

*Executive Summary*

This report attempts to consider a number of variables in examining problems in student housing that will be faced by Queen's University as it undergoes expansion in the next decade. The planning issue as defined in this report is how to plan for student housing during a period of enrolment expansion. This report begins by looking at a number of factors that may explain why there is likely to be an increase in levels of student enrolment in the next decade, and consequently, an increasing demand for suitable and affordable student housing. Of particular concern is the peak demand which is forecast for 2004-05. This report looks briefly into a consultant's report to the Council of Ontario Universities which summarizes the demographic and workforce changes Ontario is likely to experience in the next ten years, with a focus on the 18-24 age group. The consultant's report identified four factors that will likely lead to a substantial increase in the demand for post-secondary education in the province. They are: Ontario secondary school reform beginning in 2003, a steady increase in population of the 18-24 year old cohort, higher participation rates in post-secondary education, and a rise in the demand for post-secondary education due to changing workforce requirements. The most consequential of these four factors is the change to Ontario secondary school requirements, which will decrease the normal duration of high school from five years to four years, leading to a "double cohort" of graduating students in 2003. The peak of this increase in post-secondary school demand is projected for the year 2004-05. The implications for universities if they do not plan to increase their capacity to absorb this swelling of applicants are both economic and social. An economy thrives when it has an abundance of highly educated and skilled members of society. Therefore the availability of a university education to young students is essential for the growth and development of the provincial economy. Further, students in Ontario have the right to access quality post-secondary education if they meet the qualifications required for admissions. In practice, this means that a competitive university, such as Queen's, must ensure that it has sufficient capacity to absorb this increase in demand for student housing or forgo the opportunity to enroll new students and gain associated benefits with a larger student population.

The report examines the nature of demand for new student housing. Projections of the increasing demand for student housing by all students, and of first year students are respectively presented. The findings of the Enrolment Planning Task Force will offer a basis for enrolment goals for Queen's over the next 10 years and on optimal levels of enrolment at Queen's during this transitional period. Finally, demand is also defined as a preference for certain types of housing by the user group, and this will be examined in the analysis chapter of this report. In sum, respondents have expressed a preference for cleaner facilities, upgraded facilities, increased privacy, improved meal plans in residence, and a fairer system of residence rules and administration.

Through the use of a survey instrument, this report attempts to suggest student preferences based on student opinions and behaviors and to recommend the type of residence building that might accommodate student lifestyles. The findings of the survey generally indicate a high level of preference for a single residence building of the four housing options students were asked to rank; a residence building, apartment-style housing, shared housing, and co-operative housing. The survey also found high to mid-level satisfaction with the current locations and security of existing residence, and dissatisfaction with several key aspects of residence, including the set up of the bathroom, common room, and kitchen spaces. The conclusions of this survey reflect that while students enjoy living and socializing in a shared residence building, there were high levels of dissatisfaction with current facilities. Thus an apartment-style residence building was recommended.

Residence has the potential to play a key role in the social development and psychological development of students. A majority of the respondents felt that residence was very important to them, and best suit their social and psychological needs in their first year university. It was found that Queen's residences successfully promote social interaction. The strong appeal of residence is noted and suggests the viability of expanding Queen's residence programs.

Chapter Two examines some of the latest designs in student housing that are being built on campuses across North America as options to be considered. The three designs that are explored are apartment-style, European style, and North American style. They are presented for planners' and student housing administrators' consideration. Finally, possible sites for new student housing on the Main and West Campus are considered in accordance with current land development policy in the university's Campus Plan.

From the survey results, the following recommendations are made: 1) continue the policy of offering residence admission to all accepted first year students with few reservations, 2) substantially improve the services and attractions at West Campus before considering building a new residence there, 3) locate new residences near classes, services, and public transportation, 4) choose residence designs that accommodate students needs for privacy, social interaction, upkeep of rooms, and quiet, 5) build apartment-style residences on a trial basis, then build a second one after a year or so if previous occupants were satisfied with their experiences of it, and taking into consideration their recommendations for improvement. It is advised that Queen's make some important decisions about student housing on campus soon in order to meet the impending increase in demand for student housing in the year 2003 and beyond.