



## Roles and Responsibilities of Development Team Members

### Members of the Development Team

Throughout a supportive housing development project, most organizations will need to add various experts to the team of in-house professionals responsible for the project. Each development effort may involve all or many of the following development team members:

- **The Project Manager:** The first step when starting the housing development process is to determine whether the Project Manager role will be performed by in-house staff person, by a hired housing development consultant, or by staff of a non-profit or for-profit development partner or contractor. When making this decision, it is important to consider the Project Manager's set of responsibilities, which will typically include: assembling the development team of experts who will design, build, finance and manage the project; identifying and obtaining control of a suitable site for the housing; working with the development team, particularly the architect, to design the physical space; obtaining appropriate financing for the development from private lenders and public agencies; obtaining all design review and planning approvals from local agencies; maintaining compliance with all funders during the predevelopment and construction process; implementing and monitoring the construction process with the construction team; selecting and hiring property management services; and monitoring the property management agent as it implements initial lease-up to tenants.
- **The Developer:** The Developer is the organization designated as the lead agency on the development of the project. The Developer is ultimately responsible, whether through in-house staff or through engaging the services of a development consultant, for managing the development team and driving the development process, from the acquisition of the site through to the leasing up of the completed units. In many cases, the Developer will continue to own the project after it is completed and operational.
- **The Lead Service Provider:** This is the organization designated as the lead provider or coordinator of supportive services. In some cases this is the Developer, in other cases a Co-Developer or an agency that is contracted to provide the supportive services. The Service Provider is responsible for development of the annual service plan and may be the grantee of supportive service funds for the project. The Service Provider may subcontract or partner with other service agencies for the provision of specialized services (for example, for employment services or daily living skills training). The Service Provider should assure that case management services are available to all residents of the development, not just to those with identified special needs, both to eliminate any stigma associated with accessing services and to contribute to the overall stability of the project.

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Note: This document is included within the *Development and Finance* section of CSH's *Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing*, which is available at [www.csh.org/toolkit2](http://www.csh.org/toolkit2). This document has been adapted from CSH's publication *Not a Solo Act*, which is available at [www.csh.org/publications](http://www.csh.org/publications).

- **The Property Manager:** The Property Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of the property, including maintenance, tenant screening, leasing, rent collection, fiscal management, funder compliance reporting, and other responsibilities. In some cases this is the Developer, in other cases a Co-Developer or the Service Provider, or a professional management agent (nonprofit or for-profit) selected by the project owner, and if appropriate, the Service Provider. In all cases, the Property Manager must have demonstrated skills and experience in the management of affordable housing, and preferably will have experience in housing serving the project's target population. The experience of the Property Manager may be a factor in the scoring of the project's applications for financing. Further, the earlier the Property Manager is identified for the project, the better the Developer can take advantage of their experience and expertise in project design and operating cost estimates.
- **The Asset Manager:** The Asset Manager's primary responsibilities begin once the property is occupied. The Asset Manager acts as a financial manager for the completed development, overseeing the property management activities to ensure that the tenant occupancy levels remain high and the project performs well financially. The Asset Manager also reports information about the development to funders, in compliance with regulations associated with housing funding programs. In many instances, the Property Manager assumes the role of Asset Manager in addition to their other duties.
- **The Attorney:** An Attorney must be available to provide legal services associated with the real estate (including the acquisition of property), project financing, and organizational issues (i.e., creating a new corporation to own and manage the real estate). The Attorney should work closely with the development team to negotiate the acquisition of the site, prepare related documents, review all contracts associated with the project or development team, assure compliance with all requirements of funders and other stakeholders, and protect the lead organization from any errors or omissions, and keep the agency out of any legal trouble. The Attorney should also handle any closings on property or financing. It is important that the Attorney have experience with similar housing development activities, and ideally should be familiar with the project's primary sources of funding. Some sources, such as the Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) program, require very specialized legal advice that can be best provided by an Attorney who is experienced with the legal issues involved.
- **The Architect:** The Architect works with the development team to determine the feasibility of specific sites, create preliminary and final drawings of the project, develop construction specifications, assist with preliminary cost estimates, work with the Developer to secure local site and design approvals, and monitor construction.
- **The General Contractor:** The General Contractor is responsible for the actual construction or rehabilitation of the housing. Most housing Developers hire an outside firm through a competitive process after the Architect completes the plans and specifications for the development. Sometimes a Contractor is selected early in the predevelopment process and is a member of the development team from the beginning. The General Contractor is responsible for processing the necessary insurance coverage and building permits, contracting with subcontractors, managing the construction, and ensuring wages and labor standards are met for all construction workers. The General Contractor should have experience in the type of

development planned and understand funder requirements and procedures. Some funders may have special requirements for general contractor selection.

- **The Accountant:** The project Accountant typically provides cost certifications – such as those required for the LIHTC program – and other accounting work as required by the different funding sources in the project. You may already have an Accountant, either on staff or under contract for your agency finances, but the project Accountant is usually an independent professional consultant or firm. When selecting the accounting consultant or firm that will take on this role, make sure that they are familiar with the various requirements of both for-profit and non-profit accounting practices, as well as the unique requirements of the housing financing, particularly the LIHTC program, if the project will be utilizing that funding source.
- **Tenant Representative:** At some point during the predevelopment planning of your project, you may wish to include a Representative of the tenants you plan to house. It is essential to hear the concerns and needs of prospective tenants throughout the development process. The Representative can be included as a part of the design team and may bring an important perspective on key decisions to the group.

There will likely be many other development team members with different levels of involvement with the project, including: staff of funders and lenders, an environmental consultant, a relocation consultant, financial consultants, a marketing consultant, a community relations specialist, and surveyor, among others.

Note: CSH's *Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing*, includes documents that provide tips and considerations for selecting many of the members of the development team described above. See the tools under *Building the Development Team* within the *Development and Finance* section of the Toolkit, available at [www.csh.org/toolkit2/development](http://www.csh.org/toolkit2/development).