



VICTORIA
Alliance Church

Next Steps **ON THIS SITE**

A renovation and expansion initiative of Victoria Alliance Church

Our desire is to glorify God by becoming a
Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered Church,
making Jesus known among us, around us, beyond us

*We long for our church building to be a catalyst for making
Jesus known among us, around us, and beyond us.*

ON THIS SITE

Ezra 6:7 “Let them rebuild this house of God on it’s site.”

A QUICK RECAP

For over a decade at Victoria Alliance Church, we have sought God’s vision for how we can best be making Jesus known among us, around us, and beyond us specifically with our building.

In November 2019, VAC membership approved the first phase of a larger project to expand and renovate the church facility. Phase 1 included the relocation of our front sidewalk and ramp to the lower level, and the installation of a sunken gathering/play area. This work was successfully coordinated with the construction of the new housing development to the west of the church. We heard a high level of support and enthusiasm for the larger project at our 2019 AGM. As a result we discussed and sought direction regarding “next steps” at a GM held online in November 2020. Rather than discussing specific plans, our approach was to present Overall Project Goals (p.2) that would guide us through a large-scale and somewhat unpredictable renovation process. The overall Project Goals were adopted in fall 2020, and the Project Committee was empowered to move towards their eventual completion.

Then, in April 2021, a significant opportunity arose to purchase the adjoining land and house at 2810 Queenston Street. The church membership approved the purchase in May 2021, providing greater flexibility and site planning options for our project with this expanded footprint. The house is now rented through a property management firm generating income, with at least half returned into our Capital Fund.

The pandemic has left our current faith community with many new faces, needs and questions. In the spring of 2022, our Project Committee and Church Board revisited the On This Site Overall Project Goals and prayerfully agreed that they still represent our desires for our facility’s future. We also agreed that a wise next step would be to invite engagement with our current congregation, to present this exciting vision and explain what we expect to happen next.

ON THIS SITE

OVERALL PROJECT GOALS

Through the work of various committees, church wide meetings, and discussions at the Church Board level, we have discerned and approved the following goals for our facility.

ON THIS SITE OVERALL PROJECT GOALS

Expand our Kingdom impact by providing a meeting space with room for growth (sanctuary ~300).

Create spaces that can be utilized by our greater Victoria community as well as our church community.

Secure a physical building that will serve Victoria Alliance into the next several generations, ensuring a continuous evangelical presence in this community.

Embody our value around gathering by accommodating meetings for groups of various size.

Reflect to our community the passion and value we place on the message of Jesus.

Ensure that our physical site provides access for people of all physical abilities to all spaces, and in doing so better reflect our value around community as marked by inclusion, diversity, and unity.

Honour the sacrificial giving of those who have come before us, and well steward the trust that has been passed on to us.

APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE

Any renovation of an aging building requires flexibility: the work plan will change as unknown details are revealed. As such, approval in principle by the membership was a logical approach. However, it placed significant trust in the Project Committee to oversee the project. We took steps to mitigate these risks by placing clear limitations and reporting requirements on the Project Committee, which has submitted monthly updates and financial reports to the Church Board since November 2019.

This “approval in principle” model is like planning a trip to a set destination on a road with well defined guard rails. In this case, the destination has been clearly identified through our **Overall Project Goals** (p. 2), but we do not know the exact route we will take to get there. However, this risk and uncertainty can be mitigated through the well-defined guard rails of financial responsibility and accountability to our Church Board and the Pacific District Executive Committee.

Our collective decisions have set the destination and established the guard rails.



Phase 1 is complete. So what is next?

In Phase 2, Pre-construction, we will engage a consultant architect to develop more detailed plans and cost estimates for the balance of the project. These plans will allow us to apply for planning permission from the District of Saanich, after which the architect can prepare final working drawings and obtain construction bids from qualified building contractors.

MEET OUR PROJECT TEAM



Rev. Kyla Ward, Project Committee Chair

Kyla and her husband Darren are so pleased to serve in a faith community as vibrant and warm as Victoria Alliance. She has served on committees examining our future facility options since first arriving on staff at VAC in 2008. She offers her creative and visionary leadership style, paired with strong connections with the Canadian Pacific District to help guide our team toward prayerful discernment, even as we navigate denominational and governance requirements. She loves to give anyone who will listen a "walk" through some of the architectural sketches and invite you to engage in the process of moving a dream to reality.



Russell Bell, Project Committee Member

Russ and his wife Dana have two daughters, 11 and 15. He has been with VAC for over 12 years and happily calls VAC home. He has served as a past Board member and Chair of the Church Leadership team. Russ has worked for TELUS, Telekom New Zealand and BC Ferries. He joined the BC Public Service in 2009. In government he has had roles in client management, business infrastructure, records and FOI, facility, operations, policy, project development, and contract management. Russ is excited to develop our facility to support our church family among us and the wider community around us.



Rev. Rob Olsen, Project Committee Member

Rob is an energetic and servant-hearted pastor. His ministry on the pastoral leadership team is flavoured with a passionate heart for God and a compassionate heart for people of all ages. Rob and his wife, Patti, enjoy the opportunity to invest in the lives of those who make up our community, while also building up ministry in a way that releases others into ministry too! He has served on the pastoral staff at Victoria Alliance since 2007 and has been an active participant in the various facility planning committees along the way. He welcomes the opportunity to lovingly guide the church as we navigate this project together.



Henry Umoren, Project Committee Member

Henry holds a Master of Science Degree in Construction Project Management (Loughborough University, UK). He is a highly skilled and focused Project Management professional with more than 20 years of experience spearheading and recovering complex projects for high profile companies. He possesses a combination of financial and contract expertise, team leadership, and Applied Engineering skills. Henry has demonstrated ability to establish cross-functional relationships with all stakeholders in budget and timeline driven environments.



Lesley Watson, Project Committee Member

Lesley and her family moved to Oak Bay from Toronto in 1998. She has been involved in community and family life in local schools, sports clubs, church, and other volunteer organizations. She is trained in economics (BA, University of Toronto) and urban planning (MCP, University of California, Berkeley), with a speciality in Housing and Community Development and additional training in urban design. Lesley has served in senior roles in housing policy and planning with the City of Toronto, BC's Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and the Land Development Agency in the Australian Capital Territory. During her time as BC's Director, Provincial Planning, she oversaw the legislative framework for local government land use planning and development. She has served two terms on the City of Victoria Advisory Design Panel. Lesley brings this expertise to our Project Committee as well as Oak Bay Council, where she has just been elected to a four-year term as Councillor.

ON THIS SITE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This is a big project. Did we really consider all our other options?

The Board has had committees actively addressing issues regarding future facility plans for well over a decade. The Future Facility Committee listened to and incorporated the ideas and goals of the congregation through focus groups, committee meetings, and discernment by the Church Board. This input helped shape the criteria and values that guide the current Project Committee. We believe that this project, while big, is an appropriate next step for our facility.

We did consider many other options. We have had to ask ourselves:

- Do we stay on this site and update our current configuration?
- Do we stay on this site and renovate and expand?
- Do we look to another site for a future facility?

Given the current condition of our building, the Church Board engaged in a discernment process with these options in mind. Initially, we believed that this site would not accommodate a large enough sanctuary to allow for future growth. However, as options to purchase other properties became exhausted or too expensive, Buck Perrin, a VAC member and architect, proposed a way to reorient the sanctuary that would provide the space we desire on this site.

Faced with choosing between significant capital repairs to our current building, or a plan to renovate and expand the facility to accommodate the next 60+ years of ministry, the Board believed, and the membership confirmed, that the Spirit is leading us to renovate and expand!

Where can I see designs/sketches for this project?

We have detailed schematic drawings prepared by Buck Perrin which provide a clear direction based on our high-level goals and practical needs. (Of course, these are subject to change as we seek planning and building permissions). We are excited to show these to you at information sessions to be hosted in the church foyer by members of the Project Committee. These sessions will be advertised in our church email newsletter. Visit victoriaalliance.ca to sign up for updates.

FAQ *con't*

What have we committed to at this point?

A motion was approved in 2019 for a full renovation and expansion project. More specifically, the motion commits us to:

- Be guided by the Overall Project Goals (p.2)
- Move forward in discrete phases.

A phased approach will allow us to identify logical chunks of work that can be completed in sequence to improve the building in line with the Overall Project Goals, but which are financially and practically independent of each other. (For example we have already seen that the phased approach allowed us to align our project goals with the financial opportunity to address our front entrance and ramping needs in conjunction with work being done by a neighbouring development). A phased approach may also give us greater financial control.

Note that detailed plans will need to receive approval from both the Pacific District of the Alliance Church and the District of Saanich.

How much will it cost?

Costing out a new construction project is challenging. Costing out a renovation and expansion project even more so! However, our initial high-level estimate, based on preliminary schematic drawings is \$1.6 million as at July 2022. Actual cost may vary significantly, depending on the final approved plans, and the cost of construction at the time the project is tendered.



Pictured above: Phase 1 now complete has provided us with a wonderful new outdoor space and improved access.

Once we know how much it costs, how will we pay for it?

The On This Site project currently has just over \$900,000 in accounts and securities plus the Queenston investment property, which is mortgage-free and valued at approximately \$977,000. We have the option to borrow against the Queenston property to provide funds for the On This Site project, and can also ask the District for a building project loan. In addition, we will be looking for other capital grants that may be available from government or charitable sources.

What happens if we run out of money?

As good stewards of our resources, if a loan is required, we will bring that decision back to the general membership. We will not proceed beyond our means without endorsement and approval from the congregation. Our bylaws and District policy stipulate that we are prohibited from incurring debt beyond \$30,000 (credit card, or capital leases) without approval of both the VAC membership and the District Executive Committee.

There is a global pandemic going on right now. Is this really the best time for this?

This is a fair question. It is not lost on our leadership that the road ahead for many of us feels more uncertain and unfamiliar than ever before. Still here are a few things to consider as we seek to move ahead now:

1. We are entrusted with generous savings from faithful givers who hope for a physical site that points to the good news of Jesus Christ in the community. We have a new development next door and the new Lansdowne Middle School Grade 6 campus across the street. We are in a great place to provide a Christ-centered testimony in our community during these times.
2. While our facility saw a decline in use during the pandemic, we are already seeing this return to pre-pandemic levels. This increase is from our own programs and from various community user groups.
3. There is an unmet need for flexible community space for all sorts of activities, as other churches who used to provide this space consolidate or close their doors.
4. While the pandemic may have left us feeling more uncertain, the truth is that this time is no riskier than any other time. Starting something new is always going to involve a step of faith. So, we seek to trust the Lord to direct our steps according to His good will and perfect timing.

FAQ *con't*

How long will it take?

It's hard to say, as many variables are at play: time to obtain planning approvals and building permits; access to funding; availability of general contractors who will take on a project of this type; availability of necessary building materials given supply chain issues. We are asking the community to pray with us that roadblocks be removed, and that God's direction be clear as doors are opened and closed in this process. We acknowledge that this project requires detailed planning and a huge step out in faith.

How will church work during renovations?

Gathering is one of our church's core values. Every effort will be taken through the process to address our need as a community to gather. The idea of staging the work was to allow us to keep adequate access and egress for our sanctuary. However, the municipality will ultimately determine, in consultation with the Fire Chief, whether we can continue to occupy our current worship space during construction. There may be a season during the process where our physical gathering place needs to be temporarily relocated. Recent world events have shown us that we can be quite creative and successful in the way we approach alternative gatherings. Please know that we will be working hard to limit disruption to our community worship and gathering experiences.

What happens if it's not approved at any level (district/municipality/etc)?

As with all projects, there may need to be adjustments along the way. The Board feels that our plan is reasonable and adds greatly to the value of our surrounding community.

The District has indicated to us a desire to ensure good order and fiscal responsibility. As we are committed to following their directives and have a significant portion of our construction funds on hand, we believe that they will continue to be favourable to the work as it moves forward and willing to support further debt financing to complete the project.

That said, the Board has asked God to open and close doors in a manner that makes His will known to us. We remain open handed to any outcome, and see this whole process as a way that we may all be drawn closer to the heart of Jesus. Please keep praying.

Do we own our property?

No. The Pacific District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance is the property owner. That is why we have sought and gained District approval before taking on this endeavour.

In your analogy of the road with good guard rails, how can we be sure our proposed guard rails of financial responsibility and clear accountability are enough?

It may feel as if this kind of "guard rail" structure is new, but we are actually quite familiar with it as a church community. We currently rely on these same limitations with the day to day functioning of our church. Our Board is accountable to our church membership through our stated local bylaws, and to our denominational District leadership's authority as well. The other rail we set forward is the financial responsibility in ensuring annually that our records are clear, accurate, and in good order according to an accredited accountant. These guard rails have served our community and many others well for decades.

I'm in. How can I support the project?

There are a few concrete ways to offer your personal support to the On This Site project.

- **Pray.** We desire this project to be a means through which we are all drawn closer to Jesus and kept in step with the Spirit's leading.
- **Give generously.** As we draw down on the Capital Fund to hire a consulting architect, prepare detailed plans, submit applications, etc., the interest earned from that fund will diminish. As this interest income currently supports our general operations, we encourage you to demonstrate your support for the project by faithfully continuing or increasing your support of our church's **General Fund**. Of course, you may also feel led to make an extraordinary gift to our On This Site project fund. This is a gesture we would ask you to make prayerfully and without reservation.
- **Engage.** Consider lending your voice to our community discussions. As we host information sessions, make plans to attend and share your support, raise any questions, and pass on encouragements to our team.

I have more questions. Who do I contact?

The easiest method to pass along a question or concern is to email the Project Committee at onthissite@victoriaalliance.ca

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Contact us with your questions or comments at
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