

review draft documents prior to them being released to the general public, and attend public meetings as ambassadors of the Master Plan to the greater community.

MODIFIED CHARRETTE PROCESS

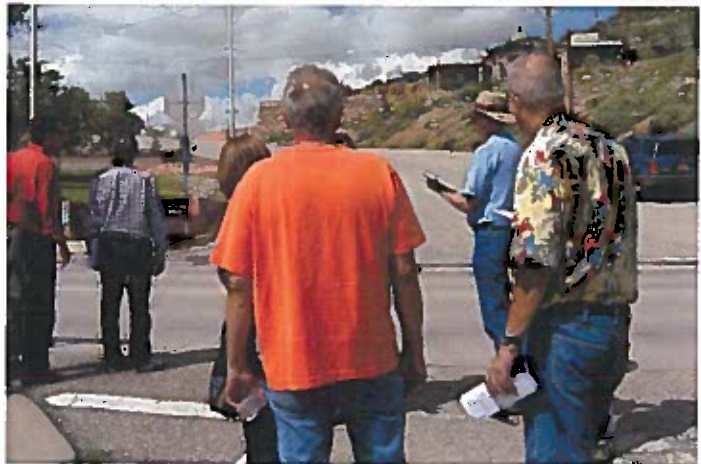


Modified Charrette Process

The Steering Committee was asked at the project kick-off meeting their preference for public engagement. They were given the option of having a typical 2-3 day charrette or holding a series of meetings, workshops, and other means of public engagement. The Steering Committee chose the latter option; basically, a modified or “deconstructed” charrette process. Elements of this process included:

Stakeholder Interviews - A series of stakeholder interviews were conducted by the consultants, with the goal of gaining more in-depth input from those who had most at stake in the success of Downtown. These were one-on-one sessions with individuals identified by the MainStreet Board, and primarily included Downtown business owners. The interviews were documented and became an integral component of the background research.

Downtown Walking Tour - A three hour walking tour was held with the Steering Committee on September 14, 2013, prior to the Second Saturday Art Hop that evening. This was an excellent opportunity for the consultant team to hear first hand from the Steering Committee members what they thought was good or needed improvement in Downtown. It allowed the participants to see Downtown with a critical eye, discuss areas of concern as a group, and provide objective feedback to the team. The walking tour focused on issues including, but not limited to, storm water drainage (there had been recent flooding), sidewalk conditions, vacant lots and buildings, building conditions, etc.



Steering Committee making observations on the walking tour.

Community Visioning - Second Saturday Art Hop - The first public meeting was held during the Second Saturday Art Hop event on Saturday, September 14, 2013. The purpose of

Downtown Master Plan

the meeting was to introduce the public to the MainStreet Master Plan project and gain their perspective on, vision for, and concerns regarding the MainStreet District of Truth or Consequences. The consultants were stationed at two locations during the Art Hop - Grapes Gallery and Studio de La Luz. Two different types of surveys were provided at each location, including one for visitors to Downtown and one for Downtown business owners. Other members of the consultant team walked through Downtown and visited with business owners since they were unable to leave their businesses during the event. The surveys included both quantitative and qualitative questions, and were extremely helpful in providing information to the consultants about what people liked about Downtown, what they thought needed improvement, and their vision for Downtown in the future. This approach was very successful in reaching a far greater number (87 total) and more diverse group than a typical public meeting / charrette (see Appendix A for the full survey results). Participants were also asked to write their vision for Downtown in five words on a dry erase board (see photos below).



Photos of some of the participants at the Art Hop holding up their visions for Downtown.

Steering Committee Workshops - Two half day working sessions (total of eight hours) were held with the Steering Committee, MainStreet Board members, and a few members of the general public. Alternative strategies were discussed and refined during these two workshops. Topics included branding / marketing strategies, eco-tourism, wayfinding, transportation (alternative street sections, one-way versus two-way streets, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and aesthetics), creation of a focus area, and opportunity sites (e.g., vacant lots, vacant buildings, public art opportunities, access to the Rio Grande, etc.). The Steering Committee