



Bonnie Harper
The Open Space Council for the St. Louis Region
P.O. Box 220011
St. Louis, MO 63122

February 9, 2022

Mr. Tom Ott
Director, St. Louis County Parks and Recreation
41 South Central
Clayton, MO 63105

Dear Mr. Ott,

The Open Space Council for the St. Louis Region (OSC) is a local non-profit organization that works independently and collaboratively to conserve and sustain land, water and other natural resources throughout the St. Louis Region. We have over a 50 year history of working to create and protect parks, including St. Louis County managed parks and open spaces. We are writing to inform you that OSC is supportive of Proposition D that would authorize St. Louis County to enter into a lease agreement with Raintree Foundation for the Jarville House complex and surrounding ground located in Queeny Park for the operation of a pre-primary and primary grade school.

The Open Space Council recognizes how important St. Louis County Parks are for residents by providing important assets such as historical, cultural and recreational opportunities and natural resources for our communities to thrive. It is important for the use and management of County Parks to align with these assets. It is also essential that the historical and natural assets of our parks are properly maintained and that there is adequate funding for this to happen. OSC supports Proposition D because allowing the Raintree Foundation to occupy this historical building and a small portion of Queeny Park will result in an overall benefit for the park and the community. The Raintree Foundation shows a demonstrated commitment to stewarding the natural environment and fit to be a responsible tenant of a historical building. The public will have access to even greater facilities and resources at the Jarville House complex and St. Louis County will have a reliant funding stream for ongoing maintenance - a win-win for public access and historical preservation.

We are hopeful that this lease agreement could lead to new potential partnerships between OSC, St. Louis County Parks and the Raintree Foundation to increase environmental stewardship in Queeny Park. We are also hopeful that the reduced financial burden on St. Louis County for maintaining the Jarville House complex can result in additional funding towards other needs such as natural resource management across the County park system.

The Open Space Council will encourage our members to vote **yes** on Proposition D during the April 5, 2022 General Municipal Election. We look forward to our continued partnership with St. Louis County Parks to create, maintain and steward our wonderful County parks.

Best regards,

Bonnie Harper
Executive Director

Scott Emmelkamp
President, OSC Board of Directors

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