



BHC-MSS 0245

## Guide to the Records of Bridgeport Generation Now January 2023

### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Bridgeport Generation Now

**Title:** Records of Bridgeport Generation Now

**Dates:** 2017-[present]

**Quantity:** 0.8 linear feet

**Abstract:** Bridgeport Generation Now is a grassroots social action network founded in 2016 focused on responding to systemic issues in the city and building civic engagement among residents. The current contents of the collection consists of material meant for the public. This includes election time mailing information including reminders about the voting dates and endorsed candidates, annual policy platforms, flyers for events including their signature Civics 101 workshop, and additional handouts such as bumper stickers and t-shirts.

**Language:** English, Spanish

**Repository:** Bridgeport History Center

### **Biographical History:**

Bridgeport Generation Now is a grassroots social action network founded in 2016 focused on responding to systemic issues in the city and building civic engagement among residents. Founder Callie Gale Heilmann found inspiration from the article “How America Is Putting Itself Back Together” in the Atlantic, which included the work of San Bernardino Generation Now.

Using the approach of San Bernardino Generation Now as a guide, Heilmann, along with Razul Branch, Adhlere Coffy, Ashli Giles-Perkins, Maggie Gotterer, Niels Heilmann, Marcella Kovac, Isa Mujahid Kate Rivera, and John Torres began holding weekly meetings. As of writing, the organization has a two-tier membership system: general membership which allows individuals to show support and participate in meetings, and core membership which confers voting privileges and committee membership. It is run by the action council, consisting a president, vice president, member secretary, administrative secretary, treasurer, and core member delegates, along with additional committees as needed.

The work of Bridgeport Generation Now is in direct response to issues within the City of Bridgeport. In the 1980s, the city was especially well known for corruption and violence, and modern journalism frequently reveals insider dealings, systemic issues on matters such as housing and policing, and other long-term issues that have never been fully resolved, creating what Bridgeport Generation Now sees as cynicism and apathy regarding governance and a decline in participation in the civic process. As such, their goals are to foster engagement through getting out the vote (including their #UnrigBridgeport campaigns), endorsing political candidates that align with their goals, offering signature Civics 101 workshops, their anti-racism collective, police accountability, and investment in education and social services.

In the past, the group has been able to ensure a public forum with candidates for chief of police (2022), help elect their preferred candidates to various posts in the City of Bridgeport (various years), and ensure that their policy recommendations are heard during city council and other meetings (various years), in addition to continually responding to the news and needs of Bridgeport.

**Scope and Content note:**

As a grassroots organization that focuses on fostering civic engagement, the current contents of the Records of Bridgeport Generation Now consists of material meant for the public. This includes election time mailing information including reminders about the voting dates and endorsed candidates, annual policy platforms, flyers for events including their signature Civics 101 workshop, and additional handouts such as bumper stickers and t-shirts.

Correspondence exists, but is currently unprocessed. It contains emails and newsletters.

**Arrangement note:**

Currently, the records of Bridgeport Generation Now are arranged into five series. It is anticipated that this collection will expand in the future, both with physical and born-digital material. Born digital material is currently unprocessed and only available by request.

Series I, correspondence, is currently unprocessed. It contains emails and newsletters.

Series II, policy and strategic planning, consists of the group's annual policy platforms as well as strategic plans for the year. Series III contains the mailers and other campaign material sent out to voters, and series IV currently captures other subjects. Series I through III are arranged chronologically, whereas series IV is arranged alphabetically. Series V contains realia in the form of t-shirts.

**Administrative information:**

**Provenance:** 2023.04, Donation of Bridgeport Generation Now

**Preferred Citation:**

Records of the Bridgeport Generation Now (BHC-MSS 0245), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

**Names and Subject Tracings**

*Corporate names*

Bridgeport Generation Now

*Subject tracings*

Bridgeport (Conn.)

Elections

Connecticut--Politics and government

Voting

Voter turnout

Civic action

Social action

**Detailed box/folder listing**

Series I – Correspondence, electronic, 2017-2023 [unprocessed]

Box 1

Series II – Policy and strategic planning

1. Policy and issue platform, 2017
2. Policy and strategic work, 2019
3. Policy and issue platform, 2021

Series III – Mailers and campaign material

4. Mailers and campaign material, 2019
5. Mailers and campaign material, 2021
6. Mailers and campaign material, 2022
7. Mailers and campaign material, 2023

Series IV, Subject files

8. Anti-corruption resolution, 2018
9. City council district map, 2020s
10. City council and election information, 2020-
11. Civics 101 workshop, 2019-2022
12. Events, 2017
13. Promotional material, 2017
14. Speech regarding policy brutality perpetuated on Aaron Kearny, 2017

Series V, Realia

Box 2

1. T-shirt, Bport Gen Now, 2022
2. T-shirt, Bport Gen Now votes, 2022