

LIFT Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 5/23/2016

Program information and outreach schedules are available on the LIFT program webpage here: <http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/Pages/lift-housing-development-program.aspx>

What does the ownership structure look like?

The concept for the ownership structure is overviewed in the LIFT framework available on the LIFT program webpage <http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/Pages/lift-housing-development-program.aspx>; the legal agreements are still being drafted, once they are available they will be released for review. To receive any updates, subscribe to the LIFT Housing Development Updates by clicking [here](#)

What will the operational structure look like?

The concept for the operational structure is overviewed in the LIFT framework available on the LIFT program webpage <http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/Pages/lift-housing-development-program.aspx>; the legal agreements are still being drafted, once they are available they will be released for review. To receive any updates, subscribe to the LIFT Housing Development Updates by clicking [here](#)

What about construction standards for LIFT?

- Framework does not contemplate prescriptive green building standards or building design;
- Allows for both traditional and alternative / innovative methods of construction;
- Desire to not burden tenants with higher than average utility expenses.

What does it mean to serve communities of color?

Service to communities of color can be achieved in a number of ways, and should be relevant to the community in which the project is located, and the target population anticipated to be served. In general OHCS would expect that addressing this disparity could be accomplished in one of the following ways:

- Development, sponsorship or management by a culturally specific organization with a diverse and representative leadership.
- An ongoing service partnership with a culturally specific organization.
- A relevant marketing and outreach plan designed to publicize to communities of color the availability of the new housing opportunities created by the project, and to affirmatively further fair housing.
- A project explicitly designed and located to address displacement.

How will we address fair housing if we chose to build a project which serves Communities of Color?

- Fair Housing prohibits the targeting or exclusion of any protected class; including all race and ethnic groups;

- The intent of ‘serving communities of color’ for the LIFT program is not to limit tenancy by race or ethnicity. The intent is to ensure that the housing is made available to and is responsive to the needs of historically underserved population groups; in this case, communities of color.
- Communities of color is defined as racial / ethnic groups that have been historically underserved and is not specific to a geographic area or determined by specific geographic demographic factors;

What other resources are available to fill the gap?

Working with community partners will be critical to accomplish the goals. OHCS does not intend to use other state resources for LIFT projects, though a project may choose to pursue the use of 4% LIHTC. Since OHCS began discussions with the Legislature regarding this money, a range of partners have expressed an interest in committing resources such as:

- Project Based Vouchers (Public Housing Authorities)
- Land (City or County)
- Financial Resources

Questions to ask of potential partners:

- Have you asked your Housing Authority whether they have filed a plan with HUD to site base vouchers? Would the Housing Authority be willing to commit project based vouchers to help serve lower income families?
- Would the local DHS office commit to partnering with you in exchange for a few units set aside for their clients? Would the local office commit to maintaining a waiting list for those units? Would the local office commit to providing services on an on-going basis to those families?
- Have you considered partnering with your Coordinated Care Organization? Do they have families who need housing? Would they be willing to help pay for the housing to be built? Or provide on-going rent assistance? Or assist with service coordination and provision?
- Have you met with your Continuum of Care? Do they have site-based vouchers they could commit to the project or other funding?

Ways to decrease the cost of the building:

- Alternative construction methods;
- Mixed income;
- Additional sources of non-state gap funds;
- Developer equity;
- Designing smaller units;
- Leverage project based rent assistance;
- Limiting cash developer fee;
- Land donation;
- Dense development on low cost land; and/or
- Lowering operational costs.

What do you mean by rural communities?

- A community of less than 25,000 people outside of the Portland Urban Growth Boundary <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/urban-growth-boundary> .
 - Communities that are not incorporated cities are eligible to apply.

Can my project get funded if we request more than \$38,000 per unit in LIFT subsidy?

Projects requesting more than \$38,000 per unit in LIFT subsidy will get secondary consideration, and could not be reviewed if OHCS decides that ample applications requesting \$38,000 per unit or less have been submitted. The only way to ensure that your project application gets reviewed will be for it to get primary consideration by requesting \$38,000 per unit in LIFT subsidy or less. All applications will have the same deadline for submission.

What if we want to do this but don't have development experience?

OHCS expects that an experienced developer is part of the development team for all funded projects; the application will require that you indicate how the group has adequate experience. If your organization does not already have this experience on staff, you would be able to hire this experience as a contractor to work with you on the project.