

The purpose of this document is to establish a general framework for the SGPS to institutionally commit to the inception of a new Housing Authority. It also serves to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Council, the Executive, and the SGPS as a whole while moving forward with this plan. If Council approves this venture, this action plan aims to create an overarching structure that will supersede personalities and individuals and ensure the project is pursued as an entity and as an organization. The document is not intended to be rigid, but rather provide flexibility by being amenable to change with shifting environments and emerging challenges.

Introduction

The SGPS Executive had concluded in May that the SGPS financial reserves of about \$250,000 were underutilized and could be leveraged to provide a sizeable and stable source of revenue other than the SGPS Student Activity Fees. It was also of interest to provide a service that is required and utilizable by SGPS members.

In conjunction with limited housing services offered to Graduate and Professional Students by the Queen's Administration and the poor quality of housing available in the Student Ghetto, a housing service offered by the SGPS seemed to be the most reasonable compromise between serviceability and profitability for a new SGPS service. This proposition seemed more attractive as land value prices had bottomed out due to the most recent economic recession. VP Finance and Services Amir Nosrat sent a letter to Councilors in late May informing of the inception of a new Housing Authority Task Force that will better explore this idea.

The Housing Authority Task Force completed preliminary research on the legal, financial, and operational aspects of a new housing service and presented its findings to Council in August. After meeting broad support from Councilors, a new Housing Special Committee was established with an overwhelming majority. The Housing Committee ultimately recommended that the SGPS hire Queen's Business Consulting (QBC) to conduct an independent professional feasibility study on the Housing Authority and dissolved itself in November after providing its assessment report.

QBC had presented an 83-page document in December 2009 outlining the challenges and assessments pertaining to a Housing Authority and have recommended that the idea be pursued in a contractual collaboration with a separate organization. If Council wills to pursue this project, it must be initiated as soon as possible, before a new Executive is elected that will not be aware of the details of setting up the Housing Authority. Both the report of QBC and the Housing Committee are available on file with the Executive Director.

The Executive have approved this action plan and recommend to Council as a guide for implementing a new Housing Authority. In order to successfully implement the action plan, a body will be struck by the Executive hereby referred to as the Housing Authority Initiation Working Group (HAIWG). Membership will be prioritized by members of the Executive, the Finance and Services Committee, Council, and the regular membership. In order to be effective the HAIWG will be comprised of no more than ten (10) people.

Caveats

The purpose of the Housing Authority must remain true to the four following principles:

1. To provide affordable, high-quality rental housing to Queen's graduate and professional students, their partners and families at or below market rates; and
2. To endeavour to have a positive impact on the community and avoid displacing low income residents; and
3. To balance the need to increase housing stock with the programming and service needs of the SGPS by making revenue streams available to the SGPS; and
4. To enhance and augment the services available to the SGPS membership.

This venture, if approved, must not be viewed as a short-term investment but rather a 20 or 30 year strategic move. While we will not be able to service a large portion of our membership or generate a staggering amount of revenue in the first few years of the operation, it is expected that the service will grow substantially over a longer period of time. This will not only leverage the SGPS financially, which can then be used to subsidize programs, offer new services, or increase our administrative and lobbying capabilities, but also provide a valued service by the students for the students.

The Housing Authority must also be aware of its relationship with Queen's administration. Queen's University is a Crown organization, by virtue of its Royal Charter and can essentially seize any properties roughly within a 5 minute walking distance from the Main Campus. These boundaries are negotiated once in a while with the City of Kingston and can be found in Queen's Campus Development documents archived by our Executive Director.

Tasks

This action plan recognizes the minimum following tasks as necessary to establish a new Housing Authority:

- *Task A:* Council empowers HAIWG to set up shell corporation for the Housing Authority.

- *Task B:* HAIWG negotiate with potential third parties for joint investments or operations. Potential third parties include but are not limited to:
 - Student Housing Cooperative
 - Queen’s Community Housing
 - Queen’s Student Village
- *Task C:* HAIWG consult with legal experts to address legal matters with initiating and maintaining a new Housing Authority and negotiate regular legal services. Legal experts include but are not limited to:
 - Queen’s Legal Clinic
 - Mary-Anne Higgins
- *Task D:* HAIWG finalize Housing Authority Bylaws draft to recommend to Council
- *Task E:* Council approves Housing Authority Bylaws.
- *Task F:* HAIWG searches for suitable property as well as suitable instruments of financial leverage in collaboration with third party if need be. Based on their finding, the HAIWG recommends a value of funds to be transferred from Council.
- *Task G:* Council releases funds to the Housing Authority (two readings required).
- *Task H:* HAIWG vitalizes Housing Authority governance body per bylaws and transitions the new governance body on the role, history, and needed operations of Housing Authority.
- *Task I:* Housing Authority purchases property.
- *Task J:* Housing Authority ratifies needed policies and begins operation.

2010	Task A	Task B	Task C	Task D	Task E	Task F	Task G	Task H	Task I	Task J
January										
February										
March										
April										
May										
June										
July										
August										
September										