



## *LEED Goal-Setting Workshop and Design Charrette Overview*

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### **A Summary of the Charrette Process:**

A successful high performance building is a solution that is greater than the sum of its parts. It is a system of integrated processes and products that increases the efficiency of the building systems and helps to reduce overall costs. A building that conserves energy alone does not constitute a high performance building. In the same respect, adding or overlaying environmental systems will not truly help the building benefit from the connections and interdependencies of an integrated, or “whole systems”, design approach. This is the fundamental challenge of high performance building design and LEED Certification.

High performance buildings are most effectively developed through a design process that invites the client, building designers and consultants, a consulting general contractor/cost estimator, and other appropriate stakeholders to participate from the very beginning of the project. This is done in a focused and collaborative design effort, or brainstorming session(s), known collectively as a design “charrette” process. The purpose of this composite design team and design process is to encourage the exchange of ideas and information, thereby allowing truly integrated solutions to take form. A forum and methodology is provided where every team member is encouraged to cross fertilize with all others in order to identify solutions to problems that may relate to, but are not typically addressed by any one team member’s specialty. The objective is to have every member of this composite design team understand the issues that the other members need to address. Thus more thorough and integrated solutions can result.

The charrette method is very important when the Owner is not one person but consists of a number of interested people. This is a successful way to educate all the participants: architects, engineers, community stakeholders, and the client team. There are many advantages to this approach: The client’s staff members are invited to participate throughout the process. Participants are educated about the issues and participate in the team’s investigations in order to “buy in” to the solutions. The educational process is accelerated, decisions are verified, adversity is diminished, the nuances of organizational issues are learned, and the design process is expedited. Final resolutions are not necessarily produced in the charrette, but most of the issues are explored with all the involved parties present.

Most buildings have great potential for incorporating the most advanced green building design techniques and systems. Part of the team’s job is to find an acceptable balance between the economic, cultural, ecological components of sustainability that will meet the Client’s objectives and yet allow for future adaptation of new technologies and interactions with the community.

7group’s approach targets common sense applications of thoughtful and integrated solutions. Market transformation in this area will occur only if environmentally responsible buildings can be built at conventional construction cost. The integrated design process is the key to producing high performance green buildings within budget.

### **Charrette Objectives:**

1. Gain an understanding of the process required to realize high performance LEED goals.
2. Establish preliminary LEED performance goals.
3. Familiarize participants with the importance of this approach.
4. Identify design concepts and strategies.
5. Establish next steps.