



ATTLEBORO AREA
Interfaith
COLLABORATIVE

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2022-2024

Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative
PO Box 368
Attleboro, MA 02703

AttleboroAIC.org



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CONTENTS

WHO WE ARE	3
PLANNING PROCESS.....	4
PRIMARY FEEDBACK.....	5
IDENTITY.....	6
PROGRAM FOCUS	7
BIG PICTURE GOALS	8
STAY, TRANSITION, OR ADD.....	9
2022 GOALS	10
2023 GOALS	11
2024 GOALS	12
FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS.....	13
APPENDIX: FOOD INSECURITY IN MASSACHUSETTS	14

WHO WE ARE

MISSION. Inspired by diverse faiths and shared values, Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative advances a healthy, secure, and meaningful life for all within our community.

VISION. With multi-faith understanding and compassion, Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative alleviates hunger, promotes stability, and inspires the community to thrive.

VALUES. While many values are important to us as an organization, the seven values of community, faith, human dignity, inclusion, self-determination, service as duty, and volunteerism – sustain and strengthen us. We practice these values in our actions and attitudes.

- We believe that individuals and congregations that make up the organization are strongly grounded in and guided by personal spiritual beliefs.
- We affirm the dignity of every person.
- We embrace inclusion and serve all people.
- We believe in self-determination and personal agency.
- We serve and act in the spirit of obligation to better our world.
- We create opportunities for people to share their time, talent, and resources for the benefit of the community.

HISTORY. Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative was founded on May 8, 1946 with nineteen churches as charter members including eleven from Attleboro, and the YMCA. Today our partners have grown to include 36 houses of worship and faith-based partners of diverse denominations. For 23 years, the Masonic Temple in Attleboro served as the first “home” for the AAIC offices. In 1970, the offices were moved to Murray Unitarian Universalist Church, Attleboro. In 2002 the offices were located at 7 North Main Street, Attleboro. Later AAIC moved to 95 Pine Street, Attleboro, in the former Richardson School. In 2020, the organization operated remotely in response to the impact of the pandemic. In 2021, it transitioned its office space with the Attleboro YMCA at the Sweet Community House.

On January 24, 2017, Attleboro Area Council of Churches changed its name to Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative. The new name was chosen to better reflect the vision of the founders to promote dialogue between diverse houses of worship and honor the diversity of the faith beliefs of its volunteers and the community-at-large. Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative has been led by nine executives: Rev. Daniel Potter, Rev. Arthur Rinden, Rev. Robert Ryder, Carolyn L. Bronkar, Elaine Gaetani, Janet Long, Dorothy Embree, and Kat Wright. Lisa Piscatelli is the ninth and current Executive Director.

The programs operating under the auspices of Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative are Food n’ Friends, Interfaith Chaplaincy, and Resource Junction.

PLANNING PROCESS

Planning took place from November 2021 to April 2022.

AAIC engaged Cheryl Harris and Associates, Inc. to provide consultation and facilitation of the strategic planning process. Rev. Cheryl Harris designed and distributed surveys for the board of directors, area clergy, staff, and volunteer site coordinators to obtain input on the operations, state of condition, and direction of the organization. Rev. Harris also met with executive director Lisa Piscatelli and board president Taryn Degon to discuss pre-planning and conduct in-person interviews.

Two board planning sessions were facilitated by Rev. Harris. In the first planning session, Rev. Harris reviewed the results of the surveys and interviews from all key stakeholders and provided a summary of the current state of the organization. It was then necessary to determine AAIC's desired identity and depict the future vision of the organization.

In the second planning session, the Board of Directors reviewed and agreed upon the identity statement and big picture goals for the next three years.

The Board of Directors approved this Strategic Plan on October 19, 2022.

PRIMARY FEEDBACK

AAIC IS:

- a small agency with big impact
- a force for good in community

The following feedback was consistent and influenced our decision-making:

CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

- Mission Creep
- Persistent Confusion with Name Change
- Volunteer Coverage is Variable at Select Meal Sites
- Food Availability at Greater Boston Food Bank is still a Challenge

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

- Resource Junction provided aid to program guests during pandemic
- Camaraderie and Sense of Community is strong with program partners
- Dedicated Core of Volunteers
- Hybrid Format model is preferred for Food n' Friends

AS A RESULT, AAIC WILL:

- Keep the current Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Core Values
- Focus on Chaplaincy and Hunger Relief Services (smaller focus = bigger impact)
- Transition Resource Junction to a subprogram of Food n' Friends
- Maintain the hybrid format of Food n' Friends programs
- Focus on volunteer management
- Continue to foster relationships with key stakeholders

IDENTITY

Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative is a dedicated provider of interfaith chaplaincy and hunger relief services.

PRIMARY PROGRAMS



SIGNATURE EVENT



serving our community,
one meal and one comfort at a time

PROGRAM FOCUS

2022

- 70% Food n’ Friends
- 15% Resource Junction
 - *Homes With Heart – a subprogram addressing homelessness*
- 15% Interfaith Chaplaincy

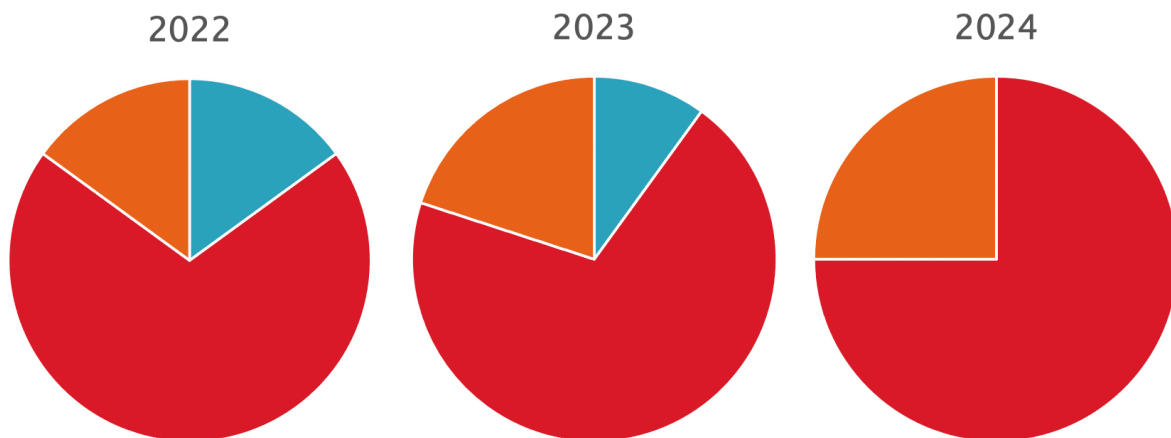
2023

- 70% Food n’ Friends
- 10% Resource Junction
 - *transition services to CCBC, NBCAC, and other specialists*
- 20% Interfaith Chaplaincy

2024

- 75% Food n’ Friends
 - *Resource Junction – wrap around subprogram addressing gaps*
- 25% Interfaith Chaplaincy

	2022	2023	2024
Food n’ Friends, red	70%	70%	75%
Interfaith Chaplaincy, orange	15%	20%	25%
Resource Junction, blue	15%	10%	subprogram of Food n’ Friends



BIG PICTURE GOALS

2022 GOALS

- Establish ourselves as the community hub for hunger relief services
- Begin to plan to move away from housing insecurity services
- Increase chaplaincy services and partnerships with houses of worship

Consideration: Pandemic

2023 GOALS

- Expand Food n' Friends services and use of new commercial kitchen
- Discontinue funding and services as related to housing insecurity
- Advocate for (and implement) enhancements in the spiritual and religious offerings at Sturdy Memorial Hospital

Consideration: Attleboro Shelter (NBCAC) expected to open in Spring 2023

2024 GOALS

- Expand upon region where emergency meals are served
- Explore Food n' Friends program options, to best meet the needs of youth, families, individuals, and seniors
- Explore Interfaith Chaplaincy program options, facilitating opportunities to connect, learn, serve, comfort, and nourish our community

Consideration: Capacity (Funding and People Power)

STAY, TRANSITION, OR ADD

What activities should **stay**? Access Assistance, such as:

- IDs, Birth Certificates, Phones (gap areas needed to sign up for hunger relief benefits)
- Transportation (CAR/Uber, Bus Passes, and Gas Cards)

What activities should we **transition** away from?

- Shower, Laundry, Shelter, Hygiene Kits, Clothing/Boots, Blankets, Insect Repellent, etc.
- Security Deposits, Rent, and Mortgage Assistance
- Easter Baskets and Christmas Gifts

Are there activities that we should **add**?

- Faith Advisory Council (may also guide AAIC with equity, racial, and social justice initiatives)
- NBCAC Meals, utilize cargo van for select meal deliveries and/or pop-up meal site.
- Enhanced Volunteer Recruiting, Onboarding, Training, and Recognition
- Nutrition Education
- Additional Access Assistance, such as translating marketing materials
- Family Café Redesign and/or Food n' Friends in new towns with partner Houses of Worship
- Consider providing Kitchen Equipment, Container Vegetable Gardening, etc.
- Offerings related to Health/Wellness/Poverty – partnering with specialty organizations

2022 GOALS

Establish ourselves as hub for hunger relief services in our community

- Begin to plan to move away from housing insecurity services
- Increase chaplaincy services and partnerships with houses of worship

Consideration: Pandemic

Food n' Friends

- Create uniform volunteer policies and procedures; train volunteers
- Look for new resources for recruiting volunteers
- Transition back to fellowship model
- Create MOUs with partner houses of worship and organizations
- Secure role as the meal provider for the future shelter
- Participate in planning of Phase 1 Commercial Kitchen at Sweet Community House
- Reduce number of Kids Summer Café meal sites in Attleboro (from 3 to 2)

Resource Junction

- Continue emergency and humanitarian aid for shelter
- Continue CAR program
- Notify CCBC / Homes with Heart / GBCATCH about transitioning away from housing insecurity services

Interfaith Chaplaincy

- Resolve relationship with Sturdy Memorial Hospital
- Formalize Faith Advisory Council
- Utilize Council guidance to determine involvement with GAIN and racial/social justice initiatives
- Notify community partners about plan to transition away from AAIC distribution of Easter Baskets and Christmas Gifts
- Coordinate the transition of the Sunrise Easter Service to be led and hosted by area clergy

General Operations

- Move to full utilization of Dropbox for BOD document management
- Work with YMCA on obtaining funding for enhancements to lower level of Sweet Community House

2023 GOALS

Expand Food n' Friends services and use of new commercial kitchen

- Discontinue funding and services as related to housing insecurity

Consideration: Attleboro Shelter (NBCAC) expected to open in Spring, 2023

Food n' Friends

- Provide meals to residents and guests at the new shelter (NBCAC)
- Provide delivery service to homebound using cargo van (considerations to take into account – preference for fellowship format access)
- Additional Access Assistance, such as translating our marketing materials
- Begin nutrition program at Sweet Community House
- Collaborate with Sweet Community House Committee to evaluate data and planned regional response for addressing food insecurity.

Chaplaincy

- Faith Advisory Council plans and assists with the coordination of activities
- Provide guidance to Sturdy Memorial Hospital on the indicators of quality spiritual care in health care.
- Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative no longer coordinates Easter Sunrise Service
- Enhance relationships of area clergy, houses of worship, and faith-based organizations partnering with Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative

Resource Junction

- Transition shower pass program
- Transition emergency sheltering
- Transition utility assistance
- Maintain access to services and unique needs assistance
- Keep Aware of Status of Community Connector / Stronger Together Alliance and consider membership

General Operations

- Manage installation of Work Stations and Storage in lower level of Sweet Community House

2024 GOALS

Expand upon number of emergency meals served

- Expand upon region where emergency meals are served
- Explore program format options, to best meet the needs of youth, families, individuals, and seniors

Consideration: Capacity (Funding and People Power)

Food n' Friends (Daily Kitchens and Kids Summer Café)

- Consider adding a pop-up meal site using Cargo Van
- Consider adding new Meal Sites in Towns/Cities with partner Houses of Worship
- Consider redesigning and bring back Family Café

Resource Junction (subprogram of Food n' Friends)

- ⇒ Consider providing food security educational opportunities with participatory incentives
- ⇒ Coordinate specialty offerings related to Health, Wellness, and Poverty Reduction Assistance – partnering with community organizations

Chaplaincy

- Plan and Host an interfaith workshop or conference
- Build new relationships with area clergy, houses of worship, and faith-based organizations in the region that Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative serves

General Operations

- Set up a Finance Task Force or Committee
- Consider other opportunities for funding – monthly donations, matching gifts, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, donor advised fund, planned gift, etc.
- Explore benefits of incorporating AmeriCorps VISTA, internships, etc. Apply and implement as appropriate

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative Financial Projections

	2022 Budget	Updated 2022 Budget	Hypothetical Budget	
Donations	\$82,000.00	\$72,000.00	\$82,000.00	Set-Up Finance Task Force
Fundraising	\$93,000.00	\$123,000.00	\$123,000.00	
In-Kind Donation Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	
Grants	\$248,245.00	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00	
Total Income	\$423,245.00	\$445,000.00	\$555,000.00	
Interfaith Chaplaincy	\$22,833.00	\$22,833.00	\$22,833.00	
Food n' Friends	\$160,565.00	\$200,700.00	\$315,700.00	Includes In-Kind Donations and Volunteer Coordinator
Resource Junction	\$67,357.00	\$87,357.00	\$47,357.00	Reducing Focus on Housing
Fundraising	\$7,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Office	\$116,578.00	\$120,000.00	\$120,000.00	
Payroll Expenses	\$12,900.00	\$12,900.00	\$39,000.00	Includes Retirement Benefits and Health Insurance
Other	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	
Total Expenses	\$387,233.00	\$458,790.00	\$549,890.00	

Based on January - June 2022 Actual
Projects Income & Expenses Going Forward

2023

- Volunteer Coordination Position (15 hours)
- Staff Benefit Enhancements
- Market Rate Alignment for Chaplain position
- Set up of 4 Work Stations at Sweet Community House (lower level)

2024

- Volunteer Recognition
- Add New Meal Sites and Increase Number of Emergency Meals
- Interfaith-Based Opportunity for Clergy
- Staff / Board Retreat to Plan for 2025 and Beyond

APPENDIX:

FOOD INSECURITY IN MASSACHUSETTS

“Food Equity and Access Report”

Source: Greater Boston Food Bank, June 6, 2022

Background. The U.S. economy has been unpredictable during the second year of the pandemic. Despite improvements in unemployment, inflation is offsetting economic gains, particularly for people with lower incomes. As Massachusetts unemployment decreased from 7.1% in January 2021 to 4.6% in December 2021, nationally, grocery prices increased by 6.5%; the largest over-the-year increase in over ten years. Fortunately, national policies to support people struggling financially because of the COVID-19 pandemic were shown to improve the financial status of many Americans. However, benefits such as supplemental pandemic unemployment benefits and the Expanded Child Tax Credit came to an end in 2021, the end of which has disproportionately harmed people with lower incomes and people of color.

Recommendations for programmatic anti-hunger efforts:

- Increase public awareness and outreach by food and financial assistance programs to reduce stigma and discrimination and maximize utilization.
- Explore opportunities to make it more convenient to access food pantry services in a friendly, dignified way.
- Expand and utilize client-centered best practices among hunger relief organizations, staff, and volunteers (e.g., home delivery, cultural competency, equity training, language translation, increased hours of operation, and reducing wait times).
- Optimize food access alternatives and opportunities for people receiving services from hunger relief organizations. This includes offering culturally responsive food options, grocery cards, expanding food delivery and maximizing government benefits.
- Connect food pantries, healthcare, organizations, schools, and other community-based organizations with local SNAP outreach and other support programs to build partnerships that will ensure clients receive accurate eligibility information and timely assistance.
- For organizations directly engaging with individuals who have lived experience with food insecurity and discrimination, develop informed solutions to address stigma, discrimination, and lift their voices in advocacy efforts.
- Focus investments on food pantries that serve sizable communities of Black, Latinx and LGBTQ+ individuals, to improve services and access.
- Promote equitable data collection and data-informed food access investments.