



ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Our Master Plan Journey

Why now, what it involves, and how you can be part of it

A Conversation with the Congregation • September 2026

TODAY'S CONVERSATION

What We'll Cover Today



Why Now?

The story behind this moment, and the decade of discernment that brought us here.



What a Master Plan Involves

The phases of work, what's being evaluated, and what it costs.



Our Partner: McKinney York

How we chose an architecture firm, and why they're the right fit.



How You Can Be Involved

Upcoming meetings and sessions where your voice shapes the plan.



Why Now?

This work builds on a decade of discernment, not a decision made overnight.

FOUNDATION ONE

Where We've Been: The 2014 Master Plan



What Drove It

- Strain from a previous relocation
- A financial crisis facing the parish
- Diocesan intervention
- Decisions about 11 acres of undeveloped land



What We Accomplished

- Recentered our identity as a multicultural, multilingual community with African American heritage
- Established lasting financial strategies
- Advanced key formation priorities
- Set the terms for subsequent land sales

FOUNDATION TWO

Where We're Going: The 2025–2030 Strategic Vision



What's Changed

- Our debt was paid off in 2023
- Our neighborhood is changing
- Generational shifts within our parish
- Growing demands on our building's use
- Deeper incorporation of our Spanish-speaking community



How We Listened

- Consulted Rev. Nancy Frausto on bilingual models
- Vestry-led small-group discernment
- Engaged more than 160 parishioners
- Insights organized into three strategic pillars

Three Strategic Pillars Guide Our Planning



Expanding Welcome

- A new Master Plan that connects our church more deeply to community
- Newcomer engagement
- Bilingual communications
- Stewardship sensitive to our socioeconomic diversity



Connecting Generations

- Multicultural hospitality training
- Mentoring in liturgy & music leadership
- Monthly intergenerational experiences
- Life-stage focused ministries



Building Partnerships

- Campus ministry expansion
- Arts, education & food-insecurity collaboration
- Latino/immigrant organization connections
- Interfaith & sustainability partnerships

EMERGING FROM OUR PLANNING

What Our Campus Needs to Address

Themes surfacing from strategic planning that will inform the Master Plan



Accessibility



Sustainability



Heritage Preservation



Secure Access



Restroom Upgrades



Sanctuary Improvements



Founders Hall Expansion



School Facility Needs



Outdoor Gathering Spaces



Columbarium Placement

THE PROCESS

What a Master Plan Involves: Five Work Streams

1

Congregational Engagement

Clarify the congregation's goals and priorities for the campus.

2

Site Evaluation

Assess the property, access, and outdoor spaces.

3

Building Evaluation

Review the condition and systems of existing buildings.

4

Drawings & Narratives

Translate findings into concept drawings and a written plan.

5

Meetings

Ongoing collaboration with the committee, vestry, and congregation.

THE PROCESS

Our Investment in This Work

By Work Stream: Quoted vs. Negotiated

Work Stream	Quoted	Negotiated	Savings
Congregational Engagement	\$25,000	\$21,650	\$3,350
Site Evaluation	\$16,000	\$13,050	\$2,950
Building Evaluation	\$29,000	\$19,650	\$9,350
Drawings & Narratives	\$35,000	\$30,800	\$4,200
Meetings	\$12,000	\$7,350	\$4,650

\$91,900

Total negotiated investment

\$25,100

Saved through negotiation — down from an initial \$117,000 estimate



Our Partner: McKinney York Architects

How we chose the firm who will walk this journey with us

SELECTION PROCESS

How We Chose Our Partner



WHY THIS FIRM

Why We Chose McKinney York Architects



Deep experience with churches,
including Episcopal parishes



Strong roots in East Austin's
cultural sites and nonprofits



A collaborative approach to
congregational engagement



Genuine enthusiasm from their
whole project team



Budget consciousness
throughout their proposal



Understood the importance of
our columbarium to this
community

GET INVOLVED

How You Can Be Involved



Stakeholder Meetings

- September 23, 7 pm
- September 26, two morning sessions, one in Spanish
- October 10

Focused conversations with key stakeholder groups.



Congregational Engagement Sessions

- October 31, 10-12 pm
- November 7, 10-12 pm (multilingual - English & Spanish)

Open sessions for the whole congregation — times to be announced.

Watch your bulletin and email for sign-up details and exact times.

PREPARING FOR THE CONVERSATION

Questions to Consider Before Our Sessions

Reflections to bring with you into the conversation.

1

How can the campus of St. James' more clearly reflect and honor its African American heritage, and its multicultural present and future?

2

How can we continue the work of accessibility in order to bring many generations to the table?

3

How can the campus of St. James' open itself up to and connect better with its changing surroundings?

4

How could campus changes contribute to the historic work of this community in education, public health and wellness, and music and the arts?



Thank You

Your voice matters in shaping St. James' future.

Questions? Reach out to the Master Plan Committee through the church office.