

# Document D2A: “How do we get there?” | Prioritizing Our Initiatives Facilitation Sheet & Impact/Effort Analysis Chart

Event Hosts: PFAC/PFLT members | Audience: PFAC members

## Overview

To prioritize initiatives, you will: Summarize the previous community discussions from “Who do we want to become?”; combine the summary with the finalized parish family vision and high-level initiative list; and hold a PFAC work session to prayerfully review the proposed initiatives from the “Who do we want to become?” work and prioritize these as High, Medium, Low, or Not a Priority by considering the potential effort and impact of each initiative, keeping in mind how they do (or do not) align with the parish vision.

## Setting Up

This PFAC/PFLT session would be best in-person with printed copies of the finalized vision and initiatives for reference. One person should facilitate the discussion while another take notes. Make use of the Impact/Effort Analysis guide (Doc. 3) and Vision and Initiatives document (Doc. 4) in the coming pages during the discussion to ensure everyone is on the same page. The notetaker should read back the initiative identified as the High, Medium, Low, or Not a Priority – as well as how each aligns with the vision.

## Impact, Effort, and Prioritization

Assessing the impact, effort, and prioritization of initiatives is an art, not a science. The goal is to estimate, knowing your opportunities and challenges, which ministries or offerings would “move the needle”. Instead of starting by targeting numbers, plan towards likely ministry outcomes such as strengthening faith in families, increasing access to sacraments, providing service and charity, evangelizing the wider community or promoting vocations, etc.

Effort can be similarly challenging to estimate, as each initiative will require unique resources (whether time, personnel, property, or capital). At the same time, initiatives planned without sufficient consideration for the structures and needed resources are unlikely to come to fruition. Consider the following questions for each:

- **Timing:** When will work begin in the next 5 years and when will it conclude?
- **Staffing:** Will new staff (or volunteers) need to be hired or trained for this initiative?
- **Leadership:** Who will have leadership/oversight responsibility for this initiative?
- **Budget:** Will it have a dedicated budget? Will it result in measurable cost savings (or changes to income)? How will the budget, savings, or revenues change over time?
- **Program structure:** Will it include new or changed programming, events, or retreats?
- **Partnership:** Will it involve collaboration with other parishes or organizations?
  
- **Communication:** What communications (promotional or informational) will need to be distributed to parishioners as part of this initiative?
- **Evaluation:** How will its outcomes be tracked, reviewed, or reported after it is implemented? How will we know if this initiative was successful?

- **Other resources:** Will new resources (e.g., technology, equipment, tools, space) be introduced or upgraded as part of this initiative?

Look for high-return opportunities to tackle first. If something is *High impact* and *Low effort*, it should be considered a *High priority*. *High impact* and *High effort* initiatives may also be *High priority*. Something *Low impact* and *High effort* should be considered *Low (or Not a) priority*.

Most importantly, carry this out with trust in God. Remember St. Paul's words to the Corinthians:

*What is Apollos, after all, and what is Paul? Ministers through whom you became believers, just as the Lord assigned each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth. Therefore, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who causes the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters are equal, and each will receive wages in proportion to his labor. For we are God's co-workers; you are God's field, God's building. (1 Corinthians 3:5-9)*

### A note on estimating effort

While successful parish initiatives will involve the whole community, the effort we are estimating is that of staff, clergy, or consultative leaders, and volunteers responsible for accomplishing the work. If you are proposing a new faith formation program, try to estimate the effort for staff to design curriculum and recruit volunteers, and for ministers to launch the program – not the effort for people to drive to a session or adapt to a new schedule. Effort is taken on *for* the parish community, while impacts are those felt *by* the parish community.

### Process

Review each of the initiatives and discuss the potential impact and effort required, as well as how well the initiative aligns with the vision statement. After determining the impact and effort, plot it on the chart below. Then list the initiatives on the next page based on priority level, noting the alignment (or nonalignment) with the vision.

## Example Impact/Effort Considerations

Parish Family 91 contains St. Dymphna, St. Joan of Arc, and Annunciation Parish, three suburban parishes with two schools. St. Joan of Arc and Annunciation parishes both have under 600 registered families, while St. Dymphna has over 1,000. St. Dymphna and Annunciation both have active schools, with St. Dymphna serving pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade and Annunciation serving 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>. St. Joan of Arc and St. Dymphna both have a weekly Spanish Mass and faith formation. After their work in the "Who are we?" and "Who do we want to become?" sections of the One Parish Plan, the following were included in their high-level initiatives:

1. Create a taskforce to study the feasibility of combining the St. Dymphna and Annunciation schools into a pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> school, likely at a new location.
2. Move all Spanish Masses and reconciliations to St. Joan of Arc, maintaining faith formation and other programming at the St. Joan of Arc and St. Dymphna campuses.
3. Start a food pantry at St. Joan of Arc, retain the Annunciation food pantry, and expand the food bank at St. Dymphna to offer hot meals once per week.
4. Renovate a large house currently used as a rental at St. Dymphna to serve as a faith formation space hosting all religious education programming for the campus.

When reviewing these initiatives, the PFAC determined the following:

1. Initiative 1 is **High effort** and **High impact**. The research to determine feasibility of a potential move of school facilities will take multiple years, and the execution of this (if it is determined necessary) is likely to include substantial fundraising and community engagement. That said, both schools are nearing capacity and serve similar demographics, making the proposal for a new school to serve the region compelling.
2. Initiative 2 is **Medium effort** and **Medium impact**. It does not require changing any non-weekend ministries, as it only proposes the move of Masses and reconciliation to a single site. The primary effort will be in communicating with and inviting the Spanish-speaking population to make the move to the other campus for liturgy and confession. With no cuts to programming, negative impacts on the ministry should be minimal.
3. Initiative 3 is **Medium effort** and **Low impact**. It involves the creation of a new social justice ministry at one campus, and a slight expansion of services at another, without clarity of who could take on these responsibilities. There are also already food service programs in the same town as St. Joan of Arc, so this ministry is likely to be duplicative.
4. Initiative 4 is **High effort** and **Low impact**. The parish family will lose rental income, while spending a substantial amount to transform a living space into something amenable for faith formation. The parish family is also proposing to maintain site-specific faith formation while doing this, so it would only serve those families at Annunciation.

When considering their options, the PFAC decided to categorize Initiative 1 as High priority, Initiative 2 Medium priority, Initiative 3 as Low priority, and Initiative 4 as Not a priority. Their next step is to begin determining the specific resource needs and impacts of Initiatives 1, 2, and 3, and to consider adjusting or not pursuing Initiative 4.