



Approved MARC Rail Communities Plan Scope of Work

January 28, 2016



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Introduction

The MARC Rail Communities Plan is located in the upper portion of Montgomery County, west of I-270 and approximately 15 miles north of the Capital Beltway (I-495), along the CSX-owned railroad tracks in Boyds and Germantown. This Scope of Work describes the boundaries, context and purpose of the MARC Rail Communities Plan and highlights the process and timeline that Planning Department staff will use to work with the community to develop short- and long-term Plan recommendations.

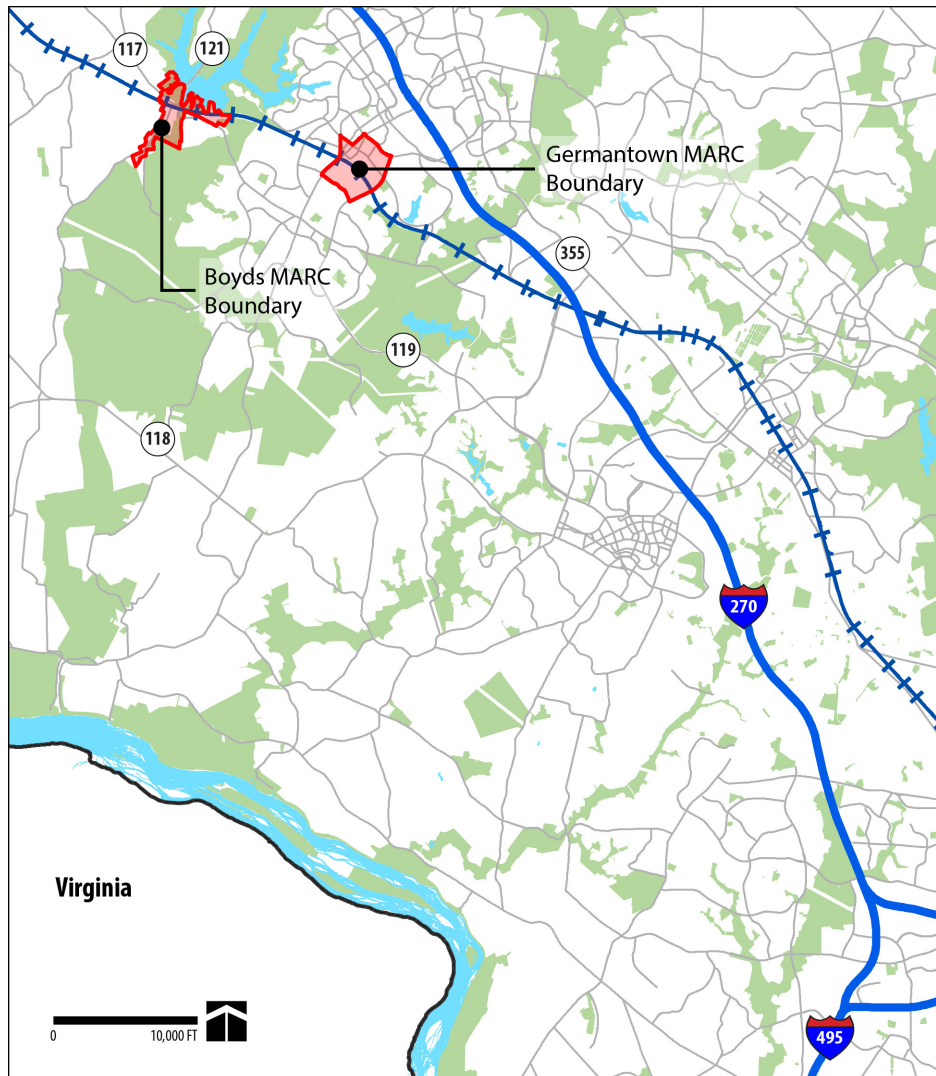


Figure 1:
Boyds and Germantown
MARC Boundaries in
Relationship to I-270 and
I-495

Plan Purpose

The upper portions of Montgomery County have experienced large population growth over the past 50 years. It is anticipated that this growth will continue with development that has been recommended by Master Plans, approved by the Planning Board and is in the pipeline. These projects may create a significant burden to the transportation network.

The MARC Brunswick line is a well-traveled commuter rail line that is an existing transportation alternative connecting West Virginia to Washington, DC. The Boyds and Germantown MARC stations areas, which are the focus of this Master Plan, are historic communities along this line less than

2.5 miles apart. While the area around the Boyds station has remained rural, the area around the Germantown station has experienced increased development in recent years.

Although they have developed unique identities, both stations are integrally connected by rail lines and roads, and face 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 Ride On bus service to the two stations. Additionally, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is studying how to improve vehicular circulation in and around the Boyds MARC station area to alleviate traffic pressures.

The focus of this Master Plan is to link together all of the various studies of the station areas and study parking, transportation and land use issues affecting these locations. In addition, the Plan will seek short- and long-term recommendations for better and safer pedestrian, bicycle, bus and auto connections in the areas around the stations and enhancements to the historic communities around them.

Context

Boyds

Boyds, which was originally settled in 1753 on a tract of land named Resurvey of Gum Spring, is representative of post-Civil War development and growth generated by the arrival of the railroad in the area during the last quarter of the 19th century. The railroad had a significant social and technological impact on the area's agricultural community over the past century.

Today, Boyds is a small, rural unincorporated town with a population of approximately 2,000 people, according to the 2013 American Communities Survey. The community consists primarily of single-family homes on large lots on the eastern edge of the County's Agricultural Reserve. The town is located between two larger communities, Clarksburg to the north and Germantown to the east, which have significantly more residents.

The heart of the Boyds is centered on its MARC rail station and small commercial area west of the intersections of Barnesville, Clarksburg and Clopper Roads. Little Seneca Lake, a man-made lake serving as a backup drinking water supply within the Black Hill Regional Park, is a defining feature of the northern portion of the area. A well-preserved and cohesive historic district is located on both sides of the MARC station platform and extends down White Ground Road south of the MARC station. The Boyds Local Park is another important feature within the community. The entire area is located outside of the sewer envelope, so it is served by private well and septic.



Commercial area along Barnesville Road



Little Seneca Lake



View looking west from the MARC station



Field along Clopper Road in the undeveloped Boyds Local Park

The Boyds portion of the Plan boundary incorporates the publicly owned land north of the railroad track along the south edge of Little Seneca Lake, the industrial land between the railroad tracks and Clopper Road, the local park and the historic district. This area is approximately 252 acres.

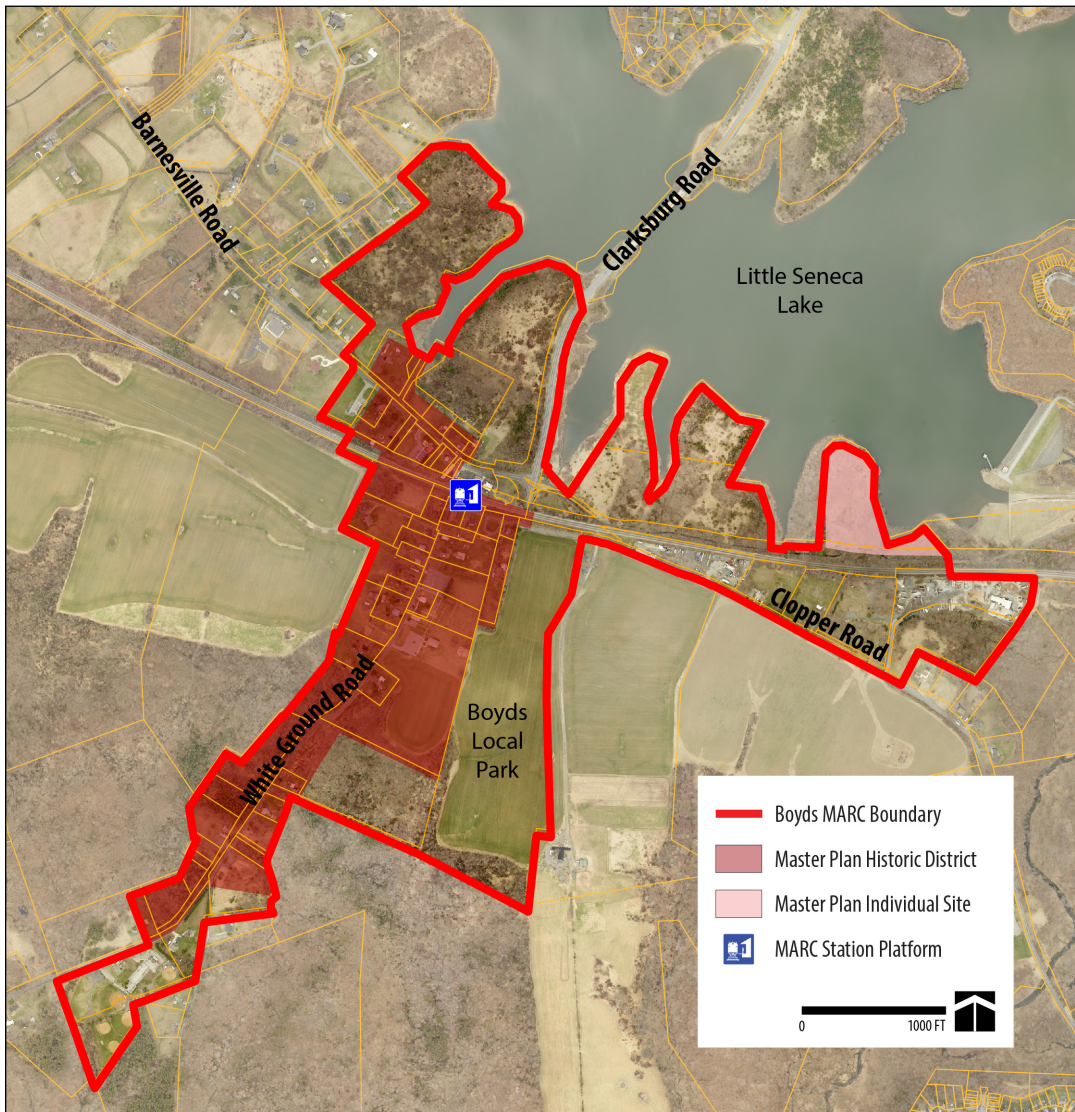
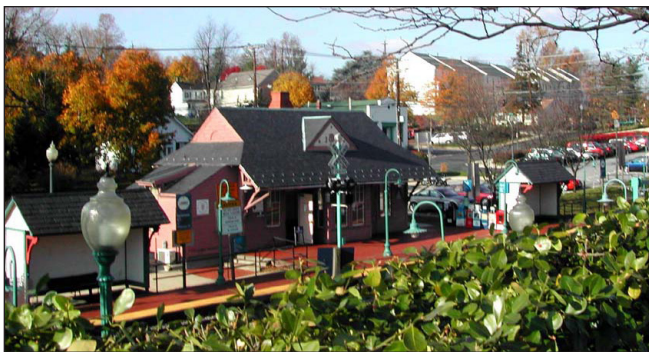


Figure 2:
Boyds MARC
Boundary

Germantown

The initial Germantown settlement was clustered around the intersection of Clopper and Liberty Mill Roads. By 1850, several German families settled nearby and, by 1865, developed a commercial crossroads known as Germantown. After the introduction of the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad in the 1870s, the community known as Germantown Station grew about one mile north of the original crossroads community. Present-day Liberty Mill and Walter Johnson Roads comprised the original Germantown Road.

Today, Germantown is a large unincorporated town envisioned as a Corridor City in the 1964 General Plan on Wedges and Corridors. With a population of approximately 89,000 residents, the town is nearly 9 percent of the population for the County. The community contains approximately 11,000 acres within a three-by-five-mile area.



Germantown MARC Station



Passengers departing the train during the evening



Flea market in the parking lot of the MARC station



BlackRock Center for the Arts in the Town Center



Retail along Century Boulevard, Germantown's "Main Street"



Grand opening of the Germantown Town Center Urban Park

The development pattern in the overall Germantown community is similar to many of our suburban communities. Germantown consists of a mix of single-family attached, single-family detached and multifamily housing areas interspersed with commercial uses.

The Germantown MARC station is located near the geographic center of Germantown along the railroad tracks between Germantown Road and Great Seneca Highway, and contains a significant historic district. Two areas, the Town Center Core District and the Town Center West End District, make up the entirety of the town center in the 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan. The Town Center Core District, which is the “Main Street” within Germantown, is envisioned as having the highest density and mix of uses. The Germantown MARC station area is located just south in the Town Center West End District. The 2009 Plan envisions this district as a thoughtfully designed, less dense neighborhood around the MARC station with historic references and more varied housing types.

Based on the Planning Board’s approval of this scope of work on January 28, 2016, the boundary for the Germantown portion of the Plan has been revised to include the two blocks immediately north of Wisteria Drive and east of Germantown Road. Specifically, this new boundary for the Germantown



Figure 3:
Germantown
MARC Boundary

portion of the Plan boundary is bounded by Middlebrook Drive on the northeast, Great Seneca Highway on the southeast, Dawson Farm Road on the southwest and Germantown and Waters Roads on the northwest. The area is approximately 290 acres. Adding this area will allow a more detailed study of the pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety issues in the area. This Plan will also reevaluate relevant recommendations made in the 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan.

Planning Framework

This MARC Rail Communities Plan is focused on two small geographic areas within the larger 1985 Boyds and 1989 Germantown Master Plan areas. Additionally, the northern portion of Germantown MARC station area also falls within the 2009 Germantown Employment Sector Plan.

The aim of the 1985 Boyds Master Plan was to balance the development pressures from regional activities and still retain the integrity of the local community. All land use recommendations were made to reinforce the rural character of the community. Some of the highlights of the Plan included

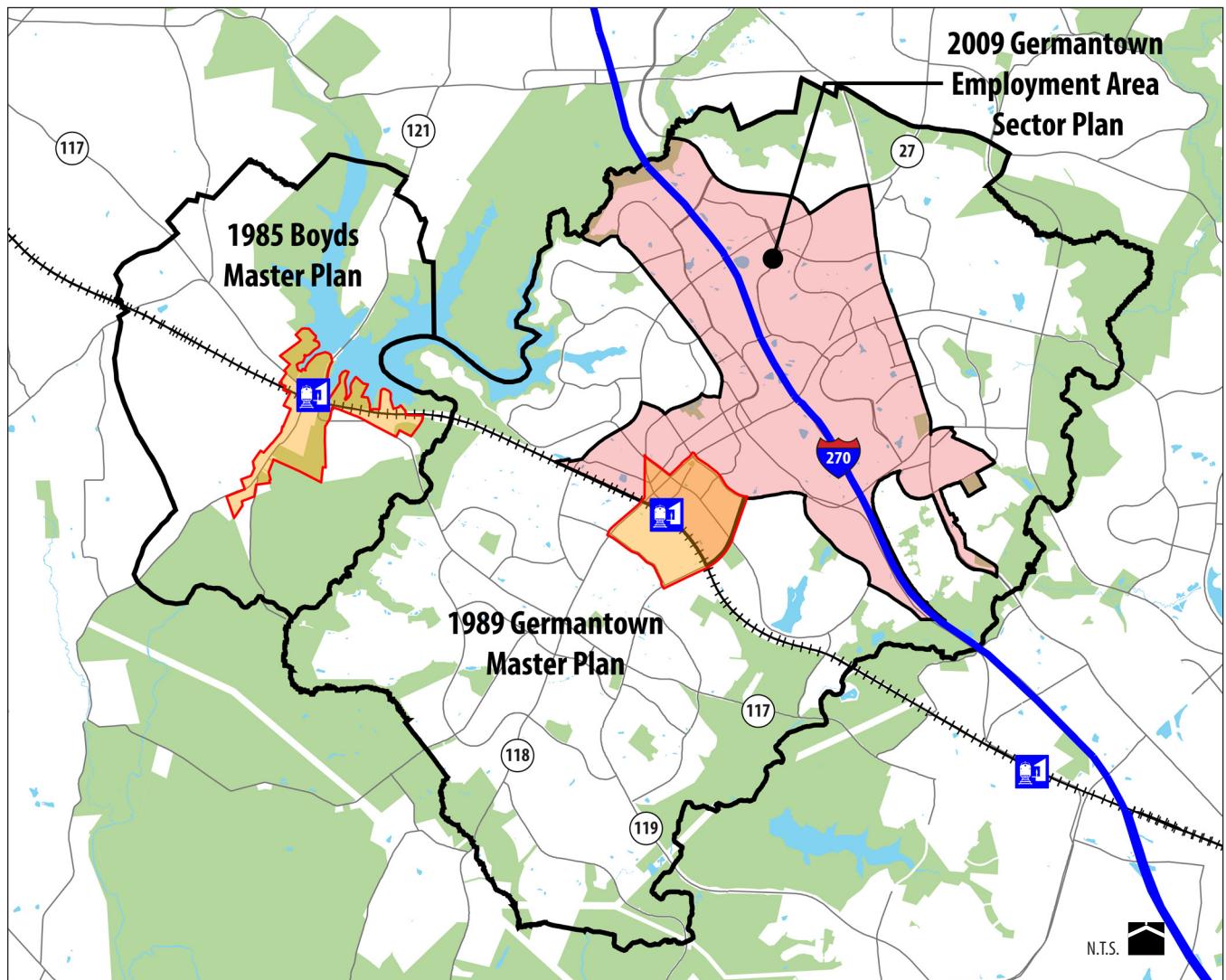


Figure 4: 1985 Boyds Master Plan, 1989 Germantown Master Plan and 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan in Relationship to the MARC Rail Communities Plan Boundaries

the establishment of the Boyds Historic District; the recommendation for the development of a local park; the recommendation to realign Barnesville, Clopper and White Ground Roads; and the recommendation to rehabilitate the commuter rail station area.

The 1989 Germantown Master Plan placed the Germantown MARC station area within portions of the Town Center, Clopper Village and Gunners Lake Village Districts. The Town Center District was envisioned as the “downtown” area of the community with a mix of uses, including a cultural arts center, library and Upcounty Government Center. The Clopper Village District contains the Germantown Historic District, and the analysis of this area called for preserving the existing residential character of the historic area. There were no land use recommendations for the portion of the MARC station area within the Gunners Lake Village District. Specific to the MARC station, the Plan recommended the expansion and improvement of the Germantown commuter rail station and the provision of Park and Ride facilities to serve carpools, vanpools and commuter buses as they largely do today. The portion of the MARC station north of the railroad tracks was envisioned as “a quiet, green, pedestrian-oriented enclave” with a strong link to the historic district. Office uses and commuter parking were described.

The northern portion of the Germantown MARC rail station area is located within the West End and Gateway Districts of the 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan. The primary purpose of the 2009 Plan is to establish a vision that will transform Germantown’s central employment corridor into a vibrant town center and mixed-use, uptown district. Near the MARC rail station, recommendations included structured parking, retail, and enhancements to public spaces, with special attention given to design compatibility with the historic resources. Beyond the MARC parking lots, the 2009 Plan proposes a more varied mix of housing types to increase walking to MARC. These recommendations increase the activity levels envisioned in the 1989 Plan while maintaining the pedestrian-oriented focus and connections to the historic district.

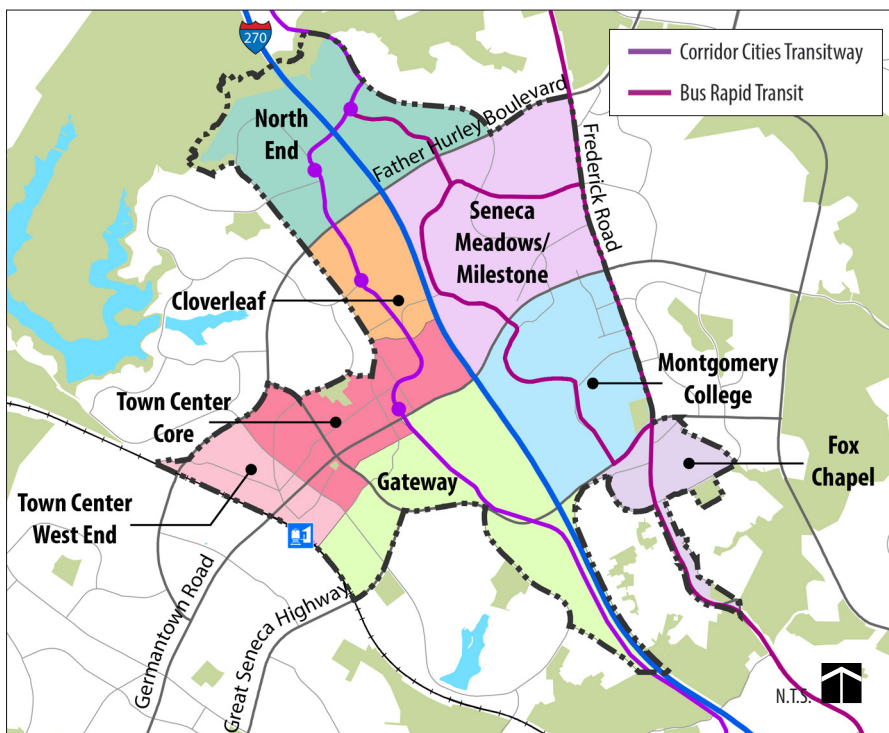


Figure 5:
2009 Germantown Employment
Sector Plan Districts

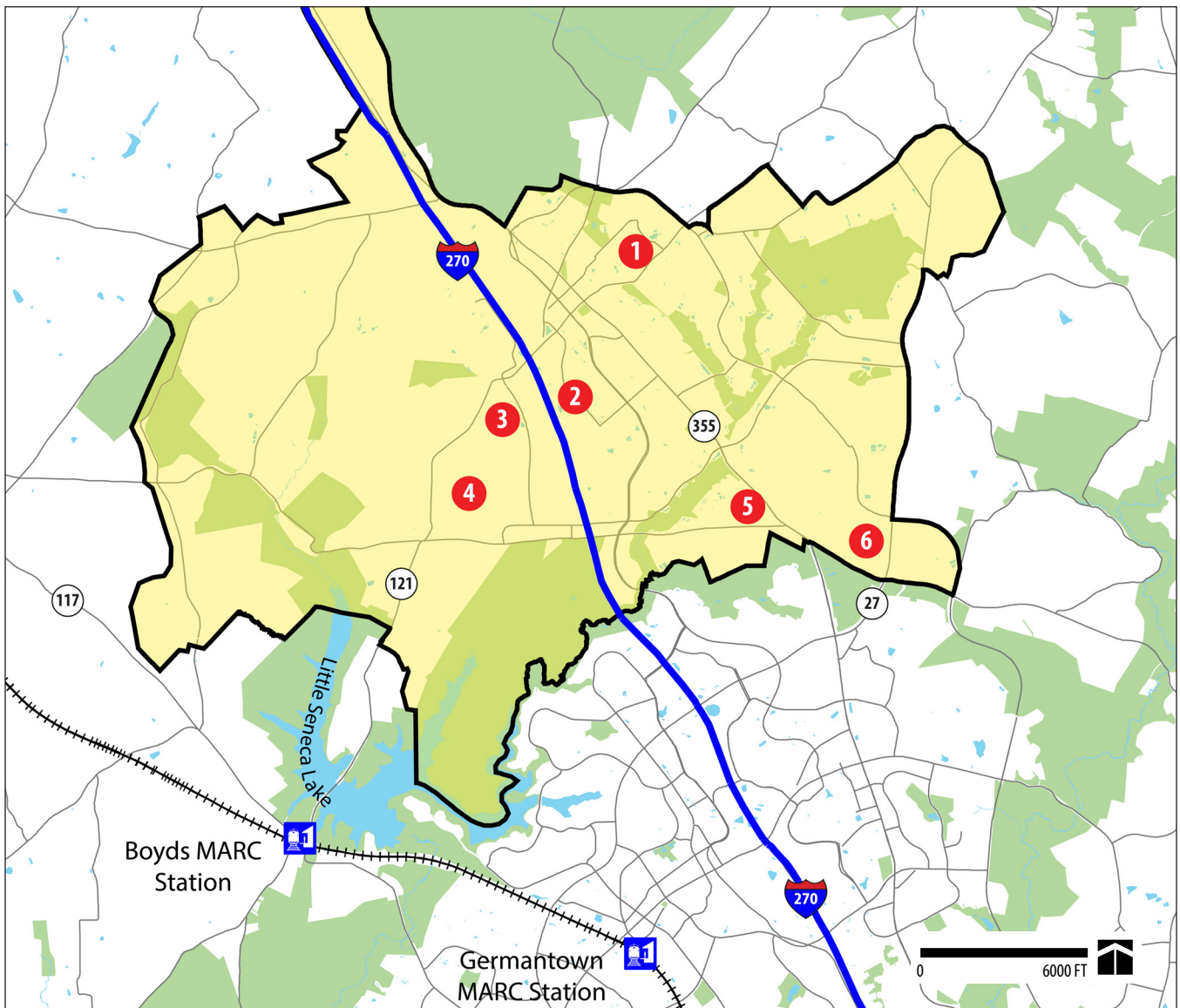


Figure 6: Recent Major Private Development with Clarksburg Master Plan Area

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Clarksburg Town Center
 1,120 approved dwelling units
 <i>(283 dwelling units unbuilt)</i>
 206,185 square feet of non-residential
 <i>(206,185 square feet of non-residential unbuilt)</i></p> | <p>4. Cabin Branch Residential
 2,386 approved dwelling units
 <i>(2,260 dwelling units unbuilt)</i></p> |
| <p>2. Gateway West (Completed)
 254,637 square feet of non-residential</p> | <p>5. Tapestry
 67 approved dwelling units
 <i>(66 dwelling units unbuilt)</i></p> |
| <p>3. Cabin Branch Non Residential
 2.42 million square feet of non-residential
 <i>(2.42 million square feet of non-residential unbuilt)</i></p> | <p>6. Courts of Clarksburg
 140 approved dwelling units
 <i>(140 dwelling units unbuilt)</i></p> |

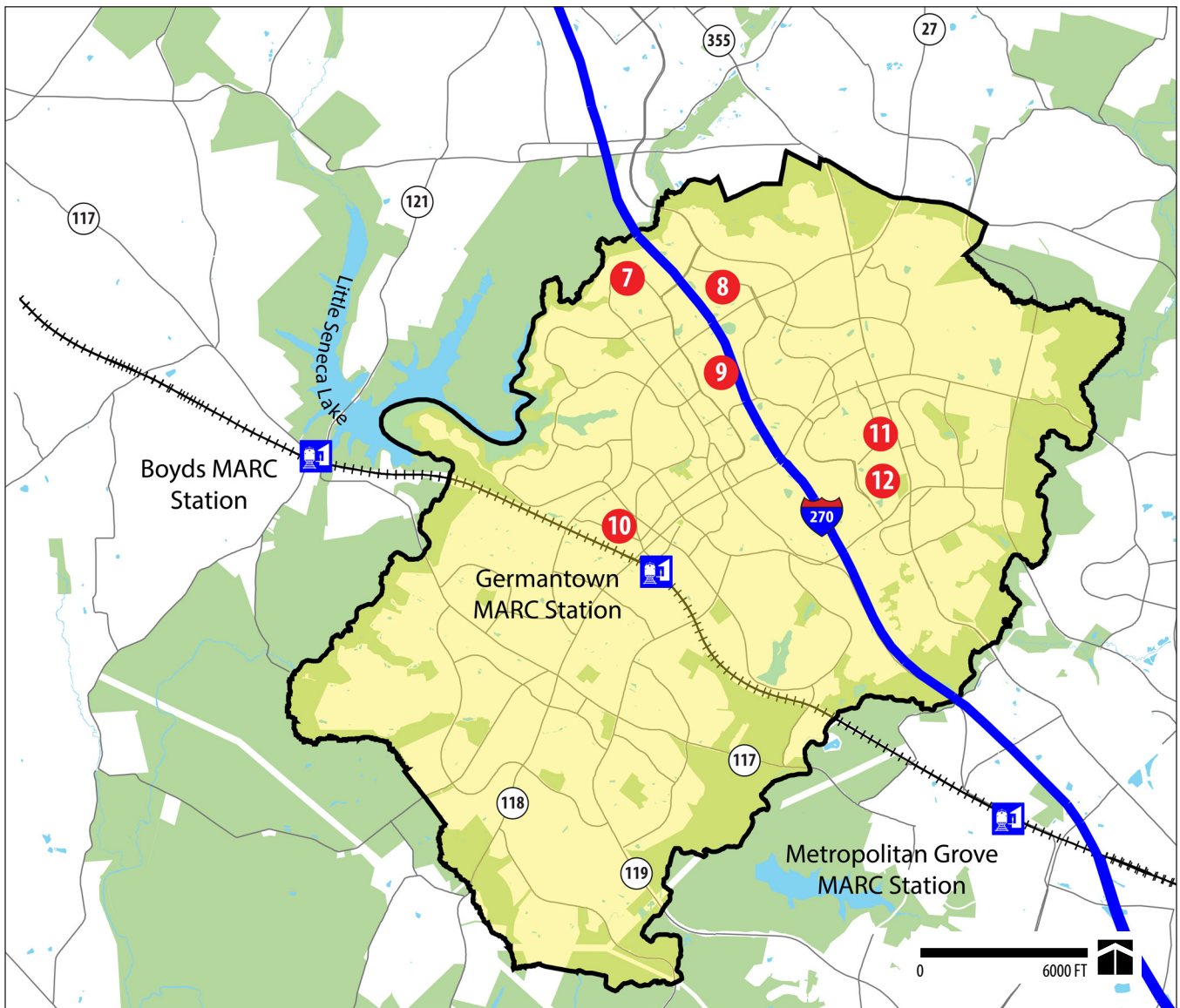


Figure 7: Recent Major Private Development with Germantown Master Plan Area

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>7. Black Hill, formerly Crystal Rock
 1,189 proposed dwelling units
 1.4 million square feet of proposed non-residential</p> | <p>437,420 square feet of proposed non-residential</p> |
| <p>8. Milestone North
 485 approved dwelling units
 <i>(485 dwelling units unbuilt)</i>
 683,250 square feet of non-residential
 <i>(38,250 square feet of non-residential unbuilt)</i></p> | <p>10. Village West (Under Construction)
 470 approved dwelling units
 <i>(70 dwelling units unbuilt)</i>
 19,771 square feet of non-residential</p> |
| <p>9. Century Technology, formerly Cloverleaf (Proposed)
 477 proposed dwelling units</p> | <p>11. Medical Office Building (Completed)
 80,000 square feet of non-residential</p> |
| | <p>12. Holy Cross Hospital Germantown (Completed)
 317,200 square feet of Non-Residential</p> |

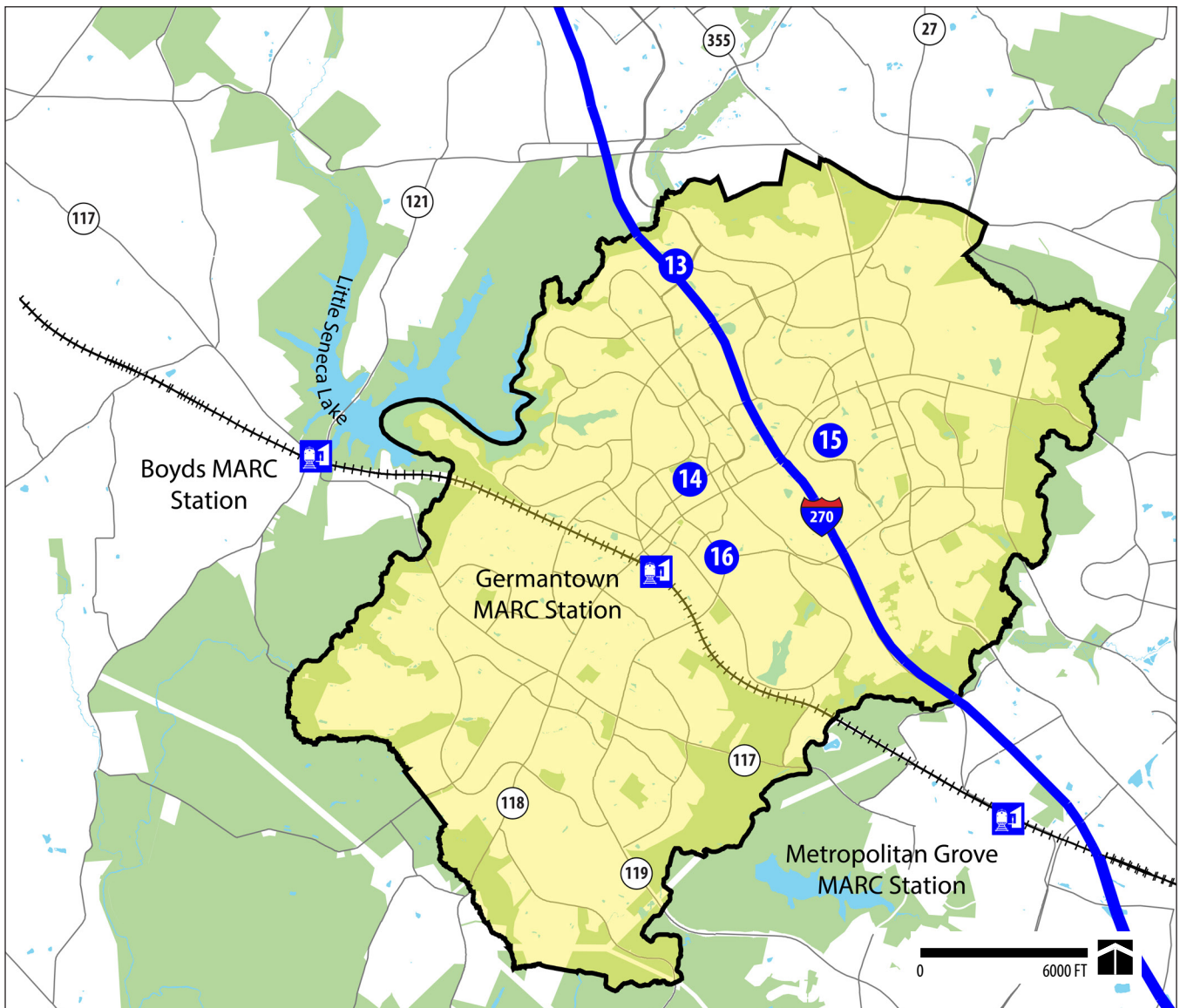


Figure 8: Recent Major Public Development with Germantown Master Plan Area

13. Dorsey Mill Road Overpass (in Design Phase)

**14. Germantown Town Center Urban Park
(Completed)**

**15. Bioscience Building Germantown Campus
Montgomery College (Completed)**
145,000 square feet of non-residential

**16. Seneca Valley High School (Anticipated
Completion in 2020)**

Development Activity

There has been no recent development within the boundaries of the Boyds and Germantown portions of the MARC Rail Communities Plan. However, within the greater Germantown area, there are a number of projects in various stages of development that may have an influence on the Germantown MARC station. Additionally, existing and future development within Clarksburg may have an impact on both the Boyds and Germantown MARC station areas. The following three pages show the major public and private projects within the upper portions of Montgomery County that may have a bearing on the MARC Rail Communities Plan.

Community Outreach

Throughout the late summer and early fall, planning staff made public presentations regarding the status of projects within the Germantown area and promoted the MARC Rail Communities Plan to various civic groups at their regularly scheduled meetings, including the Boyds Civic Association, Germantown Alliance, Upcounty Citizens Advisory Committee and Germantown Historical Society.

During this same timeframe, staff also conducted a series of site visits and meetings with the County and State agencies that will have integral role in the planning process, including the Montgomery County Department of General Services (DGS), Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA).

Finally, the MARC Communities Rail Plan Open House was held on November 4, 2015 at the Upcounty Regional Services Center. A total of 35 residents and stakeholders attended this meeting. Each of these meetings provided staff with the opportunity to learn about the concerns of stakeholders and receive input on the focus of the Plan.

A Communications Plan has also been prepared for the project that outlines resources and tools for effectively communicating with the community about the issues of this Plan. Social media, electronic newsletters and other communication tools will be utilized. Outreach efforts will include the community design workshop, regular reports to the Upcounty Community Advisory Board, meetings with pertinent civic and homeowner associations, updates through the interactive project website and testimony before the Planning Board. All public meeting dates, events and staff reports will be posted on the project website at montgomeryplanning.org/community/marc_rail_station/.



Citizens attending the MARC Rail Communities Open House on November 4, 2015

Plan Schedule

Staff will continue to meet with citizens, civic leaders, property owners and public agencies in early 2016. Additionally, a major outreach initiative will be the design workshop planned for March 2016. The Planning Board is scheduled to review the Working Draft Plan during summer 2016 and transmit the Planning Board Draft Plan to the County Executive and County Council by winter 2016. The County Council review of the Plan is scheduled to begin in early 2017 (see the MARC Rail Communities Schedule on page 15). Upon completion of the Council's review and action, a Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) will be initiated to implement the Plan's zoning recommendations. The work schedule and products are outlined as follows:

Continued Meetings with Stakeholders

January 2016 – March 2016

Work with the various stakeholders prior to the design workshop to help finalize the opportunities and constraints in the general vicinity of the Boyds and Germantown MARC station areas.

Design Workshop

March 7, 2016 and March 14 - 16, 2016

Work with a multitude of stakeholders to develop a common vision for the future of their community. Below is a general schedule for the design workshop (see the Proposed MARC Rail Communities Plan Workshop Agenda on page 16).

Draft Preliminary Recommendations

March 2016 – May 2016

Develop preliminary recommendations for discussion with the community and Planning Board, including identifying infrastructure needs of the proposed development scenario, and land use and zoning options, and urban design recommendations that will implement the Plan recommendations.

Working Draft Report

Summer 2016

Present a Working Draft Master Plan for Planning Board review and approval of a Public Hearing Draft. Set a public hearing date and publish the Public Hearing Draft of the Master Plan.

Planning Board Public Hearing

Fall 2016

Conduct the Planning Board's tour of the area and the public hearing to receive public testimony.

Planning Board Work Sessions and Planning Board Draft

Fall 2016

Planning Board work sessions will be held to review testimony and discuss issues presented during the public hearing. The Planning Board Draft will be prepared for transmittal to the County Council and the County Executive.

County Executive Review

Fall 2016

The County Executive will review the Plan's recommendations, prepare a fiscal analysis and transmit comments to the County Council.

County Council Review

Winter 2017

The County Council will tour the Plan area and conduct a public hearing on the Planning Board Draft Plan. Work sessions will then be held by the Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee. The PHED Committee will make recommendations to the full Council on the Planning Board Draft.

County Council Work Sessions

Winter 2017

County Council work sessions will review the PHED Committee's recommendations and approve the MARC Rail Communities Plan with a Council Resolution.

Staff Contacts

Roberto Duke, Project Lead

Telephone: 301-495-2168

Email: roberto.duke@montgomeryplanning.org

Leslie Saville, Senior Planner

Telephone: 301-495-2194

Email: leslie.saville@montgomeryplanning.org

Fred Boyd, Supervisor

Telephone: 301-495-4654

Email: fred.boyd@montgomeryplanning.org

Project Webpage

http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/marc_rail_station/

Twitter

@montgomeryplans

Attachment

Proposed MARC Rail Communities Schedule

Proposed MARC Rail Communities Plan Workshop Agenda

Briefing Book, November 2015

MARC Rail Communities Plan Schedule

	2015					2016												
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Outreach																		
Stakeholder Meetings																		
Scope of Work																		
Background Research																		
Scope of Work Presentation																		
Analysis and Draft Plan																		
Analysis/Concept Refinement																		
Draft Workshop Recommendations																		
Staff Draft																		
Community Meetings																		
Open House																		
Workshop/Public Meetings																		
Planning Board Review																		
Public Hearing																		
Work Sessions																		
Executive & County Council																		
Transmit to Executive & County Council																		

Community Outreach

Staff Work

Planning Board

Proposed MARC Rail Communities Plan Workshop Agenda

Time	Monday, March 7th	Monday, March 14		Tuesday, March 15		Wednesday, March 16	
	Agencies	Boyd's		Germantown		Synthesis	
9:00 AM	Discussion Topic Existing and Proposed Facilities Attendees Historic Preservation Environmental Protection Permitting Services General Services Public Schools Parks	Team Meeting Internal Recap of Public Meeting #1		Team Meeting Recap of Drop In #1 and Comm. Vision Germantown		Team Meeting Recap of Drop In #2	
10:00 AM		Team Exercise for Boyd's based on Community Vision Exercise Alternative Concept Development (consider land use and connections)		Team Exercise for Germantown based on Community Vision Exercise Alternative Concept Development (consider land use and connections)		Synthesis	Stakeholder Feedback Loop (Agency and Community)
11:00 AM							
12:00 PM	Lunch						
1:00 PM	Discussion Topic Road Network MARC Parking Ride On Road Sections Ped/Bike Facilities Attendees County Transportation CSX State Highway Admin.	Alternative Concept Dev.	Stakeholder Feedback Loop (Agency and Community)	Alternative Concept Dev.	Stakeholder Feedback Loop (Agency and Community)	Production	
2:00 PM							
3:00 PM							
4:00 PM	Setup Public Meeting #1	Preparation for Drop In #1		Preparation for Drop In #2		Setup Public Meeting #2	
5:00 PM	Dinner						
6:00 PM	Open House <ul style="list-style-type: none">Intro to new participantsQ&A with agency tables	Community Drop In for Boyd's Alternatives (primarily for public who could not make it during daytime)		Community Drop In for Germantown Alternatives (primarily for public who could not make it during daytime)		Open House <ul style="list-style-type: none">Intro to new participants	
7:00 PM	Presentation Recap/ Online and vision summaries					Pin Up Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vision statements for each communityAlternative ConceptsDiagrams (Land Uses, Connections, Parks, Environment, Historic and Placemaking) Questions/Next Steps	
8:00 PM	Vision Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none">Tables of 8B/G 30 minutes each<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vision statementCue cardsReport out						
9:00 PM							

Open Sessions

	Discussion/Feedback		Community Worksessions
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