



**Better Together**  
NEVADA COUNTY

# **Nevada County's Plan to Address Homelessness**

*January 16, 2020*

NEVADA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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# INTRODUCTION



## BACKGROUND

In 2017 the Nevada County Board of Supervisors made addressing homelessness a top priority, directing staff to develop initiatives and incorporate homelessness in fiscal planning and management of County operations. Over the past two years, County staff, nonprofits and community stakeholders have made significant strides in addressing this pervasive issue. These efforts are spearheaded by the County and coordinated between jurisdictions and providers in new and innovative ways. Homelessness touches many systems and presents social, political, economic and environmental challenges that can only be addressed through a collaborative approach. Existing programs address homelessness in a piecemeal fashion with resources that are needed for other critical services. To meet the new service expectations around homelessness, we must be aggressive in seeking new funding.

Since February of 2017, County staff have brought more than 32 resolutions directly related to homelessness before the board. These resolutions

have expanded collaboration with regional partners, increased existing services to the most vulnerable and created new innovative services that have worked to increase the number of people engaged in services and housing programs.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Although much remains to be done, much has already been accomplished. The following is a partial list:

- Added 11 low barrier beds and four recuperative care beds at Hospitality House.
- Implemented the Coordinated Entry System.
- Created the Bridges to Housing program.
- Partnered with FREED on the Housing Disability Advocacy program.
- Awarded \$3.2 Million to remodel the Odyssey House residential treatment facility.
- Awarded No Place Like Home funding to develop 41 units of affordable housing.
- Created the HOME Team, which meets homeless individuals where they are and gets them into services and housing.

The efforts to date of County staff in collaboration with nonprofit partners and local jurisdictions has resulted in receipt or award of more than \$6,250,000 in funding to support homeless initiatives in the County.

## SCOPE OF HOMELESS CRISIS IN NEVADA COUNTY

According to the most recent Point in Time Count, Nevada County has 410 people experiencing homelessness. This represents a 9% increase from the 2017 PIT count. One third meet the HUD definition of Chronically Homeless.

POINT IN TIME COUNT	2019 Results	%
<b>Total Number Sheltered</b>	161	39%
<b>Total Number Unsheltered</b>	249	61%
<b>Total Number of Homeless Persons Counted 2019</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100%</b>
Total Number of Adults	367	90%
Total Number of Children	43	10%
Total Number of Families*	28	
Total Number of Persons in Families*	74	18%
Total Number of Unsheltered Families	10	36%
Total Number of Unsheltered Children	13	3%
Total Number of Adult Only Households	317	
Total Number of Persons in Adult Only Households	332	
Total Number of Unsheltered Persons in Adult Only Households	221	
Total Number of Persons in Households with only Children	4	
Total Number of Chronically Homeless Individuals	118	34%
Total Number of Chronically Homeless Families	4	14%
Total Number of Veterans	35	10%
Total Number of Male Veterans	34	10%
Total Number of Parenting Youth	3	1%
Total Number of Unaccompanied Youth	30	9%
Total Number of Individuals with a Substance Abuse Problem	57	
Total Number of Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness that contributes to homelessness (HUD Definition)	75	21%
<b>Length of Stay (info only from interviewed participants):</b>		
5 or more years	207	59%
1 to 5 years	76	22%
Less than 1 year	21	6%
90 days or more	27	8%
1 month or more	9	3%
1 week or more	5	1%
Refused	6	2%
Total	<b>351</b>	100%
<b>Additional Information Calculated from the Raw Data</b>		
Lived in Foster Care	<b>59</b>	17%
Involved in Criminal Justice System	<b>151</b>	73%

## ABOUT THIS PLAN

The specific objectives and initiatives presented here are the result of a broad-based review of multiple source documents, and over two years of collaborative work to address homelessness in Nevada County. This will be a living document as we identify new opportunities, collaborate with additional partners, measure success and adjust strategy.

### Plan Structure

#### Objectives

This plan is divided into five overarching objectives. The Objectives will remain consistent over the duration of this plan, while specific initiatives and goals to implement the strategies will change as successes and failures are measured, new needs emerge, or new funding sources necessitate the creation of additional initiatives. The five Objectives are as follows:

1. Prevent Homelessness
2. Provide Emergency Shelter
3. Expand Supportive Services
4. Increase Affordable, Subsidized and Supported Housing
5. Enhance Communication, Coordination and Collaboration

#### Accomplishments to Date

Each objective highlights accomplishments to date, including initiatives that are complete or ongoing, new funding obtained, and programs that are starting to show results.

#### Initiatives

Within each Objective, specific Initiatives have been identified. These initiatives are the activities that County and partners are taking to make progress towards the objectives. Most of the initiatives include specific milestones or goals necessary to achieve them.

#### Performance Measures

The plan includes seven Key Performance Indicators derived from the Built for Zero program. Additionally,

within each objective section there are Performance Measures to indicate the success of the specific initiatives.

Performance Measures will be tracked in the County's ClearPoint software to effectively monitor and communicate progress.

#### Partners

While the County and its Health and Human Services Agency have embraced a lead role in addressing homelessness, we cannot do it alone. Each Objective identifies key stakeholders or partners whose collaboration and cooperation are critical to success. These lists are not exhaustive.

#### Phases

The work within these objectives will be implemented over three phases:

**PHASE 1: Began January of 2018 and ends June 30 of 2020**

**PHASE 2: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021**

**PHASE 3: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022**

#### Source Documents

Since the Board prioritized homelessness, there have been several documents and presentations that have articulated recommended or potential strategies to address homelessness. One significant source is the Thurmond Strategic Plan, which was completed as a requirement to apply for No Place Like Home funding. The document identified possible strategies, many of which are incorporated into this plan. In addition, this plan takes strategies from several other sources, including, but not limited to the following:

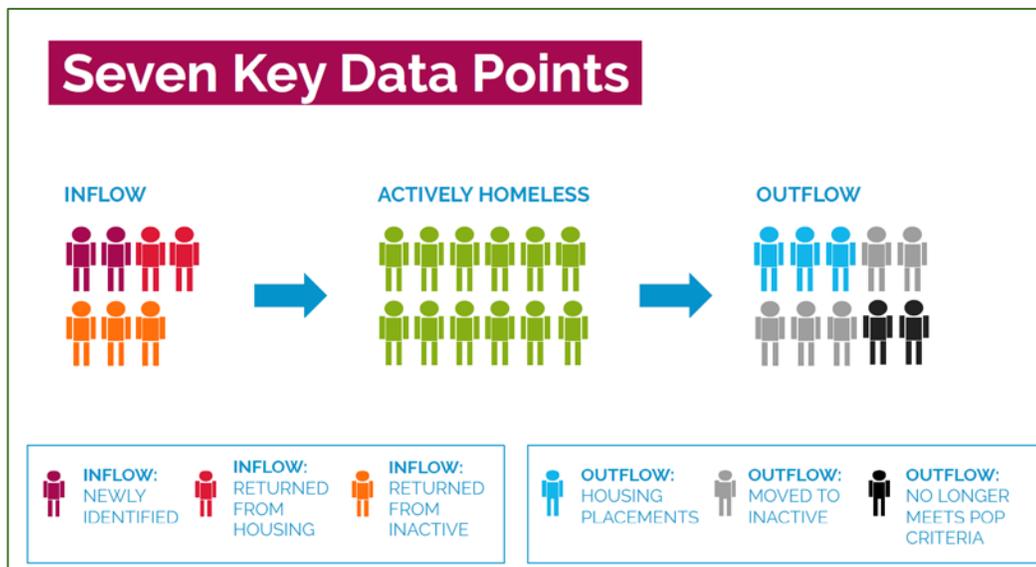
- Previous presentations to the Board
- 2019 Grand Jury Report
- Budget Objectives
- Grant and Funding Objectives

## Overview of Objectives and Phase 1 Initiatives to Address Homelessness:

<b>A. Prevent Homelessness</b>	
<b>A1</b> – Assess gaps in youth, family and Transitional Age Youth services and identify funding opportunities.	<b>A4</b> – Increase availability of intensive mental health services for foster youth or youth at risk of entering the foster care system.
<b>A2</b> – Increase availability and access to funding and supportive services to prevent individuals from slipping into homelessness.	<b>A5</b> – Improve early identification and assessment of mental illness and substance use disorder in the jail.
<b>A3</b> – Utilize the CalWORKS Family Stabilization Program (FSP) and the Permanent Housing Assistance (PHA) program to prevent families from becoming homeless.	
<b>B. Provide Emergency Shelter</b>	
<b>B1</b> – Expand shelter options.	<b>B3</b> – Increase effectiveness of Bridges to Housing.
<b>B2</b> – Strengthen and support seasonal extreme weather shelters.	<b>B4</b> – Implement a hotel/motel voucher system.
<b>C. Expand Supportive Services</b>	
<b>C1</b> – Create a homeless resource center.	<b>C4</b> – Expand embedded case management.
<b>C2</b> – Utilize the HOME Team to engage people experiencing homelessness in services.	<b>C5</b> – Expand outreach and supportive services in the Tahoe/Truckee region.
<b>C3</b> – Strengthen the coordinated multi-disciplinary case conference team (Housing Resource Team).	<b>C6</b> - Help people experiencing homelessness with substance use disorder access residential treatment and low barrier housing.
<b>D. Increase Affordable, Subsidized and Supported Housing</b>	
<b>D1</b> – Facilitate and promote partnerships for the development of affordable housing.	<b>D4</b> – Secure additional flexible housing funds for rental assistance and to fund a landlord recruitment and retention program.
<b>D2</b> – Expand master leasing and improve supportive housing programs, including in eastern county.	<b>D5</b> - Expand Recovery Residence housing.
<b>D3</b> – Maximize utilization of federal housing subsidies.	
<b>E. Enhance Communication, Coordination and Collaboration</b>	
<b>E1</b> – Strengthen the Coordinated Entry System.	<b>E3</b> – Provide County assistance to the Nevada County Regional Continuum of Care.
<b>E2</b> – Enhance data sharing and tracking.	<b>E4</b> – Improve community engagement, relations, and education on homelessness and related issues.

## Key Performance Measures

All these initiatives, working together, aim to significantly reduce homelessness over the next three years. To measure these reductions the County and the local Continuum of Care have joined Built for Zero, a nationwide campaign of over 80 communities who are pioneering changes in how communities use data and collaboration to tackle homelessness. Utilizing local data collected through Coordinated Entry and tracked on the individual level in the Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS), Built for Zero will work with the County and its partners to build a real-time “Quality By-Name List” of everyone experiencing homelessness in the community. This list is reviewed weekly at case conferencing meetings attended by multiple service providers who work directly off the list to prioritize assistance based on vulnerability, screen for program eligibility, coordinate housing plans and combine resources with a shared goal of housing people as quickly as possible. The results are tracked monthly through seven key data points:



1. Inflow (newly identified): Individuals and families who have entered the homeless system for the first time
2. Inflow (returned from housing): individuals and families who were housed but lost that housing and have returned to homelessness
3. Inflow (Returned from inactive): individuals and families who were moved to “inactive status” but have now reentered the system
4. Actively Homeless: Everyone on the current by-name list and/or identified through outreach and engagement as in the process of being assessed and included on the by-name list
5. Outflow (Housing Placements): the number of individuals and families exiting the homeless system to housing.
6. Outflow (moved to inactive): individuals and families who have not been located by outreach, received a service by any provider or have not sheltered in over 90 days.
7. Outflow (no longer meets population criteria): individuals whose current status changes in ways that remove them from the active list. Examples included entering institutions for long periods of time, re-unification with families, or other situations that resolve their homelessness.

### Glossary of Terms:

**Coordinated Entry** – Administered by Connecting Point, Coordinated Entry helps prioritize assistance based on vulnerability and severity of service needs to ensure that people who need assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner. In addition, a Coordinated Entry Process provides information about service needs and gaps to help communities plan their assistance and identify necessary resources. The goal of Coordinated Entry is to ensure rapid referral to vital resources. Coordinating Entry generates the By-Name list.

**Quality By-Name List** –A Quality By-Name List (QBNL) is a list of everyone in the county experiencing homelessness in real time. The key components of a QBNL include ensuring that the system includes everyone who is homeless in the

community; accurately assesses who is entering the homeless system on an ongoing basis; and accurately track their progress **through** the system, including how successful the system is in implementing prioritization and providing permanent housing to those who need it.

**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** – A database used by homeless service providers to track individuals service information and client data over time.

**Inactive Policy** – A policy that establishes the length of time someone can stay on the list without any contact by agencies that provide homeless services before they are moved off the active homeless list and placed on an inactive list. Individuals and families moved to inactive can be moved back to active but will have to go through Coordinated Entry for assessment and re-instatement on the list. Inactive policies help to capture outflow data that is related to self-resolution of homelessness or people moving out of the area.

By June 30th, 2020 the data infrastructure and case conferencing processes will be fully in place allowing for accurate reporting on the above metrics and incorporation of system-wide improvements that will drive reductions in homelessness.

## A. Prevent Homelessness

Combating homelessness requires effective services to reduce the number of families and individuals who become homeless, in addition to helping currently homeless individuals and families move into housing. Research suggests that 50% of all chronically homeless individuals had their first episode of homelessness as children (Johnson, 2013). This points to a cycle of homelessness and poverty that is inter-generational and connected to family turmoil and instability. A similar cycle is also represented in people experiencing homelessness who move in and out of institutional settings like jails, hospitals and foster care. Providing effective services to prevent families, Transitional Age Youth (TAY), and individuals exiting institutions from exiting to homelessness is key to ending cycles of homelessness.

### Accomplishments to Date

- Housing Support Program
- Justice and Mental Health Collaboration
- Housing Rehabilitation Projects
- HOME Down Payment Assistance
- Awarded Home Safe funds
- Flexible funds for homelessness prevention

### Objective A Initiatives:

- **A1** – Assess gaps in youth, family and TAY services and identify funding opportunities
- **A2** – Increase availability and access to funding and supportive services to prevent individuals from slipping into homelessness
- **A3** – Utilize the CalWORKS Family Stabilization Program (FSP) and the Permanent Housing Assistance (PHA) program to prevent families from becoming homeless
- **A4** – Increase availability of intensive mental health services for foster youth or youth at-risk of entering the foster care system
- **A5** – Improve early identification and assessment of mental illness and substance use disorder in the jail.

### Descriptions of Objective A Initiatives:

**A1 – Assess gaps in youth, family and TAY services and identify funding opportunities**

Members of the Nevada County Regional Continuum of Care (NCRCoC) who work with youth and families have formed a committee comprised of a wide array of youth and family service providers. The group is working to outline key objectives and funding sources to expand youth and family services. The Committee includes representatives from the Superintendent of Schools, Nevada County Child Welfare Services, The Friendship Club, LGBTQ groups, and the Family Resource Centers, among others.

#### A1 goals for PHASE 1:

- Provide County staffing to assist the Youth and Families Committee in formulating objectives and identifying at least two funding sources
- Work with the Committee to evaluate funding sources for key gaps in existing services and identify needed elements for future funding applications. Create timeline for at least one funding application
- Assist the Committee in forming and convening a Youth Advisory Committee comprised of youth services consumers, as required by some funding sources

#### **A2– Increase availability and access to funding and supportive services to prevent individuals from slipping into homelessness**

Funding to support prevention efforts is hard to come by. For families, funding exists through CalWORKS but individuals (seniors, TAY, etc.) can fall through the cracks. Additionally, CalWORKS funds for families are time-limited and can run out before a recipient family can fully shoulder ongoing rent costs.

#### A2 goals for PHASE 1:

- Secure a portion of Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funding to increase available prevention dollars and enable prevention funds to be spent on individuals
- Create an inventory of existing prevention funds and the limitations on those funds. Use this document to identify gaps and seek out funding opportunities targeted to those areas
- Utilize Full Service Partnership services to support individuals with serious mental illness in maintaining stable housing situations

**A3 – Utilize the CalWORKS Family Stabilization Program (FSP) and the Permanent Housing Assistance**

### **(PHA) program to prevent families from becoming homeless**

Rental assistance and other funding is available for families at risk of homelessness through the CalWORKs PHA and FSP programs. In order to ensure timely and far-reaching provision of funds to families in need, a comprehensive strategy will be implemented in order to more effectively identify potentially eligible families.

#### A3 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Identify CalWORKS families at risk of eviction earlier in the application process to assist with eviction prevention
- Educate community partners on CalWORKs resources available for preventative services
- Create a procedure to connect with families on the By-Name List and evaluate for CalWORKS eligibility
- Provide at least one refresher training to front-line County Eligibility staff on identifying families potentially in need of rental, deposit, or eviction-prevention assistance
- Create a community partner referral process for Family Stabilization Services when the need for preventative rental assistance is identified
- Screen all families at the time of application for housing stability and risk for homelessness
- Hold at least one meeting with community agency fiscal staff to identify funding sources that will increase the reach of limited FSP funds

#### **A4 – Increase availability of intensive mental health services for foster youth or youth at-risk of entering the foster care system**

##### A4 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Increase contracts for Wraparound and other mental health services and target those services to foster youth
- Train Behavioral Health staff in modalities useful for serving children ages 0-5 who are the most prevalent age group within the foster care system.

#### **A5 - Improve early identification and assessment of mental illness and substance use disorder in the jail**

Jail staff have implemented the Brief Jail Mental Health Screen, a screening tool for mental illness that is administered to every person booked into jail. The next step is to ensure that persons who are identified by the tool to be high-risk for mental illness receive an assessment from a mental health professional. The assessment will inform treatment received in jail and release planning.

##### A5 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Hire contract therapists to provide mental health assessments to at least 80 people in jail annually to determine diagnosis and need for services
- Provide discharge planning to at least 80 people leaving jail including connection to needed treatment services in the community by December 2020
- Collect and analyze data from the Brief Jail Mental Health screen monthly
- Partner with Common Goals to pilot Substance Use Disorder (SUD) programming in the jail, including initial assessments and warm handoffs to treatment upon release

##### **Performance Measures:**

- Reduction in Inflow metrics (newly identified, returned to homelessness from housing, and returned from inactive) as measured through the Coordinated Entry System and HMIS
- Increase in number of families receiving FSP/PHA funding compared to prior fiscal year

##### **Collaborating department/agencies:**

*Nevada County Regional Continuum of Care  
Nevada County Social Services  
Nevada County Behavioral Health Department  
Nevada County Sheriff's Office  
Sierra Forever Families  
Victor Community Services  
Partners Family Resource Centers*

## B. Provide Emergency Shelter

Nevada County is home to three highly effective, year-round shelter providers: Hospitality House, Community Beyond Violence, and Salvation Army's Booth Center. Additionally, community-based organizations have opened shelters in the winter months that add capacity during extreme weather events. Shelters are an integral part of the continuum of services to address homelessness and expanding capacity, lowering barriers to access and collaborating on service delivery are of paramount importance to ensure shelter access while long term strategies are completed.

### Accomplishments to Date

- 11-bed Low Barrier expansion at Hospitality House
- Four bed Recuperative Care Collaboration with Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital
- Extreme weather shelter with Sierra Roots and City of Nevada City
- Extreme weather shelter for families at Salvation Army
- Extreme weather shelter collaboration in Truckee
- Extreme weather shelter collaboration in North San Juan
- Implemented 15-bed Bridges to Housing program

### Objective B Initiatives:

- **B1** – Expand shelter options
- **B2** – Strengthen and support seasonal extreme weather shelters
- **B3** – Increase effectiveness of Bridges to Housing
- **B4** - Implement a hotel/motel voucher system

### Descriptions of Objective B Initiatives:

#### **B1 – Expand shelter options**

Significant investments have been made to expand capacity and low barrier access to Hospitality House, but additional steps are needed to ensure access to suitable shelter on a low barrier basis to highly vulnerable homeless residents.

#### B1 Goals for Phase 1:

- Utilize the By-Name List to identify individuals who cannot or will not access shelter.
- Inventory their specific needs and issues and explore options for engagement and housing.

- Work with Social Services staff and Salvation Army staff to assess opportunities to expand Booth Center Capacity.

#### **B2 - Strengthen and support seasonal extreme weather shelters**

Extreme weather shelters have historically been operated in the County by nonprofit community-based organizations. In recent years, the County has worked to support these operations but, while funding is essential, coordinating skilled services to engage shelter stayers during extreme weather events is key to increasing safety at the shelter, identification of high-needs individuals, and increased engagement with harder to reach individuals.

#### B2 Goals for Phase 1:

- Complete Memoranda of Understanding with cities and contracts with providers.
- HOME team members will check in at each extreme weather shelter operation in Western County when open.
- County nurse to offer Hepatitis A and flu vaccine at cold weather shelter, upon request, while vaccine supplies last.
- Public Health staff provide in-person or online naloxone training to volunteers from each shelter, upon request.
- Collect HMIS data on Truckee shelter participants and offer connection to services.
- Coordinate with Social Services and the Veterans Services Office to provide opportunities for enrollment in mainstream benefits during extreme weather operations.
- Ensure HOME team outreach to engage homeless individuals and families and assist them in accessing the Salvation Army Seasonal Shelter.
- HOME team to hold at least one meeting with lead community group that organizes the North San Juan shelter to provide technical assistance.

#### **B3 – Increase effectiveness of Bridges to Housing**

Improve effectiveness of the program by implementing policies and procedures that provide for improved case management focused on housing stability and rapid placement into permanent housing.

#### B3 Goals for Phase 1:

- Improve and strengthen policies and procedures for Bridges to Housing

- Develop case planning documents and train contracted providers in the evidence-based practice Critical Time Intervention (CTI)

#### **B4 - Implement a Hotel/Motel Voucher system**

To support cold weather operations and to assess needs for individuals and families that do not or will not access shelter, work to implement a hotel/motel voucher system so that outreach workers can quickly identify and locate highly vulnerable homeless individuals and families and prioritize their placement.

#### B4 Goals for Phase 1:

- Administer hotel/motel vouchers through the HOME team to ensure individuals and families are connected to appropriate resources.
- Contact hotel/motel operators and compile a list of individuals and families that have been banned from staying at a given hotel/motel and either work to reverse the ban or identify alternatives.
- Work with hotel/motel operators to streamline payment methods.

#### **Performance Measures:**

- Increase in shelter beds utilized each night open
- Reduction in unsheltered population

#### **Collaborating departments/agencies:**

*Nevada County Housing and Community Services  
Nevada County Housing Development Corporation  
Nevada County Behavioral Health  
Foothills House of Hospitality  
Salvation Army Booth Family Center  
Sierra Roots  
Church of the Mountains  
North San Juan Community Center  
Community Beyond Violence  
Nevada County Social Services  
Nevada County Office of Emergency Services  
City of Nevada City  
Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital*

## C. Expand Supportive Services

Most families and individuals experiencing homelessness need some level of case management and supportive services to secure and maintain permanent housing. The level of need varies with the circumstances but, for many, the needs will initially be high and fluctuate over time. Services will likely need to be offered on an ongoing basis in order to prevent individuals and families from re-entering homelessness. This will require collaboration by multiple service providers. Additionally, case management and supportive services need to meet people where they are. This includes institutions like jails, hospitals and treatment facilities. Working with these facilities to create a process to quickly identify homeless individuals caught in the “revolving door,” we can work proactively to ensure they receive services and do not re-enter the community into homelessness.

Discussions on creating a homeless resource center have been a centerpiece of County efforts to address homelessness. While various models of these kinds of centers exist, the overall vision is to create a centralized location, open during the day, with access to essential services (restroom, lockers, showers, etc.) and intensive case management. Phase 1 goals related to implementing a homeless resource center will focus on securing a location for day-time access. Phase 2 goals will continue the planning process for constructing on-site, low barrier units dedicated to chronically homeless individuals.

### Accomplishments to Date

- Implemented the HOME Team, expanding case management and outreach through seven new contracted staff positions
- Awarded CDBG to expand Bost House
- Embedded case management at Hospitality House
- Added 18 recovery residence beds

### Objective C Initiatives:

- **C1** – Create a homeless resource center
- **C2** – Utilize the HOME Team to engage people experiencing homelessness in services
- **C3** – Strengthen the coordinated multi-disciplinary case conference team (Housing Resource Team)

- **C4** – Expand embedded case management
- **C5** – Expand outreach and supportive services in the Tahoe/Truckee region
- **C6** – Help people experiencing homelessness with substance use disorder access residential treatment and low barrier housing

### Descriptions of Objective C Initiatives:

#### **C1 – Create homeless resource center**

Options for day-time services have been explored and discussed, including in meetings of the County Board of Supervisors. County staff will work to finalize site selection based on various factors including location, viability of site control, and input from Grass Valley and Nevada City.

#### C1 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Identify a site for the homeless resource center
- Develop a service sustainability plan for the homeless resources center
- Identify and apply for funding for development and ongoing operations

#### **C2 – Utilize the HOME Team to engage people experiencing homelessness in services**

The Homeless Outreach and Medical Engagement (HOME) team officially launched on June 26th, 2019. This innovative team provides outreach and engagement, intensive case management and medical services to 80 highly vulnerable homeless residents per year. The team will utilize the Coordinated Entry System to identify participants and identify and extend case management and supportive services to individuals who, for a variety of reasons, are not currently engaged in services

#### C2 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Incorporate existing Tahoe/Truckee outreach staff into the HOME team by including them in the weekly meetings and ensuring access to HOME team funds.
- When people experiencing homelessness receive Housing Choice Vouchers, connect them to housing navigation services to assist in securing housing units.
- Coordinate quarterly HOME team trainings to enhance skills and knowledge of members
- Actively utilize the By-Name List to identify and engage highly vulnerable homeless residents and

ensure that data for all homeless individuals are entered in HMIS.

- Attend and staff the bi-monthly Homeless Outreach Team meetings with law enforcement and prioritize individuals experiencing homelessness who interact with law enforcement most often.
- Support SPIRIT staff in addressing impacts of serving homeless drop-in clients by providing HOME team staff support on a weekly basis.

### **C3 – Strengthen the coordinated multi-disciplinary case conference team (Housing Resource Team)**

In line with best practices as outlined by Built for Zero, coordination of housing providers and service providers is key to utilizing a Housing First approach. By implementing case conferencing teams, we can leverage case management skills and resources from a variety of providers to help stabilize clients who are ineligible for or unwilling to engage with the behavioral health system and keep them housed long term.

#### C3 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Coordinate trainings and skill building workshops quarterly to develop the skills of supportive services staff in line with evidence-based practices.
- Continue to provide flexible housing funds that are accessible to housing providers for a variety of client needs.
- Housing Resource Team will meet weekly to case conference utilizing the By-Name List.
- Assign HOME team members to travel to Truckee once per month to engage people experiencing homelessness in Eastern County and connect with providers in the region.

### **C4 – Expand embedded case management**

Nevada County Behavioral Health and Turning Point provide two case managers who work at Hospitality House to help shelter residents with mental health related goals. The recent award of Proposition 47 funding allows the County to add a Personal Services Coordinator who will work in the Public Defender's Office, where many people experiencing homelessness come into contact with the justice system.

#### C4 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Personal Services Coordinator embedded in the Public Defender's Office will begin assisting clients experiencing homelessness and those eligible for

diversion programs such as pre-trial diversion and Drug Court by January 2020.

- Embedded Personal Services Coordinator will enroll 30 individuals in the Proposition 47 program each grant year.

### **C5 – Expand outreach and supportive services in the Tahoe/Truckee region**

Western County has a variety of programs, organizations, and teams that work to alleviate homelessness, but Eastern County has a need for services as well. Increase outreach in Eastern County to engage people experiencing homelessness and connect them with services.

#### C5 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Eastern Nevada County HOME team representative will meet with community organizations to increase awareness of resources available.
- Contract with an Adult Behavioral Health Case Manager to increase supportive services available.
- Strengthen partnerships with Probation, Public Defenders, and court services in Truckee by including them in the Tahoe/Truckee CoC Committee meetings.
- Increase access to employment services supports in Truckee, including One-Stop, by utilizing Eastern County Social Worker and strengthening partnerships with Vocational Rehab and community agencies.

### **C6 – Help people experiencing homelessness with substance use disorder access residential treatment and low barrier housing**

According to the 2019 Point-in-Time count 57 people experiencing homelessness indicated that they suffered from a substance use disorder, and there are likely others who did not report substance use due to stigma or other factors. Connecting individuals experiencing homelessness with substance use disorder services, including residential treatment when indicated, can help people on the path to recovery and finding permanent housing.

#### C6 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Increase access to case management services for homeless individuals with substance use disorders, including those referred by the HOME

team, in order to increase success rates of connecting people to treatment.

- HOME Team will assist individuals with substance use disorders in accessing the low barrier beds in Hospitality House and Bridges to Housing.

#### Performance Measures:

- Number of contacts made, duplicated and unduplicated
- Number of people connected to health, mental health, substance use disorder treatment and sources of income

#### Collaborating departments/agencies:

*Nevada County Behavioral Health  
Foothill House of Hospitality  
Turning Point Community Programs  
Connecting Point  
FREED Center for Independent Living  
Nevada County Sheriff's Office  
Nevada County Housing Development Corporation  
Community Beyond Violence  
Nevada County Social Services  
Partners Family Resource Center  
Project MANA / Sierra Community House  
SPIRIT  
Common Goals  
Granite Wellness Centers  
Nevada County Office of the Public Defender  
Nevada County Regional Continuum of Care*

## D. Increase Affordable, Subsidized and Supported Housing

Across the State of California, the homeless crisis can be contextualized as a housing crisis. Not only is there not enough housing to meet the needs of the residents of the State but, increasingly, the amount of money residents pay in rent as a percentage of their household income is increasing. This puts up-stream pressure on services and systems as more individuals and families struggle to maintain housing and keep from entering homelessness and down-stream on services as it becomes increasingly hard to locate suitable housing for chronically homeless individuals and families. This strategy proposes that there are two distinct sides of any strategy to address the housing issues: 1) expansion of financial assistance, leveraging multiple subsidy sources, and embracing innovative interim housing options while, 2) Working on a regional plan to spur the development of additional affordable housing units. This view accounts for the reality that even if all the stars align, new housing development takes time.

### Accomplishments to Date

- Awarded No Place Like Home funding for Brunswick Commons.
- Hosted a two-day Housing First landlord recruitment and retention toolkit training.
- Master-leased 3 homes for the low barrier program.
- Submitted Housing for a Health California grant application.
- Supported affordable housing units at Lone Oak, Truckee Lofts, and Courtyard.

### Objective D Initiatives:

- **D1** – Advocate for and collaborate on the development of affordable housing
- **D2** – Expand master leasing and improve supportive housing programs, including in eastern county
- **D3** - Maximize utilization of federal housing subsidies
- **D4** – Secure additional flexible housing funds for rental assistance and to fund a landlord recruitment and retention program
- **D5** - Expand Recovery Residence housing

### Descriptions of Objective C Initiatives:

#### **D1 – Advocate for and collaborate on the development of affordable housing**

The long-term solution to homelessness in California is the development of more affordable housing. While the Nevada County Health and Human Services Agency is taking the lead on alleviating homelessness in the short term, collaboration with other County agencies and other jurisdictions on this core issue will be necessary to add housing and achieve long term relief from housing cost burdens.

#### D1 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Create a workgroup comprised of staff from the Department of Housing and Community Services and the Community Development Agency to facilitate the development of affordable housing
- Coordinate with CDA and other jurisdictions on reviewing funding opportunities related to SB2 regional planning grants and incentive funds available for achieving the “pro-housing” designation
- Identify existing parcels (public and private) and work with stakeholders to explore possible and existing development opportunities well ahead of HCD Notice of Funding Availability releases
- Identify projects partners for No Place Like HOME Round 2, Multi-Family Housing Program (MHP), and Veterans Homeless Housing Program funds (VHHP)
- Identify projects for potential Community Development Block Grants and Infill Infrastructure Grants
- Support Brunswick Commons development.
- Explore options for Phase 2 projects at Brunswick Commons Site

#### **D2 - Expand master leasing and improve supportive housing programs, including in eastern county**

These are housing units for residents who require ongoing supportive services. County and partners will work to strengthen the program and build capacity.

#### D2 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Work with realtors to identify homes that have been for sale for a long period of time and offer property owners the option to master lease.

- Expand options for master leasing to include private pay and other forms of rental subsidies available to different homeless demographics (TAY, Disabled, Families).
- County staff from HCS and NCBH will work with contracted providers to create a detailed referral and selection processes, evidence-based practices employed, and provide case planning documents that are uniform for all participants across all programs.

### **D3 - Maximize utilization of federal housing subsidies**

Rental assistance and interim housing options cannot be provided indefinitely. As additional landlords are recruited there needs to be a process for converting their units to an ongoing subsidized source (Housing Choice Vouchers, VASH vouchers, etc.) to ensure long term rental support and reduce costs to grants or other local sources.

#### D3 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Work with Regional Housing Authority to ensure recipients of Housing Choice Vouchers can access housing navigation services through the HOME team.
- Create a "moving-on" strategy in line with HUD best-practices.
- Transfer PSH residents who have attained stability from PSH Voucher support to Housing Choice Voucher support.

### **D4 - Secure funds for rental assistance and to fund a landlord recruitment and retention program**

Acquire flexible housing funds that can be used for a wide array of housing purposes. Funding will provide longer term rental support, deposits, and landlord incentives to encourage them to rent to individuals who have a barrier to accessing rental units, such as past evictions.

#### D4 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Continue to build up available flexible housing funds utilizing a portion of allocated Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention program funds (formerly HEAP).
- Apply for Housing for a Healthy CA rental assistance funds.
- Work with other housing providers through the HRT to leverage multiple funding sources to provide medium and long-term support.
- Work to expand the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program, providing housing and

advocacy for homeless and chronically homeless individuals while they work to secure SSI income.

- Expand rental stock by leveraging HEAP, HSP and other potential funding sources to provide rehabilitation for previously unrented homes in need of repair.
- Create a Landlord Recruitment and Retention Program.
- Build out marketing materials that are easy for landlords to understand and can be used by a wide array of housing service providers to engage landlords Make landlord incentive funds available to HRT members.

### **D5 - Expand Recovery Residence housing**

Recovery residences provide crucial support for people who graduate from a residential treatment program but continue to need a lower level of care. Some residents may exit residential treatment into homelessness if not for these programs.

#### D5 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Granite Wellness Center will open one additional recovery residence, using Proposition 47 funding to finance startup costs.
- Granite Wellness opened one additional recovery residence in June 2019 utilizing Rural Health Opioid Program funds.
- Common Goals added one additional recovery residence utilizing MAT in Jails grant funding (May 2019).
- Behavioral Health will support 150 people in receiving recovery residence services this year.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Increased number of landlords willing to accept families/individuals with housing vouchers/subsidies
- Number of identified affordable housing projects connected to available funding opportunities

### **Collaborating departments/agencies:**

*Nevada County Department of Housing and Community Services  
Nevada County Community Development Agency  
Regional Housing Authority  
Nevada County Regional Continuum of Care  
Nevada County Behavioral Health Department  
City of Grass Valley  
City of Nevada City  
Town of Truckee  
FREED Center for Independent Living*

## E. ENHANCE COMMUNICATION, COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

Accurate and timely information is key to winning support for initiatives and highlighting progress towards objectives. Informed messaging can highlight new trends in homeless demographics that require new resources or responses, provide perspective from various partners (i.e. law enforcement, crisis workers, veteran services officers etc.), and shed light on innovative approaches to addressing issues faced by individuals experiencing homelessness and impacts on the wider community. Accurate data will inform and frame this messaging and measure how well programs are performing, ensuring that high performing programs are promoted and expanded.

### Objective E Initiatives:

- **E1** – Strengthen the Coordinated Entry System
- **E2** – Enhance data sharing and tracking
- **E3** – Provide County assistance to the Nevada County Regional Continuum of Care (NCRCoC)
- **E4** – Improve community engagement, relations, and education on homelessness and related issues

### Descriptions of Objective E Initiatives:

#### **E1 – Strengthen the Coordinated Entry System (CES)**

The Coordinated Entry System streamlines access to available services by utilizing a no-wrong door approach to offering connections. It is just over one year old and in need of updating in keeping with emerging trends in best practices associated with high performing CES systems. County staff and representatives from five local nonprofit agencies have begun the work of making improvements. Additionally, HMIS utilization is key to increasing Nevada County CES system performance. This will make Nevada County more competitive when applying for HUD funding opportunities.

#### E1 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Utilize the existing Housing Resource Team (HRT) to coordinate and implement efforts to track CES data and reduce chronic and veteran homelessness.
- Improve data quality of the By-Name list.

- Expand understanding and utilization of CES in the Tahoe/Truckee region through regular meetings of the Tahoe/Truckee CoC.
- Expand the number of available HMIS licenses to match the number of service providers who work with homeless clients.
- Identify an HMIS technical support provider to deliver HMIS trainings, monitor data quality and provide call-center support for day-to-day technical challenges.
- Require HMIS utilization by all county funded homeless services agencies.
- The Best Practices Committee at the Continuum of Care will review data quality reports monthly to ensure accurate and timely data collection in HMIS.

Much of this work will be achieved through participation in a national effort coordinated by the Built for Zero campaign. More information on Built for Zero can be found here:

<https://www.community.solutions/what-we-do/built-for-zero>

#### **E2 – Enhance data sharing and tracking.**

Create a data capture and monitoring system with dashboards that analyze HMIS data.

#### E2 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Develop standard monthly reporting tools in line with Build for Zero's key metrics.
- Develop a qualitative and quantitative report card for county funded collaborative partners to report out on monthly progress towards contracted deliverables.
- Utilize ClearPoint to track and communicate progress.

#### **E3 – Provide County assistance to the NCRCoC**

With the recent de-merging of the Joint Placer-Nevada Continuum of Care (CoC), the newly recognized CA-531 is now an independent CoC representing Nevada County. Opportunities now exist for the NCRCoC to expand funding through state and federal sources that only a CoC can apply for. Objectives E1-E2 will also benefit NCRCoC as having a high-functioning CES, high HMIS utilization, and a high degree of data quality are keys to a CoC's "score." This score governs how

competitive CoCs are when applying for federal and state funding sources.

E3 Goals for PHASE 1:

- Continue to contract with the NCRCoC
- Work with Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras to expand the scope of the contract to include specific duties for the NCRCoC.
- Participate in monthly governing board meetings providing leadership and County input into its deliberations.
- Provide online presence for the CoC through the “Better Together” webpage.
- Ensure meeting minutes, strategic documents and reports are posted to the “Better Together” page regularly.
- Participate in the Outcomes and Measures Committee and ensure accurate and timely data collection and submission.
- Assist in coordinating the Point-In-Time Count.

**E4 – Improve community engagement, relations, and education on homelessness and related issues**

Identify key dates and milestones to message well in advance and engage the broader community in important events, meetings and trainings.

E4 Goals in PHASE 1:

- Create a Communication Plan to effectively engage the community in collaborative efforts to address homelessness.

- Coordinate and deliver two trainings per year that are open to the public that highlight issues relevant to homelessness.
- Collaborate with cities and nonprofits to address and mitigate environmental and public health issues caused by camping.
- Work with law enforcement through the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) to proactively identify encampments and conduct outreach.

**Performance Measures:**

- Creation of Communication Plan and Media Plan
- Number of trainings, meetings, and camp clean-up events

**Collaborating departments/agencies:**

*Nevada County Regional Continuum of Care  
Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras  
Homeless Outreach Team  
Nevada County Housing and Community Development  
Nevada County Sheriff’s Office  
Nevada City Police Department  
Grass Valley Police Department  
Foothill House of Hospitality  
HOME Team*

## CONCLUSION and PHASE 2 Overview

These strategies are designed to maximize the effectiveness of current efforts to combat homelessness, expand certain key efforts, and implement new actions where appropriate. The current level of available funding has expanded, but additional funding will be needed to eliminate homelessness in Nevada County permanently. These objectives, initiatives, and goals are designed to reduce the current number of homeless families and individuals, maximize the alignment and effectiveness of County and community partner efforts, and lay the foundation to be highly competitive in funding opportunities so that the County and its partners can make effective investments in the future.

### Possible PHASE 2 Goals and Objectives:

<b>A. Prevent Homelessness</b>	
Work with the Youth and Families Committee to apply for HUD TAY demonstration project funding and other funding identified specific to Youth and Families.	Conduct a youth and families specific Point In Time Count .
	Strengthen the County's foster care and juvenile detention discharge policies.
Work with Youth and Families service providers to implement a youth drop in center.	Work with Sierra College to assess campus homelessness and devise strategies to expand and fund service and housing opportunities.
<b>B. Provide Emergency Shelter</b>	
Work with hospitals, treatment providers and the jail to implement discharge planning procedures that work to connect individuals to housing prior to exiting an institution.	
<b>C. Expand Supportive Services</b>	
Begin Odyssey House renovation.	Explore Medi-CAL billable services in the homeless shelters.
Expand training for outreach and supportive services staff.	
<b>D. Increase Subsidized, Supported and Affordable Housing</b>	
Increase CoC and Coordinated Entry effectiveness which will make the CoC more competitive when applying for HUD funding.	Convert County-subsidized master leased homes into Housing Choice Voucher-subsidized master leased homes.
Identify and plan for Phase 2 options for the Brunswick Commons site.	Incorporate practices and measures codified in the housing manual (in progress at the time of this plan) into all housing contracts.
Implement Housing for Healthy California grant rental assistance program.	Implement a regional housing council to review and plan for housing development.
Work with Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital to explore funding opportunities for housing medically vulnerable people who receive high cost medical interventions.	Facilitate greater utilization of federal housing subsidies (HCV, HOPWA) through early identification of homeless individuals and families who receive vouchers and working to assist them with housing navigation.
Work with Regional Housing Authority to acquire additional Housing Choice Vouchers	Implement a homeless veteran's workgroup within the HRT to identify veterans experiencing homelessness and streamline benefit acquisition (VASH, SSVF).
Increase General Assistance vendor pay amount to eligible beneficiaries enrolled in HDAP.	Explore available funding opportunities to create an Accessory Dwelling Unit Pilot program.
<b>E. Enhance Communication, Coordination and Collaboration</b>	
Implement a county-wide Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for First Responders	Discharge Data tracking system