

The Importance of Prayer and Programming...No Matter the Size of the Project

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We have worked with churches of every size and denomination over our 120 year history. One of the first steps of a successful project is Programming.



- ❖ **Programming** is the process of putting down on paper all of the different functions that a church would like to have happen within the walls of the facility. It is the transition from the Vision, Dreams, and Needs to actually compiling a list of spaces, their occupancies, and their adjacencies to other spaces.

This is a critical step, regardless of how big or small a project, for many reasons:

- It is the first “**check and balance**” that all of the functions from the Vision planning for the church are clearly compiled.
- This list can then be a reference during the entire journey of the project.
- This is also the first time that the design professional can add basic function requirements such as rest rooms, janitor rooms, elevators, mechanical rooms, etc. In addition, a formula can be used for an allowance of horizontal and vertical circulation, such as corridors and stair towers.

This is important because all of these rooms and elements require space, and this space adds up.....with regard to actual square footage, cost, and feasibility on the site. The occupancy of each space is also very important as this number should be a “projection” for 5 to 10 years into the future, not present day needs.

If the space is planned for the present, it will be too small once the project is complete or in the very near future, and the project will not be helpful to the church. It is also imperative to list the required adjacencies for any spaces at this time. These adjacency needs should have been discussed during the Vision planning.....and they do not want to be forgotten after sketches begin.

Horst recently completed a “Vision” meeting with State College Alliance Church in State College, PA which lasted several hours. A detailed programming discussion took place for all 15 Church Ministry and Christian School teams to capture their future needs, dreams and goals for a Master Plan. This process has allowed the church to discuss the difficult questions and move forward in a positive and unified way to reach their collective vision.



The importance of Prayer cannot be forgotten during this journey. Each of State College Alliance's Building Expansion Team Meetings begins with prayers for all concerned to ensure that everyone is open to hearing and seeing God's vision for their future and His plan.

Once the entire Program is complete it is the "**benchmark**" for the overall square footage needs as well as code requirements for the different assembly

areas. It is also useful to see if the overall square footage is feasible on the site or within the parameters of the project. This overall Program can also then be analyzed and broken down from the "Master Plan" into "Phases". Once the Program is reviewed and approved by the church, it becomes the basis for the Sketches from the design professional...and another step in the journey begins.

One of the most rewarding aspects of our work is walking this journey with churches who have struggled for years to move forward with their projects for a variety of reasons. Clarification of their vision and honing in on programming needs (current and future) helps the focus to become more clear, collaboration and support from the congregation grows and excitement for their future leads them forward on their journey.



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