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Illustrating the Charrette Process

Labarbara J. Wigfall Kansas State University

Avantika Gurung Kansas State University

Alexander M. Blair Kansas State University

Annapurna Singh Kansas State University

Lucille Z. Sadlong Kansas State University

See next page for additional authors

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Presenter Information Labarbara J. Wigfall, Avantika Gurung, Alexander M. Blair, Annapurna Singh, and Lucille Z. Sadlong

Illustrating the Charrette Process: a dialogue on possibilities for West Stadium Community Development Workshop (PLAN 661 Faculty and Students)

...to vision – to image, envision, to evoke imagination

There are a number of community engagement strategies that utilize brainstorming to facilitate group visioning and problem-solving results. Visioning is a process by which a community envisions the future it wants, brings citizens together to develop a shared image of what they want their community to become, and consciously work to achieve it.

So what is so unique about community visioning using the charrette process?

Charrettes transform the way people work together by building capacity for collaboration. Experts work collectively with community members from the onset to determine viable solutions but the stakeholders manage the process throughout the implementation. Inclusion and listening are used to foster new understanding, transform perceptions, and build stronger alliances for project support. The intense process builds engagement and trust since all viewpoints are represented. Compressed work sessions, harnessing the talents and energies of all interested parties, facilitates creative problem-solving by accelerating decision-making, reducing unconstructive negotiation tactics, and efficiently co-creating innovative and achievable, shared vision.

The Community Development Workshop students illustrated this holistic process using their Memorial Stadium project, specifically considering the feasibility of new uses for the undeveloped space in West Stadium. Participants learned the origin, tools and techniques, and outcomes of the charrette process by doing an abbreviated collaboration by design exercise.



