

Liberty Place

The Development Story of a
HUD-VASH Project Based Voucher Complex

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Project Overview

- New 32-unit Veterans' complex
- Located in Knoxville, TN
- Offered through a partnership between Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC) (local PHA) and the VA.
- All units will accept project-based HUD-VASH vouchers
 - Tenant-based HUD-VASH vouchers will be converted to project-based HUD-VASH vouchers for the project



Intentional Design

- Multi-story with wide elevators
- No Individual Balconies
- Wide, open front porch concept to encourage interaction
- Walk/Roll-In Showers
- Outdoor pavilion
- Location selected to be near current VA outpatient clinic
- Additional space includes 2 partner offices, a meeting room, and a community room
 - Adding space for partners to offer on-site services will remove the barrier for access and provide community stability



Unit Specifics

- 16 ADA units; all 32 units will have the same footprint and similar accessibility
- Units will be fully furnished
- Utilities are included in the rent payment
- Partner organizations adopted units and are providing soft goods for tenants in need



Beginning Stages



A community taskforce was developed to discuss the disconnect between community identified Veterans and voucher utilization.

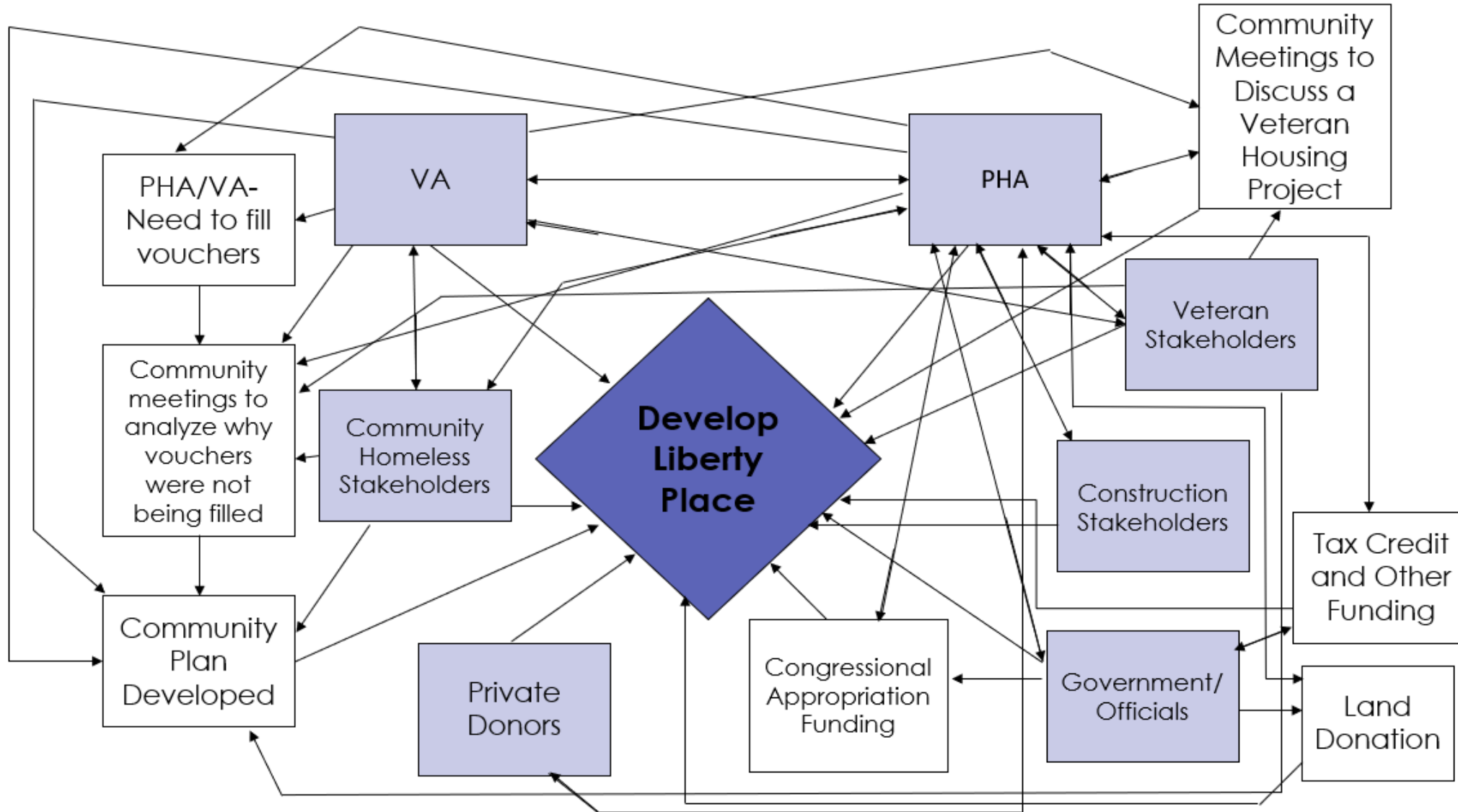
Meetings occurred monthly during 2020 and 2021. Data inaccuracies, communication breakdowns, and barriers within the coordinated entry system referral and housing process were discovered. An improvement plan was developed and implemented.



Concurrently, community stakeholders began to discuss the idea of new Veteran housing to address the insufficient amount of housing within the community.

- Veteran and community stakeholders began to meet.
- The housing authority began to investigate the idea of increasing support for Veterans.

Connections & Collaboration



PBV Rules For HUD-VASH Vouchers

NEW RULE:
HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY
THROUGH
MODERNIZATION
ACT
(HOTMA)



- HUD provided PHAs with additional guidance for project basing HUD-VASH vouchers (PIH 2021-21)
- VA was able to provide the key supportive services component.
- PHAs no longer need authorization from HUD to convert tenant-based HUD-VASH vouchers to project-based HUD-VASH vouchers. (86 FR 53207, 82 FR 5458)
- However, PHAs must consult with the partnering VAMC or DSP to ensure approval of the project. (86 FR 53207, 82 FR 5458)
- **Project Cap: Generally, PHAs may project-base the greater of 25% of the units in a project or 25 units in a project (some exceptions exist).**
 - Units financed with LIHTC are excepted (89 FR 38224, 82 FR 32461, 82 FR 5458,)
 - Units housing households eligible for supportive services available to all families receiving PBV assistance in the project are excepted (82 FR 5458)
 - Projects that are in a census tract with a poverty rate of 20 percent or less are excepted (82 FR 5458)
 - KCDC is a HUD MTW agency which allows 100% Project Cap for PBVs.

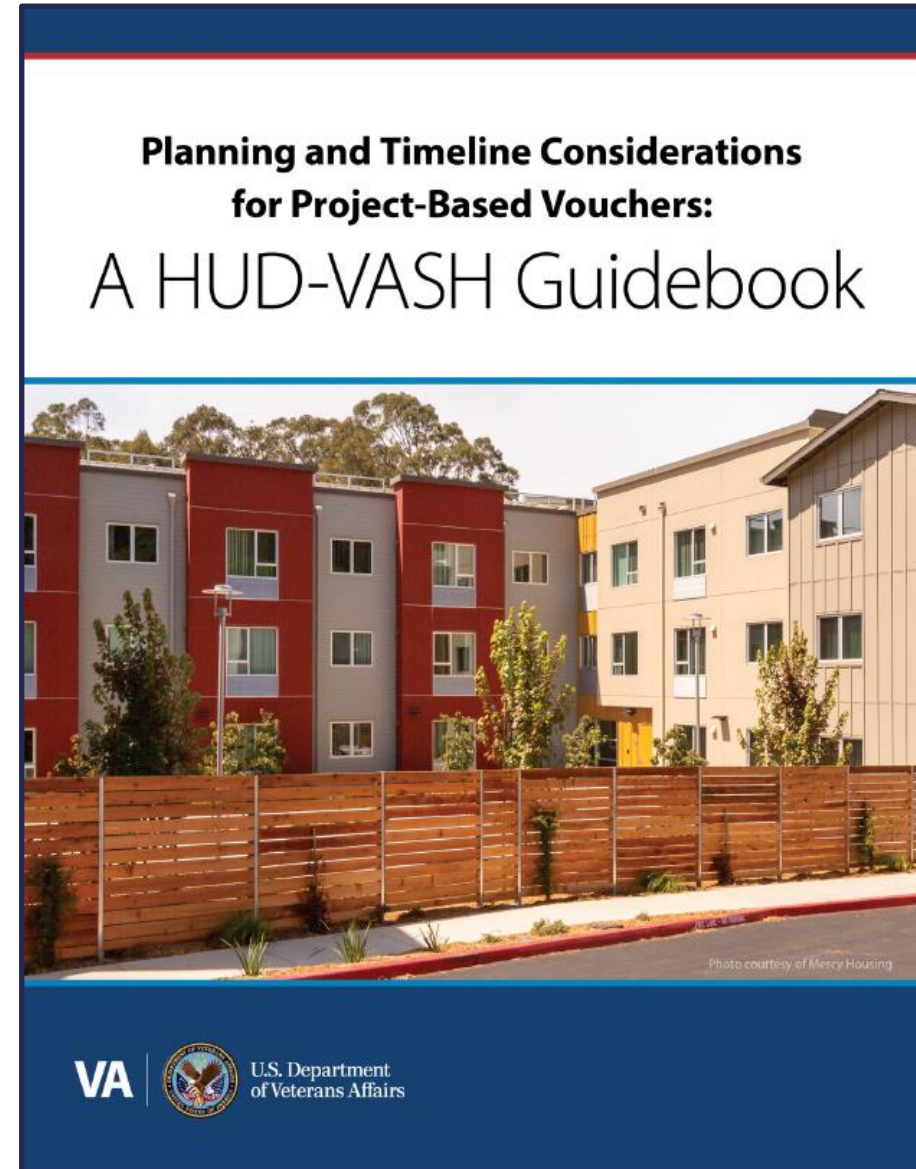
Funding Sources

- Federal Funds: \$2M
- City of Knoxville Affordable Housing Funds: \$500K
- LIHTC: \$6.6M
- HOME-ARP: \$1M
- Hard Debt: \$1.4M
- Soft Debt: \$1.3M
- Deferred Developer Fee: \$721K
- TVA Solar Grant: \$225,000
- ORNL AgPod Donation: \$50K
- Additional philanthropy in progress



MOA Design

- Low Barrier, Housing First
- Dedicated Units to Coordinated Entry (CHAMP)
- Clear roles for management company, housing authority, and VA case management
- VA Resources are Available
 - HUD-VASH PBV Guidebook
 - PBV Call Recordings
 - MOA Template
 - Revocable License Template



Timeline

- VA-PHA-HMIS Meetings start: October 2020
- Community Interest: October 2020
- PHA Need Identification/Idea: January 2021
- Market Analysis: November 2022
- Verbal Commitment to Support from VA: January 2023
- First Draft of MOA: January 2023
- Signed Statement of Fact from VA: April 2023
- Groundbreaking: August 16, 2023
- MOA Signed: June 2024
- Expected Opening: November 2024



Lessons Learned

- 1. Involve individuals who understand the community**
- 2. Don't be afraid to have difficult conversations, and be willing to work toward resolving concerns**
 - In our case, there was a miscommunication about the voucher utilization rate
 - Created a taskforce to determine the reasons
 - All parties continued to invest and work hard toward a common goal
 - This process built trust, which was crucial for the project's success
- 3. Obtain data upfront**
 - The market analysis helped with obtaining VA support
 - Important information was determined
 - Not all voucher holders were able to find suitable housing
 - Needs assessment of current voucher holders showed that 43.4% were at an advanced age and 58% had a disability
 - Some individuals with current vouchers were living in units not supportive of their needs or disability
- 4. Be open to saying yes**
 - In our case, it took leaders who were willing to remove barriers and to streamline processes to bring the project to fruition
- 5. MOAs can take a while**
 - It took over a year to fully execute our MOA
- 6. Commit to low barrier**
- 7. Prioritize Veterans in the process**



Ribbon Cutting Event

- Mid-November
- The date will be set after special guests have confirmed
- Please join us! All are welcome!



Thank you!

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