

Building Community: Bridgeport's Gateway at 570

Liz Torres, executive director of Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, says the Gateway at 570 is near and dear to her heart. This milestone project combines apartments with ground floor offices and community meeting space in her organization's first large mixed-use development. The building looks commercial, fitting in well at the western entrance to Bridgeport's downtown. It helps create a ripple effect, building on efforts to revitalize Bridgeport and enhance the livability of downtown.

"It's not only what we do, but why we do it. This puts us closer to the community, more connected to our work, with easier access for clients and residents."

Locating their offices in the building saves money for Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust and also puts them into the thick of things, supporting their mission of building community. Their conference room is available free to anybody doing good work in the city and hosts a wide array of groups – parent training sessions, housing coalition meetings, neighborhood association planning retreats, and time for community partners like police, youth organizations and social workers to get to know each other.

Success: Orlando was living on a park bench after losing his job as a tractor trailer driver down south and moving back home to Bridgeport. A recent graduate of a job training program, he is happy to have a safe place to live where he can get help with his disabilities while he searches for work.

"I love being in a calm state of security, where I can come and go as I please, and keep my house clean. I don't give up, so give me two weeks and I'll have a job."

Success: Jorge applied for affordable housing because he needed a place to live while going to trade school and recovering from foot surgery. He is an artist and musician, trying to put his past behind him as he trains for a new career as a barber.

"I like the neighborhood and the people in this building. It was great to get a chance with rent help when I needed it."



Success: Dayne recently had a traumatic, life-changing injury and faces a challenging recuperation in which everything seems overwhelming because he is wheelchair-bound. This meant he had to move from his old third floor walk-up apartment, so he was happy to find this building.

"I really needed a place to stay, and this gives me a chance to be independent. I like the upscale view down State Street with lots of people, so it's not the same every day."





When and where:

Gateway at 570 is located at 570 State Street in Bridgeport, Connecticut and was developed by Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust (BNT) in 2014.

What:

The building contains 30 apartments, with rents from 30% of the area median income (AMI) up to full market rate. Some units are reserved for people coming out of homelessness. It has a lounge area for residents, BNT offices on the first floor, and a conference room for use by community groups.

Why and how:

LISC provides ongoing technical assistance and operating support to BNT, and also helped BNT significantly when the project was under development. The Fairfield County Funders' Collaborative, which LISC manages, provided operating funds to BNT. LISC made HUD Section IV grants that enabled BNT to build its capacity by implementing an in-house property management function and hiring staff. This will help BNT implement its long term strategy of creating larger rental developments in targeted areas of the city.

Who:

Funders for this development were the State Interagency Committee for Supportive Housing, City of Bridgeport, Corporation for Supportive Housing, Community Capital Fund and Wells Fargo.



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