



The Journey to St. Pauls' Latest Bold Accomplishment: *Expanding and Elevating Our Openness*

Prepared for
St. Pauls Church
September 23, 2025



What we hope to evoke today

Enlightenment

Understanding

Pride

Appreciation

Inspiration

Today's Journey

- What defines a “capital campaign” at St. Pauls, anyway?
- The latest capital campaign journey to 2025
 - Steps in process
 - The congregation's remarkable generosity
 - Hurdles (“turnstiles”?) overcome
- Where we are today
- The coming six weeks
- The November 9 dedication celebration
- Looking ahead: what this means for St. Pauls' future

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St. Pauls Church Capital Project Defined:

A project that involves construction or repair/updating of the church building or an element of its infrastructure, or of a building project underwritten by St. Pauls.

Traditionally, these projects have happened every 5-15 years, depending on their scope and scale.

Fundraising for such an initiative is separate from annual pledging/ giving support – not a substitute or tradeoff.

Some examples of St. Pauls' historic capital initiatives

- Rebuilding St. Pauls after the 1871 Great Chicago Fire
- Acquiring land and building a new church building in Lincoln Park in the 1890's
- Acquiring land and constructing St. Pauls House for the Aged at California and Mozart on the north side of Chicago
- Construction of the church office/classroom building (the so-called "parish house") in the 1950's (after initial funds were lost in the Depression)
- Rebuilding the church sanctuary after the 1955 fire
- Repairing and upgrading the sanctuary and chapel in the 1990's
- Refurbishing the sanctuary pipe organ in 1999
- Installing a new heating and AC system in the early 2000's

Some other major projects funded by individual member gifts/bequests rather than capital campaigns

- Acquiring the land and building the original Uhlich Children's Home (1860's-70')
- Building the first church access ramp in the courtyard and interior lift (1990's)
- Refurbishing the Oscar Mayer Room and Social Hall (2000's)

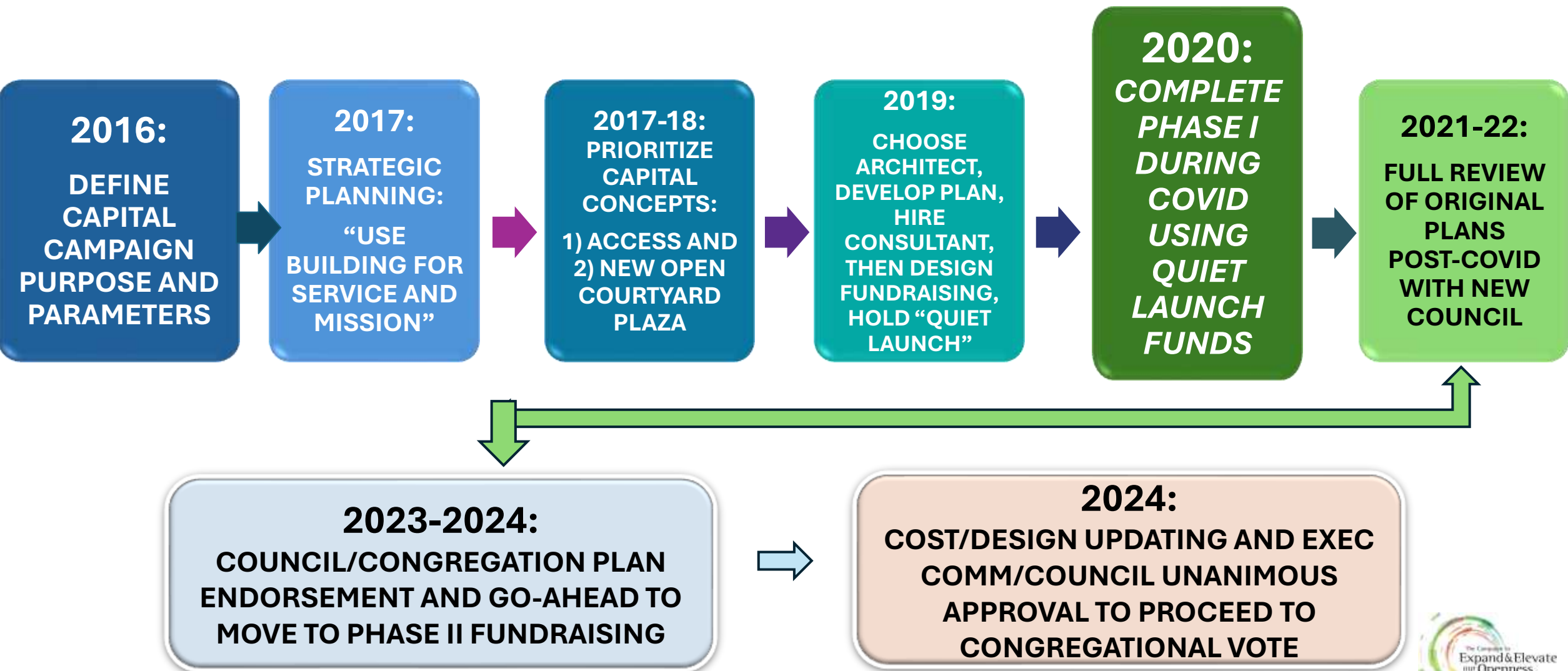
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Our Most Recent Capital Campaign:

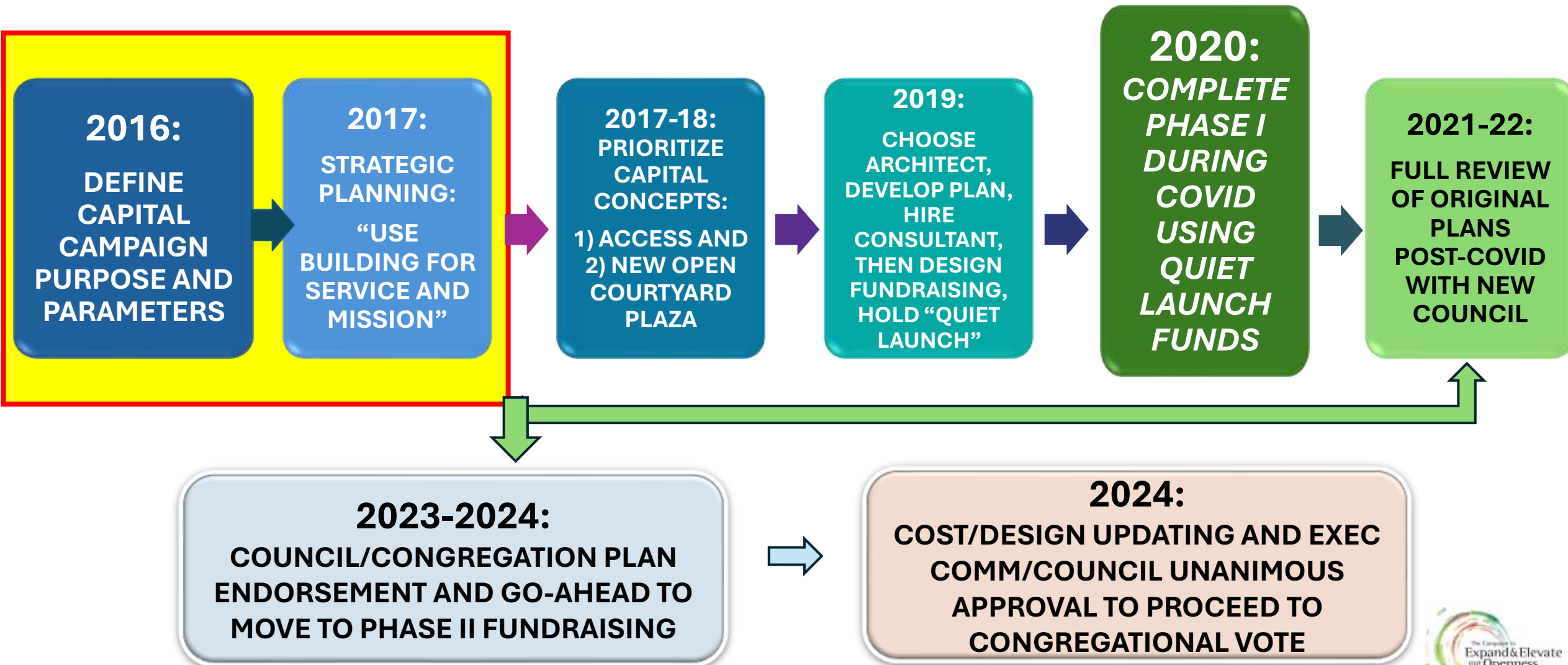
*“The Campaign to Expand and Elevate
Our Openness”*

Our latest capital initiative began nearly **NINE** years ago.



November of 2024:
Congregation votes unanimously to
proceed with Phase II construction

The whole process began with defining capital campaign parameters and an overall St. Pauls strategic plan process



STEP 1: 2016

Held discussion with present and all living past St. Pauls Congregation Presidents, Pastor Matt, Pastor Emeritus Tom Henry, and Capital Campaign Co-Chair Jana O'Brien as moderator



STEP 2: A comprehensive 2017 St. Pauls strategic plan laid out six church “Calls from God”



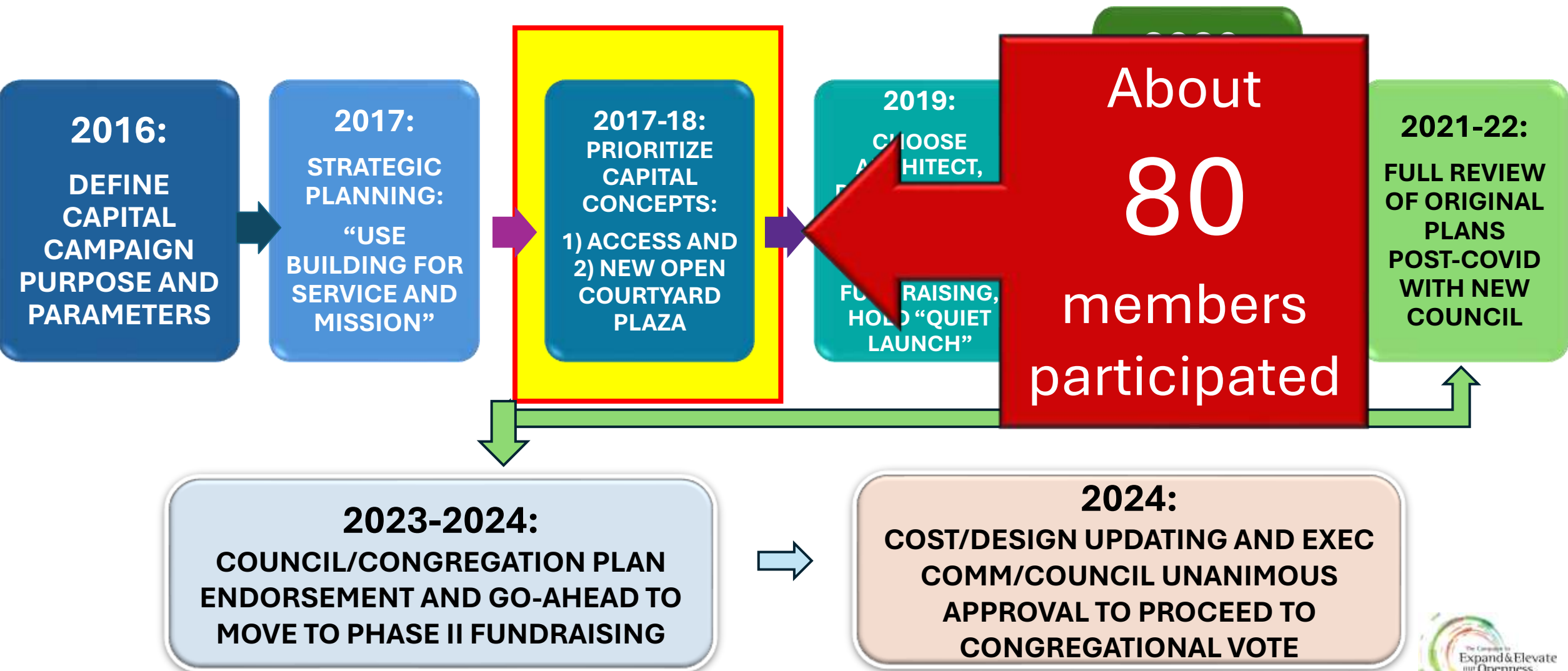
1. Grow toward each other
2. Grow toward God together
3. Increase diversity in partnerships and congregation
4. Live our faith in age of injustice
5. Use building for service and mission
6. Tend finances faithfully

One “call” had specific capital planning relevance.



1. Grow toward each other
2. Grow toward God together
3. Increase diversity in partnerships and congregation
4. Live our faith in age of injustice
5. Use building for service and mission
6. Tend finances faithfully

Capital Campaign Committee then hosted cross-member meeting to review and prioritize seven potential capital ideas.



Seven concepts were discussed and prioritized by members.

1. Turn Little Lights into full pre-school program
2. Underwrite 10-year St. Pauls Summer Camp Scholarship program
3. Convert parish house classrooms into mission-based, income-generating rental space
4. Underwrite an annual “Repeat the Sounding Joy” outreach and benevolence program
5. Make St. Pauls’ public spaces accessible
6. Create an open-air courtyard plaza multi-use gathering space
7. Replenish the St. Pauls “rainy day” endowment/investment fund

“2020 Vision” Strategic Plan and Subsequent Congregational Input Session Yielded Two Clear Congregation-Defined Priorities:

#1:

Making Saint Pauls truly

ACCESSIBLE

throughout the
building's
public spaces

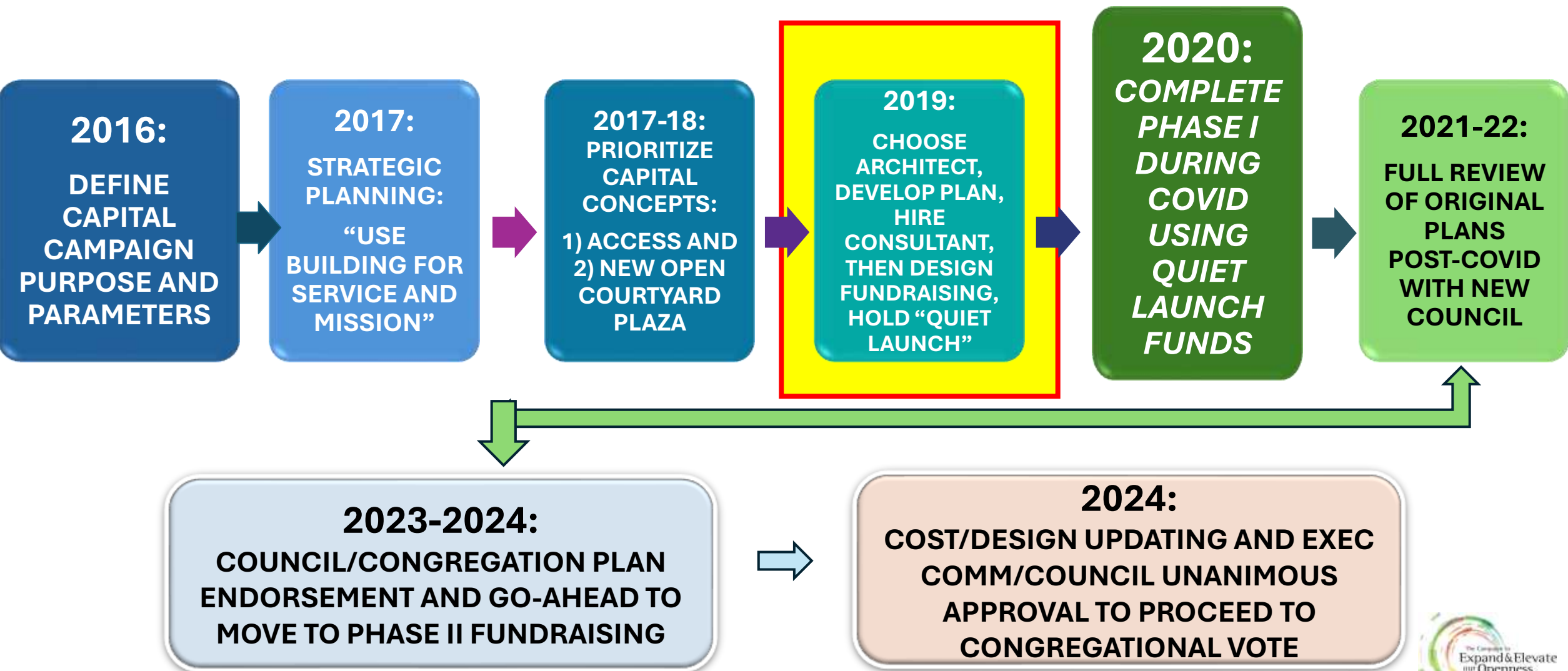
#2:

Transforming the
Saint Pauls Courtyard
into a

***PUBLIC
GATHERING SPACE***

Member discernment process also reinforced parameters of capital campaigns as being for building-specific (rather than programming or outreach) investment

Next: Capital Building Sub-Committee developed architect RFP and Fundraising Sub-Committee hired consultant.



Thorough architect vetting process was undertaken;
unanimous choice was Wheeler Kearns Architects.

11 INVITED



9

SUBMITTED



1

CHOSEN



The ONLY firm that identified a SINGLE location where an elevator could reach all public levels except the sanctuary balcony (with addition of small top floor ramp).

Meanwhile, the fundraising sub-committee hired an outside consultant and began campaign planning.



- Training on “how to ask”
- How to ensure annual and capital campaigns are “and/and” rather than “either/or” successes
- Campaign administrative requirements/protocols
- Fundraising capacity research

After research completed,
consultant-estimated
St. Pauls capital giving capacity:
\$1.5 - \$1.75 Million

*As you will see, this ultimately proved to be
a “slight” understatement.*

The chosen theme reflected the campaign's purpose:



Campaign pre-launch kick-off breakfast held to generate knowledge, excitement, early pledges.



Early pledges generated
over **\$2 million**
in campaign commitments!
(And that was before the formal
cross-congregation fundraising campaign
was even launched.)

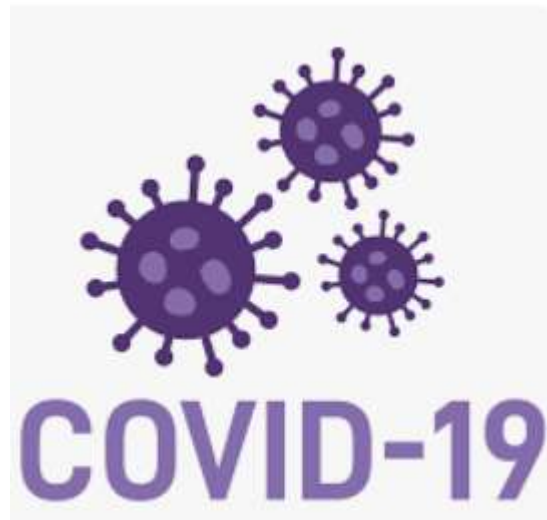


The Clear Message: St. Pauls is no ordinary church!

This gave us confidence we
could achieve the campaign's
bold goals.

So, the cross-congregation campaign launch
was set for March of 2020...

But then – what happened in March of 2020?



=



In-person church activities stopped, including campaign launch/fundraising.

But we were undaunted!!



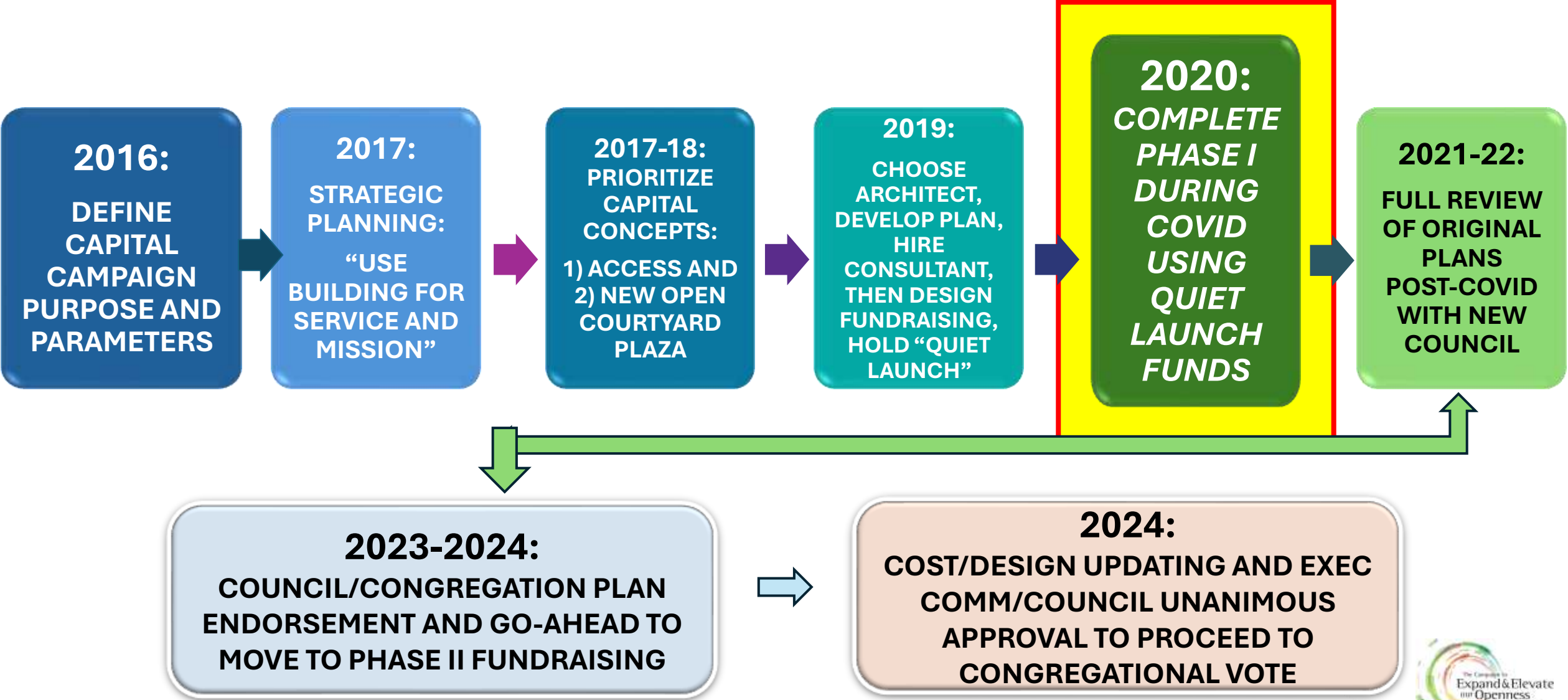
Every **obstacle**
is an **opportunity**
waiting to reveal itself

We realized we had sufficient pledge commitments to proceed with an initial phase of construction while the church was closed – assuming the congregation approved doing so.

After internal leadership discussion/debate (over ZOOM, of course!) a virtual Congregational Meeting was scheduled and held, with the Phase I construction recommendation approved by a **98% to 2%** margin.



Phase I construction began in late 2020 and was completed before the church was reopened after COVID-19 waned.



The beautiful results that welcomed us back to the reopened church in 2022...



And less glamorous, but equally important for the church's long-term needs and safety...



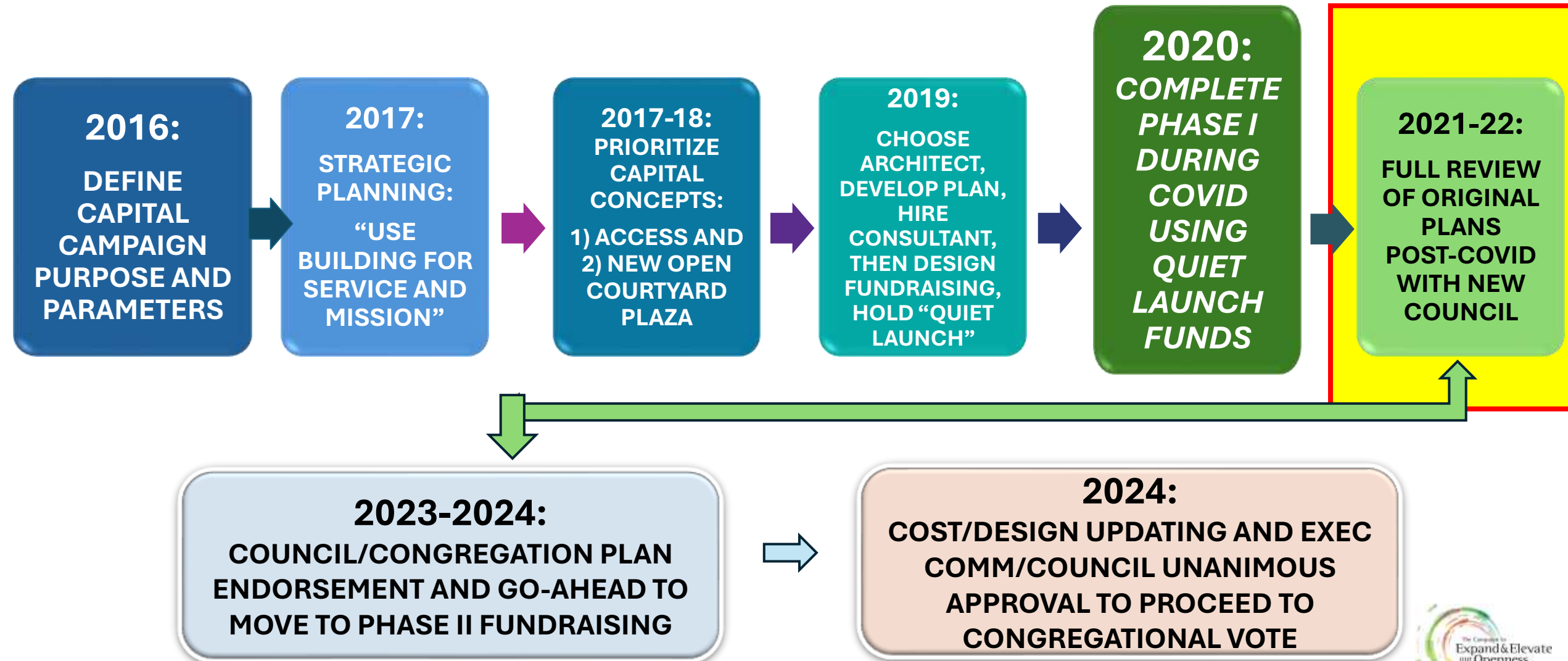
Installation of 1) entirely new electrical panel room off the social hall 2) upgraded electrical wiring to the north end of the building and 3) a new ComEd transformer in the alley to accommodate our increased electrical needs.

Fun Facts from Phase I Construction

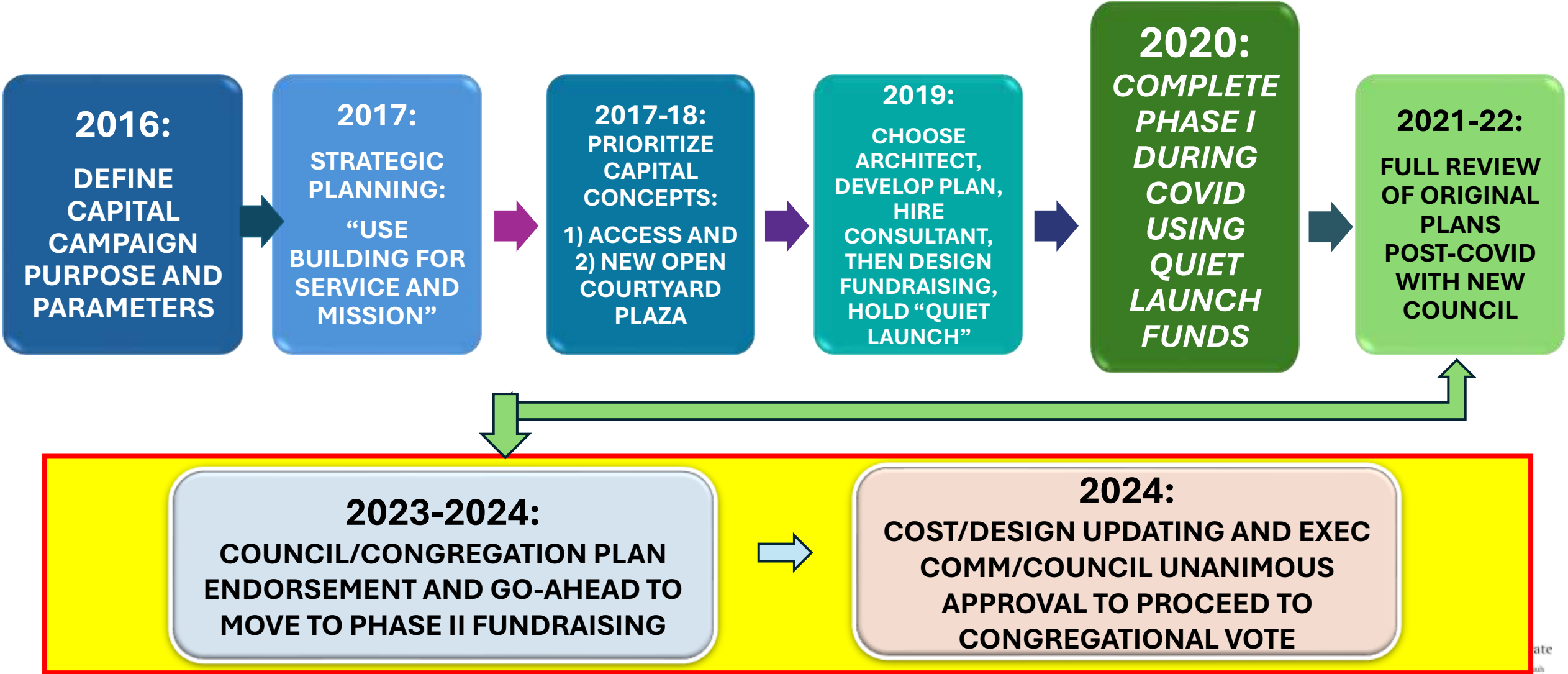


- The brick north wall from the 1890's church sanctuary was found within the old hall wall from the side lobby to the Senior Pastor's office; this needed a "design work-around."
- Liquor bottles were found within that brick wall – possibly a left-behind gift from the 1950's post-fire construction crew! These "relics" are in our vault now.

Post-Covid, the entirely new St. Pauls Council chose to fully review the entire original CapCam plan before giving approval to proceed.



After two Council task forces completed their reviews, the original plans were fully endorsed, and fundraising began.



Thanks to our congregation and friends' faith and commitment, fundraising as of the congregation's go-ahead vote in 11/24 exceeded ALL expectations.

As of Phase I COVID
shutdown:

\$2.1 million



As of the November of
2024 Congregation Vote:

>\$5.1 million total, with
\$3.4 million left for Phase II





At a special November 2024
Congregational Meeting,
the recommendation to
move ahead with Phase II
construction was
unanimously approved.

Congregation also okayed spending up to
\$950,000 from the church investment fund
to cover differences between funds raised
and total Phase II project cost.

In the meantime...

- All needed City of Chicago permits secured
- Near North Neighborhood Association's enthusiastic endorsement of Phase II project satisfied Historic Commission
- Saint Pauls secured a second bridge line of credit from United Church Funds
- Orchard Street curb cut requested – but ultimately not permitted
 - Will use removeable curb inclines along Orchard Street to aid disembarking process for physically-encumbered members/visitors
- Special new street banners have been designed, with the application now in the hands of the City of Chicago

Thanks to our congregation and friends' deep faith and commitment, fundraising as of September of 2025 has exceeded all expectations...even beyond 11/24 levels.

As of Phase I
COVID
shutdown:
\$2.1 million



As of the 11/24
Congregation
Vote:
>\$5.1 million



As of
today:
>\$5.3 Million!!



Our best estimates are that the Phase II project will come in about 6.6% above budget – or +\$283,153.

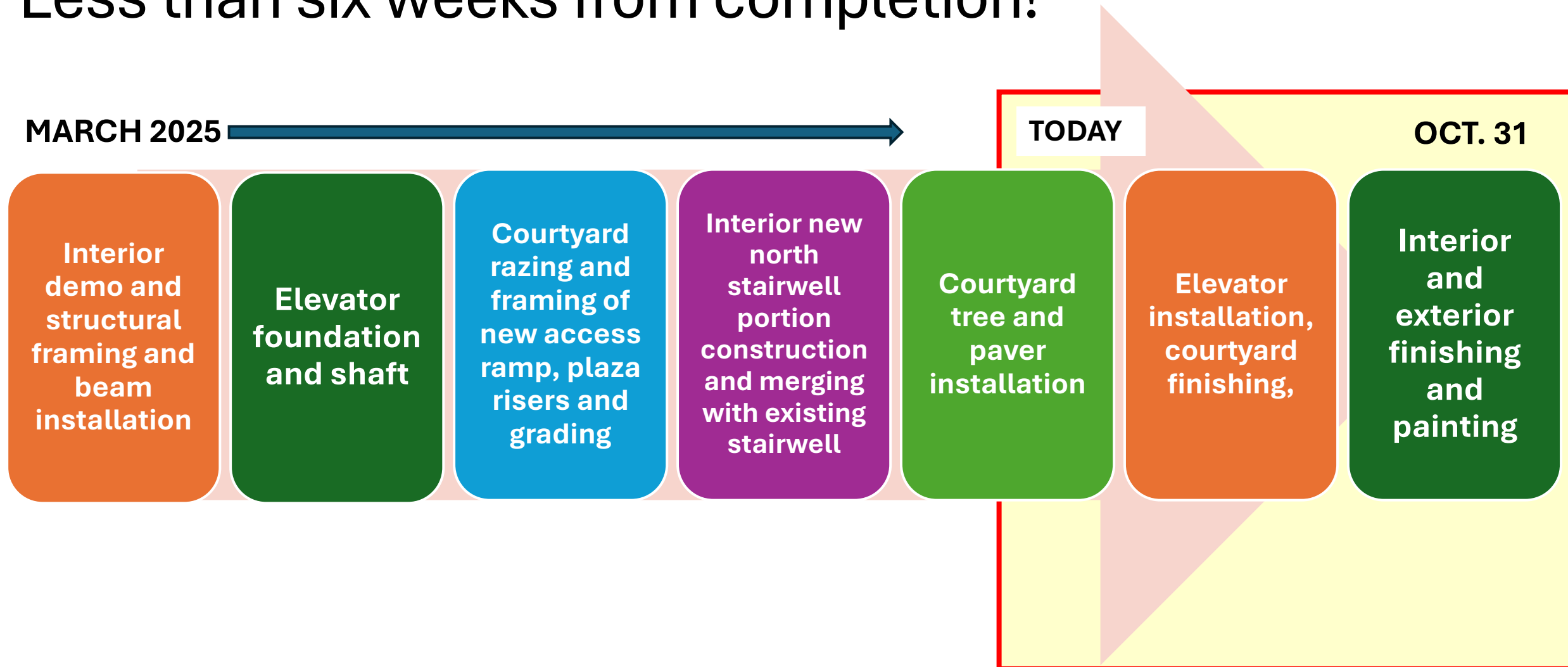
- Overages are about 90% due to required change orders based on issues discovered when walls and floors were opened that required addressing
 - Mainly, asbestos-, electrical-, and plumbing-related issues beyond original scope
- Notably, the Mortenson Cost Index estimates past-year Chicago area construction inflation rate is 6.2% -- higher than U.S. average
- But the good news is, we recently have reached out and secured (thus far) **\$160,000** in new/incremental pledges to close this overage gap
 - And more meetings are scheduled to attempt to secure more pledges
- **NET RESULT:** we will NOT need to withdraw the entire approved \$950,000 from the St. Pauls investment fund
 - Likely \$100,000 - \$125,000 less than that approved amount



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Construction Key Steps Since March: Less than six weeks from completion!



THE TEAM: Architects Larry Kearns and Thomas Boyster, B&A key project managers Chris Bruns and Ray Puntillo, and St. Pauls Owner's Rep Lorne Frank.





Steel beams needed to be installed to reinforce the exterior walls and frame out the newly-constructed space.



The elevator shaft was built from the reinforced foundation floor-by-floor upward, through a roof opening.





Electrical wiring
had to be
rerouted and
upgraded
through the
church gym.



Half of the existing north stairwell was retained, while the other half had to be relocated/ newly-constructed to make room for the elevator and lobby.



The existing courtyard was razed and graded...



...where the crew discovered a long-forgotten City of Chicago cistern/drain that required a plan “work-around” into the plaza design...



Trenches with eco-friendly water retention systems were installed for the six courtyard trees.



The plaza will have concrete risers on the north end for casual or worship leader seating/performing.



The plaza's
blue paver tiles
are about 80%
finished
and will be
extended to the
Orchard Street
curb.



The new north
entry door
from the
access ramp
will come in at
the chapel/
parlor level...

The donor recognition listing
will run along the lobby wall...





On the top floor, the elevator will stop at both levels, and a ramp has been installed to the level of Pastor Jeff's office and the archives and Confirmation rooms...

The View of Our Expanded Welcome to All Just a Month Away!



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On Sunday, November 9,
immediately after worship,
we will hold the Phase II Dedication Ceremony
in the courtyard, to be followed by
a “delayed” Oktoberfest lunch in the gym.

Please be there -- and pray for good weather!



ST. PAULS UCC



**Church redefined
for the
21st Century.**

spucc.org

ST. PAULS UCC



**Our exceptional
welcome has
no exceptions.**

And, hopefully, our
new St. Pauls
street banners
will be installed by
the dedication day!

(Thank you for underwriting this,
Karen E. Johnson.)



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So what's next for St. Pauls once we have “expanded and elevated” our openness?



A beautiful open-air
courtyard plaza
perfect for...

Outdoor worship during fair weather...



Expanded church school and Little Lights youth space...



Outdoor social events such as Oktoberfest...



Formal and informal church and neighborhood gatherings...



And overall,
a more beautiful,
welcoming,
and attention-getting
“front face” of St. Pauls
for people looking for a
welcoming faith
community.



Moving inside, becoming fully
accessible and ADA-compliant
expands our space use options...

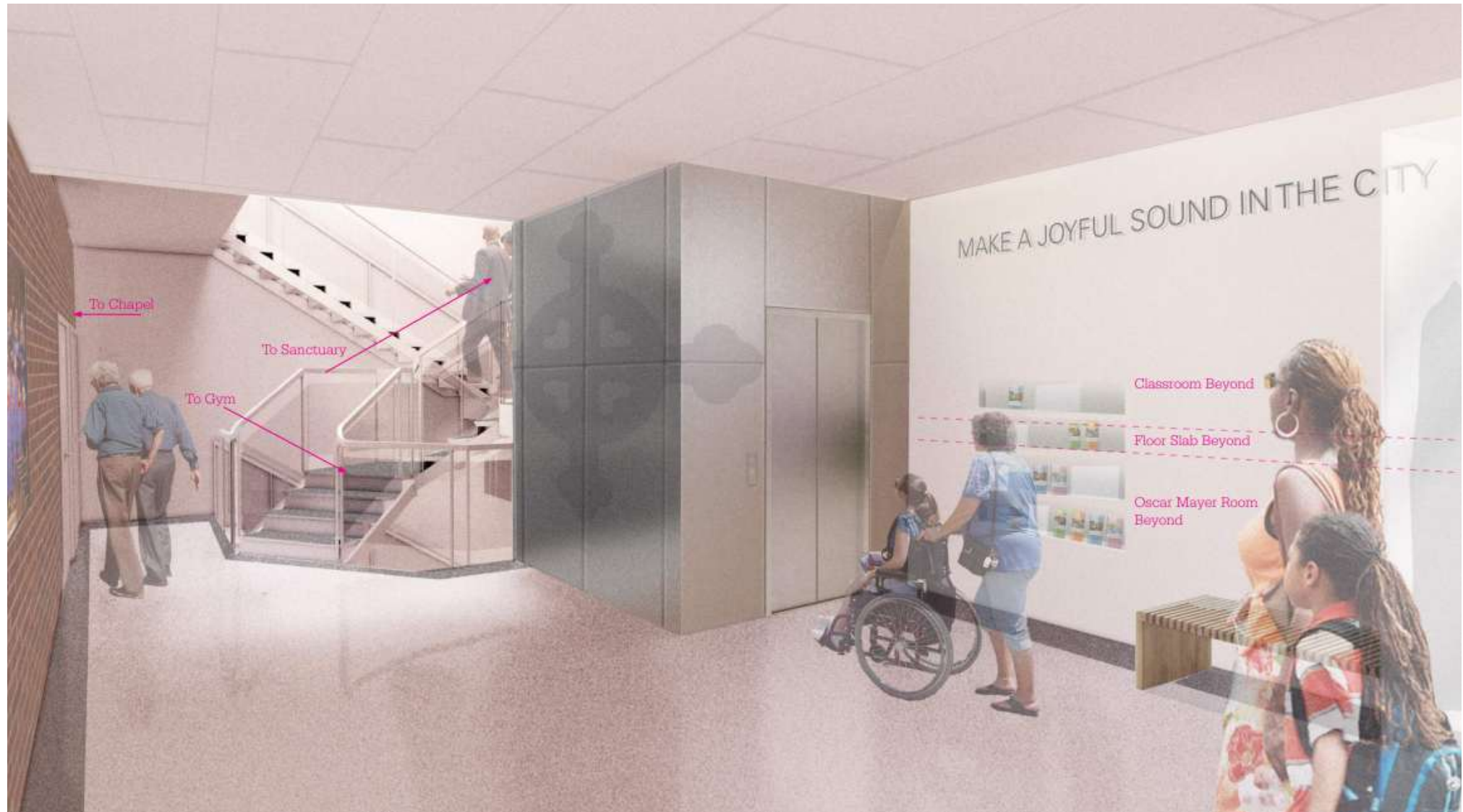
The five-stop elevator and top-floor ramp mean meetings and programs can be held in any church public space, and all will now be able to participate...



And ANYONE
will now be
able to visit
Pastor Jeff
IN HIS OFFICE!



The new lobby also will have closet space and areas for stroller and wheelchair parking and storage...



To better ensure excellent hygiene practices, some Little Lights and church school classrooms will now have in-class sinks, plus updated washrooms nearby...



Our church complex is now much safer,
with upgraded electric wiring and circuit
breakers, a new ComEd transformer,
and remaining asbestos removed.



Being ADA compliant means St. Pauls can now consider space rental for complementary entities...

Examples:

- Therapists/counselors
- Visiting nurses/clinics
- After-school programs
- Etc.



This could provide ongoing church income to help balance the annual budget.



And overall,
our message of
*“No matter who you are, or where you are
on life’s journey, you are welcome here!”*
will, at last, be **100%** true.

In total, we estimate this project involved 15,000 of member volunteer hours.

Campaign Committee, Council, Council Sub-Committees, and Members-at-Large participating in pre-planning work.

When you see them, thank these many people who worked on this campaign.

- Larry Kearns, Architect
- Lorne Frank, Owner's Rep
- Jana O'Brien, Co-Chair
- Wayne Parman, Co-Chair
- Nate Combs
- Don Curtis*
- Char Damron
- Greg Dekker*
- Van Ewing II*
- Deon Fayhee
- Sr. Pastor Matt Fitzgerald
- Sally Fletcher
- Marcia Frank
- Allen Heinemann
- Pastor Emeritus Tom Henry**
- Karen E. Johnson
- Monty Kehl
- Jack Knight*
- Jack Lyons
- Tara Magner
- Rev. Chuck Mize
- Tom Murray
- Frank Mynard
- Linda Patton
- Steve Patton
- Toby Rodgers**
- Donn Schimp
- Mark Weglarz
- Craig Wilbanks

* Moved or no longer attending

** Passed away during project



We also thank the church staff and Claire Haraburda (Campaign Coordinator) for their constant help throughout the campaign.

Bookkeeping, city permits, line of credit applications, moving furniture/building items to make room for construction, and much more.

AND...

deep, deep thanks to you,
and all other members like you,
for your ongoing, generous support of this
bold and “seemingly impossible” initiative.

This will be our generation’s legacy gift
to St. Pauls Church for the long term.



A quote from >60 years ago
seems applicable to
St. Pauls Church
in the 21st Century...

"We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard".

- President John F. Kennedy
Rice University, 1962



Questions and Discussion