

## Hope for Athens

What an exciting time to be at Beech Haven! The gospel conversations, the conversions, the baptisms, the discipleship, the overall growth of our congregation and leadership team ... I could go on and on about how excited I am to see God do all that He's doing. The unwavering hope of Jesus is, indeed, being cultivated in us and through us, it's a mission we pray continues to the next generation. That's why your Master Planning Task Force has been prayerfully at work—seeking how we can faithfully steward this season of growth and position Beech Haven for continued gospel impact in the years ahead. We're grateful to share this latest update with you.

## Realities and Criteria

As we prayerfully worked through all the data informing our conversations, we arrived at the following conclusions:

- We are growing at a healthy pace, roughly 5% a year.
- Growth is concentrated among college students, young adults, and preschoolers.
  - Reaching and retaining families with children and students has been a challenge.
- Our current preschool space is near capacity.
- Our parking lot is near capacity.
- Our current financial health masks major future challenges beginning in the next decade.
  - We are highly dependent on the giving of our more seasoned saints, not just in dollars, but in number of givers, and we lack the numbers in the next generation to compensate for our future.
  - We estimate that we will need to add more than 100 giving units over the next 15 years simply to keep pace with inflation in our current budget.
  - This means worship and classroom space for some 300 *additional* people and an intense focus on family ministry if we are to have sustained health.

In our last update, we told you about the 6 criteria our team has been prayerfully using to vet possible options that might best help us in our mission to cultivate the unwavering hope of Jesus in every generation.

- Mission & Ministry Alignment -- Does it support our mission?
- Long-Term Capacity & Flexibility -- Will it meet long-term needs?
- Financial Stewardship & Affordability -- Can we afford it wisely?
- Phasing & Disruption Risk -- Can we do it with manageable disruption?
- Site & Regulatory Risk -- Are the site and approval risks acceptable?
- Congregational & Community Impact -- Will it benefit our church and community?

## Options

Faced with those realities and using those criteria, your team has been able to discern 4 possible options, though one of them has varieties that are worth mentioning.

- Option 1: No Major Change
- Option 2a: Renovation/Construction
- Option 2b: Renovation/Construction with Adjacent Land Expansion
- Option 3: Relocation to a New Site
- Option 4: Multi-Site Ministry

So, let's walk through each of these options according to the six categories of criteria we told you about in our last update.

### Option 1: No Major Change

While signage, carpet, paint, and other updates may occur, no substantive renovation or construction will take place if we choose this option.

- **Mission & Ministry Alignment.** Simply maintaining current facilities aligns weakly with Beech Haven's long-term mission.
- **Long-Term Capacity & Flexibility.** It limits the church's ability to expand or adapt ministry for future generations by leaving existing capacity and parking constraints unresolved.
- **Financial Stewardship & Affordability.** While financially the least demanding in the short term, it does not represent sustainable stewardship over time and offers little flexibility for evolving ministry needs.
- **Congregational & Community Impact.** This option preserves comfort in the present but misses opportunities for renewed growth and outreach.

### Option 2a: Renovation/Construction

In coordination with architectural and construction professionals, heavy construction and renovation would take place (additions, subtractions, upgrades, etc.) within our current property boundaries if we choose this option.

- **Mission & Ministry Alignment.** This option offers renewed ministry potential within Beech Haven's current footprint, providing improved functionality and limited capacity gains aligned with current mission priorities. It largely sustains existing ministry patterns—effective with college students and young adults, but still challenged in connecting with families of older children and teens.

- **Long-Term Capacity & Flexibility.** This option could modestly enhance flexibility through redesigned spaces, though future growth remains somewhat limited by existing neighborhood context.
- **Financial Stewardship & Affordability.** It carries significant financial costs relative to its long-term capacity return.
- **Phasing & Disruption Risk.** Phasing would require extended on-site construction and renovation, generating substantial disruption to worship and ministry continuity.
- **Site & Regulatory Risk.** Site and regulatory constraints add permitting risk and complexity. Available utility capacity may be a challenge.
- **Congregational & Community Impact.** This option preserves community familiarity and identity but may fatigue members through prolonged inconvenience without achieving new or improved ministry success.

## Option 2b: Renovation/Construction with Adjacent Land Expansion

In coordination with architectural and construction professionals, heavy construction and renovation would take place (additions, subtractions, upgrades, etc.), alongside the purchase of adjoining property to the east (Lewis Flooring, Arby's, etc.). This option is essentially the same as Option 2a, but with the acquisition of land to the east.

- **Mission & Ministry Alignment.** This option balances current-site continuity with moderate enhancement to Beech Haven's mission capacity. While ministry alignment remains similar (continuing strength with college students and young adults but still challenged with families), this option addresses many functional constraints such as additional parking, circulation, and worship space.
- **Long-Term Capacity & Flexibility.** Long-term flexibility improves through additional land, though future growth remains somewhat limited by existing neighborhood context.
- **Financial Stewardship & Affordability.** Financially, this option requires greater investment than Option 2a but offers a stronger long-term return on stewardship. Adjacent land acquisition may also be beneficial to a prospective buyer if Option 3 is undertaken in the future.
- **Phasing & Disruption Risk.** Phasing would require extended on-site construction and renovation, generating substantial disruption to worship and ministry continuity.
- **Site & Regulatory Risk.** Site and regulatory complexity increase with new property acquisition and integration, requiring zoning, environmental due diligence, and utility coordination. Available utility capacity may be a challenge.
- **Congregational & Community Impact.** This path preserves geographic familiarity and community visibility, yet does not address significant ministry pressure on reaching families with older children and teens.

## Option 3: Relocation to a New Site

This option would involve strategically selling our current property/facilities and constructing new facilities at a new location.

- **Mission & Ministry Alignment.** Relocation offers alignment with Beech Haven’s mission by providing space purpose-built for future generations—facilitating expanded worship, discipleship, and outreach opportunities.
- **Long-Term Capacity & Flexibility.** It delivers the greatest long-term capacity and flexibility, with a master-planned site that can grow over decades.
- **Financial Stewardship & Affordability.** This option requires significant capital investment and allows for more efficient, sustainable facilities that enhance financial stewardship over time. Acquiring land with existing retail potential could offset financial burdens of this option.
- **Phasing & Disruption Risk.** Construction can proceed off-site while we continue to meet onsite, minimizing ministry disruption and enabling a seamless transition upon completion.
- **Site & Regulatory Risk.** Site and regulatory risk must be carefully evaluated through due diligence related to zoning, environmental, utilities, and access.
- **Congregational & Community Impact.** Congregationally, relocation brings both challenge and opportunity—requiring faith and unity to embrace change, but promising broader visibility and renewed community engagement in a location strategically suited for continued gospel impact.

## Option 4: Multisite Ministry

Launch a second campus at a new strategic location.

- **Mission & Ministry Alignment.** A multi-site model could extend Beech Haven’s mission reach by positioning new ministry outposts in areas with more families, particularly those with children and teens. It requires a shift in staffing roles and responsibilities and impacts future governance structure.
- **Long-Term Capacity & Flexibility.** This approach aligns moderately with our mission goals, expanding engagement potential while retaining existing strengths. It offers high long-term flexibility through distributed growth that can scale over time, though each added site increases leadership and coordination complexity.
- **Financial Stewardship & Affordability.** Financially, multi-site expansion carries lower upfront capital risk compared to relocation but introduces higher ongoing operational costs through duplicated staffing and facility expenses.
- **Phasing & Disruption Risk.** Phasing could occur incrementally with minimal disruption to the main campus.
- **Site & Regulatory Risk.** Site and regulatory risks vary depending on location choice, from leasing to acquisition or church partnerships, or even building a new campus.

- **Congregational & Community Impact.** Congregationally, this model fosters broader community presence but demands strong unity, communication, and cultural consistency to maintain one Beech Haven identity across multiple campuses.

## Next Steps

### Prayer

There are specific things your task force humbly requests that you pray for.

1. **Church Unity.** Ask the Lord to maintain our hearts and minds around His mission to cultivate the hope of Jesus in every generation. Ask Him to keep us as one body moving in faith, humility, and love—so that in every plan, decision, and step forward, we reflect His Spirit and bring glory to His name.
2. **A Signal Event.** Ask the Lord to do something that we can only attribute to Him and that would make it abundantly clear that He is at work in a certain direction.
3. **Courage for Leaders.** Your team and your staff need your encouragement to be courageous and kind leaders through this process. Pray that we would take on all the best qualities of people like Moses, Joshua, Esther, Nehemiah, and more!
4. **Protection.** Pray for each member of the committee to be protected from Satan's attacks and give us all that we need to be obedient through this process.

### Congregational Communication

We want to hear from you as we walk through this process together. You can share your thoughts or questions at any time through the form on our website: [beechhaven.org/masterplan](https://beechhaven.org/masterplan). You're also always welcome to connect directly with any member of the Task Force. We would love to engage with you and hear what the Lord is putting on your heart.

### Continued Research

To make a fully informed recommendation regarding these options, we will need to partner with several experts in real estate, planning, design, architecture, engineering, and ministry facilities. It may be that we will need your support to secure these partners.

## Conclusion

As we enter this next stage of discernment, we are reminded once again that this process is not ultimately about buildings, land, location, or logistics—it's about the Lord, His mission, and our participation in it, both now and for generations to come. He has given us the mission to cultivate the unwavering hope of Jesus in every generation. The Master Planning Task Force

exists to serve that mission by helping us see clearly what's possible, what's wise, and what's next.

Every option we've explored thus far represents both opportunity and responsibility. None are without challenge, yet each invites us to trust God more deeply and to seek His leading together, faithfully stewarding where we are today while preparing for where He is leading us tomorrow. Our goal is not simply to choose a plan, but a path that honors Jesus Christ, strengthens His Church in the present, and equips future generations to know and proclaim His name.

In the days and months ahead, your prayer, feedback, and participation will be essential. This process belongs to all of us. Together, may we continue to walk by faith, confident that the same God who has so faithfully guided Beech Haven through the decades is at work among us now and will lead us into a future filled with purpose, unity, and lasting gospel impact.

With Unwavering Hope,

Your Master Planning Task Force

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