



Two Bridges
NeighborFood



Two Bridges Neighborhood Council
NYC Department of Small Business Services
Avenues NYC Placemaking Grant Recipient 2014 & 2015

Who We Are

Two Bridges Neighborhood Council (TBNC) was founded in 1955 to resolve racial conflicts and to serve as a channel for communication among settlement houses, churches, and community leaders.

By the early 1970s, the mission of TBNC evolved to focus on both neighborhood preservation and the creation of affordable housing. To date we have created almost 1,500 units of affordable housing across the Lower East Side, along the East River Waterfront between the Manhattan Bridge and Corlear's Hook.

Through an extensive array of community programs and strategic partnerships, TBNC continues to support and promote the vibrant residential, business, and cultural life of Lower Manhattan.

Our Placemaking Challenge

In the late 70s and early 80s, TBNC & Settlement Housing Fund led the fight to bring a full-service supermarket to the Two Bridges neighborhood, resulting in the construction of a Pathmark Supermarket.

The 24-hour Pathmark Supermarket & Pharmacy served the community with food and provided local jobs for almost 30 years (1983 to 2012).

In late September 2012, the Pathmark Supermarket announced its intention to close. Its replacement (not yet built) is likely to be a market-rate residential tower.

A fixture in our largely low-income residential neighborhood, Pathmark's closure has had immediate and long-term impacts on the residents of the Two Bridges neighborhood.



In response to the announcement of the store's closure, TBNC hosted a community rally and press conference to give visibility to the community's needs.

In the wake of Pathmark's impending closure, many people began to call the neighborhood a "food desert" – a term TBNC believed was a misnomer.

What Is Placemaking?

“Placemaking strengthens the connection between people and the places they share...

More than just creating better urban design of public spaces, Placemaking facilitates creative patterns of activities and connections (cultural, economic, social, ecological) that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.”

-Project for Public Spaces

Source:
www.pps.org

“Placemaking is the last step in the commercial revitalization process.

[Placemaking projects] will engage local residents in the newly revitalized commercial corridor by cultivating a sense of place that capitalizes on unique characteristics of the commercial corridor... Successful projects do more than district marketing (restaurant guides, business directories) - they design a purposeful strategy that incorporates key traits of the commercial corridor to create a brand that benefits the businesses, is easily marketable, and engages local residents.”

-NYC SBS Avenues Grant Application

Source:
www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/html/neighborhood_development/avenue_nyc.shtml

The first step in **Placemaking**: understanding the place!

Developing Our Placemaking Project

Identifying the Characteristics of the Two Bridges Neighborhood



Image credit: TODA
www.toda.com

Developing Our Placemaking Project (continued)

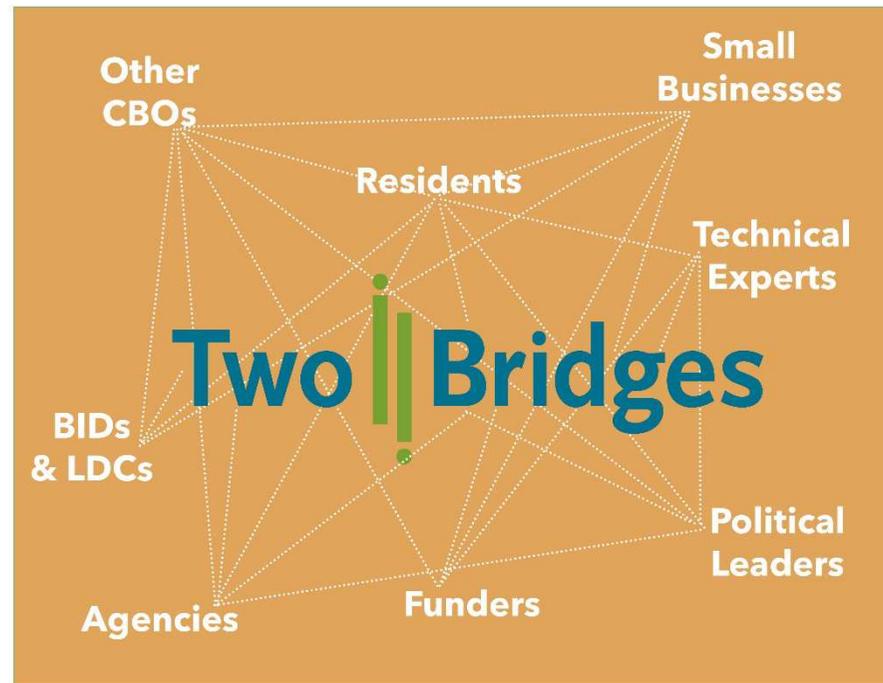
Defining the Landscape & Culture
of the Two Bridges Neighborhood's Commercial Corridor(s):



Image credit: TODA
www.toda.com

Developing Our Placemaking Project (continued)

Identifying and Engaging Local Stakeholders



- TBNC hosted a series of community meetings with a diverse group of local stakeholders.
- We also enlisted the services of industry experts (consultants: Urbane Development) to troubleshoot the issue and brainstorm possible community-based solutions.
- Additionally, TBNC began to identify potential funding sources and pro bono opportunities.

Next Steps: Gathering Data

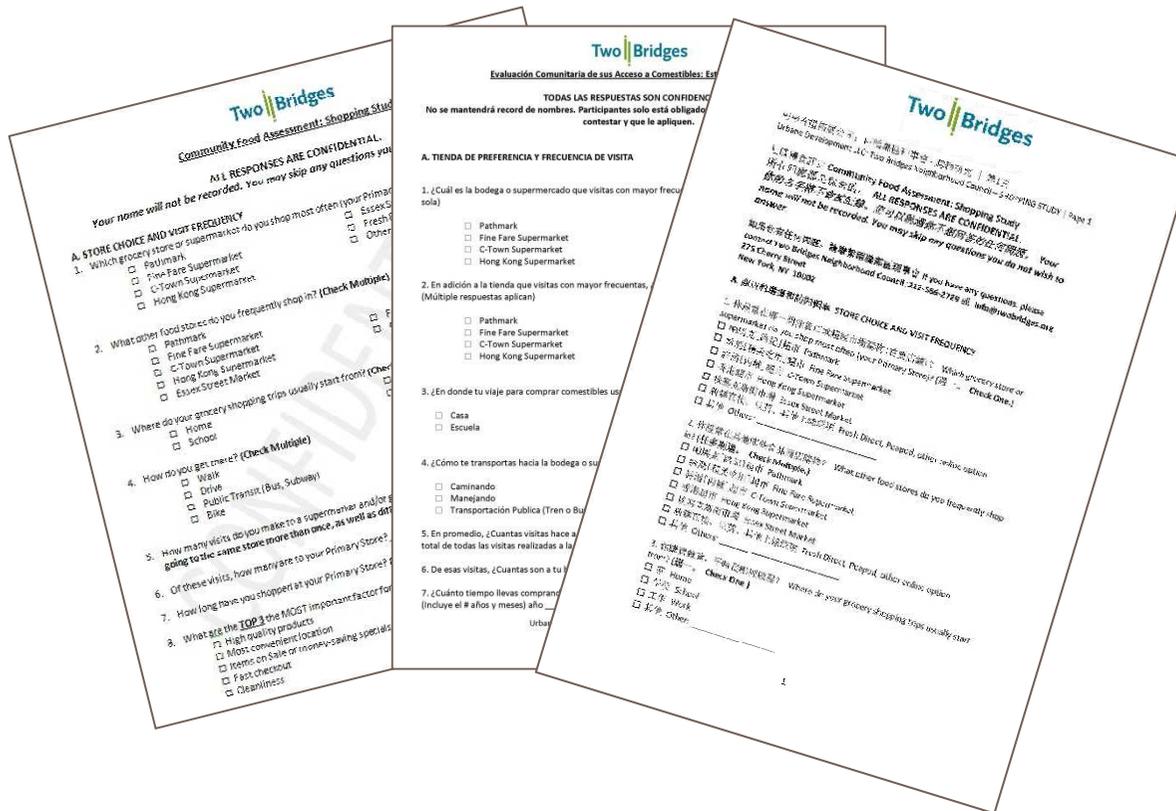
In November 2012, TBNC launched a comprehensive “Community Food Assessment”.

To better understand resident shopping habits & needs, TBNC collected data through a multilingual survey (paper & online).

Completed by nearly 400 residents, the survey helped TBNC identify the current and desired shopping habits of the community.

Key Questions Covered:

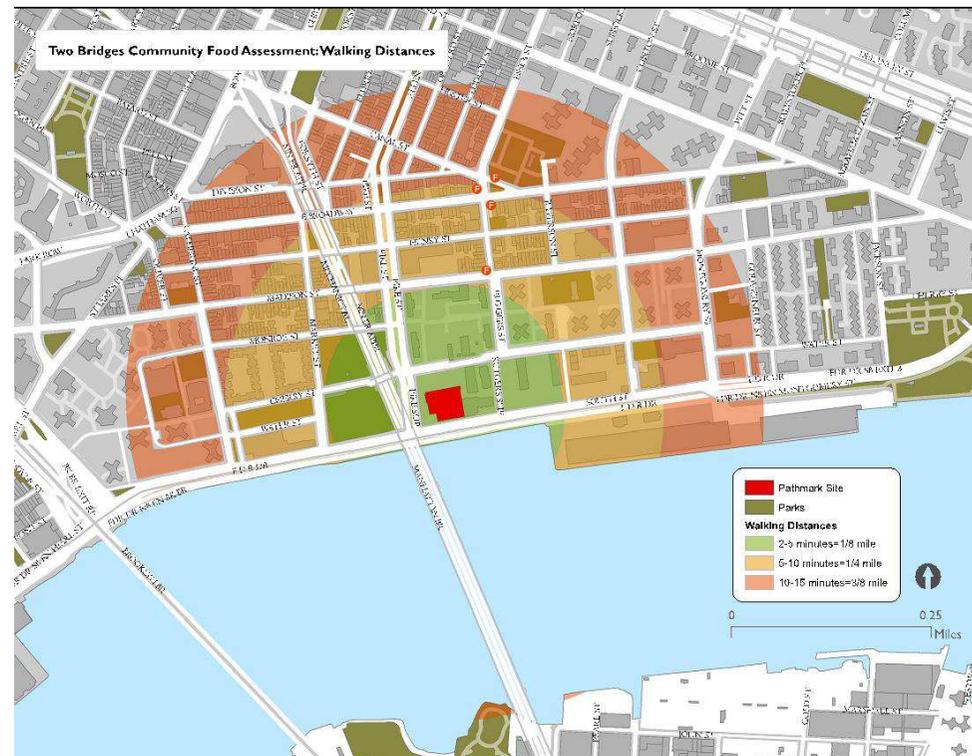
- Where were local residents shopping?
- How much were individuals and families spending on groceries each week?
- What were the top reasons residents chose their “primary” store?



Next Steps: Gathering Data (continued)

To better understand local grocery offerings, TBNC staff & and a team of research fellows surveyed over 85 stores within a 15 minute walking distance of the Pathmark site in January 2013.

- The data collected focused on identifying what was (and possibly what was not) available in the local area.
- To aid in our ability to communicate with all store owners, TBNC hired skilled translators to help explain the purpose of the data collection.





Our Findings: Two Bridges Residents

The data from the resident surveys helped illustrate the following:

- 1) In the wake of the loss of the Pathmark, local residents were going **outside** of the Two Bridges neighborhood to do their grocery shopping, primarily due to the perception that the goods and services they were accustomed to were not available locally.
- 2) The diversity of ethnicities and languages made shopping in Two Bridges / Chinatown intimidating for many.



Our Findings: Two Bridges Businesses

The data collected on local businesses helped illustrate the following:

- The products and services that local residents desired on a weekly basis were available locally, in abundance.
- The prices of these items were similar to those advertised at the former Pathmark.
- The majority of business owners surveyed were open to assistance in marketing their store(s) to local residents.
- The majority of business owners were unaware of TBNC's presence in the neighborhood.



Developing the Two Bridges Grocery Guide

Based on our findings from both the resident and business surveys, our overall placemaking project was designed with the following goals in mind:

- Build on the strong sense of place and character unique to the Two Bridges neighborhood.
- Promote local businesses to over 40,000 local residents, many of whom report that they do not currently shop in Two Bridges/ Chinatown due to cultural or linguistic barriers.
- Strengthen small business environment and encourage local economic growth and prosperity.
- Use food as cultural bridge to strengthen ties between diverse members of Two Bridges community.
- Create opportunities to enhance healthy food access, education, and affordability in the low-income Two Bridges community.

Developing the Two Bridges Grocery Guide (continued)

TBNC concluded we wanted to use the survey data and additional research that was compiled to create a grocery guide to the neighborhood as the first step in its placemaking endeavors.

- The guide was to serve as a roadmap to allow residents to locate the goods & services they require, while directing customers to our local and locally-owned businesses.
- TBNC received a 2013 pro bono service grant from designNYC to work with internationally known designers TODA to design the guide.
- With support from the FY 14 SBS Avenues NYC grant, TBNC would be able to print 10,000 copies of the guide once it was developed, as well as a launch a digital version of the guide (web based & mobile).

Learning the Importance of Branding

Our pro bono design partner, TODA, hosted a series of branding workshops which helped TBNC think deeper about how our placemaking project could help strengthen and create a more unified sense of “place” in Two Bridges.

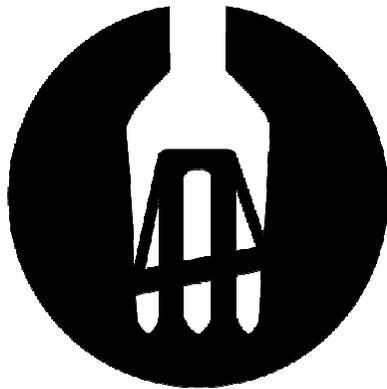


What is branding and why is it important?

A stamp, or seal, is often used in design to show approval, or give an attribution towards a bigger program or brand. In this case, the seal of approval is coming from the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council, and can become a secondary branding element that gives residents additional trust in a neighborhood store.



Our Placemaking Project's Brand



Two Bridges NeighborFood

Two Bridges NeighborFood promotes access to fresh and affordable food in the Two Bridges Neighborhood by fostering relationships between small businesses and local residents. We are strengthening the local economy, increasing traffic to local small businesses, and bridging cultural divides in our diverse community.

Two Bridges NeighborFood Grocery Guide



NeighborFood Grocery Guide: Bridging Language & Cultural Barriers

The printed NeighborFood Grocery Guides are available in the neighborhood's three predominant languages: English, Spanish, and Chinese.

The guides are being widely distributed through a network of diverse local sites, (ex. libraries, BIDS, non-profit orgs, settlement houses, senior centers, small businesses, etc.)

We believe NeighborFood is already helping tie the neighborhood together – under a unified “brand,” residents, businesses and other local entities are working together and with TBNC to highlight the abundance of products and services that are available locally.





Outreach & Socialization: Residents

TBNC has created a diverse advisory committee comprised of residents and other stakeholders called “**Food Ambassadors.**”

Our NeighborFood Food Ambassadors:

- Get involved and take ownership of the program.
- Provide and share resources, such as volunteering time to distribute flyers or shooting and editing video/photo footage.
- Give feedback on the program as it evolves.
- Promote the project to their family, friends, neighbors and colleagues.



Dalia Soto
Two Bridges Resident

My goal is to see that the residents of the Lower East Side eat healthy foods and live a healthy life.

There is somewhat of a culture divide and maybe something of an economic divide [shopping for food in this neighborhood]. It's everyone's responsibility to cross that.



Landry Ndremihaja
Two Bridges Resident

Outreach & Socialization: Residents (continued)

Why Our NeighborFood Food Ambassadors are Important:

- By engaging and empowering people from different backgrounds within the community, we are able to tap into a broad base of local knowledge.
- It encourages dialogue among the diverse constituents to incorporate a spectrum of ideas about how to create the most relevant and meaningful programming to serve the entire community.
- We receive direct feedback from potential customers on the types of goods and services needed and desired by the community.

Outreach & Socialization (continued)

TBNC has made it a priority to both host and attend local meetings:

- Resident Association meetings
- Community Board meetings
- Also, request meetings with partner organizations

TBNC also takes advantage of existing neighborhood events that are targeting local residents:

- Meet with the event hosts to see if they have the capacity and resources to provide you with an informational table.
- Provides an opportunity to pull in and attract residents at almost no cost to you and requires little prior planning.

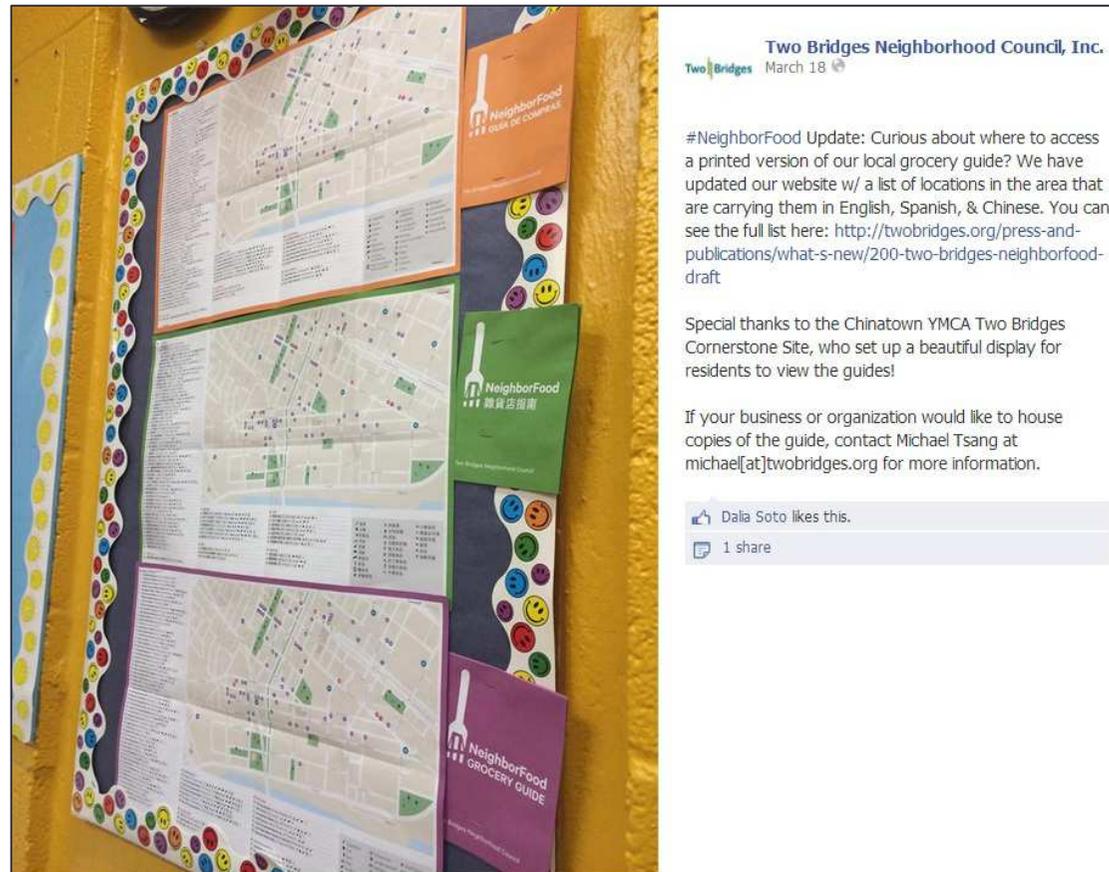


Outreach (continued)

Other Methods of Outreach:

- Social Media
- Newsletters
- Flyers
- Collateral
- Press & Media

Note: Making connections by establishing trust and rapport with local partners is important in relationship-building for your placemaking project!



Bulletin board display of NeighborFood Grocery Guides at the Chinatown YMCA Two Bridges Cornerstone site.

Benefits to the Two Bridges Neighborhood

The Two Bridges NeighborFood project:

- Cultivates a uniform sense of “place” for the Two Bridges neighborhood (through branding, etc.)
- Highlights that the strong commercial corridor in the Two Bridges neighborhood where residents can shop locally.
- Environmental (less travel) and public safety (more foot traffic, more money for infrastructure improvements) benefits as well.

If every resident of Two Bridges shifted \$1/day of their spending to a local business, we'd generate a little over \$9.3M that would re-circulate through the local economy.



Benefits to Two Bridges Residents

- Strengthening of local jobs
- More entrepreneurial opportunities
- Stronger small businesses providing higher quality goods and services
- Possible future opportunity to be rewarded by businesses through loyalty discount programs (TBD)

Download our NeighborFood Digital App when it rolls out!



Benefits to Two Bridges Business Owners

- Cultural exchange and community identity building through newfound relationships between the small business owners and Two Bridges residents
- Increased sale and consumption of fresh, affordable healthy foods
- New customers
- Direct feedback
- Future events (guided NeighborFood tours) will help provide an opportunity to showcase their business and new goods/services.



Two Bridges NeighborFood Phase Two: Guided Tours of Local Markets



Two Bridges
NeighborFood

Saturday, June 14

Walking Tour:

Front of 80 Rutgers Slip at
11:00AM



WALKING TOUR

Join us for a walking tour of Chinatown. We will cover family owned businesses as well as supermarkets on the route to understand the different shopping cultures that exist in this neighborhood.

WE WILL BE GIVING AWAY A FREE TOTE BAG FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS!



This is the route that we will take during this tour!

The Two Bridges neighborhood on Manhattan's Lower East Side is among the most diverse neighborhoods in New York. From Chinese bakeries to Latino groceries; halal and kosher meat stores to produce stands featuring dozens of types fruits and vegetables; corner bodegas to full-service grocers, we see strength and resilience in this diversity. We also believe that food can serve as a cultural bridge between diverse members of the Two Bridges community.

Register by June 12 to attend

Contact:

michael@twobridges.org or 212-566-2729

**FREE
EVENT**



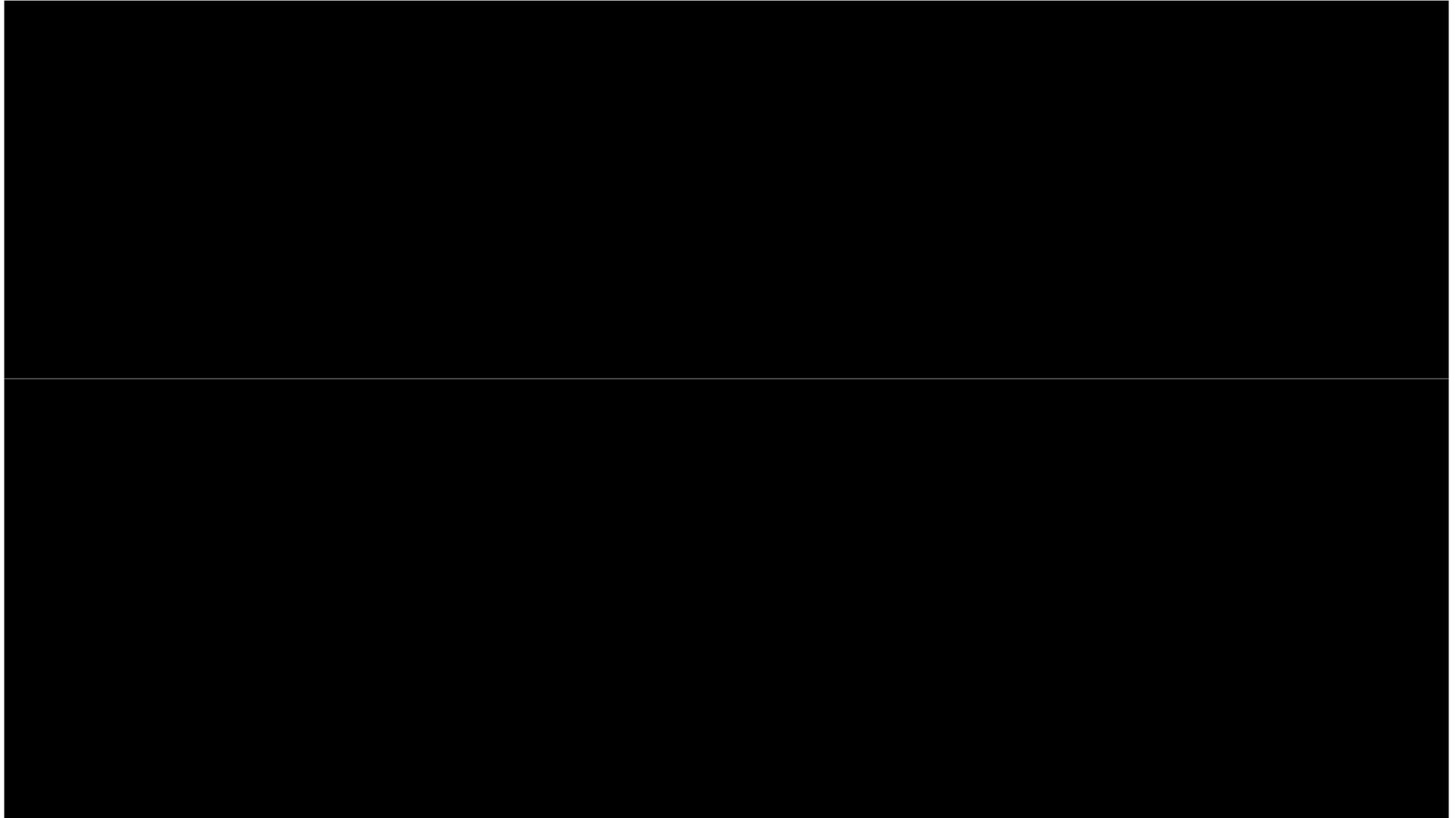
Ask us about getting a
free NeighborFood
Grocery Guide!

www.twobridges.org | [facebook.com/twobridges](https://www.facebook.com/twobridges) | [@twobridgesnyc](https://twitter.com/twobridgesnyc) | [#neighborfood](https://www.instagram.com/neighborfood)

Two Bridges



NeighborFood Guided Tour (video)





Contact Us!

**If you have questions about the
Two Bridges NeighborFood program:**

**Michael Tsang
Project Coordinator
275 Cherry Street
Michael@twobridges.org
(212) 566-2729**

Follow us on social media to receive updates:

**www.twobridges.org
www.facebook.com/twobridges
www.twitter.com/twobridgesnyc**