

*First life, then spaces, then buildings – the other way around never works.*  
 Jan Gehl

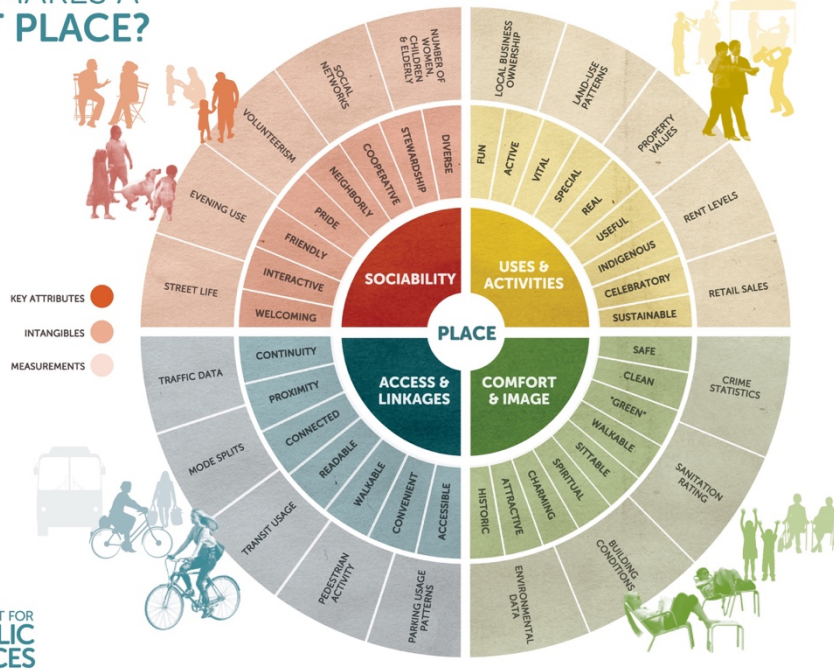
**PREMISE and BACKGROUND:**

Envision Charlotte, an organization best known for helping uptown corporations reduce their energy consumption, is re-developing a former vehicle maintenance facility into the **Innovation Barn**, a lab for research into the recycling, re-using, and repurposing philosophy of the circular economy.

While the I-Barn will contain offices, labs and classrooms, it is also envisioned as a community gathering space with a restaurant, bar and coffee shop. As much as possible, the design of these spaces will illustrate the basic tenants of the circular economy. However, to achieve these goals, a plan is needed for **Placemaking** in the outdoor spaces that surround the building, so people will be drawn to it.

The intention of Placemaking is to create public spaces that promote people's interaction, health, and well-being. It is both a process and a philosophy that makes use of urban design principles at both an immediate micro and long-term macro scale. The concept behind Placemaking originated in the 1960s with Jane Jacobs and William Whyte and their then groundbreaking ideas that cities should cater to pedestrians, not just to cars. Almost 50 years later, urban designer Jan Gehl continued to build on their work and placed it within the context of civil society. He wrote, "In a Society becoming steadily more privatized with private homes, cars, computers, offices and shopping centers, the public component of our lives is disappearing. It is more and more important to make the cities inviting, so we can meet our fellow citizens face to face and experience directly through our senses. Public life in good quality public spaces is an important part of a democratic life and a full life." (<https://www.pps.org/article/jgehl>)

**WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE?**



**CONTENT:** Jamie Bennett, executive director of ArtPlace America, has identified four tools needed to be considered in successful Placemaking.

(<https://www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/cdir-10-02-final.pdf>). They include anchoring, activating, fixing and planning. Students will examine each of these components throughout the semester beginning with Case Studies, and then later through Site Analysis, Site Design and a Placemaking Plan for the I-Barn. In the process, they will work with architects, landscape architects, urban designers, and city planners, both from the private sector and local government. The students' work will be shared with Envision Charlotte's Board of Directors, elected officials, and the City Manager's office.

**EVALUATION & GRADING:** Case Studies and Analysis 20%, Mid Review 30%, Final Review 50% for one on-going project over the course of the semester.

**METHODS:**

Students will complete class readings and research throughout the course of

the semester and engage in a reiterate design process, exploring alternative solutions and interventions at a site scale. While they will be collaborating on one comprehensive plan for the I-Barn site, each student will be responsible for their individual design proposals.

**Sample CLASS READINGS:**

["What is Placemaking? | Project for Public Spaces". Pps.org. 2009-12-31. Retrieved 2012-08-15](https://www.pps.org/article/jgehl)  
["Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places - Project for Public Spaces". Project for Public Spaces. Retrieved 2017-03-29.](https://www.pps.org/article/jgehl)  
 Jacobs, Jane (1961). *The death and life of great American cities*. New York: Random House. p. 168. [ISBN 0394421590](https://www.pps.org/article/jgehl).  
 "Urban Acupuncture: Hybrid Social and Technological Practices for Hyperlocal Placemaking". *Journal of Urban Technology*. **22**: 3–19  
 Ray., Oldenburg, (1999). *The great good place: cafés, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons, and other hangouts at the heart of a community*. New York: Marlowe. [ISBN 1569246815](https://www.pps.org/article/jgehl). [OCLC 41256327](https://www.pps.org/article/jgehl).