



## **OpportUNITY for the Tri-Community**

## **Are You Ready to OpT-In?**

**December 2019**

We imagine a community where ALL residents have the opportunity to thrive and fully participate in community life—to have good jobs, a home for their family, a good education for their children, and hope for the future. Too many of our friends and neighbors have slipped into poverty and lack the opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their loved ones.

### **Who are we?**

OpportUNITY for the Tri-Community (**OpT**) is a collaboration of individuals seeking to increase opportunity and reduce poverty in the Tri-Community of Charlton, Southbridge, and Sturbridge. We are focused on not just helping the poor but in reducing poverty. This effort is about less poor, not better poor. The Tri-Community is our home and we want to see it thrive. We share a common love and care for our neighbors, especially those suffering from poverty and lack of opportunity.

### **What do we want to do?**

We want to begin a community conversation—to hear your voice and the voices of everyone in the Tri-Community. Our goal is to increase opportunity and reduce poverty in the Tri-Community—to be sure that everyone has a chance to thrive.

### **How can we do this?**

We need to get it on the radar--to start talking about poverty and opportunity. We need to listen to those experiencing poverty to better understand what holds them back. This is a bottom-up, multi-sector approach, not a top-down, siloed approach. This conversation needs to engage those from across the Tri-Community—business, government, the non-profit sector, and especially those experiencing poverty. Only by engaging the whole community can real, systematic change happen.

Conversation leads to engagement. Engagement leads to commitment. Commitment leads to action. We won't increase opportunity and reduce poverty by staying "siloed" and doing things piecemeal. Our community has problems, but it also has great, caring people. We need to build on our strengths and assets.

We will be working with the Tamarack Institute to guide us through this process. Tamarack has helped dozens of communities, large and small to reduce poverty and increase opportunity through a process of community engagement.

### **Are you ready to OpT-in?**

Come join the conversation.

Let's talk, let's get informed, let's make things happen.

**CHARLTON – SOUTHBRIDGE – STURBRIDGE**

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