

Tool #18: Space Use Inventory

The following exercise will give you a quick check on how your church property is used and what actions you might take to maximize its effectiveness and availability for externally focused ministry.

I. Draw a rough diagram of your building — don't worry about measurements or proportions. Indicate all spaces on all floors and don't forget the outdoor space.

II. For each space, fill in a row in the following space usage chart (make copies as needed), indicating:

- Who uses it (e.g., whole congregation, adult Sunday school, AA group, youth group)
- How often (daily, weekly, monthly, or only occasionally)
- Condition — excellent, good, fair, or poor

Space	Who uses?	How often?	Condition

III. Examine your church's use of its space:

- Note who benefits from church space — whether space is used only by members of the congregation, or whether it is also accessible to outside groups.
- Do you have current space limitations — spaces that are overbooked, too small, or not right for their current use? Where?
- Do you have space that is not being used or could be used more? Why is it underutilized? Is the under-use due to a structural or organizational problem that could be addressed?
- What missional uses could these spaces have if repaired, expanded, made accessible, etc?
- List the specific renovations or improvements that could result in better space usage, particularly to make space available for ministry programs.

Adapted from *Establishing Public Value: A Tool Kit*, a resource for churches seeking to show the value of their buildings and structures as community assets and to identify potential partners and supporters. Available from Partners for Sacred Places, www.sacredplaces.org.

For a more detailed space inventory chart, see the Church Facilities Assessment Form in the *Leading Congregational Change Workbook* by James Furr, Mike Bonem, and Jim Herrington (Jossey-Bass, 2000). See also the helpful chapter on resources in *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* edited by Nancy Ammerman, Jackson Carroll, Carl Dudley, and William McKinney (Abingdon Press, 1998).