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### Sponsors

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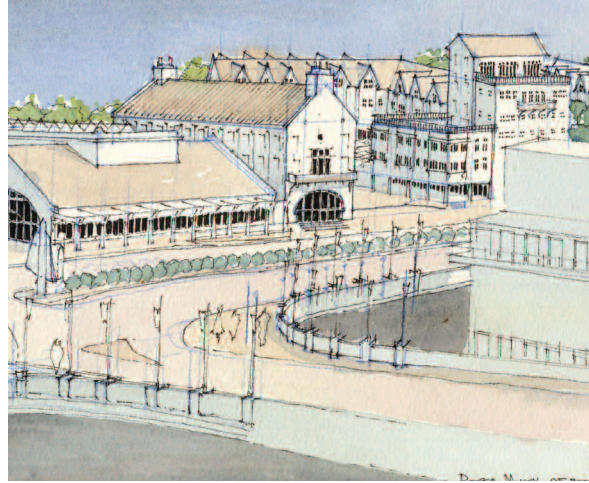
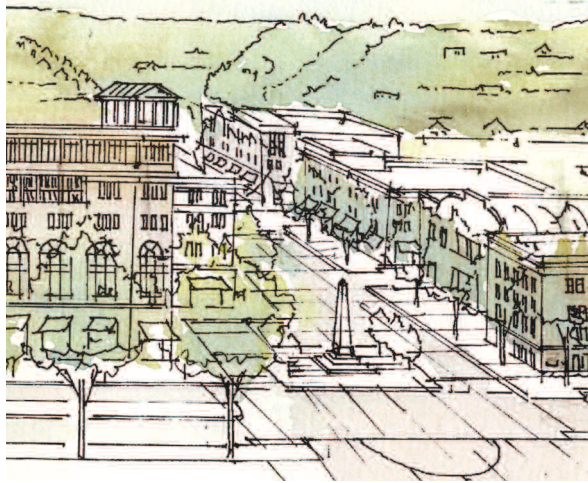
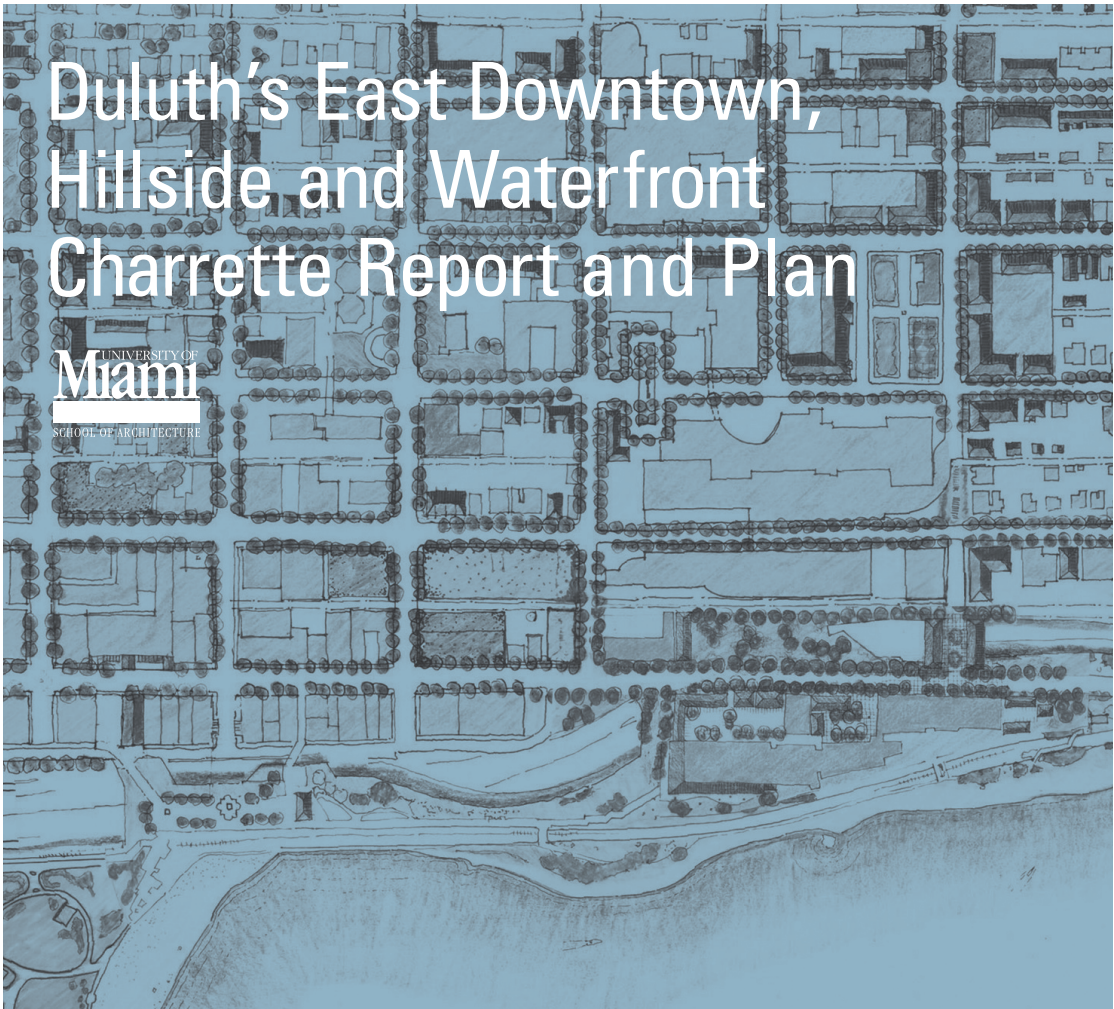
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<b>1. Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1. Background	6
2.2. Goals and objectives	7
2.3. The charrette process	8
<b>3. Existing Conditions Assessment</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1. Regional context	11
3.2. The built and natural environments	12
3.3. Economic development	20
3.4. Social environment	23
3.5. Regulatory framework	29
<b>4. Master Plan</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1 Guiding principles	31
4.2 Charrette recommendations	33
4.3 Policy recommendations	34
4.4 Design recommendations	38
4.5 Management recommendations	54
4.6 Lower Chester form-based code	55
4.7 Implementation strategy	66
<b>5. Appendices</b>	<b>67</b>
5.1 Previous Duluth plans and studies	68
5.2 Additional charrette documents	69



In early 2005, Duluth was selected by the Knight Program in Community Building at the University of Miami School of Architecture to be the site of its annual charrette effort for 2005. The purpose of the charrette, an intensive week-long public design workshop, was to develop a vision and plan to help facilitate the revitalization of the east downtown and adjacent Hillside/Waterfront areas of Duluth. Duluth was selected as the charrette site through a highly competitive process. The charrette was held from July 13–18, 2005, and co-sponsored by the City of Duluth and Duluth Local Initiatives Support Corporation (Duluth LISC).

During the charrette, the 35-plus member charrette team worked with business professionals, local officials, city staff, local organizations, clubs, groups, churches, and residents from the city and surrounding area. The Duluth community was invited to share opinions and ideas for the future development of the city. Ideas for new development and for improving existing neighborhoods were drawn by the Knight Program team so participants could review and critique them, refining a community-driven vision for their neighborhood.

The overall effort was headed by Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, dean of the University of Miami School of Architecture and principal in the firm Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co., which has created plans for more than 200 communities worldwide. Plater-Zyberk is one of the founders of the Congress for the New Urbanism, a reform movement based on the principles of traditional urbanism that advocates the planning and design of great urban neighborhoods that are walkable, diverse, and economically sustainable, with shopping, civic institutions, parks, and jobs within easy access of residents.

The Duluth charrette was the fourth charrette conducted by the Knight Program in Community Building; previous charrettes were held in Macon, Ga., San Jose, Calif., and Coatesville, Pennsylvania. The Knight Program is funded by a grant from the John L. and James S. Knight Foundation. The Knight Foundation promotes excellence in journalism worldwide and invests in the vitality of 26 U.S. communities.

The intent of the charrette process was to create a set of overarching principles for redevelopment of the study area, and to identify specific design, policy, and management recommendations for creating a critical mass of positive transformation. The principles and recommendations provide a blueprint for preserving what citizens love most about their city's character and its past, while enabling new development to sensitively blend in and enhance the community's character and sense of place.

After an opening presentation and visioning exercise involving more than 300 participants, part of the charrette team spent the next several days conducting numerous meetings to gain valuable input and insight from residents, officials, and other stakeholders, while other team members analyzed the study area by taking photographs and making field observations. All of this resulted in an assessment of as many characteristics of the study area as possible, including physical aspects such as urban form, transportation systems, housing types, and environmental features, as well as economic, social, cultural, historic, and policy matters. As the charrette progressed, ideas began to surface about ways in which the study area could be improved through a series of physical design proposals, as well as through policy and management measures. "Pin-up" sessions were held midway through the charrette, during which residents could see and comment on preliminary ideas the team was considering. This feedback was distilled and culminated in final design ideas that were eventually unveiled at the final presentation.

**Highlights of the final design, policy, and management recommendations include the following:**

- A set of overarching principles, called The Duluth Charrette Principles
- Design proposals for both medical complexes, which were sensitive to the surrounding neighborhoods
- A design for better integration of the Fitger's complex with surrounding areas
- Expansion of Central Hillside Community Center and surrounding infill development
- Design of the area encompassing the Armory and Plaza shopping center
- Design proposals for stronger connections between the lakefront, downtown, and Canal Park

- Design ideas for creating a better pedestrian environment through innovative enhancements to the skywalk system and to the Lake Avenue overpass
- A historic preservation strategy for the endangered block of Superior, just east of Lake
- Creating a new hierarchy of street types designed to be "context sensitive" and help calm traffic
- A pilot "form-based" code for the Lower Chester Creek area as a replacement to the existing zoning code
- A new, streamlined planning review process to attract quality development
- Nearly 70 additional design, policy, and management recommendations

The Charrette Stewardship Group was formed by Mayor Bergson at the end of the charrette to ensure that the ideas and recommendations developed during the charrette would be further explored and implemented to the extent possible. One of their first orders of business was to prioritize the recommendations that the charrette team presented, and identify responsibilities and timeframes for each.



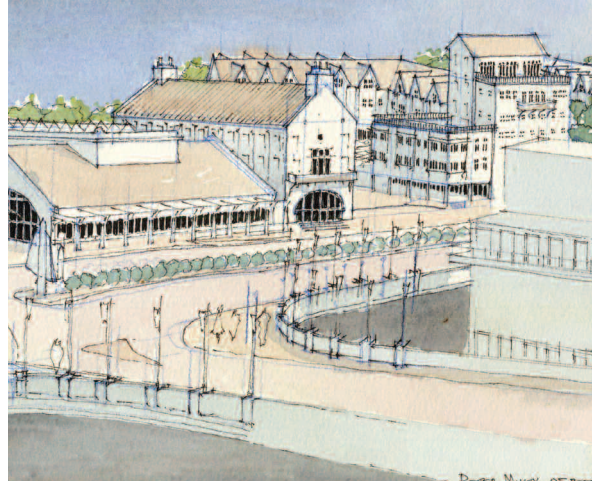
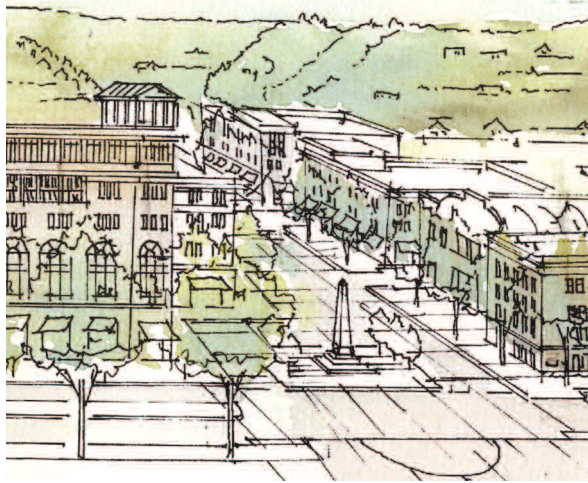
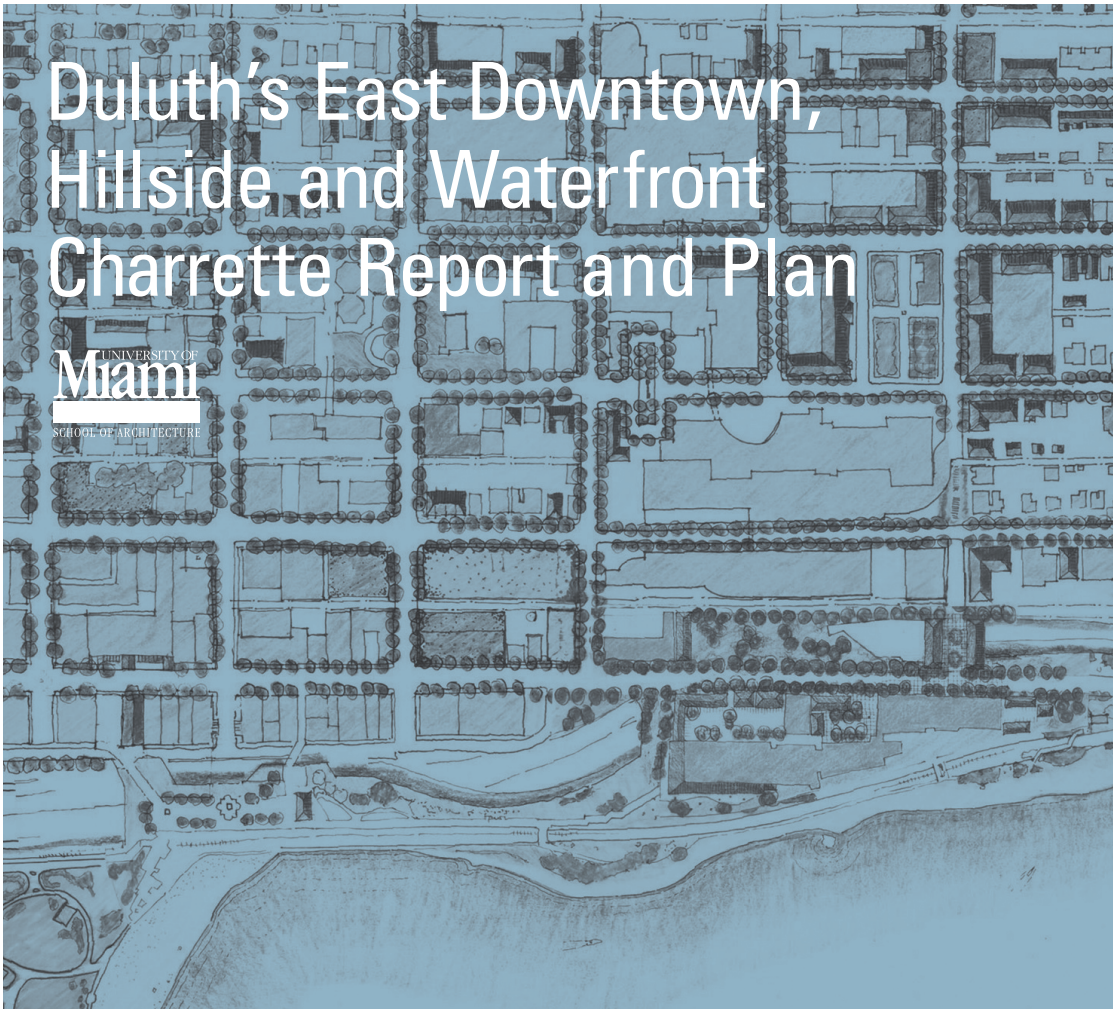
Participants around a table during the opening session of the charrette.



Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk leading a pin-up session midway through the charrette.



Duluth residents examining one of the charrette proposals before the final presentation at the DECC.



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During the charrette, the charrette team worked with business professionals, local officials, city staff, local organizations, clubs, groups, churches, and residents from the city and surrounding area. The Duluth community was invited to share opinions and ideas for the future development of the city. Neighborhood residents, property owners, and other stakeholders were invited to specific sessions, and all of the discussions were open to the public. Ideas for new development and for improving existing neighborhoods were drawn by the Knight Program team so participants could review and critique them, refining a community-driven vision for their neighborhood.

The charrette was led by the 2005 Knight Program Fellows, an interdisciplinary group of 13 community development professionals from around the country who offer a range of expertise including community development, planning, housing, real estate development, arts management, transportation, architecture, and historic preservation. The design team was composed of graduate students enrolled in the Suburb and Town Design Program at the University of Miami School of Architecture.

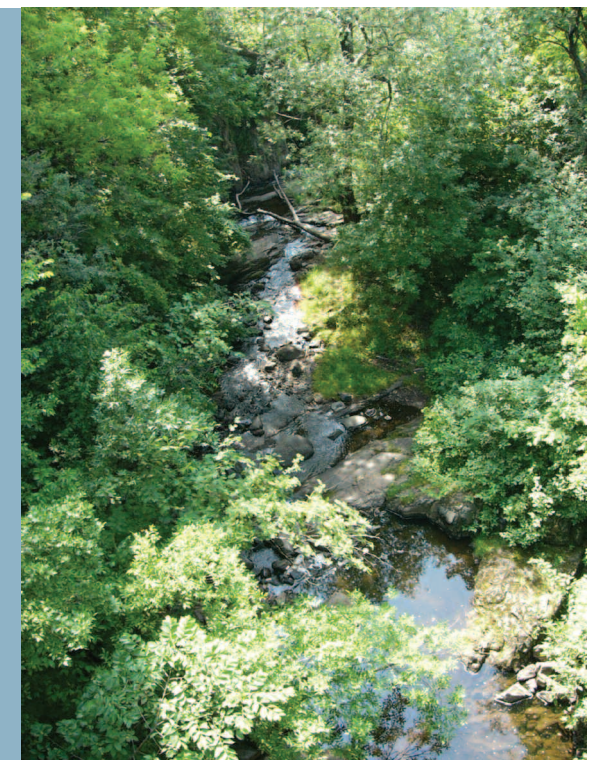
Two Knight Fellows played major roles in coordinating the event and serving as community liaisons: Tom Cotruvo, executive director of the Duluth Economic Development Authority and a 2004-05 Knight Fellow; and Pam Kramer, program director of Duluth LISC and a 2003-04 Knight Fellow. The overall effort was headed by Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, dean of the University of Miami School of Architecture and principal in the firm Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co., which has created plans for more than 200 communities worldwide. Plater-Zyberk is one of the founders of the Congress for the

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### About charrettes

A charrette is a community-wide design process in which members of the public are invited to meet with urban designers, planners, and other specialists, and are encouraged to participate in workshop sessions and share their opinions and ideas for the future development and refinement of their community—it is essentially a combination of an urban design studio and a town meeting in which the full spectrum of community problems, opportunities, and future alternatives are studied and debated. The goal is to create a plan that is practical and achieves consensus.



Duluth scenes.

Duluth is facing the challenges of bringing back the focus of development— housing, jobs, and commerce—to the core area of the city. The intent of the charrette process is to create a set of overarching principles for redevelopment of the study area, and to identify specific design, policy, and management recommendations for creating a critical mass of positive transformation.

The principles and recommendations provide a blueprint for preserving what citizens love most about their city's character and its past, while enabling new development to sensitively blend in and enhance the community's character and sense of place. Duluth's special character and sense of place will only increase in importance as the city's primary assets in the future as it works to attract entrepreneurial people who are looking for livable communities in which to live, work, raise families, and base their businesses. The downtown represents the natural focus for these efforts and for the charrette. It is the heart of the community; it belongs to everyone in Duluth, and it is the place that visitors to the community first encounter. The downtown is Duluth's public face to the world.



Duluth scenes.



1. The charrette process began several months in advance of the charrette itself, with a series of pre-charrette visits by key team members. This allowed them to become familiar with the study area, conduct advance interviews with stakeholders, and determine the best location for the charrette studio. The Tech Center in the heart of downtown Duluth was eventually chosen as the optimal location for the charrette studio.



2. At the beginning of the charrette, an opening presentation was held at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center (DECC), which was attended by more than 300 people. Participants sat in groups around tables with team members and engaged in a robust exchange of ideas on ways to improve East downtown, the Hillside, and the Waterfront. Residents drew their ideas on maps and took notes on flip charts to document all comments and ideas.

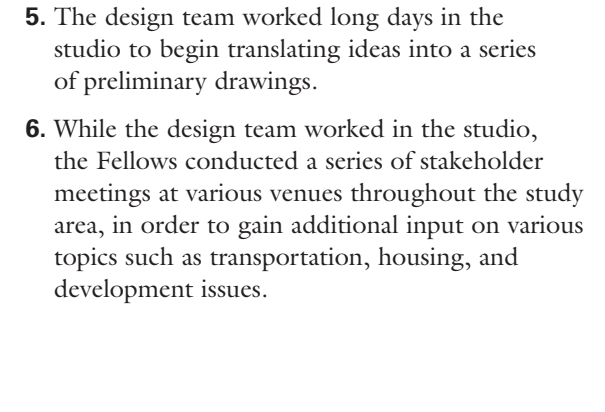


3. Each table reported back to the entire group and the results were then taken back to the charrette studio, where the team looked for dominant themes and opportunities to incorporate ideas into the initial designs.

4. On the first day, the team took a walking and bus tour of the study area, which included extensive photo cataloguing of streets, buildings, frontages, civic spaces, natural features, and other observations in order to inform the team's work.



7. During the stakeholder meetings, participants provided additional input on various themes, which provided important dialogue that the team used to identify key issues. Twelve stakeholder meetings were held, plus a multi-cultural forum and a "youth charrette," which ensured that the participation during the charrette was highly diverse and inclusive.



5. The design team worked long days in the studio to begin translating ideas into a series of preliminary drawings.

6. While the design team worked in the studio, the Fellows conducted a series of stakeholder meetings at various venues throughout the study area, in order to gain additional input on various topics such as transportation, housing, and development issues.





8. After several days of stakeholder meetings, the Fellows synthesized the information gleaned and formulated a series of policy, management, and design recommendations.
9. As the work by the design team proceeded, a series of public “pin-up” sessions were held throughout the charrette. This was essential for vetting ideas and providing feedback loops that let the team know if they were on the right track.



10. From the feedback loops, the design team was able to refine ideas and finalize designs into a series of sketches, plans, and renderings.



11. On the final day of the charrette, a closing presentation was held at the DECC, which showcased the results of the week-long event. A gallery was set up in the hall so that attendees could view the charrette illustrations and discuss them with team members. Then a formal PowerPoint presentation was given, which walked the audience through the process and provided details on the findings and results. The end of the charrette marked the beginning of the implementation phase, which included formation of a stewardship committee to ensure that the recommendations and ideas presented in the charrette would be carried forward.

