



October
2016

Little Eden Echoes

The WHY of future growth for Little Eden

Little Eden exists to provide a Christian environment that nurtures and encourages relationships to God and others through fellowship, worship, camping and education.

This past summer and in the September newsletter, I spoke about some of the **WHAT** of the projects in the Proposed Master Plan we are developing, but I have not talked about the **WHY** of these projects for some time.

The **WHY** goes all the way back to the strategic planning the Little Eden Board did in November of 2013 when they reviewed our mission statement, *“Little Eden exists to provide a Christian environment that nurtures and encourages relationships to God and others through fellowship, worship, camping and education.”* As a result of that review, they sharpened a strategic plan for the future of Little Eden’s ministry.

Family Camp Program.

The Board recognized the ongoing decline in the traditional American family and the outside pressure of our culture on families today, and realized the opportunities provided at Little Eden help strengthen immediate and extended families through inter-generational relationships, shared memories, educational and spiritual growth. As they looked at the current waiting lists and the number of families coming today who are quickly outgrowing their cabins (prohibiting all family members to attend together), a clear vision emerged about the need to diligently work to get more families from the waiting list into family camps and provide more space to families outgrowing their current cabins so that Little Eden can continue to be a place that encourages and helps strengthen family ties across the generations.

Youth Camps Program.

The Board also recognized that youth camps are one

of the most effective ways Little Eden can reach young people for Christ. And with so many forms of media and messages being thrown at youth than ever before, we want youth camps to remain a priority at Little Eden. Youth camps assist the parents outside of the home with what the parents are doing in the home. They allow us to reach children growing up in non-Christian homes when they

come to camp with a friend. Youth camps also help children and teens develop their faith and encourage them in their walk with the Lord. In order for our Youth Camp Program to continue to thrive long-term, we need to provide cabins that will continue to meet state requirements, allowing for program growth.

“Opportunities at Little Eden help strengthen families through inter-generational relationships, shared memories, educational and spiritual growth.”

Community Outreach.

For more than twenty years, the Board has also seen and become passionate about the need to develop a more connected relationship with the local Onkama community as well as minister to the broader Northern Michigan region. As we move forward, we want the community to feel that Little Eden is an integral part of the community, not just “that other camp”. We want them to think of us as they are looking for a place to hold an event, a family or church outing, or a recreational activity. We want to be light and salt in this community and region for Christ. And as we add facilities for our summer programs, we want to be intentional in designing them so they can also be an asset and outreach to our community and our guests in the non-summer season, and be used for effective ministry year round.



The Master Planning Task Force

After the strategic planning was complete in 2013 (see page 1, *The WHY of Future Growth*) the Board appointed a Task Force to create a site plan that would carry out their vision for ministry.

This Task Force consisted of Doug Kauffman – current camper and Board President, Todd Lederman – current camper and past Board President, Steve Ringenberg – current camper and past Board President, Joseph Mast – current camper and current Board Member, and Wayne Faber – Executive Director.

Before moving forward, the Board set some guidelines for the Master Site Planning Task Force to keep in mind:

- Don't make the camp feel crowded even with more people on site
- Try not to obstruct the view of the lake as much as possible

- Design buildings to “fit” into the existing feel of camp structures
- If camp expands across the road, make it so people cross the road the fewest times possible throughout the week
- Keep the lake side of the Lodge the central hub of activity
- Any new cabins need to be preapproved by the State of Michigan to use for our Youth Camp Program but function seamlessly for both the Family Camp and Youth Camp Programs.

The Master Site Planning Task Force moved forward with their direction from the Board and input from campers. As they progressed, they sought further direction from the Board and developed a proposed plan to send to the Board of Directors for approval. The results of their 18 months of diligent, methodical and thorough work are found in the Proposed Master Site Plan. 

The Proposed Master Site Plan

What follows is a proposed plan the Board of Little Eden approved to present to the Onekama Planning Commission. This is a comprehensive plan of projects the Task Force and Board feel the camp would look to do over the next 15 to 20 years. The Board felt that it was important to include the items in the big picture of the long range plan so everything would be well thought out, ensuring that land usage would be maximized and Little Eden could avoid having to go back to the Planning Commission repeatedly over the years.

Please be aware that this is only a proposal at this point. We will not know what the final plan will look like until we know what the Planning Commission will approve, what the State of Michigan and permitting authorities will allow, which projects will be supported and donor-driven, and what will be needed most when we reach that point in time.

As you look at the Proposed Master Site Plan, it is divided into phases. These phases were developed to give some order to the projects and are subject to change before anything is implemented. Some changes could occur based on what we receive back from the township, the needs of the camp as we progress through the process as well as the feasibility of completing the projects debt-free. The Little Eden Board is committed to not incurring long-term debt throughout the process of these projects.

The proposal includes:

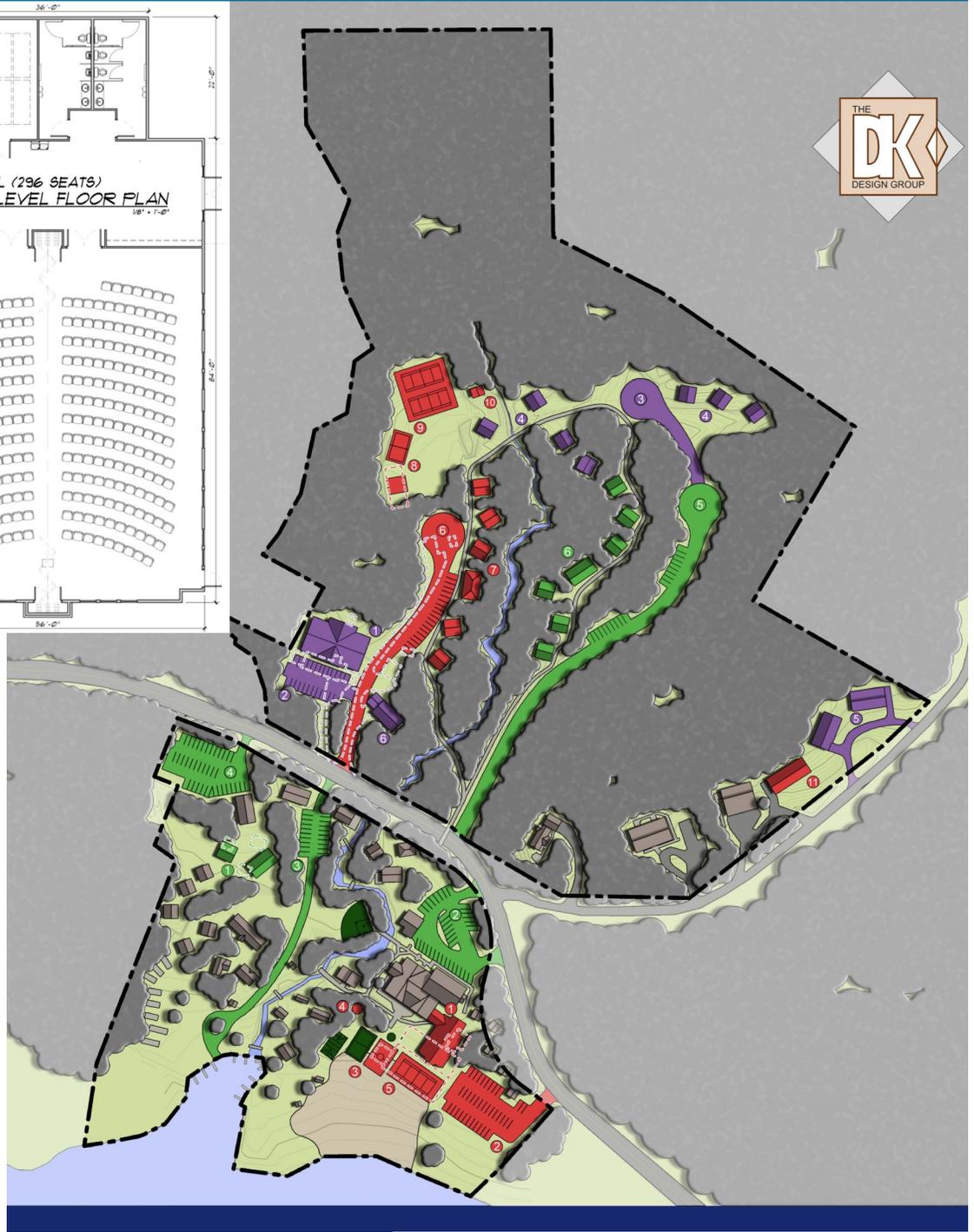
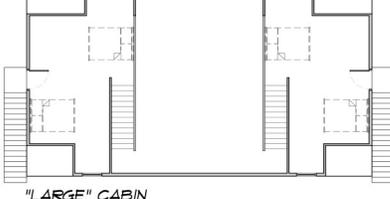
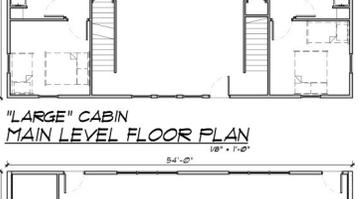
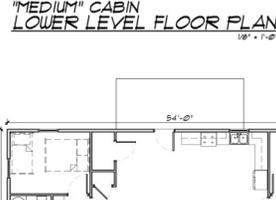
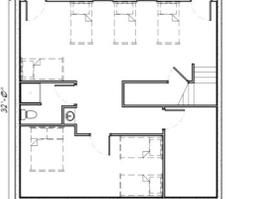
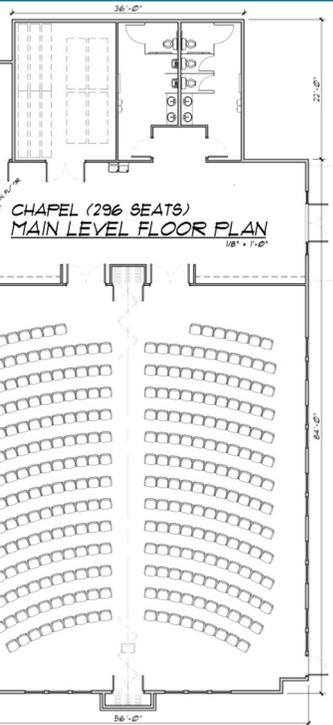
- **A new chapel:** Worship is a very important part of Little Eden's mission. The proposed new chapel would attach to the existing chapel allowing those staying in the lodge easy accessibility and keep the number of people crossing the road for worship to a minimum. The room would be dividable into two separate meeting spaces. Meeting room space is a current and growing need as we look to the future. Parking for the chapel as well as camper parking would be adjacent to the building.
- **Additional cabins:** Currently, one of our biggest needs is cabins for our Family Camp and Youth Camp Programs. This proposed plan has additional cabins in all three phases. Most of the cabins would be medium in size with two larger cabins that have basement meeting rooms. These cabins would allow us to move the Youth Camp Program across the road, thus making more room for families on the lake side. They would also provide additional housing for family camps during the other weeks of the summer. The last phase for building cabins is considered “extras” and would not be completed unless deemed necessary in the future.
- **New sports courts and playground:** New sports courts would be added to both sides of the road with a new playground added to the north

side. The hope, again, is to limit the need to cross the road as few times as possible throughout the week while creating spaces for fellowship, recreation, and community. When these activities are added, the storage building on the north side of the road would be removed and a new one would be placed by the existing maintenance building on Woodland Drive.

- **Crosswalk at nature trail:** The Task Force took the concerns of crossing the road very seriously. After much time spent evaluating different options, their proposal is to funnel all the foot traffic to the current nature trail and to have a pedestrian crosswalk just beyond the Little Eden Camp sign to the nature trail. At this location, you can see two to three hundred yards each direction giving ample room for pedestrians to observe traffic as well as drivers to notice campers crossing the road. Signage and additional safety options are also being pursued.
- **Additional parking:** The desire is to make camp safer. By providing more parking areas, fewer cars would need to drive in and out of camp. Campers in cabins could unload and then park in designated areas.
- **Additional office space:** As camper numbers increase, additional office space would be needed. The proposal shows the new house recently purchased becoming the new office location. This would make the office more centrally located as the camp expands.
- **An indoor activity center and staff housing:** To better accommodate campers, both in the summer and the off-season, on days of inclement weather, the proposed plan includes an indoor activity center and relocating staff who are currently housed on Portage Point Drive to Woodland Drive.

Again, this is a proposed plan that the Board approved to go to the Onekama Planning Commission. Please remember this plan is fluid and subject to change depending on the Planning Commission's decision, the State of Michigan and the permitting process, donor support and what is needed most at each step of the way.

We are excited about the possibilities for the future of Little Eden and want to thank the Master Plan Task Force for all their work thus far. We also want to thank you, our campers, for your ongoing suggestions, support and prayers as we have worked on these plans and will continue to work through this process in the upcoming year. As we progress through this process, we will continue to refine what our completed Master Plan will be and what portions of the Plan will be contained within the Capital Campaign to follow. 



Proposed Master Plan

- Legend**
- Phase I
 - Phase II
 - Phase III
 - Existing Buildings
 - Water
 - Trees
 - Existing Roads
 - Trails
 - - - - - Remove Existing
 - — — — — Property Boundary
 - Existing Recreation

Phase I Infrastructure Additions & New Construction

- 1.) New Chapel addition
- 2.) New parking
- 3.) New basketball court
- 4.) New tetherball court
- 5.) New tennis court
- 6.) New access road, parking & cul-de-sac
- 7.) One new large & five small cabins
- 8.) New play area & volleyball court
- 9.) New tennis courts
- 10.) New bathroom facility
- 11.) New maintenance building

Phase II Infrastructure Additions & New Construction

- 1.) One new large & one small cabin
- 2.) New Lodge parking
- 3.) New parking at boat launch access
- 4.) New parking
- 5.) New access road, parking & cul-de-sac
- 6.) One new large & six small cabins

Phase III Infrastructure Additions & New Construction

- 1.) New Activity Center
- 2.) New Activity Center parking
- 3.) Extend access road & cul-de-sac
- 4.) Seven new small cabins
- 5.) New drive & Director/Staff housing
- 6.) Move main offices to existing house

From the Director... Taking the next step in the planning process

Dear Families and Friends of Little Eden,

In this special edition of the Little Eden Echoes, you will find a **Proposed Master Plan** that will be submitted to the Onekama Planning Commission in November.

As you look over this newsletter, I would ask that, although you might be drawn to first look at the prints, to please first pause and read, **"The WHY of the Future Growth for Little Eden"**, **"The Master Planning Task Force"**, and **"The Proposed Master Site Plan."** The information in these sections will help you understand what the prints are about, the processes that have taken place to get us to this point, and where we will go from here.

I want to thank the Board of Little Eden and the Master Planning Task Force for all their work thus far and for the work they will need to continue to do as we move forward through this process. I would also like to thank everyone who has been praying for us as we work through this process; for the feedback, encouragement,

and concerns expressed which helped shape the work done thus far; and for your ongoing prayers as we continue to finalize these plans over the next year.

This information was presented at the **72nd Annual Meeting**, held at the camp on Saturday, October 22, 2016. We wanted to mail it to you prior to the normal January newsletter so that you, too, would receive this information and be informed on the happenings at camp.

Sincerely,

Wayne Faber

Wayne A. Faber
Executive Director



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LITTLE EDEN CAMP

