



Diocese of Scranton

Diocesan Building Commission Policy & Procedure

Policy:

The Diocesan Statutes constitute particular law of the Diocese of Scranton. The Diocesan Statutes define a parish as a definite community of the Christian faithful which is under the pastoral care of a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop. (c.515).

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedure that is to be followed when a parish desires to engage in a particular project to repair, enhance or otherwise improve a particular parish property (i.e., church, rectory, convent, school, parish center, cemetery, etc.). Projects that are subject to this policy include, but are not limited to: painting, installing carpeting, roof repair or replacement, window repair or replacement, masonry work, etc. All projects that are anticipated to cost \$100,000.00 and above shall follow this policy. Projects under the \$100,000.00 threshold shall follow the previously instituted Parish Project Policy.

In instituting this policy, it is clarified that the Diocesan Building Commission (DBC) exists to provide engineering and architectural advice to the Diocesan Bishop and members of his leadership and senior staff on major projects (i.e., those anticipated to cost \$100,000 and above) being planned within the boundaries of the Diocese of Scranton. Members of the DBC are appointed by the Bishop and are responsible to review projects so as to provide an independent perspective regarding the proposed project and provide comments to assist all Diocesan entities in obtaining the best value project in accordance with the approved scope of work. Reviews will be conducted to determine technical feasibility, bidability, constructability, sustainability, energy conservation opportunities, schedule practicality, use of best practices, value-engineering opportunities, means of increasing operational efficiencies, and quality of construction documents. Reviews are usually not intended to change the concept, intent, or aesthetic features.

Procedure:

1. Any project shall not commence until the approval of the Diocesan Bishop has been obtained by following the Parish Project Policy. When it is determined that a project will meet or exceed the \$100,000.00 threshold, a request to convene the Diocesan Building Commission must be made. In advance of submitting said request, the following items **must** be addressed:
 - a. Projects of this magnitude must involve the required disciplines such as architects, engineers, and construction managers.
 - b. Plans for the construction/renovation shall be created by engaging the services of an architectural and/or engineering firm licensed to perform work in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with the ability to perform the requested work. This engagement of services shall be either by setting a fixed fee or by payment based on a percentage of the overall project. A standard percentage used for commitment usually averages 7%. The percentage will vary predicated on the extent of involvement and oversight of the selected firm. A firm's involvement could range from creation of the initial conception drawings to the complete

direction/oversight until completion of the said project. The Parish Project Policy is to be followed in order to engage such services.

- c. The use of Construction Management in conjunction with Engineering/Architectural specialties is strongly recommended to ensure proper project completion and value engineering throughout. The selection of a Construction Management Firm will follow the same process as that of engaging the services of an Engineering/Architectural firm. The standard cost for these types of services averages 6% of total project cost unless otherwise agreed upon.
 - d. Engagement of services shall be through the use of standard AIA accepted contracts outlining the specific services to be provided by the accepted contractor.
 - e. An explanation addressing how the project is to be funded, including specifying if the parish has funds on deposit to pay for the project or if funds need to be raised or borrowed shall be part of the presentation to the DBC.
 - f. Once the associated drawings, cost estimates, time frames, etc are established, a request to present the project to the Diocesan Building Commission can be made through the Vicar General's Office. Along with the request to convene, submission of a project summary along with corresponding drawings/blueprints is required 2 weeks prior to the scheduled Commission meeting.
2. Once the presentation is made to the DBC, the DBC will evaluate the information and respond in the following manners:
 - a. If additional information or clarification is needed, the pastor will be informed of the additional information needed.
 - b. If the project request is approved, the pastor will be informed and an approval letter will be forwarded to the pastor.
 - c. Likewise, if the project request is denied, the pastor will be informed and a denial letter will be forwarded to the pastor.
 - d. A copy of all correspondence related to the project will be maintained in the parish file.
3. If a project is approved to move forward using the construction bid process, the Diocese requires the following items be incorporated into the process to ensure consistent procedures and accurate accountability:
 - a. The selected firm charged with the oversight of the project will be responsible for:
 - I. Soliciting and reviewing a minimum of three bids for the scope of the particular work to be conducted. Solicitation for bids should be made on a prevailing wage basis unless otherwise deemed unnecessary by the DBC.
 - II. Recommendation to pastor/parish of bids to be accepted.
 - III. Acceptance of bids will be through the use of standard AIA accepted contracts which are to be signed by the Bishop unless it is agreed the pastor is authorized to sign on the Bishop's behalf.
 - IV. Bid Bond's in the amount of 10% should be part of the authorized contract unless otherwise deemed unnecessary by the DBC.
 - V. The Diocese of Scranton along with the entity hosting the project are to be named as additional insured on the accepted contractor's insurance policy.

Insurance requirements and minimum limits for contractors:
Commercial General Liability \$2,000,000 Aggregate Limit
Automobile Liability \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit
Excess Liability \$4,000,000
Workers Compensation A – Statutory B - \$500,000

- VI. Payment applications are to be submitted through the overseeing firm on standard AIA forms with the appropriate authorizations and signatures. The appropriate number of copies are to be provided.
- VII. Payment applications are to be reviewed and authorized by the pastor or a representative of the Diocese before submittal for payment.
- VIII. Retention of 10% of the overall agreed upon cost to provide services will be held until contract has been fulfilled and signed off upon by overseeing firm and entity involved. Retainage can be paid individually as appropriate.
- IX. Upon completion, all operating manuals, blue prints, etc are to be turned over to the involved entity with a copy of all provided to the Diocese for archiving.

Questions regarding this policy are to be directed to Reverend Thomas M. Muldowney, Vicar General. Additionally, if a pastor and his Parish Pastoral Council or his Parish Finance Council need assistance or guidance with determining whether or not a particular project should to be conducted, raising funds for a project, or verifying the financial status of a particular parish account, such support is available through the following diocesan offices:

Vicar General

Reverend Thomas M. Muldowney, V.G.
Vicar General of the Diocese
Rev-TM-Muldowney@dioceseofscranton.org
Phone: (570) 207-2269

Development Office

James Bebla
Diocesan Secretary for Development
Jim-Bebbla@dioceseofscranton.org
Phone: (570) 207-2250

Property and Risk Management

Frank Semanski
Secretary of Property and Risk Management
Frank-Semanski@dioceseofscranton.org
Phone: (570) 558-4310

Finance Office

Robert J. Miller, CPA
Diocesan Secretary for Financial Services
Robert-Miller@dioceseofscranton.org
Phone: (570) 207-2237

Diocesan Building Commission Request Checklist

Date: _____

Parish/Facility: _____

Pastor/ Administrator: _____

Please provide in advance of meeting:

☐ Description of the project

☐ Reason for the project

☐ Bids for the project

- a minimum of three (3) bids are to be secured
- if fewer than 3 bids were secured, explain why
- identify the vendor selected for the project
- if the lowest bidder was not selected, explain why
- submit copies of the bids with the request letter

☐ Cost of the project

☐ Funding for the project

- confirmation that the parish has the funds available to cover the cost of the project
- if the funds must be raised, explain the fundraising activities that will occur
- if the funds must be borrowed, explain how that will be accomplished

☐ Parish Pastoral Council

Confirm that the Parish Pastoral Council agrees with and consents to the project

☐ Parish Finance Council

- the chair of the parish finance council must co-sign the letter of request with the Pastor
- if the cost of the project will exceed \$50,000, all the members of the finance council must sign the letter of request indicating their consent for the project