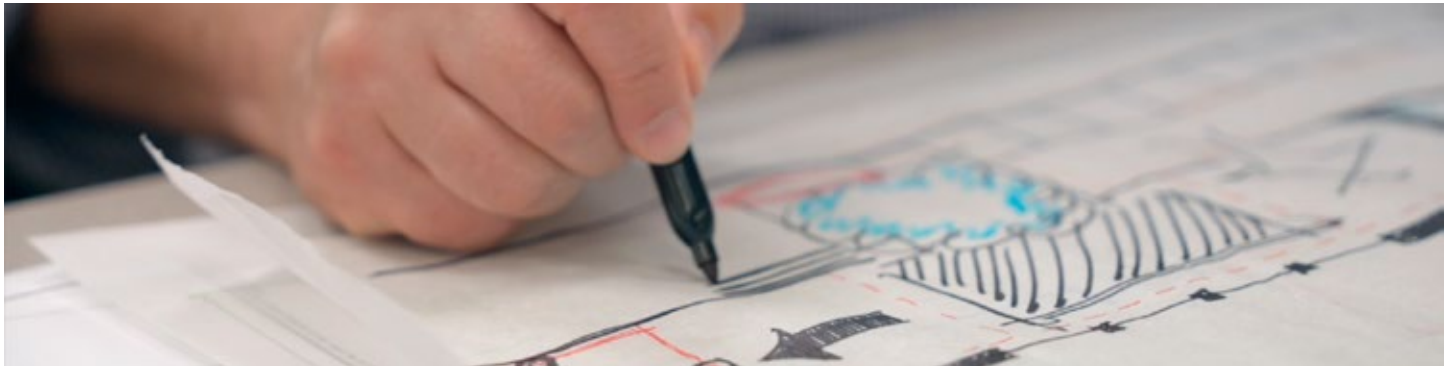


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Workplace Insights

Creativity Unleashed: The Value of Charrettes

Design charrettes are interactive sessions where design stakeholders meet to resolve conflicts and ideate solutions. Charretting is a way to address client needs, provide fresh perspectives, coordinate challenging design solutions, and highlight portions of a project that require further investigation. These sessions have become an increasingly valuable tool in the design process, providing a platform for collaboration AND fostering client engagement:

- **Collaboration.** One of the key values of charrettes is their ability to encourage a burst of design collaboration among a variety of stakeholders. At Hixson we utilize interdisciplinary charrettes during multiple phases of a project to investigate and coordinate design elements and building systems. These sessions can be used to address challenging existing building conditions and gain alignment for new builds. These multiple points of view contribute to richer and more holistic design concepts.
- **Client engagement.** Ideas generated through a charrette can help a client focus on what they want, as well as what they don't want. Our clients typically aren't working in the world of design

day-in and day-out. They may have a clear end goal but may not be able to fully articulate how to get there. Sometimes, it's simply, "I'll know it when I see it." Charrettes help fill the void between that blank slate and the ultimate goal, giving the client a voice in the process. They are a quick representation of ideas that can outline the broad strokes of design direction very efficiently. In this way, charrettes foster a strong sense of ownership and partnership throughout the project and can result in a more meaningful and successful design solution.

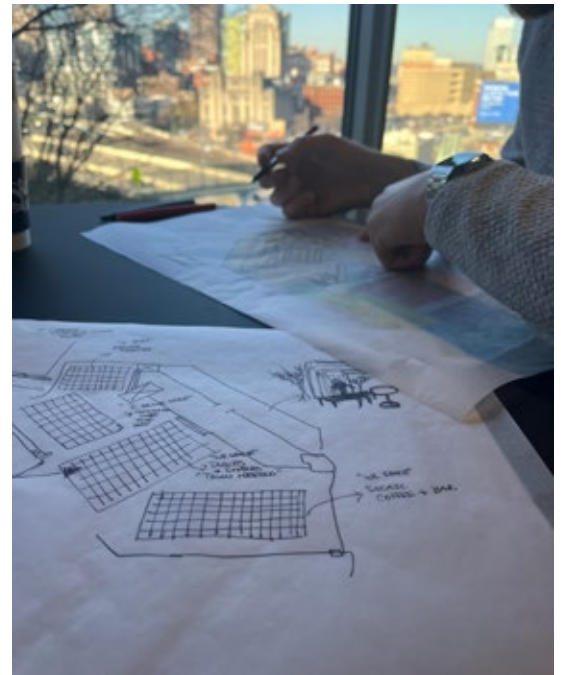
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What does a conceptual design charrette look like?

Charrettes can occur at any time during a project! The designers leading the charrette will start with the general guidelines and client's goals. With trace paper and pens in hand, participants are given time to think outside the box, explore a full range of design ideas, and push boundaries. At the end of the design charrette, each participant shares their design concept with the team, allowing an important opportunity to recognize synergies between different approaches. The sketches are then compiled into a wide variety of options to be presented for the client's review.

- **Cohesive designs.** By incorporating diverse perspectives, encouraging innovative thinking, and engaging stakeholders throughout the design process, charrettes are instrumental in fostering cohesive and integrated design solutions. One reason why? The iterative nature of charrettes allows for ideas to be refined, tested, and iterated upon in real-time, so that the resulting design is functional, meets the client's needs, and is innovative all at once.

Charrettes offer an effective approach to design that fosters collaboration, engages clients in the creative process, and leads to innovative solutions. They bring together diverse perspectives, promote experimentation, and encourage open dialogue between designers and clients. Incorporating charrettes into the design process leads to successful outcomes that reflect the collective efforts of all involved.



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