

Master Planning for the Future

Parishes should begin the process of determining the usage of all buildings and properties in their newly formed Parish communities. The topics will involve:

1. Buildings and properties that will provide value to the Parish.
2. Buildings that may need to be used for other purposes.
3. A “five-year” plan is needed.
4. The expectation will involve multiple meetings.
5. A facilitator is recommended to move the process forward.

A discussion must take place involving the following:

1. Newly formed Parish Finance Council and Parish Pastoral Council
2. Pastor/Pastoral Administrator
3. Parish Bookkeeper/Business Manager
4. Parish Building and Grounds Committee

If the Parish has not selected a Building and Grounds Committee, a designated group of parishioners should be selected with expertise in fields of buildings, mechanical, electrical, architectural, engineering, and real estate.

5. Parish Maintenance person
6. Parish DRE, Music/Worship, and Christian Service staff need to provide input to the needs they will have.
7. An individual to represent the Parish Cemetery

It is important that meetings/discussions take place regarding the required needs for all ministries within the Parish. This discussion will include an evaluation of what services are currently provided and what services are anticipated for the future. A thorough review of building issues should take place, including:

1. The Diocesan provided structural evaluation
2. The Parish self-evaluation
3. Stained glass evaluation
4. Bell tower evaluation
5. Review of the Diocesan Maintenance and Risk Management guidelines
6. Review of one-year previous utility costs
7. Review of one-year previous maintenance costs, inclusive of grass, snow, repairs, etc.

8. Insurance costs must be evaluated
9. Review of issues with neighboring properties
10. Review of issues regarding water drainage, tree removal, and drains
11. Review of most current MCC loss control report on each building

Walk-through Inspection

Exterior

- Property Issues
- Underground tanks
- Sewer system or Septic tank & field
- Exterior of all buildings (roofs, brick condition, landscaping, security and parking lot surfaces and drainage)
- Requirements of time needed for lawn mowing and snow removal
- Review of age & condition of equipment required to care for properties (including cemeteries)

Interior

- Contents of each building
- Maintenance needs
- Upgrades needed for compliance with existing safety and ADA codes
- Mechanical equipment
- Electrical wiring and panels
- Paint condition
- Carpet and tile condition
- Asbestos (any building built before 1976)
- Lead paint (any building built before 1976)
- Age of piping and plumbing fixtures (future replacement)
- Compliance of buildings with GIRM

A discussion should also take place regarding budgetary dollars required to make upgrades to buildings and the required maintenance allotment of time for each building.

After reviewing each building and property, a discussion should take place as to what the Parish community believes the new Parish should become within 5 years. The requirements of each ministry should be included and a total review of what the Parish can afford. Although it is not easily accepted, the age or history of the building does not mean it has significance (purpose) in comparison to the buildings available for current use. The Parish must make decisions based on the best stewardship of its congregation. Being able to provide a comprehensive Religious

Education and Christian Service Program is much better than putting the congregation's money into buildings that are not utilized.

Instructions exist for the placement of sale for properties and Churches available. It is a lengthy process that requires the support of the congregation. The decision to offer church property for alternative use is a very difficult choice and must be supported by the people. Having a master plan in place (including financial costs for each building); will assist in the accountability offered to parishioners.

My office is here to assist you any way to come to the decisions that are in the best interest of all our people.