



R. BRIAN NELSON ARCHITECT - FAQ

(Frequently Asked Questions)



Q: Should we hire a local architect? Don't they all know how to design a Rescue Mission?

A: Yes, you need a local architect, but also need an expert in the field of Rescue Mission design. I like to use the analogy of someone taking their Mercedes into a VW mechanic to be worked on: they ask, aren't they both cars, with an engine, doors, windows, a transmission, carburetor...? Yes, but the VW mechanic doesn't have the expertise, tools, parts, and specific knowledge to do the best job for you. The same goes for a Rescue Mission design: it is not a church, a home, an apartment, a commercial building...! Yes it has walls, doors, windows, offices, a chapel, dorms, etc., but how it functions is different than all those other types of buildings. With my expertise and background in the design phase, and working with a local architect, you will get the very best facilities and the highest return on your investment.

Q: Won't it cost more to have you come and design our facility AND hire a local architect?

A: No! In the long run, it will save you money, plus time and frustration. Because I have worked with so many ministries, I am able to be so efficient with my time and fees, that even after combining my fees with the local architects, you will actually end up paying less; in the long run, the fees for architecture is a very, very small portion of the overall costs.

Q: We have a local architect who will donate his services Shouldn't we just use him?

A: See the first question. Also, it will probably cost more in the long run due to their lack of experience and the facilities will not function as well. It might be like you living in a house for a long time that you really don't like how it works for your family, but you will make do because it costs less.

Q: Can you help me "Get the Board on board"? I have told them we need to expand, but they are reluctant and don't know about the cost and Capital Campaign.

A: Almost every Ministry I have worked with asks this question. I think the best way to answer this is to give you a real-life answer. I am working with the Board and Task Force of Quarterman Ranch in Amarillo, TX. Their ministry is a camping experience for children of incarcerated adults in all of Northwest Texas. I conducted a 1 ½ day retreat for them at the Bishop's request. At the end of our time, the Bishop said to me, "You have accomplished in 1 ½ days than I've been able to do with the same people for 3 years! How did you do it? PLUS, you have given us written instructions on the next steps and who will do those steps, by when!"

Q: What specific experience do you have in Rescue Ministry?

A: I have worked with over 50 Ministries across the US, Canada, and Jamaica. I have been the Chairman of the Board for 2 Rescue Missions, the Executive Director of Santa Barbara Rescue Mission, I was on the Board of AGRM for 7 years and co-founder for a Rescue Mission. I have conducted many Board/Task Force retreats, and lead retreats and motivational seminars for RM staff.

Q: What do you typically do on your first visit and what will we have in our hands to use after you leave?

A: I like to say, "I will ask a thousand questions" of you, your staff, and the Board, and then I will write an executive summary which includes estimated square foot numbers and acreage required for any new/expanded facilities, a review of your budget and expected capital campaign amount, and I will write a "Next Steps" outline for tasks to be performed with projected dates for completion and who will complete each item.

Q: What is the next step after your first visit?

A: The conceptual design (I actually get to put on my architect's hat) which includes a colored site plan, floor plans and exterior color renderings for use in a capital campaign and for your presentations to donors. I will also guide you in applying for grants on a national basis: I will design the facilities to help get you the most points towards those grants.

Q: What personal ministries are you involved in outside of Rescue Missions?

A: I attend, and I am a volunteer staff, at The Ranch Church (a Calvary Chapel Church), where I co-chair the Missions Committee. God has given me a heart for short term missions, especially doing "make-overs" on pastor's homes. So far I have led teams to Molokai and Honolulu, Hawaii, Vail, Colorado and our own pastor's garage. I have been on missions trips to Jamaica, Australia (twice), and Mexico (6 times). I was a High School youth leader in our church for 5 years.

Q: Where do you live and what about your family?

A: Marcia and I live on a 10 acre horse ranch in the Santa Ynez Valley, near Santa Barbara, California. We have been married 40 years. Marcia's business, Horseman's Hangout, is a rider and horse training business with 20 horses. We have 2 sons, an 18 year old granddaughter and a 6 year old grandson. My 89 year old parents live 8 minutes away from us (they have been married 69 years).

Q: My question to you is...

How can God use me and what He has taught me to help your ministry?

More questions? Please contact me.

"The Homeless Architect"
R. Brian Nelson, Architect
PO Box 1897
Santa Ynez, CA 93460
805-895-9011
brian@rbnarchitect.com