Tab 1

Dwell Initiative (Draft)

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us (Jn. 1:14)

Authored by Andrew Nilson

A non-profit real estate investment initiative for affordable, missional living

Executive Summary

Dwell is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to creating a sustainable pipeline of affordable housing for college students, young adults, missionaries, and ministry families. We aim to address the growing need for stable, reasonably priced housing through a mission-driven, revenue-reinvestment model.

We aim to leverage real estate to be an asset rather than a hindrance to mission. It aims to be a long-term solution to the overlooked problem of rising housing costs among students and ministry workers.

Initial Seed Capital Needed: $4 million or 2-3 multi-family homes

Initial Acquisition Target: Two to three large single family or multi-family homes in strategic university-proximate neighborhoods with high capacity for tenants (6-8 people).

Mission Outcome:

1) Reasonable rent for students and young adults → Revenue generation
2) Revenue Generation creates:
    a) Purchasing more properties
    b) Opportunity to subsidize missionary/ministry family housing.

Example: Imagine a day where Dwell owns multiple properties bringing in 15-20K a month. A pastor moves to the area to plant a new church, but his family of 5 is struggling to afford the downpayment or monthly payment. Dwell could come alongside them offering them a sellers mortgage rather than a transitional mortgage at an interest rate of 2.5% instead of 6%.

Imagine a day where campus ministry interns could pay $500 a month for rent vs. $1000 a month because Dwell owns the building and can afford to offer subsidized housing.

Potential Timeline:

2026: Launch 501c3; find partners
26-27: Purchase 1-2 properties for revenue generation
27-28: Assess actual income and consider 3rd property
27-28: Begin using property or income to subsidize ministry families

Vision & Mission

Hook:
What if you could make Boston affordable? What if you could leverage real estate to be an asset rather than a hindrance to mission.

Vision:
To create thriving communities where young adults, students, and ministry families can flourish without being financially burdened by housing costs.

Mission:
To acquire and manage residential properties that provide affordable, stable, and spiritually grounded living environments. Dwell reinvests rental income to acquire additional housing for ministry families and missionaries to bring down cost of living.

The Problem

College students and young adults face rising rental costs, often deterring educational and vocational progress. Boston regularly ranks in the top five most expensive cities to pay rent in the world.

Ministry families and missionaries often struggle with transient, unstable, or unaffordable housing, especially when starting new positions in the Boston area or navigating low-income church/ministry assignments.

No scalable, faith-rooted housing model currently exists to systematically address these needs.

The Solution

Real Estate as Mission Infrastructure

Dwell purchases and manages multi-family housing in university-adjacent and ministry-relevant locations.
By offering at or below-market rents to students and young adults, we attract responsible tenants and generate steady income. That income is reinvested to acquire more properties that are then used to support housing for full-time Christian workers by stabilizing rent and subsidizing the cost to bring down overall cost of living.

Phase 1: Seed Capital & Launch Strategy

Capital Requirement: $4 million
Use of Funds:

$3.4M for the purchase of two multi-family properties (~$1.7M each, assuming 7-8 tenants per building)

$400k for renovation, compliance, legal, insurance, and operational setup

$200k as reserve for first-year management and maintenance

Property Target Criteria:

- Proximity to universities (high student demand)
- Strong rental market with growth potential
- Zoned for multifamily use
- Accessibility for vehicles

Estimated First-Year Revenue:

Gross monthly rent: ~$14,000 (based on $1000 for 14 tenants)

Annual gross: $168,000

Net after expenses: ~$100,000

All net profits reinvested in future property acquisitions

Impact Model

Stakeholder Benefit

College Students & Young Adults
- Below-market rent in stable homes with community accountability

Donors & Grantmakers
- Long-term impact from one-time gifts; permanent housing legacy

Missionaries & Ministry Families
- Access to affordable housing for short term missionaries (1-2years) and long term missionaries and ministry workers.
- Have properties that could be sold through (seller financing) to ministry families at lower interest rates.

Local Communities
- Revitalized homes, responsible tenants, faith-rooted leadership reaching neighborhoods.

Revenue & Growth Model

Revenue Sources:

- Rent from student/young adult tenants
- Grants and donor contributions
- Church partnerships (subsidizing missionary housing)
- Eventual program income from missionary housing fees (modest, mission-priced)

Growth Strategy:

1. Year 1–2: Operate and optimize two properties
2. Year 3–5: Reinvest profits + new donor funding to acquire 2–3 more homes
3. Year 5+: Begin dedicating 1 in 3 properties to missionary/ministry housing
4. Long-Term: Establish a self-sustaining property fund to subsidize rent fully for families in need

Organizational Structure

Board of Directors (Skills Sought):

- Real estate law / nonprofit law
- Property management / landlord experience (Dan Berglund?)
- Ministry / missions leadership (Tanner Green: The Orchard Group?)
- Problem Solver: (Areg Esserian: BlackRock?)
- Real Estate Broker: (Julian Addy?)
- Financial oversight and investment
- Student and young adult discipleship experience (Andrew Nilson)

Staff (when needed):

- Executive Director (FT)
- Property Manager (PT/contract)
- Development Officer (PT)
- Accountant/Admin (contract)

Exit Strategy / Sustainability

Dwell will maintain ownership to provide permanent housing.

Dwell will only sell a property if the profit from that property will be reinvested into the non-profit and its purposes.

All excess revenue is directed toward:

- Capital reserves
- Property expansion
- Subsidizing rents for ministry recipients

Should the non-profit ever need to dissolve for any reason all funds would be given to the New England Mission Foundation or something similar to be used to push the mission forward.

Donor Legacy Opportunity:
Major donors and families can sponsor a home in honor of a ministry legacy or personal mission story.

With the agreement of the board, legacy donors can name a house in honor. For example, Massey House in honor of pastor John Massey (fictional).

Funding Request

We are seeking $4 million in initial capital through a combination of:

- Major philanthropic gifts
- Christian foundation grants
- Church mission board contributions
- Donor-advised funds

We invite strategic investors who want to be part of a legacy project that will multiply the impact of one-time gifts for decades.

Conclusion

Dwell is more than real estate—it is leveraging real estate to be an asset rather than a hindrance to mission. It aims to be a long-term solution to the overlooked problem of rising housing costs among students and ministry workers. With seed capital and prayerful stewardship, this nonprofit can reshape housing as a resource.

About the Author

Andrew Nilson has studied, lived, and worked in the Boston area for 15 years. He received his undergraduate business degree from Bentley University 14' and his masters in Divinity from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary 19'. Andrew has worked in ministry since 2014 working on various campuses and has led the team serving 8 campuses and 450 students since 2016. His work has taken him to 5 continents and dozens of countries. In 2014, Andrew started a community house with a group of friends as a model of having community housing offset the cost of rent. That community house lasted 11 years with a sustainable model of tenants finding their replacement as they left. It closed down this fall as the owner needed the place for other purposes. This personal experience, plus the dozens of other existing examples proves the demand for such a place. Andrew is married to Marie Nilson and they have two kids. Joah (2) and Esme (4 months).

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