

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **COUNTY SCHEDULES DESIGN CHARETTE FOR JAIL PROJECT**

During the week of March 22 - 26, the County's design team will be hosting a design charette at the site of the new facility (640 River Street, Allegan, Michigan) in an effort to develop a recommended design concept for the new jail. The design team consists of the firms of RQAW, Byce and Associates (Architect/Engineers), O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock and Associates (Landscape Architect and Planning firm) and CCI, Inc. as the construction manager for the project.

The charette will bring various stakeholders together to provide input on the jail and Sheriffs Department facility, as well as the Courthouse modifications. The County's lead architectural firm, RQAW Corporation, will host and facilitate the weeklong workshop. According to Joe Mrak, Senior Vice President of RQAW, "The design charette will be an intensive work effort incorporating team building in a collaborative environment which will contribute to the success of the project."

To keep the discussions on track, a core focus group will be used to represent the various stakeholders (Sheriff Department, Courts, Building Authority, Facilities Management, Prosecutor, and Administration, among others). However, it is a priority for the County Board of Commissioners to gain input from the local units of government and other community stakeholders. The Board worked with RQAW to develop a uniquely open process that will still stay on track.

On Monday, March 22, 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., representatives from all local units and community members are invited to learn about the charette process and provide input relating to the project. A tour of the facility will be offered during that time. In addition, RQAW will give a summary of each day's progress for those who would like to attend, and will occur at 5:00 p.m. each day March 23 - 25.

All of the information obtained through the process will be reviewed at the April 8 Board of Commissioner's meeting. Once again, there will be an opportunity for input before the Board considers approval of the recommended design.

Casey Jones, Board of Commissioners Chairman states, "We are excited about this collaborative process and moving forward with this project." Blaine Koops, Sheriff states, "The Sheriff Department is eager to fully participate in the process and is expecting great results."

Joe Mrak summarizes, "The site the Board has selected for the new jail gives the County a number of opportunities for creative solutions and significant cost savings. These opportunities will make for an exciting design process."

Detailed information on the jail project including the charette is available at [www.allegancounty.org](http://www.allegancounty.org).

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