

HOUSING TOOLBOX

for Massachusetts Communities 

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Development Team Members

ACCOUNTANT

Responsibilities: Provides cost certifications (LIHTC) and other general accounting work, as defined by funding sources

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Usually an independent professional or firm

Phase of development process: Involved in certifying the development proforma and operating proforma costs; may continue by producing financial management reports

Capacity and experience required: Familiarity with various requirements of both for-profit and nonprofit accounting practices, as well as the unique requirements of some housing financing (LIHTC)

ARCHITECT

Responsibilities: Assists with site selection, creates preliminary and final drawings, develops construction specifications, assists with preliminary cost estimates, works with developer to secure local site and design approvals, monitors construction

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Usually an independent professional or firm, though some real estate development corporations have in-house architects

Phase of development process: Predevelopment through construction and initial occupancy; involved until the general contractor is released

Capacity and experience required: Licensed and bonded, experienced in designing family housing (especially rental), knowledgeable about target tenant population

ASSET MANAGER

Responsibilities: Oversees property manager, ensures project purpose is maintained, and manages regulatory agreements, partnership documents, and ongoing finances

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Agent of owner, may be an independent contractor; can be part of in-house staff when ownership is by a nonprofit development corporation

Phase of development process: Upon completion of development phase, though often included in initial development decisions

Capacity and experience required: Experience with nonprofit housing management, financing, and other regulatory expectations; understands needs of the target population

ATTORNEY

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Responsibilities: Provides legal services associated with the real estate, project financing, and organizational issues

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Usually an independent professional or firm

Phase of development process: May be involved in all phases of development and on retainer for needs as they arise during operations

Capacity and experience required: Experienced with real estate, housing, financing, corporate structures, partnership negotiations, etc.; knows specific funding programs and players

DEVELOPER

Responsibilities: Guides the development process

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: May be the sponsor and the owner of the real estate or a partner who will co-own the project

Phase of development process: Involved in predevelopment, development, and initial occupancy stages, and may continue as owner or co-owner

Capacity and experience required: Must have experience in every aspect of the development process; working knowledge of local building practices, political processes, and expectations; and knowledge of community leadership

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Responsibilities: Builds the project according to plans and specifications, secures bonding and insurance, manages subcontractors, and meets contracting, wage and labor obligations

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Generally an independent corporation selected by the owner and developer, but may have in-house contracting capacity

Phase of development process: If an independent contractor, usually brought in at the end of the predevelopment phase via competitive bid; may be selected in predevelopment process and involved from beginning

Capacity and experience required: Sufficient experience to meet local requirements and funders' expectations, experience with similar developments, and knowledge of target audience and project mission

OWNER

Responsibilities: Owns the project, responsible to the mortgagee and others for the financial status of building

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Often the sponsor, sometimes the developer

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Phase of development process: Involved in all phases of development and asset-management processes

Capacity and experience required: Demonstrated ability to own and manage value of the asset

PRIMARY SERVICE PROVIDER

Responsibilities: Develops service strategies and plans, identifies outside service providers, secures service funding, coordinates service delivery, maintains service records, and contracts for service evaluation

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Is often sponsor and owner of the project; may be part of an in-house team

Phase of development process: Involved from predevelopment through development and occupancy

Capacity and experience required: Must be experienced in serving target population in either the provision of services or by making referrals to outside agencies

PROJECT MANAGER/DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT

Responsibilities: Provides professional development services on the owner's behalf (i.e., acquires site, negotiates with local government, selects technical experts such as architects and accountants, coordinates the development of the design, secures general contracting services, submits necessary documents as part of the underwriting process for securing financing, coordinates owner's activities at closings, and monitors initial lease-up and occupancy process)

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: The project manager is the owner's representative, an outside entity compensated by a fee or hourly rate

Phase of development process: Involved in predevelopment and initial occupancy stages

Capacity and experience required : Must have experience in all aspects of the development process; working knowledge of local building practices, political processes and expectations; and knowledge of community leadership. Should be an effective communicator and problem solver, experienced in coordinating a number of different entities with sometimes conflicting interests and missions.

PROPERTY MANAGER

Responsibilities: Manages day-to-day operations of housing, such as leasing apartments, collecting rent, developing an operations budget, and maintenance

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: Agent of the owner, often provided by a private company, sometimes in-house staff

Phase of development process: Mostly involved once housing is occupied but may be included in earlier development decisions, particularly if contributing information to the development and operating proforma

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Capacity and experience required: Experience in managing affordable housing, understands target population and is sensitive to their needs, excellent interpersonal and communications skills, ability to collaborate effectively with service providers

SPONSOR

Responsibilities: Initiates concept and provides leadership

Relationship to sponsor, owner, developer: May also be the project owner and developer

Phase of development process: If owner, involved in all project phases; otherwise, may be involved in predevelopment and development, then leave the team or continue as a service provider once housing is occupied

Capacity and experience required: When providing leadership only during predevelopment and development phases, sponsor must have experience with the development process and building support with political and neighborhood leaders

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Please Note | Effort has been made by the author and sponsoring organizations to provide current and accurate information. However, readers should not rely on the information and are urged to review source material and consult with appropriate funding sources, practitioners and legal counsel before embarking on a particular course of action.