

Columbine Unitarian Universalist Church

Long Range Planning Committee Recommendations
to the Board of Directors
April 10th 2007



Contents

Section	Page
Introduction.....	3
Overview.....	4
Assessment, Conclusions and Recommendations for the Cultural component.....	5
Targeted Growth Rate.....	7
Assessment, Conclusions and Recommendations for the Financial component.....	8
Assessment, Conclusions and Recommendations for the Facilities component.....	11
 Appendices	
 Financial projections.....	14

Introduction:

Without a stated, collective vision from the congregation, there can be no real long term planning for a UU church. For several years now, the open question at CUUC has been: Is there a collective vision of our church and its future growth, and if there is, what is it? The congregation answered those questions with the Pulse of the Congregation survey conducted in December of 2006 to which 73% of our members responded. Of those, 78% expressed their preference for CUUC to grow substantially over the next 5 to 7 years. This response was not simply the congregation saying “But of course we want to see the church grow!” but a deeper, more informed response based on the Preferred Size Option Analysis (PSOA) that preceded and accompanied the survey. The PSOA identified critical linkages between growth and the cultural attitudes and practices of a UU church and its membership. In essence, the survey asked the membership if, as individual members, they would be willing to adopt and implement the cultural changes necessary to foster substantial growth in the future, or, whether they were content with the way CUUC was. The survey response tells us (the LRPC) that the congregation’s collective vision is very much pro-growth, and that the membership is ready to embrace and take responsibility to make the necessary changes for evolving to a UU church where growth is a high priority. *We are ready to make the transition from what we have been to what we will be.*

Underscoring the survey results is what has been happening inside of CUUC recently. Many of the recommendations developed by the eight church committees represented on the LRPC already are being implemented through established CUUC processes and procedures—with some noticeable results in membership growth already evident. New visitors are being received, made to feel welcome, and rapidly invited into the fabric of the church by members who are increasingly aware of their role in promoting growth. Our worship services are evolving to a crisper, more professional format with a greater focus on the broader UU themes that attract newcomers to our church. Our investment, philosophically and financially, into expanding our UU life span education, UU leadership development, the formation of the Committee on Ministry and the UU Council committee structure normally associated with larger churches indicate we already putting into place a new structure for our growth. In short, *the transition from what we have been to what we will be*— from a predominately pastoral care focused church to an outreaching and growing UU church—is already happening organically.

The spirit of the LRPC process and the Long Range Plan presented here is one of building upon the momentum of what is already taking place in CUUC. It presents the next steps, in the best judgment of the LRPC, for continuing towards the congregation’s stated objectives for growth and development of CUUC. This is not a critique of the past. This is a living, forward looking set of strategic recommendations for CUUC’s future as a vibrant UU spiritual community generated by a broad spectrum of the current CUUC lay leadership in conjunction with input from the greater UU community.

CUUC Long Range Planning Committee

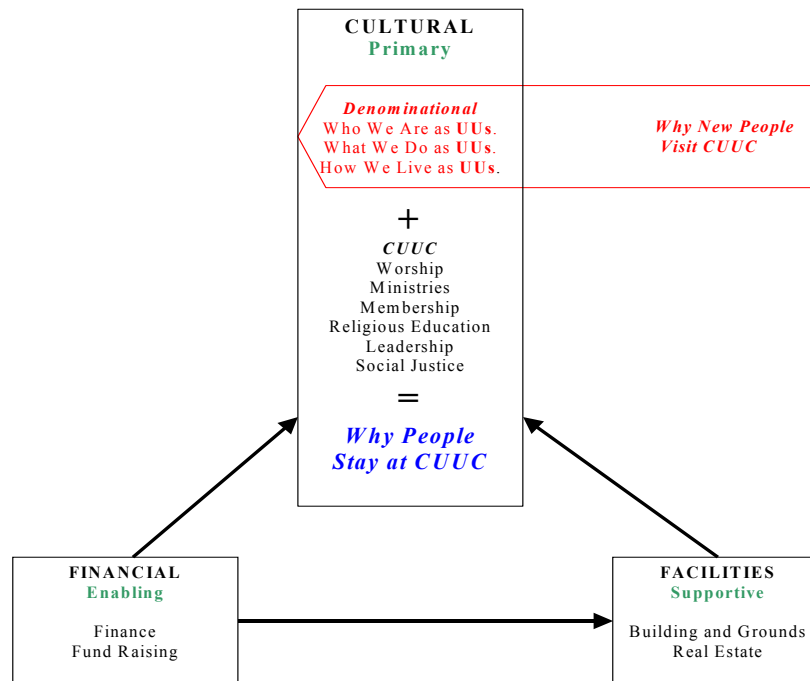
Tracy Boykin	CoM Chair
Ruth Cowger	Life Span Director
Sue Dressel	Membership Chair
Jim Hopkins	R.E. Chair
George Mandeville	Leadership Chair
Sarah Manning	Social Action Chair
David Manning	LRPC Chair
Alan Popiel	Finance Chair
Gary Wederspahn	Worship Chair

OVERVIEW

As mandated by the results of the Pulse of the Congregation Survey, this Long Range Plan is primarily growth oriented and is broken out into the three fundamental planning components that influence growth. The relationships of the three components, what comprises each of them in the CUUC structure, and their relative roles for the growth of the church as applied in this Long Range Plan are summarized below:

LRPC Overview

Components of Planning for Growth



LRPC Recommended Priorities and Roles.

1. The Cultural Component

What happens inside CUUC and how it connects with the larger UU profile is the primary driver of why new people come to and then stay at CUUC. Role is generating growth.

2. The Financial Component

Role is enabling growth.

3. The Facilities Component

Role is responding to growth.

LRPC Assessment and Conclusions for the Cultural Component.

Historical events dictated both membership's and the part-time professional staffs' pastoral care focus of the past several years. While that focus was necessary, and has been effective for healing wounds from past events, it has also been a significant constraint to membership growth. The focus on pastoral care, on meeting the needs of existing members, has left any growth related initiatives almost exclusively to the volunteer lay leadership. As indicated by the survey, CUUC's membership is now changing its focus, looking to grow, and is emotionally ready to embrace the changes needed for growth. In response, the focus of the professional staff will need to change from one of pastoral care to one oriented toward growth. Professional staff availability also needs to expand, ahead of membership growth, to allow for greater staff input and involvement in development and expansion of the Membership, Worship, Leadership, R.E, Small Group Ministries and Social Action programs. Sustained membership growth is dependant upon adequate, growth oriented, staffing in order to meet the needs and expectations of new people *and* provide for the needs of its existing membership.

LRPC Recommendations for the Cultural Component:

- **Full Time, growth oriented, UU Fellowshiped Minister**
 - Interim starting July 2008. Estimated Cost: \$45,000.
 - Called starting July 2009. Estimated Cost: \$60,000 per year. (1st year)
(Additional costs of benefits etc. are included in the five year projection on pages 14, 15)
- **Full time, Life Span Religious Education Director.**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ time starting July 2009. Estimated Cost: \$21,000.
 - Full time starting July 2010. Estimated Cost: \$26,500 per year. (1st year)
(Additional costs of benefits etc. are included in the five year projection on pages 14, 15)
- **Full Time Office Staff** (either one person or some combination of part time staffers)
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ time starting July 2008. Estimated Cost: \$16,500.
 - Full time equivalent starting July 2009. Estimated Cost: \$22,000 per year. (1st year)
(This is required support for the two recommendations above.)
(Additional costs of benefits etc. are included in the five year projection on pages 14, 15)

Each of the cultural component committees represented on the LRPC has developed a five-year plan, from which the major recommendations above have been drawn. Action items developed by each of the committees represented on the LRPC in support of the major recommendations are listed below:

- **Worship:**
 - Continually upgrade the quality, consistency and variety of sermons and presentations to support UU values and principles.
 - Continually upgrade the professionalism of the lay leadership of the services.
 - Establish a Music Committee to support the continual improvement of the quality, consistency and variety of musical and choir performances.
 - Maintain and improve the appearance of the sanctuary.
 - Integrate the interim and future full-time ministers into the Worship Committee.
- **Membership:**
 - Continue to promote culture changes in the congregation that encourage new member growth.
 - Continue to change CUUC systems and procedures as necessary to enhance the experience for visitors and encourage them to become members.
 - Implement programs and activities specifically designed to increase the number of younger families in the congregation.

- **Social Action:**
 - Create Mission Statement linking our responsibility to act for social justice with our CUUC and UUA principles.
 - Form Coordinating Team, including the minister to establish criteria for adoption and conduct of all social justice and action programs, including standards, congregational support, social justice education, and volunteer mentoring.
 - Encourage congregational appreciation of social justice projects through ministerial participation and by developing the format for an ongoing two-way communication with the congregation.
 - Develop sources of funds for supporting social action projects and membership education programs.

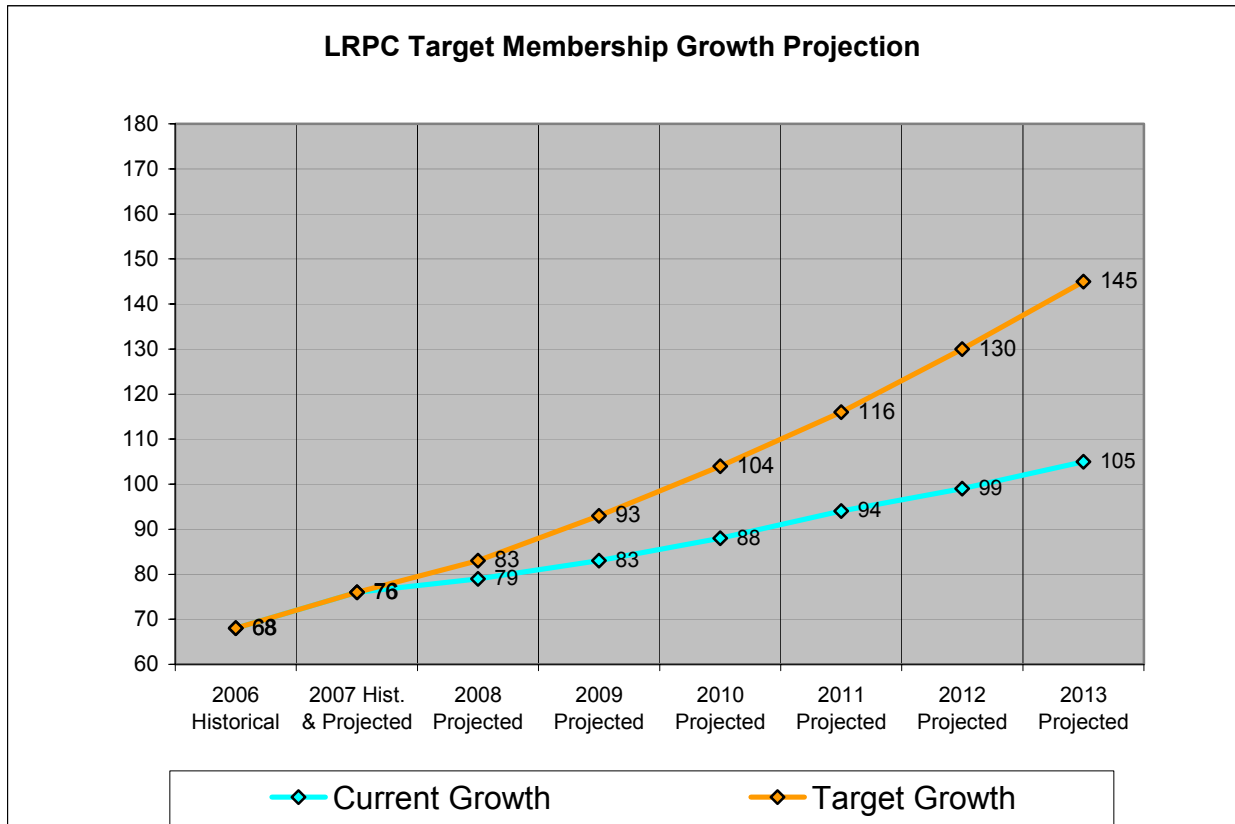
- **R.E. & Life Span Education:**
 - Bring RE enrollment up to capacity (12-15 children per 4 classrooms)
 - Bring YRUU Sunday morning class to capacity (8-10 youth)
 - Develop and implement a Life Span curriculum that will:
 - Serve as a source for the exploration of both new and familiar concepts.
 - Serve as a vehicle for interpersonal connections and bonding by creating shared activities and experiences.
 - Build a bridge between spirituality and daily life by offering opportunities to clarify issues of conscience and social concern.
 - Provide opportunities to connect with our deepest inner self.
 - Provide enrichment opportunities for already chosen paths to the Divine within and without.

- **CoM:**
 - Support the minister and promote positive minister/congregational relations during the transition from a half-time to an interim to a full time minister.
 - Continually monitor congregational life and periodically assess the shared ministry of the congregation more formally.
 - Counsel individuals and groups experiencing interpersonal conflict and mediate when necessary.

- **Leadership:**
 - Continue to create an improved environment of trust between the congregation and CUUC leadership through increased transparency to and involvement of the congregation in the church's decision making processes.
 - Continue to promote and fund UU leadership training for current and future lay leaders.
 - Adopt practices within CUUC for the integration, development and mentoring of future lay leaders.
 - Continue to proactively develop and implement leadership structures and procedures necessary for the transition to a 150 – 180 member church.

Target Growth Projections:

Key to constructing a Long Range Plan is identifying a realistic expectation for net membership growth *assuming the recommended cultural changes that will drive membership growth are in place*. Based on input from UUA and MDD resources, for planning purposes our target growth rate should not exceed 5% above what we have been experiencing over the past several years. From 2003 to 2007 CUUC experienced an average 4.1% net annual rate of membership growth with a slight upward year- to- year trend. Using a projected rate of 9.1% (current rate plus the UUA maximum recommended increase), our projected membership over the next six years would be:



Using the target growth rate, it is then possible to determine what the necessary recommendations for the financial and facilities components are for enabling and supporting the cultural component's role of generating the desired growth.

LRPC Assessment and Conclusions for the Financial Component.

CUUC's financial management policy has run in parallel with its pastoral care orientation for the past several years, prioritizing risk avoidance and retaining current real estate assets. Accordingly, funding for growth-oriented initiatives has been very limited, with growth prioritized as something to respond to if and when it happens on a year-to-year basis, not something to be financially planned for and enabled. This has been a very prudent and effective financial policy given CUUC's pastoral care orientation and has enabled CUUC to operate with essentially balanced annual budgets and to build up substantial equity in its real estate assets.

Given the survey results mandating growth, CUUC's financial planning and policies will need to shift to a less risk adverse mode of enabling growth. This can be done by capitalizing the costs, through a reallocation of assets, to enable the required professional staff expansion called for by the cultural component in this plan. This would also create the foundation of a building fund required for interim improvements to the Webster facility and the eventual expansion of the Webster facility or relocation. In conjunction with the asset reallocation, eliminating all current mortgages is advisable for maximizing available cash from regular income to use for church programs and operations.

LRPC Recommendations for the Financial Component.

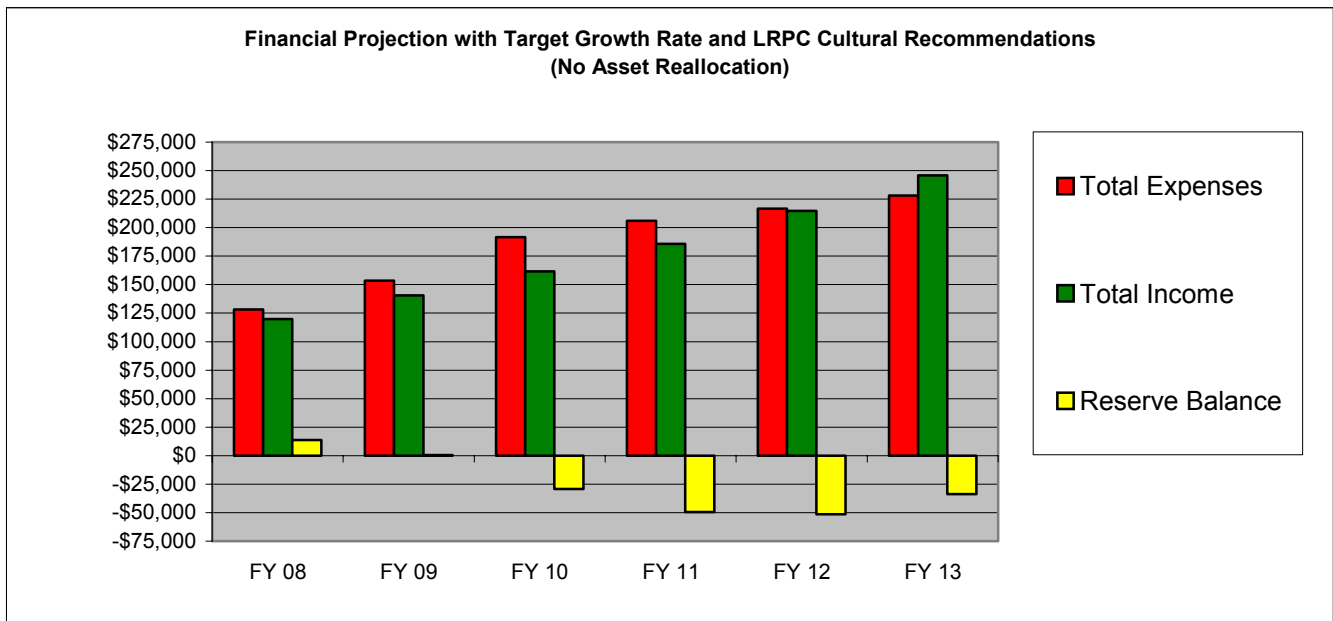
- Reallocation of current CUUC assets:
 - Completed sale of the Bowles property by August 2008. Estimated Net Value: \$320,000
 - Liquidation of the mortgages on the Webster property by September 2008. Estimated Cost: \$200,700
- Formal adoption of a policy of maintaining a running five-year budgeting process for financial planning and management beginning FY 08. Cost: minimal.
- Increasing the hours of paid office staff to accommodate increased book keeping and accounting operations.
(Incorporated in staff recommendations in Cultural component)

Comparative Case Studies based on a projected six-year financial analysis.

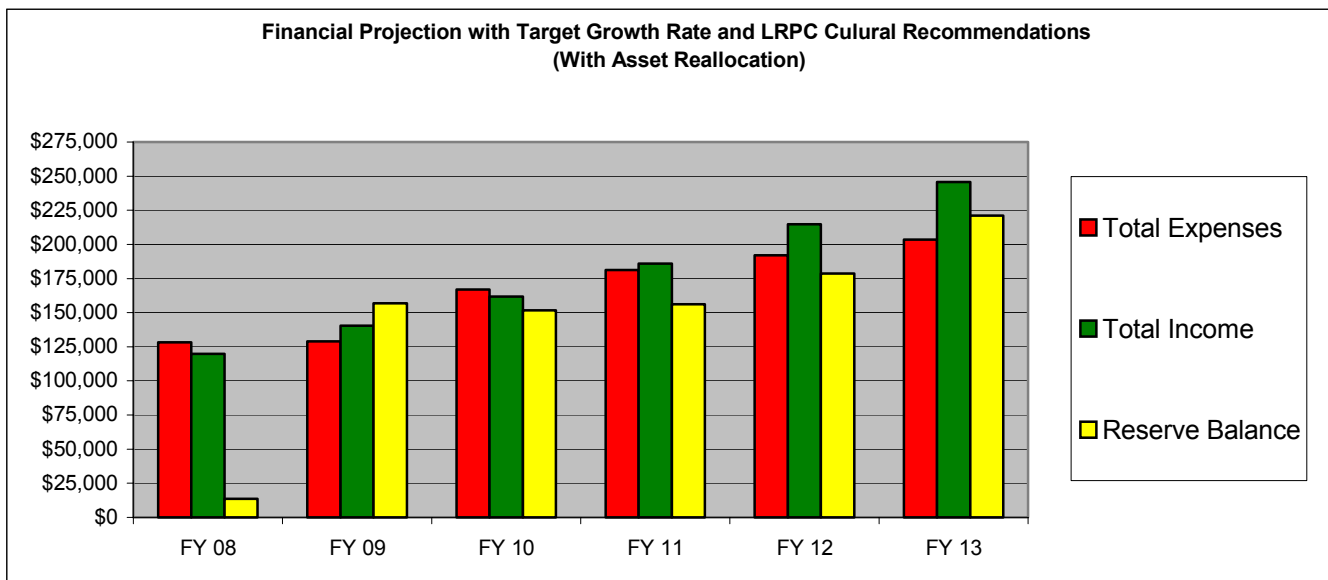
The two basic financial cases for understanding the need to reallocate assets for this Long Range Plan are demonstrated below.

- Case 1 projects CUUC’s cash position (reserve balance) without capitalizing the costs recommended in the cultural component of the plan and retaining the Bowles property. (It is assumed additional borrowing against real estate assets would cover the negative reserve balance.)
The detailed financial projection for this case is on page 14.
- Case 2 projects CUUC’s cash position with capitalizing costs recommended in the cultural component of the plan, selling the Bowles property and paying off the mortgages on the Webster property.
The detailed financial projection for this case is on page 15.

Case 1. No capitalization
 (No capital expenditures on facilities included)



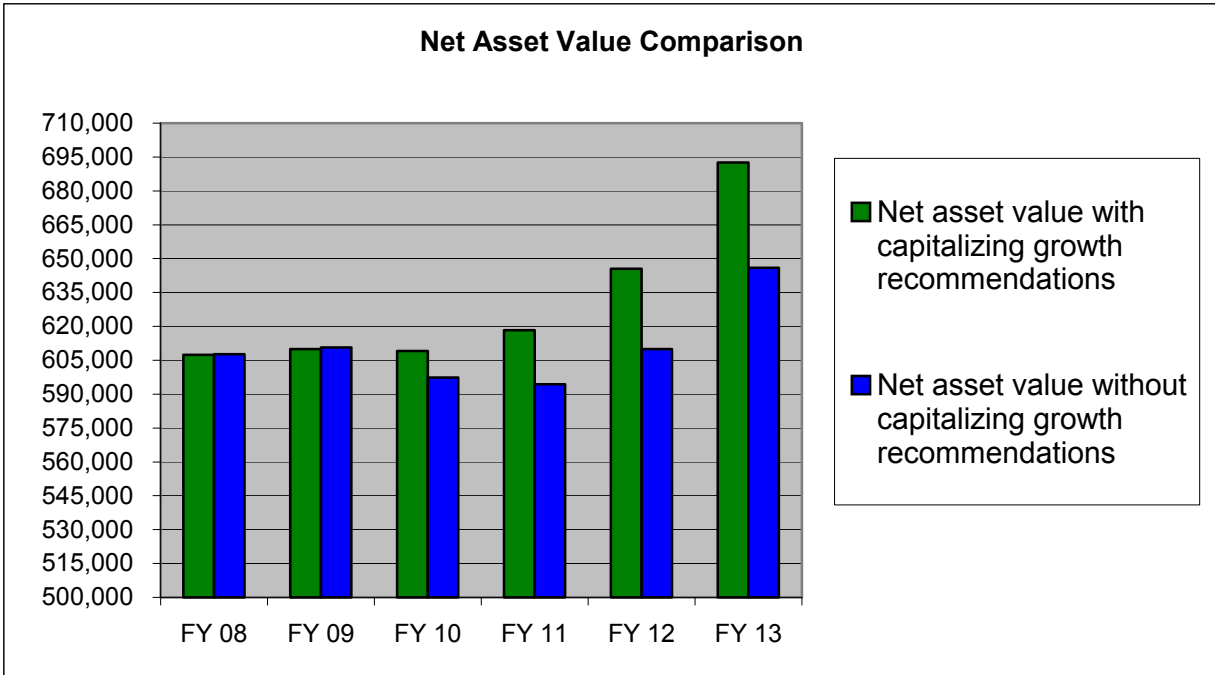
Case 2. Capitalizing recommendations for growth.
 (No capital expenditures on facilities included)



Net Asset Value comparison:

The final piece for evaluating the recommended asset reallocation is projecting the impact on CUUC’s net asset value **with** capitalizing the costs of the recommendations for growth against **not** capitalizing the costs.

For purposes of this comparison, Net Asset Value = Net value of real estate holdings + cash in the reserve fund.

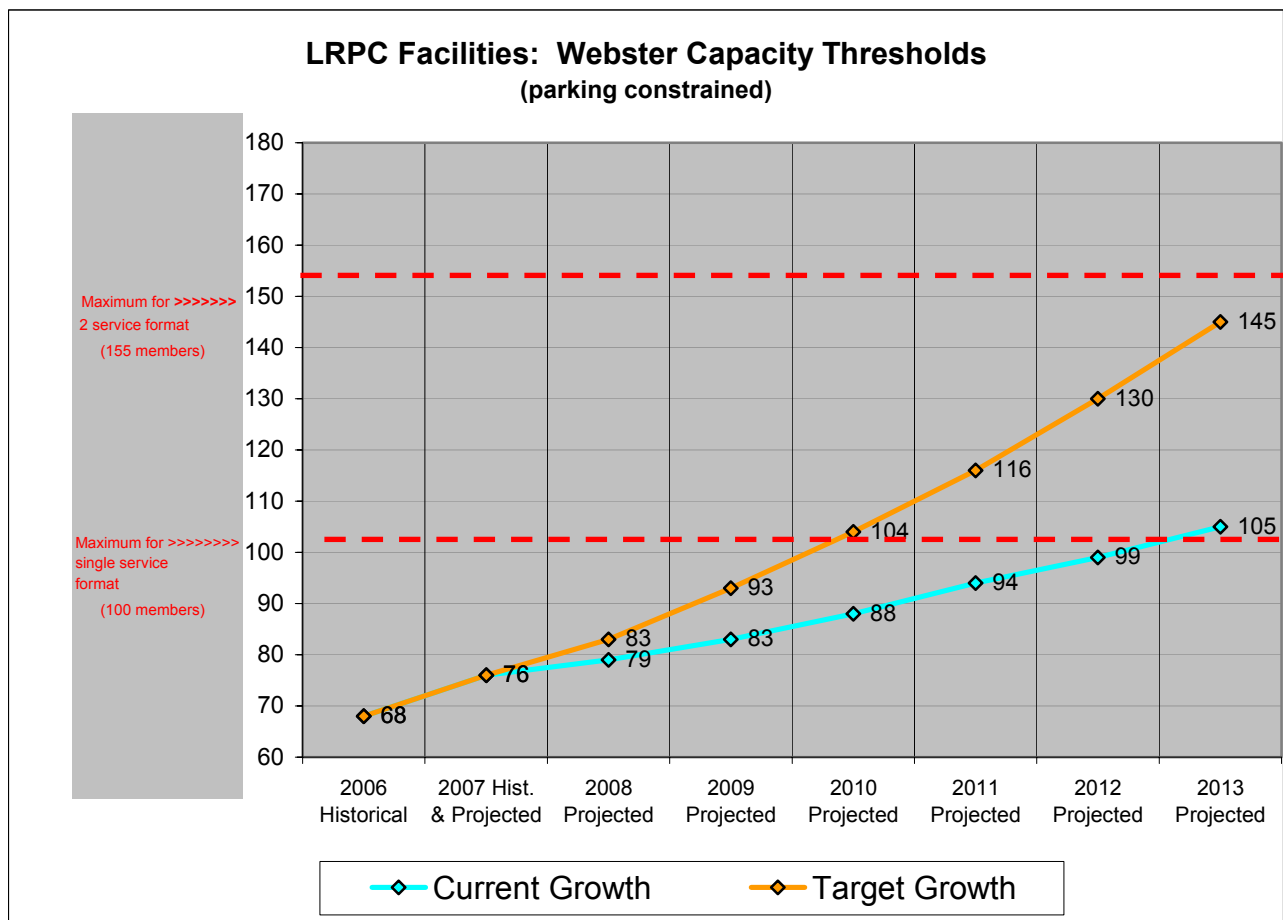


LRPC Assessment and Conclusions for the Facilities Component.

Webster Facility

A church’s facilities (building and grounds) can be a constraint on growth, not a driver of growth. UUA experience has shown that a church’s facilities become a constraint to growth when approaching 80% of capacity. CUUC’s worship space (sanctuary) currently has seating for 135 and could comfortably accommodate seating for up to 160. CUUC’s R.E. space has 3 classrooms with a capacity for 45, a nursery with a capacity for 8 and an ancillary classroom (minister’s office) with a capacity of 10. CUUC’s average worship attendance is currently about 65 with a R.E. attendance of 15 (40% of worship and 25% of R.E. capacity). There is adequate office space for 3 full time professional staff, and in general the Webster facility is a comfortable and inviting space for worship and church activities. The only drawback of the Webster facility is parking with an on site parking capacity of only 35 cars, with an estimated, reasonably convenient on-street overflow capacity of 35 cars.

Using parking as the constraining factor (70 total spaces at 1.5 people / space) the projected Webster facility’s capacity thresholds are:



Currently, the Webster facility imposes no constraints to CUUC’s growth in the near term based on the projected target growth rate. CUUC will not outgrow the current Webster facility, after going to a 2-service format, until FY’13 at the earliest with the very upward limit for the current Webster site being around 170 members. At that point, CUUC will need to substantially expand the Webster facility or relocate to a larger facility. Substantial expansion on the Webster site is dependent upon acquiring the adjacent open parcel to the North owned by Foothills Parks and Recreation and whether that parcel will be rezoned by Jefferson County to allow for CUUC’s required uses. (CUUC is currently in a joint pre-application process to Jefferson County with Foothills Park and Recreation for determining the feasibility of re-zoning the parcel.)

Bowles Property.

CUUC acquired the Bowles property through an enabling, 5-year no interest mortgage in 1998 for \$150,000. In 2002 the mortgage was renewed and changed to a 5% interest payment only (\$7500 per year) with the \$150,000 principal due in 3rd Q, 2008. CUUC has never accrued any equity in the property through amortization of the original \$150,000 loan, but has enjoyed a substantial appreciation in the value of the property. Based on the mid-range of valuations provided by Kevin Lentz in late 2005, CUUC has an estimated *net* equity in the Bowles property of approximately \$320,000.

The estimated costs to develop a 6500sf – 7500sf facility on the Bowles property with required parking, landscaping and allowances for the sub-soil conditions is \$1.3 million to \$1.5 million. Translated into a membership size that could fund and sustain the costs of operation of such a facility, a 275 to 300 member church at minimum would be required at current construction costs. Based on a sustained growth rate of 10% per year, CUUC would achieve that membership level somewhere around 2021 at the earliest. The Bowles property does not represent a developable asset for CUUC's growth in the foreseeable future.

LRPC Recommendations for the Facilities Component.

- Sale of the Bowles property.
(Schedule and financial impacts in the Financial Component of this plan)
- Continue to pursue a determination by Jefferson County on the re-zoning of the adjacent parcel to the north of Webster. Completion by 5/30/2007. Estimated cost: \$2,500 - \$3,500
- Formal establishment of a CUUC Facilities Committee for the evaluation and coordination of all CUUC facilities and real estate related proposals for presentation to the CUUC Board.
Completed by 5/20/2007. No Cost.

APPENDICES

