on Main, etc.) to downtown Bridgeport.

Total Visitors Per Year



INVESTING IN SECOND CHANCES

THE COST OF INCARCERATION: The Connecticut Department of Correction's annual per-inmate cost of approximately \$103,000 represents a significant public expenditure. This figure includes direct costs such as housing, food, and security, as well as administrative overhead and facility maintenance. When examining the potential economic impact of reducing recidivism, these costs must be considered alongside the potential economic contributions of successfully reintegrated individuals.

THE EFFECTS OF EMPLOYMENT ON RECIDIVISM: When securing employment shortly after release, approximately 75% of formerly incarcerated individuals will not recidivate. This figure climbs to almost 90% when the individual secures employment at a higher occupational level. Conversely, for those not securing employment, almost 60% of individuals will recidivate within 6 months of release.

THE VALUE OF THE BRIDGE ON MAIN: The economic impact of successful reentry extends into economic factors and positive community outcomes.

When formerly incarcerated individuals secure stable employment, they generate multiple positive economic effects. They become consumers in the local economy, supporting retail businesses and services. They pay taxes, contributing to municipal and state revenues. Many become renters or homeowners, supporting the local housing market and building personal wealth.

Furthermore, successful reentry often has intergenerational economic implications. Children of formerly incarcerated individuals who maintain stable employment show better educational and economic outcomes themselves, creating a positive cycle that can help break patterns of intergenerational poverty. This long-term effect, while harder to quantify, represents a significant potential economic benefit for the community.

A RETURN ON INVESTMENT

THE SAVINGS TO THE PUBLIC FROM THE BRIDGE ON MAIN:

Connecticut's average current cost per-inmate is \$103,000. Relative to the individuals served at The Bridge on Main being recently incarcerated, and assuming that the Bridge on Main will assist these individuals to secure employment, The Bridge on Main will have the following direct cost-savings benefits related to lower recidivism rates for the State of Connecticut:

- ➡ Gross public savings of \$12.9 million annually
- ➡ Net public savings of approximately \$1.4 million annually

The net public savings estimate is likely conservative, subject to the following conditions and assumptions:

- This model assumes an average incarceration period of one year.
- It is possible that either more or less system-impacted individuals served by The Bridge on Main will be formerly incarcerated than the assumed 25%; this number is likely low due to the overall goals of The Bridge on Main and the service population being individuals and their families impacted by the criminal justice system.
- Formerly incarcerated individuals who recidivate may be likely to have longer-than average prison stays due to their prior criminal history.
- This analysis assumes incarceration costs decrease proportionally to the decrease in the incarcerated population, e.g. if a prison had 1,000 incarcerated individuals then a decline of one incarcerated person to a population of 999 incarcerated individuals reduces prison costs by 1/1,000.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

<u>COST CATEGORY</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
Land Purchase	\$1,150,000
Development	\$12,611,703
Design	\$1,586,036
Professional Services	\$2,280,353
FF&E	\$1,000,000
Moving	\$250,000
Contingency	\$2,000,000
TOTAL	\$20,878,092

The Bridge on Main recognizes that creating a permanent home for our community requires a partner who understands how to help nonprofits seize opportunities and navigate complex challenges. This project represents a pivotal transformation-oriented moment for our organization and community — one that requires impact-first real estate funding and catalytic partnerships.

ROADMAP TO \$21 MILLION

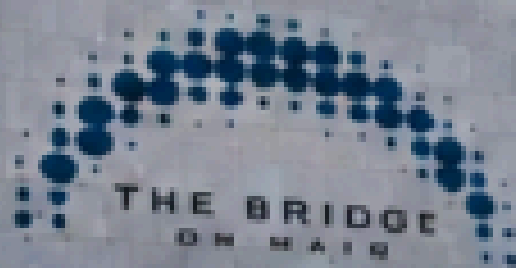
<u>FUNDING SOURCES</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
FEDERAL:		
Congressionally Directed Spending / Community Funding Project	\$500,000	Committed
STATE:		
State of Connecticut: Community Investment Fund	\$4,536,250	Committed
Connecticut Historic Tax Credit Program	\$3,300,000	Committed
PRIVATE - Philanthropic / Corporate Sponsors:		
MKRS Family Foundation	\$3,600,000	Committed
Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation	\$3,000,000	Committed
M&T Bank	\$1,500,000	Committed
Webster Bank	\$750,000	Committed
Diageo	\$150,000	Committed
SUBTOTAL:	\$17,336,250	
OUTSTANDING:		
PROSPECTS	4,000,000	Cultivating
TOTAL:	\$21,336,250	

HISTORIC RENOVATION

The property, located at 1085 Main Street is a former F. W. Woolworth's, is designed in the Art Deco style and situated within the National Register of Historic Places listed Bridgeport Downtown North Historic District (NR# 96000428). The property has been vacant and in disrepair for close to two decades.

Renovating a historic building is a delicate balance between preserving its original charm and integrating modern conveniences. The scope of work includes rehabilitation of the entirety of the building, including a new storefront on the ground level, installation of a new elevator, interior build out, and installation of a rooftop garden.

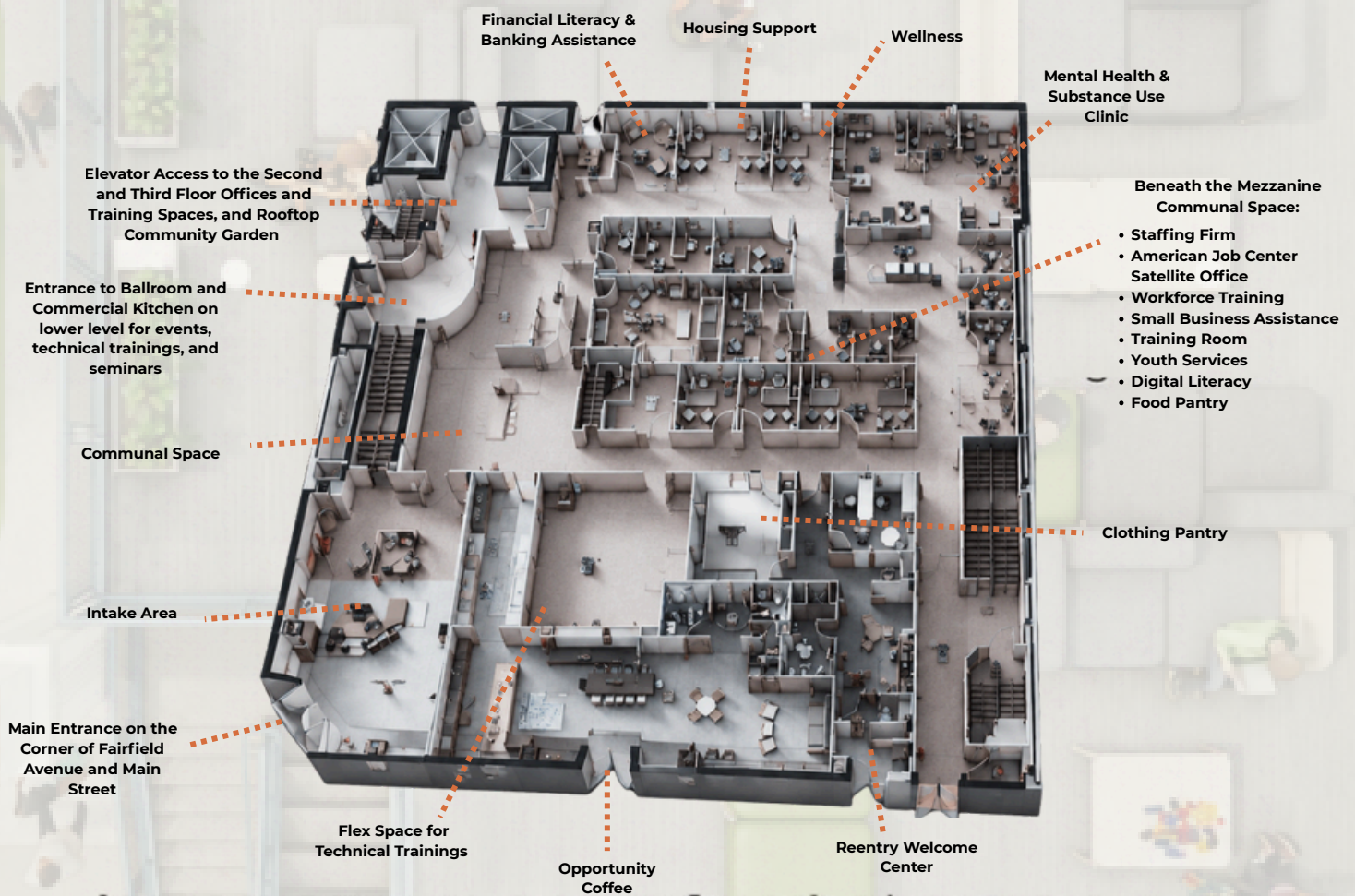
Preservation experts are collaborating with a team of architects to ensure that renovations respect the building's historical significance, using materials and techniques that match the original construction. Throughout the project, every effort is being made to maintain the building's historical integrity, allowing it to stand as a testament to its era while being functional for future generations.



A LOOK INSIDE THE BRIDGE ON MAIN



FIRST FLOOR - COLLABORATIVE HUB FOR INTEGRATED SERVICES AND SYSTEMS CHANGE





LEVELS 2 & 3

PROGRAMMATIC
PARTNERS

TECH
INNOVATION
LABS

CONFERENCE &
TRAINING SPACE

ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICES &
WORKSPACES



LOWER LEVEL -

BRIDGE BALLROOM &
COMMERCIAL KITCHEN

“A Bridge represents movement, it represents connection, safety, and hope; and for system-impacted families, a Bridge represents something even deeper — the belief that your worst mistakes do not define your entire life.”

**-Scott Wilderman
President & CEO
Career Resources**



TIMELINE



A PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP

PHILANTHROPIC PARTNER

MKRS FAMILY FOUNDATION/FOUNDATION HOUSE

Foundation House, founded by Mimi Sternlicht, is a creative, philanthropic community located in backcountry Greenwich, CT. It supports social justice initiatives, environmental activism, mental health awareness and has an artists in residency program.

SUPPORTER

STEVEN & ALEXANDRA COHEN FOUNDATION

The Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation is committed to inspiring philanthropy and community service by creating awareness, offering guidance, and leading by example to show the world what giving can do. The Foundation's grants support nonprofit organizations based in the United States that either help people in need or solve complex problems.

INVESTMENT PARTNER

M&T BANK

M&T Bank connects customers to the capital, ideas and people they need to thrive – because it knows that when its communities succeed, everyone succeeds. Founded in 1856 in Buffalo, New York, M&T Bank provides strength and peace of mind to clients in all economic environments thanks to its consistent earnings, superior profitability and exceptional financial stability. As the company grows, M&T Bank is expanding on its unique combination of core, specialty and institutional banking services, along with Wilmington Trust's corporate trust, agency services and wealth guidance. For more information visit www.mtb.com.

SEED FUNDER

WEBSTER BANK

Webster Bank (NYSE: WBS) is a values-based, leading commercial bank with more than \$80 billion in assets. With headquarters in Stamford, Connecticut, our footprint spans the Northeast from the New York City metropolitan area to Rhode Island and Massachusetts. We operate differentiated lines of business, including Commercial Banking, Consumer Banking and our Healthcare Financial Services segment that includes HSA Bank and Ametros. In addition, Webster offers direct to consumer digital banking via Brio Direct. For more information visit websterbank.com.

PUBLIC PARTNERS

STATE :

- o Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development - Community Investment Fund
- o State Historic Preservation Office

FEDERAL:

- o Congressionally Directed Spending / Community Funding Project Award, via the Office of Congressman Jim Himes
- o U.S. Economic Development Administration

SUPPORTERS

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development

Commissioner Daniel H. O’Keefe

Connecticut Department of Labor

Commissioner Dante Bartolomeo

Connecticut Department of Housing

Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno

Connecticut Department of Correction

Deputy Commissioner Sharonda Carlos

Connecticut Office of Workforce Strategy

Chief Workforce Officer Kelli-Marie Vallieres, PhD

BRIDGEPORT DELEGATION TO THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State Senate

Senator Herron Keyon Gaston, 23rd State Senate District

State House of Representatives

Deputy Speaker of the House, Representative Christopher Rosario, 128th House District
Representative Fred Gee, 126th House District
Representative Marcus Brown, 127th House District
Representative Antonio Felipe, 130th House District

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

Office of Mayor

Joseph P. Ganim

Office of Planning and Economic Development

Thomas F. Gill, Director

131st District

Councilman Jorge Cruz, Sr.

UNITED STATES

House of Representatives

Congressman Jim Himes (CT-04)

Senate

United States Senator Richard Blumenthal

United States Senator Chris Murphy

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

A Pinch of Salt

Connecticut Restaurant Association

Bridgeport Regional Business Council

Greater Bridgeport National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (GBNAACP)

Hang Time Her Time

Homes for the Brave

Housatonic Community College

Optimus Healthcare

Recovery Network of Programs

Social Impact Partners Connecticut

The Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG)

The Housing Collective

Woman Against Mass Incarceration

Women’s Business Development Council

Yale Internal Medicine – Transitions Clinic

CORPORATIONS

Diageo

Greater Bridgeport Transit

Hearst Media - Hearst Connecticut Media

Editorial Board

M&T Bank

Webster Bank

PRIVATE PHILANTHROPY

MKRS Family Foundation/Foundation House

Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation

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LEARN MORE & SUPPORT THE BRIDGE:



www.bridgeonmain.org

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