

Approved

Bowie State MARC Station

Sector Plan and SMA



Prince George's County Planning Department
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
www.mncppc.org/pgco

January 2010

\$8.00

Abstract

<i>Title:</i>	Approved Bowie State MARC Station Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment
<i>Author:</i>	The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
<i>Subject:</i>	Sector plan and sectional map amendment for the Bowie State MARC Station area (Planning Areas 71A and 71B) of Prince George's County, Maryland
<i>Date:</i>	January 2010
<i>Source of Copies:</i>	The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission 14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772
<i>Series Number:</i>	319102306
<i>Number of Pages:</i>	138
<i>Abstract:</i>	This document is the sector plan and sectional map amendment for the Bowie State MARC Station area. The plan amends portions of the 2006 <i>Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A, and 74B</i> . Developed with the assistance of the community, this document recommends goals, strategies, and action pertaining to land use, zoning, environment, parks and recreation, transportation, trails, public facilities, historic preservation, urban design, economic development, and sustainability. The SMA zoning changes implement the sector plan.

Cover Design Artist

The cover art for this sector plan was created by Samantha Key, a Bowie State University (BSU) junior majoring in Visual Communications and Digital Art. Her cover was the winning submission in a competition that asked BSU students to create designs that embodied the spirit of the objectives and vision of the Bowie State MARC Station Sector Plan.

Ms. Key researched the plan, took notes on each goal, and selected images that symbolized an environmentally sensitive mixed-use center—with connections to Baltimore and Washington—that encourages students and residents to be more socially and physically active.



Approved

Bowie State MARC Station

Sector Plan and SMA



January 2010

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

www.mncppc.org



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Samuel J. Parker, Jr., AICP, *Chairman*

Royce Hanson, *Vice Chairman*

Officers

Patricia Colihan Barney, *Acting Executive Director*

Al Warfield, *Acting Secretary-Treasurer*

Adrian R. Gardner, *General Counsel*

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is a bicounty agency, created by the General Assembly of Maryland in 1927. The Commission's geographic authority extends to the great majority of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties: the Maryland-Washington Regional District (M-NCPPC planning jurisdiction) comprises 1,001 square miles, while the Metropolitan District (parks) comprises 919 square miles, in the two counties.

The Commission has three major functions:

- The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of the General Plan for the physical development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District.
- The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system.
- In Prince George's County only, the operation of the entire county public recreation program.

The Commission operates in each county through a Planning Board appointed by and responsible to the county government. All local plans, recommendations on zoning amendments, administration of subdivision regulations, and general administration of parks are responsibilities of the Planning Boards.

The Prince George's County Planning Department (M-NCPPC):

- Our mission is to help preserve, protect and manage the county's resources by providing the highest quality planning services and growth management guidance and by facilitating effective intergovernmental and citizen involvement through education and technical assistance.
- Our vision is to be a model planning department of responsive and respected staff who provide superior planning and technical services and work cooperatively with decision-makers, citizens and other agencies to continuously improve development quality and the environment and act as a catalyst for positive change.

Prince George's County Planning Board

Samuel J. Parker, Jr., AICP, *Chairman*

Sylvester J. Vaughns, *Vice Chairman*

Sarah Cavitt

Jesse Clark

John H. Squire

Montgomery County Planning Board

Royce Hanson, *Chairman*

Marye Wells Harley

Joseph Alfandre

Amy Presley

Prince George's County

Jack B. Johnson, *County Executive*

County Council

The County Council has three main responsibilities in the planning process: (1) setting policy, (2) plan approval, and (3) plan implementation. Applicable policies are incorporated into area plans, functional plans, and the *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*. The County Council, after holding a hearing on the plan adopted by the Planning Board, may approve the plan as adopted, approve the plan with amendments based on the public record, or disapprove the plan and return it to the Planning Board for revision. Implementation is primarily through adoption of the annual Capital Improvement Program, the annual budget, the water and sewer plan, and adoption of zoning map amendments.

Council Members

Thomas E. Dernoga, *1st District, Council Chairman*

Will Campos, *2nd District*

Eric Olson, *3rd District*

Ingrid M. Turner, *4th District*

Andrea Harrison, *5th District, Vice Chair*

Samuel H. Dean, *6th District*

Camille Exum, *7th District*

Tony Knotts, *8th District*

Marilynn Bland, *9th District*

Clerk of the Council

Redis C. Floyd

Foreword

The Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is pleased to make available the Approved Bowie State MARC Station Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment (SMA). This community-based plan/SMA sets preliminary land use and development policies for the area, addressing physical and policy changes since publication of the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A, and 74B*.

The plan's comprehensive "charrette" approach to public participation was a successful collaborative effort and provided an open forum for residents, students, property owners, business owners, and developers to participate in the plan preparation. During the charrette, visions for the area were established, prominent issues were identified, alternative concepts were developed, and a preferred plan that set development policies for the area was produced.

This document contains recommendations for land use, environmental infrastructure, transportation systems (including roads, transit, and trails), public facilities, parks and recreation, economic development, design and appearance, and community participation. It recommends a mixed-use community center that incorporates a set of vibrant neighborhoods with active, pedestrian-oriented streets with a small college town character. The plan proposes a consolidated multimodal transit facility that will include an enhanced MARC Station and expanded local and regional bus service. It also encourages the use of alternative and sustainable sources of energy to minimize cost and reduce the carbon footprint of new and existing development.

The plan aligns well with comments received from more than 20,000 Prince George's stakeholders through *Envision Prince George's*, a multi-year public engagement initiative designed to create and implement a long-term vision for the county based on the viewpoints and input of citizens and stakeholders across the entire county. Over a two-year period, stakeholders shared their vision for the county through various public and online community forums. The end result was an Action Agenda that addresses more than 15,000 ideas and suggestions gathered from residents and stakeholders. Reflecting one countywide vision, the *Envision Action Agenda* outlines 14 priority goals with short- and long-term objectives to enhance the county over the next 10 to 20 years. Among the top concerns of residents was sustaining the county through effective development of mixed-use communities.

The Prince George's County Planning Board and the County Council held a joint public hearing to solicit comments from property owners, residents, and the general public. All comments and recommendations presented at the public hearing became a matter of public record and were summarized and reviewed by the Planning Board and the County Council in their deliberations prior to approval of the plan and SMA by the District Council on January 26, 2010. The Planning Board and County Council appreciate the contributions of the community and stakeholders in the development of this plan. We encourage your continued involvement in overall community planning and development through *Envision Prince George's*. We invite you to visit www.envisionprincegeorges.org to learn how you can continue to impact your communities in positive ways.

Sincerely,



Samuel J. Parker, Jr., AICP

Chairman

Prince George's County Planning Board



Table of Contents

Foreword	iv
Plan Highlights	1
I. Planning Background and Process	
Plan Purpose	5
Project Area Boundary and Regional Setting	5
Relationship to the General Plan	6
Relationship to Other Plans and Policies	7
Public Participation	8
Area Stakeholders' Assessment of Their Community	11
II. Sector Area Character Analysis	
Historical Overview	13
Sector Plan Area Today	14
Demographic and Market Profile	16
Infrastructure Elements	22
Transportation	22
Public Facilities	26
Historic Preservation	33
Environmental Infrastructure and Sustainability	34
III. Vision	
Vision Statement	39
Vision Elements	40
Land Use and Economic Development	43
Village Center	43
North Village	46
Bowie State MARC Office and Research Campus	46
Design and Appearance	49
Infrastructure Elements	50
IV. Development Pattern	
Introduction	53
Rural Tier	54
Developing Tier	57
Centers	59
Amendments to General Plan	60

V. Action Plan	
Land Use and Economic Development	62
Design and Appearance	66
Bowie State MARC Station Sector Plan Area	66
Village Center	71
North Village	82
Bowie State MARC Office and Research Campus	83
Bowie State University Campus	86
Infrastructure Elements	89
Transportation	89
Parks and Recreation	102
Environmental Infrastructure and Sustainability	103
Community Involvement	107
VI. Implementation	
Introduction	109
Existing Economic Development Incentives	109
Action and Phasing Plan	114
Public Facilities Cost Analysis and Estimates	116
Sectional Map Amendment	119
Appendices	
Level of Service Table	130
Procedural Sequence Chart	131
Procedural Sequence Chart	131
Certificate of Adoption and Approval	132
Acknowledgments	Inside back cover



Plan Highlights

Vision

The vision for the Bowie State Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Station area is a close-knit community consisting of many diverse residential neighborhoods, an expanded and improved world-class educational institution at Bowie State University (BSU), and high-quality office and research facilities, all oriented around a vibrant and active community center. The Bowie State MARC Station area offers residents, students, workers, and visitors retail options, attractive parks and open spaces, trails, multiple transportation modes, public safety, and other public facilities.

Land Use and Economic Development

- Rezone the community center to mixed-use zoning.
- Provide new development with high-quality residential and non-residential uses that have appropriate densities for three designated villages within the community center.
- Encourage a larger private or state-government user to locate to the Bowie State MARC Office and Research Campus.
- Encourage the construction of a BSU convocation center and laboratory school to be located in the community center.
- Establish a multidimensional branding campaign that brings clear identity to the area, promotes the area's strengths, and alerts private investors to its readiness for business.

Infrastructure Elements

- Relocate and improve the MARC Station north of its current location with centrally located parking and a vehicular/pedestrian passageway under the new station and Amtrak Rail line. This new passageway will link the university with the "main street" of the community center.
- Transform BSU's Loop Road into a parkway configuration with landscaped medians and plantings along the street edges.
- Create a bus hub at the new MARC Station that can accommodate new and/or increased regional and local bus service, creating an opportunity to connect to mass transit services and regional connections.

- Create a pedestrian overpass across the Amtrak Rail line at the northern end of the BSU campus, connecting to the North Village of the community center.
- Create bike lanes along MD 197 and Race Track Road that are separated from the street.
- Create a hiker/biker trail alongside the Amtrak Rail Line that will connect the community center to Old Town Bowie.
- Provide a county bus service or shuttle that connects the Bowie State MARC Station to Old Town Bowie, the Bowie Town Center, and the City of Bowie.
- Provide a continuous network of sidewalks, bikeways, and trails that provide opportunities for residents to reduce automobile trips and encourage them to walk or bicycle.

Quality of Life

- Ensure that regulated areas designated in the sector plan's green infrastructure network are preserved, restored, or enhanced before and during development, to be reviewed in the approval process.
- Implement the recommendations of the *Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan* in all development to address the relationship of planned growth to water resources for both waste disposal and safe drinking water. Include an analysis of water-resource protection areas, groundwater resources, water quality standards, total maximum daily load (TMDL) standards, and waste and stormwater management.
- Use best management strategies (BMS) to house and treat stormwater on-site through methods such as bio-retention swales, rain gardens, and man-made wetlands. These BMS will be used to capture, clean and treat stormwater and allow it to permeate into the ground or percolate into nearby wetlands and the Patuxent River.
- Support one specially designated, landmark LEED building for the BSU campus to enhance education and research in green technologies. This landmark building should be progressive in its green strategies, employ the latest green techniques and materials, and be unique in order to encourage visitors to learn from its example. This building may be well suited to a new program in environmental science, an administration building, or a new laboratory school.
- Require the use of alternative-lighting technologies at athletic fields, parking facilities, and shopping areas to limit light intrusion onto adjacent properties and provide safe and even lighting levels.

Design and Appearance

- Utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques for future development and redevelopment to create safe and comfortable areas for residents, workers, and visitors.
- Utilize design guidelines for the community center to help ensure top-quality and sustainable products.
- Enhance the streetscape along MD 197 with native trees, ornamental lighting, and Bowie State University or community center banners as part of the design.
- Construct new Bowie State University buildings at the intersection of MD 197 and New Semchopk Road to serve as a formal pronounced gateway into the university from the busy wooded highway.
- Provide design strategies for the BSU physical campus that facilitate and strengthen ties with the local community as the university moves forward with its planned growth.

Implementation

- Zoning changes are limited to making the community center conform to the land use plan, with the majority of the plan area maintaining its existing zoning classifications.
- Include a sectional map amendment to implement the sector plan's vision and recommendations.
- Provide a public facility cost analysis and estimates for the purpose of seeking future funding for proposed projects.
- Provide an action and phasing plan to implement the sector plan's recommendations.



Chapter I: Planning Background and Process

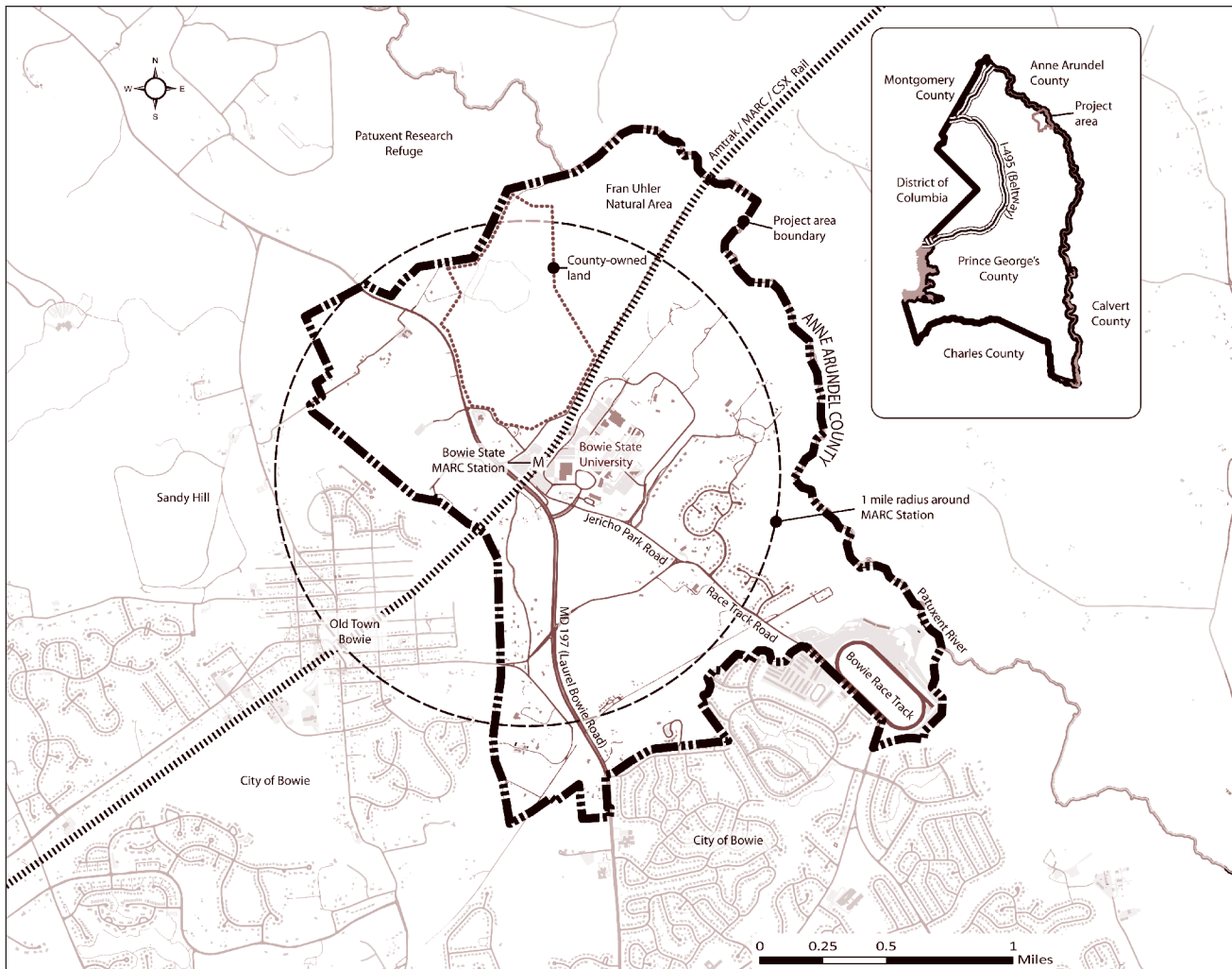
Plan Purpose

This plan was prepared in response to the recommendation in the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A, and 74B* for a community center designation and detailed sector plan for the Bowie State MARC Station area. It further recommends that the sector plan determine the scale, magnitude, and pedestrian/bicycle linkages to the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Station prior to any major development. This document is organized to reflect the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*. The sector plan contains goals, policies, and strategies to guide future development for the Bowie State MARC Station Sector Plan area.

Project Area Boundary and Regional Setting

The sector plan area consists of 3.6 square miles (2,282 acres) in northeastern Prince George's County and includes portions of Planning Areas 71A and 71B. It comprises the properties within approximately one-mile of the MARC Station and includes key properties that have redevelopment, trail connection, and streetscape potential. The sector plan project area is bounded by the Patuxent Research Refuge to the north, the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) easement to the west, the City of Bowie border to the south, and the Patuxent River to the east. (See **Map I-1: Planning Area**, page 6.)

Map I-1 Planning Area



Relationship to the General Plan

The sector plan establishes development policies consistent with the intent and vision of the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*. The General Plan places the sector plan area within two growth policy tiers—the Developing Tier and the Rural Tier—and beyond any designated centers or corridors. Approximately 25 percent of the sector plan area falls within the Developing Tier, which the General Plan envisions as an area of low-to moderate-density suburban residential communities, distinct commercial centers, and transit-serviceable employment areas. Developing Tier growth policies emphasize a balance between the pace of development and the demand for adequate roads and public facilities, encouraging contiguous expansion of development where public facilities and services can be provided most efficiently. The remaining 75 percent of the sector plan area falls within the Rural Tier, in which the General Plan seeks to preserve large amounts of land for woodland, wildlife habitat, recreation and agriculture pursuits, and preservation of the rural character and vistas that now exist.

Relationship to Other Plans and Policies

A number of previously approved plans and policy documents—such as the 1982 *Master Plan of Transportation*, the 1983 *Functional Master Plan for Public School Sites*, the 1975 *Countywide Trails Plan with the 1985 Equestrian Addendum*, the 1992 *Prince George’s County Historic Sites and Districts Plan*, and the 2008 *Approved Public Safety Facilities Master Plan*—provide background information and a framework for the plan and sectional map amendment (SMA) for specific planning issues. In addition to these documents, other state planning legislation and the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A, and 74B* also shape the planning framework and are described below.

1997 Maryland Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act

This act builds on the eight visions adopted in the 1992 act, as amended. The act is nationally recognized as an effective means of evaluating and implementing statewide programs to guide growth and development.

In 1997, the Maryland General Assembly enacted a package of legislation collectively referred to as the Neighborhood Conservation and Smart Growth Initiative. The Maryland Smart Growth Program has three basic goals: to save valuable remaining natural resources; to support existing communities and neighborhoods; and to save taxpayers millions of dollars in the unnecessary cost of building infrastructure to support sprawl. A significant aspect of the initiative is the Smart Growth Areas legislation that requires that state funding for projects in Maryland municipalities, other existing communities, and industrial and planned growth areas designated by counties will receive priority funding over other projects. These are called priority funding areas (PFA). Approximately half of the Bowie State MARC Station planning area is categorized as a county-certified compliance area that is eligible for priority funding.

1992 Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act

This legislation was enacted to encourage economic growth, limit development of sprawl, and protect the state’s natural resources. It establishes consistent general land use policies to be implemented throughout Maryland. These policies are stated in the form of eight visions:

- Development is concentrated in suitable areas.
- Sensitive areas are protected.
- In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected.
- Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic.
- Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced.
- To assure achievement of the above five visions, economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined.
- Adequate public facilities and infrastructure under the control of the county or municipal corporation are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur.
- Funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve these visions.

These visions are guiding principles that describe how and where growth and development should occur. The act acknowledges that the comprehensive plans prepared by counties and municipalities form the best mechanism to establish priorities for growth and resource conservation. Once priorities are established, it is the state’s responsibility to support them.

2006 Bowie and Vicinity Master Plan and SMA

While the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A, and 74B* updated the 1991 *Approved Master Plan and Adopted Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) for Bowie-Collington-Mitchelville and Vicinity, Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A, and 74B*, it retained the 1991 master plan's overall land use pattern—concentrating land uses and preserving open space. Specifically, the 2006 master plan recommended that higher-intensity land use activities be focused into four mixed-use activity centers (Old Town Bowie, Bowie Main Street, West Bowie Village, and Pointer Ridge) and one regional center (Bowie Regional Center) and that most land in the Rural Tier remain rural.

The 2006 Bowie and Vicinity Master Plan and SMA also designated a future community center in the vicinity of the Bowie State MARC Station and Bowie State University (BSU) to take advantage of possible future transit-oriented development opportunities. The 2002 General Plan defines community centers as concentrations of activities, services, and land uses that serve the immediate community near the centers. They should be served by mass transit and comprise a mix of public facilities and uses—including integrated commercial, office, and residential development.

The 2006 master plan recommended that the Bowie State MARC Station parking lot and its surrounding properties be redeveloped with a vertical mixed-use, pedestrian- and transit-supportive development, including housing and retail uses with structured parking. To ensure that the future community center development is coordinated, it advocated for a detailed planning study or sector plan to be prepared to determine its scale, magnitude and pedestrian/bicycle linkages to the train station prior to any major development.

Public Participation

Comprehensive public participation is critical to the preparation of sector and master plans. Public participation ensures a plan addresses stakeholder concerns as well as opportunities for change, reflects the community's vision for the area, makes the planning process open and transparent, and identifies and builds the momentum of champions to move the plan towards implementation.

The sector plan's public participation program pursued a range of methods via different media to engage a broad audience, disseminate information, and solicit feedback. Its methods targeted three distinct groups of stakeholders—Bowie State University (including faculty and students), the local community (including residents and business and property owners), and public officials and agencies.

Stakeholder Interviews

The public participation process began with one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders such as the County Council, the County Executive's office, the City of Bowie, the Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Authority, and the Department of Public Works and Transportation, as well as representatives of homeowners associations within the plan area. The purpose of the interviews was to survey initial attitudes, concerns, opinions and preferences for development within the Bowie State MARC Station Sector Plan area.



Bowie State University information booth.

A charrette is a three-pronged, multi-day planning and design process composed of a pre-charrette, charrette, and post-charrette, which brings interested and vested parties to the table to meet with the planning team and provide feedback on proposed development plans, alternative design concepts, and implementation strategies.

Bowie State University Outreach Efforts

As the largest property owner in the project area, the potential recipient of 219 acres of county property, and principal economic driver of new development, Bowie State University's faculty, staff, and students are key stakeholders. The following efforts were used as part of a multi-pronged approach to engage Bowie State University faculty and the student body in the planning process:

- Interviews and briefings were conducted with the university's cabinet level staff to vet proposed concepts.
- An information booth was staffed at the university's student center on September 2 and September 3, 2008, to disseminate information on the sector plan, publicize upcoming events, and distribute student surveys. Over 350 surveys were completed, providing valuable insights into student priorities for the area.
- Upcoming events were marketed via the university's radio station (WBSU) and webpage, flyers distributed on campus, and posters.
- Feedback was solicited directly from students through a question-and-answer session and via discussions with their representatives in the student government.
- Students were also offered the opportunity to learn more about the planning process through a competition to design the cover page of the sector plan.



Charrette in progress.

The pre-charrette and first step of the process was held on September 18, 2008, to introduce approximately two dozen stakeholders to the sector planning process and to allow them to share their concerns and ideas about the project area and visions for the future. Participants provided valuable insights into the project area's economic, historic, transportation, and environmental issues.

Charrette Process

The charrette process was the primary vehicle used to engage local residents, business and property-owners, faculty and BSU students, as well as any interested citizens. A charrette is a three-pronged, multiday planning and design process—composed of a pre-charrette, charrette, and post-charrette—which brings interested and vested parties to the table to meet with the planning team and provide feedback on proposed development plans, alternative design concepts, and implementation strategies.



A community charrette solicited stakeholders' suggestions and visions for the community center.

The charrette itself represented the main segment of the charrette process and was conducted from September 30, 2008, through October 3, 2008, at Bowie State University. The charrette was an intense and collaborative planning process during which stakeholders and the M-NCPPC team developed a preferred design concept for the project area. The charrette started with a student question-and-answer session and a kick-off presentation on September 30, followed by an open house on October 1 and final presentation on October 3. Residents, business owners, and BSU students, faculty, and staff provided input and feedback throughout the week as the design team worked to develop the concept plan.



Approximately 100 stakeholders participated in the charrette. They helped to shape four design and development alternatives that ultimately led to the creation of the preferred design concept. This concept was further refined during the upcoming months and presented to the public at the post-charrette.

The planning team presented the refined preferred design alternative and implementation strategies to the public for their review and input at the post-charrette gathering held on January 13, 2009.

The planning team supplemented the charrette process through one-on-one meetings with interested local homeowners associations and via its interactive website, community survey, and local media outlets.

Worksession with the City of Bowie

The project team participated in a project worksession with the City of Bowie's Mayor, members of the City Council, and area residents on January 12, 2009. During the worksession, the project team presented an overview of the sector plan process and the results of the charrette. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session.

Area Stakeholders' Assessment of their Community and the Proposed Recommendations

Environment and Open Space

Overall, stakeholders voiced their appreciation for the rural character of the area and their desire to preserve open space such as the Fran Uhler Natural Area. Residents called for the protection of environmentally sensitive wetlands and tree cover through clustered, low-impact-development, adequate buffering, green design, and innovative power generation, stormwater management, and waste treatment methods.

Transportation

Residents and students reiterated their concern over the safety and design of Jericho Park Road and Race Track Road and noted that the wide road widths and lack of pedestrian- and biker-friendly amenities (such as sidewalks and bike lanes) made these roadways conducive to speeding. The intersection of the two roads was also identified as dangerous and warranting some form of reconfiguration or enhancement.

Students underscored the inadequate bus service to the area, particularly on Saturdays and weekday periods outside rush hours; no service is provided on Sundays. The area's limited bus service is perceived to hamper the accessibility of the campus and MARC Station to students and local residents. Stakeholders also noted the lack of transit options connecting MD 197 to areas in the north, such as Laurel.

Stakeholders expressed support for connecting Old Town Bowie to the proposed community center and Bowie State University via a hiker-biker trail and connecting the center to the Patuxent River trail system and the Washington Baltimore and Annapolis Trail (WB&A). The lack of sidewalks along 11th Street from MD 197 to Old Town Bowie has been a concern of area residents for many years.

Support was also expressed for preserving existing commuter parking at the MARC Station and for allowing for growth in parking demand as anticipated by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA).

Economic Development

Most residents and students expressed interest in increased retail options concentrated at the Bowie State MARC Station. Sit-down and fast-food restaurants, drugstores, convenience stores, bookstores, clothing stores, and a small grocery store were identified as being highly desirable uses that were currently missing in the immediate area. This interest was moderated, however, by concern over the impact new development would have on Old Town Bowie and on existing retail centers that were

already struggling in Bowie. City of Bowie residents conveyed their hopes that the proposed community center would help facilitate growth in Old Town Bowie rather than compete with it and that enhanced trail and possible transit and/or shuttle connections would encourage residents and students to patronize its businesses.

Some BSU stakeholders advocated that the community center accommodate uses—such as office, retail, and rental housing—that could generate revenue for the university and serve as economic drivers. Others called for the inclusion of more conventional university-oriented uses such as dormitories, a convocation center, classrooms and laboratories.

Design

Stakeholders overall applauded the pedestrian-friendly and clustered design of the community center, which included low-impact design and an emphasis on connectivity and a mix of uses. They welcomed enhancing the visibility of Bowie State University through a pair of signature, gateway buildings on MD 197. Some expressed interest in creating a “real college town” at the community center with a clear sense of purpose, while others questioned the need for the university’s expansion beyond its existing campus.