



**Building Communities,
Changing lives**

www.commteam.org

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COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN 2017 – 2019 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Established in 1965, Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI) is a private non-profit 501-C3 Community Action Agency (CAA) serving the City of Lowell and the seven surrounding towns of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Tewksbury, Tyngsboro, and Westford. Community Teamwork also serves as a Community Development Corporation and as the Regional Housing Agency for the Merrimack Valley and the rest of Northeastern Massachusetts, including 61 cities and towns along the North Shore and Cape Ann. Our mission is ***to serve as a catalyst for social change. We strengthen communities and reduce poverty by delivering vital services and collaborating with key stakeholders to create housing, education and economic opportunities.***

Through a recent comprehensive community needs assessment, CTI sought input directly from the community at-large regarding their views of the most salient community needs. Community Teamwork is also a core partner in the City of Lowell's successful application to the Boston Federal Reserve Bank's Working Cities Initiative. Working Cities is cross-sectoral initiative focused on improving opportunities for low-income people in Massachusetts' Gateway Cities. The findings from our current planning process and the Working Cities Challenge have informed CTI's Community Investment Plan (CIP) and strengthened our ties to our community. In response to what we have heard and learned, we have narrowed the focus of this Community Investment Plan (CIP) to the three broad areas including Affordable Housing and Homelessness, Financial Self-Sufficiency and Workforce Development. The following strategic goals will serve as our primary efforts over the next three years:

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Goal 1: Increase access to quality affordable housing for low-income families and individuals in the Merrimack Valley

Goal 2: Increase the number of homeless families moving out of shelter and decrease the length of stay that families reside in shelter.

Goal 3: Enhance the efforts of the Merrimack Valley Consortium to expand homelessness prevention services for low-income individuals and families and youth experiencing housing instability.

FINANCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Goal 1: Assist low-income individuals to increase their financial knowledge to better position themselves to invest in their future and that of their children.

Goal 2: Assist low-income individuals to increase their income, improve their ability to save and acquire an asset.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1: Increase the number of unemployed individuals who become gainfully employed.

Goal 2: Increase the number of individuals who retain employment for 12-months.