



Date: Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Danny Renfrow – Chief of Police

Title: **Tahoe Truckee Regional Homeless Action Plan**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

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**Recommended Action:** That the Town Council:

1. Accept the Tahoe Truckee Regional Homeless Action Plan (TTRHAP);
2. Provide direction to Town staff to continue participating in the Tahoe Truckee Homeless Advisory Committee (TTHAC) with the initial focus on navigation center services, community engagement, and outreach; and
3. Approve budget appropriation of \$25,000 in support of partnership funding for the continuation of the Tahoe Truckee Homeless Advisory Committee to focus on implementation of the TTRHAP.

**Background:** In May 2023, the Town of Truckee joined the newly established *Tahoe Truckee Homeless Advisory Committee* as a member agency. Members include Nevada County staff, special districts, NGOs, faith-based organizations, and non-profits. Town Manager Jen Callaway and Police Chief Danny Renfrow served as the Town's initial representatives. At the October 10, 2023, Council Meeting, Councilmember Jan Zabriskie was appointed to co-chair the committee alongside Nevada County District 5 Supervisor Hardy Bullock and Placer County District 5 Supervisor Cindy Gustafson. This participation aligned with the *Truckee 2040 General Plan*, specifically supporting **Community Character Element Policy 6.6: Services for Underserved Populations**. Following the Council's direction, this initiative was officially added to the Town's workplan during the November 2023 update.

With Council's priority and focus on Housing, the Town has made significant strides toward affordable housing, with programs serving a wide range of Area Medium Income (AMI), including 31 deed-restricted housing units available to 30% AMI and below. In addition to these 31 units, Pacific Crest Commons is expected to break ground this calendar year and will add 10 units of supportive housing.

**Discussion:**

The Tahoe Truckee Regional Homeless Action Plan (TTRHAP), attachment 1, recognizes that homelessness is a complex issue that requires collaborative action, compassion, and persistence. While resources are limited, collective efforts from local governments, community organizations, businesses, and individuals are essential to providing the necessary support and services for those in need. This plan serves as a guided vision to end homelessness, emphasizing that even incremental progress is a success. The goal is not perfection but a shared commitment to take action, adapt, and move forward together. By starting this journey, the community can create a system that offers hope, dignity, and a brighter future for vulnerable populations.

## **Tahoe Truckee Regional Homeless Action Plan: Summary**

The TTRHAP outlines a collective vision and roadmap to address homelessness in the Tahoe Truckee region. This plan, developed by the Tahoe Truckee Homeless Advisory Committee (TTHAC), reflects a commitment to tackling homelessness with a collaborative and persistent approach. It recognizes the limited resources available and emphasizes the importance of a unified community effort. While ending homelessness is an ambitious long-term goal, the success of the Action Plan lies in taking continuous, incremental steps toward achieving stable housing and supporting vulnerable populations.

### **Overview and Purpose of the Plan**

The plan's primary objective is to guide the community's efforts in providing comprehensive services to individuals experiencing homelessness, with the aim of helping them transition to permanent, stable housing. It does not assign specific roles or responsibilities to any single organization but creates a framework for cooperation, pooling resources, and leveraging expertise. This collaborative effort is crucial in ensuring that services are available and accessible to meet the region's unique needs.

The planning process involved extensive collaboration over 18 months, incorporating data from local homelessness services, interviews with service providers, and research on best practices. The plan aligns with existing homeless action frameworks, such as those of Placer and Nevada counties, while considering the unique characteristics of the Tahoe Truckee region. The TTRHAP integrates the insights of local experts and lived experience to craft strategies that prioritize prevention, supportive services, interim housing, and permanent housing solutions.

### **The Region's Unique Challenges**

The Tahoe Truckee region, located across eastern Placer and Nevada counties, has a population of approximately 33,000 residents. The area's reliance on tourism contributes to a strong tax base but also leads to extremely high housing costs. Winters are harsh, with heavy snowfall that complicates both travel and daily living. The region's geographic separation from other parts of the counties further complicates the delivery of services. To address these challenges, a coordinated effort between local agencies and organizations is necessary, particularly in providing housing and community services.

### **Focus on Housing Needs and Solutions**

The plan places strong emphasis on addressing the needs of those in the extremely low-income category (30% of Area Median Income or less). It aims to integrate various services, from emergency shelters to long-term solutions like housing and healthcare, ensuring accessibility and reducing barriers for all residents. The Action Plan leverages both local and regional resources to address gaps in services and provide a comprehensive system of care.

The Mountain Housing Council's data highlights the housing needs across income levels, with a specific focus on the extremely low-income population. These insights inform the Action Plan's targeted strategies for addressing homelessness and improving housing accessibility for the most vulnerable.

### **Data and Analysis of Regional Homelessness**

The Action Plan is informed by a detailed analysis of homeless data conducted by Bowling Business Services (BBS) in 2024. BBS reviewed three years of data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and conducted interviews with local homeless service providers. The study identified key trends and challenges in the region, including the increasing number of households requiring housing interventions, with an average of 117 households needing support each year.

While various services provide support to these households, the gap between the number of individuals needing assistance and those successfully housed remains significant. On average, only 39 out of 117 households are permanently housed each year. This gap highlights the need for additional resources and services, particularly for high-vulnerability households that require more intensive support.

### **Permanent Supportive Housing and Shelter Needs**

A significant portion of the homeless population in Tahoe Truckee requires Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), which provides long-term care for individuals with high vulnerability. Data from the BBS study indicates that 49% of households fall into the highest vulnerability category, with many experiencing homelessness for over a year. These individuals require more intensive support to achieve stable housing. The plan suggests that approximately 44 households annually need PSH to ensure they have access to the necessary resources and care.

Furthermore, the region lacks a year-round shelter, with the nearest available shelters often being temporary and weather dependent. The BBS study estimates that 22 year-round shelter beds would be required to accommodate households experiencing chronic homelessness. These beds would need to be flexible to accommodate additional individuals during extreme weather events, providing a responsive and adaptable solution to the region's housing challenges.

### **Community Costs of Homelessness**

The study also highlights the financial costs of homelessness in the region. Based on vulnerability levels, BBS estimates the following annual costs per person: \$15,000 for low vulnerability, \$30,000 for medium vulnerability, and \$50,000 for high vulnerability. These figures, when applied to the regional homeless population, suggest a total annual cost of approximately \$3.07 million for emergencies and critical services. This figure emphasizes the financial burden of homelessness on the community and the need for targeted investments in housing solutions and services.

### **TTRHAP Key Focus Areas for Addressing Homelessness**

#### **1. Crisis Stabilization (Access to Services and Beds)**

The first focus area emphasizes expanding housing navigation services and increasing interim shelter beds. Navigation services involve outreach and case management that assist individuals in securing permanent housing. Interim housing provides temporary shelter while individuals work towards long-term housing. As of 2023, the region's winter emergency shelters were limited, and services need to be expanded year-round. The goal is to establish a navigation center with 22 year-round shelter beds, with the flexibility to accommodate an additional 13 individuals during extreme weather events, bringing the total to 35 shelter beds. A critical component is securing funding to support these expanded services, including establishing a permanent shelter operator, like Volunteers of America.

#### **2. Stable Housing for High-Vulnerability Populations**

The second focus area seeks to increase the inventory of permanent supportive housing (PSH) units. PSH is a proven model combining subsidized housing with case management to support individuals with chronic homelessness and intensive service needs. The current inventory includes 14 units, but an additional 30 units are needed to meet the growing demand by 2030. Strategies include securing state funding (e.g., Homekey funding) for properties and supporting projects like the Pacific Crest Commons affordable housing project in Truckee. Additionally, post-housing services and adequate funding for ongoing case management are critical to ensuring long-term housing stability for residents.

It should be noted that by state law, local or county government cannot deny or restrict permanent supportive housing projects in a residential neighborhood.

#### **3. Partnership Structure, Collaboration, and Community**

The third focus area stresses the importance of formalizing regional collaboration to address

homelessness. While various local agencies and nonprofits are already involved, the region lacks a central coordinating entity. Establishing a formal partnership structure, including a backbone organization to manage fiscal and administrative duties, is essential for effective service coordination and long-term success. This structure would also ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and that funding efforts are coordinated. Additionally, community awareness and support are vital for raising understanding of homelessness and mobilizing resources. The Advisory Committee proposes continued engagement with community partners, businesses, and local governments to build support for both housing projects and services.

#### **4. Sustainable Funding**

The final focus area is securing the necessary funding to implement the Action Plan. A diverse funding approach is required, combining public, private, and philanthropic sources. The plan recommends launching a fundraising campaign to raise \$1 million in private philanthropic support over the next five years. This funding would supplement public sources such as state and federal grants, which are crucial for sustaining long-term solutions. Several specific funding strategies are outlined, including leveraging funds from jurisdictions, applying for state and federal grants, and building partnerships with local foundations and businesses to ensure financial sustainability.

#### **Implementation Steps and Collaborative Framework**

The implementation of the Action Plan will require the formation of a formal regional homeless partnership, which will oversee the coordination of services and resource allocation. This partnership will need to develop a detailed implementation budget, identify funding sources, and collaborate with local and state agencies to apply for grants. As part of the framework, the partnership will also need to establish specific roles for service providers, including a Housing Lead, Services Lead, and Navigation Services Lead. These entities will be responsible for coordinating efforts across housing, mental health, and social services to address the needs of the homeless population.

The Advisory Committee has also proposed establishing a backbone organization that can manage the collaborative effort for a minimum of three years. This organization will provide the necessary administrative support, including billing for services through programs like Medi-Cal, and help secure additional funding to close any financial gaps.

#### **Community Outreach and Feedback**

On April 3, 2025, the Town hosted a Community Workshop aimed at enhancing public understanding of the Action Plan strategies while providing a space for residents to share their questions, feedback, and concerns. The event welcomed approximately 60 community members and featured four interactive stations, each focused on one of the Action Plan's Strategic Priority Areas outlined above. Interpretation services were provided during the community workshop and materials were provided in both English and Spanish.

It should be noted that the Town is currently conducting a community survey via social media to support ongoing efforts to enhance public understanding of the Action Plan. This survey is active now and will close on Sunday, April 20, 2025. The results will be included in the staff presentation at the April 22, 2025, Town Council Meeting.

Summary of April 3, 2025 Community Workshop feedback is provided below. More detailed summary prepared by Agnew Beck, whom facilitated the community workshop on behalf of the Town, is provided as Attachment 2. The power point slide deck that was presented at the community workshop is provided for reference as Attachment 3. Mayor Zabriskie welcomed the community to the workshop on behalf of the Town.

## **Station 1: Crisis Stabilization: Navigation Center and Beds – Community Feedback Summary**

### **Q1: Familiarity with Navigation Services and Housing Models**

Responses ranged from no familiarity to high familiarity, especially among those with VA or social service experience. Many referenced familiarities through organizations like United for Action or Sierra Community House. Some stressed the need for broader community education and a local survey.

### **Q2: Scaling a Navigation Center Model (with Beds)**

Key suggestions included 24/7 staffing, no sobriety requirement (housing first model), integration with mental health services, and modular or tiny home solutions. Emphasis was placed on year-round, not weather-triggered, access. The center should build trust, have private/family spaces, include hygiene facilities (showers, laundry), and use co-housing or repurposed hotels/STRs.

### **Q3: Ideal Characteristics for Navigation Center Location**

Top priorities: proximity to transportation, services, food access, and being walkable but not isolated. Suggested sites included Jibboom Street, Deerfield, and Pioneer Center. Some emphasized mixed-use or underutilized properties. Zoning reform was frequently mentioned as necessary to move forward.

### **Crisis Stabilization and Other Considerations**

Community members asked about funding sources, single points of entry, zoning barriers, and the balance between emergency weather centers and year-round beds. Concerns included correlation with fire risk from encampments, NIMBYism (comments also included frustration with the use of the term NIMBYism as unproductive and offensive), and the need for permanent housing. There was support for community volunteers helping run the center and coordination between agencies.

## **Station 2: Stable Housing – Community Feedback Summary**

### **Q1: Familiarity with Supportive Housing Models**

Responses varied widely—from very familiar to many unanswered questions. Some had detailed knowledge (e.g., about PSH and Housing First models), while others called for better education and clear differentiation from traditional affordable housing. Suggestions included using social media, community meetings, and real-life stories to build understanding and empathy.

### **Q2: Thoughts on Pacific Crest Commons PSH Units**

The 10 PSH units planned at Pacific Crest Commons were seen as a good step, but not enough. Community members emphasized the importance of wraparound services, case management, rules for behavior, and intentional design. Some concerns included safety for families, how success will be measured, and the need for transparency and communication.

### **Q3: Future PSH Location Characteristics**

Ideal locations should be walkable, near services (bus, food, healthcare), and not isolated. Feedback stressed avoiding over-concentration in specific neighborhoods. Support was voiced for PSH in mixed-use, higher-density areas rather than in single-family zones. Many called for zoning reform and balanced geographic distribution of projects.

### **Q4: Post-Housing Support Services**

There was broad support for services like mental health care, substance use treatment, job training, transportation, and case management. Participants highlighted the importance of educating the public on what services exist, how they differ from traditional affordable housing, and how they help tenants stay housed. Concerns included service gaps and how to protect both tenants and neighbors.

## **Station 3: Partnership and Funding Support – Community Feedback Summary**

### **Q1: Partnership – How can we develop stronger partnerships to support our unhoused folks?**

Community members emphasized the need for visible, collaborative efforts between the Town, County, and local organizations. Suggestions included creating a volunteer app, hosting community events

(e.g., shared meals like "Stone Soup"), and deepening relationships with local businesses. There was a strong call for the Town to engage with existing groups and for the community to be involved early in planning, especially regarding locations for services like navigation centers.

**Q2: Communications – How do we build community awareness around issues impacting unhoused people?**

Feedback stressed the importance of education, storytelling, and visibility. Ideas included public campaigns, interviews with individuals with lived experience, and consistent updates through multiple channels (social media, newsletters, Nextdoor). Workshops, youth engagement, and clear information about services were also key. The community wants transparency and an end to stigma—showing the humanity of unhoused individuals was a recurring theme.

**Q3: Fundraising – What ideas do you have to raise local dollars for implementation of action plan solutions?**

Participants believe funding exists in the community but must be approached thoughtfully. Strategies included private donations, involving churches, crowdfunding, taxing second homeowners or home sales, and partnering with local businesses for fundraising nights. Emphasis was placed on building trust before asking for funds, tying fundraising to powerful stories, and having a clear, realistic business plan. Suggestions also included funding day centers, winter shelters, and wraparound services.

**Station 4: Understanding Homelessness – Community Feedback Summary**

**Q1: Understanding Data – Do you have questions about how we gather and use data?**

Community members find homelessness data confusing, especially terms like "household" which feel impersonal. They want clarity on definitions (e.g., local vs. transient, chronic homelessness, couch-surfing), demographic breakdowns (gender, age), and how HMIS tracks individuals. There's also interest in how data reflects lived experiences, not just numbers.

**Q2: What did you learn tonight that you didn't know before?**

Attendees gained insight into causes of homelessness (e.g., COVID-related displacement, domestic violence, trauma, life skills, and car loss). Many expressed a deeper understanding that unhoused people are part of the Truckee community and have complex, individual stories, not just statistics.

**Q3: What information is missing that would help you better understand this topic?**

People want more data on causes (addiction, mental health, economics), eligibility for services, entry points into homelessness, and distinctions by gender. They also seek better outreach—getting information to people who don't attend meetings—and more personal storytelling to build empathy.

**Q4: Concerns about Homelessness in Truckee?**

Top concerns included stigma, lack of continuum of care, absence of warming/day centers, and community resistance. There's urgency around safety, mental health, and the need for permanent, supportive housing. People worry about those dying on the streets, being ignored, or misunderstood.

**Conclusion**

The Tahoe Truckee region faces a growing challenge in addressing homelessness, driven by rising needs and limited shelter and housing options. The TTRHAP offers a comprehensive, data-driven roadmap focused on prevention, crisis stabilization, supportive services, and expanding housing solutions. Through strong community collaboration and a commitment to long-term, sustainable strategies, the plan aims to meet immediate needs while building a resilient system that ensures homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. By uniting local governments, organizations, businesses, and residents, the region is taking meaningful steps to create lasting change and support its most vulnerable community members.

While this framework of the Tahoe Truckee Homeless Action Plan serves as a guiding vision to end homelessness, all future projects outlined in the Action Plan would be presented to the Town Council for consideration and support before implementation. It should be noted again that projects such as Permanent Supportive Housing, are allowed per state law, in residential neighborhoods and the Town nor County would be allowed to require approval. The Town is committed to bringing such projects forward for Council consideration in the circumstance in which government agencies are involved in moving a solution of this nature forward, however in the event of a private individual moving a solution of this nature forward, the Town and/or County would not have approval authority.

**Recommendation:**

The TTRHAP encapsulates the work of many community and regional stakeholders, working together to build a framework and roadmap for supporting and providing services to our most vulnerable community members. Therefore, staff recommend that the Town Council accept the TTRHAP with the understanding that as individual action items and projects move forward, each would be brought forward to the Town Council for consideration and direction. In addition, staff recommends that the Council authorize a budget appropriation of \$25,000 to support a funding partnership for the continuation of the TTHAC with next steps focused on implementation of action plan strategies. Finally, staff recommends that the Town Council provide direction for staff, The Town Manager and Chief of Police, to continue representing the Town as part of the TTHAC with Town prioritization and focus on navigation center, given this is a key missing solution in the region and generally supported based on community feedback, as well as focus on continued community engagement and outreach for specifically for navigation centers as well as all aspects of the TTRHAP and general understanding of unhoused as highlighted as areas of continued interest in community feedback.

**Priority:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Investment	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Core Service

**Fiscal Impact:** Staff is asking Council to authorize budget appropriation of \$25,000 to support partnership funding support for the continuation of the TTHAC with focus on implementation of the action plan. This amount has been included in the Draft FY 2025/26 Operating Budget that will be brought to Council at a later date for review and approval.

If the action plan is approved, there may be additional financial commitments asked of the Town for implementation of certain items. Those will be analyzed and brought to Council as the committee continues their work.

**Public Communication:** Community Workshop (April 3), community survey, and this posting.

**Attachments:**

1. Truckee Tahoe Homeless Action Plan
2. Agnew Beck Consulting summary of Community input
3. April 3, 2025 Community Workshop Presentation