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Planning · Architecture · Design

2260 Douglas Blvd. Suite 155  
Roseville, CA 95661

July 2012

## TPC Architects, Inc. Newsletter

### Construction Industry Expected to Rebound

*Sacramento Business  
Journal Article  
By Sanford Nax, Staff  
Writer  
July 5, 2012*

The construction industry is starting to show signs of life, with total construction spending in 2012 expected to reach positive levels for the first time in half a decade.

Associated General Contractors Chief Economist Ken Simonson said private nonresidential construction should grow through 2012 and beyond, and that multifamily construction remains strong too. Single-family home building appears to be bumping up from its low point. "Together, These categories should mean that total

### Expecting the Strange...

*...and 5 questions to ask about your ministry growth.*

As a church's ministry grows, strange things do happen! What seemed like well balanced strategy just a few months ago may now be challenged by unexpected things. I hear pastors talk about needing more people to teach the children, or more dedicated, mature leaders to head up key areas and train others. Then there is the lack of adequate, properly designed space for these growing activities. Toss in overcrowded parking and issues with local agencies (like nitrates in the water, sunset clauses on permits, environmental fees etc.) and life in the local church becomes all the more interesting. Oh yes - there are also people and their differing personalities and opinions! And did I mention money?

I have observed that churches often expect building projects to address some or all of these issues. Why is it, then, that in many cases these projects seem to subtract from ministry and even cause new issues? Understanding your project goals and expectations can help you not to lose sight of ministry or be shaken by the strange world of building projects.

So what are your expectations and your goals for "enlarging the place of your tent" (Isa. 54:2)? Consider the following questions as you think about it:

#### **1. Where has God placed you?**

I was talking to a pastor recently who told me that his church, with decades of effective ministry behind them, had considered selling their large site, purchasing a property in a growing, "healthier"

construction in 2012 will be positive for the year for the first time since 2007, despite ongoing weakness in public construction," Simonson said.

May was the strongest month since December 2009, according to an analysis of new federal data released today by the Associated General Contractors of America.

Simonson noted that private nonresidential spending climbed for the third consecutive month, and was 19 percent higher than in May 2011. Residential construction surged 3 percent for the month and 8 percent and 50 percent, respectively, and single-family home building up 2 percent and 15 percent.

### **Construction Cost Trends for 2012**

*Taken from DCD Cost Trends, July 2012*

Construction Spending is up over 8% compared to this time last year. After a strong finish last year, the first quarter of 2012 slowed but still showed a healthy increase for the last 12 months. Housing seems to be bottoming out, or flattening. We've said this before, but the industry is handling delinquencies and foreclosures on a realistic basis and

community, and starting over; but they stopped to ask themselves why they were there. They discovered that their community had some pronounced needs that they could help address. They now have an after school tutoring program, an effective food ministry serving hundreds of meals per week, and an active sports ministry. Their future facility growth will be largely driven by these emerging community needs, and not just worship attendance. They have a fresh vision that now governs their decisions.



Church's local Sports Ministry

## **2. What tools or resources do you need?**

I have come to the conclusion that God provides practical guidance and equips His church for the vision He's given them. Do you know what you need to ask Him for? Perhaps, as with the church I mentioned above, it involves "ministry partners" to join in the community outreach.

Start by specifically defining your current ministry needs and formulate a master plan for the future growth. Financial planning is crucial, and is inseparable from facility planning (Luke 14:28). Building your planning team should be among your first steps.

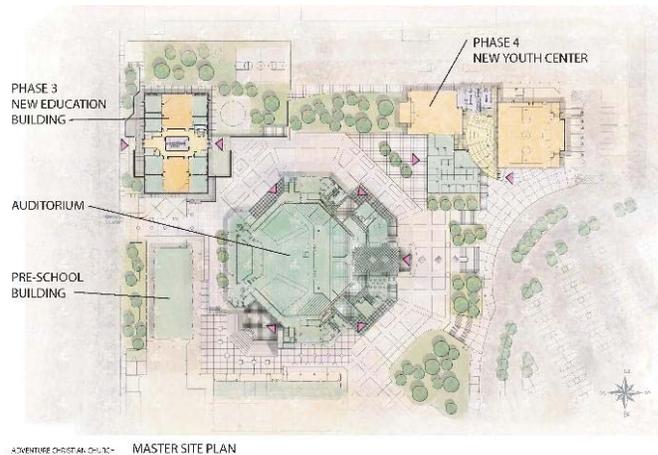
once these are dealt with, the housing market should improve. Watch for Stabilization over the next year. Overall, construction spending is up 8% with most segments (with the exception of hospitality and religious) showing moderate gains.

After heavy increases in 2011 of 8%, construction materials have slowed down to 3-4%. This is the third straight year of increases after 5 years of declines. Steel Prices are leading the way, with an increase of 6%, while lumber again surprised us all and posted a decline of almost 5%. Asphalt continues to be an inflationary item following the fortunes of crude oil, while copper and stainless have moderated and still mirror the fortunes of precious metals.

**Construction Materials Prices Slip for Second Consecutive Month in June; Prices of Finished Buildings are Flat for Month, Rise Modestly Year-to-Year**

*Taken from DCD Cost Trends, July 2012*

Year-over-year rise in construction materials prices is the mildest since 2009 as diesel and metals tumble; contractors association urges



Church's plan for a Youth Center.

### 3. What is the #1 obstacle preventing the healthy growth in your church?

It may be that the lack of sufficient site area or building space is an obstacle, but do not limit your thinking to these "nuts and bolts," nor necessarily to money. I have watched God do some amazing things in providing these for His church! I encourage you to focus on the things that *drive* the need for facilities and finances. With this focus it will be clearer where the facility needs belong on your list of obstacles.



What is preventing your growth?

### 4. If you could receive one resource to assist you in your growth, what would it be?

The answer to this question will flow naturally from the previous questions, and it is good to know this answer! For instance, let's say that you become aware of a

quick action of funding bills to take advantage of lull in prices.

The amount contractors pay for a range of key construction materials decreased for the second consecutive month in June and inched up by just 0.5 percent from a year earlier, according to an analysis of producer price index figures released today by the Associated General Contractors of America. Meanwhile, the amount contractors charge to construct projects was virtually unchanged for the month and rose only between 3.2 and 4.4 percent from a year ago.

"Contractors are finally seeing sustained relief from the outsized cost increases that buffeted them last year," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "The half-percent rise in the producer price index for construction inputs from June 2011 to June 2012 was the smallest year-over-year swing since December 2009."

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property or building for sale at a "great price" (maybe even free!). Would this acquisition really benefit your ministry? If you know, from a ministry perspective what you specifically need, you can assess this opportunity wisely.

Maybe your #1 resource is not facility-related but is political favor, or key leaders, or partnerships with others. As you plan, this will become apparent.



Sometimes new space is not the answer.

### 5. What has God done to stimulate growth and effectiveness in your church?

How God has worked in your church in the past offers valuable insight into His work now. Perhaps a community need became apparent and in faith you stepped forward to meet it. Maybe an adversary came and in the fiery trial the Lord's plans prospered while man's failed. What have you learned from these experiences? What ideas do you now believe have merit moving forward? God equips His Church for ministry; how has He equipped you already?

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Heb. 13:20-21

These thoughts are offered from TPC's position as a church planner and designer. They are intended to help you think about how God may wish to direct you. There are times "not to build" and to focus on other aspects of ministry. Remember that developing property, designing and constructing a building, or renovating building space takes a lot of time, energy, and money; and it is NOT ministry! If you do it for the wrong reasons and with the wrong expectations, I'm convinced that it can *subtract* from ministry.

May the Lord bless you in your planning and your ministry!

I encourage you to contact me personally with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Daniel M. Kinnoin, AIA, NCARB  
Principal  
TPC Architects, Inc.  
2260 Douglas Blvd. Suite 155  
Roseville, CA 95661  
T. (916) 772-4100  
F. (916) 772-7804



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