



SITE SELECTION PROCESS

Selecting the site is undoubtedly one of the most critical phases of the development process. While working with a real estate agent is not required, it is recommended as part of the process in finding an appropriate site. Realtors are knowledgeable about market conditions and may be aware of available properties that are outside your field of reference.

In addition to working with a realtor you might also want to inquire with your local municipality, local religious organizations, community development corporations and other non-profits, etc. to ascertain if there are properties for sale that are not listed with a realtor.

The following are some of the more important questions to keep in mind during the site selection process:

- Is the site located in the charter school's primary service area?
- Is the size adequate and can it accommodate future growth?
- Is the proposed use for the project permitted by zoning? (For example, can you build the type of project you want on the site?)
- Is there adequate space for parking?
- Are there any political issues that would block approval of the site? Are the neighbors likely to be supportive?

Consider a Variety of Options

Creativity and flexibility are very important when seeking an appropriate home for your charter school. The following chart summarizes advantages and disadvantages of various types of space.

Type	Pro	Con
School buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideal academic setting• Already arranged with classrooms, gym, cafeteria, library, administrative offices• Site is usually very accessible• Good parking, playground space• Rarely available in good condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing space with charter schools difficult in some districts• School buildings sometimes deed restricted to educational use (decreasing the re-sale value for charter schools purchasing these facilities)
Commercial space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequently available in strip malls• Large, open spaces easily converted to classrooms• Easy bus and car access• Good parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extensive renovations required• Few windows, poor light and ventilation• Setting often inappropriate for school• Limited playground space• Busy traffic may be safety issue• May not be zoned for education use

Office space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently available • Access to public transportation • Good parking, car access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive renovations required • Limited non-academic space (gym, etc.) • Limited playground space • Elevators and potential safety issues • May not be zoned for education use
Residential space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location accessible to student homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive renovations required • Limited non-academic space • Zoning variance possibly necessary • Limited parking • Potential difficulties accommodating growth • Possible resistance from neighbors
Warehouse/ flex space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, open spaces easily converted to classrooms • Easy to adapt space for non-academic uses (gym, etc.) • Easy bus and car access • Good parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive renovations required • Limited access to public transportation • Zoning variance possibly required • Potential hazardous material issues • Possibly inappropriate setting for school
New construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored to the school's needs • Low maintenance costs • Attractive to prospective parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public funds to construct new buildings sometimes prohibited for charter schools • Very expensive (though sometimes actually cheaper than renovating) • Code requirements for new buildings may be more extensive • Disposition of building if charter is not renewed
Modular units (trailers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be obtained quickly • Appropriately sized space provided • Configured in flexible ways • Short term commitment • Flexibility of location • Growth easily accommodated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expense of necessary site work • Sub-optimal in bad weather conditions (not all under one roof) • Limited office and non-academic space
Houses of Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually very affordable • Frequently available during school days • Often configured with classrooms • Often include gym, cafeteria, play ground • Good access, parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need to set up every Monday, pack up every Friday