

Forming an Effective Supportive Housing Consortium



Written by Tony Proscio

Dear Colleague,

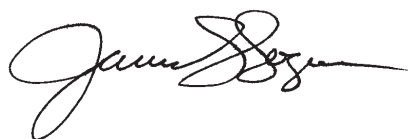
In 1996 we began a state-level partnership with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Corporation for Supportive Housing. Together we hoped to create *Supportive Housing* — something that did not then exist in Michigan.

We wanted new models of housing and service delivery that would enable some of Michigan's most needy citizens to get out of shelters or off the streets and move into a good home. By mixing in the right services, we hoped that people who had a history of instability in housing would feel *at home* in supportive housing and move on to establish new connections with their families and communities.

Through the vision and dedication brought to the Michigan Supportive Housing Demonstration by our local partners in Allegan, Genesee, Kent and Washtenaw counties, we have watched our dreams become reality. We now know this concept can work. It can work in a variety of ways, because no two communities have done it exactly alike.

As we move forward to a new phase in our supportive housing work, we want to help communities who are interested in developing their own brand of supportive housing learn from the experience of others. This manual on local collaboration and its companion manuals on supportive services and housing development will enable additional communities to begin their own efforts, knowing more about what works and how to avoid at least some of the pitfalls.

We are pleased to endorse this manual and its companions. Supportive housing is not yet a science, something that can be recreated by applying a formula out of a cookbook. But it is less of an experiment now that our local partners have units in place, occupied by the people we set out to serve. Additional communities are ready to undertake the challenge and hard work that supportive housing demands. These manuals will be invaluable to those Michigan communities who will be moving the supportive housing initiative to the next level.



James L. Logue III

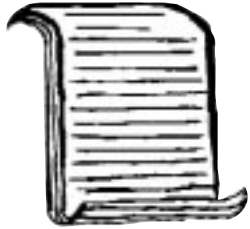


James A. (Jack) Krauskopf



James K. Haveman Jr.





Credits and Thanks

Michigan Interagency Partnership

The Michigan Interagency Partnership was formed in 1996 to oversee the development of a state and local partnership committed to developing supportive housing for individuals and families with special needs who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Partnership is comprised of the Department of Community Health (DCH), the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), the Family Independence Agency (FIA), the Department of Career Development/Rehabilitation Services (DCD/RS), the Office of Services to the Aging (OSA), the Department of Management and Budget (DMB), and the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH).

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The Author

Tony Proscio is a writer and consultant to foundations and nonprofit organizations. In the mid-1990s he was deputy commissioner of homeless services in New York City, and previously worked in various positions on community development, affordable housing finance, and social welfare policy. He was associate editor of *The Miami Herald* and a member of its editorial board from 1990 to 1995.

The Corporation for Supportive Housing

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) was created in 1991 with funding from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Ford Foundation to support the individual efforts of local nonprofit pioneers developing service-supported housing for those most in need — people coping with extreme poverty and mental illness, addiction or HIV/AIDS. CSH supports the expansion of permanent housing opportunities linked to comprehensive services for persons who face persistent mental health, substance abuse, and other chronic health challenges, and are at risk of homelessness,

so that they are able to live with stability, autonomy, and dignity and reach for their full potential. CSH works through collaborations with private, nonprofit and government partners, and strives to address the needs of, and hold ourselves accountable to, the tenants of supportive housing.

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), created in 1966 as the state's housing finance agency, has financed over \$3 billion for rental housing which has been used to finance over 50,000 units of affordable housing. Using tax exempt bond financing and Mortgage Credit Certificates, the Authority has assisted in financing nearly \$4 billion in single family mortgages for 90,000 units occupied by homeowners. One of the nation's larger state housing agencies, MSHDA has allocated over \$150 million in Housing Tax Credits which has produced approximately 30,000 rental units. The Authority also administers Community Development programs for non-entitled communities in Michigan, makes grants to combat homelessness and runs a 15,000 unit statewide Section 8 Existing Housing voucher/certificate program.

The Michigan Department of Community Health

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is one of 18 principal departments of state government. The department, the largest in state government, is responsible for health policy and management of the state's publicly funded health service systems. An estimated 2 million Michigan residents will receive services this year that are provided with total or partial support from MDCH. The Department was created by an executive order issued on January 31, 1996 by Michigan Governor John Engler. The executive order consolidated the Department of Public Health; the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; the Medical Services Administration, the state's Medicaid agency; and combined all child, family and housing elements of these respective systems. The Office of Drug Control Policy and the Office of Services to the Aging were consolidated with MDCH in subsequent executive orders.

Design

Michael Winikoff, Designer; Cynthia Gunn, Layout

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Introduction

What is supportive housing?

By “supportive housing,” we mean permanent, independent, affordable housing for people with disabilities who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, where appropriate supportive services are provided *as part of the normal operation of the housing*, as a way of helping residents maintain the maximum possible level of independence, stability, and participation in the general community. Some definitions, like the one used by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, may be narrower. But in this book, and in the Michigan Supportive Housing Demonstration Program generally, we deliberately use the phrase to represent a wide range of models, benefits, and opportunities.

It is worthwhile to distinguish supportive housing from other kinds of residential programs and facilities common in Michigan — for example, adult foster care, group residences, skilled nursing facilities, transitional housing, residential treatment programs, or assisted living facilities. Compared to these various models, supportive housing is more permanent, more independent, or both. It is in most respects like other forms of housing — it typically looks and functions exactly the same way as any kind of permanent housing for anyone — except that tenants have access to supportive services as one of the benefits of living there.

In supportive housing, residents’ disabilities may be physical, psychiatric, or developmental, they may involve chemical addictions, HIV/AIDS, or other circumstances that raise special needs. The supportive services that are part of a supportive housing program could therefore take many forms, depending on residents’ needs and available resources. Some services may be provided on-site, as a permanent feature of the supportive housing environment; others may be available nearby, possibly from unrelated providers.



In general, services in supportive housing are as accessible as possible to the residents, and are integrated as much as possible into the normal routine of managing the building and providing a quality living environment. The most important services, and the ones most thoroughly integrated into supportive housing, tend to be those that prevent emergencies that lead to homelessness.

Years of experience and a growing body of research show that this integration of housing and services materially increases residents' stability and independence, reduces their need for emergency or institutional care, and thus provides a higher quality of life — including the greatest possible productivity and self-reliance — at substantially lower cost.

What is the role of supportive housing in Michigan?

State policy strongly favors the integration of services and housing for people with long-term special needs, especially those who have had difficulty maintaining a stable residence. The Department of Community Health — which provides medical assistance to low-income people and services to those with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and chemical addictions, among many others — includes supportive housing among the required services in all its contracts with local agencies. Moreover DCH encourages supportive housing as a component of managed care in place of more restrictive service models. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority, which finances and subsidizes affordable housing through a range of loan, grant, and equity programs, has set aside a portion of its Federal HOME funds for supportive housing. MSHDA also gives applications for Housing Tax Credits a scoring advantage when the proposed housing serves people with special needs.

Since 1996, in cooperation with the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the State has conducted a Supportive Housing Demonstration Program, now in its second phase. The demonstration, initially in Allegan, Genesee, Kent, and Washtenaw Counties, has shown that, with careful coordination among service providers, housing developers and managers, and local government agencies, it is possible to develop housing that effectively incorporates appropriate services, and that materially improves the lives of those who live there. Participants in the demonstrations have assembled effective funding streams



for both the housing and services, developed quality housing, formed working partnerships between housing and service providers, and woven the housing-based services into the development's ongoing management, and into the tenants' overall service plan. Beginning in 2000, the demonstration will expand to four more counties and the city of Detroit.

In each of the demonstration counties, the supportive housing program has been overseen by a consortium of local funders and government agencies, service organizations, and housing developers. These groups have identified needs, raised funds, formulated policy, and facilitated working partnerships among housing and service agencies to develop projects.

What is the purpose of this handbook?

This is the first of three related guides for those interested in forming Supportive Housing Consortia and developing projects. In this guidebook, we discuss the formation and management of the Supportive Housing Consortium: who should participate, what the agenda should include, and, in general, how to seize opportunities and avoid problems that emerged in the initial few years of the demonstration program.

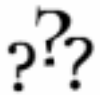
The two companion guide-books discuss, respectively, the planning and provision of services in supportive housing, and the development and financing of the housing itself.





Forming an Effective Supportive Housing Consortium

Convening the Players



A. Why do we need a consortium?

A gathering of major stakeholders is essential for organizing effective supportive housing *projects*, designing an appropriate *mix of services*, assembling reliable *funding* for both the housing development and the services, and building local *coalitions of support* for supportive housing.

Supportive housing is almost never the work of a single organization. Its funding comes from multiple sources, both public and private, with different missions and regulatory requirements. Developing and managing housing requires technical and professional skills quite different from the operation of a quality service program. Federal, state, and local government programs for housing development are almost always separate from those that support mental health, addiction recovery, and other human services. Housing and service providers operate in distinct policy environments — which all too often are so isolated from one another that each field has little or no idea how the other operates.

In fact, the “*professional cultures*” of housing and services are profoundly different. Even their fundamental economics are different. Housing developers,



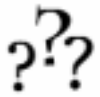
for example, are accustomed to a “bottom line” measured at least partly in dollars and cents. Most of the value of a service agency’s work isn’t measured financially, but in less quantifiable terms. Housing organizations are accustomed to multi-year commitments that run 10, 15, even 30 years into the future. Services agencies almost always live on year-to-year commitments that could change or disappear at any time.

In that light, consider how differently a housing developer and a service provider might react if service funding in a supportive housing project were suddenly withdrawn: The service providers would be concerned about the residents’ future, and would no doubt scramble to help them find alternative sources of support. But if that effort falls short, the service agency would probably bear few long-term consequences (other than concern and stress). The housing owner, by contrast, would have to choose between continuing to deal with the tenant population and its now-unmet needs, come what may, or evicting people who begin to experience problems — and then finding other tenants willing to replace them. The building is that organization’s long-term responsibility; any failure to maintain it in good order could mean chaos, lawsuits, fiscal crisis, or all three.

In the best of times, when practitioners in these two fields work together the result can be a dialogue of distinctive and complementary perspectives, where each side sheds light on problems encountered by the other side. But in less ideal (and probably more common) circumstances, the two sides speak different languages. They approach problems with dissimilar assumptions and methods of analysis. And they sometimes come away from the discussion either confused by the other side or, in the worst case, distrustful.

Supportive housing is doomed to serious trouble if it suffers from that kind of culture clash. Effective supportive housing requires a *close partnership, common goals, and real understanding* between housing providers and service agencies. Plenty of unhappy experience illustrates what happens when a program’s housing developer or manager is out of sync with the designated service providers, or vice-versa: The result is not only inadequate housing or services for the tenants, it can lead to a failed project and a financial crisis for the participating agencies.





B. Why do these different cultures have to blend? Why can't they simply do their separate jobs professionally, and establish clear boundaries?

In supportive housing, each component — services and housing — depends on the other component to be effective. For the typical supportive housing tenant, affordable housing is not effective without services, and services are not effective without housing. For tenants whose housing and service needs are so thoroughly intertwined, the “boundaries” (if they exist at all) can sometimes be wavy and thin. An example — from another state, fortunately — illustrates what can happen when the two cultures clash in the midst of an ongoing supportive housing program:

“Dave,” a formerly homeless man in his mid-30s, was in his second year in supportive housing, after years on the streets and in shelters, suffering from mental illness that had mostly gone unmedicated. After more than two years with medication and a successful transition to stable housing, Dave began to exhibit new symptoms, including signs of increasing paranoia and occasional belligerence. He had stopped paying rent and refused to speak with building managers, though he still was in contact with his case manager.

Management staff, noting that Dave was already severely behind in his rent and fearing that he would become dangerous, wanted to proceed to eviction. Service and medical staff were certain that an adjustment in medication would address the problem, but needed time to persuade Dave to keep his psychiatric appointments. As the disagreement between management and social-service staff escalated, the building owner eventually complained that the service organization had no concern for the well-being of the building. The service agency accused the owner of hypocrisy and callousness. The matter was resolved — with Dave eventually getting new medication and keeping his apartment — only after eviction proceedings were under way, and the two agencies had decided to dissolve their partnership at the end of the year.

To end up in severe trouble, it isn't necessary for the partner agencies to be openly at war with one another. Projects have had problems simply because friendly agencies didn't really understand what one another's needs and roles were, and quite accidentally found themselves working at cross-purposes.

It is important, but not sufficient, for the housing provider and the service agency to work out a set of *common operating assumptions and policies*. To operate supportive housing effectively, they need to have some basic understanding



of one another's *business*. For example, it's not enough for housing managers to know that the service provider should be notified of behavioral problems; it's far better for those front-line managers to understand *how* such problems will be handled, *what to expect* in their day-to-day dealing with tenants, *how to respond appropriately* in special circumstances, and how much is *reasonable* to ask of their colleagues in the service agency. The service provider, meanwhile, needs to understand the building's *economic and management realities*, and to help service consumers be responsible tenants in that context. These are not things that can simply be resolved in the formalities of a partnership agreement.



C. What can a consortium do to avoid these problems?

A Supportive Housing Consortium can help a group of provider agencies from the housing and the services fields *get to know one another's concerns*, and eventually anticipate and address those concerns, in an atmosphere that leads to more effective projects and partnerships. It can offer *training opportunities* for both sides, and generally help members become acquainted with the services and operating style of potential partners. It can function, in some ways, like a good matchmaking service for organizations looking for the "right" partner.

The consortium can also organize a concrete discussion about *picking target groups* of tenants, *based on the kind and amount of funding* that can realistically be raised. Such a discussion is by no means easy or straightforward. In the first round of the state's Demonstration Program, some consortia found themselves embroiled in long (sometimes purely hypothetical) debates between those who wanted to focus on the neediest or hardest-to-serve groups, and those who favored tenants needing much less support.

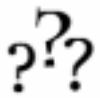
At the extremes of this discussion, some in the former group were overlooking the tight limits on service funding, and the risk of year-to-year fluctuations in such funding. Some in the latter group were failing to grasp how well some needs could be met with current dollars and existing community-based supports. In rough terms, service providers tended to be in the first camp, and housing providers in the second — though there were plenty of exceptions to that rule.

As leaders of the consortia began to understand why these debates weren't leading anywhere, they gradually brought both sides into a worthwhile, practical discussion. From that point, the effect was usually beneficial, and sometimes



led to important insights and ideas. If the consortia are prepared for this kind of discussion — understanding the different perspectives and constraints that underlie it — they can help housing and service providers, funders and practitioners, government and nonprofit players, work effectively together.

In the process, consortia can also help *formulate more favorable public policies* for people who need supportive housing; *attract funding* from private and public sources — including sources who are familiar with only one part of the equation — and help both housing and service organizations *think more expansively* about meeting the needs of various target populations. We will have more to say about all of these in later sections of this booklet.



D. Why do we need to organize a formal body? Aren't informal discussions sufficient?

The formality of a consortium's operating style is a matter of local preference. Most operate with an easy collegiality typical of a staff task-force in a small organization. Some require more structure. But in most cases, consortia have found that it's not useful to expect every member to attend every discussion. The purpose of the consortium, in fact, is to *give essential constituencies "ownership" of supportive housing* — not to alienate them with long, frequent meetings. It's important to convene the group and invite participants in a way that respects people's schedules and makes the fewest demands possible.

But establishing the consortium as a *distinctive group with clear objectives and leadership* has usually proven useful for the purpose of raising funds from multiple sources, allocating them to individual projects, and speaking with a common voice to policymakers about supportive housing.

If the goal were simply to operate one supportive housing project, then a project-specific partnership would be sufficient, and meetings with other stakeholders could be handled ad-hoc. But when the objective is to build supportive housing into the range of housing and service options available throughout the county — potentially involving multiple sites, different providers, and a range of funding and management relationships — then a *coordinating vehicle* becomes essential.

As the group begins seeking public and private funds, the *fiduciary responsibility* of the consortium becomes especially important, and should be taken very seriously. Participants in the Michigan Supportive Housing Demonstration



receive start-up grants from the state, and may receive organizing and planning grants from the Corporation for Supportive Housing and other sources. These need to be lodged, managed, and accounted for in some agreed-upon organization, with clear lines of responsibility.

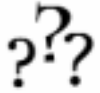
Even beyond the organizing stage, it is virtually impossible to *fund the full support-service budget* for any supportive housing development from a single source of funding. (Housing funds likewise come from multiple sources, but these mostly flow to individual *projects* and their sponsoring organizations, not to the consortium as a whole. A companion booklet on housing finance and development explains this further.) Typical funding sources for services in supportive housing have included local charities or foundations, county and municipal governments, the local Community Mental Health Service Program, the regional Substance Abuse Coordinating Agency, the State's Family Independence Agency, and a variety of Federal programs administered by the locality or the State. These may come as *grants for multiple projects*, and thus need to be apportioned and overseen by the whole consortium.

It is wise, and often essential, for a single fiduciary agency to *handle funds* from these various sources and *take responsibility for complying* with the requirements of each. As the supportive housing program grows, that responsibility becomes more and more necessary to lodge in one place, with clear oversight by all participants and stakeholders.

Because most of the funds will eventually be used for supportive services, the fiduciary agent normally *should not be a service provider* — or at least not one that may eventually be receiving those funds directly, as the designated service agency in a supportive housing development. In the first round of the Supportive Housing Demonstration, some consortia asked housing providers to be the fiscal agent. Others turned to neutral community-based groups, such as a Community Action agency, that would not themselves be applying for funding or providing direct services.

To start exploring possible projects, partnerships, and methods of operation, it certainly isn't necessary to have finalized all these organizational decisions, or to have worked out all the operating details of the consortium (rules, procedures, officers, and the like). But by the time the group begins to solicit funds, some formal understanding of policy-making and fiduciary responsibilities should have been worked out among the participants and stakeholders, and given a clear set of rules, roles, and responsibilities.





E. Who are these ‘participants and stakeholders’? Who should belong to the consortium?

The most important thing to keep in mind is that the consortium exists, first of all, to advance the development of supportive housing *projects*, and second, to build sustainable funding and support for an ongoing supportive housing *program*. To pursue such a practical agenda, it’s best *not to have too large a group* — where discussions become cumbersome or participants begin to feel superfluous — or to include many members for whom developing effective projects and programs is not an immediate concern. The membership should consist mainly of the people who are *necessary to getting projects organized and moving them forward* through the planning, financing, development, and operations phases. Others can and should be invited specially when the agenda addresses their areas of activity and calls for their expertise.

In the interest of being inclusive and comprehensive, some consortia in the first phase of the Michigan demonstration program found they had too many people at the table, and several participants drifted away. In the best cases, the ones left behind sometimes found they could work more effectively and solve problems more quickly with smaller numbers. But not every group was that lucky.

So three principles are worth considering when assembling a membership list.

1. **Recruit likely providers and people with experience:** The most essential participants are those from organizations that are *likely to provide services or develop housing* in actual projects. Organizations that seem best suited to those tasks — even if they are not yet experienced or familiar with the idea of supportive housing — should be encouraged to join and drawn actively into the discussion. If someone in the community has experience developing or managing supportive housing (even if they got that experience elsewhere), that person would probably make a helpful member.
2. **Include selected funders and policymakers,** but don’t demand that they attend every meeting. At least one representative of the Community Mental Health Program and the Substance Abuse Coordinating Agency is normally essential. A representative from a community foundation, the Family Independence Agency, a county or municipal commissioner, a representative of consumers, or a local housing official may be helpful as well, especially if they have *experience* in this area or express a real *interest* in participating. Public officials who might be helpful in *advocating* for supportive housing — particularly if funding, site selection, tax abatement, or zoning become political issues down the road — would be wise to include. But be careful



not to let the “stakeholders” heavily outnumber the likely “producers,” or the meetings may lose their practical focus. And it’s important not to ask government, nonprofit, or consumer representatives to spend time at meetings where issues don’t involve them, or you may gradually lose their interest. Hence, the third point:

3. **Create working subcommittees:** After observing these first two points, if the list of participants ends up seeming unmanageably long, and the meetings seem likely to become unwieldy, don’t exclude important participants. Consider creating working sub-groups — perhaps including an *executive committee* to make decisions between meetings of the full group — and then let the full consortium meetings be less frequent and more goal-oriented. We’ll talk about this two-tier structure later in this handbook.



F. Who should convene, lead, and organize the consortium?

This is a local matter, depending a lot on how leadership is shared and exercised in a given community. It also depends on which individuals have the *stature, skill, commitment, and time* to be an effective chair. Three principles may help in deciding whom to recruit for leadership (both as the general chair and as the chairs of subcommittees):

1. **Look for someone who’s *really committed to the program’s success.***
Leading a consortium takes a great deal of time and effort, especially if the chair is also going to be one of the main spokespeople for the group. Convening meetings, maintaining momentum, ensuring that members and subcommittees follow up on their assignments, and representing the group to the wider public can take several hours a week. No one who would make a good chair is likely to have that amount of time completely “free.” This is *partly a labor of love*, and the person who does the work therefore needs to be someone committed to making supportive housing a success. It may be tempting simply to hand the gavel to the highest-ranking public official, or the most eminent “expert” in the group. But that may be the person with the least amount of time to spend on the consortium’s work — or possibly someone who still needs to be persuaded of the value of the project. A person without the *time and desire* to lead the group could be more costly than helpful.

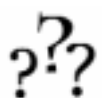
In the first round of the Michigan Demonstration, one or two consortia appointed leaders who were already overwhelmed by other responsibilities, and who tried to “squeeze in” the consortium’s work between other duties. Sometimes their effort was heroic, but often it was insufficient to keep the consortium on track and focused. In one such case, the group simply stopped meeting altogether, and members had to re-group on their own.



Perhaps the most successful leadership experience was in Allegan County, where the Community Mental Health program recruited a senior employee to spend as much as 50 percent of his time on supportive housing. Best of all, this was a person who had a keen interest (though no direct expertise) in housing development, besides his formal credentials in social work. A willingness to become involved in *both* parts of the supportive-housing equation made this leader especially effective, and made the job satisfying and enjoyable as well.

2. **Seek out someone who has good relations with all the necessary constituencies: government, nonprofit groups, and consumers.** Any new undertaking can give rise to anxiety or distrust among those not familiar with it. Having a chair whom others consider trustworthy can save much trouble for the consortium down the road, and make it possible for the group to work more quickly, with less need to involve multiple participants in every deliberation. In any case, beware of a chair whose relations with any key constituency are tense.
3. **Choose an *efficient manager* — someone who can move a meeting along and keep everyone focused on objectives and results.** Before the first project is developed, participants may find themselves drawn into speculative discussions that can easily roam off-topic. A good chair will bring discussions quickly to a decision-point, keep participants focused on next steps, and understand when to table an issue or direct it to a subcommittee, rather than let a discussion run on. Once the group has had experience with real projects, these concerns tend to become less important. But in the early stages, it is possible for discussions to grow so lengthy or vague that members become frustrated and don't return.

What the Consortium Does



A. How should the consortium get started?

The first responsibility of the consortium is to make sure that projects are developed with an equal concern for the quality of the housing, the quality of the services, and the effective meshing of the two — in a way appropriate for the target populations.

Consequently, the consortium's first task (once it decides how its funds will be managed) is to *identify target populations and their needs*. The question could



be phrased this way: In the context of this community's available services and housing, what groups with long-term disabilities and special needs are *not being served and housed effectively*, and of those groups, whose needs might be most effectively met by *combining services and housing* into an integrated package. To answer these questions, a *needs assessment* may be worthwhile, though it need be *neither elaborate nor expensive*.



B. What should the needs assessment cover?

The general questions listed above could easily lead to rambling philosophical disputes or complex social-scientific research that could delay or sidetrack the consortium's work. To avoid that, the first challenge for the needs assessment is to determine which *elements of the community* tend to suffer from unstable or inappropriate housing or homelessness, and *what the relationship is between their housing problems and the services they need*. Most particularly, what are the available services and housing opportunities that they *are not receiving*, what kind of housing and services are *not available* for them, or what kinds of services and housing are *available but inappropriate or ineffective* for them? The answers to these questions will naturally — and concretely — point to areas in which supportive housing can improve the options.

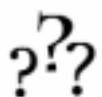
The next challenge is to determine, among the categories of need, where *resources* are available (or might be made available) to do things differently — specifically, to create a supportive housing model that addresses the identified gaps and problems. For some categories of need, there may simply be little or no money available that can be redirected into supportive housing, meaning that the consortium will have to focus its energies elsewhere. Conversely, some groups — like those with serious and persistent mental illness, people with developmental disabilities, and those living with HIV/AIDS — *do* have agencies and revenue streams devoted to supporting them more effectively and at the lowest cost. If these populations, or subsets of them, show up as high priorities among the identified needs, they probably represent a good opportunity for action by the consortium.

The better needs assessments tend to conclude with a short list of the main *barriers to success*, which sums up the main challenges the consortium needs to address. In the first phase of the Michigan demonstration, Allegan County's barrier list included limited *public transportation* (Allegan is a rural county whose programs and services tend to be located far from one another and from people's



homes), a lack of *housing development capacity* among nonprofit groups, and a scarcity of locally controlled resources. In more urban Kent County, the list included a lack of *service funding* for certain top-priority populations, especially those with chemical addictions; a need for new models of *case management*; and the reluctance of HUD's regional office to support *scattered-site housing development* in their area. And Kent, like Allegan, also listed gaps in public transportation.

These are merely examples, relevant to two specific counties, but they illustrate the concrete nature of the identified barriers, and the brevity of the list. The barrier list constitutes the priority items for the consortium's early work. Make it too long, and it sets the group up for failure. Make it too vague, and no one will know whether progress is being made. It should consist of five to ten items, each of which the consortium can try to address by some set of actions.



C. How do we get the information for the needs assessment?

Service providers and funders around the table may already have performed essential parts of the analysis, and others might be able to furnish necessary information from their own management or operational records. Some *existing planning processes* are likely to have covered much of the terrain already.

Each county, for example, has a *Multi-Purpose Coordinating Body* responsible for establishing needs and priorities across a wide array of services; they may already have identified populations for whom a better “fit” of housing and services is needed. Counties or municipalities that conduct a *Continuum-of-Care planning process* for U.S. HUD funding may likewise have identified such needs. The Multi-Purpose Coordinating Body focuses on services, but may well take note of housing-related needs as well; the Continuum-of-Care process is explicitly responsible for identifying gaps in both services and housing.

If a professional planner is needed to compile and analyze additional information, the assignment should be kept simple and brief. There is little point spending months on an exhaustive, academically rigorous needs assessment, because at least initially, the *identified needs will far exceed the housing opportunities available* to address them. The work of the consortium will depend just as heavily on what possible *housing emerges* — i.e., potential sites for construction, buildings available for purchase and renovation, or existing houses and apartments that can be incorporated into a supportive housing program. The initial assessment may identify five or six areas of need, but there are likely to be only one or two *projects*



in the first year, and the needs they address will be shaped partly by the location, size, and configuration of the housing that can be created in those projects.

So the purpose of the needs assessment is simply to help the consortium *gauge the usefulness and market potential of the first few sites* it considers, to *break down the major barriers* to success in those sites, and then to select, from among those sites, the *opportunities that best meet identified needs* at the most reasonable cost. The fact that a given project may not suit the No. 1 target population in the county is no reason not to proceed with it, if it meets a genuine need and makes economic sense. In short, the planning and the needs analysis should not be treated as ends in themselves, but simply as tools for getting started. The needs assessment can — and certainly should — be revisited and updated as time passes, and its priorities adjusted as some needs are met.



D. But wouldn't it be better to search for a project that serves the **neediest or **least-well-served** population first? Isn't that the best way to demonstrate the effectiveness of supportive housing?**

Frankly, no. If such a project happens to materialize as an early opportunity, then so much the better. But if not, it is generally far *more important for the consortium to get started on some project or projects* than to spend its time searching for an ideal model. Why? Because building effective projects and partnerships, learning to use funding sources creatively and responsibly, and thinking imaginatively about new program models all demand *experience*. Serving the most difficult populations, or developing a more complicated housing model, may make more sense as a second project than as the first. If the consortium sticks with its mission over a few years, it will get better, more creative, and more credible over time.



E. What should the consortium do while the needs assessment is under way?

There is a great deal of organizational work involved in setting up an effective consortium, and there is exploratory work that can help move the needs assessment along and supply some of the information for it. As soon as the consortium is convened, it will be necessary to draw up and approve basic organizational and fiscal procedures (choosing leaders, settling on a fiscal agent,



deciding on the frequency of meetings, and so on). Next, members should begin forming working groups to tackle the central questions that will lie ahead, some of which will feed directly into the needs assessment, as well as establishing the group's early work plan. The most important of these questions are:

1. What kinds of **housing sites and opportunities** are available in the community, and could they be made affordable and effective as supportive housing?
2. What **funding streams** are available to support what **mix of services** for which target groups? And what other sources of funding might consider a contribution to supportive housing? (The needs assessment will give a formal answer to this question, but sometimes new possibilities emerge in informal conversations and “brainstorming” sessions among consortium members.)
3. What **information** do service providers, housing providers, and other key players in this community need in order to develop supportive housing effectively, and how can the consortium supply that information? Who among local government, community leadership, potential funders, and other local organizations will need to be informed or persuaded about supportive housing, and what information might be shared with them in what ways? What information do consortium members need, and how can that be supplied?

Each of these questions could form the initial task for a committee. Housing providers would probably be most interested in working on question No. 1 (though at least one service provider might be helpful in keeping their explorations realistic and on target). Service providers and funders would be most appropriate to work on question No. 2. For question No. 3, both groups are appropriate — the mission would be to find speakers, publications, or training opportunities that all members of the group can share. This might also be the sub-group that most closely oversees the needs assessment, to ensure that it is both complete and practical.

Two other handbooks accompany this booklet — one on housing, one on services — which will discuss many issues that the first two groups need to consider. So we will not cover those in detail here. The third group may wish to start by circulating all three of these handbooks to the consortium members, and then seeking out people to make presentations, answer questions, and make suggestions for further learning. Possible candidates for such presentations might come from State government, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, and other supportive housing providers (including those in the four initial demonstration counties: Allegan, Genesee, Kent, and Washtenaw).



The Corporation for Supportive Housing also publishes a more detailed handbook, with companion software, called *Not a Solo Act: Creating Successful Partnerships to Develop and Operate Supportive Housing*. This may be too detailed for all members to read, but likely provider agencies and leaders of the consortium may find it particularly helpful.

Organizing the Work

?? A. What is the role of the full consortium, compared to that of the committees or sub-groups?

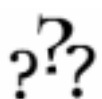
Above all, the full consortium should try to maintain its focus on *developing projects* and on building a sustainable *base of funding and public policy support*. The committees should do the “leg work” to advance those two goals, then bring their conclusions and recommendations back to the full group for discussion, approval, and a decision about next steps.

In the first round of the Demonstration Program, the most successful consortia were those that carved out specific tasks for each member or group of members to perform, and then let them work on their tasks independently, reporting back to the full group. They did not attempt to engage the whole consortium in working through technical problems, drafting written material, or designing specific projects. Those were done by committees or task forces, and the results reported back for approval or further guidance. In the less successful cases, some consortia found themselves bogged down when large groups of people tried to perform tasks *en masse* — debating the precise wording of papers or exploring tactical choices with 12 or 15 people trying to weigh in at once. For the groups doing most of the consortium’s work, small is beautiful.

The task-oriented “leg work” of these committees will initially entail *reconnaissance* and the development of *options* among which the full group can choose. That can be technical work, requiring some expertise in a particular field. The committee’s job, therefore, is to make a professional judgment about what steps might be feasible — and about what resources and action it would take to make them feasible — and then to recommend actions to the full group.



It's important to understand that the term "committee," as we're using it here, isn't necessarily meant to imply some formal body with officers, rules, and rigid procedures. Especially in smaller counties, a few people may simply get together once a week for a while, as they gather information or formulate a recommendation to the larger group. Other such clusters may form around other tasks. Except where the group is very large, or when tasks become especially complicated, it is not worthwhile to spend a great deal of time on the organization of standing committees with independent authority and reporting requirements and the like. It's enough to know who will participate in each group, and who will convene and lead it.



B. How should the committees proceed?

The *services* team might set out to compile a budget for on-site services at a hypothetical supportive housing development, and then consider how the funding for that budget could be raised. The companion booklet on services discusses in more detail how they might approach those questions. But in general, they would need to form some realistic assumptions about *what funding could conceivably be raised*, and *what services are essential to integrate* into the supportive housing program, given the needs of the target populations. Their assessment, if the full consortium approves, could form the basis for the sub-group to compile funding proposals, and for the full group to assign fundraising responsibilities based on those proposals.

The *housing* team might begin looking at buildings, buildable lots, or existing housing that could be made suitable for supportive housing, and consider how any necessary *acquisition, construction, or renovation could be financed*. At first, this might be purely hypothetical — the housing group might simply visit available sites, or members might discuss sites that they are already working on or interested in, which might be suitable for supportive housing. Depending on the larger group's reaction to these opportunities — and particularly on how well they fit with the needs assessment as it comes together — the sub-group may begin sketching out *hypothetical development budgets* and conferring with the services team on *how the management might be organized*, and more specifically, on which organizations might form partnerships to take on potential projects.

If the full consortium approves, the ideas of both groups would move from hypothetical discussions to actual budgeting for one or more specific projects, and responsibilities assigned for more formal feasibility analyses and appropriate fundraising.



The general principle is that, at each step, the full consortium is *responding* to concrete information and recommendations, *authorizing* further work by the sub-groups, or *adjusting course*, by asking the committees to explore other options. The full group's normal meetings should therefore be *brief* — one to two hours at most — consisting of reactions to the sub-groups' work, and instructions for next steps.

If the consortium has formed an information and education sub-group, it may want to have some occasional longer, "*learning*" meetings or retreats to hear from speakers, discuss policy matters, and refine its understanding of what makes successful supportive housing. Allegan County, for example, organized a brief supportive housing "seminar" for its County Commissioners, two of whom were consortium members. The Corporation for Supportive Housing periodically offers statewide training and information forums, from which the sub-group or the full consortium may benefit. Although it's generally useful for the larger group to maintain a focus on development and momentum, it's also important to pause for information and fresh perspectives from time to time — so long as the process doesn't become too theoretical or academic.

Keeping the Consortium on Track



A. How do we keep key participants motivated and involved?

The most important challenge is to be constantly mindful of what brought people to the table in the first place — usually, the hope of a *concrete solution to their problems* or needs — and to make certain the group is helping them meet their goals. For most people, the greatest motivator will be the belief that they are working on things they care about, and that their work is leading to *concrete outcomes*: new housing, better services, and an effective interweaving of the two.

During the first years of the Michigan Supportive Housing Demonstration, some consortia accidentally alienated many members by summoning people to meeting after meeting where the agenda consisted of philosophical issues of interest to only two or three participants. As this dragged on for month after month,



participants began to ask themselves “why am I here?” and before long, they stopped coming. One such member — speaking for several — put it this way:

I run a small nonprofit group. When I’m not at my desk, half the management is missing. So if I go to these meetings, I have to make a conscious decision that my organization’s regular work is going to sit on hold for a few hours, so that I can do something else. Well, if I’m going to keep doing that, I’ll tell you: The *something else* had better be pretty valuable! I’m not going to spend an afternoon listening to people talk about theoretical issues I don’t know anything about, and never move one step closer to creating anything real.

Looking back on such an experience, one consortium leader said:

It was really my job to keep looking around that table and asking myself ‘why isn’t John Doe over there taking an interest in this discussion? Have we gone off-track? Are we losing people?’ I let too much time go by before I did that. I guess I thought, well, supportive housing is *important enough* for everyone to just pay attention. That only works for so long. Pretty soon, people either want to see results or they disappear.

To “see results,” it is not necessary for the group to reach consensus on every issue, and trying to do so will quickly lead to irresolvable debates. Not all members will have the same priorities, be equally concerned about the same populations, or share the same philosophy of treatment, development, public policy or what-have-you. Different supportive housing projects will no doubt serve slightly different populations, embody somewhat different approaches to treatment and services, and generally operate with distinctive styles that suit some preferences better than others. That *diversity of approaches is desirable*: When the supportive housing environment is mature, and several projects are in operation, this diversity will contribute to consumer choice, and may even prompt some healthy competition among providers. The consortium, to be successful, requires only that the group agree on some projects that are needed and valuable, and then find credible partners to work together on those projects.

Above all, it is important periodically to *ask participants what they like and dislike* about the consortium, its agenda and meetings, and its pace of accomplishment. Too often, groups find out that their members are dissatisfied only when the members stop showing up. By then, much credibility has been lost, and the member’s commitment will be hard or impossible to restore.





B. How do we organize project partnerships?

As the committees are conducting their reconnaissance and reporting to the full group, potential partnerships may start to form between participating housing developers and service providers. It's important not to force these matches — long-term success depends on a level of mutual trust and understanding between housing and the service providers — but it is important for the consortium to help *housing and services providers get to know each other*, and understand how each can contribute to the other's work.

One way to encourage that kind of understanding might be to encourage members from each field to give “*tours*” or *briefings* to those from the other field. Service providers may have seen housing developed and managed by local development groups, but they may not understand how that housing came to be financed and developed, who manages it, and how the management interacts with tenants. Housing developers, similarly, may not understand what counselors and case managers do, or how service programs operate day-to-day. They may have little idea how services can be delivered at a housing site in a way that improves the management of the building and that enhances the tenants' living environment. As organizations in one field get to see the operating style, level of expertise, and accomplishments of programs in the other field, it will become easier for them to arrange partnerships on their own, and explore ways of working together.

In some localities, funding sources may not be willing to support partnerships that simply organize themselves informally. They may instead require a more formal selection process like a *Request for Proposals*. In Kent and Washtenaw Counties, for example, the lead services funder, the Community Mental Health program, worked with the housing development organization to draft and issue an RFP for an agency to provide services in a planned supportive housing project. This ensured that all services providers were able to compete fairly for the funding, but it made for a delicate challenge in drafting the RFP: The selection process needed to be objective in order to be fair, but it also needed to include criteria that would ensure a *good working relationship* between the housing provider and whatever service agency was chosen. The process did, in fact, result in a final selection that satisfied everyone involved. The Kent RFP is attached as a sample of how this more-formal approach can be made to work effectively.

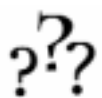
As they get closer to committing themselves to a specific undertaking, the housing and service agencies will need to enter into a written partnership agreement.



The Corporation for Supportive Housing can provide several sample agreements and other information on what should be included in these agreements and how to negotiate and draft them.

Partnership agreements are necessary not only for collaborations of housing and service agencies, but also if *two or more service agencies work together* in a single supportive housing development, or if *two or more housing developers form a joint venture* for a single project. In Kent County, three local housing development organizations formed a separately-incorporated partnership to develop the first two supportive housing projects there. When it came time to recruit a core service provider, they found that the best arrangement was a combination of two strong local providers — each with specialties in different population groups. As a result, Kent County’s first two supportive housing projects involve partnerships within partnerships.

This sounds complicated, but it really hasn’t been. Because the organizations spelled out their *roles and responsibilities in clear agreements*, the relationships have worked smoothly and effectively so far. And the results seem to be better than they would have been without the collaboration.



C. So who actually launches the projects? The full consortium or the partnering organizations?

Both — but the partners who will manage the project, and particularly the housing developer, will have to take the lead. The full consortium will never have the expertise or the time it takes to develop and manage a successful project, nor is that the group’s role. Once a partnership has begun to form between a housing provider and a service agency — or even when a single member organization begins to formulate a specific project — the consortium’s main role is to *make certain it can support that project* with advocacy, fundraising, and general problem-solving.

If so, it should discuss with the sponsoring organization(s) what funding will need to be raised, and by whom; who will address likely political and governmental problems; and in general, how the full group can help ease the process along. The consortium might, for example, be able to *seek pre-development support* from the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, or other sources of grants and loans (this is discussed in more detail in the handbook on housing). That might be the first of several ways



in which the consortium can support a new development and help to make it a reality. If, on the other hand, the project is not one that the full group can endorse, it may encourage the sponsors to try something else, or simply wish them well and turn its attention elsewhere. Either way, once explorations are under way for acquiring a site, the development is mostly in the hands of those who will build and operate it, principally the housing developer. The process is far too complex to be managed by a large group.

If the consortium has raised funds for supportive housing operations — for example, money for on-site services or service enhancements — then the group will need to determine *how much of that money can be committed to the new project*, including *how and when it will be disbursed* to the operating organizations. The sources of these funds — usually government agencies or foundations — will have rules and conditions for how such allocations can be made, which the consortium and the operating partners will have to follow. In the best case, officials of these funding organizations will also be members of the consortium, or will be available to meet with consortium leadership to help them take the necessary steps, and to ensure that no rules are overlooked.



D. What does the consortium do once a project is under way?

Most importantly, if the consortium is providing funds to the new project, it remains responsible for seeing that the developer, service provider, and other principal actors *comply with the terms under which the funds were raised and allocated*. How this is handled depends partly on how the consortium decided to organize its responsibilities — if it is relying on a lead organization as its fiscal agent, that organization may be responsible for monitoring compliance and reporting back to the full group. If the consortium has created its own fiscal and management capacity, then it will need to monitor progress and hear periodic progress reports directly from the project's sponsors (who will probably be members of the consortium anyway). This can be a time-consuming process, at least while a new project is getting started and going through its first year or two of operations. It may be managed best by an executive committee or other sub-group.

The next most important role of the consortium, when a project is getting started, is to help *build public support* for it, and *ease potential opposition*. For example, most projects require local tax abatement in order to be affordable to the target populations, and that requires approval by local elected officials. In some cases,



a zoning change may be needed, which likewise requires local approval. On these occasions, the consortium may need to organize strategically to help both residents and public officials understand the purpose of supportive housing and why the community has an interest in supporting it. Some residents, unfamiliar with supportive housing and its benefits, may attempt to block development under these circumstances. That will normally require careful bridge-building and public information work by the consortium and its members.

Beyond that, the consortium's responsibility always includes a *search for the next project* opportunity, even if that is still remote. And it should constantly be seeking ways to expand its base of support, including (when desirable) expanding its membership to include key local policy-makers.

As we said at the outset, the consortium's main role is to create supportive housing projects, and to build public support, funding streams, and effective public policy for supportive housing generally. As each project enters the development stage, the consortium's work shifts toward future projects and toward creating a more and more favorable environment in which to operate.





Kent County Services RFP



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION

The Genesis Housing Corporation is soliciting proposals for the delivery of supportive services for up to 100 individuals who will be residing in residential settings managed by the Genesis Housing Corporation.

Between the time period of May, 1999 to December, 2000, 100 residential units will be developed by the Genesis Housing Corporation to serve individuals with Mental Illness, Substance Abuse, Developmental Disabilities, HIV/AIDS, and homeless youth. The residential sites will be scattered throughout Kent County.

The housing units are made possible through the cooperative efforts of the Genesis Housing Corp., the Corporation for Supportive Housing, MSHDA, and the Department of Community Health. The City of Grand Rapids is providing a strong financial and administrative support commitment to this project.

The funding for the housing development is contingent on a strong and effective support services model. The Heart of West Michigan United Way, Kent County Family Independence Agency, and Kent County Community Mental Health are currently providing financial support to the Genesis Housing Corporation for the provision of support services. Other funding sources are being explored at the present time and may generate additional financial resources to the support services component of this project. The successful bidder is expected to provide a bid at \$160,000 per year or less.

This document contains the following information:

- I. General Information
- II. Program Description
- III. Proposal Requirements
- IV. Proposed Budget Requirements
- V. Criteria for Decision-Making
- VI. Time Lines
- VII. Provider Obligations

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

- A. This RFP is issued by the Genesis Housing Corporation, 385 Leonard NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. All questions regarding this RFP will be addressed at a bidders conference which will be held on March 30, 1999 at 10:00 at the offices of the Genesis Housing Corporation. Organizations intending to respond to this RFP should attend the conference. Any questions that arise outside of the bidders conference must be submitted in writing. Responses will be provided in writing and distributed to all who attend the bidders conference. Questions regarding the content and intent of the RFP will not be addressed after April 2, 1999.



- B. Genesis Housing Corporation reserves the right not to award a contract as a result of this process.
- C. Genesis Housing Corporation reserves the right to consider modifications received at any time before an award is made, if such action is in the best interest of the implementation of the project.
- D. Genesis Housing Corporation is not liable for any costs incurred by respondent in preparation of a response to this RFP prior to the issuance of a contract.
- E. Those who respond to the RFP must disclose any personal or business relationship with employees or board members of Genesis Housing Corporation or of the Kent County Supported Housing Consortium. A decision to fund a proposal from a respondent having such a relationship will be dependent on additional consultation regarding conflict of interest. Attachment C is a roster of the Board of Directors of Genesis Housing Corporation and the membership of the Kent County Supported Housing Consortium.
- F. Providers must submit a complete response to this RFP by 5:00 p.m. on April 15, 1999. A cover letter shall be submitted with the proposal that is signed by an authorized representative of the provider agency and include documentation of approval for the submission by the agency's board of directors. Eight copies of the proposal shall be submitted to Lissa Schwander, Genesis Housing Corporation, by 5:00 p.m. on April 15, 1999. Proposals received after that time will not be opened and will be returned.
- G. Genesis Housing Corporation will be writing 1-year contracts that cover January to December time periods. The initial contract will be a phase-in contract covering less than a full year. The Support Services proposal will be bid out approximately every three years.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The supportive services provided in this project are expected to provide flexible support services to ensure that all consumers receive adequate service to reach their fullest potential in the community. Supportive services will maximize the use of existing community resources and emphasize the concepts of Person-Centered Planning.

Genesis Housing Corporation and The Kent County Supported Housing Consortium have adopted guiding principles that should be emphasized in the planning and implementation of the project. Those are:

1. The principles of Person-Centered Planning, especially focusing empowerment and decision-making of the consumer will be emphasized.
2. Supportive services must be adequate and appropriate for all consumers within the residential setting which will assist them in maintaining their housing and stability in the community. A primary goal of this project is to maximize the success of the consumer in their preferred living arrangement.



3. All consumers of the housing program will have prompt access to supportive services.
4. The future development of this program will be responsive to the rapidly changing mental health, substance abuse, physical health, and social services environment with respect to managed care.
5. The program must provide supportive services in locations that meet the needs of the persons served and emphasize the need to provide services at the residential site.

Once fully implemented, it is estimated that the program will be providing support services to 100 individuals. Best estimates at the present time are that approximately 55 of those 100 individuals will have existing case management services available to them through various human service systems. It is estimated that between 70 and 75 of the individuals will have a disability of Mental Illness and/or Substance Abuse, 15-20 individuals will have a Developmental Disability, 5-10 individuals will be persons with HIV/AIDS, and 1-5 individuals will be homeless teenagers.

It is expected that the successful bidder will employ staff with a title similar to "Resident Services Coordinator" who would be assigned coverage for recipients in geographic housing clusters. These individuals will be responsible for coordinating a service plan for each of the residents. The primary responsibilities of staff will be:

1. Developing with the resident a service plan which incorporates assessment and reassessment of the needs, goals, and preferences of the person served.
2. Resource assessment and management.
3. Outreach and support to encourage the person served to participate in the services needed.
4. Coordination and assistance in crisis intervention and stabilization as needed, including participation in a 24-hour on-call program.
5. Assistance for the person served to achieve their objectives and optimize their independence and productivity through support and training in the use of personal and community resources.
6. Assistance in the development of formal community linkages that meet the needs of the person served, particularly when residents are currently receiving outside case management services.
7. Assistance for the person served to further develop the competencies they need to increase and enjoy social support networks.
8. Coordination of transportation as needed for the person served.
9. Assistance to enhance functioning and daily living activities.
10. Facilitating volunteer mentoring for residents who request it.
11. Maintaining all program required records which are not specifically the responsibility of property management staff.
12. Establishing a frequent presence at all residential sites.
13. Advocacy with property management staff for property improvement and maintenance.
14. Facilitating resident participation in property management.



The successful bidder must develop an Advisory Council that shall participate in quality improvement efforts for the supportive services. The Advisory Council shall include recipients, community members with expertise in property management and real estate, and representatives of local social service agencies.

The successful proposal will also be expected to implement a resident mentor program. In general, this project shall include developing partnerships with local volunteer groups, churches, businesses, and human service programs. Volunteer mentors will be recruited and trained and be available to residents of this project if the resident so chooses. The mentor would be expected to provide additional support and personal assistance to the resident. Examples might be skills training in the areas of meal preparation, laundry, transportation, basic life skills, and household maintenance.

It is expected that some management and administrative support will be required for this project and organizations submitting bids are encouraged to specifically address this need in their proposal. It is expected that administrative time will be required to interact with the Advisory Committee, the Kent County Supported Housing Consortium, the administration of Genesis Housing Corporation and participate in other community planning initiatives.

III. **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

Please provide a narrative proposal that addresses each of the following specific issues. Please follow the outline provided using the headings identified. Should you feel a need to emphasize or address issues not included in this outline, please address those at the end of the proposal.

- A. **Identification** - Provide the full legal name of your organization, Federal Identification number, legal address, non-profit status, and name of representative authorized to represent the agency in this project.
- B. **Agency History** - Describe the brief history of your organization and define your profit/non-profit status. What is the mission and treatment philosophy of your organization? How are the mission and philosophy applied within your programs to produce a person-centered and community integration approach to serving consumers? Specifically describe your experience in coordinating with local providers and agencies on behalf of clients.
- C. **Target Population Experience** - Specifically describe the extent and scope of training and experience your organization has in serving the target populations. Please also describe the competency of staff in serving persons of diverse cultural backgrounds.
- D. **History of Service Provision** - Specifically describe the extent of your experience in providing services that are similar to those described in this RFP. Include examples which document the consumer outcome of those services.
- E. **Experience with Property Managers** - Describe your experience, philosophy, and plans for a balanced approach to working with property management for a



stable living environment and advocacy for recipients of services.

- F. **Staffing Model** - Describe the specific staffing model being proposed, including experience and educational background of staff, and interventions you will employ to meet the requirements of the program specifications. This description must specifically address how you propose to handle crisis situations. Innovative staff models and interventions are encouraged.
- G. **Use of Community Resources** - Describe how you will ensure the maximum use of existing community resources for all primary and ancillary services required by recipients. Genesis has developed several service agreements with community agencies. (See Attachment D.) Specifically address how your organization will accomplish coordination with these organizations.
- H. **Advisory Council** - Specifically describe how you would set up and manage the advisory council.
- I. **Mentoring** - Specifically describe how you would establish the mentoring component.
- J. **Times Lines** - Describe the time lines you would have for implementation of this project based on the information provided in the RFP. Please note that some preparation work will be necessary prior to the opening of the residential sites. This plan must include specific time lines assuming an award date of May 3, 1999.
- K. **Staff Training** - Specifically describe the methods to be used in providing training to staff both in the initial start-up phases and on an ongoing basis.
- L. **Management Capacity & Management Information Systems** - Please provide a specific description of the management and administrative resources your agency will utilize to manage this program. Specifically describe the management information capacity and assistance that would be provided by your organization.
- M. **Recipient Rights** - Describe the mechanism that would be used to protect the rights of recipients.
- N. **Outcomes** -
- 1) Describe how your agency will address the following desired outcomes of funding sources:
 - 80% of clients in residence for 12 months shall report improved stability and quality of life as defined by criteria established by the Kent County Consortium for Supportive Housing Oversight Committee.
 - 90% of clients shall maintain stable housing for 12 months from the date of entry into the supportive housing program.
 - No more than 10% of residents shall leave in any month on a non-



- voluntary basis.
- Assess the degree to which the Residential Services Coordinating staff added in this project may or may not overlap or duplicate services provided by existing case management systems.
- Assess the degree to which the amount and intensity of supportive services provided to residents in this project is consistent or inconsistent with the amount of services provided to individuals with comparable level of needs in the Kent CMH system.

2) Identify 5 measurable objectives your organization would propose, in addition to those above, to assess the providers' effectiveness of the services provided.

O. **Audit** - Provide a copy of your most recent independent audit.

IV. **BUDGET**

Using the attached general framework, (Attachment A) submit one budget that describes an annual budget, assuming the project is fully operational serving 100 individuals. Provide a narrative that describes essential information for each line item. A phase-in operational budget will be negotiated with the successful provider using this framework.

Please specifically emphasize and identify your ability to provide additional financial resources, over and above what is identified in Attachment D, in support of this project.

V. **DECISION-MAKING CRITERIA**

Decisions on the successful bidder will be a collaborative effort between the Genesis Housing Corporation and the Kent County Supported Housing Consortium. Proposals will be evaluated in terms of content, specificity, completeness, feasibility, reasonableness and consistency with the principles stated in Section II of this RFP. The specific weighting of sections is as follows:

1. Successful experience with the service coordination model, planning design, and experience - 25%
(B, D, F, H, I, J, K)
2. Outcomes - 20%
(N)
3. Successful experience with target group - 15%
(C)
4. Successful experience with property management - 10%
(E)
5. Successful experience with community collaboration - 10%
(B, G)
6. Agency administration and management capacity - 10%
(L, O)
7. Proposed cost - 10%
(Program Budget)



VI. **TIME LINES**

All bidders are strongly encouraged to attend the bidders conference at the Genesis offices on March 30, 1999 at 10:00.

- A. RFP's issued March 19, 1999.
- B. Bidders conference on March 30, 1999 at 10:00 at the Genesis offices.
- C. Proposals due and opened on April 15, 1999.
- D. Genesis Housing Corporation and Kent County Housing Consortium recommend successful bidder to the Genesis Board by May 3, 1999.
- E. The first batch of 23 units will be occupied by December, 1999. A second batch of 27 units will be occupied by February, 2000.
- F. Remaining 50 units occupied on December, 2000 and remaining support services provided.

VII. **PROVIDER OBLIGATIONS**

The successful bidder will be required to fulfill expectations specified in a contract with Genesis Housing Corporation.

BP/jsk
3/18/99



Further Information

The information presented here is not meant to be exhaustive, but to give a general overview of the kinds of issues that development organizations and Supportive Housing Consortia are likely to confront as they approach their first few supportive housing projects. This discussion builds on several years of experience in the four counties that pioneered Michigan's Supportive Housing Demonstration Program. Any exploration of supportive housing would therefore benefit greatly from a consultation with those who shaped and led the formative work in those four counties, in state government, and at the Corporation for Supportive Housing. Among the sources to consult are:

Allegan County

Heritage H.O.M.E., Inc.
Judith Kell
168 James Street
Holland, MI 49424

Kent County

Genesis Nonprofit Housing Corporation
Harold Mast
385 Leonard NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Dwelling Place of Grand Rapids
Dennis Sturtevant
343 S. Division
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Washtenaw County

Avalon Housing, Inc.
Carole A. McCabe
404 West Washington
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Genesee County

Community Capital & Development Corporation
Judy Christenson
711 N. Saginaw Street - Suite 123
Flint, MI 48503

Shelter of Flint, Inc.
Patricia Motter
432 N. Saginaw - Suite 902
Flint, MI 48502

Michigan State Housing Development Authority

Dorothy Byington
Special Housing Section
401 S. Washington Square
P.O. Box 30044
Lansing, MI 48909

Corporation for Supportive Housing

Sally Harrison
10327 E. Grand River Ave. - Suite 409
Brighton, MI 48116





CSH Publications:

In advancing our mission, the Corporation for Supportive Housing publishes reports, studies and manuals aimed at helping nonprofits and government develop new and better ways to meet the health, housing and employment needs of those at the fringes of society.

Under One Roof: Lessons Learned from Co-locating Overnight, Transitional and Permanent Housing at Deborah's Place II *Commissioned by CSH, Written by Tony Proscio. 1998; 19 pages. Price: \$5*

This case study examines Deborah's Place II in Chicago which combines three levels of care and service at one site with the aim of allowing homeless single women with mental illness and other disabilities to move towards the greatest independence possible, without losing the support they need to remain stable.

Work in Progress...An Interim Report from the Next Step: Jobs Initiative *1997; 54 pages. Price: \$5*

This report provides interim findings from CSH's *Next Step: Jobs* initiative, a three-city Rockefeller Foundation-funded demonstration program aimed at increasing tenant employment in supportive housing. It reflects insights offered by tenants and staff from 20 organizations based in Chicago, New York City, and the San Francisco Bay Area who participated in a mid-program conference in October, 1996.

Work in Progress 2: An Interim Report on Next Step: Jobs *Commissioned by CSH, Written by Tony Proscio. 1998; 22 pages. Price: \$5*

Work in Progress 2 describes the early progress of the *Next Step: Jobs* initiative in helping supportive housing providers "vocalize" their residences—that is, to make working and the opportunity to work part of the daily routine and normal expectation of many, even most, residents.

A Time to Build Up *Commissioned by CSH, Written by Kitty Barnes. 1998; 44 pages. Price: \$5*

A Time to Build Up is a narrative account of the lessons learned from the first two years of the three-year CSH New York Capacity Building Program. Developed as a demonstration project, the Program's immediate aim is to help participating agencies build their organizational infrastructure so that they are better able to plan, develop, and maintain housing with services for people with special needs.

Not a Solo Act: Creating Successful Partnerships to Develop and Operate Supportive Housing *Written by Sue Reynolds in collaboration with Lisa Hamburger of CSH. 1997; 146 pages. Price: \$15*

Since the development and operation of supportive housing requires expertise in housing development, support service delivery and tenant-sensitive property management, nonprofit sponsors are rarely able to "go it alone." This how-to manual is a guide to creating successful collaborations between two or more organizations in order to effectively and efficiently fill these disparate roles.

Closer to Home: An Evaluation of Interim Housing for Homeless Adults *Commissioned by CSH, Written by Susan M. Barrow, Ph.D. and Gloria Soto of the New York State Psychiatric Institute. 1996; 103 pages. Price: \$15*

This evaluation examines low-demand interim housing programs, which were developed by nonprofits concerned about how to help homeless people living on the streets who are not yet ready to live in permanent housing. Funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, this report is a 15-month study of six New York interim housing programs.

In Our Back Yard *Commissioned by CSH, Directed and produced by Lucas Platt. 1996; 18 minutes. Price: \$10, nonprofits/ \$15, all others.*

This educational video is aimed at helping nonprofit sponsors explain supportive housing to members of the community, government representatives, funders and the media. It features projects and tenants in New York, Chicago and San Francisco and interviews a broad spectrum of supporters, including police, neighbors, merchants, politicians, tenants, and nonprofit providers.

Design Manual for Service Enriched Single Room Occupancy Residences *Produced by Gran Sultan Associates in collaboration with CSH. 1994; 66 pages. Price: \$20*

This manual was developed by the architectural firm Gran Sultan Associates in collaboration with CSH and the New York State Office of Mental Health to illustrate an adaptable prototype for Single Room Occupancy residences for people with chronic mental illnesses. Included are eight prototype building designs, a layout for a central kitchen, recommendations on materials, finishes and building systems, and other information of interest to supportive housing providers, architects and funding agencies.

Next Door: A Concept Paper for Place-Based Employment Initiatives *Written by Julianne Dressner, Wendy Fleischer and Kay E. Sherwood. 1998; 61 pages. Price: \$5*

This report explores the applicability of place-based employment strategies tested in supportive housing to other buildings and neighborhoods in need of enhanced employment opportunities for local residents. Funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, the report explores transferring the lessons learned from a three-year supportive housing employment program to the neighborhoods "next door."

Understanding Supportive Housing *1997; 58 pages. Price: \$5*

This booklet is a compilation of basic resource documents on supportive housing, including a chart which outlines the development process; a description of capital and operating financial considerations; tips on support service planning; program summaries of federal funding sources; and a resource guide on other publications related to supportive housing.

The Next Step: Jobs Initiative Cost-Effectiveness Analysis *Written by David A. Long with Heather Doyle and Jean M. Amendolia. 1999; 62 pages. Price: \$5*

The report constitutes early findings from a cost-effectiveness evaluation by Abt Associates of the *Next Step: Jobs* initiative, which provided targeted services aimed at increasing supportive housing tenants' employment opportunities.

Employing the Formerly Homeless: Adding Employment to the Mix of Housing and Services *Commissioned by CSH, Written by Basil Whiting. 1994; 73 pages. Price: \$5*

Funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, this report explores the advisability of implementing a national employment demonstration program for the tenants of supportive housing. The paper is based on a series of interviews with organizations engaged in housing, social service, and employment projects in New York City, the San Francisco Bay Area, Washington, D.C., Chicago, and Minneapolis/ St. Paul, as well as a body of literature on programs aimed at alleviating the plight of homelessness.

Connecticut Supportive Housing Demonstration Program — Program Evaluation Report *Commissioned by CSH, Prepared by Arthur Andersen LLP, University of Pennsylvania Health System, Department of Psychiatry, Center for Mental Health Policy and Services Research, Kay E. Sherwood, TWR Consulting. 1999; Executive Summary, 32 pages. Complete Report, 208 pages.*

Executive Summary Price: \$5 Complete Report Price: \$15
This report evaluates the Statewide Connecticut Demonstration Program which created nearly 300 units of supportive housing in nine developments across the state in terms of tenant satisfaction, community impact — both economic and aesthetic, property values, and use of services once tenants were stably housed.

Miracle on 43rd Street *August 3, 1997 and December 26, 1999.*
60 Minutes feature on supportive housing as embodied in the Times Square and the Prince George in New York City. **To purchase VHS copies, call 1-800-848-3256; for transcripts, call 1-800-777-8398.**

Between the Lines: A Question and Answer Guide on Legal Issues in Supportive Housing - California Edition *Commissioned by CSH. Prepared by the Law Offices of Goldfarb and Lipman. 2000; 217 pages.*

Price: \$15 or download for FREE at www.csh.org
This manual offers some basic information about the laws that pertain to supportive housing and sets out ways to identify and think through issues so as to make better use of professional counsel. It also offers reasonable approaches to resolve common dilemmas.

Landlord, Service Provider...and Employer: Hiring and Promoting Tenants at Lakefront SRO *Written by Tony Proscio and Ted Houghton. 2000; 59 pages.*

Price: \$5 or download for FREE at www.csh.org
This essay provides a close look at Lakefront SRO's program of in-house tenant employment, as a guide for other supportive housing programs that either hire their own tenants or might want to do so. The lessons of **Landlord, Service Provider...and Employer** are also of potential interest to affordable housing programs whose tenants could become valuable employees given sufficient encouragement, training, and clear policies.

The Next Wave: Employing People with Multiple Barriers to Work: Policy Lessons from the Next Step: Jobs Initiative *Written by Wendy Fleischer and Kay E. Sherwood. 2000; 73 pages.*

Price: \$5 or download for FREE at www.csh.org
The **Next Step: Jobs** initiative tested the premise that a range of employment services targeted to supportive housing tenants can help them access employment. It used supportive housing as the focal point for deploying a range of services to address the multiple barriers to employment that tenants face. It also capitalizes on the residential stability and sense of community that supportive housing offers.

Vocalizing the Home Front: Promising Practices in Place-Based Employment *Written by Paul Parkhill. 2000; 79 pages.*

Price: \$5 or download for FREE at www.csh.org
Accessibility; inclusiveness; flexibility; coordinated, integrated approach to services; high quality, long-term employment; and linkages to private and public sectors are hallmarks of a new place-based strategy to help people with multiple barriers to work, find and keep employment. The 21 place-based employment programs featured in this report represent some of the most comprehensive and innovative approaches to employing persons who are homeless, former and current substance abusers, individuals with HIV/AIDS, those with physical and psychiatric disabilities and other challenges.

Supportive Housing and Its Impact on the Public Health Crisis of Homelessness *Written by Tony Proscio. 2000; 40 pages.*
Price: \$5 or download for FREE at www.csh.org

This publication announces the results of research done between 1996 and 2000 on more than 250 people who have lived at the Canon Kip Community House and the Lyric Hotel. It also looks at pre-occupancy and post-occupancy use of emergency rooms and inpatient care.

Forming an Effective Supportive Housing Consortia; Providing Services in Supportive Housing; and Developing and Managing Supportive Housing *Written by Tony Proscio. 2000; 136 pages.* **Price: \$5 each or download for FREE at www.csh.org**

These three manuals are designed to assist local communities and service and housing organizations to better understand the local planning consortium, service delivery and funding, and supportive housing development and financing.

The Network: Health, Housing and Integrated Services Best Practices and Lessons Learned *Written by Gerald Lenoir. 2000; 276 pages.* **Price: \$5 or download for FREE at www.csh.org**

This report summarizes the principles, policies, procedures and practices used by housing and service providers that have proven to be effective in serving Health, Housing and Integrated Services tenants where they live.

Closer to Home: Interim Housing for Long-Term Shelter Residents: A Study of the Kelly Hotel *Written by Susan M. Barrow, Ph.D. and Gloria Soto Rodriguez. 2000; 65 pages.*

Price: \$5 or download for FREE at www.csh.org
Evidence that a subgroup of homeless individuals have become long-term residents of NYC shelters has spurred a search for new approaches to engage them in services and providing appropriate housing alternatives. The Kelly Hotel Transitional Living Community, developed by the Center for Urban Community Services with first year funding from the Corporation for Supportive Housing, is one pioneering effort to help mentally-ill long-term shelter residents obtain housing.

COMING SOON:

Between the Lines: A Question and Answer Guide on Legal Issues in Supportive Housing - National Edition

Commissioned by CSH. Prepared by the Law Offices of Goldfarb and Lipman. This manual offers some basic information about the laws that pertain to supportive housing and sets out ways to identify and think through issues so as to make better use of professional counsel. It also offers reasonable approaches to resolve common dilemmas.

Guide to Developing Family Supportive Housing *Written by Ellen Hart Shegos.*

This manual is designed for service providers and housing developers who want to tackle the challenge of developing permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless families. The manual will provide information on the development process from project conception through construction and rent-up. It also discusses alternatives to new construction such as leased housing. It contains practical tools to guide decision making about housing models, picking partners, and service strategies.

Please mail your request for publications with a check payable to "Corporation for Supportive Housing" for the appropriate amount to: Publications, Corporation for Supportive Housing, 50 Broadway, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10004 (212) 986-2966 x 500 (Tel); (212) 986-6552 (Fax); Or, you can print an order form from our Web site at www.csh.org.

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Mission Statement...

CSH supports the expansion of permanent housing opportunities linked to comprehensive services for persons who face persistent mental health, substance use, and other chronic health challenges, and are at risk of homelessness, so that they are able to live with stability, autonomy, and dignity, and reach for their full potential.

We work through collaborations with private, nonprofit and government partners, and strive to address the needs of, and hold ourselves accountable to, the tenants of supportive housing.





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