



Washington

BOWIE TOWN CENTER

Sponsored by
The City of Bowie, with support from the
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Technical Assistance Panel | November 12–13, 2025

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Contents

Executive Summary	1
Scope and Background	2
Moment of Opportunity	3
TAP Questions	4
TAP Study Area Description	4
Existing Conditions	5
Stakeholder Engagement	6
Recommendations	8
Phase-Independent Strategies	9
Phase Zero Activation	10
Infill Re-Programming	15
A Broader Plan for Programming the Site	22
Implementation	24
Conclusion	27
Appendix: List of Stakeholders	29
About the Panel	31

Executive Summary

ULI Washington convened the Bowie Town Center Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) from November 12th through November 13th, 2025. Panelists were asked to provide recommendations to support the development of a new vision for the future of the Bowie Town Center. This TAP built upon the recent work of Bowie's Economic Development Committee (EDC), which had presented a draft vision for the Town Center to City Council the previous month. The TAP was sponsored by the City of Bowie with support from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (WashCOG).

The site for this TAP, the Bowie Town Center, includes 123 acres located in the City of Bowie in Prince George's County, Maryland. The study area is made up of two major segments: Bowie Crossing to the northeast and Bowie Town Center to the south. These distinct areas are bisected by Collington Road and connected with a pedestrian bridge. The site is a shopping destination and includes dozens of retailers and considerable surface parking.

The emerging vision for the Town Center developed by the EDC includes, among other aspects, the addition of new retail; entertainment, residential, and institutional uses; placemaking; and more green and public spaces. This vision imagines the Town Center as a place where residents and visitors go for a unique experience. Using this

initial EDC vision as a foundation for the TAP, the Sponsors posed the following questions to the Panel:

- What uses, design, amenities, and other features will best **attract the real estate market** to a revitalized Town Center?
- What are the **design considerations** for the revitalization vision?
- What is the **suggested mix** and proportion of uses, activities, and amenities? How should the Town Center best interact with **adjacent uses** and with the broader City?
- What **best practices and case studies** are most relevant?
- How should the City and stakeholders proceed to **implement its vision** for the Town Center (considering, for example, incentives, timing, marketing, regulatory changes, partnerships, and financial strategies)?

After two days of deliberation, the Panel proposed a number of high-level recommendations, as well as more specific strategies to achieve these goals. They offered general considerations to be applied throughout the planning process, "phase zero" activations that can be started now, as well as longer term infill re-programming. The high-level recommendations are:

- Co-Create the Bowie Town Center Plan with the Community
- Expand the Boundary View

- Connect Greenway, Bicycle, and Trail Networks
- Create a Hierarchy of Public Spaces & Circulation
- Establish a Signature Park
- Connect to City Hall
- Incorporate Compatible Housing

Importantly, the Panel recommended bringing ideas to the community as a next step to better understand their priorities and hopes for the future of the Town Center. With a multitude of assets already in and around the study area, there is a prime opportunity to start thinking about how to enhance and connect what is already there. Community knowledge and experience will lie at the core of that process.



Scope and Background

ULI Washington convened a two-day Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) on November 12 and 13, 2025. The City of Bowie was the sponsor of this TAP with support from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (WashCOG). The Panel was composed of ten professionals from the region with expertise in development, design, and business improvement districts, who came together to develop recommendations for the future of the Bowie Town Center.

The TAP began on November 12, 2025 at Bowie City Hall with a presentation by the Sponsor team that highlighted the primary goals and context for the TAP. Panelists engaged the Sponsor team with questions, and then took a bus together to Bowie Crossing to begin a walking tour through the Bowie Town Center. In the afternoon, ULI convened 19 stakeholders for roundtable

discussions. These conversations focused on market potential, design, programming, and implementation and helped contextualize subsequent Panel deliberations. The goal of the roundtables was to ensure that Panel recommendations are grounded in the experience, knowledge, and perspectives of local community stakeholders (see Appendix A for full list of Stakeholders).

Panelists spent the remainder of the first day, in addition to the first half of the following day, debriefing stakeholder conversations, deliberating, and developing recommendations (see Appendix B for full list of Panelists). The day concluded with a presentation of these recommendations to the Sponsor team, stakeholders, and the public. This report documents the Panel's process, findings, and final recommendation.

Moment of Opportunity

The success of the Bowie Town Center is pivotal for both the City of Bowie and the broader region, underscoring the high stakes of this project. The City of Bowie has identified the present moment as an opportunity to plan for its future alongside the community. This TAP's timing is strategic for a few reasons.

First, the Tap builds on the Bowie Economic Development Committee's (EDC) October 2025 presentation of a draft vision to City Council. The EDC conducted research, examined case studies, and presented its emerging vision for the Town Center, which includes new retail, more residential and institutional uses, placemaking, and more green space. It was envisioned as a destination for fine dining and entertainment, offering residents and visitors a unique experience.

Second, the Town Center is approaching an inflection point as it nears the end of its market life and could trend in either a negative or positive direction. With new ownership in the Town Center, there is a particular opportunity to think bigger about potential changes in the area.

Additionally, Sponsors noted that the City of Bowie is located in a part of the region that typically does not receive extensive attention or resources for this type of effort. Combined with the momentum of the EDC, the City is especially eager to capitalize on current energy and attention to imagine a Town Center that makes better use of existing land and infrastructure and supports internal



TAP Panelists

growth. The City hopes to get people – residents, community stakeholders, retailers, and others – excited about a revitalized Town Center by articulating a clearer vision for what it could be. The stakes are high, and the timing is optimal.

TAP Questions

The TAP sponsors based the questions for this TAP on both the EDC’s emerging vision, as well as City Council’s stated priorities for the area. The Bowie City Council identified three main goals for the revitalization of the Bowie Town Center:

1. **Economic development and community revitalization** of the Bowie Town Center (which may include new uses and services, such as residential and recreation);
2. **Making the Town Center a destination** in the City and region with placemaking elements;
3. **Promoting smart and sustainable growth** (inward rather than outward).

City Council envisions the Town Center as an urban attraction with interior circulation and the ability to move around without a car.

The TAP questions posed to the Panel were:

- What uses, design, amenities, and other features will **best attract the real estate market** to a revitalized Town Center?
- What are the **design considerations** for the revitalization vision?
- What is the **suggested mix** and proportion of uses, activities, and amenities? How

should the Town Center best interact with **adjacent uses** and with the broader City?

- What **best practices and case studies** are most relevant?
- How should the City and stakeholders proceed to **implement its vision** for the Town Center (considering, for example, incentives, timing, marketing, regulatory changes, partnerships, and financial strategies)?

Study Area Description

The Bowie Town Center is located in Prince George’s County, Maryland. The Town Center is made up of 123 acres in the middle of the City of Bowie. The City, with a population of 60,000,

is located between Annapolis, Baltimore, and Washington, DC. It sits at the intersection of two major highways, Routes US 50 and 301, and along the Patuxent River (the divider of the Washington, DC and Baltimore metropolitan areas). Bowie is considered a bedroom community with a largely suburban feel.

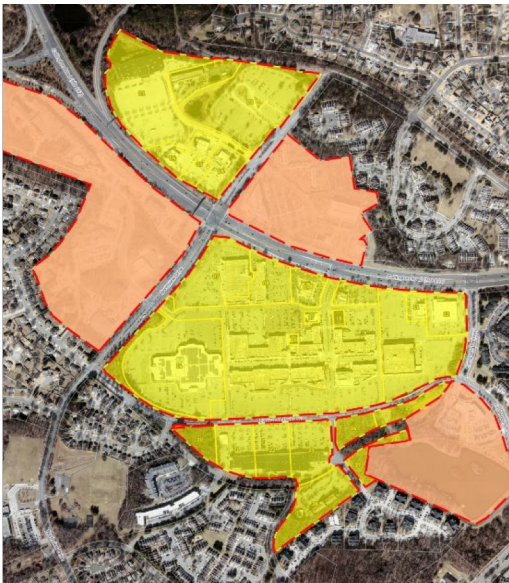
The study area is made up of two major segments: Bowie Crossing to the northeast (made up of six parcels) and Bowie Town Center to the south (made up of 22 parcels). For the purpose of this report, we refer to the full collection of 28 parcels across these two major areas as “Bowie Town Center” (see map). A bridge provides pedestrian access over Collington Road (MD 197), which bisects the Town Center study area.



Map of the study area.

Bowie Crossing is the smaller, more northern of the two sections. It is bounded by Collington Road and Northview Drive to the south with John Hanson Highway to the north. There is a Park & Ride stop onsite, a former movie theater building (which was recently purchased by a church), a Hampton Inn, two restaurants, and considerable (underutilized) parking.

The southern section of Bowie Town Center, which combines an outdoor mall and the Shoppes at Bowie Town Center, is bordered by Northview Drive and Collington Road to the north, and Evergreen Parkway to the south. This section includes many commercial properties, including Macy's and a former Sears store (now a United Furniture Warehouse) as anchors, and considerable surface parking. The Shoppes at Bowie Town



Sections of the study area, with affected areas highlighted in orange.

Center at the south end of the study area include a Goodwill of Greater Washington store, among other retail.

The study area links to the three WashCOG priority areas, an Activity Center, Equity Emphasis Area, and High Capacity Transit Station Area, further underscoring the primacy to promote cohesion and equity as the area grows.

Existing Conditions

The study area is currently known for its many shopping opportunities, as it includes the commercial properties of Bowie Crossing, Bowie Town Center, and Shoppes at Bowie Town Center. Despite the many active businesses and low vacancy rates, there is consensus that the area lacks vibrancy and demand (one stakeholder noted that there is a perception that more vacancies exist than in reality).

The Town Center includes an outdoor mall with street-facing retail and considerable surface parking. There is a Macy's, Safeway, and Best Buy onsite, along with dozens of other businesses. While Panelists were asked to envision long term plans for the Town Center, they also considered that many of these buildings have existing leases and active businesses that must be taken into account, even while imagining what the area could become in the future.

The study area is surrounded by a number of community and civic buildings, including City

Hall (which includes the Bowie Police Department), a City of Bowie gymnasium, Bowie Senior Center, and a County Fire and EMS Department. There are additional institutional and residential uses adjacent to the study area, including office buildings north of Collington Road.

While there are pockets of green, there is no current cohesive green infrastructure or design scheme. Mill Branch Pond sits below the study area, and several trails surround the area – but no unified strategy connects green and open spaces. There is little to no tree canopy.

The current zoning allows for a mix of uses at a moderate density (the two zones that make up the Bowie Town Center are Town Activity Center-Core and Town Activity Center-Edge). While zoning has not historically been a constraint to development, Panelists considered it when developing recommendations.

The study area is a part of the previously designated "Bowie Center Study Area," for which the City analyzed demographic data as a part of its ongoing planning processes. The Bowie Center Census Tracts (BCCTs) make up about one-third of the City's total population. In 2019, the BCCT's median household income of \$102,205 was \$11,133 less than the Citywide median household income of \$113,338. As the City population grew 3.8% between 2014 and 2019, the BCCTs grew over 19%. The residents of the BCCTs are older than the Citywide average.

Stakeholder Engagement

On the first day of the TAP, the Panel conducted roundtable discussions with 19 stakeholders, including community members, elected officials, and representatives for the property owners in the study area (see Appendix A for participating stakeholders). Stakeholders were invited to join roundtable discussions due to their roles and vested interests in creating and implementing a vision for the Bowie Town Center.

The overarching questions stakeholders considered were:

- What is Bowie Town Center now, and what can it be?
- What does the next generation of our Town Center look like?
- Why would someone come here?

With these questions in mind, Panelists facilitated four distinct discussion groups, focused on the Market (demand, mix), Design, Program, and Implementation. The complexities of this site and project emerged through these discussions, as well as the ample opportunities to enhance existing assets and establish new connections.

Below is an overview of priorities, challenges, and local needs that stakeholders identified.

Importance of Delivering an Experience.

There was a strong desire – shared by community members and property owners – for the Town Center to be a place where people come for a unique experience. The

question “What would one do on a typical Saturday in Bowie Town Center?” was posed several times. While there was not a clear response in the present context, there was a desire to be able to answer that question easily in the future.

Green Space Connections. Many stakeholders expressed a desire to better connect green spaces, including the trails and the pond surrounding the study area.

New and Adaptive Uses. A number of uses were mentioned across conversations, including upscale dining, health and wellness, museums, spaces for children and youth, brewery/beer garden, and more public art and spaces. Stakeholders noted the opportunity to retool parking lots, and more broadly, a desire to capitalize on what currently exists.

Identity and Culture. There was some consensus around a lack of culture and identity of the area. The question of what **elements** of identity should be preserved or maintained as the area grows will be an important topic for community engagement.

Size of Study Area. The large size of the study area (123 acres) presents a challenge. Given the 28 parcels that make up the site, coordinating multiple owners for a cohesive plan will be difficult. Further, because much of the study area contains active businesses, any major redevelopment efforts will need to take into account existing structures and uses.

Geographic Location Offers Pros and Cons.

Bowie’s geographic location – between Annapolis, Baltimore, and Washington, DC – is considered both an advantage and disadvantage. One challenge it presents is the competition for retail demand. It will be difficult for Bowie to attract retailers who are already in nearby locations.

Challenging Regulatory Environment. The current form-based code and complexities of permitting processes were cited as notable obstacles to implementing a long term vision.

M-NCPPC, the City, and the County.

Stakeholders discussed where there might be opportunities for public-private partnership for placemaking and experience-making, and both challenges and opportunities with the overlapping authorities of M-NCPPC, the City of Bowie, and Prince George’s County.

Need for Community Engagement.

Stakeholders noted the importance of getting buy-in from the community and engaging them in the process. To date, there has been limited community engagement in developing the vision for the future of the Town Center.

To recap, stakeholders emphasized the lack of an existing cohesive identity, disconnected nature of current uses, and uncertain market conditions as the most prominent challenges. Engaging the community and enhancing connectivity to surrounding influence areas emerged as top priorities. These themes directly informed the Panel’s recommendations.



Recommendations

As previously mentioned, this is a timely effort for Bowie Town Center. Given the City's priority to focus on the Town Center, the fact that the Town Center is reaching later stages of its market life, and the new ownership of parts of the Town Center, this TAP presented a key opportunity to contemplate what the area could feel like in 20 years. Given this moment, the Panel presented a series of recommendations and concepts with strategies including phase-independent approaches, "Phase Zero" activations (short term), and infill re-programming (medium/long term). (It did not consider comprehensive redevelopment of the entire study area a likely scenario given current ownership). They emphasized that their recommendations were not prescriptive, but rather ideas to be brought to the community for evaluation and input. They further noted that – while organized into immediate, short, and medium/long term strategies, these are not suggested in mutually exclusive phases. Rather, they provide options that can show progress, stimulate imaginations, and create new experiences, while serving as a starting point in the process of co-creating a vision for the area alongside community members and stakeholders.

The Panel recommended seven "big gestures":

1. Co-Create the Bowie Town Center Plan with the Community
2. Expand the Boundary View
3. Connect Greenway, Bicycle, and Trail Networks
4. Create a Hierarchy of Public Spaces and Circulation

5. Establish a Signature Park
6. Connect to City Hall
7. Incorporate Compatible Housing

Phase-Independent Strategies

The Panel first presented on a number of phase-independent strategies that can serve as undercurrents. In partnership with the community, the City should consider the below throughout the duration of planning processes.

Promote Sustainable Development

The City of Bowie has previously defined its sustainability goals, and revitalization of the Town Center provides ample opportunities to demonstrate those commitments by supporting health and wellness, adding and enhancing green space, and promoting connections to nature. For example, the Town Center could be used to support individual health and wellness uses by explicitly **supporting active lifestyles** through specific uses (like outdoor yoga classes), **creating opportunities for human-nature connection, providing access to healthy food options** (including locally grown food), and intentionally **designing for resident and visitor comfort**.

One way to design for comfort is through attention to microclimates. To promote moving comfortably outdoors across different seasons, strategies – especially when thinking about building massing – should respond to differing needs for sun (in

the winter) and shade (in the summer). Building designs should **respond to seasonal sun paths and angles, provide vegetated and structural shade opportunities, balance hardscape and softscape, and orient buildings for solar responsiveness**.

Currently, the Town Center is made up of considerable hardscape, and the Panel emphasized that redevelopment efforts should promote green infrastructure. Strategies the City should consider include building out a **network of trails and green spaces, building outdoor assembly space for local events, integrating LID stormwater management, and increasing tree canopy and the natural ecosystem**. Some can be leveraged to achieve multiple goals. Replacing hardscape with vegetative ribbon to provide connectivity to existing trails, for example, can also provide an opportunity for outdoor assembly space and improve stormwater management (compared to the hardscape).

Establish Connective Tissue

Promoting connections was a theme that arose as a priority for the future of the Town Center in multiple contexts. Strategies to establish connective tissue include strengthening connections between parcels and larger trail systems, introducing a community social loop and/or interior walking loop, and creating paseos/passages.

In order to think about the best opportunities to establish connective tissue within the Town Center, the Panel took a more holistic view of the study area and zoomed out to identify key assets surrounding the site, **expanding the**

boundary view. They encouraged the City to do the same in their planning efforts. The Panel looked at parks and trails to establish a network of spaces that **connect to greenways and trails** and recommended developing a **hierarchy of circulation** that would allow multiple open spaces from which to enter. They suggested a **signature park** be among the added green spaces, which would further promote local identity.

In the image shown, the Panel proposed an illustrative vision of how connectivity could be enhanced. Here, the existing pedestrian bridge (delineated in blue) would be expanded to create a landmark opportunity for when people arrive at the intersection. Shown in magenta is a pedestrian only plaza,



Opportunities to establish connective tissue.

which would establish social space and a safe and welcoming environment for family activities. The smaller blue dots suggest potential additional plaza spaces and node connections that could become alleys to allow movement through the site. The Panel also suggested improving the **connection to City Hall** (which could be achieved by punching through buildings if there is an opportunity), and other existing civic spaces surrounding the Town Center. The visual represents one proposed concept, but the Panel's key point is the importance of promoting connectivity and circulation.

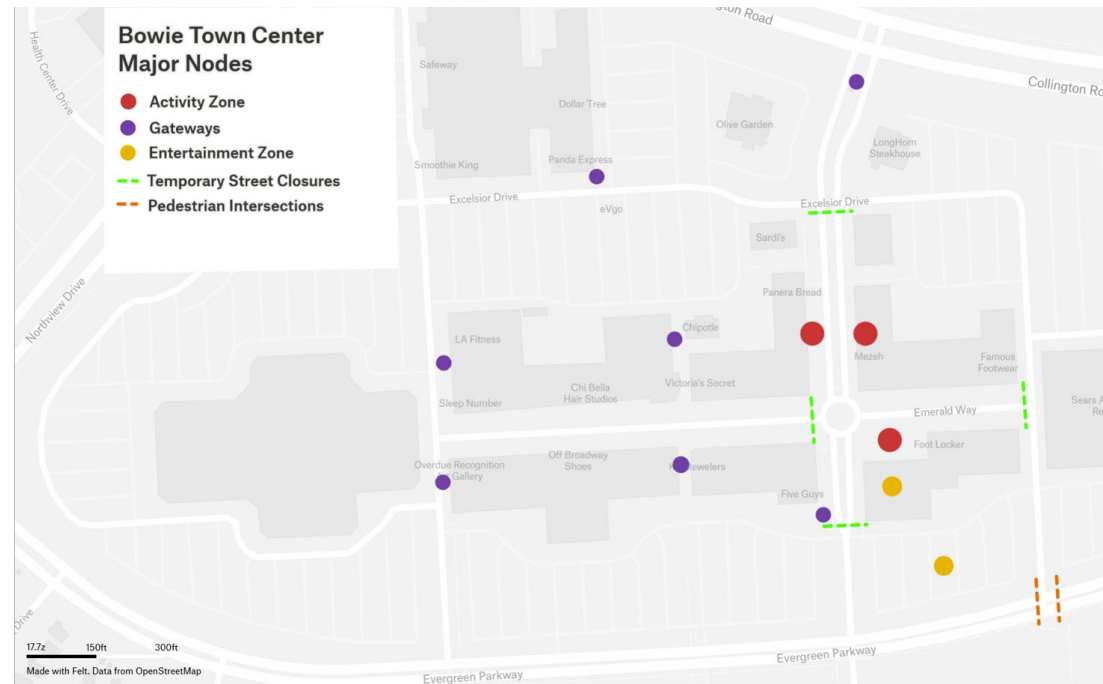
Open Space Network

There are numerous strategies to consider that would promote comfort, a sense of

belonging, and a desire to visit and stay in the Town Center. A variety of open space typologies should be presented to community stakeholders to best understand local needs and desires. Some examples of typologies the Panel mentioned include bridges, plazas, parklets, alleys, paseos, walkable and bikeable environments, and streets and intersections that prioritize pedestrians above vehicles. These typologies help express the experience in the area.

Phase Zero Activation

Given what will likely be a decades long timeline to devise and realize a vision of the future of Bowie Town Center, the Panel proposed recommendations that could be



Opportunities for Phase Zero activations.

undertaken in the immediate future and don't require infrastructure changes to add vibrancy. They deemed these "Phase Zero Opportunities." Phase Zero refers to temporary activations that can be retained or reintroduced with redevelopment (while these are relatively easy to implement in the short term, they should also be integrated into long term plans). These include placemaking and programming (e.g. adding moveable furniture or art) as well as repurposing existing usages (like sidewalks) to create third spaces, spaces for relaxation, recreation and connection, and a specific experience for visitors. These activations can build upon Food-Experience-Culture to brand the Town Center as a space for relaxation, recreation, and connection. They also introduce new gathering locations that communicate the Town Center's brand.

The Panel identified potential sites that most lend themselves to Phase Zero activations (see map below for the major nodes). They suggested that the four buildings with shared ownership may be the simplest place to start.

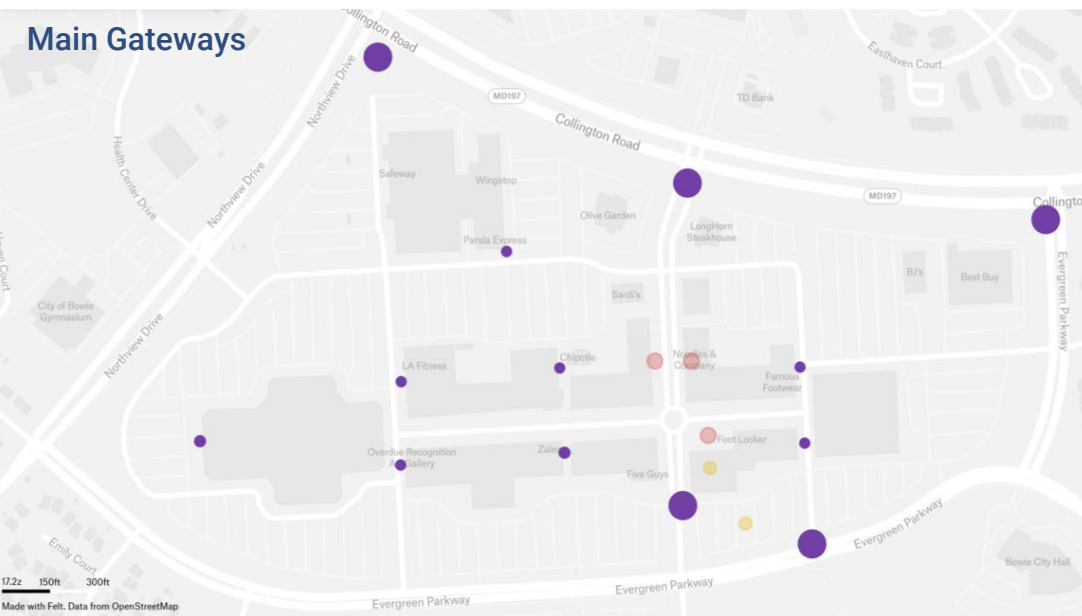
Identify Opportunities to Create an Authentic Sense of Place

Currently, businesses are inward facing, there are blank walls, and there is not cohesive branding to suggest a strong sense of identity or place. Panelists therefore considered additional smaller scale opportunities to celebrate Bowie's identity and create a destination. They considered gateways (main gateways and alley gateways), activity zones, entertainment zones, as well as places for temporary street

closures and new pedestrian intersections. Below, see the Panel's menu of potential "phase zero" activations for community consideration, examples of other places that have demonstrated similar activations, as well as suggested locations where they may make sense.

Main Gateways. The main pedestrian and vehicular entry points could celebrate Bowie's identity through seasonal design, clear wayfinding, and cohesive branding that together create a strong sense of place. (see image)

Alley Gateways. Otherwise anti-climactic alleys can be transformed with interactive elements that engage visitors, turning the walk from the parking lot to the retail area



Main gateway opportunities in the study area.



(above) Example of a gateway to a shopping center in Lakeland, Florida. Source: Vintage Neon Project

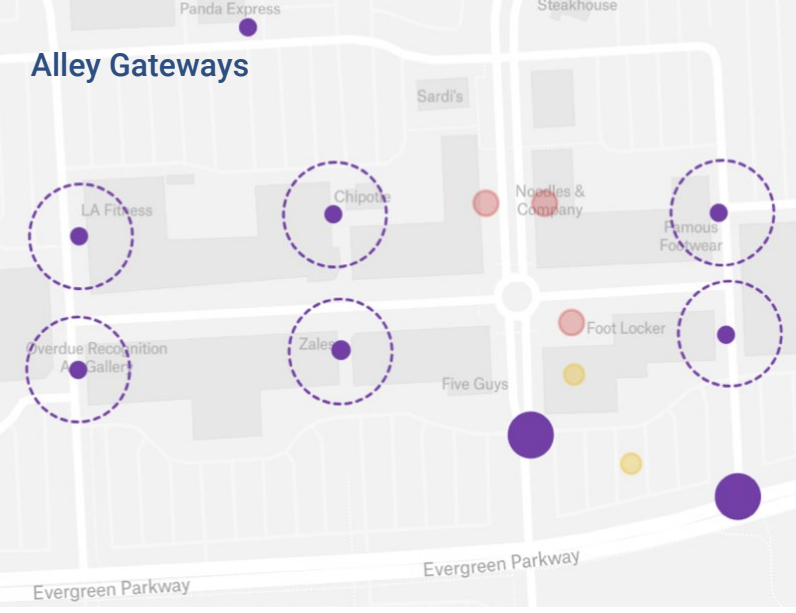


(right top) A main gateway at the District Wharf. Source: District Wharf Properties



(right bottom) Gateway treatment in a shopping district in San Antonio, Texas. Source: Alamo Architects

Alley Gateways



Alley gateway opportunities in the study area.



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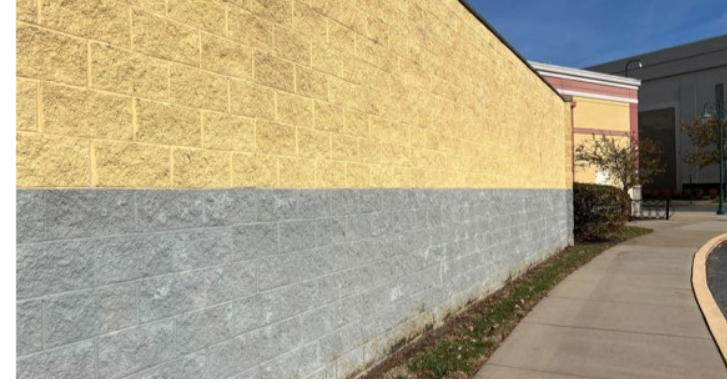
Examples of alley gateways.

into an experience itself and reinforce the Bowie Town Center as a destination where people want to linger. Elements like unique lighting, chalk art, planters, and mural art can make alleys destinations themselves.

Art Walls as Entry Ways. Blank walls can be turned into entry ways through murals that celebrate Bowie's identity. This can also be an opportunity to platform local artists or allow local businesses to market themselves. (Because these walls are private property in the Town Center, there are few bureaucratic restrictions on transforming these walls).

Activity Zones. Sidewalks can be transformed into gathering places. Examples of strategies that can turn the spaces created by inward-facing businesses into welcoming social spaces include bistro chairs, movable seating furniture for restaurants and cafes to extend their businesses outdoors, umbrellas and temporary shade structures, decorative posts, planters, and ropes to protect outdoor diners and make them feel separated from the road.

Entertainment Zones. Developing active programmable areas can draw visitors and encourage "play" and linger longer. Programming ideas include outdoor concert series, dog costume contests at event venue spaces, movable hard games (e.g. large chess board to add interactivity to the park), or movable furniture. Music



Town Center walls could become art walls, welcoming visitors.



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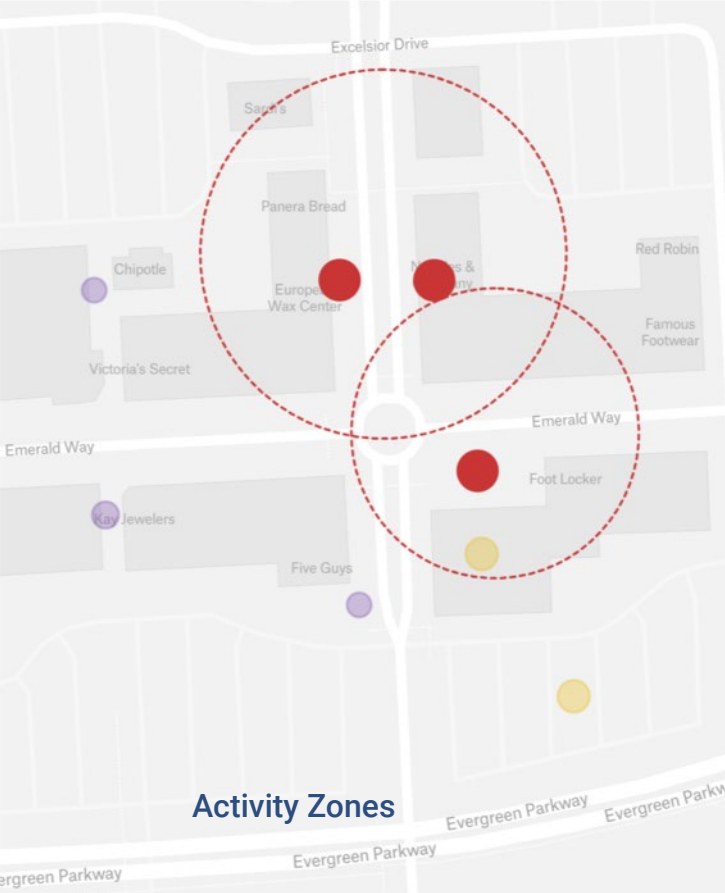


COSTAR



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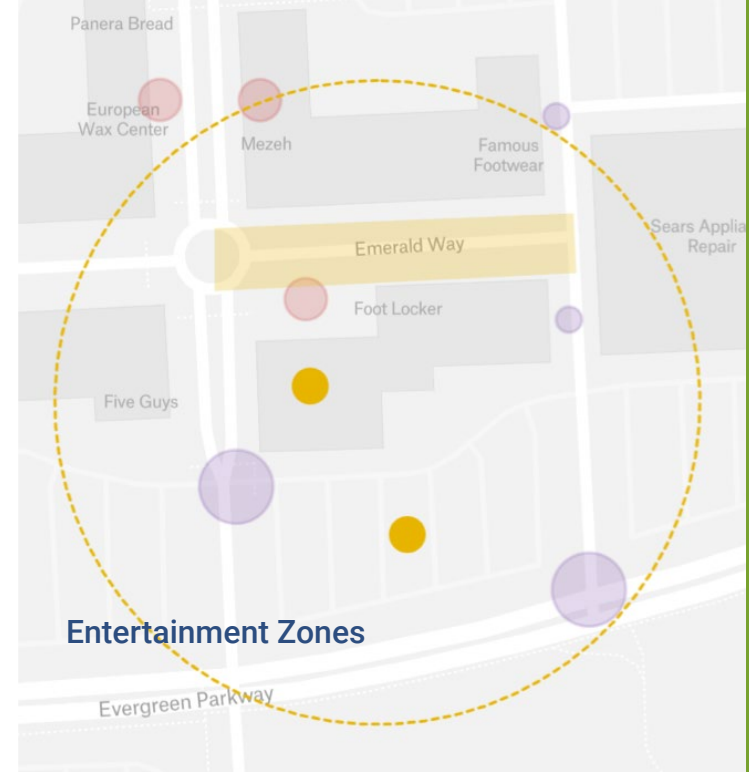
Examples of art walls used as entry ways in other developments.



Activity zone opportunities in the study area.

and entertainment venues that provide experience-driven retail also serve as dynamic anchor destinations to drive foot traffic.

These strategies will improve the experience for many types of residents and visitors. They support families by offering activities that may appeal across age groups, as well as senior citizens or others who may benefit from an increased number of resting points.



Entertainment zone opportunities in the study area.



Examples of activity zones.



Examples of entertainment zones.



A Closer Look at Entertainment Zone Components in the Future Bowie Town Center

The Panel considered one particular segment of the study area for a number of entertainment zone components, which could together create central gathering space for people across generations and serve as a front door to City Hall.

- A **music hall** can be a community hub that hosts artists and provides a comfortable and intimate setting for people to come together.
- A **plaza** is a “gathering heart” that provides flexible, vibrant space that can host and engage intergenerational users.
- Creating a **signature multi-purpose park** provides a flexible outdoor event venue to host food markets, culinary classes, or



other community events, utilizing the power of “learning” to create community and **connect with the City Hall**. This could also include a green house, makerspace, or other spaces that are difficult to have within homes.

While the future Bowie Town Center could introduce a number of different spaces, the important piece is that *programming matters*. The above recommendations will help empower people to take ownership of the streets and allow activity and interaction to shape the space. This creates an authentic sense of place. In summary:

- Phase Zero opportunities can build upon Food-Experience-Culture to brand the town center as a space for relaxation, recreation, and connection
- Invest in new gathering locations to help communicate the new town center brand
- Reinvigorate portions with repurposed components and unique programming
- Introduce a central event and gathering space



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GREAT PARK NEIGHBORHOODS

Infill Re-Programming

In addition to the short-term activations that wouldn't involve infrastructure changes, the Panel assessed the current conditions of the study area in order to think about how one might approach re-programming and make connections as the area evolves. The following analysis is specific to the southern portion of the study area (which excludes Bowie Crossing).

Panelists identified both challenges and opportunities to the way the site is designed and owned, noting that realistically, the study area likely will not be entirely redeveloped at a single time. Rather, there will be incremental changes as ownership of individual parcels changes. They identified a few specific characteristics to consider, which create opportunities, but are paired with challenges.

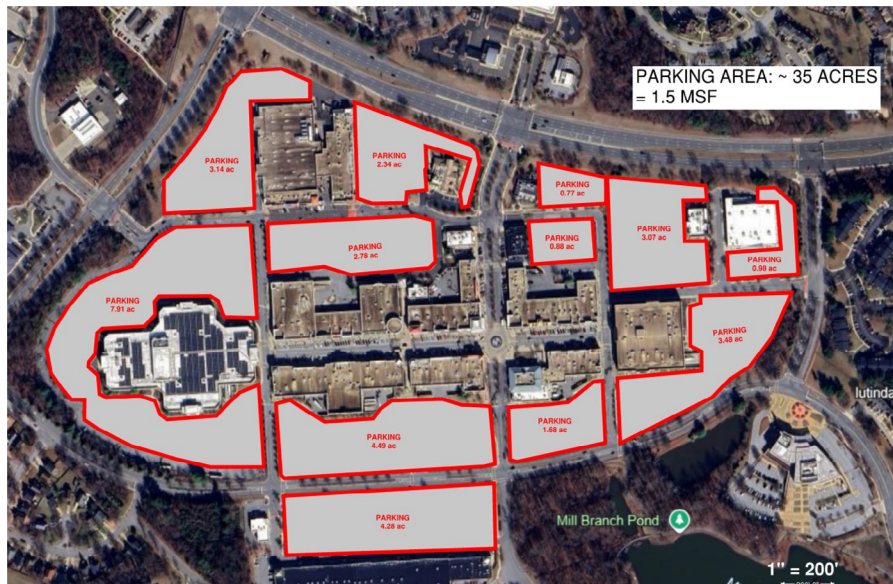
Opportunity with Extensive Surface Parking, but Inherent Design Challenges. Currently, the area is essentially a shopping mall without a roof, surrounded by nearly 35 acres of parking (nearly 1.5 million square feet). This extensive amount of square footage provides a lot of potential opportunity to re-imagine the area. The inherent challenge of this type of shopping center orientation, however, is that it is inward facing with all loading facing outward. Despite planning for more pedestrian and bicycle friendly spaces, there will still be considerable car use and need for parking in the future to plan for as well.

Good Circulation Around Perimeter, but Large Blocks Within. There is also currently good circulation around the

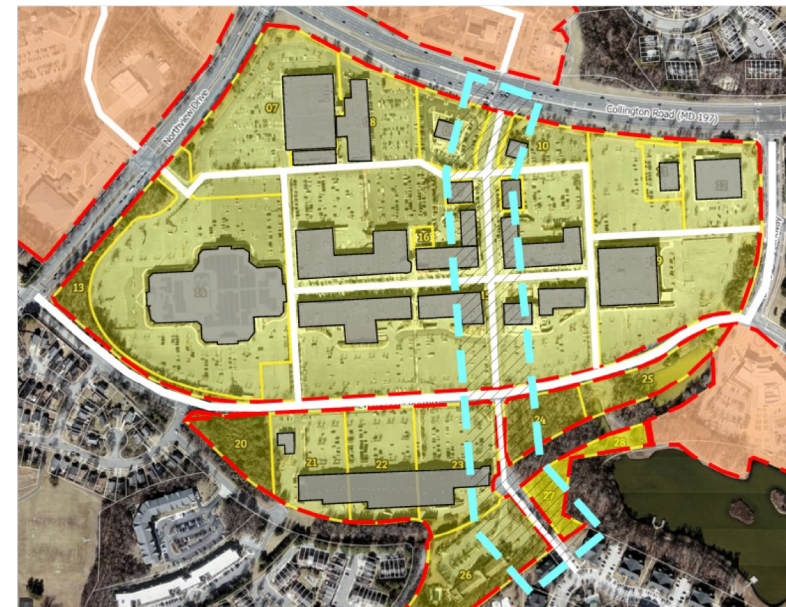
perimeter of the area. Within the perimeter, however, there are large blocks of space – potentially over 800 feet from one intersection to the next (a normal, comfortable block to traverse would be 200-300 feet from one intersection to the next).



Aerial view of southern half of study area.



(left) Parking lot surface area.



(right) Parking lot surface area.

Single Owner for Several Centrally-Located Parcels, but Multiple Other Owners. The single ownership of four central parcels bodes well for the potential to re-think connections and open spaces in the area. The fact that there are many other owners across the study area, with their own interests and timelines, however, does pose potential challenges to a unified strategy across the study area. As leases expire and ownership changes, more opportunities will present themselves.

Re-imagine Town Center Boulevard

In thinking about how to best connect the blocks within the study area with the

surrounding neighborhoods and create more of a “Main Street”, the Panel suggested that the easiest connection to develop is along Town Center Boulevard, where there is common ownership and underutilized asphalt that will allow new construction to occur. Because it connects to Collington Road (197), it has visibility from the main thoroughfare and brings visitors into the heart of the site. They suggested improvements to the street – that could knit the Town Center with the neighborhood and create a pleasant walk for people to get to the Center of Town – along with possibilities for incremental residential development.

Adopt Phased Approach. The Panel considered a phased approach – which is how development would be most likely to

occur – with initial changes to the streetscape that make it start to feel like more of a town street. Eventually, there may be opportunity to develop areas to the south and **incorporate compatible housing**. This would create connections to residential neighborhoods and the park space south of the study area.

Remove Angled Parking. By introducing parallel parking along Town Center Drive (as opposed to angled parking), up to nine feet on each side of the street could be freed up,



Re-imagining Town Center Drive



GOOGLE MAPS



Opportunities for improvements along Town Center Drive.

yielding a more generous landscape and sidewalk space (which could also be used for street cafes).

Improve Building Facades. One relatively easy series of improvements would be replacing the current façades and introducing a variety of styles to mimic a “Main Street.” More specific preferences for architectural styles of feels could be weighed by the community.

Build Incrementally South and Extend Sidewalk. Continuing south along Town Center Boulevard, the sidewalk could be extended and appropriately scaled residential buildings could be added. Smaller two to four-story buildings along Evergreen are likely to be most compatible with the connecting neighborhoods and will require less parking. Single stair buildings, which have not previously been permitted, could also be considered, allowing for smaller building footprints. As more pads become available over time, residential development can be considered incrementally.

More Density to the North. Over time, more pad sites may become available for redevelopment on the north side, where there is potential for more density and height. Four to six-story residential buildings could potentially be supported, or alternatively, civic or institutional uses could be introduced. Depending on the market over time, with good design, developers could balance for economic return. Market studies will help determine what uses and mixes are most likely to be successful.



Extend sidewalk south - a view along Town Center Boulevard.



Examples of residential development, slightly less dense.



Examples of residential development, slightly less dense.



Examples of residential development, slightly less dense.



Examples of residential development, slightly more dense.



Examples of residential development, slightly more dense.

Green Space Connections

The Panel noted that it should be intuitive how to move through the community, so they began to map out patterns and start to connect the green spaces across the area. Through the proposed scheme, the Panel emphasized the rich assets already in the community, and illustrated the goal to enhance and connect them more effectively. The proposal considered how greenways might bring people through, and how a bike trail could connect key sites around the area, such as Mill Pond.

Enhance and Connect Green Spaces, Civic Uses, and Surrounding Area

The Panel also wanted to ensure that City Hall – a major existing asset – was

connected to the surrounding area, as well as the civic uses on the west side of the study area. Additional ideas include a music hall that serves as an open, porous space connecting to the park or the addition of greenways going east to west to capture storm water before it gets to Mill Pond.

The illustrative diagram below shows the potential for connected green spaces where people can walk along tree-lined streets, children and cyclists can walk or bike into the Town Center, and the parcels remain large enough that they can be developed in an economically viable fashion.

The Bowie Crossing site already has great park amenities, highlighted in the zoomed in diagram. These amenities can be enhanced and enjoyed further by increasing their access and connection.



Illustrative diagram.



Illustrative diagram, zoomed in (southern section of study area).



Illustrative diagram, zoomed in (northern section of study area).



Illustrative diagram
(full study area)



Illustrative diagram, zoomed in (southern section of study area).



Illustrative diagram, zoomed in (northern section of study area).

are closed and turned into a **cross-shaped Central Green** for outdoor entertainment/activity plazas. **Pedestrian circulation** within the area is shown with green dashes, and auto circulation would remain outside shown with red lines. **Five-story residential development** (shown by pink rectangles) would be built to the north and south of the central green and existing retail, as well as a **BSU Incubator Campus** (shown in the upper right with blue rectangles) with first-story structured parking and retail front. **Strategic community venues** such as an Athletic Center, Art Center, Movie Theater, Museum, and Children's Crystal Palace, for example, etc. that connect to City Hall and the Lake and Centennial Park would create a cultural campus. The Safeway would be preserved but existing stores would transition to community-based services and shops.

Bowie Crossing – Proposed Site Schemes

The Panel also considered the Bowie Crossing site, and what infill programming might make sense there.

The first proposed scheme includes **office and mixed-uses** on much of the site, with a **large regional attraction** at the current site of a large, underutilized parking lot. A more detailed example of what this could look like is seen below – including a multi-purpose regional cultural center or stadium, in addition to hotels, a plaza, restaurants, and condos.

Alternatively, if there is no market for a regional attraction, an alternative scheme suggests residential development in its place.



**Bowie Crossing Scheme A:
Office/Mixed-Use with
Regional Attraction**



**Bowie Crossing Scheme B:
Office/Mixed-Use with
Residential**



Implementation

The Panel considered various best practices and case studies that could inform the process of turning visions for the Bowie Town Center into reality.

Meaningfully Engage Community

The Panel stressed that it was presenting concepts and ideas to bring to the community for discussion rather than a prescriptive set of strategies. The Panel also provided some best practices for meaningful community engagement.

The Panel suggested some strategies for meaningful community engagement based on successful efforts in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Establishing an engagement plan. Map out the phases of the project and identify key points in the process where community feedback (as well as educating and informing) would be helpful and meaningful (likely throughout the process). Being transparent about the process and when the key points of engagement are is crucial in bringing the community along and ensuring their needs and hopes for the area are reflected in the plans.

Identifying appropriate stakeholders.

Stakeholders the City should consider engaging include schools (public and private), faith-based institutions, retailers, property owners, public agencies, advocacy groups, and community-based organizations. When engaging community members, it is especially

important to consider whose voices are not traditionally engaged or elevated in typical planning processes. Consider the demographics of the area and ensure that representative groups are intentionally engaged in a way they will find accessible. Some key groups to consider include seniors, parents of children under 18, youth, renters, non-English speakers, those living with disabilities, low-income residents, and non-White residents. Think about anyone who lives, plays, works, or shops in the area, as well as those who may want to – but for reasons of affordability or accessibility cannot.

Establish a project management team at the City. Identifying a point person and a primary backup contact at the City to manage the engagement process ensures that it remains a central, focused part of the project, and that the community has a point of contact for questions or feedback they have. This will keep the engagement process on track and maintain accountability.

Host three or more interactive public meetings to get input. Providing multiple meeting formats for engagement ensures more participation and allows feedback to be received through a variety of communication styles. Design charrettes, for example, are short, intensive, and highly collaborative workshops used to solve a design problem or generate ideas. Charrettes bring together a diverse group of stakeholders – designers, stakeholders, subject-matter experts, and community members – to rapidly explore possibilities and co-create solutions. Specific

interactive exercises, such as dot exercises, can also be utilized within public meetings; allowing participants to use colored dots or stickers to visually indicate their preferences on an idea enabling consensus-building and decision-making. These interactive activities are accessible and engaging and can be helpful for ranking or narrowing down options through collective input. It is important that the specific feedback sought can be meaningfully incorporated into plans.

Workshops should be designed to be easy for anyone to participate, particularly those not accustomed to planning processes or language. Afterwards, sharing “what we learned” back out with the community is a good way to build trust and reassure community members that their feedback was received.

Host two or more pop-up events that meet people where they are. While hosting public meetings is a key way to get feedback, they are often most attended by individuals who already interface with the City and/or planning processes. Meeting community members where they already are – stadiums, grocery stores, parks, farmers markets, etc. and partnering with local organizations that are well-connected with specific groups is a good way to get feedback from a wider swath of the community.

Conduct a survey and/or host focus groups. Using a variety of tools to get feedback and buy-in from the community is most likely to yield a successful project that reflects the desires and addresses the needs of the

community. Engaging the right stakeholders at the right time is an essential element to successful implementation.

Understand the Market

One key aspect to successful implementation of plans for the Bowie Town Center will be developing a strong understanding of the market through **market and feasibility analyses**. Not everything the community wants will make sense financially, and not everything that makes sense financially will serve the community. These analyses will help determine a sweet spot where the community vision can be turned into concrete plans.

Market studies to assess supply, demand, and competitive positioning, as well as analysis of economic trends and demographic profiles will inform what will be successful in bringing people to the area (to live, work, or visit). Additional feasibility analysis will determine the financially viable mix of uses and help to develop a strategic phasing plan.

Considering an array of funding and financing mechanisms, including leveraging public incentives and public-private partnerships, the City can create a market feasible plan for the Town Center. The City can look to some other places to learn more

about how these infrastructure funding mechanisms have been used to support large scale revitalization efforts across the region. Two that might prove especially useful for Bowie include the Mosaic District and Tysons in Fairfax County, Virginia.

The Mosaic District was established through a public-private partnership between Fairfax County and the developer (Edens) to transform a former industrial site in Merrifield into a vibrant, mixed-use urban center. In order to achieve the revitalization goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors established its first Community Development Authority (CDA) with Tax Increment Financing. The CDA financed public roads, parks, parking, and other infrastructure improvements, through the issuance of bond funds, with debt service that is paid through incremental real estate tax revenues.

When the long-range plan for Tysons was adopted, the County Board called for the establishment of a Special Tax District known as the Tysons Transportation Service District. The Special Tax District funds transportation improvements through an additional real estate tax on commercial and industrial properties. It is an additional tax to regular property taxes based on assessed value. All properties within the District pay the special assessment.



The Mosaic District in Fairfax County.

Prepare Plan to Address Regulatory Barriers

Successful redevelopment will require the **identification of and a plan to address regulatory barriers** that may arise throughout the process. Some suggested approaches include reaching out to the development community to understand what their experiences (and challenges) have been, interjurisdictional coordination (especially given the unique nature of the City's planning authority), and potentially establishing a Development Process Committee.

Ensure Plan is Adaptable and Flexible


It was also noted that places experience normal lifecycles, and **any plan adopted should be flexible and adaptable to be able to respond to both changing market conditions and community needs**, while staying true to the vision. Ranges and flexibility in types of uses, as well as phasing and flexible timelines, therefore, should be considered during the visioning and plan development.

Reston Town Center provides an illustrative example. The town center itself was developed in the 1990s, but has remained successful across several decades as it has been able to respond to market conditions and adapt to stay relevant to user preferences even through ownership changes. This has included architecturally updating ground floors of structures, changing uses, updating signage and wayfinding, and re-developing the central park space to be more modern. The changes maintained the same placemaking effects, however, and continued to align with the overall character of the town center.

Develop a Place Management Structure

Once visions begin to be realized, there's an ongoing question of how a place is maintained, programmed, and kept desirable. The Panel provided several examples of case studies for the City of Bowie to learn more about where different types of place management structures have been employed. **Reston Town Center Association (RTCA)** conducts an annual assessment, set by the RTCA Board, which funds operations, maintenance, and community programming in Reston Town Center. The **Tysons Community Alliance** is funded out of the County's General Fund and, in coordination with local government, is responsible for placemaking activities. The **Potomac Yard Owner's Association**, funded through dues and special assessments, covers maintenance of common areas, as well as reserve funds for major repairs.

Conclusion



Plans are bold statements, and new plans for Bowie should inspire the community about what is possible. Building upon the work already completed by the Economic Development Committee and other City efforts, the present is a prime opportunity to begin engaging the community with questions about people want to see Bowie become.

The Panel recommended a number of big gestures they felt should inform the planning for the Bowie Town Center.

- Co-Create the Bowie Town Center Plan with the Community
- Expand the Boundary View
- Connect Greenway, Bicycle, and Trail Networks
- Create a Hierarchy of Public Spaces and Circulation
- Establish a Signature Park
- Connect to City Hall
- Incorporate Compatible Housing

These gestures represent big ideas, under which more specific strategies should be developed. The Panel shared a number of examples of those strategies that have been successful in other places, as models that could be presented to the community as a part of a more in-depth visioning process.

The Bowie Town Center has many of the ingredients needed to be successful reimaged, including many current assets to build upon. With community engagement as a key next step, the City is poised to capitalize on the current moment to further develop a vibrant vision for the Town Center.

Appendix: List of Stakeholders



Oluseyi Ademiluyi, Real Estate Investor
Robert Antonetti, Shipley & Horne, P.A.
Dennis Brady, Bowie City Council, At Large
L. Terry Carnes, CECA, LLC
Melanie Casanova, Compass
Jen Dewberry, Resident
Lakisha Hull, Director, Prince George's
County Planning Department
Delanéó Miller, Miller Trucking Co.
Zina Redfearn, Washington Prime Group, Inc.
Andres Saavedra, Consultant & Resident
William Shipp, O'Malley, Miles, Nylén &
Gilmore
Dennis Stillions, Bowie Town Center
Clinton Truesdale, Sr., Bowie City Council,
District 3
Fred Tutman, Patuxent River Keeper
Jamie Tyler, The Jamie Tyler Foundation,
Inc.
Ken Ulman, Margrave Strategies
Malcolm Williams, Government Contractor
Karen Williamson, Resident
Dufour Woolfley, Mayor pro tem

About the Panel

Panel Chair



Rob Mandle National Landing Business Improvement District

Since 2007, Rob has played a leading role in the successful transformation of the

National Landing area into a vibrant downtown community that is attracting residents, new businesses, and a wave of new investment by the private sector. His background in urban planning and economics combined with his passion for placemaking and collaboratively building communities for people, not just buildings, drives his perspective and vision. Rob's work envisioning and championing a new pedestrian connection to Washington National Airport, the CC2DCA Intermodal Connector, helped propel a unique, differentiating idea into an important infrastructure investment included in the Commonwealth's winning Amazon proposal. Additionally, Rob's framing of the Greater Crystal City area as a downtown of scale and substance as the largest, walkable downtown in Virginia helped propel the BID's efforts to extend its boundaries to Pentagon City and Potomac Yard.

Outside of National Landing, Rob has a track-record for active and engaged community involvement with a vision for community action that embraces creativity, efficiency, and partnership building in order to proactively make change, not just advocate for it. Rob has founded a downtown Civic Association in Norfolk, launched a farmers market in the Petworth neighborhood of DC, and served a term as an

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner where he championed new bicycle infrastructure and traffic calming measures, supported community organizations, and advocated for economic development efforts along Georgia Avenue. Rob is also currently serving as Assistant Cubmaster for Scouts BSA Pack 98 providing leadership and management that supports a team of volunteers providing programming to over 100 youth.

Rob earned a graduate degree in Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Tech's regional campus in Old Town Alexandria. Rob is also a graduate of Bowdoin College of Brunswick, Maine having earned a degree in Economics and Environmental Studies. Rob resides with his family in the Petworth neighborhood of Washington, DC.



Dan Avrit ParkerRodriguez

Dan Avrit is a founding member and Principal at ParkerRodriguez. Born and raised on a dairy farm in California, he graduated from Cal

Poly in San Luis Obispo, CA in 1992 with a degree in Landscape Architecture. Previously Dan worked with Jay Parker and Trini Rodriguez at HOH Associates on master planned communities and the Botanical Garden of National Museum of Nature Science in Taiwan. His love for the built and natural environment from a young age has led him to think big and search for meaningful solutions to complex development challenges.

Designing for the human experience is a first principle that guides all his work because if it's not beautiful, it's not sustainable. Every great place satisfies our human needs, is memorable, engages our senses and works within it's setting. Equally sustainable considerations are Economic, Social and Environmental factors that go into developing complete environments that are sustainable in the long term.

With 28 years of professional experience he has worked throughout the eastern United States providing expertise in master planning & visioning for new communities; urban design for new, walkable districts; and full Landscape Architectural services at all scales of work. Dan has led the design, management, and implementation of award winning large-scale mixed-use communities, active adult communities as well as highly detailed urban plazas, streetscapes and urban infill projects.



Suzie Battista
 Fairfax County
 Department of
 Planning &
 Development

Suzie Battista, AICP, is currently Chief of the Urban Centers Section

in the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development. Her career with Fairfax County has focused on urban design and Comprehensive Plan implementation using creative problem-solving in the development review process. Suzie has extensive experience in all stages of development review and has worked on both large- and small-scale projects across the County, from the redevelopment of Transit Oriented Development areas such as Tysons to site-specific placemaking efforts in transitioning communities such as Bailey’s Crossroads. Prior to joining Fairfax County, Suzie spent some years in the private sector doing land planning and landscape architecture work. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Landscape Architecture from Penn State and a Master’s Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Tech.



Jonathan Bush
 US Federal
 Government

Jonathan is a dynamic strategic leader, urban planner, and advisor with a track record of shaping cities, government

agencies, and global organizations through strategic planning, budget formulation, transportation, and the built environment. His expertise spans mixed-use redevelopment, comprehensive planning, strategic planning, and technical assistance, particularly within the DC metro region.

He co-authored the triennial Strategic Plan for the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and led the DEI framework impacting 8,000+ employees and 2 million residents in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties, MD.

Jonathan’s leadership extends to federal government strategy, where he has played a pivotal role in reforming the FDA’s Human Foods Program, aligning with Congressional mandates to enhance efficiency. Previously, he managed a \$345M payroll budget for the FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), impacting approximately 1,736 employees. His global experience includes directing U.S. DoD-backed health facilities in East Africa and Thailand, reinforcing the intersection of urban planning and public health.

A passionate educator, Jonathan serves as an adjunct professor at the Community College of Philadelphia, teaching entrepreneurship, business fundamentals, and corporate responsibility. He spearheaded a program overhaul, creating partnerships with corporate organizations and creating the framework for Lion’s Den—a student-driven pitch competition modeled after Shark Tank.



Soojin Choi
 Southwest Business
 Improvement District

Soojin Choi is an urban planner with the Southwest Business Improvement District (SWBID) in Washington,

D.C. She manages community events that activate public spaces and parks while building partnerships with local businesses and community-based organizations. Some of her work focuses on using institutional collaborations to help small businesses build capacity and strengthen the neighborhood’s economic vitality. Sooin supports the growth of retail nodes and residential development through creative placemaking strategies that make Southwest more vibrant and connected. She holds a Master of Professional Studies in Urban and Regional Planning from Georgetown University.



Erin Ezell
HOK

As the Sustainable Design Leader of HOK's Washington, DC practice, Erin Ezell manages a regional team of Sustainability

Specialists and works directly with clients and design teams to help guide the development and implementation of project sustainability goals at the building, site and master plan scales. Ms. Ezell works to improve the design, planning, and construction of projects through resource management, resiliency strategies and optimizing human health and well-being. She also manages pursuit of third-party sustainable project certification under the LEED Rating Systems, the WELL Building Standard and the Fitwel Standard, providing training, guidance and oversight throughout the certification process. Ms. Ezell is currently serving as Vice Chair of the USGBC National Capital Region's Market Leadership Advisory Board.



Lu Hou
Cityscapes Associates
International

Lu Hou is a visionary and trans-cultural urban planner and designer with over 30 years of professional experience

shaping sustainable communities in both public and private sectors in the US and internationally.

As the Founder and Principal Urban Designer of Cityscapes Associates International and a former Senior Urban Designer for Arlington County, VA, Lu is a hand-on practitioner actively engaged in transit-oriented development, community-based planning and culture-activated placemaking. His extensive research and practice on Cultural Urbanism provide an innovative approach to activating urban dynamics and revitalizing community assets. His experience extends to advisory roles, having served as a mayoral-appointed Commissioner on the Virginia Beach Resort Area Advisory Commission and as an Urban Design Liaison for Arlington County's Rosslyn Urban Design Committee.

Lu's leadership in international development is embodied in his role as a Co-founder and President of International City Alliance (ICA), a non-profit dedicated to fostering professional exchange and international collaboration, where he has initiated and organized numerous impactful international planning conferences and activities and spoke at various influential international forums and institutions.

Lu holds a master's degree in urban design from Arizona State University and an Advanced Management Development Program (AMDP) in Real Estate diploma from Harvard University, and is deeply committed to creating equitable, walkable, sustainable cities and rejuvenized communities.



Daughan Pitts
Conrac Solutions

Daughan brings more than 20 years of experience in infrastructure delivery, with deep expertise in both private and public

finance, including real estate development, project finance, and municipal bond structures. At Conrac Solutions, she leads project financing efforts, managing capital investment in collaboration with equity partners, lenders, airports, and rental car companies. Her work spans the full financing spectrum, from private equity and debt to public bond issuances and tax-exempt financing. Prior to joining Conrac Solutions, she served as Senior Director at Hayat Brown, where she provided public-private partnership (P3) and real estate advisory services to government and higher education clients. Her portfolio exceeds \$3 billion in commercial transactions, including public infrastructure, mixed-use, and multifamily projects. Her expertise includes project structuring, financial modeling, procurement strategy, and execution of complex deals involving layered capital stacks and funding sources such as tax credits, municipal debt, and revenue bonds. She holds a Master of Business Administration from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, with concentrations in Real Estate and Strategic Management and a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Howard University, with a concentration in Finance.



Michael Swartz
David M. Schwarz
Architects

Michael Swartz is a Principal, Managing Director with David M. Schwarz Architects (DMSAS). He has been

with the firm since 1982 and focuses on much of the firm’s planning and mixed-use work along with civic and institutional projects. Some of his notable planning projects include master planning for downtown Fort Worth, Southlake Town Square, Duke Central Campus masterplan, West Village in Dallas and Alpharetta, Georgia’s City Center masterplan.

Mr. Swartz’s completed building projects include: Yale University Class of 1954 Environmental Science Center, the Tarrant County Family Law Center in Fort Worth, TX, Ed Smith Stadium and Spring Training Complex in Sarasota, FL (for the Baltimore Orioles), Alpharetta City Hall, and The Woodley and 13|U apartment buildings in Washington, DC.

His professional memberships include The Congress for New Urbanism, the Urban Land Institute, and American Institute of Architects. Mr. Swartz is also a LEED accredited professional. On numerous occasions he has been a presenter and panel participant for the Urban Land Institute’s Mixed-Use conferences. Mr. Swartz also volunteers as a mentor for ULI’s Young Leaders Group and has served as a visiting critic at the University of Maryland and the University of Miami. He received his Bachelor of Architecture from Carnegie Mellon University.

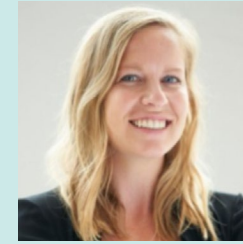


Sandeep Walia
MKSK

Sandeep Walia, ASLA, PLA, LEED AP, is a Senior Associate at MKSK, where she brings over two decades of experience shaping

meaningful places across the United States and abroad. Trained as an architect and holding a master’s degree in landscape architecture, Sandeep’s interdisciplinary background informs a design approach that is both visionary and grounded. Her work centers on curating holistic human experiences — environments that draw from history and culture, nurture social, emotional, and environmental well-being, and weave storytelling into the fabric of design to strengthen community connections.

Sandeep began her career with EPD in Pittsburgh before joining SWA’s international planning studio in Laguna Beach in 2006. Most recently, at BrightView Design Group (BVDG), she led the design and delivery of large-scale community, institutional, and hospitality projects, guiding them from visioning and entitlements through final implementation. Her professional engagement extends beyond practice: She is an active member of the ULI Washington Housing Council and serves on the City of Bethesda Downtown Technical Advisory Panel, contributing her expertise to advance community-centered, equitable, and connected urban environments.



Joni Kaden
Report Author

Joni Kaden is a community engagement consultant with over a decade of experience leading projects to ensure that public

policies, plans, and programs meaningfully reflect the perspectives and needs of the people they serve. Joni’s expertise spans facilitation, strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, policy writing, community-network building, and technical assistance. She is especially skilled at developing creative tools to promote meaningful and authentic community participation and relationship building. Joni has managed projects related to mixed-income and affordable housing, equitable transportation, economic and community development, criminal justice, and sustainability. She holds a Masters in City Planning from UC Berkeley.