

Executive Summary

Master Planning Process

This report is offered as a summary of the concepts and strategic direction that will be presented in the Final Report of the Master Planning process for Fellowship Camp and Conference Center. The Final Report will include a detailed narrative of the concepts, implementation plan, long range financial plan, and cost estimates for major site projects.

This work is the result of a collaborative process and has incorporated the dedicated work of a planning team including staff, summer staff, members of the Outdoor Ministries Division, and engaged supporters. The work has spanned over a year, and has included extensive data analysis, 4 planning team retreats, a summer program observation, and additional site time by the consultant team.

The consultants remain committed to the successful implementation of this plan, and are available to support staff and volunteer leaders as they execute and fulfill this plan.

Mission

The mission of Camp Fellowship is clear among leaders and is fairly well represented by the mission statement: *Fellowship Camp and Conference Center nourishes and sustains faith in God by building community, fostering relationships, and exploring our connection with Creation.* As the ministry grows, the leadership of the camp should regularly review the statement to be sure it remains clear, and is compelling for participants and supporters.

Camp Fellowship is, and will continue to be, an instrument by which Trinity Presbytery accomplishes its mission in the world. Camp Fellowship will assist the Presbytery in serving Christ in a changing world by:

- Being open to the movement of God's Spirit in all that it does;
- Facilitating the partnership among churches; and,
- Equipping its diverse community in spiritual growth and mission effectiveness.

Program Plan

The program of a camp/retreat center is the total array of events, services, and amenities that are offered to accomplish its mission. The program includes not only summer camp, but other sponsored events, partnerships, and hosted groups.

- The summer resident and day camp programs are a mainstay of the ministry, and focus on offering outdoor-centered, recreational and formational experiences designed to “nourish and sustain faith in God.”
- Programs of outdoor education and scientific research express the church’s commitment to the stewardship of Creation, learning, and the fostering of wonder that makes worship possible.
- Retreat experiences are an expression of Christian hospitality that promotes community among guests. The Welcome of God is extended to groups and guests. By making it possible for groups to accomplish their goals, Camp Fellowship participates in their work.

- Support for the community, hosting community events and participating in community associations extends the witness of the Church into lives and places where the church may not otherwise go.
- Additionally, in the future, Camp Fellowship can grow in its capacity to provide program services for local churches that the Presbytery may no longer be able to provide. Training events, renewal experiences, and skilled leadership in ministry areas are some of the ways that Fellowship may serve the Presbytery.

Marketing

Several sustained, aggressive initiatives will be necessary for Camp Fellowship to achieve its missional and fiscal goals. Marketing must be driven by data and based on goals that accomplish mission and realize fiscal targets.

Summer camp marketing involves deepening relationships with current camper families and establishing relationships with new camper families. Each year will have specific goals for the number of returning campers (camper retention) and the number of new campers. Additional segmentation allows for targeted initiatives to campers of certain areas, ages, or participation history.

Partnerships can be especially important for summer camp marketing. Fellowship currently has several working summer camp partners, and has the potential for additional ones. Partnerships with specific local churches are uniquely effective as Fellowship summer camp becomes one of the ways in which churches serve their local communities.

Marketing for guest groups has three objectives: additional groups, larger groups, and groups which stay longer. Again data analysis helps to target specific initiatives. It is an especially effective means of growth to help groups increase their numbers and choose a longer stay. This represents an increase in the volume of activity per group, and is typically very cost efficient.

Development

Development refers to the work of cultivating relationships and extending effective invitations for persons to support Camp Fellowship through volunteer service, gifts to support camperships, annual fund gifts, and gifts for projects.

Regardless of incorporation (see below), there has to be an increased level of funding from donors and foundations. This will require inviting people into new levels of support for the ministry

The first priority for gifts is an annual fund and campership funds. These provide direct support to the operating budget. Many persons start as donors by helping to support an organization at this level. Camperships can be excellent entry level gift opportunities for persons, or small, specific items which are already included in the operating budget.

A development plan is based on metrics such as number of donors, average gift per donor, number of new donors in a year, number of lapsed donors, number of monthly donors, and numbers of donors who increase their giving. Each of these metrics has a goal which combine to accomplish the annual goal.

Gifts which support specific projects generally increase the camp's ability to generate earned revenue. While these are typically site/facility projects, they may also be support for new program ventures or new staff positions.

Project focused giving is often a good “second step” giving for persons who are ready to move beyond annual gifts.

The third piece of a development plan is a capital campaign. While a major capital campaign is several years into the future for Camp Fellowship, the preparation for that can begin immediately with the establishment of a donor base and the institution of practices which will prepare the way.

The final piece to a development plan is the establishment and growth of an endowment fund which will ultimately provide reliable funding for major maintenance projects, such as roof replacement, HVAC replacement, and facility improvements which are not good candidates for a capital campaign. Legacy gifts which build endowment funds can involve inclusion in a will, the donation of property, or donation of other assets.

Site & Facilities

The property improvement plan requires the ability to move ahead with inviting support for facility enhancement projects in addition to annual funds. The plan is sequenced and prioritized by those projects which could make significant difference in Camp Fellowship’s ability to expand program, extend ministry, and increase revenue.

Property acquisition would be beneficial in several regards. Camp Fellowship should position itself to develop the relationships necessary for conversations around potential gifts and/or purchases. Instruments of giving such as Charitable Remainder Trusts may be useful, and Camp Fellowship should be prepared to engage in those conversations as appropriate.

- The near term (1-3 years) site projects include the following:
 - Improve (surfaces, ventilation, etc.) camp bathhouse;
 - Improve (surfaces, ventilation, etc.) existing camp cabins;
 - Construct a pole barn style maintenance/storage facility, which removes maintenance from the core of camp and permits the dedication of Frasier to program space;
 - Convert Frasier to program space, improve the building; set up a Field Station (Environmental Educations and Research Center) in the end of the building that is currently occupied by maintenance;
 - Address road/parking issues and erosion from water run-off;
 - Complete necessary repairs to docks and waterfront features.
- Mid-term (4-8 years) site projects include:
 - Construction of new camp cabins, which are year round, climate controlled facilities, with internal bathrooms;
 - Repurpose current bathhouse to program space;
 - Construct Welcome Center/Office at corner of Whitten Road and Camp Fellowship Road;
 - Construct new Field Station between new dining hall and waterfront pavilion;
 - Construct staff residence.
- Long-term (9-12 years) site projects include:
 - Construct indoor program facility near cabins;
 - Construct new dining hall (on the site of Frasier);

- Construct adult lodge on site of current office and dining hall; repurpose current dining hall as meeting space or chapel; relocate house for use as additional or seasonal staff residence.

Organizational Capacity

The strategic plan calls for the overall enhancement of “the ability of the organization’s operations to implement key organizational and programmatic functions.”¹ In short, organizational capacity is understood as the ability of the organization to accomplish its mission.

Capacity is commonly understood in terms of an organization’s:

- Human resources: their number, quality, skills, and experience,
- Physical and material resources: land, buildings, machines,
- Financial resources: money and credit,
- Information resources: pool of knowledge, databases, and
- Intellectual resources: copyrights, designs, patents, etc.

This plan is aimed at strengthening all aspects of Camp Fellowship in order to increase its organizational capacity.

Operations

While moving forward with incorporation as a nonprofit entity would greatly enhance Camp Fellowship’s ability to achieve its financial goals, there are numerous initiatives that do not need to wait upon that process and should begin immediately. The initial steps into an improved financial system, cost containment, and management tools can be put into place quickly.

The “preferred financial future” is based upon the following assumptions:

1. 70-80% of the revenue should be “earned,” that is received from fees that people pay for services and events. Additional operating revenues are also received from gifts and Presbytery support. This is a nonprofit financial model called “Beneficiary Builder.”² It is consistent with the financial model for a nonprofit hospital or college/university.
2. The will require significant focus, which is ambitious, but not unrealistic, with marketing, establishment of new partnerships, and expanded program lines.
3. The site currently has the capacity to generate the required level of revenue without additional facilities, but with some moderate level of upgrade and improvement.
4. Direct costs should be reduced to appropriate levels (understood as a percentage of gross revenue), and the volume of activity (guests and campers) sufficient to cover fixed/indirect costs. For most sites, direct summer camp expenses are typically around 60% of gross revenue and direct hosted group expenses around 40% of gross.
5. The financial contribution of the Presbytery will be reduced to an amount that is 10-15% of the earned revenue, which is a far more appropriate level of support. It recognizes the significant role

¹ Read more: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/organizational-capability.html#ixzz3yq2eBdW4>

² Foster, W. L., Kim, P., & Christiansen, B. (2009). Ten Nonprofit Funding Models. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*(Spring 2009), 32-39. Retrieved from http://ssir.org/pdf/2009SP_Feature_Foster_Kim_Christiansen.pdf

and relationship of Camp Fellowship to the Presbytery, and yet is not a burdensome amount for the Presbytery or an unhealthy dependency for the camp.

Structure and Governance

Incorporation will make it far more likely that these financial goals can be realized:

1. Financial systems will be designed to meet the requirements of a revenue based organization. Effective management is far more possible when the system is designed for that.
2. Additional earned revenue is more likely with a separate corporate entity. Other organizations may be more willing to enter into partnerships and invest in programming initiatives.
3. Donors are generally more willing to support a separate entity.
4. Grants are far more likely with a separate corporate entity.
5. The camp organization must be able to respond quickly to new opportunities and changes in circumstances. A separate organization is far more likely to be “agile,” and to be able to respond quickly.

Finally, incorporation creates what has been termed a “Threshold Organization.” In a study funded by the Lily Endowment, the conclusion is that often ministry organizations can better serve the mission of the church by being less entangled in the institution of the church. See “Serving at the Threshold” by Floyd Reed. <https://www.tmf-fdn.org/assets/uploads/docs/TMFCaseStudy-Serving-at-the-Threshold.pdf> The author of the study also currently chairs the Board of Director for a Presbyterian camp, which is Incorporated.