



Cedar Canyon Expansion FAQ

*In response to feedback gleaned from
Horizon Group's work.*

FINANCIAL

Q: Have we considered a “phased-in” expansion process which would be less risky?

Yes! We have considered a phased-in expansion process. Currently, we are exploring the possibility of building the food bank first. This would allow for the current Food Bank space to be renovated into an additional Lifehouse Kids ministry area. While we are early in that process, we hope to know the feasibility of this phase soon and look forward to communicating our findings.

Q: How are we handling the current debt? How much more debt can we manage and continue to thrive?

Our current debt (\$959,695 at the time of writing this) is paid through our regular budget. However, rather than making the minimum payment each month, we make two payments toward our debt each month. The first payment is approximately 50/50 principal to interest. The second payment is 100% principal. This is greatly reducing the total amount we will pay over the life of the loan and it is all covered by the regular generosity of the people who call Lifehouse home. We will not authorize an additional debt load that will put our mission at risk. We will manage that very carefully. For instance, our Horizons consultants indicated that they felt the upper total limit of our facility debt should be no more than twice the total we have currently, or \$2 million.

Q: How can we handle the financial needs at all three sites for facilities, staff, outreach and programming?

Multiplicative growth and mission expansion will demand a deeper sense of stewardship on the part of our Lifehouse 3C Christ followers, and intentional training of new 3C Christ Followers who join our mission. We will be intentional to not only carefully manage ministry costs, as we are now, but also grow a culture of generosity to meet the financial demands at three campuses. We realize that growing in numbers must be matched by growing spiritually and that includes our generosity.

CONSTRUCTION

Q: Why did we decide on Design-Build? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

As with any decision, there are advantages and disadvantages to every option. Our building team interviewed various companies, each with a different approach. Knowing that we would pay a premium for a design-build company, we selected Aspen Group because of their vast experience in building church buildings and their unique ability to learn and understand Lifehouse and design with the goal of accomplishing our mission and vision their number one priority. In a Design-Build relationship, the owner (in this case Lifehouse) has a contract with only one entity (Aspen) rather than contracts with designers and contractors. Aspen will then do the work of hiring and coordinating the various contractors to accomplish the job. One thing that we loved about this process

is that it still allows us to utilize local contractors and businesses in our project as Aspen will be looking to hire local, which fits well with our desires to invest in our local community. Finally, the building team decided that it was also in the best interest of the church to partner with a team that would lead the way through the entire process. A Design-Build firm like Aspen works as the project management team throughout the entire project ensuring all aspects of the project are in alignment with our mission and vision.

Q: Have we made the case for how the mission/vision is advanced by this facility cost?

“Life happens here.” Those three simple words have driven the leadership of Lifehouse to constantly evaluate what we do, how we do it, and where we do it. We know that everyone deserves to have a full life in Jesus and it is our objective to do all that we can to share that full life with as many people as possible. We are always on the lookout for ways in which we can do this more effectively and for growth barriers that stand in our way. Our Cedar Canyon campus is experiencing 4 different growth barriers that have led to our exploration of a building expansion and have been the focal point of everything that Aspen and our leadership team have done.

The first barrier is our Lifehouse Kids space. With rapidly growing numbers of young families calling Lifehouse home the space we have for kids is quickly becoming too small to effectively disciple every child. We must find ways to increase the amount of space dedicated to children in order to reach young families and help them become 3C Christ followers.

The second barrier is our gathering space. If Lifehouse is going to be a place where life happens, it is important that it is a space for more than just worship. A gathering space that was larger and more conducive to people lingering after worship or other events, or even hanging out with a cup of coffee from the café during the week, would enable people to connect with one another further becoming 3C Christ followers.

The third barrier is our worship space. We have a great team of servants who set up and facilitate worship each and every week in the gym and we believe we are able to provide effective and quality worship in that space. However, to have a dedicated space for worship would allow us to have more flexibility and creativity in worship which we believe would enhance our worship experience. Creating a dedicated worship space for the adults would also allow the children to have their own worship time in the gym simultaneously as the gym space would be dedicated to children’s ministry on Sunday mornings. This would allow the children to engage in Celebrating, Connecting, and Contributing as 3C Christ Followers each and every week.

Finally, the fourth barrier is our food bank. This ministry has served our community with the love of Jesus for a long time and it is an anchor ministry at Cedar Canyon that is restricted by the lack of adequate space. Adding an addition to the north side of the building allows our food bank to more effectively and smoothly serve those in need and, therefore, have greater impact. The location also lends itself to a greater partnership with our Community Garden for future donations and/or interactions.

We entered into conversations about a building expansion with these things on our minds to ensure that Lifehouse has an effective witness in this community for decades to come. As we worked with Aspen, these points of focus grew in prominence and we began to see more clearly the potential this plan could bring to Lifehouse. Our mission is to share the full life of Christ with as many people as possible and we know that this will happen through effective ministry with kids, environments that encourage connections, worship that inspires all ages to celebrate God, and opportunities to contribute to the world around us through life-giving missions. The building is a tool to do those things and this plan is all about getting the best possible tool for the job.

Q: Have we considered multiple services (Worship and Children’s Ministry) at Cedar Canyon?

We have considered multiple services at our Cedar Canyon campus, and our pastors and full-time staff are “all in” to do so. However, at this time, we have been unable to recruit sufficient numbers of leaders and volunteer servants to staff the several ministries needed for an additional service. We are working toward this. In the meantime, we have reconfigured our children’s classroom space and are studying the possibility of building the food bank building which would free up additional space. We felt, based on our research, that temporary classrooms would be too expensive but it may come to that if our delay continues longer than anticipated.

MISSION AND MINISTRY

Q: Are we trying to become a mega-church or is the long-term vision still multi-site?

The vision of Lifehouse is multi-site. However, for the same reason we feel a deep passion for multi-site ministry in order to reach people for Jesus, we also know that we cannot fail to continue to create space and opportunities for those in the communities we already serve. We do not view an expansion at our Cedar Canyon campus as a step away from multi-site strategy. We understand an expansion to be an important part of reaching a growing community that God has called us to reach.

Q: Do we have a staffing plan for future growth? How will that staffing plan be funded?

Yes. The leadership of Lifehouse Church have been talking about our next staffing move for the past few months because we know that there are some necessary moves that must happen as we grow. We have known for some time now that the next staffing move that we would have to make is in the area of facilities and administration. Having someone who would focus on leading in those areas would free up other staff and leaders to focus their energies on the areas of their greatest strengths and impact.

The Board has unanimously decided, after prayer and discernment, that Cheryl Degler, who has served as the Executive Assistant to the Lead Pastor, would be promoted to Executive Director. The Executive Director will lead in the administrative, facility, and financial areas of the church. This will ensure our pastoral and ministry staff are able to focus the majority of their time and energy on the most critical parts of their positions that will most impact the growth and discipleship of Lifehouse. The creation of this

position will allow the church and the systems within the church to operate with more excellence.

Since we knew this move was coming, the LifeBoard has planned well to ensure that this increase in staffing is covered through our regular budget and spending plan. Also, the reality is that the staff will continue to grow to meet the demands of a growing church at three sites. We believe this will be supported financially as we grow spiritually as a community with a deeper culture of generosity to God and God's work. We will take intentional steps to make that a reality. We know God has given us all the resources we need to do what God asks us to do for people who are seeking the full life.

Q: Are we prepared to provide effective, growing youth ministry for the children to continue to grow in their faith?

We are currently providing effective, growing youth ministry. In fact, we have seen a 50% increase in average weekly over the past two years. At the end of last year, our leaders asked the students to complete a survey in which we discovered that 75% of students stated that they attended MaxOut (our Sunday evening programming) because they wanted to grow closer to God. 100% of those surveyed said that they grew spiritually that year and that they learned something new about God. This has all been made possible because of the increased number of leaders serving within this ministry and a new small group approach to their time together. We could not be more excited about what is happening within our Student Ministries.

We understand, however, that much of the Student Ministry is not seen by most people in the church as they currently meet on Sunday evenings. One reason they meet on Sunday evenings is to allow them to experience worship on Sunday mornings. We feel it is important that our young adults experience worship and have an opportunity to serve on Sunday mornings along with our adults.

Our Student Ministries Team is doing an amazing job of building a community of spiritually growing young adults. Currently, however, that ministry is only at our Cedar Canyon campus. Our team, as they continue to grow that ministry are continually assessing the needs of all campuses and evaluating what our next steps are in order to provide spiritually empowering ministry to all students. We are also aware of the growing number of young children that will soon be entering into the Student Ministries and our Lifehouse Kids leaders and Student Ministries leaders have been working together to create smooth transitions from one ministry to the next. Our Student Ministries leaders are dedicated to not only growing the youth into strong 3C Christ followers, but to also providing an effective opportunity for all the young children we currently serve to have a place to continue to grow when they enter into Middle School.

Q: How can we communicate more clearly to our people across the three sites?

We understand that our communication has not always been at the level we desire it to be. For that reason, we have started making changes to communicate to everyone more effectively. We have streamlined some internal communication among staff and leaders which was an important first step. We have also recently updated our guides, our website, and our social media strategy all with the intention of helping all those

who are connected with Lifehouse to experience the full life of Jesus. Finally, we have implemented the “Link” as our common place to find all things happening at Lifehouse. Each of these steps, working together, has created a foundation upon which we will continue to strive for healthier and more effective communication. We do know, however, that we could provide greater excellence in the area of communication. For that reason, we would love to hear from you. How have you experienced communication at Lifehouse and what suggestions would you have as areas that need improvement? Please send any feedback you may have to Cheryl Degler at cheryl@lifehousefw.com.

Q: How can we raise up leaders to lead?

Apprentices! We believe very strongly that the best way to raise up leaders is for leaders to invest in potential leaders as apprentices. Nearly one year ago, we began implementing this into the DNA of our staff. It is the expectation that each and every staff person has an apprentice and is investing in that person (or persons) as a future leader. The next step will be to have every leader in the church live into the apprenticing life as well. Some leaders are already doing this! We have seen more leaders raised up in the past 12 months than ever before and this is only the beginning. In addition to apprenticing, we are exploring what a formal leadership development plan would look like at Lifehouse and we hope to have something in place by fall of 2020.

Q: What is our strategy for reaching the 40,000+ unchurched people in our community right now?

While we have been engaged in efforts to reach the 80,000+ people in our communities (including all campuses), we have not done a sufficient job in developing and communicating that strategy. We believe the best strategy that Lifehouse can have in regards to reaching those in our community is to capitalize on the spheres of influence that we already have. Rather than trying to reach people who have never encountered Lifehouse or the people of Lifehouse before, we believe our greatest success will be in reaching those in the 5 spheres of influence that Lifehouse has. Those spheres are, in order of potential: (1)Personal invite, (2)Preschool, (3)Those we serve through the various missions of Lifehouse, (4)Our online connections, (5)Those who attend our various events. These spheres of influence already have some connection with Lifehouse and, considering people are much more likely to accept an invitation to church if there is a pre-existing relationship, they are the greatest areas of outreach for the church.

We plan to implement our new discipleship pathway, which is currently being developed, by the start of the school year this coming fall. This will be a clear pathway for new people, who are brought to Lifehouse through our 5 spheres of influence, to follow in order for them to grow into 3C Christ followers.