

## Renovating & Fundraising Planning: A Side-by-side Process

Most of our Phi Gamma Delta fraternity houses have tons of history between the floorboards and rafters. These are structures that have seen chapters prosper and struggle; grow and decline; and even come and go over the years. Some have been around since the founding of the chapters; others might be new to us but have housed other organizations on their campuses. Bottom line, most are just old.

The good news is this means they have character. They are part of our chapter's image, which help in recruitment. Decades of your brothers have passed through a house's doors and it may be the only tie that binds some graduate brothers back to the chapter.

The bad news is, historic and quaint could eventually become a pain in the rear; pose safety risks to our members and guest, or just fail to meet the chapter's needs in an ever-changing college scene.

There lies the dilemma. You want to renovate your fraternity house, but you also don't want to destroy the spirit of the place you and so many of your brothers have called home. What do you do and, the major question, how do you raise the money? Here are some tips to tie your renovation & fundraising plans together.

1. Find out What You Need, Not What You Want: Before approaching graduate brothers in a major fundraising capital campaign, you're going to need a professional plan that's well thought out and puts their hard-earned money to good use. Prioritize items that need repair or updating to current safety standards. Essentials to chapter house operations (like kitchen and dining spaces, living quarters, bathrooms and study areas) are also important. Unfortunately, the fun stuff comes last on the list. When you think about renovating your property, make sure to focus on what you need most, so you and your alumni see the value out of what they're giving.
2. Balance the Future with Your Fraternity House's Past: Be careful not tear out your house's tradition and history for something brand new that can never be regained. Renovate within the spirit of the original design and incorporate original materials into the modernized aspects of your renovations. This should also help you with fundraising; showing alumni that you're trying to retain what made the house so great for them when they lived there as well as push it into the future.
3. Get Graduate Brother Input on the Renovation: Graduate brothers likely have some very solid ideas about what part of the house should be part of a potential renovation project. They're also going to likely be donating a sizeable chunk of money toward your fundraising campaign, so they deserve to be a major part of the decision-making process as well. Get them involved early to show them you're interested in their input and participation in bettering the chapter, not just their money.

Are you planning a fundraising campaign for your fraternity house remodel? Reach out, we can help! Feel free to email us at [housing@phigam.org](mailto:housing@phigam.org).

Fraternally,

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Member of 1848 Housing Committee

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