

March 25th, 2026

Affordable Multifamily Retrofit Series

WEBINAR #3: Tenant Engagement



We will start promptly at 10am



Recording



Slides



Q&A

AGENDA

1. Background & Context
2. Why Tenant Engagement Matters
3. Building Your Engagement Team & Plan
4. Pre-Construction, During Construction, & Post-Construction Engagement
5. Lessons Learned
6. Q&A





HOST

DAVID HODGINS
Founder & CEO

SUSTENTO



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WHY THIS MATTERS

**Housing
Affordability**

**Aging
Buildings**

**Extreme
Heat**

**Air
Pollution**

**Utility
Bills**

Regulation

**Access to
Funding**

Safety

FIELD GUIDE FLOW CHART





SPEAKER

ADALIA RODRIGUEZ

VP Human Capital & COO

East LA Community Corporation



EAST LA COMMUNITY CORPORATION



Why **Tenant Engagement** Matters

Retrofit projects directly impact residents and their homes. A thoughtful tenant engagement process helps create a **positive environment** for:

- Keeping residents informed
- Building understanding of the project goals
- Encouraging cooperation during construction
- Creating space for feedback and questions

Effective engagement helps ensure the project is successful for both residents and the property.



Build Your Engagement Team

A strong tenant engagement process begins with assembling the right internal team.

Key team members include:

Supportive Services

Understands resident needs and helps address concerns

Property Management

Maintains day-to-day communication with residents

Project Manager

Provides construction updates and technical information

Construction Manager

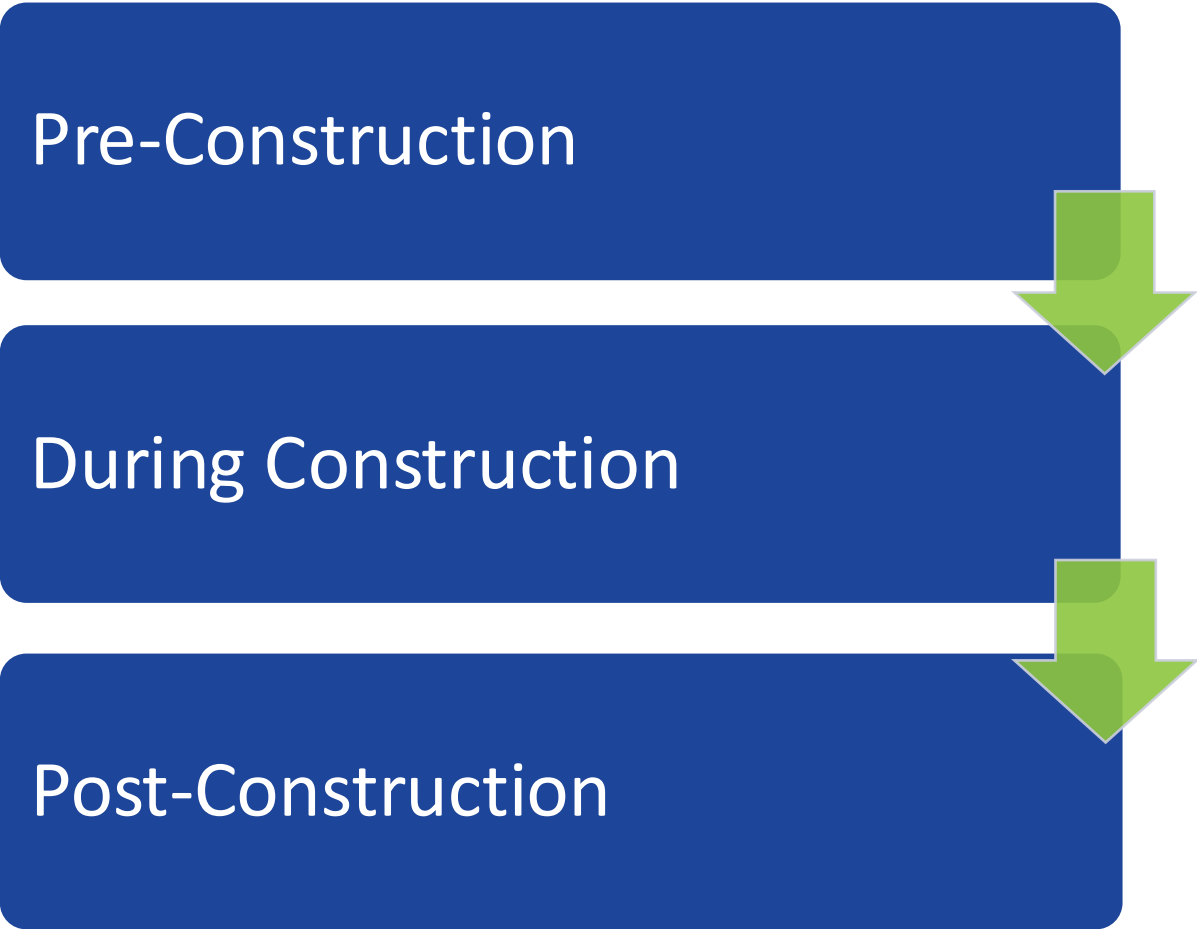
Provides input on experience and how their team can handle vulnerable populations



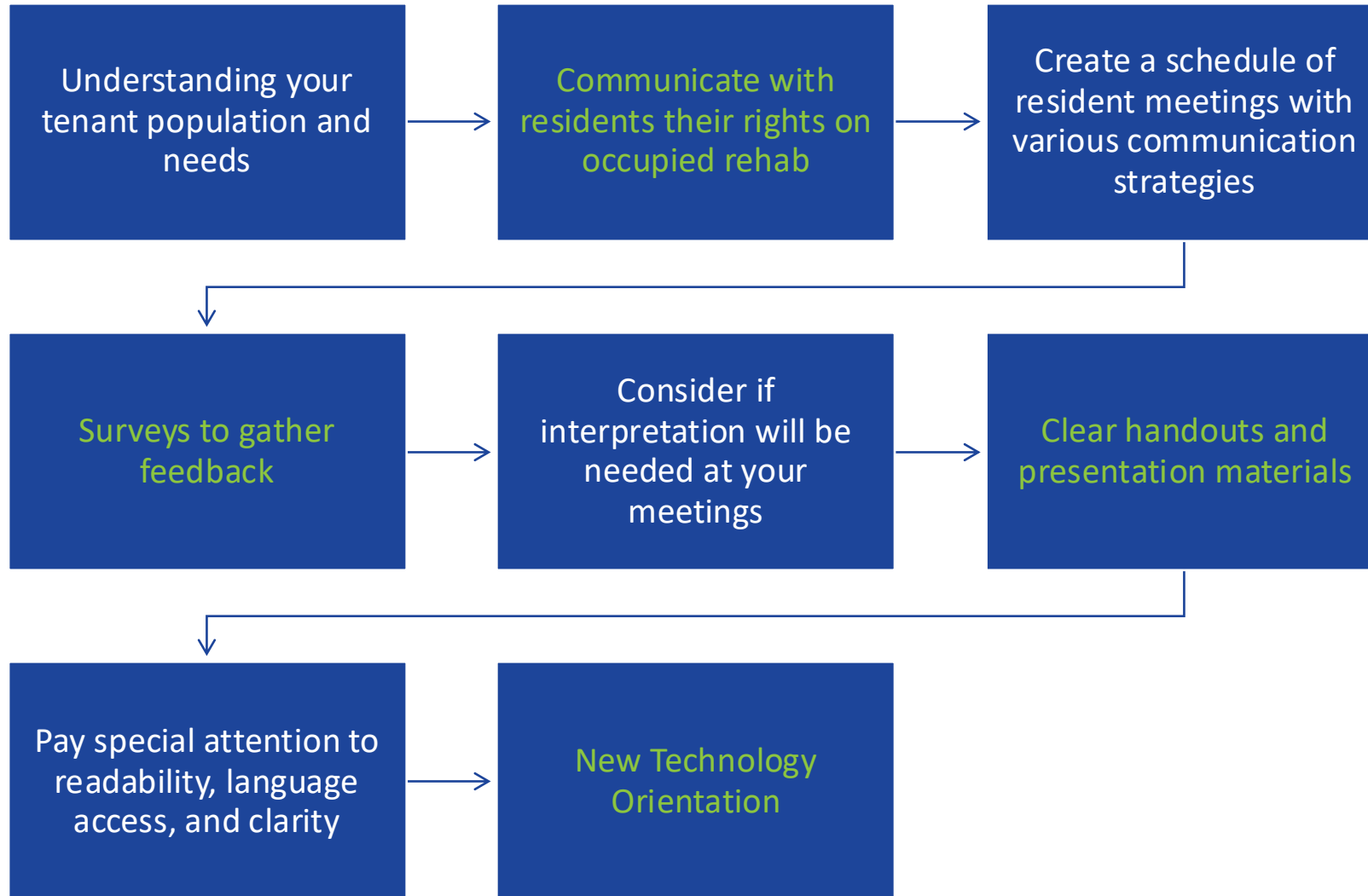
Start by understanding your resident population (languages, accessibility needs, preferred communication methods).

Together, this team develops and implements the tenant engagement plan.

Build Your Engagement Plan - Phases



Build Your Engagement Plan – Key Components



Tenant Communication Materials

Tenant Communication Materials Checklist	
Materials	Purpose
Welcome Packet ✓	Provide an overview of the decarbonization project and its benefits (a pamphlet)
Tenant FAQ ✓	Address common questions about the retrofit process, timelines, and impacts. Provide materials such as booklets and flyers to answer questions like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is this happening? • How will it improve their living conditions? • Address issues tenants raise (e.g., requests for dishwashers).
Tutorial on Induction Cooktops (if applicable) ✓	Offer written, video, and/or in-person lessons on how to use the new induction cooktops
Weekly Newsletter/Updates ✓	Keep tenants informed of weekly progress, upcoming disruptions, and new developments



Pre-Construction Management - Overview

Begins approximately 60 days before construction.

Meeting 1: Project Overview

- Overview of the retrofit project and why the building was selected
- Resident rights and protections
- Introduction to decarbonization and energy upgrades (Decarb 101)
- What residents might expect regarding utility bills
- Ask residents their preferred communication methods (text, meetings, flyers, mail, etc.)



Pre-Construction Management - Preparation

Meeting 2: Construction Preparation

- Review the construction timeline
- Explain what residents can expect during construction
- Introduce the contractor
- Provide construction issue process





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Engagement **During Construction**

Hold monthly or bi-monthly meetings during construction.

These meetings should be used to:

- Provide construction updates
- Address resident questions and concerns
- Gather feedback from residents
- Provide training on newly installed equipment

If possible, bring examples or demonstrations of new equipment so residents can become familiar with how it works.



New Technology Training – Heat Pumps

What is a Heat Pump?

One electric device instead of A/C & Gas-powered heat



THE SWITCH IS ON

Post Construction Engagement

Post-Project Follow-Up Meeting (~2 months after completion)

- Thank residents for their cooperation
- Check in on equipment performance
- Re-educate residents on proper use of smart pumps, and other upgrades
- Share utility assistance & bill discount programs
- Address common concerns from Property Management
- Open floor for resident feedback & shared experiences



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Lessons Learned

From our experience, several key lessons stand out:

1. The tenant engagement team must maintain consistent communication and coordination internally to ensure residents receive clear and accurate information
2. Residents should be prepared for the possibility that construction schedules or technologies may change as the project progresses
3. It is important to explain early that multiple inspections may occur throughout the project
4. Track tenant engagement: meeting attendance, resident concerns, and follow-up actions

Strong communication and transparency helps to build trust and make the process smoother for everyone.





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Planning – Org Wide Decarb Plan Success

- Must have organizational buy-in
- At ELACC this is lead by AM & PM teams
- Designated staff – We hired a full-time summer intern
- Stay organized – we created a central filing system
- Review your portfolio and prioritize your assets
- If LADWP area, apply to CAMR
<https://ladwpcamr.com/interest-form/>
- Set structure in place to keep each other on task and informed.



Planning – Org Wide Decarb Plan



ELACC's original decarb goals that motivated us to start this work

1. Leverage resources to improve our tenants' homes
2. Work on strategies that would help stabilize our building – building systems and building operations
3. Benefit from available technical assistance (TA)

A KEY TO SUCCESS - Partner with others such as net-zero technology experts. We partner with Association for Energy Affordability (AEA). And we work with Retrofit.LA partners.

Vallejo Apartments Case Study



Started planning with first site visit in August 2022

Approved Scope of Work August 2023:

- Low flow aerators & showerheads
- LED lighting
- In-unit A/C: mini splits
- Central heat pump WH
- New windows – historic building
- Induction cooking
- Exterior insulation
- Exterior painting
- Electrical Upgrade

No relocation was needed

Why this asset? It was underperforming annually and needed a lot of work.

Estimated annual savings of \$700.

Equipment

- Central WH took 2 months
- HVAC took 1-month
- Electrical took 6-months

Construction estimated 12-months

- Started April 11, 2025
- Completed 95% by June 27, 2025
- Upon city inspection required re-piping & new water meter (~\$130,000)

Tenant Meetings

- Tenant Habitability Plan
- 5 tenant meetings

- NOAH acquired in 2017
- Built in 1905 and 1916
- 17 units in 2 buildings
- No major rehab
- All units are occupied

Vallejo Apartments Case Study



Retrofit Total	\$980,799	100%
MAHEP	\$132,700	14%
LIWP	\$138,089	14%
CAMR	\$182,057	19%
TECH	\$345,000	35%
Grants	\$156,500	16%
Replacement Reserves	\$26,453	3%

Staff costs not included

Started planning with first site visit in August 2022

- Scope of work (SOW) is sized to incentives and grants secured. 97% cost coverage.
- Required electrical rewire to bring up to current code. This was done in sections as occupied rehab.
- A NOAH property that had major deferred maintenance and substandard construction.
- AEA's TA helped us with stacking incentives.
- Original budget \$800K, cost increased ~22% during construction. ~\$140,000 unexpected corrections.

It's a can of worms when you open it. Risk of LADBS mercy.

Q & A



Upcoming Webinar

WEBINAR #4

Construction Management

June 19th, 2026
10-11am PST

Thank you

There will be a 2-3 min survey (from Zoom) when this meeting ends. Your responses are extremely helpful.