

What is a Charrette Process?

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A charrette is a design approach to collaborative planning of land use. A charrette reaches consensus through a feedback-driven design process that includes all of the affected stakeholders working together on a collaborative basis. Established and supported by a project sponsor who is working with participants on a land use project, the charrette includes these key phases.



- Preparation – stakeholder identification, research, informational events, planning logistics
- Design phase – multi-day, facilitated design workshop focused on land use, resulting in a feasible plan that meets the stated goals of the stakeholders
- Implementation – refinement of workshop output into presentation-quality drawings and documents, presentation of final materials, use of the results for project development purposes as agreed to by the participants

During the preparation phase, these are some typical activities:

- Identify stakeholders – all interested parties – neighborhood residents, property owners, developers, City staff, elected and appointed officials; engage those needed for a successful process throughout
- Identify and prepare base information needed for the charrette
- Inform stakeholders about the process, the base information, and other helpful background
- Plan the physical arrangements for the charrette workshop

The multi-day charrette with feedback loops has these characteristics:

- Starts with an open public meeting to gather vision and goals of the stakeholders
- Proceeds over several days to develop and examine plan alternatives, discussing and testing them for feasibility against
 - Market constraints
 - Neighborhood constraints
 - Physical and environmental constraints
 - Financial constraints
 - Other constraints identified by the stakeholders
- Is supported by a multidisciplinary team that develops, refines, and tests the plans on or near the proposed development site in a compressed timeframe
- Stakeholders and the public review the alternatives daily and that input is the feedback that informs the next design iteration; all comments are addressed
- Generally at least 4 days is needed for a relatively small project.

The implementation phase of the process involves getting the final plan from the charrette into a form that can be used to move the project forward. That may mean it is used for adoption and construction, or it may just be a record of the participants' consensus.