

Update on Holy Spirit Building Plans

The plan for the access road to the new Holy Spirit church and school, which includes a total realignment of Gathe Road, has been approved by the city of Pocatello, and construction is expected to begin next spring. In addition, the annexation process has begun for the Holy Spirit property where the new church and school will be located.

The city of Pocatello will begin taking bids on the construction to realign Gathe Road soon. Realigning the road and running water and sewer lines to Gathe Road will be the first “on the ground” construction to be initiated as part of the Holy Spirit plan to eventually build a new church and school on the West Bench site. The Diocese will initiate construction on the utility lines next spring. The utilities for the new church and school will be pulled in along with the construction of the new road to the site. Costs of the realignment and utilities are yet to be determined.

Realigning Gathe Road has been a goal of the city for a long time, due to the difficult intersection of Gathe and Kraft Roads. By combining realignment with the construction of the access road to the new church and school site, the parish can share costs with the city for equipment and labor. The exact allocation of those costs will be determined in talks between the Diocese and the city.

The parish currently owns 181 acres of land near Gathe Road, and it intends to use about 40 acres to accommodate the new church and school complex. The remainder will be sold in order to raise funding for the building projects. Getting the land annexed into the city of Pocatello will allow the city to take over maintenance of the roads in the area, and make city utilities available to the Holy Spirit facilities, and to any developers of the surplus property the parish may eventually sell.

“It will be exciting to actually begin construction, even if it is just the first step,” said Holy Spirit Pastor Father Enrique Terriquez. “We then have to begin site preparation work, which will be extensive. It includes moving a lot of dirt in order to prepare a pad for the church and school, as well as the parking lot and the rest of the complex.”

During a planning meeting earlier this year, parish leaders were updated on the expected cost of the building projects. Site preparation, which includes bringing utilities all the way to the construction site and grading of the pad, are estimated at about \$2.75 million. Construction of a “bare-bones” church, which does not include accoutrements like furnishings or a sound system, was estimated at about \$4.2 million. Cost for a “completed” church building, which would include furnishings, sound system, etc., was estimated at \$5.5 million. That would put the total cost for a “completed church,” including site preparation, at about \$8.35 million.

Currently, the parish has cash and pledges of \$2.4 million from its capital campaign. St. Paul’s chapel in Chubbuck has been placed on the market with an asking price of about \$1.7 million. It is uncertain how much the excess property is worth, but Holy Spirit paid about \$1 million for the equivalent of 181 acres when it bought the land a couple of years ago. A raw estimate, then, is that the parish has about \$5.1 million in cash and assets, although there is no guarantee how

much the sale of St. Paul's or the excess property will actually generate. That leaves a gap of about \$3.2 million between parish assets and cost of a fully functional new church.

Kregg Aytes and Bruce Olenick have resigned as co-chairs of the Building Core Committee, which has taken the lead in providing advice to Father Enrique on the building process. They have been succeeded by Mark Dahlquist as chairman, but they will remain on the core committee as members. A new Parish Council was recently seated, and the council and core committee members will get together to talk about how to close the "funding gap" in order to begin construction of the new church.

More information will be provided to parishioners as events warrant. Information will be placed in the Holy Spirit weekly bulletin and on the parish web site, at www.hsc.org.