

**A SUMMARY OF SOCIAL ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE 2016
ONE TRUCKEE RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN**



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1.0 Introduction

In December 2015, the University Center for Economic Development was contracted by CFA, Inc. to examine the various social issues pertaining to the development of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan. As part of this planning effort, University Center for Economic Development faculty examined various aspects of the social issues pertaining to the development of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan. Currently, the portion of the Truckee River corridor included into the first phase of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan contains a mix of uses. This corridor is used for recreation purposes by area residents and visitors, contains a mix of residential and commercial land uses, and is also populated by a number of encampments occupied by a significant number of the area's homeless population. The University Center for Economic Development was contracted by CFA, Inc. to (1) explore program and policy options designed to divert homeless individuals and families away from using this portion of the Truckee River corridor to supportive mental health, physical care, and housing services, and (2) report on the findings and recommendations of the Social Issues Committee formed as part of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan project.

1.1 Overview

From the onset of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan initiative, beginning with the One Truckee River Management Plan Stakeholder Forum held on September 30, 2015, it has been apparent that social issues, perceived as primarily associated with homelessness, are central to the concerns surrounding the Truckee River corridor area identified in the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan and throughout the Truckee Meadows.

The current organization of topics for the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan includes:

1. Ensure and protect water quality and ecosystem health in the Truckee River.
2. Create and sustain a safe, beautiful and accessible Truckee River connecting people and places.
3. Build an aware and engaged community that protects and cares for the Truckee River.
4. Ensure the measurable, sustainable and collaborative management of the Truckee River for today and into the future.

Directly or indirectly, each of these categories involve addressing program and policy issues directed toward the region's homeless population and their continued use of the Truckee River as temporary housing, yet only one committee, Social Issues, specifically addressed homelessness. The Social Issues Committee, formed as part of the One Truckee River Management Plan

Stakeholder Forum held on September 30, 2015, identified four primary planning and policy areas directed toward the region's homeless population. These primary planning and policy areas included (1) an understanding of the underlying reasons for homelessness, (2) identification of the various cohorts of homeless people, (3) consideration of the complexity of the problem and, finally, (4) the efficacy of various homeless programs in the region and across the country.

From the start, it has been generally recognized that the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan would not endeavor to directly manage or treat homelessness. The 2016 One Truckee River Management plan would, however, examine what was being done to provide appropriate supportive mental health, physical care, and housing services, what else might be done to improve the overall management and mitigation of homelessness along the Truckee River corridor and throughout the Truckee Meadows, the impacts of the homeless on the Truckee River corridor, and how adoption, implementation and administration of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan could support those entities that were directly and effectively working to provide comprehensive interventions.

University Center for Economic Development faculty began by investigating the efforts of other communities in addressing a population with comparable challenges regarding a homeless population with various mental and physical health concerns, substance abuse disorders, and various co-occurring disorders. This assessment of program and policy actions taken by other communities began with a review of best practices published by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/local_progress). Using this site as a general guide, University Center for Economic Development faculty examined the efforts of local governments, in partnership with various other local, state, and federal government agencies and various for-profit and non-profit entities and non-governmental agencies in Denver, Colorado, Hennepin County (Minneapolis), Minnesota, and Portland, Oregon. Two general insights were gained from this initial analysis, including:

1. These three ten-year plans to end homelessness, which have been in effect for ten years, have not resulted in the end of homelessness in these communities. Depending upon the underlying conditions and circumstances, homelessness can sometimes be quickly reversed, often mitigated, undoubtedly better managed, but probably not eliminated; and
2. The plans have been effective in reducing both homelessness and unsheltered populations. All three plans include a continuum of housing (typically consisting of a mixture of emergency shelters, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, etc.) to address different cohorts and aspects of homelessness, in combination with supportive services.

While the "housing first" approach is included in all of the plans, each and every plan recognizes the need to combine housing with supportive services. Each plan includes an element for data collection and analysis. Examples from the three plans in Denver, Colorado, Hennepin County (Minneapolis), Minnesota, and Portland, Oregon regarding data collection, analysis, and evaluation include:

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1. Denver, Colorado: “Evaluation – Accountability”.
 2. Hennepin County (Minneapolis), Minnesota: “Develop a system to track and evaluate progress on the Ten-Year Plan”.
 3. Portland, Oregon: “...implement new data collection technology throughout the homeless system”.

Current efforts in Washoe County, designed to provide the region’s homeless population with supportive mental health care, physical care, and supportive housing services, best aligns with the best practices of each of these three jurisdictions. One notable exception, unique to Washoe County’s current efforts, is the Crossroads program.

Washoe County’s Crossroads program is unique in three separate ways from the plans from Denver, Hennepin County, and Portland. First, Washoe County’s Crossroads program has an emphasis on personal safety and security for the clients. The Washoe County Sheriff’s Office has permanently assigned two Washoe County Sheriff’s Office Deputies to both patrol the Crossroads site and proactively and positively engage with the program’s residents. Second, the Washoe County Crossroads program emphasizes a personal accountability requirement of the Crossroads program residents in addition to holding partner service provider agencies accountable for their continued participation. Third, Washoe County’s Crossroads program has no specific time limit on the amount of time a Crossroads program client may spend at Crossroads. Typically, most “long-term” transitional programs limit an individual client’s stay to between six and 12 months. Crossroads has determined that the use of a specific time limit on the amount of time a client may stay at Crossroads does not work for people who have been homeless or without a permanent fixed address for extended periods of time. As a result of these three unique differences from other continuum of care or ten-year plans to end homelessness, Washoe County’s Crossroads program is being cited as a best practices model.

1.2 Background

If the use of law enforcement, river rangers and camping prohibitions along the Truckee River were the solution, there would not still be a problem with homelessness along the Truckee River corridor. River sweeps and clean-up programs designed to remove homeless encampments along the river are only temporary treatments. Unless individuals who are required to change their places of habitation are provided with alternative places to go with wrap-around supportive services to address the underlying reasons as to why they are homeless, using law enforcement, river arrangements and camping prohibitions merely result in temporary dislocations of the homeless population. Temporary dislocations simply shift the problems associated with homeless from the Truckee River corridor to other parts of the community or other parts of the Truckee River corridor. This temporary dislocation phenomenon is not unlike blowing the leaves from one persons’ yard onto the street or into a neighbors’ yard.

Chronically homeless individuals typically exhibit a combination of mental illness, addiction to gambling, drugs, alcohol, or most commonly, some combination of the above conditions. This

combination of conditions, known as a co-occurring disorder, often results in the loss of basic life skills needed to lead what might be described as a more normal lifestyle. Homeless individuals who are not classified as chronically homeless typically have milder degrees of some of these same issues and/or are financially illiterate. The working poor often live paycheck to paycheck, and it takes only one incident such as losing their job, having their car break down, or a sudden and significant health issue to trigger a homeless episode. Many individuals who currently use the region's weekly motels transition in and out of homelessness based upon their current week-to-week or day-to-day financial condition.

2.0 Local Progress in Managing Related Social Issues

Significant progress has been made in developing a variety of effective programs and policies for addressing homelessness in the Reno-Sparks-Washoe County region. Unfortunately, resource constraints have prevented the various local government and non-profit private sector and non-governmental service providers from expanding some of the programs that have shown to be successful in providing supportive mental health, physical care, and housing services as an intervention strategy.

2.1 Past Research and Program and Policy Recommendations

In a collaborative paper published in 2008 by the University of Nevada, Reno's Center for Regional Studies and the University of Nevada, Reno's Bureau of Business & Economic Research, based upon research completed in a 2007 regional homeless study for Washoe County, four primary program and policy recommendations were made, including:

- 1. Recommendation No. 1: Segmentation of the Homeless Population, with Separate Program Development, Service Delivery and with Results Reported by Segment**

This recommendation naturally follows the understanding that homelessness is a symptom of underlying problems and conditions, with substantially different desired outcomes and vastly different sets of resources and mitigating measures needed to address the various and different underlying problems. The 2007 University of Nevada, Reno interdisciplinary research team concluded that segregating the populations, based upon the identification of various underlying conditions, could vastly improve the understanding of homelessness and the homeless population within the region and the effectiveness of the program and policy solutions. This recommendation further recognized that this approach to segmentation of the population was desired by those homeless individuals and families who were not chronically homeless.

- 2. Recommendation No. 2: Complete and Add System Components Needed for Immediate Interventions**

This recommendation included several key program and policy actions including the completion of the Community Assistance Center, the provision of additional transitional supportive housing, and increased focused attention on and new program development targeting those homeless individuals who are high frequency users of services from various mental healthcare, physical healthcare, and housing service providers as well as high users of the area's first responder systems, judicial systems, and detention facility.

This recommendation further stated that certain new system components and services could have an immediate or short-term positive effect of relieving pressure on other public services.

3. Recommendation No. 3: Make Needed “System-Level” Improvements

This recommendation included several key program and policy actions including a recommendation to implement a data system for tracking individuals across all service providers or better integrating and connecting existing data systems, a requirement that service providers measure their performance in-terms of measurable outcomes, for example a reduction in the number of emergency shelter stays by an individual, as opposed to using inputs to measure performance, for example providing a certain number of available beds for homeless individual, and that system managers measure and continuously improve the effectiveness and strength of the linkages between various services providers operating through the region.

This recommendation is most targeted to the underlying purpose of developing cost-effective approaches to permanent supportive housing as part of the 2007 University of Nevada, Reno Center for Regional Studies and Bureau of Business & Economic Research study. It is applicable to the cost-effectiveness of all other components of the network of homeless service providers. To be able to measure cost-effectiveness, this recommendation must be implemented. This recommendation is critical to the ability of system managers to intelligently manage the programs and to effectively and efficiently allocate resources. Finally, in order to develop the political support needed to obtain additional resources, the public and their elected representatives need to know that resources are being efficiently utilized and are making a difference, which requires implementation of the measures included in this recommendation.

4. Recommendation No. 4: Improve the Weekly Motel Environment for Safety and Security

This recommendation included a series of program and policy actions including an expansion of the City of Reno’s Motel Interdiction Team, expansion of the City of Reno Police Department’s guest registration information process, required improvement in public lighting on the property of the weekly motels, the required installation and use of video security systems at the weekly motels including retention of the captured video for a certain period of time, and required City of Reno Police Department issued police cards for motel managers subject to background checks.

This recommendation was developed due to the absence of readily available standard affordable and/or supportive housing. While the area’s weekly motels are not transitional supportive housing, they continue to serve as de facto transitional housing to individuals and families who would otherwise be homeless at the time of this publication. Although this was not initially a recommendation, but given the unexpected findings of this study, the sheer number of weekly motel units, the indication of the low level of safety and security evidenced by the crime statistics compelled this recommendation. This

recommendation was made in order to help alleviate a major part of the problem facing those individuals who move in and out of homelessness and for whom the weekly motels may be the only option preventing them from living on the street or in homeless shelters. The safety and security of individuals living in weekly motels is a problem that needs to be addressed, and can be addressed with a relatively limited public resources.¹

2.2 Current Progress and Implementation of Past Research and Program and Policy Recommendations

During early One Truckee River project discussions, professional staff currently working in the Truckee Meadows for various public sector and non-profit private sector and non-governmental homeless-related service providers, upon review of the 2007 regional homeless study completed for Washoe County by the University of Nevada, Reno's Center for Regional Studies and the University of Nevada, Reno's Bureau of Business & Economic Research indicated that some of the most important and impactful recommendations had been or were being implemented and that some of the recommendations that had not yet been implemented should still be implemented. Current program on each of the recommendations listed in the above section include:

- 1. Recommendation No. 1: Segmentation of the Homeless Population, with Separate Program Development, Service Delivery and with Results Reported by Segment**

While there is no segregation occurring at the emergency centers, specifically at the Community Assistance Center and the Overflow Shelter, the local entities and service providers have begun to recognize specific cohorts that are provided significantly different services and housing based upon needs, conditions and life-skills capacities of homeless individuals and families over the last few years. Examples of cohorts with specific intervention programs include the chronically homeless, those that have become recently homeless, and families living in weekly motels.

- 2. Recommendation No. 2: Complete and Add System Components Needed for Immediate Interventions**

The Community Assistance Center has been completed. During its operation, management and staff have been engaged in a process of continuous improvement, which has included emulating programs and policies that have proven to be efficient and effective in other cities along with trial-and-error during program and policy implementation at the Community Assistance Center. One important lesson learned included the importance of having an overflow shelter year-round, and not for just those

¹ Bartholet, Richard, G. Atkinson, C. Gill, T. Harris, A. Hubbert, M. Nichols, F. Steinmann, "Examination of the Costs of Homelessness and Issues Related to Determining the Cost-Effectiveness of Supporting Services and Housing in Washoe County, NV: Study Overview & Synthesis," 2007, Center for Regional Studies and Bureau of Business & Economic Research, University of Nevada, Reno, p. 16-18, <http://unrbusinessresearch.org/representative-projects/>

periods of severe inclement weather, especially for chronically homeless men who would have used an alternative location to shelter such as an encampment along the river, in parks, and on other public and private properties. Unfortunately the Overflow Shelter used for the past few years was vandalized and can no longer be used. The City of Reno is searching for a new overflow shelter facility but has not yet found a suitable substitute.

Transitional supportive housing is one of the region's most notable successes. During the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009, Washoe County decided to redirect funds, which were being utilized to pay monthly stipends to registered indigents, into a program that provided these individuals with a roof and a bed in conjunction with wrap-around services. Wrap-around services is a broad term, which in the case of Crossroads, includes personal security that was perceived to not exist at other homeless facilities, mental-health and substance abuse/addiction counseling, training and support to help those capable to find employment, other life-skills training, all accompanied by monitoring for drug and alcohol usage. The objective is to start the clients along a pathway into a different lifestyle than they were experiencing during the most recent portion of their lives, sometimes measured in decades of homelessness. Catholic Charities, which owns and operates the Crossroads facilities, is a key partner. The Washoe County Sheriff's Office, the Municipal and County Specialty Courts, and a number of other entities participated in helping develop and evolve Crossroads into a cutting edge program that is being cited nationally as one of the best models for dealing with chronic homelessness.

The Crossroads program specifically sought to provide services to the "super utilizers" of services, which were those chronically homeless individuals with the most interaction with the region's criminal justice system and health-care system. This focus on super utilizers was made for two reasons. First, these individuals represented the toughest test of the efficacy of the program, and, second, government could achieve the greatest societal and monetary savings if interventions with these individuals could be successful.

Other supportive housing programs, which were not specifically included in the 2007 University of Nevada, Reno study recommendations, have since been developed, added, and implemented and are currently being administered by various public sector and non-profit private sector and non-governmental agencies and entities

3. Recommendation No. 3: Make Needed "System-Level" Improvements

The Homeless Management Information System has been fully implemented. All funded service providers are required to use the system. The City of Reno implemented the Homeless Management Information System in northern Nevada and, in 2015, contracted with Bitfocus, a firm headquartered in Las Vegas, Nevada, to administer the program. Clients are issued plastic cards, known as Clarity Cards, which contain the clients' personal identifier and information. All that is needed for data entry and for any client to access services is for the client to swipe their card when accessing those services. This process and procedure has dramatically reduced both the time and cost of data entry.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City of Reno, Washoe County, the State of Nevada, and others now have real-time access to critical data regarding system and program implementation and administration, allowing for better analysis of aggregate demand loads for various services, which individuals are accessing which services, rates of recidivism, and other outcomes associated with program design and service delivery. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and pertinent state and federal law, require that individual personal information be kept confidential. This, however, does not restrict those entitled to the data from developing more and better analyses of how the service delivery and provision system is working, where it is not working, and where and how it might be improved. It may be worthwhile for there to be a review of the analyses being done in order to determine if more sophisticated analyses could be helpful in resource allocation and/or improvements in the network of service providers.

4. Recommendation No. 4: Improve the Weekly Motel Environment for Safety and Security

The City of Reno Police Department's Motel Interdiction Team no longer exists due in large part to the budget considerations and realities of the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009. However, the issues related to weekly motels in the 2007 regional homeless study prepared for Washoe County has received increased attention from policy makers and government officials over the last couple of years.

Some of the individuals perceived as homeless by the general public may not be unsheltered but are, instead, using the weekly motels located throughout the region as a form of temporary, transitional or even permanent housing. Many of the perceptions about the prevalence of homelessness in the Truckee Meadows, and the impacts of homelessness, may be attributable to individuals who are residing in the weekly motels and also engage in panhandling and other behaviors typically attributed to homeless individuals. Additionally, some of the weekly rental properties, due to their either negligent or predatory management practices, make life more difficult for the vulnerable populations who make up their customer base.

The City of Reno has been examining the impact of some of the weekly motels on the City, on other property owners and businesses, and upon the motels' own customers. The City has been in an extended process of determining how code enforcement, law enforcement, and social service providers can help mitigate some of these circumstances. Additionally, the City of Reno is contracting with Catholic Charities on a program, currently known as Motels to Home, specifically designed to move families out of weekly motels into monthly rental housing.

It is important to note that the weekly motels, while generally considered substandard housing, serve as "shelter of last resort", used prior to the emergency shelter for many individuals, including the working poor. There is a great concern that the combination of requiring health and safety upgrades, as well as gentrification, may result in the elimination of some of these weekly motel units, or pricing them beyond the means of the

people who currently occupy those units. These changes could potentially exacerbate and increase the size and complexity of the region's existing homeless population. It is reported that there are now waiting lists for some of the weekly motels and that it is becoming harder for some of the "service providers" to find housing for the lowest of their low-income clients.

In short, much progress has been made since the 2007 regional homeless study for Washoe County was completed but much more needs to be done. Through emulating successful programs in other communities and through trial and error, the various public sector and non-profit private sector and non-governmental service providers in the Truckee Meadows are achieving increasingly better results with their homeless intervention efforts but additional resources are needed.

3.0 Social Issues Recommendations for the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan

The Social Issues Committee of the One Truckee River Management Plan stakeholder group met and created a list of additional steps that should be taken, many in the short-term of one year or sooner. It is important to note that for each and every objective listed below, the appropriate role identified, relative to the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan, is *support*, rather than any direct intervention, management, funding or equivalent levels of involvement. The envisioned involvement of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan will be to continue to monitor the successes and failures in managing homelessness and mitigating the impacts of homelessness along the impacted Truckee River corridor. Metrics that could be useful in monitoring success might include the point-in-time homeless census that occurs every January, numbers of arrests for offenses primarily associated with homelessness, counts of encampments along the Truckee River corridor, self-reported nights spent living along the Truckee River, and other similar types of measures that may be identified from time to time. The identified objectives are outlined in this section.

3.1 Expand the Continuum of Housing Options

Expansion of the continuum of housing options, which currently includes emergency shelters such as the Community Assistance Center and the Overflow Shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing, should be pursued. Efforts for expanding the continuum of supportive housing are currently ongoing. The three primary categories traditionally have been emergency shelter, including the Community Assistance Center and Overflow Shelter, transitional supportive housing, including Crossroads, and permanent supportive housing, including U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funded housing vouchers. Additionally, other programs that could be considered as elements of the continuum of supportive housing are Rapid Re-Housing and Motels to Homes. Each of these options is associated with one of the social issues objectives described below.

3.1.a Support Commitment to the Continuation of the Current Practice of Keeping the Overflow Shelter Open Year-Round

The City of Reno has learned that when the overflow shelter was not open, during the time of year when freezing temperatures were no longer an issue, those individuals that had been using the overflow shelter migrated to locations that were not suitable for habitation, including camping along the river. The community is better served by having the overflow shelter available year round. The local governments are also better able to enforce laws related to no-camping restrictions, no sleeping in public parks, and other established policies and procedures only when they can provide an alternative location. The current vandalism which made the recent Overflow Shelter uninhabitable has created a current crisis for the City of Reno. A

portion of a storage area at the Community Assistance Center is being used temporarily to meet overflow requirements but a new permanent overflow shelter facility is needed as soon as possible. Washoe County and the City of Reno and the City of Sparks are working collaboratively and individually to meet the need for a permanent overflow facility with some supportive services.

3.1.b Create Another Facility, like Crossroads, with Law Enforcement and Social Services Staff

Crossroads is a transitional housing facility and program. The efficacy of Crossroads is so compelling that most of the Social Issues Committee of the One Truckee River Management Plan stakeholder group believed that the community would benefit significantly if a way could be found to support twice as many beds with the appurtenant supportive services, accountability and security measures. A number of entities are actively working on the expansion of Crossroads-like transitional housing, with Washoe County taking the lead through the Washoe County Social Services Department and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. Currently, there is no "new money" allocated in the Washoe County budget for expansion of Crossroads. Advocacy for a budget increase for Crossroads from the One Truckee River Management Plan stakeholder group could be very helpful in securing a budget increase approved by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners. Past funding for Crossroads by Washoe County has resulted in significant savings in other services.

3.1.c Support the City of Reno's On-Going effort to Create More Scattered Sites for Permanent Supportive Housing Projects and Expansion to Other Jurisdictions

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is focused entirely on permanent supportive housing rather than transitional housing. Through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City of Reno provides rental assistance programs and the Reno Housing Authority administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, the Project Based Voucher program, and the Moderate Rehabilitation program.

These voucher programs offer various housing subsidies that are tied either to the tenant or directly to the housing unit. Operation Downtown, the City of Reno Mayor's blue ribbon task force, has begun discussions to expand case management services and to set aside units in new housing developments to be used for permanent supportive housing for those at the low income and chronically low income poverty levels. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently amended the Reno Housing Authority's Annual Plan, allowing the Reno Housing Authority to allocate up to 50 Project Based Vouchers for homeless individuals and families, which will be coupled with case management services. Significant challenges for the voucher programs in finding housing for homeless individuals, for example the Housing Choice Program, include, first, that there is a long waiting list, and, second, while there is a homeless preference, anyone with a criminal history or a registered sex offender is not eligible.

3.1.d Rapid Re-Housing

One of the lessons learned from other communities is that when people, especially families, first become homeless, a relatively small amount of support is needed to put them back into a

permanent residence. The City of Reno started a homeless prevention and rapid rehousing program in 2009, using funds provided by the federal government via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Once these federal funds had been depleted, the City of Reno began using Emergency Solutions Grant funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, leveraged with state Trust Fund money from the State of Nevada, to continue the program.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determined, and the City of Reno has since confirmed, that people first entering homelessness, when provided some financial support and case management for about four to six months, will typically self-resolve. When people first apply for assistance, an assessment is done in order to determine if the individual is a good fit for the rapid rehousing program. Some people are assessed as needing permanent supportive housing due to underlying mental health and/or addiction issues. Those who are assessed as needing short-term case management and financial assistance are able to enter into the Rapid Re-Housing program. Since the City of Reno initiated this program in 2009, approximately 70 individuals have entered the rapid re-housing program. Of these, only two have regressed back into homelessness.

3.1.e Motels to Home

The Motels to Home program is a relatively new program created by the City of Reno. The City Council approved a contract with Catholic Charities with an expenditure of \$100,000 in June 2015. In October 2015, Catholic Charities began an outreach program for families living in weekly motels in order to help them transition to monthly rental affordable housing and case management. Since October 2015, Catholic Charities have helped over a dozen families make this transition. One of the lessons learned since implementation of the Motels to Home program is that the process should begin with case management while the families are still residing in the weekly motels rather than waiting until they have moved into the more permanent monthly rental affordable housing. While still in the early stages, this appears to be an effective program and an efficient use of resources for addressing homelessness. Because children residing in weekly motels are classified as homeless by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the One Truckee River Management Plan implementation group should monitor the Motels to Home program and look for opportunities to support successes achieved by the program.

3.2 Continue to Coordinate with Washoe County Regional Animal Services to Care for Pets of the Homeless and Connect with Case Workers

In March 2016, Washoe County Regional Animal Services teamed with the Nevada Humane Society to provide free dog and cat vaccinations and microchips for pets of homeless residents of Washoe County. Pet licensing and registration was also provided for a fee in order to help reunite animals if lost and to provide proof of ownership. The Nevada Humane Society was available to hand out pet food and pet supplies. The only requirement to receive these services was proof of a Clarity Card. This was the first animal services outreach event for the region's homeless population and the feedback was well received. Records indicate that 86 pets received services in March 2016, including rabies shots, vaccinations and microchipping. Washoe

County Regional Animal Services plans to continue these efforts by providing similar clinics to the homeless population at least twice a year. In addition, Washoe County Regional Animal Services is teaming with other animal services providers and targeting coordinated outreach events to the homeless on a monthly basis

3.3 Create a Mental Health Facility that Provides Same-Day Access to Mental Health and Additional Services

The Community Assistance Center currently has a triage center that provides local law enforcement with an alternative to jail for people who seem to be suffering from a mental health episode, a substance abuse episode, or most commonly, both. The triage center at the Community Assistance Center has evolved into an inpatient stabilization facility but does not provide comprehensive same-day out-patient mental health and related services.

The purpose of a same-day access center is to provide out-patient services for people who need to connect with mental health services for any number of reasons including needing to refill a prescription or needing to get access to a mental health and/or substance abuse service provider. This facility would serve people who might be unable and/or unlikely to otherwise make a connection with a service provider. It is important to remember that people who are homeless or who have been homeless, who do not have an automobile, who if working may not have schedule flexibility during the day, and who are suffering from depression, bipolar, schizophrenia, anxiety or some other similar symptom of mental illness, will have an extremely difficult time making it to doctor appointments which are typically scheduled weeks in advance. A mental health facility that provides clients with same day access to mental health providers would eliminate many of the barriers faced by the homeless and working poor populations and would allow them to access immediate critical care services.

The target population can no longer utilize the Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services facility for same-day access to prescribed medications and mental health services. Under current Medicaid policy and program guidelines, the target population must go to one of two managed-care organizations currently located within the region. Generally, this population does not understand how insurance or managed care works. Understanding managed care and following the prescribed guidelines is especially difficult for mentally-ill homeless individuals to navigate and follow.

3.4 Implement Multi-Jurisdictional Case Management to Assist Individuals with Access to Housing and Other Resources

Washoe County is actively working on implementing a multi-jurisdictional case management system designed to assist individuals in need of housing assistance and other resources. Washoe County is redirecting existing Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals grant dollars in order to create and implement a multi-jurisdictional case management system and anticipates getting approval from the Federal Program Officer. These case managers should

meet regularly with Washoe County staff responsible for adult services in order to ensure that the available resources are coordinated and to share information across multiple service providers. The goal will be to assist clients in navigating the system of the many service providers that provide critical mental health, physical care, and housing services. The City of Reno issued a Request for Proposal for Community Based Case Management Services and is awaiting proposals.

3.5 Create a Collaborative Group to Focus Case Management and Law Enforcement on the Truckee River

Washoe County is working to find funding to expand the Mobile Outreach Safety Team to include additional officers and deputies and case managers. Washoe County, together with the Cities of Reno and Sparks, recently submitted a grant proposal to the Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund expansion of the Mobile Outreach Safety Team program, plus development of a more robust effort for data collection and analysis. Officers, deputies, and case managers assigned to the Mobile Outreach Safety Team would be involved in regularly scheduled sweeps of the river corridor, creating opportunities to engage with homeless individuals in need, and to provide direction on other opportunities and services as they are instructed that camping along the river corridor is not permitted.

3.6 Identify Specific Strategies to Address Youth Homelessness

Homeless youths are not currently believed to be part of the Truckee River corridor encampment problem. Additionally, youth homelessness is significantly different from adult homelessness in a number of critical ways. The 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan will work with other entities, for example The Community Foundation of Western Nevada, to identify the best ways to improve services to homeless youth and work to support such efforts to better address youth homelessness.

3.7 Reno Works Program

Reno Works, created in August 2015, is a relatively new joint employment program by Volunteers of America and the City of Reno that has already provided 21 residents of the homeless shelters with nine-week sessions to address temporary employment including safety and work training, skills training, long-term employment support, wrap-around case management, and mentoring. Upon completion of the program, Reno Works Program crew members receive certification of program completion and a letter of recommendation. The goal is for each crew member to secure employment and permanent housing. More information about the Reno Works program can be found on the City of Reno's website at [http://www.reno.gov/home/showdocument?id=52142\[reno.gov\]](http://www.reno.gov/home/showdocument?id=52142[reno.gov])

Initial results of the Reno Works Program look promising and appear to have demonstrated an ability to provide employment and training to residents of the homeless shelter and to also help get other homeless individuals connected with services and programs. A side benefit is that the participants of the Reno Works Program seem to be able to identify with the homeless population because they have experienced a past recent episode of temporary or transitional homelessness or, in some cases, periods of long-term homelessness. The homeless population appears to be more receptive to talking to participants of the Reno Works Program rather than law enforcement officials. A critical missing piece from the Reno Works Program is case management personnel who can go out in the field and work alongside the Reno Works employees in order to better assess and address the homeless individuals' needs and to identify the appropriate programs and services that may be best suited for them. The One Truckee River Management Plan stakeholder group should continue to monitor the Reno Works Program and identify opportunities to support successes achieved by the program.

4.0 Summary

The purpose of this University Center for Economic Development Technical Report is to provide the organization or organizations eventually responsible for implementation and administration of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan with a series of options for addressing the various social issues enumerated in the plan. This University Center for Economic Development Technical Report further identifies the potential roles that the One Truckee River Management Plan stakeholder group, and the entities, organizations, and/or jurisdictions eventually responsible for adoption, implementation, and administration of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan, can play in addressing the various social issues enumerated in the plan and in this technical report.

4.1 Conclusions and Observations

The One Truckee River Management Plan, in order to be successful, will need to rely upon local government and non-governmental organization service providers in order to continue to provide a continuum of supportive housing options so that the homeless population has better alternatives than camping along the river. Periodic sweeps of the river corridor should be perceived as opportunities for case managers and law enforcement, working together, to interact and intercede with the homeless individuals. Interaction with homeless people at the downtown library, in emergency rooms, and at the emergency shelters can reduce the number of people who decide to camp along the river corridor.

For this plan to be effective, all three local governmental entities, including Washoe County, the City of Reno, and the City of Sparks, need to take ownership of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan. The Truckee River is a linear park running through the Truckee Meadows, connecting the many parks already dedicated along the Truckee River corridor. For local residents and visitors to fully enjoy the scenic and recreational opportunities associated with the Truckee River, there must be commitment to this effort.

As this applies to homelessness, proactive efforts by the local communities and the non-governmental organizations benefit the Truckee River corridor and spill over to improving other parts of each jurisdiction, individual communities, and the region as a whole.

An effective role for the One Truckee River Management Plan stakeholder group in regard to social issues along the Truckee River corridor, both as a stand-alone group and through working with other community partners, should include an educational role targeted towards the business and economic development communities as well as towards local citizens, on the following topics:

1. The complexities of homelessness;

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2. The direct and indirect costs associated with not proactively addressing homelessness;
 3. The efficacy of the range of supportive housing programs, ensuring understanding of the need for integration of the wrap-around services as key to these programs; and
 4. The cost-effectiveness of allocating more resources to the mitigation and management of homelessness.

Successful engagement with the business and economic development communities, through an educational role, by the One Truckee River Management Plan stakeholder group on each of these issues will contribute to the successful implementation and administration of the 2016 One Truckee River Management Plan.