



Oberlin Master Plan

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

1. **What prompted Oberlin to seek a Master Plan in the first place?**
Over the past two years, Oberlin leadership has had to discuss space issues. Our building is aging, member needs have been apparent from the issue of classrooms, meeting space, access such as elevators and dropping off the young and the elderly. Growth is occurring and we needed a plan to determine our needs were and how and when we might need to address them.
2. **When did we approve creating a Master Plan?**
In a special business meeting in October the congregation unanimously agreed to approve the creation of a master plan.
3. **Why did we choose TGBA to develop the Master Plan?**
Pastor Alvin and several members of the Oberlin leadership team attended several workshops over the past few years conducted by John Taylor of TGBA. This professional organization has an excellent reputation and the most experience in leading churches through a master plan process.
4. **When and how did we form a planning team?**
Trustees have the lead for planning, building and construction projects. Once we knew we were proceeding, Pastor Alvin and the chair of Trustees looked closely at members of the congregation for certain gifts and skills. The group needed an assortment of skills, knowledge and abilities (small enough to make decisions quickly, and large enough to ensure that a wide representation of membership occurred).
5. **Who is on the planning team and why?**
 - **Pastor Alvin**, our spiritual leader;
 - **John Taylor**, AIA, consultant architect and principal of TGBA;
 - **Suzette Frederick** - lead, MPA, Chair of Trustees, Director of Facilities and Business Services for the State Department of Health, director/project manager of capital projects, Director of Contracts and Procurement, Parks Director, Department of Veterans Affairs Business and Operations Manager, long term member of Oberlin;
 - **John Leech**, Chief Information Officer (CIO) of Savers Inc, Air Force Reserve Officer, MS in Operations Management and Computer Science; representative of one of Oberlin's oldest member and Steilacoom community families, and very knowledgeable about codes and planning rules in the historical district

- **Dr. Preston Buckholz**, Small Group Leader of the young adults, business owner; Member-at-Large for Oberlin Council;
- **Dee Sandvik**, mother, interiors committee, Assistant Treasurer, Volunteer teacher, VBS Director, grew up in Oberlin, 36 years and counting.
- **Mark Burlingame**, BS in Finance, Director of Steilacoom Public Works, Land Use Administrator, Trustee member, long time Oberlin member
- **Judy Sacha**, MBA, Trustee Board, Financial Committee Chair, Co-Chair of the 125th Celebration, Small Group Leader, Oberlin long term member, business owner.
- **Bob Corliss**, Oberlin Moderator, Small Group Leader, Bible Study Leader, Lt. Col., U.S. Army (Retired), and currently instructs at Bates Technical College. Bob is a long term Oberlin member
- **Rod Wedge**, BS in Civil Engineering, over thirty years of professional engineering experience. He is currently mostly retired, but he worked for several international oil companies and consulting engineering firms. Most recently, Rod was a project manager for pipeline and other petroleum facility projects in Alaska for 16 years. Rod serves as Oberlin's clerk on the church council, and he serves on the Board of Trustees although he became an Oberlin member just last summer.

6. What did the January 5th focus group meetings accomplish?

This was a key element in getting feedback from the congregation. It was the first time that members saw the drawings for potential building changes. John Taylor and members of the planning team met and listened to over 60 members provide their concerns and recommendations.

7. What was changed as a result of the focus group meetings?

The majority of the ideas were incorporated into the plan. A family bathroom was added on the first floor, more storage was added, and a bride's dressing room was incorporated into a classroom with access to a restroom.

8. There are three phases to the Master Plan. What do we change as a result of Phase 1? What happens in Phase 2 and 3?

The first phase is more appropriately a remodel and renovation of the existing building. We will have an elevator, larger and more bathrooms, a larger Narthex for fellowship (the living room of the church), an enlarged nursery with easy access for parents with more security since it will be on the first floor, a family bathroom, offices downstairs, better designed classrooms and youth space, more storage, and the church building brought up to code.

The drawings that are on view in the Fellowship Hall are the best tools to show what is currently planned for phase 2 and 3. We think that Phase 2 and 3 are 7 or more years out, so we are focusing on Phase 1 at this time.

9. Why do we need to expand the Narthex?

The Narthex is the key gathering place and traffic flow intersection of a church. It is currently too small and cramped to be fully functional. Members and attendees can not fellowship, move around comfortably or safely while leaving the church, heading towards the restroom, viewing church communication stations or moving into the offices or the Fellowship hall. A larger space with better traffic flow will benefit everyone and provide a more relaxed and safe environment.

10. How and when will I get more information about the details of Phase 1?

There will be several opportunities provided. It is important that everyone who desires to provide input into the process and the plan have the opportunity. Planning team members will begin meeting with

Oberlin's Small Groups the week of February 14. Then on March 9th, we will have a congregational informational meeting, led by John Taylor of TGBA, to ensure we have heard and addressed all the questions our family has. You may also find more information on Oberlin's Web Site at www.oberlinchurch.org. There will be an article in the March newsletter. In addition, any planning team member, Trustee, Council member, or Pastor Alvin can address any questions you have. Beginning on Sunday February 17, the drawings for the Master Plan will be placed in the Fellowship Hall for everyone to see.

11. Do I get to comment or express my concerns about Phase 1 or is it a "done deal"?

It is our desire to provide ample opportunity for everyone that has an interest to express their ideas and concerns. This is a master plan; it encompasses what Oberlin believes we currently need as well as a vision for the future. When Oberlin votes to adopt the master plan, we can best determine our next steps.

12. What is going to happen on March 9th?

On March 9th, we will have a congregational informational meeting, led by John Taylor of TGBA, to ensure we have heard and addressed all the questions our church family has.

13. What is involved in the Worship Center remodel?

While there is money in the budget for some minor changes, no details have yet been planned or discussed for the Sanctuary. This is a topic we would want to spend time thinking about and providing a lot of opportunity for input from our members. We would want to look at churches constructed like ours so that we could see firsthand what is provided. We have talked about taking tour buses to local churches just to look at narthexes and sanctuaries. John Taylor and the planning team believe that some updating could provide a lighter more comfortable environment, and some minor changes could enhance our visual and sound delivery. A lot of money was not included for this feature, but TBGA thinks we could do quite a bit with what is planned.

14. Are we replacing the pews with chairs?

No. While that is one idea that many churches have implemented to increase seating capacity and flexibility in a sanctuary, the planning team has not discussed this idea. It is not included in Phase 1, however if members of the congregation thought this would be an improvement, then we would want to look at it for the future. It would be another issue where we would want to ensure we heard from our members.

15. How much will Phase 1 cost?

The cost will depend on when we build. The costs in the Master Plan were calculated for 2008. Church construction costs are currently rising 5-6% per year. The estimate provided is for 2008. Buildings and capital projects don't usually get less expensive with time. The cost **estimate** in 2008 dollars is \$1,734,096.

16. What is the contingency money for?

In any project you need some "just in case money". Just in case we find contaminated soil, asbestos, or a change order when we discover we did not plan for something we need. This money is only spent if necessary.

Did you know we did have contaminated soil found last year on the back lot? It came from our old underground fuel tank we removed about 15 or 20 years ago. The construction company that used our lot for the Rainier Street Construction took care of it for us. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for them.

17. What is the difference between hard and soft costs?

I like to think of the hard costs as the concrete and steel elements. Included in hard costs are the elevator and shaft, renovation and expansion of the restrooms, the entry canopy, sprinkler system, other building systems and hardware we might need.

Soft cost are the less tangible items such as architectural fees, drawings, printed material, permits, engineering, sales tax, furnishings, art work.

18. How does this compare to the last major building project we did at Oberlin?

We found some very interesting information in our archives. In 1960 Oberlin completed the Sanctuary wing for a cost of \$80,500. The congregation took out a loan of \$55,000 dollars payable over 150 months at 5 ½%

In 1978 Oberlin completed the Fellowship Wing at a cost of \$262,054, borrowed \$180,000 payable over 10 years at 6%. The contractor was paid \$187,500.

The size of the 2 buildings that we have today is 18,060 square feet.

Year	Original Cost of the Project	Dollar Value in 2006 (current available data)
1960	\$80,500	CPI \$547,900 GDP deflator \$445,973.14 Relative Share of GDP \$2,017,807
1978	\$262,054	CPI \$810,029 GDP deflator \$667,593 Relative Share of GDP \$1,506,830

19. Does the money come from our operating budget?

No, Oberlin would need to establish a capital building program and financial plan that would address how money would be raised. A capital fund program is separate from our operational giving. Our operating budget covers salaries, utilities, some minor projects, and our ministry programs.

20. What part does the J. Carter Bass gift play in the plan?

Mr. and Mrs. J. Carter Bass gave a wonderful gift to Oberlin by including Oberlin in their wills. We hope that other members will consider this type of giving in the future. The Bass Trust gift was approximately \$189,840 not including investment interest earned since receiving these funds. Thus far the congregation approved the following expenditure from these funds.

- \$27,000 to repair the flat roof
- \$10,000 for topographical and boundary survey
- \$20,000 for the Master Plan

The current balance, after these expenditures and encumbrances is \$141,634.16 which includes interest earned through the end of 2007.

Trustees plan to make a recommendation to the congregation that this money be used as seed money for a capital program.

21. When are we voting to approve the Master Plan and do we have to approve all three phases at the same time?

At this time, we plan to ask for a vote on the Master Plan, which includes all phases, at our quarterly meeting on April 20, 2008. A Master Plan, by its definition and nature covers years of looking forward, but it is based on current information. We consider that Phase 1 may be near term (a few years – maybe 3-5) but we would not move forward until we had a certain percentage of the funds in hand and knew where the rest was coming from and when. The other phases would not start until we had the numbers (members/attendees, and the money). Then we would pull the Master Plan off the shelf, dust it off, review the old plan and adjust based on current trends, culture, codes, needs and desires of the congregation. We would incorporate that information and then plan that next stage. Things change over time. When we are ready to move forward with Phase 2, we would need to go through a well thought out plan and process.

However, if the congregation is not ready to think beyond Phase 1, then it is always possible to vote just on the first phase.

22. When would we vote to begin the fundraising for Phase 1?

It depends. If the plan is approved on April 20th, the planning team would like to begin developing the process and plan for a capital fund raising program. This will need to be a well thought out approach. Will we need a consultant to help us? What would the benefits be? Do we need a pledge campaign? This is giving above and beyond operations so what do our members think they can contribute and for how long? How much should Oberlin try to raise from our congregation, from the community, should we borrow a portion? These are just a few of the questions that have to be answered before we would actually begin the campaign. And once again, we will need a lot of involvement and guidance from the congregation to help us.

23. Is there a fundraising team and if so who is on it?

Yes, we do have a team, but they have not yet met and other members may yet be identified. Our goal is to keep our teams around 7 members (this has been proven to be an efficient and effective team size). The team is currently comprised of the following Oberlin members.

- **Tom Van Alstyne** – lead. BS in Civil Engineering, retired Lt. Col US Army, a mature Christian, a member of Trustees, and has experience in a church fundraising program.
- **Ty Stewart** – our youth director brings a wealth of knowledge as his past church ran a capital fund campaign
- **Duane Hardesty** – a long time member, he has served on Trustees, Missions Board and was most recently, the Chair of the Nominating Committee and serves on the Church Council, He has eight (8) years of service on the Steilacoom Historical School District #1 Board of Directors. He was instrumental in the long-range planning and ultimate bond passage that is resulting in the most significant school facility expansion in the District's history. Ron

Frederick, past Chair of Diaconate, current chair of the Nominating Committee. Ron ran fund raising campaigns for many years with schools all over Washington State.

- o **Jack Wilcox**, long term member of Oberlin, a Trustee, and real estate expert
- o **Bob Corliss**, Oberlin's Moderator, long term Oberlin member, and investment savvy

24. What happens after we approve the Master Plan and the capital fundraising?

We would immediately develop a project plan with milestones and triggers. The project plan would lay out the process step by step, identify decision points, and lead to the next step. This might include such things as the following:

- o What is our communication plan and how can we be sure that we are keeping our congregation adequately apprised of the progress and where we are?
- o When we have X amount of money we will hire an architect to develop our drawings,
- o When we are at this identified point we will take our plans to the planning commission or the review board
- o when we are at this point we do an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) or an RFP (request for proposal) in order to hire a contractor
- o when we reach this point we will start construction and provide contingencies for meetings and classes
- o when we are at this point we will look at furnishings

25. Will we do any fundraising and how much of the Phase 1 funding requirement might be in the form of a loan?

As we proceed over the next few years we have to remember that these are estimates based on 2008 dollars and the cost will be more three years from now. But for our purposes here, we will use 2008 figures as in the example. Our current thoughts are that Oberlin's capital campaign for the Phase 1 could take three (3) years to raise approximately \$730,000 or 42% of the funds, and borrow approximately 49% or \$844,000. If we use the Bass Fund as part of our capital fund, we already have 9%. The timing and the ability to move forward will be based on how and when we raise the money. For Example:

Last year Oberlin had 207 giving units. If each unit gave an additional \$22.61 per Sunday for 3 years, or if 150 giving units gave \$31.20 per Sunday for 3 years, Oberlin would have raised the \$730,000 needed to proceed.

The other element that is not addressed in this scenario is the opportunity to include the community and community organizations in our fund raising efforts (such as community fund raising events, or asking businesses and organizations for donations) thereby reducing the amount that the congregation contributes. Our fundraising campaign plan may include this.

26. How long will the fundraising take?

Current conditions point to 3 years as a reasonable time frame. However, it will take as long as it takes. None of us knows the future. Life and organizations are dynamic. If for some reason it looks as if the plan could be accelerated or that we need to slow it down we need to be able to do that pretty easily. We have to be flexible and adapt as we go.

27. What is the projected giving expected of me for Phase 1?

Leadership does not have any expectations, as this is a personal discussion each of you will want to have with our Lord. However, to put this amount of money in perspective, by using the information in question #25, we can identify a couple of scenarios. The Fundraising committee may want to take pledges so that we can better gauge our capital fund raising program, but approximately \$1150 to

\$1600 per year per giving unit would get us there in three (3) years. The 2008 special tax refund would get most giving units there for this year.

28. What if the giving doesn't come up to expectations?

We adapt as we need. We know that the economy and people's incomes and financial needs sometimes ebb and flow. We just keep moving forward until we reach our goal. One thing is certain, we won't get there if we don't know where we are going and if we don't set a time and target.

29. When will we start construction of Phase 1? How long will it take, and when would we start Phase 2 and 3?

Construction on Phase 1 would not begin until we have met our milestone goals for our capital fund raising plan and would be based on the growth and financial trends. Remodeling and renovation can take longer than building a new facility. We have to work around programs and people. The first phase could take a year to complete. As with Phase 1, Phase 2 and 3 would not begin until we meet certain identified targets in our attendance and in our finances. This is the beauty of the master plan. We now have the numbers to know when we hit those milestones and need to take the other steps to build.

NOTES FOR PLANNING TEAM

The best indicators for construction is the Construction Cost Index, not a CPI or GDP. You can log into the ENR (Engineering News Record) for the CCI but we would have to pay and I am not a member. I asked John Taylor if they could give us the amounts. I am not sure what they will tell us, and then, not sure that this would be important to others. Most folks are aware of the GDP and CPI.

<http://enr.construction.com/features/conEco/default.asp>

The information below is taken from <http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/>

Descriptions of the indicators For Question # 18

- **The CPI** is most often used to make comparisons partly because it is the series with which people are most familiar. This series tries to compare the cost of things the average household buys such as food, housing, transportation, medical services, etc. For earlier years, it is the most useful series for comparing the cost of consumer goods and services. It can be interpreted as how much money you would need today to buy an item in the year in question if its price had changed the same percentage as the average price change.
 - [Construction of CPI Indicator](#)
- **The GDP Deflator** is similar to the CPI in that it is a measure of average prices. The "bundle" of goods and services here includes all things produced in the economy, not just consumer goods and services that are reflected in the CPI.
 - [Construction of GDP Indicator](#)
- **The Consumer Bundle** is the average dollar value of the annual expenditures of a "consumer unit". The consumer unit could be a family or another type of household. The main point is that spending is a joint decision of the members of the unit. The bundle increases over time as household income increases. Unlike the CPI, not only the cost but also the amount of goods and services increases over time. Note, the 2006 value of the consumer bundle will not be published until November 2007.
 - [Construction of the Consumer Bundle Indicator](#)
- **The Unskilled Wage Rate** is good way to determine the relative cost of something in terms of the amount of work it would take to produce, or the relative time it would take to earn its cost. It can also be useful in comparing different wages over time. The unskilled wage is a more consistent measure than the average wage for making comparisons over time.
 - [Construction of Unskilled Wage Indicator](#)

- **The GDP per capita** is an index of the economy's average output per person and is closely correlated with the average income. It can be useful in comparing different incomes over time.
 - [Construction of GDP Indicator](#)
- **The GDP** is the market value of all goods and services produced in a year. Comparing an expenditure using this measure, tells you how much money in the comparable year would be the same percent of all output.
 - [Construction of GDP Indicator](#)

The following information is provided in case there are questions as to how much the cost for construction will increase from 2009 to 2011. This is based on a 5% increase over each previous year.

2008	2009	2010	2011
\$1,734,096.	\$1,820,800.80	\$1,911,840.84	\$2,007,432.88