

What is a Charrette?

The word “charrette” is thought to have originated from the French word for “cart” and was used by proctors at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris to collect projects from art and architecture students for delivery to and evaluation by their professors.

It was not rare to see student architects working up to the last minute on the illustrations for their design projects by riding in the back of the charrette.

Today, “charrette” is used by professionals in the design fields to describe any collaborative session in which a group drafts a solution to a design problem.

Charrettes serve as a quick way of generating a design solution while integrating the knowledge and skills of a diverse group of people.

The Iowa Architectural Foundation uses this same process in assisting communities in the Community Design Program with design challenges. Throughout your entire involvement in the program, you will hear the word “charrette” used frequently. Not only do our charrettes include professional designers, we have developed a very open and transparent decision-making process that includes feedback from all segments of the community — elected officials, government staff, civic organizations, concerned citizens, and even the occasional youth leadership group.



Iowa
Architectural
Foundation

Founded in 1989, the Iowa Architectural Foundation is the only charitable organization in the state that promotes awareness and appreciation of architecture and design. The Foundation engages the public with architecture and design through youth education, community design charrettes, and public awareness programs.

www.iowaarchfoundation.org