On November 20th, CNC convened 20+ Cambridge nonprofit Executive Directors

We DREAMED together, envisioning a thriving Cambridge nonprofit sector in 2045. Key features include:

- Nonprofits model a holistic approach to universal services - (ex. decreases in insecurity in housing, education, & food connected to nonprofit services)
- Cross-sector coalitions with shared goals/language to address issues together
- Community’s assets are understood, well-deployed with blurred boundaries between sectors - and real space for community engagement
- Nonprofits have access to the capital necessary to effectively meet needs, in all its forms - (spiritual, financial, social, intellectual, material, cultural, experiential)
- Nonprofits have collective power to influence policies and create change - and serves as bulwark against racism and all of its manifestations in the city

Fundamental tensions within the nonprofit sector:
- Increasing constraints on our budgets - and increasing demands on our services; demand is greater than capacity
- External pressures - raising money to serve more people/have more impact vs. new programs to please funders
- Need for staff and volunteers reflective of our constituents - yet who has access to sufficient resources to afford to work with and for us?
- Collaboration (in person) vs. competitiveness (behind the scenes)
- Concern about who is making decisions, who has power - need for open conversations about race and gender

To get to a position of real power as nonprofits - and we are not there now - we can:
- Increase transparency and trust among us
- Increase collaboration and partnership - not duplicating, but amplifying
- Do asset mapping
- Attend to racism and root causes at multiple levels that have made it difficult to collaborate within the sector

At our next session, we will begin to identify how we get from here to there!