

# RAPID NATIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE

Caribbean Context



## RAPID NATIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE

---

The establishment of the Caribbean Planners Association (CPA) is derived from extensive regional planning collaboration over the past three decades. From 1984 to (approximately) 1992, the Caribbean Conference of Town and Country Planning successfully and consistently provided services to planning professionals in the region. The development of CPA will build on the existing network of planners and advance the profession throughout the Caribbean.

The first Caribbean Urban Forum (Annual Policy Meeting) in 2011 (CUF 2011 – in Guyana) ignited a dialogue centered on the development of a planning association in the Caribbean. The CUF 2011 presented an opportunity for collaboration between professional planners and provided the momentum necessary to develop a regional association. Three existing national planning associations (Barbados Town & Country Society of Planners, Jamaican Institute of Planners, and Trinidad & Tobago Society of Planners), with contributions from regional universities (the University of Technology in Jamaica and the University of West Indies in Trinidad) and international partners (American Planning Association and Canadian Institute of Planners), are members of a working group focused on moving this initiative forward. The developing Guyanese planning association is also a significant contributor to the success of the CPA. Simultaneously, the emerging national planning associations in the region support efforts towards successful regional collaboration. The structures and systems being developed for a regional planning association are drawn from Caribbean, Canadian, and American examples. The inaugural Annual General Meeting of the Caribbean Planners Association took place at the Caribbean Urban Forum 2012 in March in Jamaica.

Together we can advance the planning profession and improve urban and land management throughout the region.

The following are three simple steps for developing a National Planning Association in the Caribbean (with specific details from Guyana's recent experience).

### **1. Registration**

The first step requires investigating where to register the Association and what the requirements are for registering it. In Guyana, the National Planning Association registered as a Friendly Society with the Ministry of Labour, Human Services, and Social Security. In order to register the Association, a constitution was required with at least seven members (all Guyanese nationals). Once all required documents are submitted it takes approximately one month for the Association to be registered.

### **2. Developing the Constitution** (see attached GPA draft constitution)

Guidelines from the Guyana example:

- i. Constitutions from other countries and the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Labour, Human Services, and Social Security, were used when Guyana wrote the first draft.
- ii. After forming an Advisory Committee, Guyana composed of the most influential planning related professionals in the country to review and update the constitution.
- iii. The Ministry's lawyer reviewed the constitution before submission.

### **3. Recruitment Campaign**

Once registration is complete, the society will actively recruit Planners with the following methods:

- i. An advertising campaign (ads in newspapers, etc.)
- ii. Using the Advisory Committees contacts
- iii. Inviting all known planning professionals by email/letter/phone (other Ministries, etc.)

The recruitment campaign outlined does not limit developing associations to the use of other active recruitment methods.

The following suggestions may also be helpful for national planning association development:

1. When crafting the constitution it is important to consider the requirements for membership. In Guyana, most planning professionals are not qualified in the traditional European or North American sense. Therefore, Guyana had to broaden what the definition of a planning professional (See attached constitution for Guyana's definition).

2. During the formation of the planning association, in order for the association to develop successful and smoothly it is critical to find a local "champion" to help engage local key stakeholders. In Guyana, the Chief Development Planner at the Ministry of Housing was the local "champion". His connections and influence in the Planning world enabled the set up an Advisory Committee with all of the main planning players in the country. As well, once recruitment starts for general members, he can ensure that the process runs as smoothly and effectively as possible.

**CONSTITUTION**

**ARTICLE I – NAME AND OFFICE**

1. The Association shall be known as the GUYANA PLANNING ASSOCIATION.
2. The office of the Association shall be located at the (T.B.D.) located at (T.B.D.).

**ARTICLE II - PROVINCE**

1. The area covered by the Association shall be the Territory of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

**ARTICLE III - OBJECTIVES**

1. The aims and objectives of the Association shall be:
  - a. To advance the practice of planning as a profession in all its aspects to ensure the interests of its members and the general public.
  - b. To promote high standards of professional competence and conduct.
  - c. To encourage and promote the education of persons intending to enter or be associated with the planning profession.
  - d. To devise entry guidelines for the Association and to establish codes of practice for planning practitioners in Guyana.
  - e. To disseminate information and awareness of planning matters to the general public through general media and means such as an Association magazine or website.
  - f. To foster the advancement of knowledge and learning in planning through new techniques such as e-learning.
  - g. To foster partnerships with entities and individuals engaged or interested professionally or otherwise in planning in Guyana and the Caribbean region.
  - h. To promote and advance planning issues to the community, inter-agency stakeholder groups, private sector agencies, non-governmental organizations, the political directorate and academic institutions.
  - i. To strengthen interdisciplinary and collaborative research, stimulate research networks and share best practices amongst Planning Practitioners.

- j. To do all such lawful things deemed necessary or expedient for the attainment of the objectives of the Association.

#### **ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

1. The Association shall have the following classes of membership:
  - a. Honorary Member: This designation shall be conferred by the Association on persons who, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, have made an outstanding contribution to planning. These members shall be entitled to use the designation of Hon.M.G.P.A.
  - b. Practicing Member: Membership in this class will be limited to residents of Guyana who are qualified by academic training (Architecture, Geography, Civil Engineering, Environmental Studies or other) and/or who are currently Planning practitioners in Guyana. These members shall be entitled to use the designation of M.G.P.A. This class only will have voting powers at General Meetings.
  - c. Affiliate Member: This class of membership shall be made available to persons of Guyanese descent who qualify in all respects of the 'Practicing Member' and are residing and practicing outside of Guyana. Entrance to this class of membership shall be by invitation of the Association or by nomination of two of its members.
  - d. Student Member: This class of membership shall be open to persons enrolled in full or part time courses in a Planning related program (Architecture, Geography, Civil Engineering, Environmental Studies or other) at a recognized institution.
2. Application for Practicing or Affiliate Member shall be by letter to the Secretary of the Association, accompanied by Curriculum Vitae outlining relevant professional experience and an original or notarized copy of their diploma. For Student Members proof of enrollment, such as a student card or a letter from their educational institution, is required. The Executive Committee, sitting as an Admission Board, will decide which class of membership, if any, the applicant is eligible.
3. Admission of new members shall be announced at the first General Meeting immediately following their acceptance by the Executive Committee.
4. A member may resign on giving written notice to the Secretary of the Association, such notice shall take effect from the date of the Business Meeting following the receipt of such notice. Membership may also be terminated by death or by expulsion.
5. The Disciplinary Committee, shall be empowered to adjudicate any breach of discipline, infringement of rules or any form of misconduct of a member, for which the Committee may caution, suspend, request the resignation of, or expel any member. A decision of

the Disciplinary Committee shall only be taken by the unanimous decision of all of its Practicing Members. The Disciplinary Committee shall be formed following the guidelines of Article 6 section 7. No student members will sit on a Disciplinary Committee or have a vote in any disciplinary action.

## **ARTICLE V - SUBSCRIPTIONS**

1. The annual subscriptions, payable on the first of January each year shall be as follows:
  - a. Honorary Members: GYD\$0 per year.
  - b. Practicing Member: GYD\$3,500 per year.
  - c. Affiliate Members: GYD\$2,500 per year.
  - d. Student Member: GYD\$1,500 per year.
2. A notice shall be sent to members advising that subscriptions are due. Any member whose subscription is not paid by March 31<sup>st</sup> of that year will be sent a second notice and will cease to have voting powers until their subscription has been received. If their subscription is not paid by June 30<sup>th</sup> of that year their name will be deleted from the list of members.
3. If a member has been deleted from the list of members and they wish to regain their membership with the Association they must reapply in accordance with Article IV section 2.

## **ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS**

1. The affairs of the Association shall be managed by an Executive Committee, which shall be comprised of the following officials: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, one Practicing Member and one Student Member (all are Practicing Members except the Student Member). All members of the executive committee shall be appointed through general elections held at the Annual General Meeting.
2. The duties of the officials shall be the following:
  - a. President:
    - i. Preside over the Association and the Executive Committee.
    - ii. Form partnerships, initiatives and liaise among regional partners.
    - iii. Steer the Executive Committee towards the Association's strategic planning objectives.
    - iv. Lead the Research and Development agenda of the Association to ensure continuity and attainment of the Association's objectives.
    - v. Lead all research procurement activities and invest the Association's finances under the supervision of the Treasurer.
    - vi. Generally perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time-to-time by the Association.

- b. Vice President:
  - i. Preside over the Association and the Executive Committee in the absence of the President.
  - ii. Assist the president in all of his or her duties.
  - iii. Prepare and submit an Annual Report to the Registrar.
  - iv. Deal with the day-to-day operations and administration of the Association.
  - v. Generally perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time-to-time by the Association.
  
- c. Secretary:
  - i. Make and keep a careful record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Association and of the Executive Committee.
  - ii. Lead individual membership, maintain records and prepare/ distribute membership certificates.
  - iii. Keep a Register of the names and addresses of the Members of the institute, together with such other particulars as the Executive Committee may decide.
  - iv. Be responsible for the custody of the common seal and the records and archives of the Association.
  - v. Generally perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time-to-time by the Association.
  
- d. Treasurer:
  - i. Generally manage the finances of the Association, which includes such duties as advising the President on how best to invest the Association's finances and producing and monitoring an annual budget.
  - ii. Regularly report to the Executive Committee on the financial position of the Association.
  - iii. Arrange for the statement of accounts to be audited. Collect subscriptions and all monies due to the Association.
  - iv. Pay bills on time and record the information.
  - v. Keep up-to-date records of all financial transactions.
  - vi. Ensure that funds are spent properly.
  - vii. Issue receipts for all monies received and keep a record this information.
  - viii. Prepare and present a bi-annual statement of accounts to the Auditors.
  - ix. Present an end-of-year financial report at the Annual General Meeting.
  - x. Prepare and submit any statutory documents that are required, for example tax returns, PAYE and NIS returns, VAT returns and other reports.
  - xi. Generally perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time-to-time by the Association.
  
- e. Public Relations Officer
  - i. Disseminate information to the public on behalf of the Association.
  - ii. Promote the association within the Planning community and to the general public.

- iii. Establish and maintain promotional tools for the Association, such as a website, newsletter and other.
  - iv. Answer inquiries from members and the general public.
  - v. Generally perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time-to-time by the Association.
3. Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected from among the Practicing Members in good standing at the Annual General Meeting of the Association. The student member representative will also be elected at the annual General Meeting. Student members wishing to sit on the Executive Committee must submit an Expression of Interest to the Secretary of the Association two weeks prior to the annual General Meeting.
4. At a meeting of the Executive Committee, four members shall constitute a quorum.
5. Any Practicing Member in good standing may submit nominations for posts on the Executive Committee. The nominations must be submitted to the Secretary of the Association two weeks prior to the General Meeting.
6. The President must obtain a minimum of two-thirds of all votes cast to be voted in.
7. The Executive Committee may also create additional specific voluntary positions as may be required from time to time for the effective administration of the Association's affairs, and shall appoint members to serve in such positions.
8. The offices of the President and Vice President shall not be held by the same member for more than two consecutive terms and no other office of the Executive Committee shall be held by the same person for more than four consecutive terms. A term is two years in length.
9. The Executive Committee is empowered to co-opt members and employ administrative and other staff in order to carry out functions it may consider necessary to properly manage the Association and achieve its objectives. Some examples being: a Ballot Committee, an Admissions Board, a Disciplinary Committee, and a committee to interpret the articles of the Constitution.
10. The disciplinary Committee may make rules as are necessary for the carrying out of the purpose of this constitution and otherwise for the good and efficient order and management of the Association.
11. A complaint may be made against any member of the Association by a member of the general public. This complaint will be heard by the disciplinary committee who will then take any necessary actions/disciplinary measures against the member.
12. Disputes, if any, arising between members of the Association or any person aggrieved who has ceased to be a member and the Association or its Officers shall be resolved by reference to Arbitration. OR

If any dispute shall arise between any member or any person aggrieved who has ceased to be a member of the Association or any officer of the Association, it shall be resolved by reference to Arbitration.

13. Three arbitrators shall be elected at a General Meeting, none of them being directly or indirectly interested in the funds of the Association. In each case of dispute, two arbitrators shall be selected randomly to adjudicate the dispute.

14. Appeals may be made to the Registrar of Friendly Societies.

### **ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS, VOTING AND RULES**

1. Meeting of the Association shall be of three types:
  - a. Annual General Meeting (date(s):\_\_\_\_\_)
  - b. Extraordinary General Meeting (date(s):\_\_\_\_\_)
  - c. Business General Meeting (date(s):\_\_\_\_\_)
2. Every member present (and not disqualified by arrears) shall have one vote, and when votes are equal, the President or Vice President, whichever is presiding over the meeting shall have an additional or casting vote.
3. The Annual General Meeting shall be open to all classes of financial members and shall be held each year at a time and place to be fixed by the Executive Committee. A notice thereof shall be mailed to all members at least fourteen days before the date fixed for the meeting.
4. Business to be transacted at the General Meeting will include the election of officers, the President's and Treasurer's report and the Auditor's report.
5. A quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall consist of at least one-third of the Practicing Members in good standing of the Association.
6. The Annual General Meeting must be called by the Secretary of the Association, in consultation with the President, and members informed at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.
7. Extraordinary General Meetings shall be held to consider urgent matters. Extraordinary General Meetings can be called by the Executive Committee or at the written request of at least twenty per cent of all members in good standing of which at least three must be Practicing Members.
8. Members must be given at least seven days notice in writing of the date and agenda of an Extraordinary General Meeting.

9. Business General Meetings shall be called for the purpose of discussing technical or other matters of interest to planning and shall be open to members of the general public.
10. Business General Meetings may be held during the course of each year to discuss technical or other matters of interest to planning. Written notice of the meeting will be given to all members and an advertisement placed in one widely circulated newspaper giving notice to the general public.

### **ARTICLE VIII - FINANCE, PROPERTY AND FUNDS**

1. The fiscal year of the Association shall be from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. The accounts for each year shall be audited and presented at the following Annual General Meeting.
2. An Inventory of the Association's property shall be kept and checked annually by a Sub-Committee of two members of the Association who shall subsequently report to the Executive Committee.
3. An account in the name of the Guyana Planning Association shall be maintained at \_\_\_\_\_ Bank, approved by its members. Cheques payable to the account shall bear the signature of the Treasurer and, either, the President or the Vice President.
4. Any Funds that is not needed for the immediate use, or to meet the usual accruing liabilities, shall with the consent of the Executive Committee, or a majority of the members of the Association present and entitled to vote in General Meetings be invested by the Treasurer in any bank or person carrying the business of banking in Guyana.
5. The Association may purchase, receive or otherwise acquire or hold property in the name of the Association, and may sell, transfer, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of all property, immovable or moveable.
6. All moneys received on account of entrance fees, subscriptions, levies, donations, or otherwise and interest on investments shall be applied in carrying out the objects of the Association, and in paying the expenses of management according to the Rules.
7. Any officer misapplying the funds of the Association shall repay the amount misapplied and be expelled from the Association. The Association reserves the right to prosecute any officer who has misapplied funds of the Association notwithstanding the officer remedying funds misapplied.
8. The books and accounts of the Association shall be presented to the Registrar for audit as prescribed in Section 27 of the Friendly Societies Act, Chapter 36:04 at least once per

year provided that an auditor may be appointed by the Association for an internal audit of such books and accounts.

9. The Secretary shall cause the books of the Association to be available for the inspection of any member or person having an interest in the funds of the Association at all reasonable hours, at the registered office of the Association or at any place where the books are kept and it shall be the duty of the Secretary to produce them accordingly.
10. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a copy of the last annual balance sheet together with any special report of the auditors, to be viewed as per request.
11. Every year before the first day of May, the Secretary of the Association shall send to the Registrar a general statement (to be called "Annul Return") of all receipts and expenditure, funds and effects of the Association.
12. Every five years the Executive Committee shall make a return to the Registrar of the sickness and mortality of the Association and a valuation of the assets and liabilities of the Association, including the estimated risks and contributions.

#### **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION**

1. No new rule shall be made, nor shall any of the rules herein contained or hereafter to be made, be amended or rescinded unless two-thirds majority of Practicing Members in good standing are present at an Extraordinary General Meeting, provided that fourteen days notice of such a meeting and its proposed agenda is given.
2. No new or amendment of rule is valid unless registered by the Registrar.

#### **ARTICLE X – DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

1. The Association may at any time be dissolved by the consent of five-sixths in value of the members, including honorary members, if any, testified by their signatures in an instrument of dissolution.
2. Upon dissolution of the Association all the remaining assets shall be given to a charitable organization registered to fulfill the same objectives of the Association.