

St. Paul's Cathedral

Listening Sessions Executive Summary

JUNE 2021

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Executive Summary

St. Paul's Cathedral in San Diego, CA is in the midst of asking important questions about how the buildings and grounds reflect the mission and vision of the congregation, especially in light of the sale of property and the development project under construction on Olive Street.

To structure this discernment, the leadership contracted with Vandersall Collective for the completion of a Listening Phase. The goals for this phase are to:

1. Invite all parishioners into the conversation to be heard;
2. Present projects with transparency; and
3. Take initial steps to align potential capital improvement projects and master plans with the core values of St. Paul's.

During the Listening Phase, it was important to the leadership of this process to gather as many ideas as possible from as many participants as possible. To accomplish this goal of inclusion, in April 2021 a survey with nine open-ended questions was posted electronically, both in English and Spanish, to all members of the congregation, with a deadline of May 5, 2021. The survey allowed for completion by multiple members of a single household. While not all project ideas can be implemented, everyone's voice matters in the discernment process.

Vandersall Collective collected 95 total responses submitted electronically. The results below were analyzed thematically; this is not a quantitative report with statistical results. The purpose of our analysis is to examine emerging themes in order to determine:

- Whether the parish can articulate a connection between the buildings/grounds and mission;
- What projects appear to generate significant energy;
- What projects will require further exploration and clarification.

The diverse set of respondents demonstrated a remarkable connection to the mission of St. Paul's with their unified, clear, directive feedback.

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In addition to the survey, we also attended 14 listening sessions in which we briefly presented the process for a capital campaign and kept a record of each discussion. In the listening groups we heard an affirmation of the survey results. The input from the group conversations were taken into consideration in the writing of this report and also in the list creation of the additional project ideas.

The sessions were divided into cohort groups based on interest, but without restrictions on who could attend. Attendees were welcome to participate in more than one group, and many did. All participants were also invited to fill in the online survey.

The groups were as follows:

1. 8:00 service
2. Daily office
3. Music fans
4. Outreach fans
5. Misa (Spanish)
6. Youth and families
7. Chapter
8. Worship ministries
9. Clergy (including retired)
10. Stewardship committee
11. Women Together
12. Friends of St. Paul's
13. Congregational Open 1
14. Congregational Open 2

Projects

MUSIC CENTER

There is overwhelming support for the creation of a consolidated music space with a widespread understanding of alignment with the core values of music and liturgy, community, and outreach, but primarily within the music and liturgy category. Music is a significant reason that many come to the Cathedral, both visitors and members, and any consolidation of the existing spaces as a way to bolster the music ministry and experience are supported.

A few items of concern to address explicitly:

- What about ventilation and covid safety?
- Will the new music center be kept secure from the Outreach Center?
- Where will the altar guild, vergers and acolytes be housed? There is significant concern for their own space, significant storage, and for their own personal safety during morning and evening prayer. While this is lodged in the music center part of this survey, it really is not considered a music-related concern.

There is also significant enthusiasm for fundraising outside of the Cathedral membership and post capital campaign revenue usage for this space.

FURNISHING 525 OLIVE STREET

There is general alignment with the core values of community and outreach for the furnishing of the new building. In particular, to have a beautiful space that staff can work in, and work more effectively in, is of great value. In addition, it is a place where community can be formed through meetings and groups, and that others can share (thus, outreach). That said, there are several questions to address:

- What was and wasn't covered in the sale of the building?
- Why isn't there a plan already in place for this when the building sale has been in the works for years?

Projects

- Does the plan include the space or the furnishings?
- Does the plan include gently used furniture or new furniture?
- What research has been done to identify the needs of the community for meeting space?
- Will meeting spaces be used for nonprofits, community groups, AA and the like at a lower cost than market value that is a service to the community and connects to the core values?
- Will there be meeting areas just for Cathedral activities?

OUTREACH CENTER

While there is general alignment with the concept of an outreach center and the core values of outreach and community, there are significant questions to be answered, and a need to communicate those answers to the Cathedral community. The questions include:

- How exactly will the space be used?
- Who will staff the space? Is there a plan for hiring support?
- What partnerships have been explored and who will the Cathedral work with?
- Are we replicating services that others are doing?
- Will people be sleeping there?
- What is city government doing to aid and assist in helping unhoused people?
- What is the plan for long-term sustainability?
- What is the underlying intent of the plan?; Is this to make the Cathedral community feel good about their efforts?; Are you simply supporting the system of homelessness or are you working towards structural change to prevent homelessness?
- What is being considered to keep volunteers and others who use the Cathedral

Projects

facilities safe?

- Will the center be ADA compliant?
- What is the agreement with Greystar around the kind of work to be conducted in the outreach center?
- Have you spoken with your neighbors about this, and will this aggravate relationships?

OTHER “SMALL” PROJECTS

Generally speaking, these projects all received significant support.

In particular, there is support for the commercial kitchen, and there were several questions about a kitchen in the 525 Olive Street space as well.

There is a desire for the space to be used efficiently and effectively, acknowledging that space is at a premium and should be valued.

The transition of the third floor was also deemed as important, and there were several requests for a bathroom on that floor. The children and families team submitted a list of requests that connect with the core values of the Cathedral and Safe Church protocol, all of which connect with the third floor. In particular, these were discussed in our youth and families listening group.

For those who are hard of hearing and those who are looking towards a hybrid future of meeting, the A/V also received support. There were fewer comments about this, but none negative.

Security is a concern woven throughout the listening groups and survey. It is a very high priority.

Projects

Questions to consider:

- What are the plans for cleaning and maintenance of the space?
- What are plans for kitchen rental?
- Will there be a kitchen in the 525 Olive building? Commercial or pantry?
- What will the clergy parking lot be used for?
- Are there handicapped spaces for parking?
- What will the repurposed vacant space be used for?
- Where will the archives go?

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

There are several ideas offered as potential additional projects. Some are already accounted for in existing projects, and could be communicated as such. A full list is found in the report.