



Camp Agapé Master Plan Update April 2019

Master Plan team

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Agapé † Kure Beach Ministries calls and gathers all people
to experience the Spirit through encounters
with Christ, in Creation and Community.

Inspiration for the Master Plan update

People experience Agapé † Kure Beach Ministries (A+KBM) and specifically Camp Agapé through summer Camps, environmental education (both on-site and off-site), programmed retreats, hosted retreats, and community events. In recent years the Reach 100 program has allowed camp to serve significant number of area young people that would not have been able to attend in the past. More than 11,500 people are served by programs offered through Camp Agapé each year. In 2018 the Board of Directors recognized the need for renewed focus on the vision of ministry and service. The Board formed a working committee to develop a forward-looking Master Plan update for Camp Agapé.

Camp Agapé is in a period of its history that could be considered thriving. Staff and volunteers daily follow the vision for excellence in service that has been the foundation for programs for more than 20 years. Yet, there is a sense the God is calling us to do more. We can reach more people. We can continue to improve programming. We can build further on what we have accomplished in the first 50 years of ministry.

The reasons to adopt a new Master Plan are varied. We have witnessed a shift in the demographics of the people we serve. Changes in where and how people live mean that we experience Christ and creation in new ways. These are very different compared to past decades and require different facilities, services, and programs. The pace of change is a factor too. So, perhaps just as important as a roadmap for improvement and growth is the need for agility to allow our program staff to respond to emerging needs.

Camp Agapé has become a significant focus for A+KBM's work. A strong Camp Agapé is critical for A+KBM because its success fuels the work of the whole ministry. This master plan seeks to promote care for the current assets, plan for facility improvements, and create a cohesive long-term vision for the property. These are all important when considering how we adapt and grow. The Board believes that as we faithfully live out this plan we will also be able to create a new future for Faith Center at Kure Beach.

This Master Plan represents an opportunity to create a successful future for the whole ministry that is rooted in a 50-year legacy of serving all guests at both properties for coming generations. **We do all of this in order to live out our mission of building leaders and forming faith.**

Master Planning Process Overview:

In Early 2018 the *Master Plan Team* met to discern issues that may impact Camp Agapé in coming years. With no constraints on items for consideration, the team captured wide ranging topics and ultimately grouped those into eight major categories. The Major Categories of the topics (in no order) are:

- Financial / Fund Raising
- Swimming pool
- Community visibility
- Technology
- Environmental Education
- User base
- Facilities
- Other (miscellaneous items)

Table 1 on page 10 (Appendix), lists all ideas captured by the team during its brainstorming.

The *Master Plan Team* considered current uses of the property, various financial factors, and program offerings. Notable among the considerations is the source of existing operating funds and the experience of the staff about growth opportunities. Table 2 on page 11(Appendix), provides a list of current revenue sources for Camp Agapé and anecdotal notes about each. By aggregating these factors, the *Master Plan Team* recommends the new 2019 Master Plan address the following factors:

- Acknowledge the need to implement changes in programs (what Agapé offers) in an agile way to quickly adapt to changes for users.
- The Board of Directors must create a periodic Master Plan renewal process. The *Master Plan Team* believes a three-year cycle is appropriate.
- Address possible overall changes in direction for use of the Agapé site
 - a) Create program offerings with more adult focus
 - b) Recognize and market to serve more hosted groups as growth opportunity
 - c) Enhance Environment Education with and facilities and staffing to continue its role as a program center piece
- Be open to the potential for alternative site uses and new or different revenue streams that still fit within the A+KBM mission
- Publish materials with the 2019 Master Plan that high-light both accomplishments in the last 3-5 years and establish expectations for the next 7-10 years. These materials should serve as ministry and program guidance tools as well as the foundation of fundraising materials to inform donors.

Prioritized recommendations of the 2019 Master Plan:

These recommendations are presented on the Conceptual Site Plan (Figure 1 on pg 5) to allow readers to see how these ideas may be integrated into the site.

1. **IT Facility upgrades.** IT Facility upgrades will be the foundation for future growth. Existing internet connectivity is inadequate both for camp operations and guest service. Current internet service to the office is expensive, unreliable and data-capped, causing workplace inefficiencies for staff. For guests, a major concern is that the service we do have (even mobile cellular service) is not reliable at camp as compared to routine ubiquitous service elsewhere. Programming emphasizes “unconnected time” but most adults expect reliable phone and Wi-Fi when needed. IT upgrades are essential for communications, operations, and to provide an improved visitor experience, especially hosted retreats. Solutions and upgrades should be in place by the 2020 peak camp season.
2. **Swimming pool and bathhouse replacement.** The pool is an important feature for the summer campers. The age and useful life of the current pool are such that Harnett County Health Department requirements dictate the swimming pool be replaced no later than 2022. We have already been granted an extension on the permitted life of the existing pool. No more extensions will be allowed. Some site layout, planning, and initial budgeting has been done. Final planning must be initiated to meet the construction and operations schedule. New facilities will also allow us to take advantage of newer technologies and simplified maintenance.
3. **Intentional leadership development.** Provide for on-site residency for additional staff. A key growth area is the training and development of leaders and ministry interns. A+KBM has already begun discussions with two universities to collaborate on providing for-credit courses to support degree pursuits. Such partnerships as well as our on-going internship development requires that we offer housing options at camp. This could include adding a residential building on-site or nearby rental housing on an interim basis. The collaboration with the universities is being evaluated. Regardless, the need for program interns is such that viable housing options should be in place by the summer of 2021.
4. **Hosted retreats.** Develop an approach to serve more hosted retreats. Camp Agapé is facility constrained. In 2018, we turned away visitors and up to \$150K in potential revenue. There is a clear need to increase moderate high-comfort retreat space to support demand. Such a facility may be, in part, self-funded through rental revenue. It appears the cost can be offset by retreat earnings which will shorten the return period on the construction investment. This item should be studied, vetted, and planned by summer 2020. It is expected that studies will indicate construction in the 2021-23 time frame.
5. **Approach to rejuvenate Kure Beach Faith Center.** No later than 2024, the Board and program staff must define and publish an approach for the Faith Center at Kure Beach. Agapé † Kure Beach Ministry is more than Camp Agapé. This Master Plan is about program plans for Camp Agapé. Nonetheless, there is a desire to re-invent the Faith Center at the beach to serve its mission differently in the future. Consequently, the Master Plan Team and Board of Directors believe much needed preliminary planning should begin. As we start to fulfill the Agapé Master Plan we will respond to the complimentary responsibility to begin planning for enrichment of the Kure Beach Faith Center.

Figure 1: Conceptual Camp Agapé Site Master Plan



Camp Agapé Master Plan Concept

Fuquay-Varina, NC

Scale: 0 100 200 400
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 MARCH 12, 2019

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Additional Recommendations from the *Master Plan Team* for consideration by the staff and Board of Directors

These are not intended to be specific actions but rather considered by the Camp Agapé Leadership to grow ministry offerings, promote stability, continually improve operations, and provide for property enhancement.

Evaluation and Future Planning for A+KBM

- The Board of Directors should set meeting agendas at least twice annually to that include specific review of Master Plan recommendations. The objective is to keep these items top-of-mind and establish actions to accomplish the Master Plan.
- The Board of Directors should discuss and adopt an approach for Master Plan renewal/review process on a recurring basis.
- Staff should be encouraged to consider and plan to adopt program offerings that allow for more agility in serving guests and users of the A+KBM facilities. The Master Plan envisions program offerings may include, but should not be limited to possible program changes like:
 - a) More adult focus
 - b) More hosted retreats for business users
 - c) Build staff to support and grow Environmental Education offerings

Long Term Health of A+KBM

- Aggressively pursue capital replacement of critical facilities to assure continuity of operation
- Look for ways to strategically grow the user base that A+KBM serves
- Actively investigate a possible 3rd party partner and user on the property for an advantageous shared-use
- Consider financing options that allow the Board to determine appropriate timing of new (growth-oriented) spending
- Consider selling/trading under-utilized property that creates advantages for Camp Agapé. Goals that might be achieved could include:
 - a) Enlarge, preserve, and protect Parker's Creek and its contributing watershed
 - b) Establish designated conservation areas and environmental buffers
 - c) Create more logical property boundaries to make it easier to access, use, manage, and secure
 - d) Limit the impact of future logging operations on nearby property and possible impact to the camp ecosystem
 - e) Limit the need for adjacent owners to access their lands through Camp Agapé property

Site Plan areas of interest:

- Implement enhancements that add to the visitor experience (e.g. *develop a Cape Fear River landing, extend the zip Line, add trails for hiking and connecting camp facilities, add to Skyview Village (Gerhard Cabin area)*).
- Identify areas (zones) on the property for complementary uses
 - a) Outdoor recreation (track, drone flying field, zip line, other)
 - b) Indoor recreation to deliver programs regardless of weather
- Resolve Harnett County zoning/subdivision compliance to give best long-term flexibility for use of the property