



The Importance of Long-Term Care Master Planning for Facilities

The Long-Term Care Facilities Master Plan is an important business planning document that provides a basis for sound management decisions relative to your facilities.



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This planning process allows administrators and operators to examine the condition of their buildings and decide whether to maintain, remodel, upgrade or replace. In addition, it provides a key component to the strategic plan and mission of an organization. The Master Plan provides both short- and long-range planning solutions, which should be used as a road map that is reviewed and updated every three to five years.

At present, most Long-Term Care Facilities are faced with many issues, including the aging of their buildings and market pressure. Facilities from the 1950s through 1990s might not accommodate current market needs and 21st-century person-centered concepts. They typically have high maintenance costs, inefficient heating, inadequate lighting and poor accommodations for technology. Other deficiencies may include health and safety issues, and many facilities do not meet handicap accessibility requirements. Changing demographics and external mandates have affected Long-Term Care Facilities.

Eight Simple Steps to a Successful Master Plan

- 1. Existing Facilities Analysis:** The first action of an Existing Facilities Analysis includes an architectural and engineering survey of the current building envelope design and conditions, as well as the interior architectural, mechanical and electrical condition. This survey also reviews handicap accessibility, space utilization, site characteristics, security and air quality, and it evaluates the building's condition related to potential re-use.
- 2. Space Program:** This step involves evaluating space and space size relevant to building population, spatial adjacencies, adequacy of spaces and functions. It also includes obtaining staff, resident and community input regarding the use of spaces and how they function.
- 3. Review of Options:** Narratives of options are generated to satisfy issues identified in the first two steps of the study. Each option is described in detail, followed by an analysis

and information on associated costs. For example, building new or renovating might be two options for resolving issues with aging buildings. Options may be fairly simple or complicated, depending on the size of buildings and the factors involved in the specific solution.

- 4. Concept Development:** Once an option is selected, a graphic concept can be generated. For projects which include remodeling and additions, these plans are color-coded to show existing and new departmental configurations and adjacencies as well as the extent of remodeling.
- 5. Site Utilization:** A review of the site's existing conditions determines the impact of potential building additions upon the site's outdoor space and pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The review includes potential impact on wetlands, drainage and storm water management, utility easements, and existing landscaping and topography.
- 6. Project Development Scheduling:** Next comes the development of a detailed schedule for potential projects and a time line for capital expenditures.



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7. Project Cost Estimate: This step creates a cost estimate for the construction portion of potential projects as well as project costs, such as fees, reimbursable expenses, permits, furniture/fixtures and equipment (often termed FFE), moving costs and land costs. Costs are evaluated both in terms of present day value and future value, including the factor of anticipated average inflation rates for the construction industry. The useful life of building systems as evaluated in the first step of the process is helpful in the capital expenditure anticipated schedule as well as in decisions made to build new or renovate.

8. Report: The report comes in both hard copy and electronic formats. The latter has been useful in posting online, so constituents may review meeting minutes, decisions made, and the outcome of the master planning process. The report typically includes the materials developed in

Planning for facility maintenance projects reduced energy consumption by as much as 12% per year for our clients.

the previous seven steps as well as information provided by third parties: census data, presentations from the administration, policy guidelines and mandates.

A Facility Master Plan provides an effective way to determine current and future space utilization. This type of analysis reviews the size and appropriate locations of rooms. In some studies, better space utilization has resulted in reconfiguration of space with no new construction.

It is important to take a life cycle view of expenditures. Capital investments are typically less than 10% of total expenditures in the life of a facility. Operational expenses are typically in the 30% range, with personnel costs at 60% of the life of a facility. For this reason, PRA believes that an efficient plan is instrumental in supporting staff efforts and may affect long-term savings.

Life Expectancies of Building Components

It is also important to understand that different building components have different life expectancies. For instance, roofing typically has a 20-year life span, asphalt paving might have a 15-year life expectancy and mechanical equipment might vary from 15 to 20 or more years, depending on what is installed. These projections allow a facility manager to create a schedule that anticipates renewal or replacement costs.

Some in the Long-Term Care Facilities industry have stipulated that when the cost of renovation or repair exceeds 70% of the cost of new, it is time to consider replacing the facility. However, in the case of historic buildings, the constituency may decide to exceed that percentage to retain a prized community asset. Other major considerations in the discussion of whether to build new or renovate include the total replacement of the mechanical and electrical systems, new door and window systems and replacements for energy efficiency and structural changes to accommodate new space.



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Long-Range Advantages of Planning

Having created Long-Term Care Facility Master Plans for more than 78 years, PRA is pleased to see that some facilities have been using their studies for a decade or more in the true long-range fashion for which the document was intended. We have had the opportunity to revisit and update some of these Master Plans and participate with operators on various initiatives resulting from this process. A Master Plan also can be useful in indicating when not to take action. Sometimes, a building may have so many issues that the operator may decide it is time to retire the building and start a new chapter.

With our master planning process, our clients have realized a 5% reduction in their budgets.

Long-term care settings are perhaps ready to change more rapidly than ever, thanks to the advent of technology and 21st century person-centered care concepts. Master Planning is crucial in evaluating existing buildings to see if they have the basic configuration, attributes and structural flexibility to permit updates to meet present needs with reasonable cost.

PRA values Long-Term Care Facility Master Planning as an important aspect of our service to long-term care operators. We hope you wish to learn more about our approach.

Additional white papers regarding long-term care planning and design strategies can be found within the **Thought Leadership Section** of PRA's website at www.prarch.com.



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