



# Stop Point Consensus: Defining When to Pause a Church Building Project

When undertaking a church construction project, the leadership must have a clear understanding of when to move forward—and just as importantly, when to stop. A **Stop Point Consensus** is a predetermined agreement that defines specific circumstances that require an immediate pause in the project. This ensures that potential issues are addressed thoroughly before irreversible decisions are made.

## The Purpose of a Stop Point Consensus

A church building project is a significant investment of time, money, and trust. Without clearly defined stop points, critical issues may be overlooked, leading to financial strain, structural problems, or even division within the congregation. The **Stop Point Consensus** serves as a safeguard, ensuring that when serious concerns arise, the project is halted for a full review and resolution before continuing.

## How to Create a Stop Point Consensus as a Team

Developing this agreement should be a collaborative effort, ensuring that all key stakeholders—including the building committee, church leadership, and financial stewards—are aligned. Here's how to establish an effective Stop Point Consensus:

- 1. Identify Non-Negotiable Issues** – Determine the situations that would require an immediate stop. These might include major budget overruns, contractor disputes, unsafe construction conditions, or design failures.
- 2. Define the Decision-Making Process** – Outline who has the authority to call a stop, whether it's the full committee, a subcommittee, or an external advisor.
- 3. Establish Clear Criteria for a Stop** – Specify the exact circumstances that warrant halting progress. Examples include:
  - Exceeding budget thresholds by a set percentage.
  - Significant disagreements over critical design elements.
  - Contractor or vendor issues that threaten project integrity.
  - Discovery of legal, zoning, or permitting obstacles.
  - Safety concerns on the construction site.

4. **Document the Agreement in Writing** – Clearly state the stop points and ensure all involved parties sign off on them before construction begins.
5. **Set a Process for Resolution** – Determine how issues will be addressed before work resumes. This may include bringing in outside experts, reassessing financial plans, or revising construction timelines.

## Before We Let This Happen, We Will Shut It All Down

Some circumstances go beyond project logistics, finances, or construction issues. There may be deeper, spiritual, or relational concerns that would compel the church to completely halt the project—even permanently. Every church must prayerfully decide in advance if there are situations that would cause them to abandon the build altogether.

Examples of such situations might include:

- **A Church Split** – If significant divisions arise within the congregation over the project, doctrine, or leadership, it may be wiser to refocus on unity rather than continue construction.
- **Lead Staff Departure** – If the senior pastor or key leadership team members resign or are forced out, the project’s vision may no longer align with the church’s future direction.
- **Major Conflict with the Community** – If the project creates significant tension with the surrounding community or damages the church’s witness, pausing to seek reconciliation may be necessary.
- **Clear Lack of God’s Provision** – If financial resources or support for the project disappear, it may be a sign to reevaluate whether the church is moving in step with God’s will.

The committee must determine in advance if these or other situations warrant a **complete and permanent stop** to the project, rather than simply a pause. **Above all, this process must be guided by prayer and a commitment to following God’s direction.**

## Steps to Enforce a Stop Point

When a stop point is triggered, immediate action is required. The process should follow these steps:

1. **Call an Emergency Meeting** – Gather the committee and relevant decision-makers to review the issue.
2. **Assess the Problem** – Collect all necessary data, including budget reports, legal opinions, or contractor feedback.

3. **Identify Possible Solutions** – Determine the best course of action, whether renegotiating contracts, redesigning elements, or securing additional funding.
4. **Seek God’s Guidance** – Pray as a leadership team, seek wise counsel, and ensure the next steps align with biblical principles.
5. **Communicate Clearly with the Congregation** – Keep stakeholders informed about the situation and next steps.
6. **Resume, Redefine, or Shut Down the Project** – Once a solution is agreed upon, either move forward, restructure, or make the difficult decision to stop completely.

## Why This Matters

A **Stop Point Consensus** isn’t just about preventing disaster—it’s about making sure your church’s building project remains faithful to its mission, resources, and people. By establishing these boundaries in advance, you create a project that is **wise, accountable, and built to last**. Most importantly, by submitting every decision to God’s leading, your church ensures that the project remains an act of faith rather than a human-driven initiative. **If the choice ever comes between protecting the church’s unity, mission, and testimony—or pushing forward with construction—the right decision should always be clear.**