

Following the vote at Synod 2021 where a new governance pilot was approved, the Property Committee, a standing committee of Synod Council, was created with the following responsibilities (in part);

- Establish and recommend for approval a property development policy for the Diocese
- Develop and recommend for approval, a systematic approach to parish redevelopment/model for property redevelopment

This committee was constituted in January with Peter Patterson ODT and Stu Hutcheson ODT as co-chairs.

Several parishes have over the past few years, expressed interest in full or partial redevelopment of their sites to create mixed use facilities encompassing affordable and market housing along with worship and program spaces, and some have in fact proceeded via selling land to a commercial developer. This committee has been charged with the task of trying to construct a model where the Diocese can retain control of the development while tapping into the expertise of skilled professional resources to bring it to completion and manage it thereafter.

We believe that United Property Resources Corporation (recently renamed Kindred Works) is such a developer. This subsidiary of the United Church of Canada was formed to address that church's desire to construct similar developments according to the following mission;

"An independent company, we redevelop and manage land on behalf of the UCC, its congregations and ecumenical partners. We transform Church properties into housing and shared spaces that are built to meet broad community needs, promote sustainability and advance right relations, anti-colonialism and anti-racism approaches".

The Committee is currently conducting due diligence to confirm a recommendation that two parishes, St. Mary and St. Martha and St. George by the Grange be approved to begin pilot projects involving the development of mixed-use facilities (housing, worship and associated support) whereby the parish contributes the land and the remaining costs are financed. Upon completion, the model envisages rental income returning to the parish/Diocese through management of the housing units by Kindred Works.

While this approach appears exciting, the road to completion will still be long. Even with our potential partner's expertise in development, the process still entails feasibility studies, engineering and design work, City rezoning and building approvals, financing, tendering and construction. It is expected that the first tenant won't move into these units for 4 to 5 years.

For further information or to leave comments, you can contact Stu Hutcheson at shutcheson@toronto.anglican.ca

PS: Further insight into Kindred Works projects can be found in a May 2, 2022 Globe & Mail article at the following link.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-united-church-to-transform-its-properties/>