Memorandum

Date: December 12, 2014

To: Clare Healy, Smart Growth America

From: Kimberly H. Robinson, Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency

Re: Progress Report #3 – Planning for Economic and Fiscal Health Workshop

At the end of November 2013 Smart Growth America provided the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA) with a ‘Report and Suggested Next Steps’ to further economic and fiscal health in the Truckee Meadows. Since that time TMRPA and its partners throughout the Truckee Meadows Region (the Region) have been working to make progress on the recommendations, which are summarized below:

- Focus on “Low Hanging Fruit” that yields high returns for small investments such as complete streets and encouraging the growing success of Midtown with lighting and sidewalk improvements.
- Encourage infill development with incentives and public investment.
- Capitalize on the Truckee River by strategically utilizing publicly owned properties, enhancing public amenities and raising the quality of development and flood improvements.
- Use the arts (and specifically industrial arts) as an economic tool to foster placemaking and attract Millennials.
- Consider using scenario planning to evaluate alternative land use development patterns under different growth assumptions.

The following is a status report on our progress made to date:

- TMRPA has developed a community coalition to fund a Residential Land Study composed of the Washoe County School District, the Western Regional Water Commission, several local governments and TMRPA. The Residential Land Study will evaluate the current supply of residential housing in the region in relation to future demand with particular attention to potential demand changes driven by Millennials and the Baby Boomers. Additionally, this project will include the concept of alternative housing demand scenarios. These scenarios will set the stage for TMRPA’s scenario
planning effort discussed in more detail below. Conducting the Residential Land Study will provide much needed information specific to the Truckee Meadows region about the type of housing product and place desired by Millennials and the Baby Boomers and enable a more robust regional discussion about meeting demand for these housing products that are anticipated to support infill development, placemaking efforts, and capitalizing on the Truckee River that flows through the Region’s urban core. Funding for the project is estimated at $125,000.

- TMRPA continues to move forward with a scenario planning program and has identified that the scenarios developed for the Residential Land Study will feed the scenario planning program such that the scenarios developed will be utilized to evaluate economic and fiscal impacts of alternative land use patterns for future growth. Additionally, to develop a strong foundation of baseline data about the Truckee Meadows region, TMRPA continues to work on an existing conditions report that will document population, demographic, land use, transportation, infrastructure and economic development trends and establish baseline metrics against which to evaluate scenarios in addition to economic and fiscal impacts. Given that development in the Region continues to pick up, utilizing scenario planning to discuss economic and fiscal impacts of alternative land use patterns for future growth will be critical to encouraging infill development and opening a discussion about further strategies and tools to incentivize infill.

- With both the Residential Land Study and the Scenario Planning project moving forward, TMRPA staff anticipates having valuable new tools and products to discuss fiscal and economic health for the Truckee Meadows Region. These tools and products serve as the informational foundation to the update of the Truckee Meadows Region Plan, which must be updated in 2017.

Thank you again to Smart Growth America for providing us with an extremely useful technical assistance opportunity. We look forward to providing Smart Growth America the one year progress update.