



THE PLANNING AND BUILDING PROCESS



No two building projects or processes are exactly alike. However, there are enough common points that it is possible to generalize the experience of specific churches into a planning and building process with broad application as a guideline for churches anticipating a planning and building program.

This booklet reflects the experience and expertise of Church Architecture in working with more than 100,000 churches in over three-quarters of a century. A lot of information has been distilled into a few pages.

There is much more to be said about almost every line in the booklet. Use it as a general reference and guide, and call Church Architecture at (615) 251-2466 when you need more specific assistance for your particular project.

This booklet can also be found on our web site at www.lifeway.com/churcharchitecture and can be downloaded to make multiple copies.

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Church Architecture

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Phase 1: Pre-Design Planning

STEP 1 (2–3 months) NEEDS RECOGNITION AND INITIAL ACTION

This is simply the point at which some of the church leadership recognize that “something has to be done” to relieve a problem or claim an opportunity and start the ball rolling.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify broad areas of program and facilities needs. Obtain appropriate input from key leadership.	Pastor Ad Hoc Committee Church Council Leadership Team
<input type="checkbox"/> Report findings to congregation and obtain church approval to form a Planning and Building Steering Committee to study church property and building needs and recommend appropriate church actions.	Pastor Ad Hoc Committee Church Council Leadership Team
<input type="checkbox"/> Organize the Planning and Building Steering Committee and subcommittees and select members. (See Chapter 1 and 2 and Appendix A of <i>Planning and Building Church Facilities</i> .)	Pastor Church Council Nominating Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Train committee and subcommittee members using <i>Planning and Building Church Facilities</i> .	Church Leadership Training Person(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Design and initiate a communication and promotion plan to begin now and continue through Step 12.	Steering Committee Publicity/Promotion Subcommittee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 1:

- *Church Architecture at LifeWay Christian Resources*
- *Program specialists at LifeWay Christian Resources*
- *Program specialists at your state convention and local association*

STEP 2 (2–4 months)
STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR MINISTRY AND GROWTH

In Step 2, the church explores its community, examines itself, and projects a vision for its future, with a ministry and growth strategy for achieving it.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey the community to discover needs and opportunities for church actions and response.	Church Growth Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey the church to identify and evaluate strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities that are the context for future ministry and growth.	Church Growth Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the church’s purpose and mission in response to community and church studies. Draft (or revise existing) church mission statement.	Steering Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a comprehensive and integrated strategic plan for ministry, growth, programs, and organization for next year, 5 years, 10 years, and 15 years. Refer to <i>Kingdom Principles for Church Growth</i> .	Steering Committee Church Growth Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Report to congregation and obtain church approval of mission statement and strategic plan.	Steering Committee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 2:

- *Church Architecture at LifeWay Christian Resources*
 - *Program specialists at LifeWay Christian Resources, state convention, local association*
 - *Church growth consultants at LifeWay Christian Resources, state convention, local association*
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STEP 3 (2–4 months, concurrent with Step 2) PROPERTY AND BUILDING ASSESSMENT

This step assesses the adequacy and condition of existing property and buildings, their capability to accommodate the church's vision and strategic plan for the future, and the church's financial resources. At the outset of this step, we recommend contacting LifeWay Church Architecture to set up an initial on-site consultation.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain accurate site information with a professionally prepared property and topographical survey and constraints study.	Property Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain accurate floor plans of existing buildings. Identify present space uses and any off-site uses. Determine if any structural conditions require replacement or remediation.	Plans Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify current and projected program and capacity requirements not adequately served by existing property and buildings.	Church Growth Subcommittee Property Subcommittee Plans Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine if present property is adequate for future vision. Identify and investigate any additional property considered for acquisition. Decide if present location is appropriate for future vision. If property and/or location are not adequate, consider relocation and investigate options.	Steering Committee Church Growth Subcommittee Property Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Inventory all usable furnishings and equipment, identify areas of current and future need, and establish standards for new furnishings and equipment.	Furnishings Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Make preliminary assessment of church's financial picture (See Chapter 5 of <i>Planning and Building Church Facilities</i> .)	Financial Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Summarize findings of Steps 2 and 3 and report to congregation with recommendations for appropriate action. (See Chapters 4 and 12 of <i>Planning and Building Church Facilities</i> .) Obtain church approval to proceed and to hire a qualified church design consultant to prepare a master plan for property and building development.	Steering Committee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 3:

- Church Architecture at LifeWay Christian Resources
- Civil engineer or registered land surveyor
- Structural engineer
- Draftsman
- Realtor
- Legal counsel
- Financial advisor

STEP 4 (2–12 months)

MASTER PLANNING

The master planning process builds upon the output of Steps 2 and 3 and translates it into a comprehensive, long-range, multi-phased plan for the church's property (either at the current site or the relocation site) and facilities. This is a broad brush design for the future, with more detailed focus on the proposed first phase building project, and leads into project programming and design for that project, which is elaborated and formalized in Step 5.

At the onset of this step, we strongly recommend contacting LifeWay Church Architecture to discuss master planning services.

ACTIONS

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare master plan for future property and facilities development, including conceptual design for first phase building project and cost estimates for phase one and subsequent phases. | Steering Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Present final plan to congregation and obtain church approval of the master plan as the basis for building project planning of the proposed first phase, and obtain permission to proceed with project planning and design, including hiring a project architect and capital fund raiser (if one is to be used). | Steering Committee |

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 4:

- Church Architecture at LifeWay Christian Resources*
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Phase 2: Project Design & Fund Raising

STEP 5 (1–3 months) BUILDING PROJECT PROGRAMMING

In Step 5, the process moves from the master plan overview to the detailed architectural programming and financial planning for a specific building project. There is no hard line of separation between Step 4 and Step 5, but from this point forward the process becomes project specific rather than addressing the big picture. (Where adequate master planning has been previously done and is still current, the building planning process can begin with Step 5.)

ACTIONS

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> If you do not plan to have the architects that initiated the master plan (Step 4) complete the project, interview and hire another architect. Contract only for schematic design services needed to prepare for capital campaign. (In many states Church Architecture staff can serve as your church's project architect. Church Architecture can also assist in obtaining the services of a local architect where this better suits church needs.) | Steering Committee
Plans Subcommittee
Property Subcommittee
Construction Subcommittee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a comprehensive architectural program statement for the proposed building project, defining church programs, activities, functions, and numbers of people to be accommodated. (See chapters 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 of <i>Planning and Building Church Facilities</i> .) | Steering Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a financial plan for the proposed building project. (See Chapter 5 of <i>Planning and Building Church Facilities</i> .) | Steering committee
Finance Subcommittee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work with architect to develop schematic design solution and presentation drawings of proposed design. (The schematic design may have been established in concept as part of master planning in Step 4.) | Plans Subcommittee
Property Subcommittee
Church Growth Subcommittee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interview capital fund raising consultants and retain one to lead the capital campaign. | Steering Committee
Finance Subcommittee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Investigate sources for borrowing money for interim construction financing and long-term financing. Secure tentative commitment from selected lender(s). | Finance Subcommittee |

ACTIONS (Continued)

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

- Prepare a detailed project budget to include costs of property acquisition and development, building construction, furnishings, equipment, fees, and related project expenses.

- Present architectural program statement, schematic design drawings, and financial plan to the congregation and obtain church approval to proceed with project design and fund raising.

Steering Committee
Plans Subcommittee
Property Subcommittee
Furnishings Subcommittee
Finance Subcommittee

Steering Committee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 5:

- *Church Architecture at LifeWay Christian Resources*
 - *A qualified architect with demonstrated ability to do effective project design for Southern Baptist churches*
 - *Financial advisor*
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STEP 6 (3–4 months; can begin during Step 5) CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Step 6 is the crucial step of capital fund raising to pay for the proposed project. Few church projects can proceed without successful capital fund raising.

ACTIONS

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work with capital fund raising consultant to conduct capital campaign. (Church capital fund raising assistance can be obtained from LifeWay with <i>Together We Build</i> . Call (800) 251-4220 for information.) | Capital Campaign Subcommittee
Finance Subcommittee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After pledge phase, revise project scope, design, budget, and schedule, if needed. | Plans Subcommittee
Property Subcommittee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Update status with lending institutions for interim and permanent financing. | Finance Subcommittee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain church approval to proceed with project based on updated schematic design, project budget, and schedule. | Steering Committee |

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 6:

- *Capital fund raising consultant at LifeWay Christian Resources*
 - *Financial advisor*
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STEP 7 (1–3 months, either concurrent with or following Step 6) PRELIMINARY DESIGN

Step 7 extends the design process into greater detail and documentation, leading toward construction documents. This is part of the normal scope of architectural services.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Extend scope of architect's contract services to extend through construction (with the authority to terminate at any point if the project is stopped or terminated by the church). Pay architect regularly in accordance with contract for services.	Steering Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with architect to establish project schedule.	Steering Committee Plans Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with the architect to oversee preliminary design.	Plans Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare preliminary cost estimates with assistance of architect and/or a general contractor or professional estimator. Revise preliminary plans as needed to stay within budget.	Plans Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Present preliminary design, budget, and schedule information to the congregation and obtain church approval to proceed with design development and construction documents phase. Revise preliminary plans as needed to stay within budget.	Steering Committee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 7:

- *Church Architecture at LifeWay Christian Resources*
 - *Other qualified architect*
 - *Property insurance advisor*
 - *General contractor*
 - *Professional cost estimator*
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STEP 8 (3–9 months) DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Step 8 continues the building design process into construction documents for bidding or negotiating construction contracts. This is part of the normal scope of architectural services.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with architect for design development phase, including selection of major materials, systems, and finishes. Update cost estimates and adjust design as needed to stay within approved budget. (Avoid significant changes after this point.)	Plans Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain church approval of any significant changes in project scope, design, cost, or schedule.	Steering Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with architect for preparation of construction documents (working drawings and specifications).	Plans Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare list of furnishings and equipment needed for new building. Establish furnishings and equipment budget.	Furnishings Subcommittee Finance Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Make organizational and program changes needed in anticipation of occupying new facilities. Enlist and train workers.	Church Program Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a maintenance and operations plan for the new building. Anticipate impact on church budget.	Church Property and Grounds Committee Church Finance Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> If plans require significant displacement during construction, make plans for temporary space assignments and organizational changes.	Steering Committee Church Program Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/> Update project budget and schedule near the end of construction documents phase. Adjust project as needed. Obtain church approval of any significant changes.	Steering Committee Plans Subcommittee Finance Subcommittee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 8:

- *Project architect*
- *Church program and ministry specialists at LifeWay Christian Resources*
- *Church program and ministry specialists at state convention and local association*
- *Interior designer (if not included in architect's services)*
- *Civil engineer*

STEP 9 (1 month) **BIDDING/NEGOTIATION**

In this step, the process moves from design to the threshold of construction.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> With the architect's help, pre-quality bidders and solicit bids.	Plans Subcommittee Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Receive bids and review with the architect. Select contractor(s).	Steering Committee Plans Committee Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain church approval to award contract(s) to selected contractor(s) and to proceed with construction.	Steering Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure construction loan and arrange permanent financing	Finance Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> With help of legal counsel and architect, negotiate, prepare, and award contract(s) for construction. Notify other bidders of decision.	Steering Committee Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure bonding, worker's comp, liability and builder's risk insurance.	Construction Subcommittee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 9:

- *Project architect*
 - *Legal counsel*
 - *Insurance advisor*
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Phase 3: Construction

STEP 10 (2–18 months) CONSTRUCTION

This step needs no explanation. It is what everyone has been awaiting since Step 1.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> With the architect's help, obtain all permits required for construction.	Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan and conduct a ground-breaking ceremony.	Publicity/Promotion Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> With the architect, inspect the project periodically to review progress and to process payment requests from contractor(s).	Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> With architect's approval, make monthly payments to contractor(s).	Construction Subcommittee Finance Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Order furnishings and equipment and arrange for delivery on dates needed.	Furnishings Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Publicize project status and report to congregation regularly.	Steering Committee Publicity/Promotion Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue organizational enlargement planning and leadership training.	Church Program Leadership

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 10:

- *Project architect*
 - *Interior designer (if not provided by architect)*
 - *Church program, ministry, and leadership training specialists from LifeWay Christian Resources, state convention, and local association*
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STEP 11 (1–2 months; may be concurrent with end of Step 10) COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

At long last, the building project reaches the end of construction, and the construction phase is formally concluded.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan high attendance emphasis for grand opening and prepare to implement new organizations and programs.	Publicity/Promotion Subcommittee Church Program Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/> Hire and train any new maintenance and custodial staff prior to occupancy.	Church Property and Grounds Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Make final arrangements with lender to close permanent financing.	Finance Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure property insurance on new building.	Church Property & Grounds Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Inspect furnishings and equipment upon delivery.	Furnishings Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> With architect, make inspection for Substantial Completion according to construction contract(s). Prepare punch list of uncompleted items.	Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> After Substantial Completion, obtain a Certificate of Occupancy; install furnishings and equipment, and move in.	Construction Subcommittee Church Program Leadership Furnishings Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Receive operational information and warranties on building, systems, and fixed equipment. Transfer to appropriate persons for safekeeping and operational use.	Construction Subcommittee Church Property and Grounds Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Make final inspection with architect and accept all work completed in accordance with contract documents. Approve and make final payment(s) to contractor(s).	Construction Subcommittee Finance Subcommittee Steering Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain “As Built” drawings from architect for future reference and store in safe place.	Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Make final payment to architect in accordance with contract.	Steering Committee Finance Subcommittee

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 11:

- *Project architect*
- *Insurance agent*
- *Legal counsel*

Phase 4: Ownership

STEP 12 (12 months; ongoing) POST-CONSTRUCTION

In this final step, the process moves from construction to ownership. This is really the point where the building becomes an ongoing resource for the church's ministry.

ACTIONS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan, publicize, and conduct a dedication service/celebration and open house.	Steering Committee Publicity/Promotion Subcommittee Church Program Leadership Church Hospitality Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule an inspection with the architect for eleven months after the date of the Certificate of Occupancy for warranty checkup.	Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate the planning and building process and receive feedback from building users. Learn from this experience to benefit posterity.	Steering Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify the growth, program, and financial milestones that should activate phase two of the master plan for a future building project.	Steering Committee Church Growth Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Eleven months after the Certificate of Occupancy, conduct the warranty inspection with the architect and address any items needing correction under warranty.	Construction Subcommittee
<input type="checkbox"/> Dissolve the Planning and Building Steering Committee and Subcommittees.	

Outside Consultants who may be needed in Step 12:

- *Project architect*
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PROCESS RESOURCES

These resources will help you prepare and develop a plan for your church and its facilities. To order, or for more information, contact Church Architecture at (615) 251-2466.

- *Planning and Building Church Facilities*, by Gwenn McCormick. (ISBN #08054 3011 3)
 - *Kingdom Principles for Church Growth*, Revised Edition by Gene Mims. (ISBN #07673 1889 7)
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