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Jason M. Schwier
Chair, Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee

October 5, 2023

Ms. Jenny Jarkowski
Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning
2664 Riva Road, 4th Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: 2023 Odenton Town Center Annual Report and Priorities

Dear Ms. Jarkowski:

On behalf of the Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC), I am pleased to provide you with the Committee's recommendation of approval of the yearly Odenton Town Center (OTC) Annual Report. The OTCAC supports the continuation of the format first proposed in 2021 and incrementally recommends additions that increase the utility of the Annual Report as a marker that reflects and tracks the progress that the Odenton area is making to achieve the vision of the OTC Master Plan (OTCMP). The 2023 Annual Report incorporates notes on the recommendations of the OTCAC and holding capacity information to show theoretical potential for the Odenton community.

With the completion of the yearly OTC Annual Report and Priority Project Lists, the OTCAC recognizes the need for proactive advocacy to achieve the goals and objectives of the OTCMP. The OTCAC prepared a set of recommendations for consideration by appropriate County departments in support of key investments in Capital Projects for the OTC in Fiscal Year 2024 and beyond.

The Committee formulated these recommendations as part of its deliberative process that reviewed various plans and submissions impacting the OTC. Specifically, we reviewed previous OTCAC inputs and Annual Report submissions; incorporated public feedback received throughout the OTCMP update process; and considered the proposed developments that the Committee reviewed over the past year. The OTCAC maintained the structure and projects used in the 2022 OTC Annual Report Priority Projects List and continues to support all efforts the County undertakes to schedule and complete the Top Priority and Supporting Priority Projects, which are essential to help Odenton achieve the intent of the OTCMP.

Among Priority Projects not currently funded, the OTCAC would like to highlight three projects that need dedicated support. Two of the three projects were previously highlighted in our 2022

Annual Report letter. The 2023 OTC Annual Report on pages 5-7 provides greater details behind the three priorities summarized below.

1. Make Important Bus Stop Improvements to Encourage Public Transportation as Part of Transit Oriented Development Initiatives

As the overall Odenton and the OTC areas see continued development and an influx of new residents, the OTCAC maintains its recommendation that the County consider supporting the fundamental infrastructure needed to enable the increased public transportation options envisioned for West County, one of which is installing structured bus stops within the Odenton area. With the County planning and developing the parking garage at the Odenton MARC Station, Odenton is one step closer to having a town center that is a transit hub for the West County region. Furthermore, Move Anne Arundel!, the Transportation Functional Master Plan, projects the OTC to have unsustainable traffic volumes that exceed the current road infrastructure. To decrease the overcrowding of arterial roads, the MDOT-MTA Fort Meade/Odenton Small Area Plan suggested incorporating public transportation options that provide improvements or replacements of the existing services and increase the number of people leveraging this service instead of driving. To support both the current and potential alternate services and encourage ridership, Odenton needs the installation of new infrastructure to support riders boarding public transportation at transit stops. Current stops are frequently along major roadways with no concrete pad or structure, exposing riders to the weather and adding challenges for disabled riders to even reach the bus. With this project, the County has an opportunity to accelerate the adoption of the goals of Move Anne Arundel! regarding public transportation options in Odenton.

2. Extend Pine Street coinciding with the Academy Yard development to Provide a More Interconnected Community

To support the County's vision to have an interconnected community, the OTCAC maintains its recommendation that the County consider supporting the planning, design, and construction of the Pine Street extension between Winmeyer Avenue and Baltimore Avenue. This recommendation is only a subset of the Priority Project item within the Annual Report because the proposal for the development of Academy Yard contains the remainder of the needed extension between Mt. Vernon Avenue and Telegraph Road. When the OTCAC provided this recommendation in 2022, the developer had not submitted a proposal for the Academy Yard. The OTCAC will be receiving a formal presentation in October 2023, however, establishing the need for a public-private partnership to complete the two portions of the Pine Street Extension and finally connect Winmeyer Avenue to Telegraph Road. This collaboration will provide needed connectivity for the residents living and businesses existing within this area of Odenton. The completed extension will enable residents to directly access businesses on Winmeyer Avenue and Pine Avenue without adding to the congestion on Annapolis and Telegraph Roads. Residents within the affected area have long requested extending Pine Street, but the recent proposal by the Academy Yard developer to provide a portion of the extension breathed new life into this improvement. The County has an opportunity with the Pine Street Extension to complete the final segment in concert with the private developer now that a formal submission for the development of the Academy Yard is in progress.

3. Update the Telegraph Road (MD-170) Streetscape to include bicycle and pedestrian amenities

A synergistic complement to the two priorities discussed previously, the OTCAC recommends that the County consider supporting a retrofit of the Telegraph Road (MD-170) streetscape. Specifically, the OTCAC received presentations on proposed developments in multiple locations along Telegraph Road (MD-170) that will increase the density of housing. When considered in conjunction with the destination of the parking garage at the Odenton MARC station, providing methods for community members to not use their vehicles and decrease congestion is desired by Move Anne Arundel!. The developer will complete some streetscape improvements as part of their converting Academy Yard into a functioning residential and commercial hub, but as Academy Yard borders only a small part of Telegraph Road, investment by the County is required to create uniform and consistent paths for bicyclists and pedestrians. With the addition of bicycle and pedestrian amenities connecting these new developments to the OTC, the County has an opportunity to connect previously developed areas of Odenton and encourage a safe walkable community where residents have alternatives to using their vehicle for crossing primary roadways.

Thank you for your consideration of these priority planning initiatives and capital funding requests. Together with these initiatives, we also encourage the County to help accelerate development projects across the Odenton community to realize expected near-term OTC goals. On behalf of OTCAC members, we look forward to continued collaboration with the County in line with the vision of the OTC Master Plan.

Please let us know if you need further information or have questions.

Sincerely,



Jason M. Schwier, Chair
Odenton Town Center Advisory Committee

CC: Sam Snead, Director Office of Transportation