

'Economic development' efforts brought about shelter's problems

Re: "It's not safe': Violent incidents have occurred at shelter in early months," April 3:

It seems the problems identified by the cities and county are symptoms of a larger problem: the region's unparalleled, unmitigated grow-at-any-cost mentality.

Maybe it's time to consider whether giving huge tax breaks to new businesses is the best plan. While it lures some to Northern Nevada, it leaves infrastructure additions up to underfunded local governments and social service agencies. And the resultant housing demand means unscrupulous landlords can raise rents, kick out tenants and make room for those who can pay more.

As urban redevelopment means low-rent housing is demolished, groups like VOA are left to deal with displaced, low- or no-income citizens, many of whom have mental health problems, which we can't afford to address.

Maybe it's time to reevaluate our "economic development" programs.

Joyce Newman, Washoe Valley