

SITE PLANNING (Selection) CONSIDERATIONS

Selecting the right site for your new church facility

It is important to know, when selecting a new site for your church, that the feasibility of a site is not limited to the cost of land. Other issues to consider include whether the site meets your church's functional needs as well as your church's technical needs. The functional feasibility of a potential site deals with whether your congregation will be happy and successful on the new site. The technical feasibility of a potential site deals with whether the new site will serve the long-term needs of your church. Both are important and need to be considered when selecting a new site for your church.

Factors influencing whether a site is functionally feasible include:

- Demographics
- Growth Trends
- Area economic conditions
- Schools
- Cultural Activities
- Exposure
- Public Transportation
- Housing Trends
- Medical Facilities

Factors including whether a site is technically feasible include:

- Physical Limitations
- Environmental Issues
- Regulatory Requirements
- Permitting Process

Do's of Purchasing Property for your Church

Purchase, or have the option to purchase, enough usable property to take care of your long-range growth needs for a 20 to 25 year period.

Make "offer to purchase" contingent upon any issues you might have questions about such as:

- Subsoil conditions that require soil testing.
- Zoning Changes.
- Environmental issues.
- Traffic control study requirements.
- Utility availability and associated costs.
- Impact of restrictive covenants and associated costs.
- Impact of local ordinances and associated costs.
- Learn about the history of the site to make sure you find out about possible problems.

Don'ts of Purchasing Property for your Church

Don't purchase sites that have these conditions:

- Odd property shapes.
- Long, narrow sites.
- Limited frontage for entrances and exits.
- Easements that cut the property into unusable pieces.
- Large setbacks.
- Unfavorable problematic subsoil conditions.
- Severely sloping terrain.
- Wetlands or flood plains.

Don't purchase any property that you may have questions or doubts about without finding out what impact they will have on the usability and the cost to you.

1. LOCATION FACTORS

Denomination Intrusion: This site minimizes any interference or intrusion of any of our churches in the same denomination.

Constituency: This site is favorable to the majority of our congregational members traveling to it.

Growth Trends: This site is in an area that has the potential for continued growth.

Housing Trends: This site is in an area where new housing is being constructed or is in a stable community of above average priced housing.

Area Economic Conditions: This site is in an area where economic conditions are favorable (i.e., not depressed).

Industrial Encroachment: This site is in an area where industry (factories) will not be encroaching.

Public Transportation: This site is close to public transportation availability.

2. PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

Size: Does the useable acreage of this site meet our long range growth requirements? Note: A usable acre of land will accommodate about 125 people per acre. # of acres _____ x 125 = _____.

Our growth goals. _____

Availability of adjacent property: Is additional land available for future purchase?

Site Access: Is the site easily accessible? If not, are improvements to the roadway network necessary, including the necessity for acceleration/deceleration lanes?
If so, estimated costs to us will be: \$ _____

Utilities: Are there appropriate utilities available to the property to serve our needs?

Electric	Yes_____ No_____	Sewer	Yes_____ No_____
Water	Yes_____ No_____	Gas	Yes_____ No_____

If "no" to any of the above, estimated costs to us will be: \$ _____.

Orientation: Can we orient our facilities on the site to meet our needs for visibility, circulation, parking and weather?

3. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Zoning: Is the site zoned for our church use? If not, what is the process and time frame (____months) for rezoning and how much will it cost us for legal fees? If not, estimated costs for legal fees will be \$_____.

Restrictive Covenants: Is the site free of restrictive covenants? If not, will these restrictive covenants require expensive costs to us (i.e., height, building appearance, special materials, etc)? If so, estimated costs to us will be \$_____.

Title Exceptions/Easements: Is this site free of title exception or easements? Are there title exceptions or easements that will impact our church's use of the property. If so, how much (____acres).

Local Ordinances: Is this site free of expensive local ordinance requirements? If not, do the local ordinances require expensive solutions (i.e., extensive green spaces or landscaping requirements, signage limitations)? If so, estimated costs to us will be \$_____.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Wetlands: Is this site free of protected wetlands? If not, how much of this property is unusable? If so, how many acres? _____.

Hazardous Materials: Is this site free of hazardous materials or underground tanks. If not, does this site contain hazardous materials or underground tanks that need to be addressed before construction starts?

If so, who will be responsible for the cleanup costs?
If us, the estimated costs will be \$_____.

Protected Wildlife: Is this site free of environment protected wildlife (fauna, flora) requirements? If not, how much property will this affect? _____ acres.
If there are costs involved in this, the estimated costs will be \$_____.

5. GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATION

Topography: Is the site conducive for our use? If not, does this site require extensive land alterations to accommodate us (i.e., excavation, fill etc.)?
If so, the estimated costs will be \$_____.

Subsoil Conditions: Are soil conditions adequate? If not, will special foundations, pilings, and/or pavement designs be required?
If so, the estimated costs to us will be \$_____.

Drainage Patterns: Are drainage patterns conducive to our master site plans? If not, will extensive alterations to the infrastructure drainage system retention ponds (above ground, underground) be required?
If so, the estimated costs to us will be \$_____.

6. PERMITTING PROCESS

Specific Code Compliance Requirements: Are the church facilities we build exempt from any specific local code compliance requirements (i.e., sprinkler requirements, access to baptisteries, etc.)? If not, what do we need to do to be in compliance? The estimated costs for these items will be \$_____.

Public Hearings: Will the development of this site be exempted from public hearings? If not, who will we have to have represent us (attorneys, architects, etc.)? The estimated costs for attorneys, architects, etc. will be \$_____.

Impact Fees or Development Fees: Is the development of this site exempt from local government impact and development fees (i.e., costs of developing sewer systems, surface water drainage systems, etc.)? If not, the estimated costs to us will be \$_____.
