

# May 2008 Newsletter

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## THE BUILDING PROCESS FOR PASTORS | PART 1

# PRELIMINARY DESIGN SERVICES

Victor Erwin  
Vice President  
Church Division

*Recognizing that real estate development is not one of the strengths of most pastors is key to successfully designing and building churches. The NACDB places great emphasis on educating today's church leaders on the process of expansion to help prevent the numerous pitfalls that may occur in planning their next facility.*

High quality 3D renderings are essential to visualizing building projects, keeping planning teams up to date and catching problem areas before construction begins.

One of the more popular seminars the NACDB has developed is *The Building Process for Pastors* - a plain English primer for church staff members responsible for building projects. The first major step in building a church facility is the focus of this article.

**The more time you spend on planning, the better your opportunity to steward God's resources wisely. No church ever saved money once construction started. . .**

To begin the journey, your designer starts with a Ministry Needs Assessment (also known as "programming") to capture a snapshot of the present ministries as well as a vision for the future. Experienced church designers offer a "Ministry Needs Assessment Report (MNA Report)" that helps coalesce your thoughts and provides framework to involve other staff and lay people in the church.

### A FEW QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- How does your church fit into the Body of Christ?
- Where do you see your church in next year? 3 years? 5 years?
- What is your mission emphasis? Salvation, discipleship, both?
- What ministries are needed to support your mission?
- What facilities are required to support these programs?

The needs assessment should include a demographic study of a three mile radius of your church (your "Jerusalem"). The information from this study can affect the amount and type of space you choose to build first. The results of the needs assessment is then summarized and translated into square footage requirements.



A master plan is derived to lay out the square footage on your site. At this juncture, a building cost estimate based on the square footage is used to prioritize the project into phases to accommodate your budget. Once the first phase is identified, floor plans and elevations are drawn identifying the spaces and their relation to one another. Beautiful computer generated color models (in some cases a movie "fly through") can be produced to facilitate stewardship programs.

Some designers stop there and wait on the church to decide to move into full document production. This often yields tragic results ("Our architect designed something we can't afford to build!"). Insist that you are provided with well thought out preliminary design estimate that shows line item detail for all architectural divisions (concrete, plumbing, structural steel, site work, ect.) as well as major assumptions and items excluded. A good goal is for your preliminary design estimate to be +/- 5 % of the final contract price.

## DON'T MISS PART 2

Before moving to the next phase of design, it is a good idea to have settled on a construction delivery method - Design/Bid/Build or Design/Build. This will be the topic of our next e-Newsletter.

## The Wall of SHAME

### CEO CORNER Rene M. Charest



Imagine taking 1.2 million dollars of tithe money and shredding it.

Every year CharestCorp is hired by a couple of churches that have a set of unbuildable church plans. In some instances, the Architect designed a project way too expensive for the client and they simply could not afford to build it. Other times the building is one of those "Church in a box" designs that simply does not work with the aesthetics of the neighborhood or meet the minimum standards of the local building and safety codes. Most of the time it simply does not meet the needs or the personality of the congregation.

To date we have inherited over **1.2 million dollars worth of useless building plans** that are sitting in our back warehouse. This means that church members have given tithes and offerings toward designs for projects that will never become a real building. They have wasted hard earned money which will bring no tangible results. This is why we are creating the **Wall of Shame**. It will be a reminder to our staff and

all of our visiting pastors and board members that if great care is not taken in selecting a qualified Church Design Builder, hundreds of thousands of dollars can be wasted.

I cannot think of a greater challenge church leadership must face than to inform their men and women who sacrificially gave up vacations, home improvements, and other needed items because they trusted the wisdom of Pastors and professionals and were sorely disappointed. We encourage you to remember CharestCorp's proven adage:

*The difference between a wise steward and a cheapskate is that a wise steward hires the most experienced professional at a competitive price and then gets excellence, but a Cheapskate hires a less experienced person at a lower price and gets a mess.*



They say: You get what you pay for.....unless of course you are on our **Wall of Shame**, then you got nothing that you paid for.

May God keep you and protect you as you grow.

Rene M. Charest, CEO  
CharestCorp

*Faith, Hope, Latte*  
*Sustainable Environments*

Have you ever heard the one about the two environmentalists that walk into a bar? Me neither, but I did introduce myself to a guy as an Environmentalist this week in NYC at the Q Conference. His response, "Me too." So as he begins to talk about his work regarding sustainability, I break it to him that we do the same thing only very differently. You see, he was an Environmentalist who cares for nature and thinks about God's planetary creation and I'm an Environmentalist that cares for the places where people connect. Each of us want the same thing - to create a place where God's creations can grow and flourish the way he designed. Each of us works to create sustainable environments that will last far beyond our efforts; places that will echo God's message through the life in each plant or person.

Successful Third Place Cafes are not some temporary trend, but sustainable environments that can serve the church body, the community, and causes around the world.

Michael Trent

new site:

[www.thirdplaceconsulting.com](http://www.thirdplaceconsulting.com)

new blog: <http://thirdplaceconsulting.blogspot.com/>

