

Frequently Asked Questions



Phase 2

How does budget tie in with the Long Range Program & Property Plan?

The Long Range Program & Property Plan committee was formed in March 2008. From the beginning, its #1 objective was to align property to meet girls' programmatic needs and interests. It allows the council to save money and redirect funds from administration and overhead to direct services. There is great opportunity to reinvest savings, potentially 10%-15% of our operating budget, generated by divesting some properties.

On a national level, an average of 10%-15% of the operating budget goes towards property and related program expenses. We are spending 31% and half of that is related to our four service centers. The other half supports our outdoor facilities.

In addition, Girl Scout councils are not immune to economic downturns. Our investments have decreased 33% since the start of the current recession. In addition, our three-year budget plan was based on an assumption of 14,500-16,000 girl memberships and we're off goal by approximately 25%.

How does selling the Mauldin Service Center and merging with the Greenville Corporate Headquarters help the overall strategic property plan and budget?

First, the Mauldin building is available for sale because it's owned by the council without a mortgage or lease. In the case with the Greenville and Columbia offices, we have multi-year leases that can't be broken. Being only six miles from headquarters, most volunteers and staff currently familiar with the Mauldin Service Center won't be required to drive an additional distance. Also, a commitment was made to the Board of Directors during the research process that our council would maintain a Greenville presence.

In addition, our largest expenditure is staffing. By proceeding with selling the Mauldin building, duplicate staff positions have been eliminated which will reduce overhead.

What is the status on the Mauldin-Greenville Service Center merger?

- The Mauldin Regional Service Center Closing Ceremony was held on September 27 as a tribute to the legacy and special memories of those who worked and attended activities there. The Mauldin “For Sale” sign will be posted soon.
- Volunteer Resource Center/Girlz Gear Shop: Upfitting and consolidation have been completed at the Corporate Headquarters, now known as the Greenville Service Center and Corporate Headquarters. An additional 850-sq. ft. room is newly-leased space from Activant. We thank Activant for its generosity made with the sublease arrangement and in-kind support. Located at the main entrance of the building, the current office door remains the entrance. The front half will be used as the Girlz Gear Shop and the back half as a Volunteer Resource Center. A folding wall divides both sections. As you walk through the Girlz Gear Shop and enter the Volunteer Resource Center section, a computer, copier and multi-functional printer are on the left.
- New Mobile Work Center: A 22'-long countertop with six computer hookups has been installed for community-based staff.
- The Mauldin staff has completed their transition to the Greenville Service Center.
- September 8 was the opening day for the Volunteer Resource Center/Girlz Gear Shop. Based on feedback from members, the phone system has been streamlined so that a live voice answers calls more often than in the past. All 800-number and general office calls for Greenville, Spartanburg and Columbia, will now ring directly into the Greenville office. The receptionist and support staff are in place to answer calls as quickly as possible and to direct them as requested. Direct-dial calls remain the most efficient way to reach specific staff members.
- Until it sells, the Mauldin site will maintain a phone, primarily for the purpose of outgoing calls, including emergency use by troops utilizing the site for troop rentals. It will still be cleaned, have staff storage, and be available to troops.

What is the status of Camp Mary Elizabeth?

One-on-one meetings are ongoing with key partners. Options for the Spartanburg Service Center are being explored, including a short-term lease renewal, relocating to in-kind space, or returning to Camp Mary Elizabeth Program Center.

What is the status of the Columbia Service Center?

We are in year three of a 10-year lease. We are in the process of investigating three lease options: 1) Lease the entire building and move to a more convenient location with easier access that is more visible in the community; 2) Sublet in a shared situation where some resources, such as a receptionist, maintenance and kitchen, are used by both organizations; 3) Sublet to an independent organization in which there are no shared resources.

Who are the Ad Hoc Property Committee members? What are their responsibilities?

Mark James, Columbia, and Rebecca Lever, Greenville, will be the co-chairs and all other members will be announced at the next board meeting.

If camp properties don't sell before next summer, will we have programs there in 2010?

The opportunities and obstacles are still being studied. We hope to have a decision very soon.

Are we still looking at partnering with Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina for summer programs?

That option is currently under discussion with details scheduled for report in November.

What is the best way to get updates on the continued Property Plan progress?

Log onto www.sheseesthefuture.org.