

Holy Name Catholic Community Feasibility Study

Executive Summary

March, 2010



Holy Name Catholic Community leadership is considering undertaking a major fund-raising campaign to:

- build a new school/education facility
- relocate the Thrift Store
- build Senior Housing

To that end, the Parish contracted with Consultants Tom Reid and Noreen Welte of The Reid Group to conduct a feasibility study for a capital campaign. The Consultant conducted the study from November 2009–February 2010, interviewing 47 individuals or couples from a list developed by Fr. Tom Ogg and Teri Bare, in consultation with The Reid Group.

The feasibility study was designed to assess, through strategic conversations with key representatives of the Parish and other members of the community, how much money the parish might be able to raise. Another important goal of the study was to assess the need for healing and strengthening of the parish community.

The Consultant cannot overstate the importance and effectiveness of the personal interview process in accomplishing this task. In many cases, interviews led to valuable, in-depth discussions regarding these projects and needs of the parish community. The time and insight provided by the respondents is testimony to their loyalty and commitment to the Parish.

The Reid Group Consultant presented the report on March 6, 2010. In assessing the readiness for a capital campaign, the Consultant considered a number of criteria:

- **Unity of the Community:** To undertake a major fundraising effort there needs to be a reasonable level of unity of purpose within a community. From the interviews, focus groups and representative comments it is clear that the necessary level of unity does not currently exist to proceed with a campaign at this time.
- **Understanding of and Support for the Proposed Projects:** While many understand and support the proposed projects there are a number of people the consultants spoke with who did not understand, or needed more information or did not support the project plans in the current form. The consultants believe that there is a need to provide more information, increase communication and design a consultation process with parishioners for the purpose of building a shared understanding of the need for and support of the proposed projects.
- **Leadership:** Most important to a campaign's success is recruiting effective volunteer leadership apart from Fr. Tom Ogg. Recruiting and securing volunteer leadership must be a top priority. There are potential leadership volunteers who the consultants interviewed who could be credible leadership candidates.

- **Prospective Donors:** Holy Name has a cadre of potential donors already. Many Feasibility Study participants said they would financially support the project; 30 interviewees indicated specific gifts during the study.
- **Volunteers:** A substantial number of individuals indicated that they would be willing to consider volunteering to be part of a capital campaign if the rationale was convincing and the campaign was well organized.

Recommendations

1. Healing and Strengthening of the Community

There are unresolved feelings within the parish community that must be addressed before the parish can look to undertake the proposed major building projects. To deal with these issues, the Consultant recommends these actions:

- Call everyone in the parish family to a renewal of faith and ongoing conversion.
- Promote the principles and practices of respectful communication and a positive appreciation of differences.
- Address hurts and misunderstandings through gatherings of small groups or facilitated conversation.
- Reach out to those who have left in the last six months to a year to learn of their reason for leaving.
- Initiate an outreach effort to those who have left the parish and inviting them to consider returning.
- Conduct healing and reconciliation services.
- Look for ways to build relationship and community.

2. Leadership & Decision Making

Among the unresolved issues since the last change in pastoral leadership that keep the parish from moving forward as one are differing understandings and expectations of how decisions are/ought to be made; questions about the role of the pastor, councils, and parishioners in decision-making. Therefore The Reid Group recommends that the parish schedule a workshop on Collaborative Leadership and Decision-Making that would be mandatory for all in a parish leadership role and open to interested parishioners.

3. Empower Core Committee or Form New Coordinating Committee

Designate the appropriate committee to assist in the implementation of these recommendations, while also being a bridge of communication between parishioners and parish leadership.

4. Development of a Comprehensive Parish Plan

Build upon the work of the Long Range Planning Committee, the Implementation Committee, the school study task force and the work from the January 23rd meeting of parish leadership; contract with The Reid Group or other consultant to help the parish develop an updated parish plan including broad based consultation with parishioners.

5. Improving Communication: Within the Parish & City of Sheridan

- There is a need to move from indirect and rumor-based communication to communication that is direct, respectful and constructive.

- Parishioners need regular communication regarding the progress of the projects
- In developing the case: Educate parishioners and potential donors to the needs. Prioritize the needs.
- Above all engage parishioners in the conversations so that they ultimately “own” the plan.

6. Developing the Parish Land Use & Facilities Master Plan

We recommend that some or all of the following steps be considered:

- Retain the services of a Land Use Planner to assess the parish land and facility resources together with what is the highest and best use of the parish real estate. Request that the land use planner propose and develop a parish campus master plan.
- Obtain appraisals of parish properties to determine approximate market value for real estate that may be sold.
- Request that a minimum of two options be presented for consideration by parishioners and parish leadership.

7. The Building Projects

- **Thrift Store:** There was significant support for this in an effort to improve not only the services provided but to improve the appearance given by the parish. Within the context of a master plan decide and implement the preferred solution for the **Thrift Store** as soon as possible.
- **School/Education Center:** Develop at least two options for the continuation of the school. One option would be an interim plan to house the school while a permanent solution is being developed. The other option is to obtain a competitive bid for a new school/education center.
- **Senior Housing:** This component sparked the imagination of many. Some participants expressed hope that the planning would be as inclusive as possible, incorporating input from the larger Sheridan community. Before moving forward with the project parishioners will expect detailed information about the real cost/benefit to the parish for the short and long term (after 15 years) and input to the finance and pastoral councils before a final decision is made.

8. Develop the Case or Rationale for a Capital Campaign

A compelling case that articulates a vision for what is hoped to be accomplished needs to be developed. This needs to be grounded in a comprehensive plan with more detailed cost estimates.