



# Charrettes

## Definition

Intensive brainstorming sessions where volunteer participants sketch and illustrate their ideas for planning and design solutions and present them to the community.

## What We've Found

Charrettes generate tremendous energy. They bring together professionals who are experts in their fields creating strong partnerships among organizations and special interests. Most importantly this type of event can give community members the chance to see comprehensive plans and designs for an area. Make no mistake, charrettes take a lot of work to organize and orchestrate but we feel the effort is well worth the result. It can give a project a terrific jump-start to completion.

## Just the Facts

Charrettes bring together experts in the field to develop ideas on how to improve a natural and/or cultural resource. The outputs of their efforts are maps and designs that offer solutions to such issues as preservation, access and use, interpretation, development, etc. Charrettes can involve a few or many people; they can last a couple hours or extend over several days. It all depends upon the area, the resource, the purpose and goals for the charrette and people's interest. An example charrette schedule is participants gathering on a Friday, touring the area, and hearing presentations from local experts and citizens. On Saturday, participants are divided into teams each assigned physical design, interpretation, or other relevant topics. Their assignment is to create plans, detail and section drawings, and perspective sketches. Later that night, or the next day, participants present their recommendations to each other and community members. While only a few people might do the actual work, one of the biggest keys to producing a successful charrette is to inform and engage as many people as possible in the community before, during and after the event. Charrettes can be a key public involvement tool. The term "charrette" is French for cart. In the early 20th century, professors from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris would send a cart to pick up students' work at the submission deadline. Some students, frantic to complete their drawings, would ride on the cart and continue working as it rolled down the street, hence, working "en charrette."



**Workshop Notes**  
**Planning & Design Charrette**  
**Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex**  
**City of Pasadena**

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Saturday, May 20, 2006  
8:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.  
Los Angeles County Fire Camp 2  
4810 N. Oak Grove Drive  
Pasadena, CA

### **Overview of Charrette Process**

Each team was asked to develop recommendations for the Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex (Annex) based on one of three planning and design scenarios:

#### **Scenario 1: Same tenants, same use footprints**

In this scenario, assume that the existing tenants (Rose Bowl Riders, MACH 1 and Tom Sawyer Camps) remain within the same boundaries as they are now. The focus on this group's work will be to determine how to integrate new uses into the former USDA Forest Service facilities and the "public areas" of the Annex. Additionally, explore how the existing tenant facilities could be enhanced.

#### **Scenario 2: Same tenants with the option of realigning their use footprints**

In this scenario, assume that the existing tenants (Rose Bowl Riders, MACH 1 and Tom Sawyer Camps) remain at the Annex, but there is the option to adjust their use boundaries. This group will explore how to integrate new uses into the former USDA Forest Service facilities and the "public areas" of the Annex, while thinking about whether there are better ways to realign and enhance the existing uses on the site.

#### **Scenario 3: Same tenants with no constraints in siting uses.**

In this scenario, assume that the existing tenants (Rose Bowl Riders, MACH 1 and Tom Sawyer Camps) remain at the Annex, but that any facilities on the site can be relocated within the Annex. This group will have the most flexibility in terms of starting with a "clean slate" in terms of siting uses and facilities in the Annex. Other existing conditions on the site, especially locations of natural resources and trail connections should still be considered.

In developing recommendations, the teams were reminded that their recommendations must be consistent with the planning framework provided and reflect the input from the community (*Appendix A: Planning Framework 5/19/06\**). In addition, each team was asked to generate the following recommendations:

- **An overall site analysis and design:** The site plan can include a layout of vehicular and non-motorized circulation system; types and locations of site uses; and relationships between the HWP Annex and surrounding areas.
- **Design ideas for focused areas:** Identify some specific areas with your team's proposed site plan to explore and design in more detail.
- **Management recommendations:** Explore management practices that support and are consistent with the proposed uses for the site. These can include financial/business planning, operations and maintenance, safety, partnership opportunities and anything else that seems relevant.
- **Programmatic recommendations:** In addition to management, ideas for programs for the site should be explored. Examples of programs could include types of organized education and passive recreation activities, interpretation recommendations, and partnership opportunities. These recommendations really focus on "what goes on at the Annex".

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\*Copies of the Appendices to this summary are available upon request from the City of Pasadena, Department of Public Works, Parks & Natural Resources Division.

## Summary of Team Recommendations

Each team recorded their process and recommendations in both graphic and written formats (*Appendix B: Charrette Participants; Appendix C: Teams' Notes and Graphics*). The following is a summary of their input.

### **Scenario 1 Team: Same tenants, same use footprints**

#### *Design goals:*

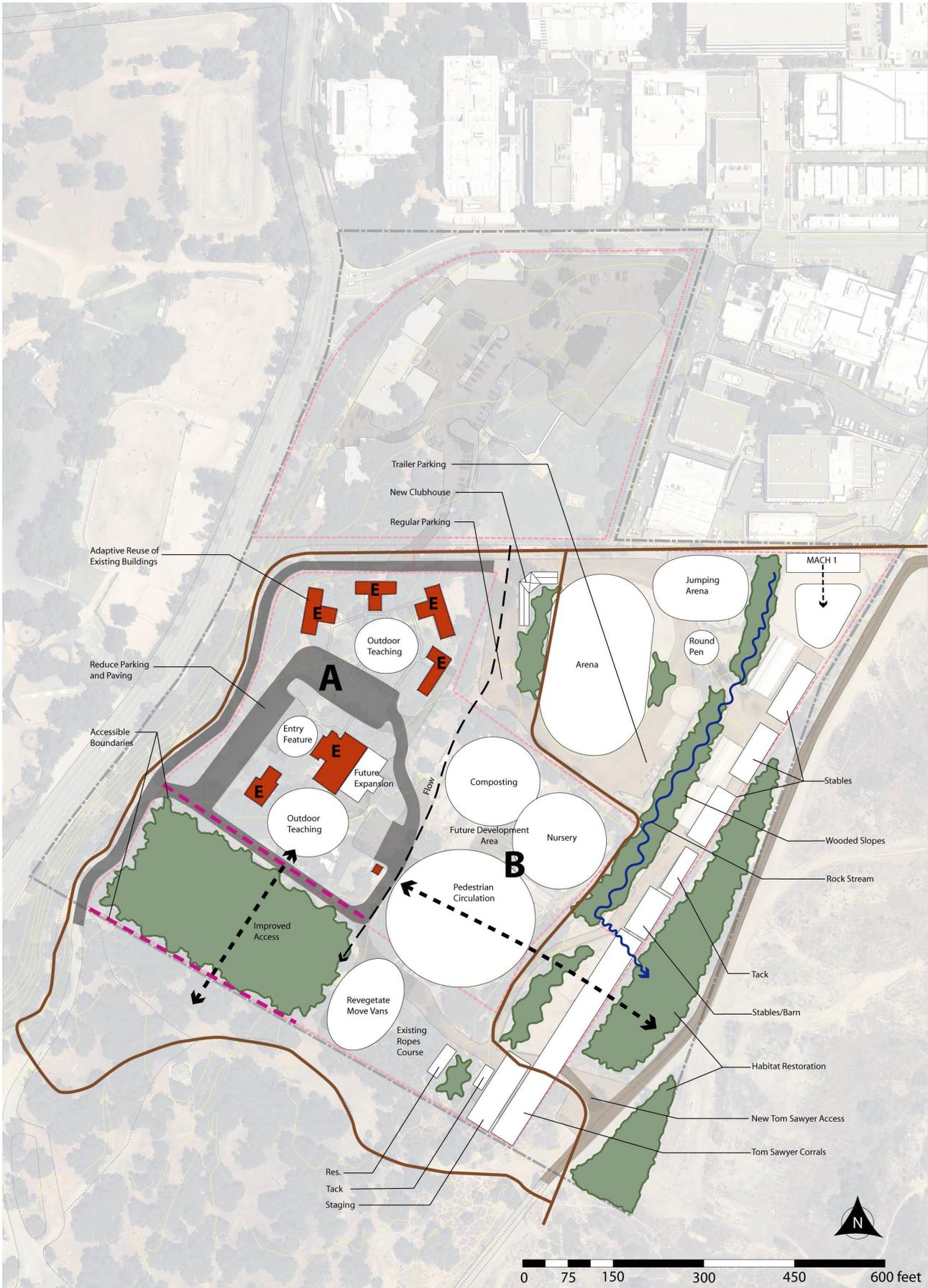
- Integrate runoff management
- Demonstrate green, sustainable design
- Provide better programmatic flow—separate uses as needed
- Centralize and share educational uses and facilities
- Protect wildlife habitat including connectivity
- Rationalize fencing on and around the site, including removal of fencing around oak woodland at southern end of site
- Adaptively reuse existing structures
- Use natural/appropriate building materials (i.e. slump stone, arroyo stone, concrete block with stucco)
- Provide visual screening where appropriate
- Provide better access/permeability through the Rose Bowl Riders and Tom Sawyer Camps area to connect to rest of Hahamongna Watershed Park
- Restore native vegetation at east end of site which is currently dominated by ruderal vegetation

#### *Facilities:*

- Outdoor amphitheater/classroom
- Plant nursery, using existing facilities to extent feasible
- On-site water harvesting for irrigation use
- Equestrian facilities:
  - o Leased uses, with long-term lease
  - o Separate boarding and public use areas
  - o Capacity to be determined
  - o Enhanced landscaping (trees)
  - o Best management practices for runoff-possible vegetated corridor/swale
  - o Adjust/shift arenas
  - o Develop new “clubhouse”
  - o Relocate trailer parking to less visible location
  - o Relocate MACH 1 uses to more quiet location within site
  - o Picnic/viewing area by larger arena
  - o Standardize stables/stalls (outdoors with covers)

#### *Site Design (Figure 1: Design Charrette Group 1)*

- Educational Area A:
  - o Interpretive/education/training center
  - o Overnight quarters
  - o Outdoor teaching areas (2)
  - o Reduce paved areas (parking)
  - o Restore landscape (native)
  - o Improve access (pedestrian and wildlife)
  - o Minimize fencing
  - o Give buildings a facelift (river rock, wood, etc.)
  - o Space (~50x100') for Forest Service volunteers, tools, etc.
  - o Sustainability
- Educational Area B:
  - o Reduce paved areas (parking)
  - o Restore landscape (native)
  - o Create riparian corridor in the flood zone




**Design Charrette: Group One**  
 Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex ■ Pasadena, California

- o Minimize fencing
- o Potential use: composting, native plant nursery
- o Third largest bubble (on site plan) is a landscaped/education area
- Equestrian/lease area:
  - o Make border of oak woodland more permeable for access
  - o Move TSC vans and revegetate area with oaks
  - o Install bioswale/treatment “stream” for runoff
  - o New clubhouse
  - o Move trailer parking to east side of arena

*Programs:*

- Composting program-partnership between equestrian uses and City demonstrating best management practices. Compost would be made available to the community
- Education programs include:
  - o Overnight programs focused on nature study
  - o Arts-potential artist-in-residence program
  - o Fire science programs in partnership with Los Angeles County Fire Dept.
  - o Water resources
  - o Native plants, landscaping and composting (targeted towards adults)
  - o Equestrian-oriented education

**Scenario 2 Team: Same tenants with the option of realigning their use footprints**

*Design goals:*

- Minimize traffic and parking impacts
  - o Convert some parking to wildflower meadow
  - o Retain vehicular access to equestrian area
  - o Use existing parking to south of Annex for visitor center. Connect parking to visitor center with trails.
- Restore/enhance habitat, including currently stressed oaks
  - o Consolidate uses to increase opportunities for habitat restoration and enhancement
  - o Reconfigure circulation to better protect oaks
- Provide safe and secure equestrian facilities (i.e. limit public access within equestrian areas—insurance constraints)
  - o Retain fencing of equestrian areas but provide thematic and visual connections
  - o As part of visitor/nature center, include equestrian themes
  - o Around equestrian area, still have fencing but provide visual and thematic connections to other areas of site
  - o As part of leased uses, require increased public use and site stewardship
- Site as a ‘dead-end’ destination for cars but a gateway for bikes, hikers, equestrians
- Encourage and demonstrate stewardship (particularly around trail use and environment)
- Demonstrate green building practices (i.e. green roofs)
- Integrate nature with other uses
- Provide joint uses to eliminate need for duplicative uses and services
- Provide for universal accessibility and ADA compliance
- Adaptively reuse existing structures to extent feasible
- Provide direct connections between nature/visitor center and rest of park
- Improve storm water and surface runoff management
  - o Treat pollution through use of bioswales
  - o Treatment wetlands—French drains around the arenas/corrals to channel runoff to wetlands
- Retain trail access around western perimeter of site
- Provide shade along trail at eastern perimeter of site
- Increase trail access and connections
- Improve aesthetics of trail corridors



## Design Charrette: Group Two

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*Facilities:*

- Maintenance
- Equestrian
- Nursery
- Nature/visitor center
- Trails
- Botanical/Hummingbird/butterfly gardens

*Site design:*

- South and east edges of site are restored and provide buffer for treating runoff and for habitat
- Building closest to the equestrian area could have a roof deck for viewing equine and a web cam to look on-line at the site
- Consolidate equestrian facilities into 9 acres-remove oak woodland from leased area
- Enhance and expand existing oak woodland
- Interpretive trail through restored areas of site
- Move parking for non-equestrian uses off site and provide trail access instead to existing parking areas. Equestrian parking within their lease area

*Programs:*

- Regional hub for environmental education
- Provide democratic programming
- Environmental career learning center
- Partnership-building:
  - o Rose Bowl Riders, Tom Sawyer and others
  - o JPL
  - o Schools
  - o USDA Forest Service (including job training for youth)
  - o Los Angeles County Fire Department Camp 2
  - o Trail users, to promote better trail etiquette
  - o Community college and facility for watershed management
- Day long environmental science center
- Regional occupational center-environmental careers and nursery-provide opportunities for students to learn, get academic credit and earn money while working to improve site
- Experiential learning
- Outdoor tent camping
- Team building

***Scenario 3 Team: Same tenants with no constraints in siting uses***

*Design Goals:*

- Restore habitat
- Improve drainage/storm water management, including minimizing paving for groundwater recharge
- Provide gateway for trail system
- Develop an oak management program, including relocating Tom Sawyer Camps out of oak woodland
- Minimize structures on the site
- Provide for unstructured recreation
- Reconfigure equestrian facilities to be more space efficient
- Complete the bike loop
- Rotate uses on land to prevent overuse
- Reconsider van parking within park
- Consider relocating entrance
- Remove work “Annex”—consider name, “The Watershed Center at Hahamongna”
- Provide universally-accessible parking



**Design Charrette: Group Three A**  
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**Design Charrette: Group Three B**  
 Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex ■ Pasadena, California



**Design Charrette: Group Three C**  
 Hahamongna Watershed Park Annex ▪ Pasadena, California

- Encourage public transportation to access park
- Define trail system better
- Provide more uniform landscaping

#### *Facilities:*

- Nursery
- Watershed Center:
- Use existing maintenance buildings for maintenance

#### *Site Design:*

- Phasing—1. rebuild equestrian, 2. stalls, 3. watershed center
- BMPs in equestrian center: composting, drainage
- Shuttle parking and ARTS bus to reduce need for parking
- Increase stalls within existing equestrian uses footprint

Within their given scenario, the team generated three conceptual alternative site plans, each of which retained a total of 12 acres of leased areas and 10 acres for other uses.

- Alternative 3A:
  - o All existing buildings and parking removed and replaced with restored oak woodland
  - o Reduce and disperse use to reduce impacts to oak woodland
  - o 10,000 sq. ft. watershed center on bluff edge to overlook park and provide direct trail connections
  - o Bike loop routed to east perimeter of Annex site
  - o Install vegetation to screen JPL buildings
  - o Terrace built areas and install overlooks of basin
  - o One acre of parking including universally-accessible spaces
  - o Riding rings were sited to provide visual access from the trail
- Alternative 3B:
  - o Visitor center sited at lower elevation on site to provide feeling of being part of the basin
  - o Rose Bowl Riders area secure
  - o Trail south of Rose Bowl Riders would provide visual connections to horses and the oak woodland
  - o At lower elevation area of site, have wetlands and more diverse habitat (i.e. riparian and wetland vegetation)
- Alternative 3C:
  - o Watershed center sited for visual connections to basin
  - o Watershed center is in flood zone and could demonstrate how to build with nature
  - o Oak woodland would be gateway to site and park
  - o Shared parking between facilities
  - o Equestrian buffers watershed center from JPL
  - o Best management practices for storm water management integrated into site

#### *Programs*

- Leases
  - o Include tree protection as a condition
  - o Provide longer lease period (min. 25 years) as incentive for site improvements by tenants
- Watershed Center (including 80-100 person capacity meeting space)
  - o History of watershed in Pasadena
  - o Environmental showcase
  - o Arroyo Seco library
  - o Watershed conservation

- o Demonstration gardens
- o Outdoor classrooms
- o Native American history
- o Partnerships with NGOs, County, JPL, volunteers, USFS, SMMC, School District for programs and to obtain funding
- o Evening programs
- o Fire ecology education
- o Appropriate planning and watershed
- History of horses in the Arroyo
- Nature rides

**Youth Team: Open to use whichever scenario they choose**

*Design Goals:*

- Overall design concept is “Roots & Wings”. The park is a connection between the community’s door-step and environment (i.e. “roots”). The park then facilitates people taking “flight” through programs and activities.
- Site accessible 24 hours/day
- Provide for open access through site (i.e. limit fencing)
- Provide adequate security
- Promote community awareness of park and Arroyo
- Include spaces and programs for youth to use in summer (both structured and unstructured)

*Facilities:*

- Equestrian facilities
- Day camp facilities
- Visitor/interpretive center with outdoor classroom
- Picnic area

*Site Design:*

- The “Roots & Wings” concept is spatially articulated through a transition across site from more mediated experiences with nature to total immersion. The three transition/use zones identified include:
  - o Step 1: Interpretive center. Interpretation for people who do not go into the natural areas but want to experience the “edge”. Facilities could include a shady outdoor classroom
  - o Step 2: The Living Arroyo. Bring the plants and wildlife from the Arroyo into the Annex site. More exploration for people. Provide a “mini Arroyo” on the site with open areas for activities, picnicking, etc. A transition zone with secluded benches would be included.
  - o Step 3: Arroyo Alive. Trail connections and native vegetation to facilitate people moving into the whole Arroyo.
- Specific site design recommendations included:
  - o Adding an outdoor classroom by existing buildings as part of educational area
  - o Defining a picnic area
  - o Providing kiosks for interpretive and other information

*Programs:*

- Community involvement, including:
  - o 4-H Club
  - o Inner city kids
  - o Student organizations and clubs, i.e. SET Academy & Key Club, Health Academy, etc.
  - o Field trips
  - o Trail Days
  - o Summer nights for teens
  - o Volunteer opportunities and jobs at TSC
  - o Annual Festival



# Design Charrette: Group Four

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### **Additional Feedback from Participants**

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to reflect on the body of work developed throughout the day (*Appendix D: Feedback on Charrette from Participants*). Additional comments were also provided informally by participants and included below:

#### ***Commonalities between teams' work:***

- Stayed within the planning framework
- Little or no on-site parking
- Emphasis on oak woodland preservation, restoration, enhancement
- Need for education and interpretation
- Leased uses currently impedes access between other portions of the Annex and the rest of the park
- Circulation is a major unresolved issue, particularly the northern trail connection (both in terms of trail alignment and design)

#### ***Other additional feedback:***

- Phasing will be important. Consider short-term improvements to increase use of site
- City and RBR could probably be competitive in applying for a grant to implement water BMPs
- Make sure that City continues to connect with the Gabrieleno/Tongva
- Concern that too much time/energy was focused on equestrian facilities which detracted from exploration of other site elements
- Concern that more detailed analysis is needed to determine the specific site needs for equestrian uses and that a capacity for the facilities needs to be identified first (i.e. need to identify how many stalls needed, how much space those facilities need and then figure out how much acreage is needed to accommodate those uses). Need to do this objectively rather than to assume that 12 acres is optimal.
- Consider removing horse trailer parking from site or charging for this separate use individually or as part of lease terms