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# Church Relocation

By Robert C. Foreman, Architect

## Before and after the decision to relocate

### BEFORE YOU DECIDE TO RELOCATE YOUR CHURCH

Important questions that need to be asked.

1. Why relocate?
  - Is our present site too small for us to grow as a congregation?
  - Have our members moved away from the community?
  - Is the community's social and economic base changing?
  - Have our buildings become old and obsolete?
2. How large a congregation do we envision becoming in the future?
3. What kind of church do we see ourselves becoming?
  - What sort of worship style?
  - What specific ministries?
  - Who is our "Target Market"?
  - Traditional or contemporary?
4. How will we handle change?
  - New people? New community?
  - Will the new community change our church?
5. What impact will our church have on the new community?

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Interior Design Guidelines

Sunday School Spaces

Conditioning Your Building

Insurance

Recommended Reading

**Newsletters**

6. Will the move leave some of our "family" behind?

How many will stay?  
How many will go?  
How far will present members be willing to drive to stay involved?  
Will some of the members "drop out" of church because of the distance?

7. Is this move financially feasible?

What will property cost?  
What will a new building cost?  
Can we afford to build in extra space for growth?  
How much will we get for our property?  
How much can we raise? In cash? In pledges?  
How much can we borrow?  
Can we pay for land, building, furniture, equipment, design and moving costs without overextending financially?  
Will the mission and ministries of our church be hurt by the financial burden?

**AFTER YOU DECIDE TO RELOCATE YOUR CHURCH**

Guidelines for Site Selection

1. Location convenient to your present congregation.
2. Location near people who are moving into a growing community.
3. High visibility location - people need to see the building to know it is there; many people passing by everyday.

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4. Ease of access to site - people need to be able to get to your location (on major thoroughfare).

5. Availability of utility services - sewer, water, gas, etc.

6. Site large enough to handle your present and future needs.

100 to 125 people per useable acre of land.

Additional 3 to 6 acres for recreational land.

Septic drain field area of one to two acres per 1000 people;

May be combined with recreational land.

Land which is not useable such as buffers, easements, flood plain, wet

lands or steep difficult terrain - should not be included.

7. Site with reasonable development costs. Factors that may make a site too expensive to develop.

a. Steep difficult terrain requiring extensive grading.

b. Lack of major utilities such as water and sewer.

c. Poor quality soil requiring expensive building foundations such as pilings.

d. Presence of rock which may increase cost of foundations, utility lines, septic fields, etc.

e. Location with high impact fees, lengthy rezoning requirements or local ordinances making development and building more expensive.

8. Location where there are not too many local established churches.

9. Cost of property is reasonable.

10. Location to which you are directed by the Holy Spirit.

a. Prayer and careful thought have been part of process.

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