



Lockwood Companies Emphasizes the Growing Importance of Preconstruction Planning in Multifamily and Senior Housing Development

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As multifamily and senior housing developments incorporate more sophisticated requirements and involve a wider array of stakeholders, the importance of comprehensive preconstruction planning has become increasingly evident. This early phase of project development allows teams to establish clear objectives, assess potential challenges, and align resources before significant commitments are made in the field. By focusing attention on preconstruction planning, participants in the residential development sector can better position projects for efficient execution.

Residential projects in these sectors often face layered considerations, including compliance with financing programs, design features tailored to specific resident populations, and the integration of building systems that support both construction and long-term operations. Preconstruction planning provides the structured framework necessary to navigate these elements systematically, helping to avoid the escalation of issues that can arise when planning is deferred.

Effective preconstruction planning relies on early collaboration between owners, developers, architects,

engineers, contractors, consultants, and trade partners. Each party brings unique expertise that, when integrated from the outset, contributes to a more cohesive project definition. This cooperative approach during the planning stages helps ensure that design intent is balanced with practical considerations of constructability, budget parameters, and schedule realities.

Dean Schroeder, Executive Vice President of Construction at Lockwood Companies, highlights the value of this collaborative input. "By engaging in preconstruction planning activities such as design reviews and feasibility assessments, construction professionals can offer insights that enhance the alignment between conceptual plans and real-world execution requirements," Schroeder explains. Such involvement supports the identification of opportunities to refine approaches while options remain flexible, contributing to more predictable project trajectories overall.

Within preconstruction planning, several key activities build this foundation. Feasibility reviews examine site characteristics, regulatory pathways, and preliminary program requirements against available resources and timelines. Budgeting processes commence early, generating cost projections at schematic and conceptual design levels that inform subsequent decisions and help maintain financial discipline as designs evolve. Estimating efforts incorporate input from trade partners and current market data to produce reliable figures that support option evaluation. Value engineering complements these efforts by examining alternative materials, systems, or methods that can achieve project goals with optimized cost or risk profiles while maintaining quality standards.

Constructability reviews scrutinize proposed designs for potential field conflicts, sequencing difficulties, or site-specific constraints, allowing modifications at the drawing stage rather than during active construction. Milestone scheduling establishes preliminary timelines and identifies key dependencies, providing a roadmap that guides resource planning. Risk analysis systematically evaluates potential exposures and outlines mitigation measures. Procurement planning addresses the timing of material and subcontractor acquisition to safeguard against delays. Ongoing coordination ensures that information flows effectively among all participants, supporting alignment.

The cumulative effect of these preconstruction planning efforts is greater project certainty. Refined cost estimates provide clearer financial pictures, while early risk identification reduces the likelihood of variances. Scheduling with broad input tends to be more achievable, and constructability input minimizes disruptive changes that occur when issues surface late. These outcomes support more controlled project advancement.

Beyond the immediate phase, thorough preconstruction planning positively influences longer-term project results. Designs optimized through value engineering and coordination are more likely to result in buildings that operate efficiently and meet resident and operator needs. By resolving uncertainties prior to groundbreaking, teams create conditions for smoother progress and outcomes that more closely reflect the

original vision. This proactive approach in preconstruction planning supports stronger asset performance in multifamily and senior housing communities.

Organizations with substantial experience in these sectors often implement formalized preconstruction planning protocols. Lockwood Companies follows an established process that begins with stakeholder engagement to define goals and expectations. This is followed by risk assessments, collaboration with design teams during schematic and design development stages, value engineering, and progressive costing, along with coordination for permitting and authorizations. These steps prepare projects for successful advancement through structured preconstruction planning.

Mark Lockwood, President and CEO of Lockwood Companies, underscores the broader implications. "When preconstruction planning is conducted thoroughly and collaboratively, it provides a stable base that carries through the development process, helping to deliver projects that achieve their intended objectives and provide enduring value," Lockwood observes.

As the multifamily and senior housing sectors continue to evolve, the emphasis on robust preconstruction planning reflects a recognition that many determinants of success are addressed well before construction begins. Early collaboration, detailed analysis, and coordinated planning represent established methods for navigating complexity.

Lockwood Companies, founded in 1944 by Rodney M. Lockwood, Sr., has contributed to housing solutions for decades. The firm has developed expertise in multifamily and senior housing, participating in the creation of numerous units across various financing structures. Today, Lockwood Companies continues to engage in the development and construction of residential communities, applying its documented preconstruction planning processes to support projects that serve families and older adults.

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Lockwood Companies

Lockwood Companies has provided multi-family housing development and management services across Michigan for

more than 35 years, drawing on extensive experience in residential projects and long-term asset management.

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