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Annapolis, MD 21401
410-222-7450

Andrea E. Mansfield
Chair, Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee

February 22, 2021

Mr. Jerry L. Pesterfield
Anne Arundel County Planning Advisory Board
2664 Riva Road, 4th Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Fiscal Year 2022 Funding – Odenton Library Community Park

Dear Mr. Pesterfield:

On behalf of the Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC), I am writing this letter in strong support of the Odenton Library Community Park (Project #P001422) and urge you to support the County Executive’s proposal to fund Plans and Engineering and Construction with the Plans and Engineering beginning in FY2022 and Construction beginning in FY2024. The OTCAC and Odenton community are excited about this project as it brings sorely needed recreation space and public amenities desired by residents of the Odenton Town Center (OTC) and surrounding area, including Fort Meade. The proposed design not only incorporates various amenities desired by the public but also provides an open public space that new developments do not have.

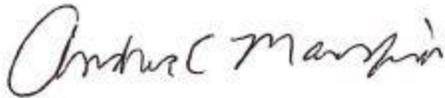
As the Park is within one of three town centers in the County, the OTCAC strongly supports the County Executive’s proposal to prioritize this project. The OTC already has difficulty attracting the type of mixed-use development sought under the Odenton Town Center Master Plan, and the OTCAC frequently hears from community members that the area is lacking in recreation spaces and other public amenities. If the OTC is to become the livable, walkable, workable community we envision, it needs to have amenities to attract and sustain both businesses and families. To this end, the OTCAC received feedback in support of the Park from over 150 individual residents and eleven organizations representing thousands of people within the Odenton area. For example, the Odenton Library and the Odenton Heritage Society offered to work with the County to help refine and implement portions of the design concepts. Both organizations have an interest in the project as it could expand library programs and offerings and serve to reflect and preserve Odenton’s heritage.

The need for a community park was recognized by the County in the Land Preservation Parks & Recreation Plan (LPPRP) in 2017, as an investment priority under acquisition and development projects. This need has not been mitigated nor lessened in the four years since the approval of the LPPRP. In that time, the OTCAC has seen hundreds of new homes, condominiums, and

townhouses built in the OTC – all within walking distance of the Park. The biggest open space within for these new members of our community is the MARC train overflow parking lot. Most land within Odenton is privately owned, and the OTCAC has observed that developers have little to no incentive to partner to create sufficient green space for recreation and establish parks or other non-revenue generating amenities. The importance of the County Executive’s proposal to initiate this project and potentially have a playground, dog parks, nature trails, an amphitheater, and open space within easy walking distance of the fastest growing area of Odenton cannot be understated for our community.

As stated previously, the OTCAC is very excited about this project, and we are very appreciative of being included in the process and for being used as the body for community input. We look forward to continuing in this role and to the Park coming to fruition. Thank you for your consideration of the County Executive’s proposed budget and the inclusion of funding in the fiscal year 2022 budget to initiate the Odenton Library Community Park project for the betterment of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea E. Mansfield".

Andrea E. Mansfield
Chairman
Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee