



OdentonPatch

BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT

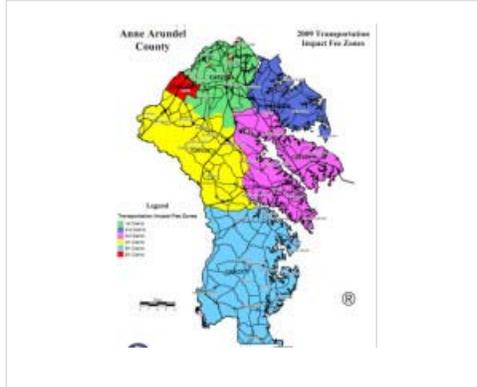
Odenton Should Have Its Own Impact Fee Zone, Leaders Say

Business leaders around Odenton want the money raised from real estate projects here to fund local transportation upgrades. They have written to the county requesting a smaller impact fee zone.

By [Tim Lemke](#) January 26, 2011

Local businesses and community leaders will ask the county to shrink the transportation impact fee zone around Odenton to ensure that money raised from new development in town goes back to road upgrades nearby.

The West Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce has crafted a letter to County Executive John Leopold, arguing that the [current zone](#)



(<http://www.aacounty.org/PlanZone/Resources/GISTransImpact.pdf>) is too large.

The group has requested a smaller zone that includes only the areas of Odenton and just outside Fort Meade. Currently, the zone stretches south to include Crofton and the northern tips of Davidsonville and Edgewater.

“We believe the current zone ... is too large and will not support your efforts to creatively underwrite critical transportation infrastructure in the Odenton Town Center and Fort Meade areas,” chamber officials wrote.

The letter is signed by Claire Louder, the president and CEO of the chamber, and Jay Winer, the President of AJ Properties and the chairman of the chamber’s economic development committee.

The West County Chamber has the support of the Odenton Now Coalition, an informal committee of business leaders and developers, many of whom pay impact fees.

The Odenton Town Center Plan Oversight Committee also voted unanimously Tuesday to craft its own separate letter to Leopold requesting a smaller zone.

Impact fee zones are designed to raise money for transportation upgrades in one area by charging developers every time they build in that zone. There are currently six zones in Anne Arundel County and most cover broad areas, though one zone encompasses only the area near the Arundel Mills Mall.

Area business leaders have been adamant that the Odenton and Fort Meade areas need road upgrades to accommodate the thousands of federal jobs being added to the Army base. More than a dozen real estate projects over more than 1,000 acres are planned in Odenton, with the potential to raise millions of dollars in impact fees. But under current zoning, those dollars would not necessarily go back to transportation upgrades nearby.

“By leveraging impact fees collected ... the major transportation projects critical to supporting the build-out of Town Center and the Fort Meade area can be added to the Capital Projects list and built in a timely fashion,” chamber officials wrote.

The desire for a smaller impact fee zone appears to have some county support. In comments to chamber members on Tuesday, District 4 Councilman Jamie Benoit said he would favor a smaller zone encompassing Odenton and Fort Meade, even though he generally prefers larger and fewer zones, or none at all.

“I’m supportive of the money from the Odenton Town Center being spent here,” he said. “I’m not a huge fan of increasing the number of impact fee districts, but the Odenton Town Center may be the notable exception for me, because that’s sort of a different kind of need than the rest of the county.”

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