



Five Elements of Successful Supportive Housing Projects

1. PEOPLE:

The starting point for successful projects is a clear and thorough analysis of the characteristics and needs of the residents. Who will live in the project? What are their particular needs for space, neighborhood amenities, and services?

2. PLACE:

The project location and building (whether rehabilitation or new construction) must support the needs of the residents. The location should offer proximity to appropriate commercial and human services, transportation, and other amenities. The building itself should provide an appropriate physical facility for the residents. Unit size and amenities should be suited to the types of households (in terms of size, composition and special needs) expected to occupy them. If any on-site services are contemplated, the building must also offer non-residential space to adequately house them.

3. SUPPORT SERVICES:

The program of supportive services should match the needs of the residents of the project. Services may cover a wide range of areas depending on the nature of the residents needs including food preparation and service, intensive assistance with activities of daily living, counseling, case management, employment training and placement, and medical services, for example. Regardless, the program ideally makes cost-effective use of off-site services and referral relationships as well as on-site services.

4. MONEY:

The project must be financially viable. There must be adequate sources of capital financing available to cover all necessary development costs. If development financing involves debt, there must be adequate net operating income to pay debt service. Project operations must be underwritten to ensure that income projections accurately reflect the availability of subsidies and the ability of unsubsidized tenants to pay rents consistent with local market conditions. Similarly, expenses must be projected to include all of the costs associated with operating and maintaining the building over time. Finally, there must be adequate income to support on-site support services in accordance with the service program.

5. ORGANIZATION:

The entire project must be supported by the organizational capacity necessary to plan, develop, manage and provide services to the project. The project must have the long-term commitment of the organization's executive staff and Board of Directors. All of the necessary roles must be filled by individuals and entities with appropriate skills and track record in those areas. One organization may play multiple roles or work in collaboration with others having complementary strengths.

Note: This document is included within the *Understanding Permanent Supportive Housing* section of CSH's *Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing*, which is available at www.csh.org/toolkit2.