



Planning Board Briefing

July 14, 2016

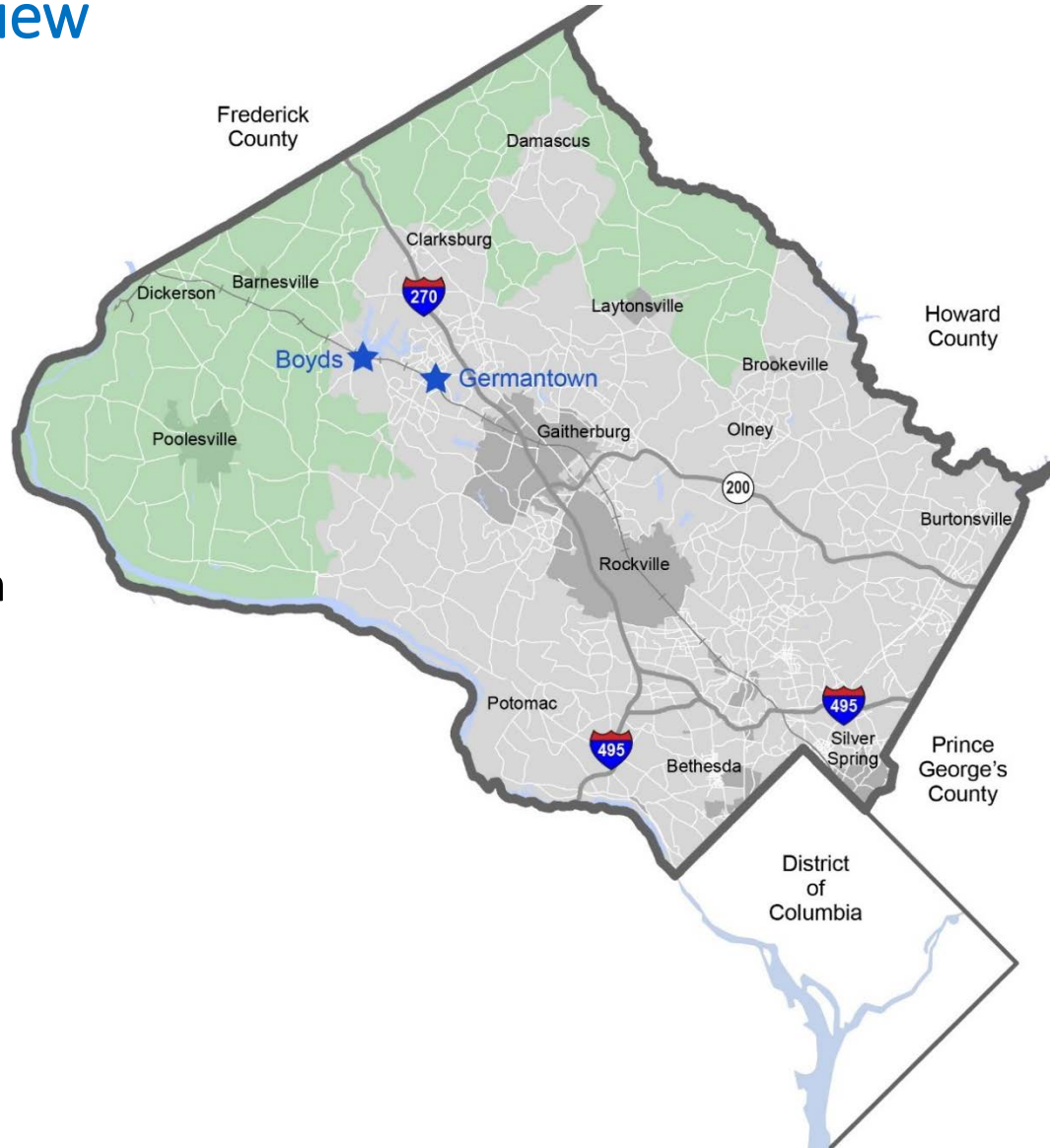


MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyd's & Germantown



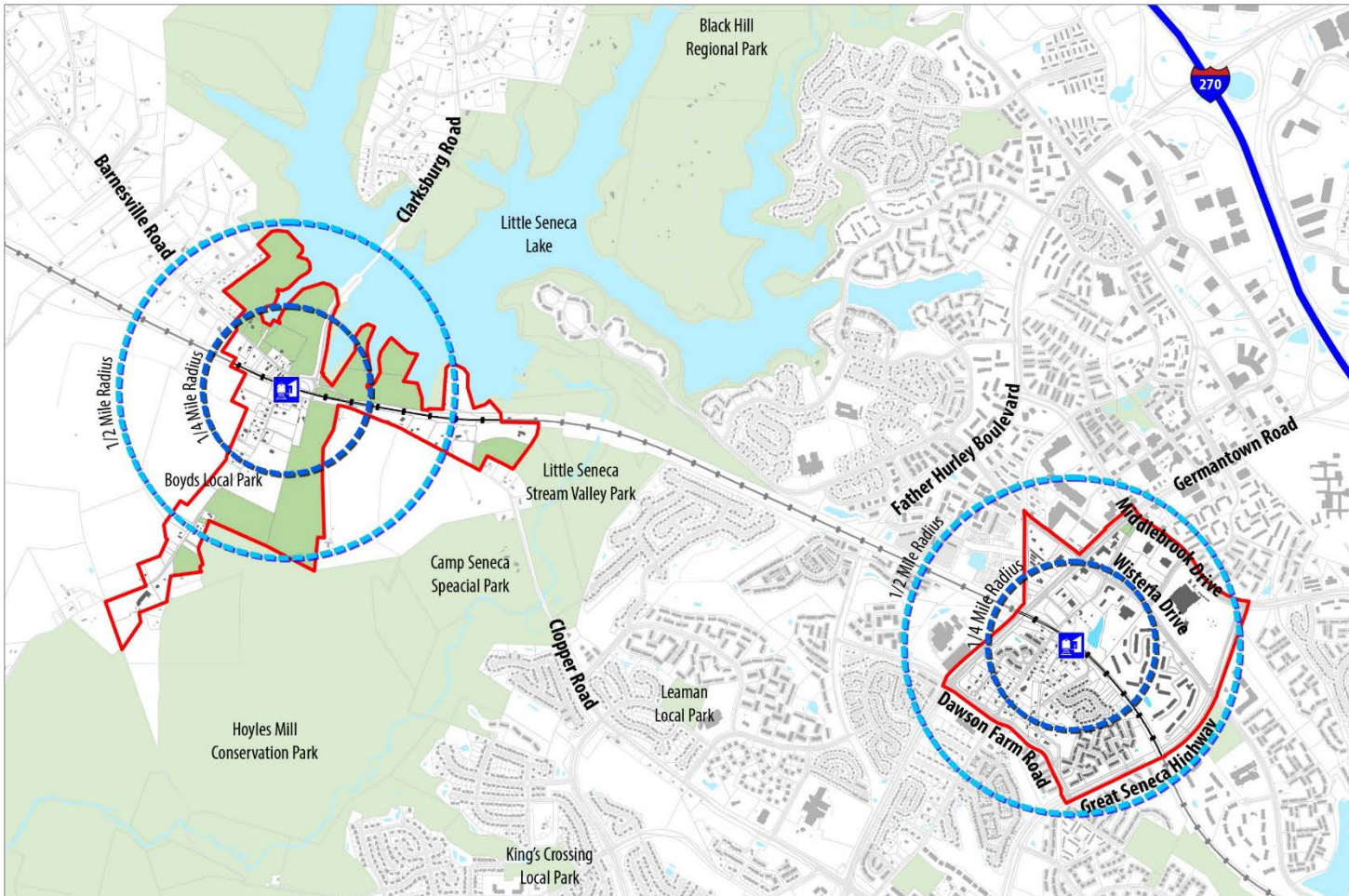
Presentation Overview

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Outreach
- ▶ Design Workshop
- ▶ Community Meetings
- ▶ Consultant Services
- ▶ ULI mTap Presentation
- ▶ For Further Evaluation
- ▶ Next Steps



Introduction

Vicinity Map



Introduction: Plan Purpose

- ▶ Protect and enhance valued activities and places.
- ▶ Evaluate land uses and zoning near each station area.
- ▶ Ensure compatibility with each historic district.
- ▶ Improve pedestrian, bicyclist, public transportation access to each station.



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Outreach

Interactive Map

- ▶ GIS Team developed map.
- ▶ Launched prior to the Design Workshop.
- ▶ Still active to receive comments.

The screenshot displays an interactive map titled 'Communities Plan | Boyds & Germantown' with a Planning Department overlay. Two comment pop-ups are visible:

- Master Plan Comment ID: 2917**
 - Comment Type: Placemaking
 - Comment: Pedestrian sidewalks
 - Date Submitted: Mar 16, 2016
 - 2 Comments... (Avg. Rating is 5.0 out of 5 stars)
 - Rating: 5 stars
 - Date: Mar 16, 2016
 - Comment: Add lamp post for street lighting.
 - Rating: 5 stars
 - Date: Mar 16, 2016
 - Comment: Add sidewalks to allow pedestrians easy access to the stores and businesses in downtown Boyds.
- Master Plan Comment ID: 4802**
 - Comment Type: Other
 - Comment: Despite the marked crosswalk on Wisteria, motorists do not always stop for pedestrians. If we expect people to walk to the MARC, it must be safe.
 - Date Submitted: Jun 23, 2016

The map shows a purple outline of the community area with various colored markers (red, orange, green) indicating comment locations. A sidebar on the right includes an 'Interactive' section with the text 'We want your input'.



Design Workshop

Daytime Day 1: Ask the Specialist Sessions

- ▶ 15 presentations by agency representatives.
 - ▷ Provided insight into the activities around each station.
 - ▷ Enabled the community the opportunity to ask questions.

Evening Day 1: Visioning Exercise



- GERMANTOWN 3/7/2016
- MAINTAIN HISTORICAL CHARACTER
 - MAINTAIN PUBLIC SPACE FOR FLEA/ FARMER'S MARKET.
 - PARKING @ END OF LIBERTY MILL @ TRACKS
IC: LANDSCAPING COMPANY
 - INDUSTRIAL AREA: WATER RD, WISTERIA & MD118
• CHESTNUT RIDGE
 - MAINTAIN SENSE OF COMMUNITY
 - OPEN SPACE & PARKS
 - PLACE FOR LARGE SCALE GATHERINGS
PHILLIPS FARM?
 - BIKE & WALKING NETWORK
 - MAINTAIN PED. BRIDGE ON LIBERTY MILL RD



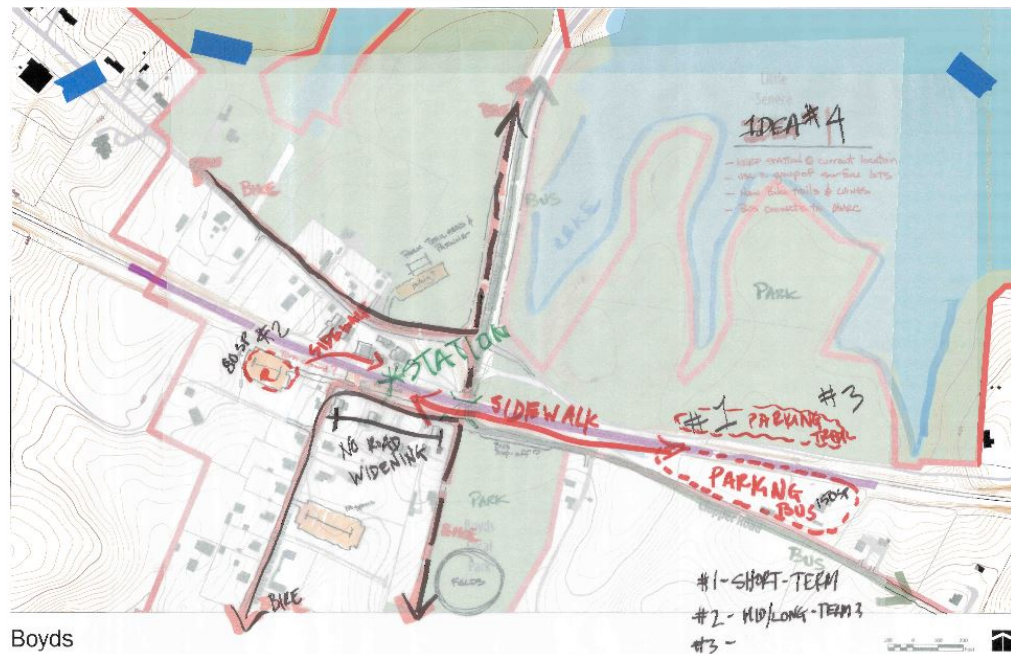
Design Workshop

Day 2: Boyds

- ▶ Developed a set of goals for the future of the community.
- ▶ Developed an initial diagram showing ideas regarding:
 - ▷ Better connectivity
 - ▷ Additional parking
 - ▷ Station location
- ▶ Discussed ideas with the Boyds community



- BOYDS GOALS
- ① MAINTAIN HISTORIC, RURAL CHARACTER AND SCALE
 - ② MAINTAIN & ENHANCE MARC STATION
 - ③ "GATEWAY TO AGT RESERVE"
 - ④ CREATE A SAFE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK
 - ⑤ ENHANCE & CREATE BIKE NETWORK & CONNECTIONS
 - ⑥ CREATE BUS TRANSIT CONNECTIONS TO MARC
 - ⑦ ALLOW FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO "TOWN CENTER" HAVEN
 - ⑧ MANAGE INCREASED TRAFFIC



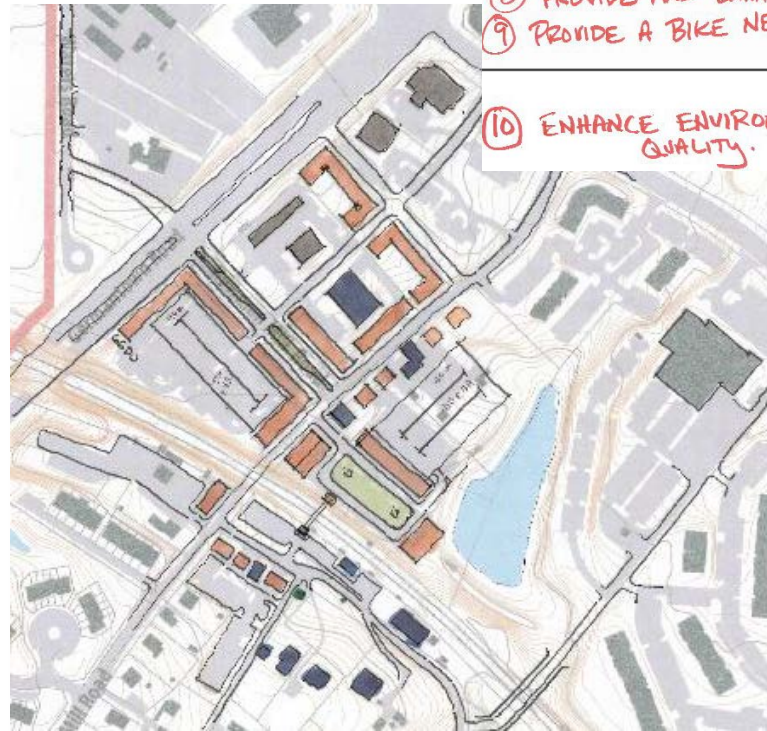
Boyd



Design Workshop

Day 3: Germantown

- ▶ Developed a set of goals for the future of the community.
- ▶ Developed an initial diagram showing ideas regarding:
 - ▷ Better connectivity
 - ▷ Places for gathering
 - ▷ Additional parking
- ▶ Discussed ideas with the Germantown community



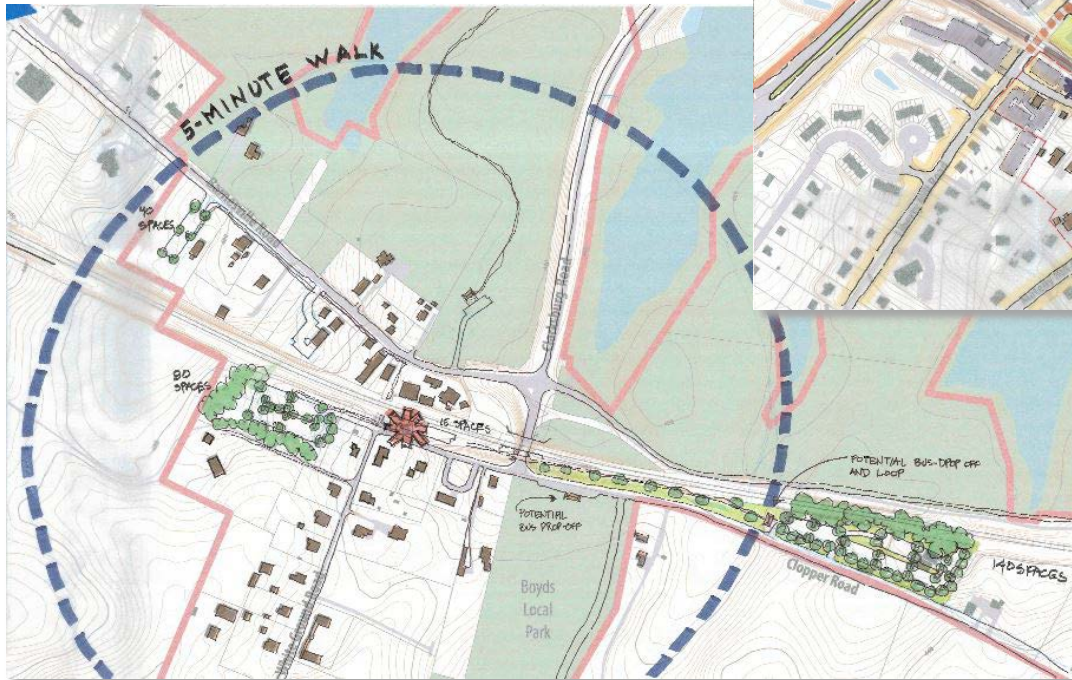
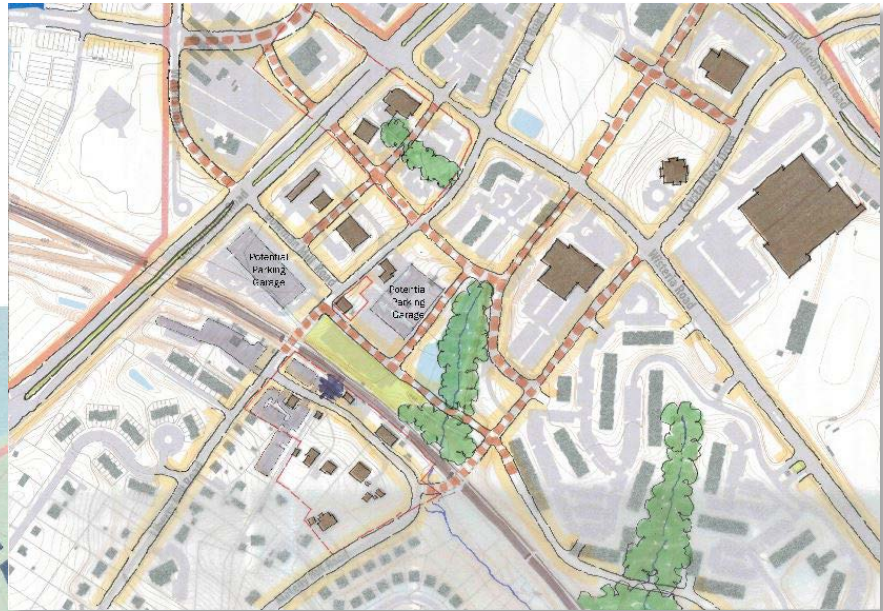
GERMANTOWN GOALS

- ① CREATE A "SENSE OF PLACE."
- ② PRESERVE AND ENHANCE HISTORIC DISTRICT.
- ③ CREATE CENTRAL, FOCAL GATHERING POINTS.
- ④ DRAMATICALLY INCREASE PUBLIC ~~PEDESTRIAN~~ PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.
- ⑤ EXPAND MARC STATION PARKING.
- ⑥ ALLOW FOR THE ADDITION OF A 3RD TRACK
- ⑦ PROVIDE BETTER CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS
- ⑧ PROVIDE AND ENHANCE BUS CONNECTIONS
- ⑨ PROVIDE A BIKE NETWORK THROUGHOUT
- ⑩ ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY.



Design Workshop

Day 4: Synthesis of Diagrams for Boyds and Germantown



Community Meetings and Outreach

Upcounty Citizen's Advisory Board April 18, 2016

- Discussed the Design Workshop and the products created

Boyd's Civic Association April 21, 2016

- Discussed the Design Workshop
- Received feedback on some potential parking locations, the idea of moving the station and the idea of a proposed.

Informational Poster at the Upcounty Regional Services Center

Handout provided at community meetings

Plan Purpose


The MARC Rail Corridor Plan is an important transportation alternative connecting West Virginia to Washington, DC, The Bayle, and Germantown. MARC's current service is limited to 15 stations, with 2.5 miles apart. While the area around the Boyd's station has experienced increased development in recent years.

Although they have developed unique identities, both stations are being surrounded by all types of roads, and have common challenges. Parking at both stations is insufficient for current MARC ridership and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is considering how to increase the number of spaces and provide better Park-Or-Ride service. Additionally, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is studying how to improve vehicular circulation and around the Boyd's station area for a limited traffic corridor.

The focus of MARC Rail Corridor Plan is to bring together the various studies of the station area and consider parking, transit options and land use issues affecting these locations. In addition, the Plan will work short and long term recommendations for better and safer pedestrian, bicycle, bus and auto connections in the area around the stations and relationships to the historic communities around them.

Results from the Design Workshop

Planners conducted an intensive, four-day Design Workshop at the Upcounty Regional Services Center in Germantown on March 16, 2016. The purpose of this workshop was to learn more about the existing conditions that affect the area around Boyd's and Germantown MARC stations, create vision input from community stakeholders, brainstorm ideas and begin developing concepts for the future vision of both MARC station areas. A link to the full agenda and ideas produced during the Design Workshop can be found at the project website: www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/marc_rail_station/



Today: 2015 Aerial
Today, the area has more than 94,100 residents and 445 million square feet of office space. Little Seneca Lake is a defining feature of the landscape. The rail line continues to link the historic centers of Boyd's and Germantown.



Yesterday: 1879 Hopkins Map
Boyd's station to be larger than Germantown. This map shows the original alignment of the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O in black. The current alignment of the rail line is shown in blue.

What are your thoughts? Here are some of ours.

Boyd's Framework Ideas

- 1) Park (Central to Station)
- 2) Enhance Pedestrian Connections & Landmarks (B&O)
- 3) New & Enhanced Bike Routes
- 4) Create Bus Loop to MARC
- 5) Create Potential for New Uses of Enhanced "Park" (Central to Station)
 - Park (Central to Station) with
 - New B&O Station
 - New B&O Station
- 6) Develop New Uses & Landmarks
- 7) Create Potential for New Uses of Enhanced "Park" (Central to Station)
- 8) Create Potential for New Uses of Enhanced "Park" (Central to Station)
- 9) Create Potential for New Uses of Enhanced "Park" (Central to Station)
- 10) Create Potential for New Uses of Enhanced "Park" (Central to Station)

Proposed Boyd's Framework Ideas and Possible Additional Parking Locations Diagram



Tomorrow: From Station to Destination
How can we create better connections in the community that is not just for cars and commuters, but also for pedestrians and cyclists? How can we build on the rich history of the location to create a vibrant, memorable, beautiful vibrant place where residents and visitors want to gather, live and participate in the community and community activities?

Germantown Framework Ideas

- 1) Preserve & Enhance Historic District
- 2) Streets (Central to Station) - New Streets (Central to Station)
- 3) New Streets (Central to Station) - New Streets (Central to Station)
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Proposed Germantown Framework Ideas and Possible Street Network Diagram (New Streets in Dashed Brown)

Boyd's Strengths

- Unique environmental setting
- Gateway to the Agriculture Reserve
- Proximity of the historic district
- Architectural & progressive land
- Well organized residents
- Continuation of railroad station use
- Businesses in historic buildings

Challenges

- Cut through traffic
- Underdeveloped property
- Poor connectivity (especially lack of sidewalks)
- Trucks as a barrier
- Single entrances
- Limited parking for MARC plus its limited service
- Impact of a potential third track

Germantown Strengths

- Historic fabric
- Active Germantown Historical Society
- Full MARC service
- Fine market
- Open space around stormwater pond area

Challenges

- Auto-oriented development station area
- Soil of the site and old lot coverage
- MD 115, MD 660, Rock Road and Great Seneca Highway as barriers
- Trucks as a barrier
- Need to present an auto and bicycle connections in area, especially around the station
- Lack of community activity area
- Limited connectivity/bikeability
- Size of historic fabric created by surface parking lots

Provide additional ideas and comments in the comment card and the project's interactive map: www.mctdas.org/marc/

Consultant Services: Boyds

- ▶ Evaluate the feasibility of a proposal by the Boyds Civic Association to realign roadways near the intersections of Clopper, Clarksburg and Barnesville Roads.
 - ▷ Developing alternatives for the alignment.
 - ▷ Providing general cost for each alternative.



Consultant Services: Germantown

- ▶ Evaluate a “road diet” for the roads within proximity of Seneca Valley High School.



Middlebrook Road west of MD 118 (4 lanes/ median)



Middlebrook Road and MD 118 with left turn lanes



8 lanes of Middlebrook Road at intersection with MD 118



Middlebrook Road adjacent to Seneca Valley High School (6 lanes/ narrow sidewalks and median)



Bicyclist riding on narrow sidewalk adjacent to Middlebrook Road





ULI mTap

Team Members

Benjamin Cohen, Davis Construction

Mike Lozier, US Bank Commercial Rael Estate

Bob Mill, PN Hoffman

Molly McKay, Willdan Financial and Economic Consulting Services

Arlova Jackson Vonhm, Department of Community Planning, Housing & Development

Robin McElhenny-Smith, Real Estate and Station Planning - Metro

Challenge

- ▶ How can the parking situation be improved at the Germantown MARC station?
- ▶ What public/private development is possible/appropriate?
- ▶ Are there any creative options for financing?
- ▶ How can the Germantown MARC station help the County and the region?
- ▶ What lessons can be learned to apply elsewhere?



ULI mTap

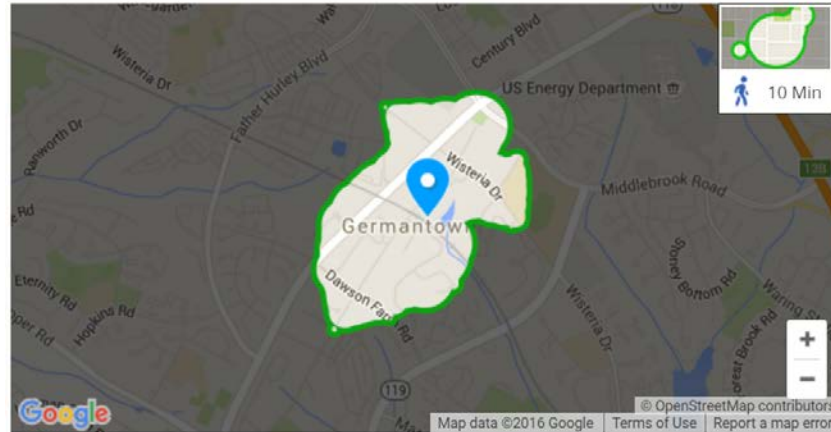
Pedestrian

- ▶ **Walk score = 32 (of 100)**
 - ▷ Based on destinations reached within 10 min. walk.
- ▶ **Challenges**
 - ▷ Auto-dominated area with major roadways.
 - ▷ Sidewalk gaps.
- ▶ **Opportunities**
 - ▷ Increase access to MARC station using existing street network as well as proposed expansion.
 - ▷ Private development to help fund infrastructure improvements.

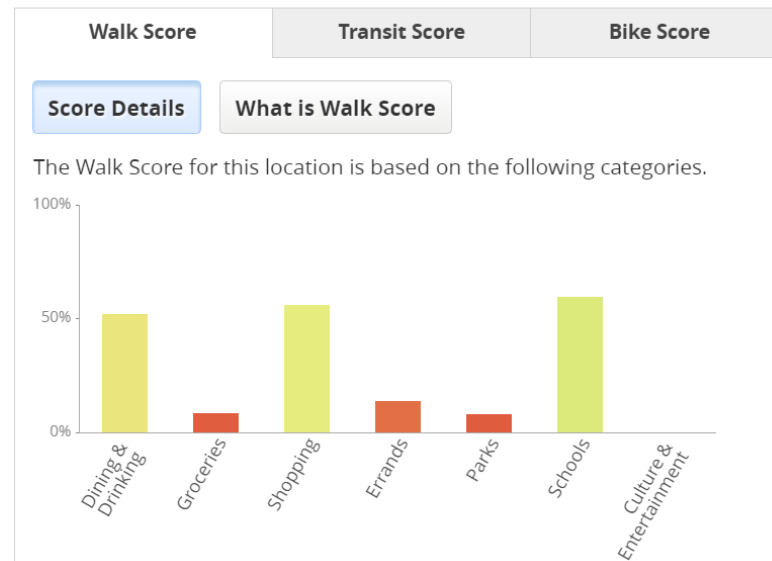
Travel Time Map

[Add to your site](#)

Explore how far you can travel by car, bus, bike and foot from this location.



Walk Score
32



ULI mTap

MARC Parking

- ▶ 694 spaces, 99% utilization rate.
- ▶ 55% of riders driving to station from < 2 miles away.
- ▶ Two parking garage options.
- ▶ Both options provide 900 - 1,100 total spaces that would serve mid-term (15-year) growth in ridership.
- ▶ Bus Circulation, Bike Rooms & Bus/Rider Shelter



ULI mTap

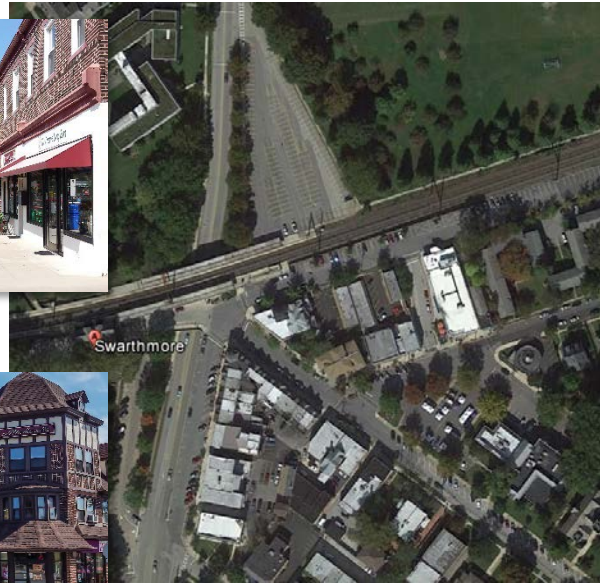
mTap Recommendations

- ▶ Promote “Mode Shift” from auto passengers to public transit and alternative modes.
- ▶ Target state and federal grants/partnerships to fund regional planning studies and capital requirements for the garage and associated public transit improvements (HUD Sustainable Communities, TIGER, etc.).
- ▶ Add public parking at Boyds MARC station in advance to help manage overflow during construction of Germantown garage.
- ▶ Improve access for pedestrians and bicycles, not just cars.
- ▶ Transition to paid parking.

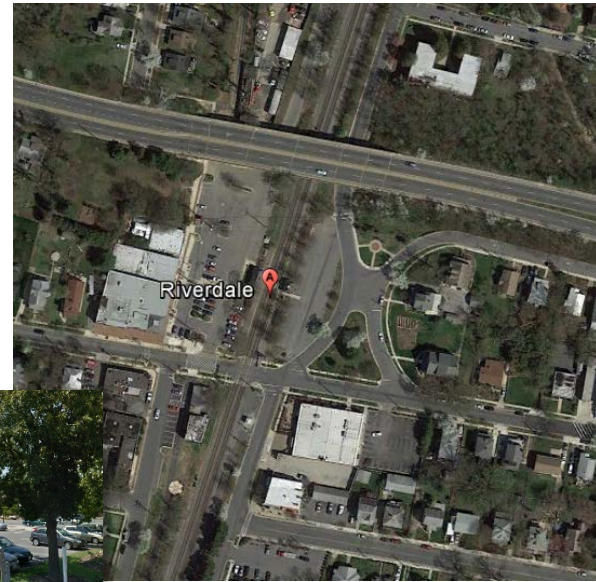


For Further Evaluation

- ▶ Look at similar regional commuter station areas.
- ▶ Address commuter parking via garages or additional surface parking and better transit access.
- ▶ Develop solutions that improve the pedestrian and bicyclist experience based on the consultant's findings.
- ▶ Investigate additional connections to the street network in Germantown.
- ▶ Determine long-term alternatives for the traffic in Boyds based on consultant's findings.
- ▶ Improve water quality thru additional tree canopy and stormwater quality retrofits.



Swarthmore SEPTA Station area



Riverdale Park MARC Station area



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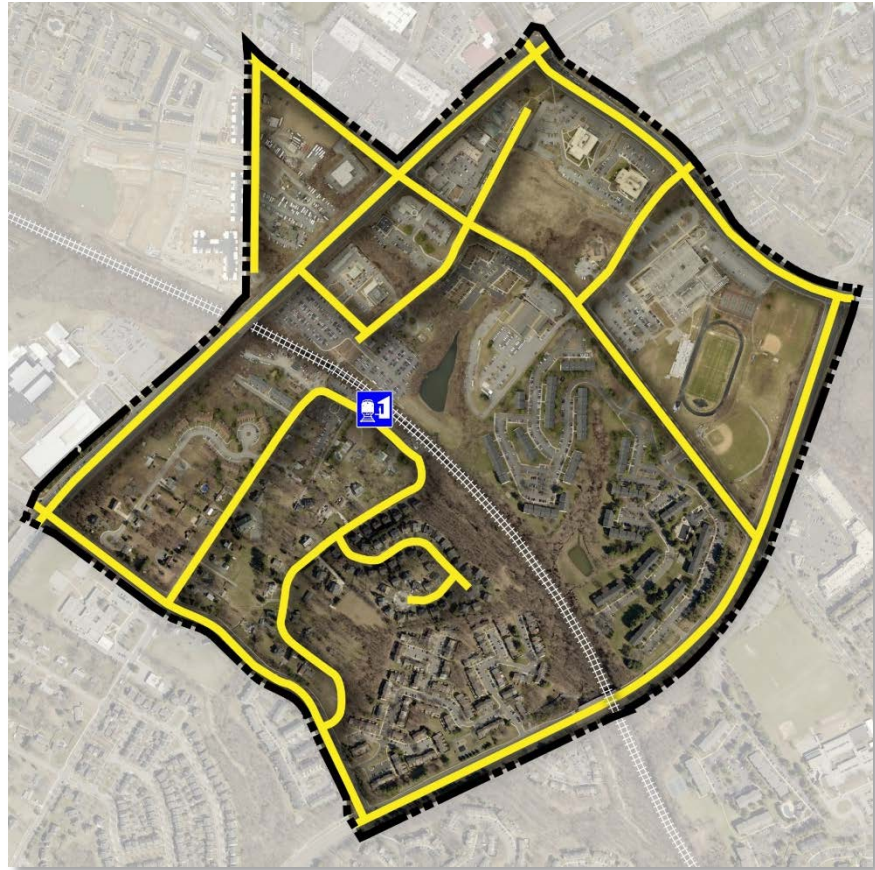


Biker using sidewalk along Middlebrook Road



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Existing Germantown Street Network



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Boyd's Alternatives Developed by Consultant for Design Workshop



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- ▶ **Improve water quality thru additional tree canopy and stormwater quality retrofits.**



Minimal tree panels in the Germantown MARC parking lot area



Next Steps

- ▶ Develop Preliminary Recommendations
- ▶ Present Recommendations to Community
- ▶ Working Draft to Planning Board
- ▶ Planning Board Public Hearings
- ▶ Transmit to Council

July - September 2016
September 2016
October 2016
November - December 2016
January 2017

