

Bill Would Funnel Impact Fee Cash to Odenton

The county council could review a bill would give Odenton priority in collecting transportation impact fees from developers.

By Tim Lemke, February 6, 2012

The Anne Arundel County Council is set to consider a measure designed to funnel new money from development fees toward transportation upgrades in the Odenton Town Center.

The bill from County Executive John R. Leopold would give Odenton priority status when the county distributes funds from developer impact fees.

The bill could be introduced as soon as Monday, those with knowledge of the bill said.

Local business leaders and developers had originally called for Odenton to have its own impact fee zone, so as to ensure fees generated from development in Odenton would be spent on transportation upgrades in town.

But that idea was met with lukewarm response from county officials and council members, who said they were not fond of expanding the number of zones in the county. The new measure allows all money from the larger impact zone to be directed to Odenton.

Anne Arundel County is carved in six transportation impact fee zones. The one including Odenton stretches from Severn to the north, Millersville and Crownsville to the east, Laurel to the west and the area just above Davidsonville to the south.

In theory, the new measure would allow Odenton to benefit from fees stemming projects from a broader geographic area. But it would also give the county flexibility to direct money elsewhere if it saw fit.

““This bill is going to make sense, to the effect that we start providing infrastructure for projects without limiting [the] county in what it can do,”” said council member Jamie Benoit (D-District 4), who represents Odenton.

Benoit said he is not a co-sponsor of the bill but he supports it.

““I think the bill will accomplish everybody’s goal,”” he said.

Projections on how much money is collected from impact fees vary, but one estimate circulated within the development community indicates about \$38 million would be collected from 10 projects in Odenton that are underway or about to break ground.

Privately, some members of the development community said the bill may not be strong enough, because the county will ultimately still be able to direct money where it sees fit. But other business leaders said it could ultimately result in more money for Odenton.

““We were happy with the proposal,”” said Claire Louder, President and CEO of the West Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce. ““I think it’s a good solution to the ends we all wanted to meet.””

The new measure would also apply to town centers in Parole and Glen Burnie, which are in different impact fee zones than Odenton.

