

The Community Association Construction Project Guide

A practical checklist for boards and property managers navigating complex building projects

Community associations eventually face major building projects. Concrete restoration, waterproofing, roofing, paving, electrical upgrades, and structural repairs are all common examples. These projects can involve large budgets, engineering reports, contractor bids, resident disruption, and long timelines. Most board members never expected to manage complex construction work. Yet associations routinely find themselves making decisions involving hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars. This guide is designed to provide a practical roadmap so boards and property managers understand the steps involved in these projects, when to bring in engineers, how to structure contractor bidding, and when it may be time to bring in professional construction management.

1. Recognizing When a Project Is Coming

Projects are often triggered by milestone inspections, reserve studies, water intrusion, structural reports, roof failures, pavement deterioration, or safety concerns.

Checklist:

- Review engineering reports or inspection findings
- Evaluate reserve study recommendations
- Identify affected systems
- Determine urgency and safety risks

2. Defining the Scope

Before contractors are contacted, the association must clearly define what needs to be repaired or replaced.

Checklist:

- Identify all affected areas
- Confirm whether structural elements are involved
- Determine if testing or additional investigation is required
- Clarify long term repair objectives

3. Hiring the Right Engineer

Many projects require licensed engineers or architects to inspect the building and prepare repair specifications.

Engineers typically provide:

- Investigation and testing
- Engineering reports
- Repair drawings and specifications
- Construction observation

Checklist:

- Interview firms with relevant experience
- Review past projects
- Confirm scope of services

4. Creating a Project Plan

Before bidding the work, associations should develop a project plan.

A strong plan includes:

Scope of work

- Budget estimates
- Construction timeline
- Resident communication plan

5. Understanding the Role of an Owner's Representative

An Owner's Representative works for the association to help manage complex construction projects.

Responsibilities may include:

- Coordinating engineers and consultants
- Organizing contractor bidding
- Reviewing proposals
- Monitoring project schedules
- Helping reduce costly change orders

6. Contractor Bidding

When engineering plans are complete, contractors can be invited to bid.

Checklist:

- Prepare a bid package
- Hold a pre-bid meeting if necessary
- Verify contractor licenses and insurance
- Compare proposals based on the same scope

7. Budget and Financing

Major projects often require financial planning.

Typical costs include:

- Construction work
- Engineering fees
- Permits and inspections
- Contingency funds
- A contingency of 10–20% is common for complex projects.

8. Construction Oversight

Once construction begins, projects must be monitored to ensure work is performed according to the plans and specifications.

Oversight helps prevent:

- Cost overruns
- Schedule delays
- Quality issues

9. Resident Communication

Construction projects impact residents. Clear communication helps maintain trust.

Boards should communicate:

- Why the project is necessary
- Expected timelines
- Areas impacted
- Safety considerations

10. Project Closeout

When construction is complete, proper closeout ensures long term protection for the association.

Checklist:

- Final inspections
- Punch list completion
- Warranty documentation
- Updated maintenance records

A Note on Professional Construction Management

Many associations begin exploring professional construction management when projects become complex, involve large budgets, or require coordination between multiple engineers and contractors. An experienced Owner's Representative can help associations organize the project, reduce risk, and protect the community's financial interests. HCMC works with community associations to guide boards and property managers through planning, bidding, and construction oversight so projects move forward with clarity and accountability.

Final Thought

Major building projects place boards and property managers in a difficult position. Suddenly you are responsible for reviewing engineering reports, comparing contractor bids, managing budgets, coordinating schedules, and overseeing work that can involve hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars.

That often leads to the same challenges:

- Bids that don't match
- Contractors pointing fingers when problems arise
- Change orders that increase costs
- Delays and resident frustration

- Uncertainty about whether the work is being done correctly

These projects are complex, and most board members were never expected to manage them alone.

Hodge Construction Management & Consulting (HCMC) works as the association's Owner's Representative, helping organize the project, coordinate engineers and contractors, review bids, and oversee construction so the board can move forward with clarity and confidence.

If your community is preparing for concrete restoration, roofing, waterproofing, structural repairs, or other major building work, contact HCMC to discuss how professional construction management can help protect your project and your community's financial interests.

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