

MCC NOVA Assessment Findings

Executive Summary of Campaign Readiness based on:

Interviews, Focus Group, Online Survey and Observations during the Worship Celebration

Executive Summary prepared for Pastor Kharmā Amos and the leadership of MCC NOVA includes:

1. Demographic Snapshot
2. Health of Congregation
3. Ministry and Mission
4. Overview of Strengths and Areas Needing Improvement
5. Campaign Readiness
6. Recommendation
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Demographic Snapshot of MCC NOVA Taken From Online Survey (January 23 – February 7, 2011)

The majority of respondents have been part of MCC NOVA for fewer than 10 years, with most coming from the “Baby Boomer” generation. Nearly all attend worship and half volunteer in a ministry. *Of note is that about one-third of respondents are involved in spiritual growth activities.*

Of those responding:

- 70% have attended MCC NOVA for 10 or less; 20% have attended for 16 – 25 years
- 63% are between 45 – 59 years of age
- 24% are between 60 – 74 years of age
- 10% are between 18 – 44 years of age
- 91% attend worship; 50% volunteer; 11% have children at MCC NOVA
- 29% are involved in adult education/spiritual formation

Health of Congregation

MCC NOVA presents as a healthy church with a high degree of interest and participation in the dialogue and discovery phase surrounding a potential capital campaign to expand the church. All assessment options (interviews, focus group, and survey) received excellent attention, and participation was unusually high for a church of this size.

Of those participating in the survey, 100 percent had the utmost trust and respect for Pastor Kharmā Amos and the staff—a finding that is, in our experience, rare at this level of acceptance. MCC NOVA can celebrate having this positive influence as a thread running through the campaign experience.

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Ministry and Mission

Unity of mission and purpose is extremely high with nearly all respondents expressing high approval of church spirit, activities and communication capabilities. The tenets of the capital campaign must support and advance this mission, resulting in passionate giving from its congregation.

Respondents expressed the following about the impact and effectiveness of MCC NOVA:

- 94% agree with and support the church's mission: "Spirit. Community. Action – Inside & 'Out'"
- 94% believe MCC NOVA is important to the surrounding communities
- 100% say the church ministries are very effective or effective
- 98% say that the church's ability to keep persons informed is very effective or effective
- 96% believe the overall spirit (attitude) is very positive or positive

Overview of Strengths and Areas Needing Improvement

Respondents focused on the worship experience, the pastor, and ministries that **engage, impact and spiritually form** the congregants as MCC NOVA's greatest strengths. They overwhelmingly (75%) noted the need to improve the church building and facilities. From there they expressed the desire to improve outreach, worship technology, interfaith efforts and welcoming ministries.

Strengths:

1. Pastor (98%)
2. Worship (68%)
3. Fellowship/Community (57%)
4. Music Ministry (47%)
5. Justice and Spiritual Formation (tied at 32%)

(NOTE: 24% list "generous and giving congregation" as one of MCC NOVA's strengths.)

Areas Needing Improvement:

1. Building and Facilities (75%);
2. Outreach (29%);
3. Worship Technology (21%);
4. Interfaith Outreach (19%);
5. Welcome Ministries (18%)

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Campaign Readiness

Assessment participants expressed a lively and healthy array of questions about the campaign project and future expansion of the church indicating the need for a **well-defined and articulated case** for the need to expand. The possibility of purchasing the unit adjacent to existing space had little objection from the interviews. Leaders must research and determine the cost of such expansion to bring a sense of focus to a capital campaign. The church will maximize its financial impact with clarity of case.

The worship service was at capacity in the service we observed. Most of the people interviewed believed the church was at the 75% to 80% capacity, which indicates the need for expansion or multiple worship experiences. Transitioning to multiple worship services did not seem to be a well-received option due to the MCC need for fellowship. No other concerns were voiced at a level that would be reason to pause at this point.

Nearly all participants were aware of the potential campaign and would support it to raise funds for expansion. **A healthy percentage would prayerfully consider giving and volunteering during the campaign; however, nearly one-fourth of the respondents were not sure about either. Furthermore, they were not sure that they or the church leaders understood the importance of this project.**

These are healthy expressions of the need for more information, clearly revealing the need to define and articulate the vision, goals, general timeline, cost estimates and ministry impact of the project. This is imperative in order to inform, inspire and engage the church in the campaign experience—resulting in a financial and spiritual victory.

Below is a sampling of respondents' questions.

1. What is the plan?
2. How much will it cost?
3. How will this expansion facilitate the vision and mission of MCC NOVA?
4. How will this impact our church budget?
5. What is the timeline? When will all this happen?
6. How will we be able to accomplish this?
7. What will be expected of me?
8. What will be specific ministry benefits as a result of expanding?

The big question of "How will we pay for this?" is relevant and shows the need to move forward with defining the campaign process and then presenting a definitive answer to the Board and congregation. Of note is the discovery of giving potential at a higher capacity in the \$25,000 - \$40,000 range.

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Recommendation

MCC NOVA has exhibited readiness for a capital campaign and church expansion. We believe the church has every capability to raise between \$400,000 and \$500,000. These financials are formed on the national statistics that a healthy church can raise in the range of two to three times the church's income when the church is deemed healthy, has solid financial potential, and the campaign case has clarity and merit.

A successful campaign will require strong participation by the entire congregation plus higher capacity gifts above the \$25,000 range. Some think there might be community financial support for this project, but a successful result using this technique is not the norm for church campaigns. However, Tom Melzoni is willing train a small team to explore such opportunity.

We recommend moving immediately into the design phase of the campaign to build on the momentum created during the assessment phase.

Going Forward...Next Steps

1. Secure a definitive bid for the property of choice with a contingency of securing financing from banks and or church bonds. These institutions will typically require the church to have a successful capital campaign and proof of income stream as a basis for the loan.
2. Assemble an initial team of leaders to meet with Tom Melzoni and walk through the campaign orientation, design the steering team organization, plan the calendar and begin the enlistment of an Executive Team, who in turn will enlist the Steering Team for the process.

The effort must be prayer focused and Bible based. The campaign must be seen as a "faith-raising" experience leading to strong "fund-raising."

Our journey together will be one of:

- Prayer Without Pressure
- Motivation without Manipulation
- Challenge without confrontation.