

Prepared for the City of Reno September 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting

# Affordable Housing



The Reno Initiative  
FOR SHELTER & EQUALITY

# Overview

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# The Reno Initiative

FOR SHELTER & EQUALITY

## Community Solutions for Global Issues



**RISE and Dine**



**Free Market**



**Giving Gardens**



# RISE Founders



**Housing Coordinator**  
Director of Market Operations

[katie@renoinitiative.org](mailto:katie@renoinitiative.org)

**Katie Colling.** Directing her energy toward community empowerment comes as a second nature. Katie has been a Founder, Vice-President, and Director of Market Operations for the Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality since July of 2012. Her donation management lead to thousands of hungry families receiving a meal each Saturday at Rise and Dine. She manages ten to twenty rotating volunteers each week to serve more than 200 clients at each potluck, has distributed over 750 bags of clothing, and 230 bins of hygiene items per year. Her previous ventures have included the sharing of resources as co-owner of Just Between Friends Reno. She has an Associates Degree in Occupational Studies, with five years of paralegal experience.



**Executive Director**  
Community Building Director

[Ben@renoinitiative.org](mailto:Ben@renoinitiative.org)

**Benjamin Castro.** Negotiating between all stakeholders leads Ben to create sustainable communication between diverse organizations and individuals. His coordination efforts founding the Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality have depended his local knowledge about services and the demographic we interact with weekly. He creates comprehensive guidance procedures in areas of payroll, benefits, eligibility, and other human resource components. He has extensive human resources experience, and a Bachelors in Economics from the University of Nevada Reno.



**Facility Staff**

**Arthur Gies.** As a founding member of RISE and Dine he dedicates 30 hours a week to our efforts. He is a veteran of the Navy and current recipient of a Restart Voucher from the City of Reno. Passion for the community fuels his direct action.



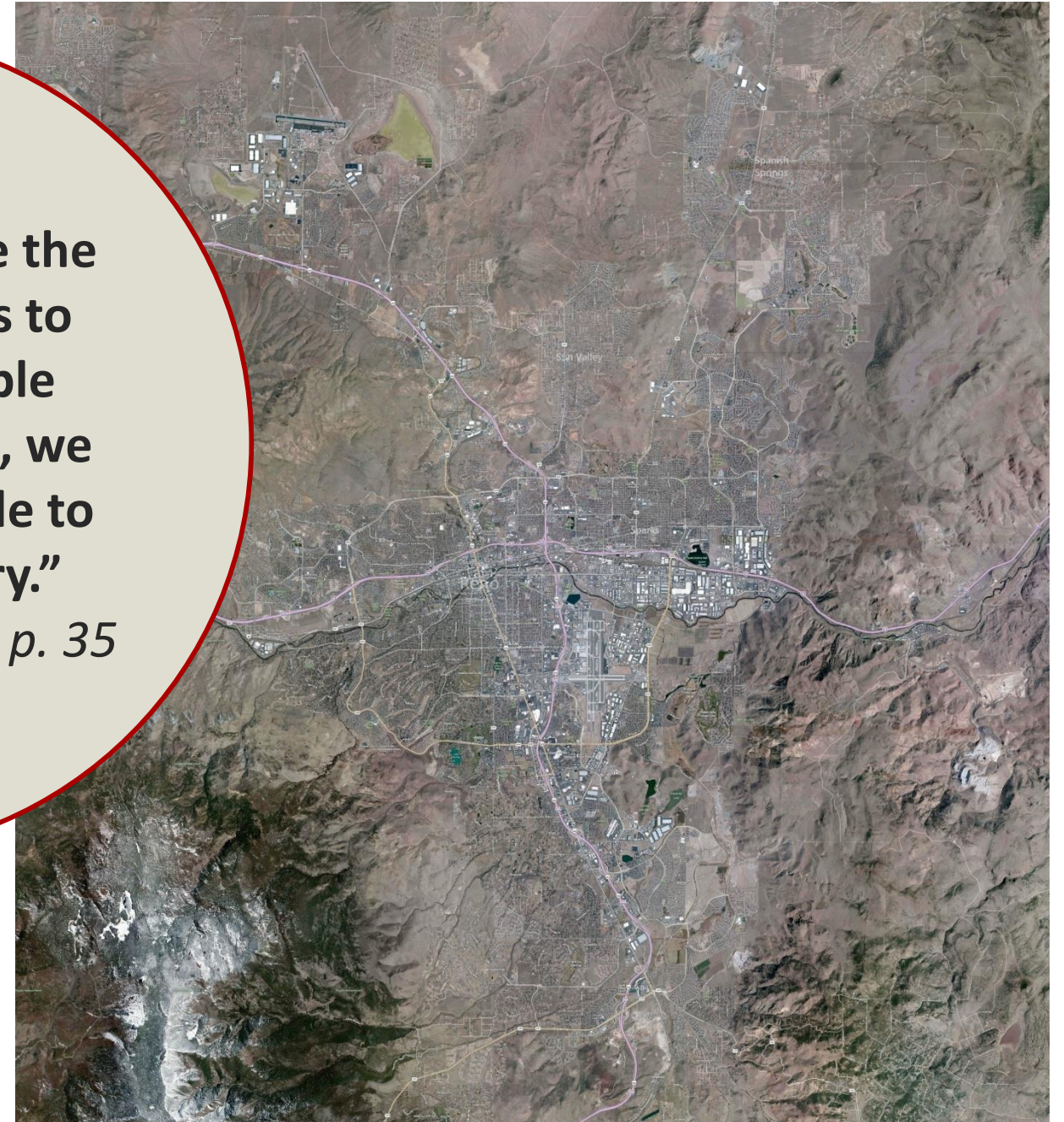
# Reno's Community Crisis

## Metro Area Map

**“Consider Inclusionary Housing Policies that Mandate a percentage of affordable housing in new developments”**  
- RAAH 2016 Report p. 36

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**“Housing – Despite the NHD’s best efforts to increase affordable housing in Nevada, we are losing the battle to increase inventory.”**  
- RAAH 2016 Report p. 35



# People who are Under-housed

**\*4072**  
**Documented**

**3680**

People  
living in  
weeklies  
or motels

**452**

Emergency  
shelter beds  
with professional  
onsite services

**844**

Transitional  
housing units

**RISE note** – We know from case management that the real numbers are higher. Unchallenged landlords enforce limitations on the number of children, refuse to put anything in writing, and other illegal rental practices. These numbers also fail to capture poverty in suburbs and outlying settlements with lower visibility.

[\\*Reno Alliance for the Homeless 2016 Report](#)

# Reno's Community Crisis

## One Houseless Person Costs the Community



Total Cost:

**\$300,350 to \$648,850** per year

See appendix for more statistics from the 2016 RAAH Report

# Our Next Solution

Living  Room

A housing and community-building space



# Living Room Plan

**Goal: To get people inside by Fall of 2016, before the cold hits.**

Our game plan is as follows:



**Gather resources to provide people with transitional housing vouchers**  
Approximately \$3000 per family for 3-4 months.



**Master Lease a house for 5-8 people**  
A total of \$23,000 for one year of operating costs and initial expenses.



**Raise resources to obtain a building and property large enough for 20-40 people**  
Estimated \$300,000 to \$1,000,000 to purchase.



**Hire staff and implement community-building**  
Including crowd funding, resident run programs, sustainability models, and services. The projected budget is \$506,000 per year.

# Living Room Plan

## Phase 1: Housing and Voucher Program (Active Now)

For our transitional houseless population that do not qualify for public assistance, or worse, do not know that they qualify for assistance, getting off the streets is the first step towards independence. Once placed in a stable environment, they can begin to escape the tyranny of the moment and plan for a sustainable future.

We will target low income adults (0-50% AMI) ages 18 and over who have fallen through the cracks of our public assistance system. Once a person is approved for a **Living Room voucher**, they are assigned a case manager who helps them find temporary housing and other qualifying resources. Additionally, they will work with an employment specialist who will assist them. Depending on each person, the length of the voucher will be from 3 - 8 months until they can assume rental payments themselves. We will be extremely selective in choosing people to sponsor with a focus on those who are employable, awaiting public assistance to commence, or who are actively involved in community-building.

While we are fundraising for housing vouchers, we will be saving to secure a long-term lease or purchase a spacious home. If by November 1, 2016 we are unable to secure property, we will accept applications for more Living Room housing vouchers.



# Living Room Plan

## Phase 2: Affordable Housing and Case Management

Once we can secure a long-term site, we will host as many people as comfortably possible. RISE will master lease the Living Room site and will sub-let to each resident using the [residual income approach](#), assuming they have any income at all. However, our priority will not be collecting rent. Without the pressure of assuming rental payments in 4 - 8 months, people can focus on healing their psyche and begin rebuilding their lives.

Our case managers staff, workforce development, and this community will be at their side to build them up for a more connected and secure future.



### Phase Two Staffing

- Housing Director & Director of Market Operations (40 hours)
- Community-Development Manager & Human Resources (40 hours)
- Communications Director & Volunteer Manager (30 hours)
- Case Manager (30 hours)
- Intake Specialist & Free Market Coordinator (30 hours)
- Facilities Staff & Neighborhood Liaison (30 hours)
- Facilities Staff & Arts and Event Director (30 hours)
- Facilities Staff & Property Safety (30 hours)



# Living Room Overview

## Community Process

We will host numerous workshops to help people recover from the trauma of poverty, including pet therapy, garden therapy, art and music therapy, yoga therapy, and culinary therapy. Additionally, we will offer workshops on basic financial management and home economics. The residents will be responsible for the cleanliness and appearance of the Living Room based on a weekly shared-responsibilities schedule.

RISE will move our current operations and Board meetings into the Living Room to educate through demonstration. Residents will be encouraged to attend Staff and Board meetings to offer suggestions for improvement and actively participate in executing and enhancing RISE operations. We will require residents who are unemployed to volunteer for up to 20 hours a week at the RISE community service projects: **RISE and Dine, Free Market, and Giving Gardens**. As with any workplace, there will be room for advancement to include title promotion and, if possible, paid positions.

Involved people develop a sense of ownership through community service. They will develop marketable workforce skills while achieving health and well-being. Their tenure in the Living Room will serve as a place to heal and as a place to establish both rental and employment history.

# Living Room Plan

## Favorable Outcomes

Understandably, many will be anxious to find employment and move out on their own once they are stabilized. We strongly encourage and promote them to do so. We will work with those residents to develop their résumé and provide letters of recommendation. We will also ask graduating persons to participate in replacing themselves in the organization and assist us in actively recruiting for the next sponsorship.

As time moves forward, we expect that some of our residents will find employment but would prefer to stay at the Living Room. Once it has been firmly established that the current residents can be responsible for the maintenance and financial management of the property, we will transfer the property into a community land trust and/or help them form a workers collective to own and operate the home.

Then the RISE team can find another property and replicate the model.



# Living Room Plan

## Financial Summary

### Donation Policies

All donations received by the Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality go directly to helping people. We allocate 10% of all donations from our Move your Mountain campaign to the Phase One Voucher Program and the remaining 90% goes to savings for phase two. [Move Your Mountain Link HERE](#)

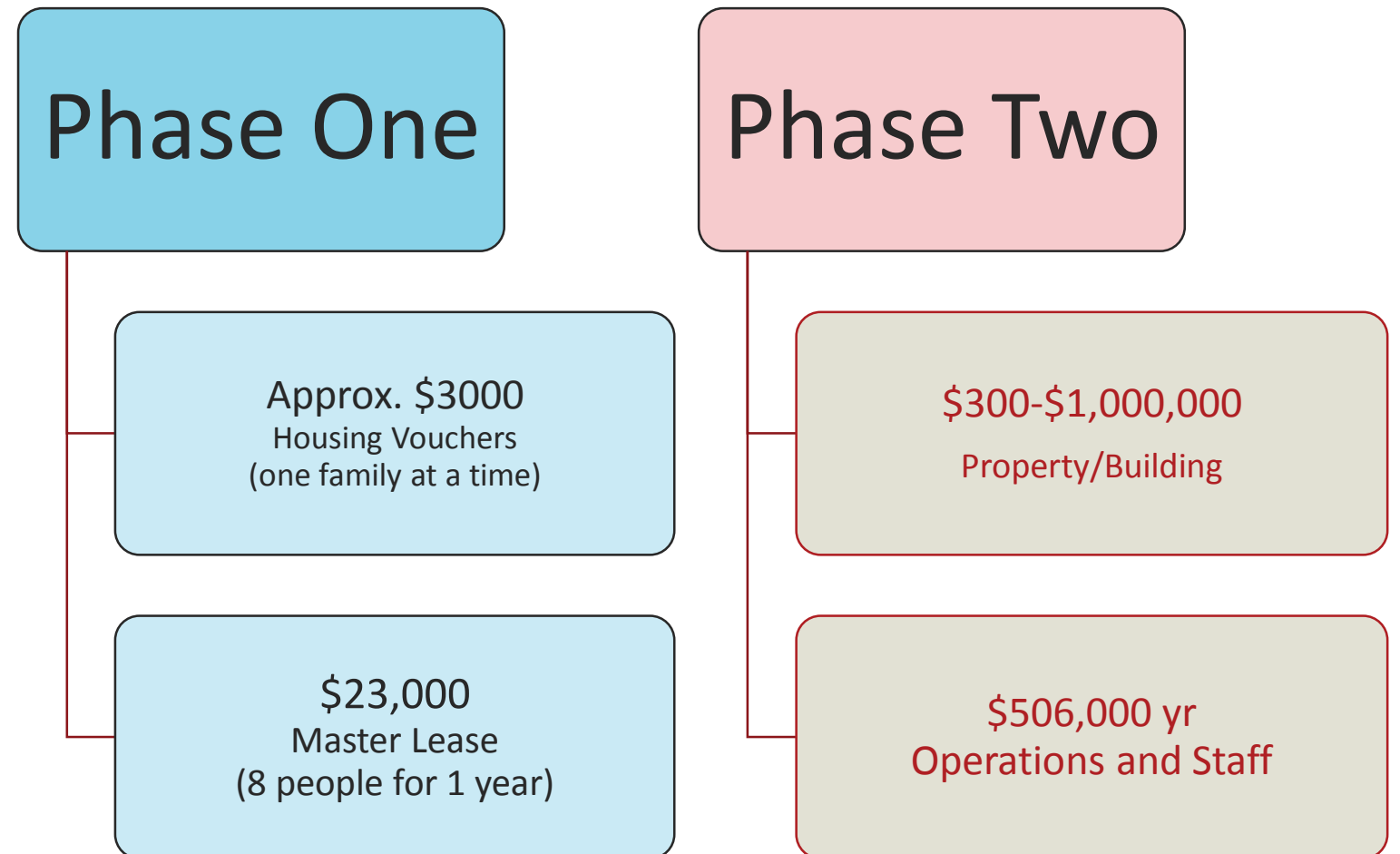
### Funding Trigger Points

#### Phase One - Housing Vouchers:

November 1st, 2016 we will use the greater of \$3,000 or 10% to move people inside. If we have raised \$23,000, we will lease a residential home for up to eight people.

#### Phase Two - Fund the Project:

Full time staff to provide case management in a facility for twenty or more people. Leased or purchased building.



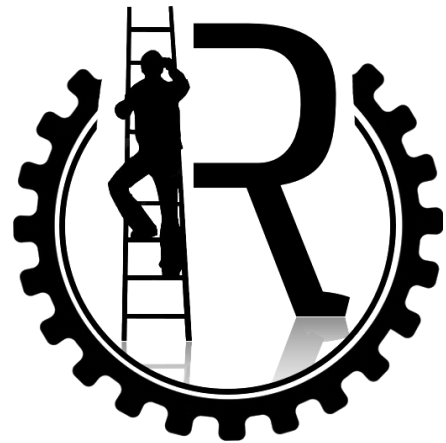
Detailed plans available by private request



# Project Development Program Documents ready for implementation:

- **Program Outline**
  - Projected Budget
  - Culture Description
  - Intake Procedures
  - Code of Conduct
  - Share Responsibilities Policy
  - Health and Safety Guidelines
- **Policy and Procedure Manuals**
  - Employee Handbook
  - Funding Proposal
  - Disciplinary and Appeals Procedures
- **Job Descriptions**
  - Shelter Manager
  - Intake Staff
  - Facility Staff
  - Case Manager
  - Workforce Development Manager
  - Communications Director
  - Arts and Events Manager
  - Farm and Garden Manager
  - Neighborhood Liaison
  - Kitchen Manager
- **Resident Management**
  - Risk Assessment Guide
  - Weekly Safety Checklist
  - Staff Organizational Details
  - Resident Handbook
  - Room Application
  - Bill of Rights & Responsibilities
  - Activities Schedule
- **Department Handbooks**
  - House Management
  - Intake
  - Facilities
  - Case Management
  - Workforce Development
  - Communications Department
  - Arts and Events
  - Farm and Garden
  - Neighborhood Liaison
  - Kitchen and Pantry
- **Workforce Development Documents**
  - Workforce Development Program Outline
  - Grant Committee Instructions





# The Reno Initiative

## FOR SHELTER & EQUALITY



Reno Initiative for Shelter & Equality  
Housing Coordinator  
Director of Market Operations

[katie@renoinitiative.org](mailto:katie@renoinitiative.org)



Reno Initiative for Shelter & Equality  
Executive Director  
Community Building Director

[ben@renoinitiative.org](mailto:ben@renoinitiative.org)

# RISE Team



Chaplin Neighborhood Liaison

**Jennifer Cassady** is a multi-religious interfaith seminarian at Starr King School for the Ministry and The Chaplaincy Institute. Jennifer has a passion for community ministry, countering oppression, and leading spiritual practice with children. In the role of chaplain she sees herself as a keeper of the sacred amidst the commonplace. She works to create a mobile sanctuary for those she encounters offering an invitation to the holy, in whatever way they experience divinity. Her work is predominantly with people struggling with poverty and homelessness and those who work closely with them. She is on course to graduate with a Masters of art in Social Change and ordain as an interfaith minister in the fall of 2017.



Intake Staff Market Manager

**Shalise Ptak.** Drawing on both her parenting experiences and time in the classroom with kindergarteners, Shalise exudes a cheerful patience. Her personal story of empowerment from less than ideal circumstances is an inspiration to the young adults who need this shelter to get on their feet. She rose out of hardship to shine as the wonderful woman she is today while gardening, making art, preparing food for potlucks, and inspiring community sharing.



Facility Staff

**Sarah Real.** Clocking in over a thousand hours at 260 community potlucks for Reno's homeless population, Sarah has built the experience to provide knowledgeable customer service for our unique clients. She has been organizing donations for the Free Markets at events at our satellite locations and the VOA shelter since June of 2015. Her work at Be The Change Project educates students about permaculture and advocacy fosters the community centered model that brings our clients success.



Communications Director

**Jay Kolbet-Clausell.** Founding community groups with hospitality and technology has grounded his efforts to build more resilient neighborhoods in the Truckee Meadows. He pursued relief work in southern China, West Africa, and the American South following Hurricane Katrina before returning home to complete his university program. Jay managed relief distribution in the aftermath of Katrina cleaning out 419 houses, twenty churches, nine businesses, six civic centers, and serving over 40,000 meals by the end of November. He is an active Rotarian and local foster parent. He is starting coursework for a Master of Social Work Fall 2016.



# RISE Team



UNR Intern Field Education Program

**Karri Lynn.** She is enrolled in the MSW internship program. Through UNR. She has a BSW minor in addiction treatment and has nearly completed her Master of Social Work.



Faculty Staff Arts and Events

**Jounda Strong.** Artist at Reno Art Works and consistent Volunteer. Past experience with service organizations in California.



Facility Partner Gardens and Pets

**Ted Levatter.** RISE board member providing locally grown produce and strategic knowledge. Director of Homer J. Senior Dog Sanctuary.



Hosting Volunteers  
for Four Years

# Reno's Community Crisis

## Appendix

### RAAH 2016 Report

- Compiled for the Washoe County Board of Commissioners by the Reno Area Alliance for the Homeless (RAAH)
- RAAH is a government formed coalition of 40 agencies.
- Point in Time Count – a yearly winter exercise to count the number of homeless on the streets. This national effort underestimates the number of people in need but provides us some information about urban poverty. January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 found 132 individuals on a night with 452 people in the local shelter, and 392 in transitional housing programs. 3,680 people were reported in weekly motels. 4,072 were identified as under-housed.
- **Need is increasing.** Point in time shelter plus transitional housing figures have increased from 695 to 844 over the last six years.
- **Need is increasing.** Persons in weekly motel's has increased from 2,569 in 2010 to 3,680 in 2016. The number of children in weeklies has nearly doubled from 576 to 1,080 in the same time period.
- "100% of properties with rental assistance had a waitinglist."
- 10% increase in rental rates for affordable properties since 2013
- 3% increase in average wages over the past two years.
- The attempts at coordinating data and intake just got off the ground but no transparency has been initiated for the general public or to provide advocacy for program recipients.
- RAAH goals embracing the 'Housing First' philosophy
  - 50 transitional housing units for youth 24 and younger.
  - 1,000 affordable units for seniors
  - 200 rapid rehousing units
  - 610 permanent supportive housing units
- Needs 75 case managers to help the homeless and the under-housed access needed benefits and services. Each would have a 20 client caseload.
- "Time to stop 'Planning' and start 'Doing'"