PART B

Community Engagement: A strategy for increasing resources to prevent and end homelessness in S. Nevada

PRESENTED TO:

S. NV. REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION

COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2013

Moonridge Group Philanthropy Advisors

Project Overview

□ Long-term Goal

To increase advocacy, charitable giving, political will, public funding, and broad public support for alleviating, preventing and ultimately ending homelessness in Southern Nevada.

□ Key Strategy to Reach Goal

Develop and execute a community engagement plan (CEP) that unifies partners (existing and new; public and private; across sectors) in a shared commitment to alleviating, preventing and ultimately ending homelessness in Southern Nevada.

□ Approach

■ Examine community engagement initiatives and models from similarly situated metropolitans (i.e. communities with high homeless populations that are demonstrating progress).

■ Identify common, best-practices across initiatives and models.

■ Engage local experts, providers and stakeholders who can inform best 'next steps'.

■ Avoid service provision analysis.

□ Outcomes

■ Identify opportunities and appropriate role for community engagement to support Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC) Committee on Homelessness' (CoH) Mission.

■ Present 'next steps' to guide SNRPC CoH as it begins developing and executing a comprehensive community engagement plan; make key recommendations for SNRPC CoH to consider and adopt that will enhance community engagement in the near and long-terms.
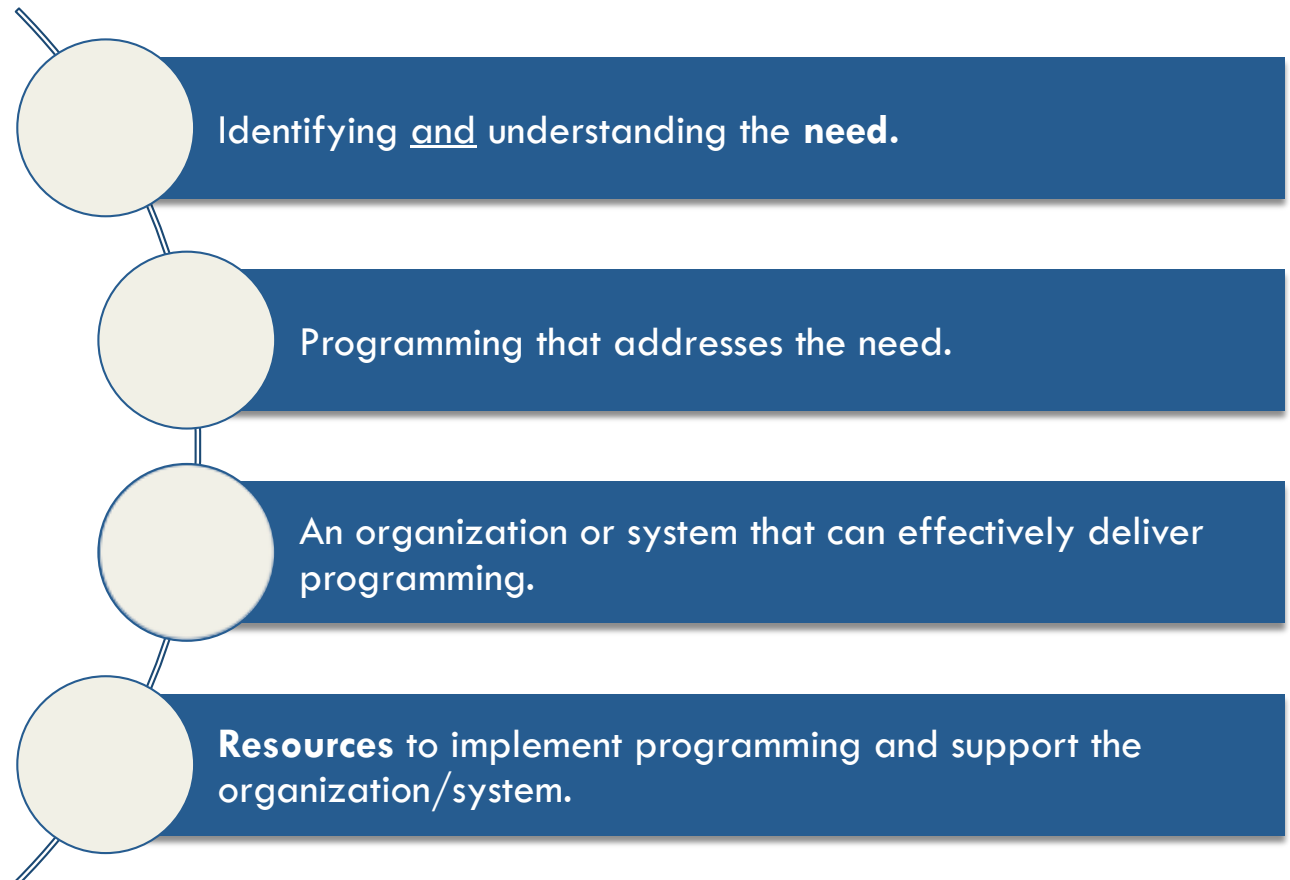
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Community Engagement in Context

Community Engagement in Context:
the role of resource development in social change

Progress in Complex Social Issues Requires:

Identifying <u>and</u> understanding the **need.**

Programming that addresses the need.

An organization or system that can effectively deliver programming.

Resources to implement programming and support the organization/system.

Community Engagement in Context:
community engagement = resource development

◻ **What is community engagement?**

Community engagement, or external relations, is the practice of building strong relationships with outside constituencies and building broad understanding about an issue and why it matters.

◻ **Who are the audiences?**

By definition, community engagement focuses on individuals and organizations that are not <u>directly</u> employed or otherwise embedded in an organization or system.

◻ **Why practice and perfect community engagement?**

To build public understanding and support to alleviate, prevent and ultimately end homelessness in Southern Nevada.
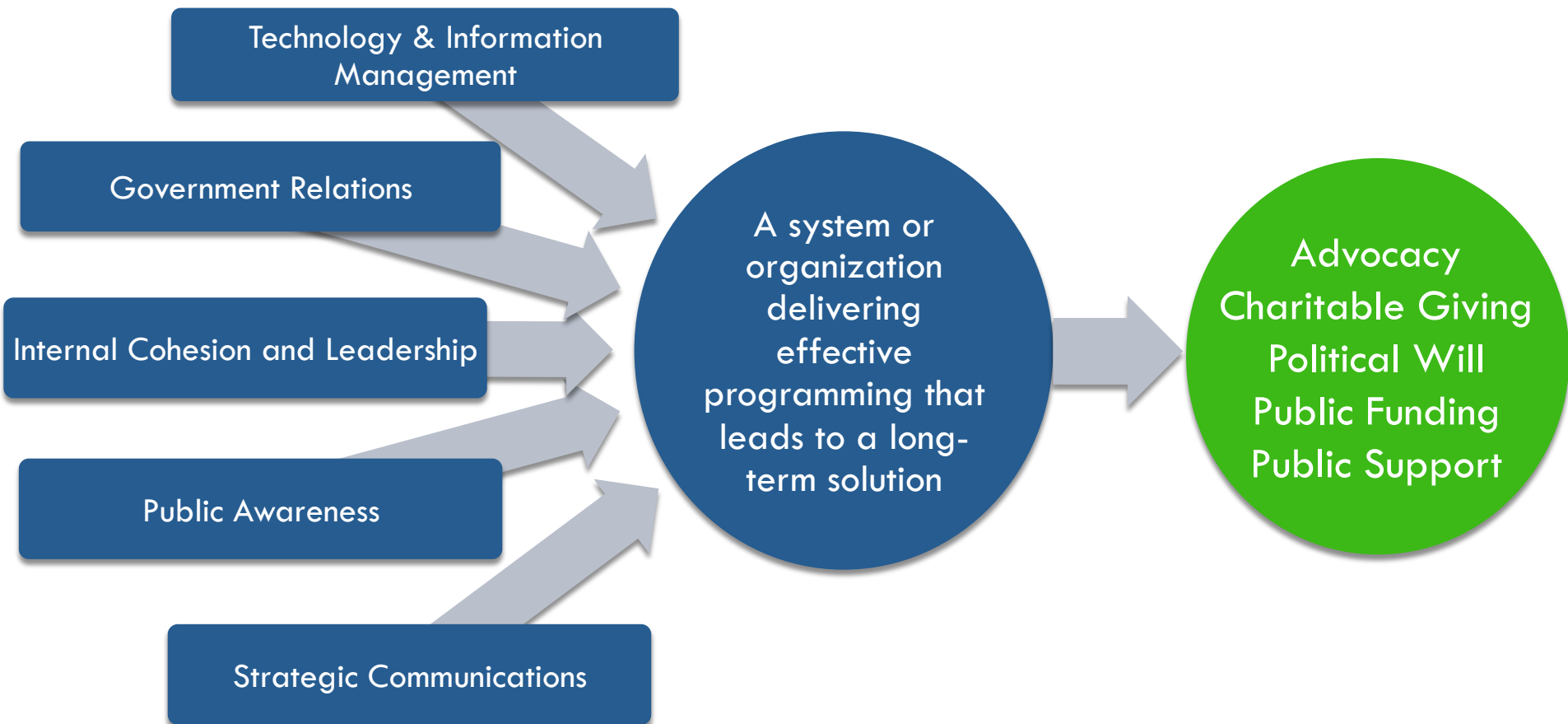

Enhancing Community Engagement Increases

Advocacy • Charitable Giving • Political Will & Public Funding • Public Support

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Community Engagement in Context:
external relations in process

Technology & Information Management

Government Relations

Internal Cohesion and Leadership

Public Awareness

Strategic Communications

A system or organization delivering effective programming that leads to a long-term solution

Advocacy
Charitable Giving
Political Will
Public Funding
Public Support

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SNRPC CoH and a Commitment to Community Engagement

A Commitment to Community Engagement:
CoH's policy statement, a sample

- About

  The Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC) Committee on Homelessness (CoH) was established in September 2003 to oversee, coordinate, collaborate, plan and address homeless issues and activities at a regional level. In order to leverage the renewed national prioritization and shifting landscape in homeless resources, along with its own near-decade of experience and considerable progress, CoH is committed to enhancing its community engagement (CE) activities. CoH's 2013 community engagement plan (CEP) is designed to support *Help Hope Home*, the region's strategic plan to end homelessness.

- Mission

  CoH seeks to build enduring public trust, support and understanding to alleviate, prevent and ultimately end homelessness in Southern Nevada.

- Vision

  For every person and business in Southern Nevada to actively support *Help Hope Home*.

CoH's Community Engagement Goal: To increase advocacy, charitable giving, political will, public funding, and broad public support for alleviating, preventing and ultimately ending homelessness in Southern Nevada.

A Commitment to Community Engagement:
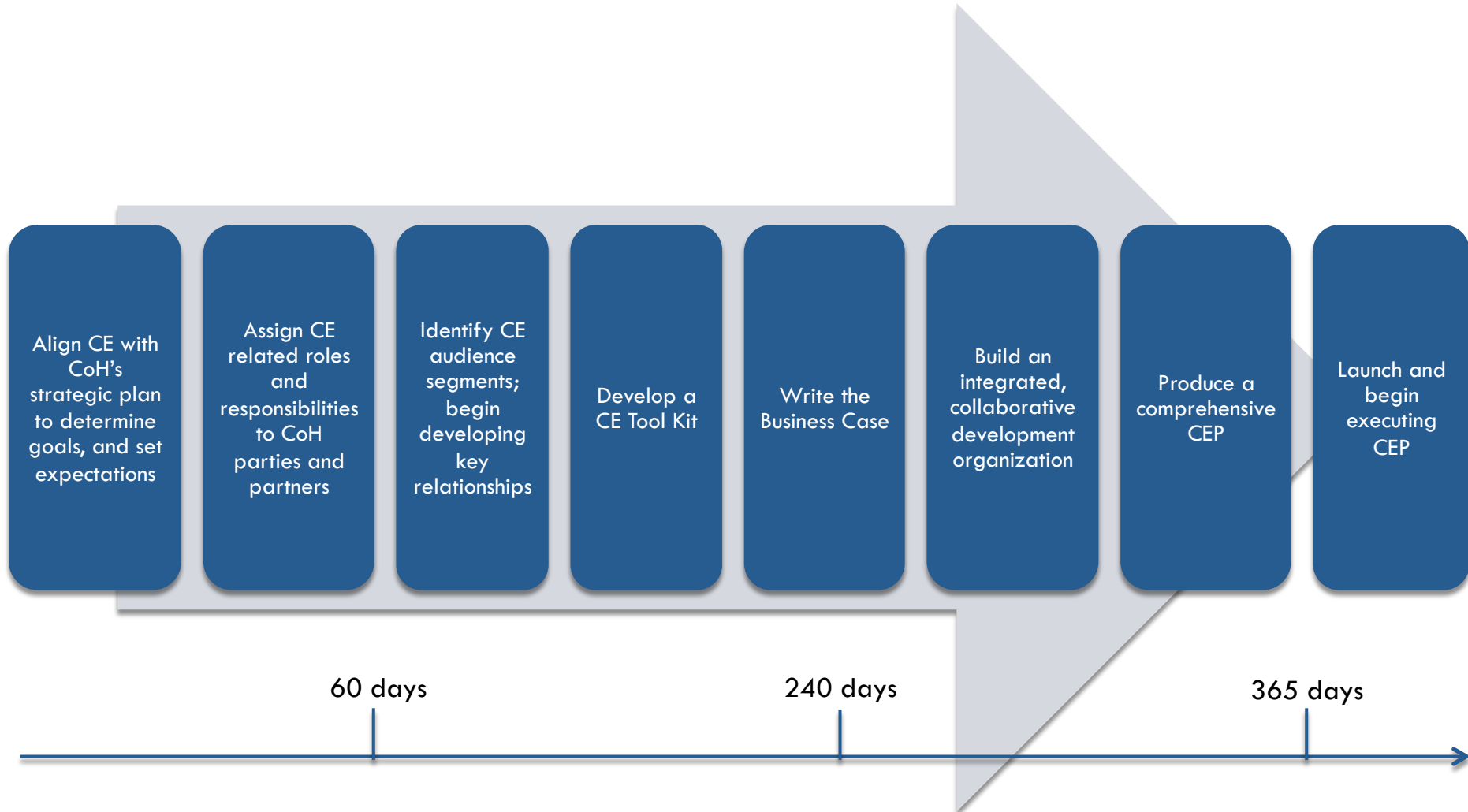## an eight step roadmap

1. Align CE with strategic plan to determine goals and set expectations.

2. Assign CE related roles and responsibilities to CoH parties and partners.

3. Identify all relevant CE audiences; begin developing relationships with key stakeholders and influencers.

4. Develop a CE Tool Kit that includes a homelessness cost study, a program study, a case survey, a collection of personal stories, etc.

5. Write the Business Case for ending homelessness in S. Nevada.

6. Work towards building an integrated, collaborative development organization that can administer CEP.

7. Produce a comprehensive CEP that integrates all research and work to date.

8. Launch and begin executing CEP; measure progress using performance indicators and adjust as needed.

Key Recommendations

- Let a comprehensive strategy guide all engagement; avoid ad hoc communications.

- Every *engagement* should answer:
  - Why should I care?
  - How can I help?

- Explain why <u>now</u> is the time to end homelessness.

- Stay on message, and leverage every opportunity to deliver it.

- Clear, consistent communications are key to success.

A Commitment to Community Engagement:
sequence of major steps

| Align CE with CoH's strategic plan to determine goals, and set expectations | Assign CE related roles and responsibilities to CoH parties and partners | Identify CE audience segments; begin developing key relationships | Develop a CE Tool Kit | Write the Business Case | Build an integrated, collaborative development organization | Produce a comprehensive CEP | Launch and begin executing CEP |

60 days   240 days   365 days

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Seven Steps to Implementation and Launch

Step 1:
Align CE with strategic plan to determine goals, and set expectations

Explanation
The best communications plans - internal or external - are highly strategic and purpose driven. Your CEP should be integrated into, and directly support CoH's near and long-term strategic plan goals.

Sub-steps
1. CoH to review its strategic plan to identify opportunities wherein external audience could/should play major roles.
2. Prioritize the identified opportunities based on the greatest ability of external audiences to support and/or advance.
3. Set a CE related goal for each specific opportunity.

Required for Implementation
Identifying the 2-3 best opportunities to leverage support from external forces.

Home for Good, L.A.'s Action Plan to End Chronic and Veteran Homelessness by 2016, is supported by two primary CE messages:

◘ The cost savings of ending chronic homelessness in L.A.;

◘ For too long the L.A. area has been the nation's homeless capital.

Both of these messages directly speak to Home for Good's Mission, as well as its strategic plan. The former focuses on a specific stated and measureable near-term goal, while the latter appeals to long-term support for Home for Good.

Step 2:
Assign CE related roles and responsibilities to CoH parties and partners

Explanation

CoH's CE initiative will be a complex effort, made even more difficult by the considerable diversity of stakeholders and the challenging nature of the topic. Thus, the team tasked with CE development and execution is key to success. Further, the leadership team will need to be supported by all CoH members as well as related parties.

Sub-steps

1. Determine who can be responsible for overseeing CoH's CE. The ideal person understands the concerns and needs of each audience group, and also has the capacity to be involved in primary decision making to ensure that all audiences are considered.

2. Assign supporting roles, complete with responsibilities, to CoH members.

Required for Implementation

A single person who can oversee CoH's CE initiative; all CoH members being engaged in the process.

CoH members, along with staff, already have considerable obligations, both direct and indirect to homelessness. As such, there may be no single person who can effectively oversee CE.

If this is the case, then CoH should consider:

□ Appointing a special sub-committee including members and staff to oversee CE; and/or

□ Retaining an outside professional services firm to manage daily CE efforts and operations

Step 3:

Identify all relevant CE audiences; begin developing key relationships

Explanation

It is critical to understand who CoH's audiences are, and what each audience's concerns and needs are.

Sub-steps

1. Organize the individuals, industries, groups and organizations who are most effected by homelessness into audience segments.
2. Consider each audience segment's ability to help or hinder CoH's strategic plan.
3. Identify what motivates each audience, along with their capacity and mechanisms to help or hinder.
4. Begin developing meaningful, transparent relationships with key audiences (i.e. the audiences that have the greatest ability to help or hinder); consider forming a 'blue ribbon task force' and inviting key influences to join.

Required for Implementation

A specific strategy for each audience, complete with specific performance indicators and expectations.

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, one of nation's most important advocates and supporters of homeless, commissioned a study in 2010 as a lead up to its support for L.A.'s Home for Good. The report produced by FSG Social Impact Advisors found that "increased political will and funding" was the second most identified challenge in L.A. to success of supportive housing.

The importance of engaging the electorate, and ultimately elected and public officials, cannot be understated.

Step 4:
Develop a CE Tool Kit

Explanation

Your CE Tool Kit is the collection of supporting documents and materials that substantiate CoH's Mission and strategic plan. Specifically, the Tool Kit should demonstrate:

☐ The need for increased assistance;

☐ How the proposed programming (i.e. strategic plan) can produce a solution.

Sub-steps

1. Survey the national research landscape for usable material.

2. Determine what original work CoH needs to produce; make a production work plan for needed materials.

Required for Implementation

CE Tool Kit should include:

☐ The research and reports (external and internal) that led CoH to its current strategic plan;

☐ The most current version of CoH's strategic plan;

☐ Relevant data sets, such as the point-in-time count;

☐ A series of firsthand accounts from people effected by homelessness (e.g. current and former homeless persons, service providers, leading advocates, etc.).

Home for Good, L.A.'s Action Plan to End Chronic and Veteran Homelessness by 2016, has an extensive Tool Kit, which includes:

☐ Home for Good Strategic Plan, complete with hundreds of signatories

☐ "HUD-VASH Boot Camp," a learning tool to help people understand HUD-VASH

☐ "Facing Homelessness," an education curriculum to help educators engage youth in discussions about homelessness

☐ Homeless Cost Study

☐ "Where We Sleep," the findings of an economic roundtable about Homelessness in L.A. area

☐ "Are Housing First Models Effective?" a case demonstrating the effectiveness of housing first models

☐ "Tackling Homeless in Los Angeles," a policy review of the success of policing interventions

☐ 2011 Greater L.A. Homeless Count Report

Step 5:

Write the Business Case for ending homelessness in S. Nevada

Explanation

A business case captures the reasoning for an initiative or organization. CoH's Business Case will need to justify that an effective solution is possible, and that now is the time to pursue that solution. Major messages should include:

☐ S. Nevada can no longer afford to operate at the status quo;

☐ A new shift in national policy and funding makes now and important opportunity for local progress; and

☐ Additional funding – whether federal, state, local or philanthropic – is necessary for meaningful progress.

Sub-steps

1. Review and aggregate existing data and research; identify gaps, and make a production work plan; draft.

2. Once drafted, host focus groups within each audience segment; the key to having Business Case embraced is by actively engaging and including audiences.

Required for Implementation

A complete, well-reasoned Business Case that is approved and supported by key external stakeholders.

The Business Case for Home for Good, L.A.'s Action Plan to End Chronic and Veteran Homelessness, is based on six (6) primary points:

1. Homeless people are dying – studies show that living on the streets can take up to 25 years off a person's life.

2. We're the homeless capital – Los Angeles is the homeless capital of the nation, with over 51,000 homeless on any given night.

3. We spend $875 million in public resources each year on homeless – these funds can be targeted to end homeless for good.

4. We know what works – permanent housing with supportive services is a proven model for ending homelessness, with a success rate of over 85%.

5. We have the resources to end homelessness – it is over 40% cheaper to house people than to leave them on our streets, where they cycle through our jails and emergency rooms.

6. We're part of a national movement – the federal government sparked a national momentum by releasing Opening Doors, a plan to end chronic and veteran homelessness in 5 years.

Step 6:

Build an integrated, collaborative development organization

Explanation

Local governments' ability to solicit and accept external resources is highly restricted. Thus, it is necessary to develop an external resource development organization to support CoH; it is critical that the organization be fully aligned with CoH such that is can leverage the strengths and capabilities of the existing organization.

Sub-steps

1. Survey existing organizations to determine if any have the capacity (i.e. reach, resources, track record, etc.) to serve as the development organization.
2. If an existing organization exists, begin integrating and further developing capacity as needed.
3. If an organization does not exist, consider CoH's ability to organize and manage an external partner.

Required for Implementation

An organization with sufficient flexibility to serve as an external resource development office that directly supports CoH's Mission.

Facing similar challenges, many public universities have formed private foundations to support them. While technically external, these foundations operate within the overall university structure and are closely aligned with the university's strategic plan and management. These foundations are specifically organized to provide development and stewardship services for donors and partners.

Step 7:

Produce a comprehensive CEP that reflects all efforts to date

Explanation

A comprehensive CEP will bring together all of CoH's planning and preparation in a single cohesive strategy that can guide the CE initiative's launch and execution. The CEP should directly support CoH's strategic plan, and should reflect all of the content and recommendations discovered through the first six steps of this process.

Sub-steps

1. Complete each of the first six steps detailed in this process.
2. Produce a clear, workable plan that can be measured for performance, and adjusted at needed.
3. Consider the organization's capacity to implement and execute when setting goals – it is better to do a few things exceptionally well than many things sub-par.

Ready for Implementation

The CEP will be ready for implementation when it answers the following question for each of CoH's CE goals: *CoH's CE efforts will be successful if (audience segment) supports CoH's Mission by (types of resources) in (the amount of) by (timeframe)*.

Communications plans have a tendency to get overly complex quickly. Throughout the first six steps of this process, focus on how each can ultimately factor into the below outline. Following this outline throughout the process should help focus the final plan:

- ☐ Determine goals

- ☐ Identify and profile audiences

- ☐ Develop messages

- ☐ Select communication channels (e.g. media types, spokespersons, etc.)

- ☐ Establish partnerships that will support goals

- ☐ Plan to evaluate and make mid-course corrections

Conclusion

- ◘ Long-term Goal

  To increase increase advocacy, charitable giving, political will, public funding, and broad public support for alleviating, preventing and ultimately ending homelessness in Southern Nevada.

- ◘ Next Steps

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