



ANACOSTIA WATERSHED COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Anacostia River and its tributaries

September 26, 2018

Ms. Sadie Drescher
Chesapeake Bay Trust
60 West Street, Suite 405
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: M-NCPPC Department of Parks & Recreation 2019 Stormwater Stewardship Grant Application:
Track 1 Tree Planting Project**

Dear Ms. Drescher:

The Anacostia Watershed Community Advisory Committee (AWCAC) supports The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission Department of Parks and Recreation's application for funding through the Chesapeake Bay Trust's Prince George's County 2019 Stormwater Stewardship grant program.

AWCAC serves as the community arm of the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership, connecting the community with the Partnership to ensure that public interests are represented in all restoration and protection projects and activities. Members include steward groups working in tributaries of the Anacostia and non-profit organizations focused on water quality issues in the Anacostia Watershed.

Because many of the stream valleys in the watershed fall under M-NCPPC jurisdiction, the Department has been involved in restoration activities for many years. Parks and Recreation has developed a strong working relationship with AWCAC member groups, first supporting our efforts, but increasingly partnering and coordinating with us. Since the beginning of 2017, Stormwater Stewardship funding has boosted the Department's ability to support AWCAC's member groups by supplying trees for community plantings and by engaging volunteer groups in watershed cleanups, invasive removal projects, and other stewardship activities. As an outgrowth of these projects, Department staff are replacing conventional landscaping at Bladensburg Waterfront Park (where AWCAC meets) with native plant conservation landscaping, demonstrating how native plants can be used to enhance public landscapes which serve as a models for professional landscapers, municipalities and community members.

Remarkably, Department staff members leading these initiatives were able to engage internal staff from across the organization in training for the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional certification program. The impact of this engagement cannot be overstated. Sustained success of restoration projects relies on participation of knowledgeable staff from maintenance workers to managers. Through this training, the Department is developing a set of shared

goals and skills in caring for stormwater installations on park property. This culture of stewardship within an agency responsible for such critical tracts of land will positively impact water quality throughout the watershed.

The Department has collaborated with a diverse groups of stewards throughout the watershed. The projects planned for 2019 are focused largely on natural areas within or adjacent to Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI) communities in Prince George's County. The health of these communities is tied to the quality and availability of natural areas and recreational opportunities. The degradation of streams and woodlands in these urban areas has a disastrous impact on the health and security of these communities and on the quality of the Anacostia and its tributaries. The strong working relationship between AWCAC members and Parks and Planning staff magnifies the positive impacts of both groups, creating opportunities to engage diverse communities in stewardship of the Anacostia Watershed.

AWCAC endorses full funding of the Department's application to the 2019 Prince George's County Stormwater Stewardship grant program and looks forward to many successful efforts in the coming year.

Very sincerely,



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cc: Adam Ortiz, Chair AWRP Steering Committee
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