Resolution No. 1-10 RESOLUTION: To strongly request that Montgomery County Fully Takes into Account and Mitigates the Impact on Surrounding Communities, including the City of Rockville, of the Gaithersburg West Master Plan

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Council is currently reviewing the Montgomery County Planning Board Draft of the Gaithersburg West Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Gaithersburg West planning area is immediately adjacent to the Cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of Rockville is elected to represent the citizens of Rockville on matters related to development and quality of life, and have the responsibility to relay the many concerns being heard from citizens; and

WHEREAS, the draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan envisions a Life Sciences Center and recommends zoning to accommodate for a very large amount of new office, residential and retail development, representing a significant increase over what is permitted under the plan currently in force; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of Rockville support the goals of the Life Sciences Center to leverage the County's comparative advantages in biosciences as long as the negative impacts of increased development can be mitigated; and

WHEREAS, no analysis has been presented that connects the large amount of development proposed with the goals and visions of the Life Sciences Center; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of this large amount of new office, residential and retail uses will extend far beyond the planning area, and includes Rockville and Gaithersburg; and

WHEREAS, this large amount of new development could have detrimental impacts on the quality of life in existing nearby communities, including Rockville and Gaithersburg; and

WHEREAS, the analysis that supports the Planning Board Draft recommendations is artificially truncated at or near the boundaries of the planning area and does not incorporate the broader impacts on surrounding communities, including Rockville and Gaithersburg; and

WHEREAS, the assumptions that underlie the transportation, economic and fiscal analysis are not sufficiently realistic to provide confidence in the projections that they support; and

WHEREAS, key transportation corridors for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan, including roads and the proposed Corridor Cities Transitway, pass directly through the City of Rockville; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rockville lies between the Gaithersburg West planning area and three Metro Stations; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Council have significant concerns about the ability of an already over-burdened Metro system to absorb the amount of growth projected in this and nearby planning areas; and

WHEREAS, traffic projections from Plan-generated growth, as conducted by County Planning staff, show key Rockville intersections to be failing based on Rockville's standards; and

WHEREAS, many key intersections and corridors that will be heavily impacted by the plan have not been studied as part of the analysis; and

WHEREAS, the Draft Plan recommends no mitigation of impacts on many key intersections and corridors in Rockville that will be affected by Plan implementation; and

WHEREAS, there is no assurance that the Corridor Cities Transitway will be funded and built during the planning horizon of this Draft Plan; and

WHEREAS, this large amount of new proposed development will create enormous new demand for open space, recreational services, schools, and other public services;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that:

- The City of Rockville cannot support the Planning Board Draft in its current form and recommends that the Montgomery County Council refer it back to the Montgomery County Planning Board to resolve the issues outlined in this Resolution and in that of the City of Gaithersburg.

Before the Montgomery County Council approves the Gaithersburg West Master Plan, the following items should be addressed:

- There must be a large reduction in the amount of development that would be permitted in the Gaithersburg West planning area, as compared to what is proposed in the Planning Board Draft. The Draft Plan envisions more development than is consistent with preserving the quality of life of existing communities and provides no compelling justification for why this level of development is needed to support the vision of the Life Sciences Center. The infrastructure investments recommended as necessary for this plan will cost an extraordinary amount of money, which would be

borne by Montgomery County and Maryland taxpayers. Even at that high cost, negative impacts are not sufficiently mitigated either inside of or beyond the boundaries of the planning area.

- The Planning Board Draft does not provide a vision that includes the amenities sufficient to service the new community that is being proposed for the Gaithersburg West planning area. All public services and amenities should be planned and programmed to serve the new residents, as well as existing communities, and to minimize the impacts on surrounding communities such as the Cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg.
- There must be robust Staging Requirements that anticipate service needs in time for new development to be completed, in order to avoid a long-term state of congestion and insufficient public services. Staging should include, at minimum, transportation, schools, open space, and recreational amenities. Development should not be permitted unless sufficient infrastructure and services will be provided. Staging should also be applied to residential development, as is not currently the case in the Planning Board Draft. Furthermore, a mechanism should be developed to continuously monitor development progress and the related impacts in the area to ensure that the Staging Requirements are met and/or to make adjustments to those requirements. Surrounding communities, including Rockville and Gaithersburg, should be part of that monitoring.

Transportation is a crucial component of any plan for Gaithersburg West, and the plan must be strengthened in the following ways:

- The plan needs to be far more aggressive in its approach to making an environment that is conducive to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit; and that environment needs to connect with the surrounding communities. Despite the inclusion of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) as a central feature of the plan, the plan is fundamentally automobile-dependent, with the Plan-stated projection of *at least* 70% of all trips being in automobiles.
- Traffic studies must be revised to include the traffic impact on all affected arterials within Rockville, Gaithersburg and surrounding communities. For all intersections within Rockville, the analysis must follow Rockville's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) and use Rockville's Critical Lane Volume (CLV) standard, which at many intersections is lower than the 1600 CLV that has been used in the analysis to date. Using Rockville's standard will show that the projected growth will make certain intersections exceed capacity and need mitigation. Rockville's specific requests regarding the Transportation Analysis include the following:
    - Analyze the traffic impact on I-270.
    - Analyze the traffic impact on arterials in terms of road Levels of Service and/or Delays. The arterials include MD 28 (Key West Avenue, W. Montgomery Avenue and E. Jefferson Street) between Shady Grove Road and MD 355; Gude Drive; and Darnestown Road. Figure 25 in the Plan Appendix 7: Transportation Analysis, shows a potential traffic increase of approximately 50% with the "High Scenario" conditions on W. Gude Drive and W. Montgomery Avenue, without much detail on how this significant increase in volume would be managed.

- Analyze the traffic impact on Wootton Parkway and Watts Branch Parkway. The current traffic on Watts Branch during the AM peak period has already reached the threshold level identified in the City's Guidelines for Neighborhood Traffic Management.
- A detailed analysis should be conducted regarding impacts on the adjacent community of Fallsgrove in general, and more specifically on Blackwell Road, Fallsgrove Boulevard. and Fallsgrove Drive.
- Analyze the traffic impacts on the I-270 ramps at MD 28, Shady Grove Road, and at the Falls Road interchange.
- Analyze the traffic impacts on the intersection of MD 28 (W. Montgomery Ave) at Darnestown Road.
- Perform the analysis for intersections and roads within the City of Rockville under two scenarios: with an added interchange at I-270 and W. Gude Drive, and without it.

➢ The plan must include traffic mitigation strategies in surrounding communities, including Rockville, where Gaithersburg West development is expected to create or exacerbate problems. Specifically, once the traffic studies are completed, a thorough analysis should be undertaken and recommendations should be made for infrastructure improvements necessary to mitigate the additional traffic in Rockville that exceeds Rockville's standards. Any such infrastructure improvements should be included in the Staging Requirements.

➢ If it is not possible to keep traffic at a level where it is in conformance with Rockville's standards, or if the recommended mitigation is not consistent with

maintaining a high quality of life within the planning area and in the surrounding communities (including Rockville), development densities should be adjusted so as to meet those standards.

- Should the State of Maryland reject the Plan's recommended alignment of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), or decide not to fund the project, the Plan should consider alternative phasing and/or amount of development.

- The Plan should include appropriate provisions for open space and parklands, to service the new residents and employees of the planning area, as well as existing communities; but also to lessen the impacts on the adjacent system of parks and open spaces in the City of Rockville. Specific provisions are as follows:
  - Developers should be required to meet at least minimal standards for provision of public open space or publicly accessible open space. The National Recreation and Park Association standard of 12 acres per 1,000 residents would be an appropriate goal.
  - Parkland should contain approximately 50 percent of "developable" land for recreational amenities.
  - Connectivity to Rockville greenways and other parklands should be established in the plan
  - It is recommended that public parkland should be dedicated to the MNCPPC to ensure continued access and maintenance.

- The plan should not compromise the County's standards and goals with respect to affordable housing, and should include full implementation of the Moderate Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program; and

- Montgomery County Councilmembers, staff, developers and institutions should be required to coordinate continuously with the Cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg throughout the decision process, during implementation of the plan (if it is adopted), and in monitoring the impacts. The City of Rockville stands ready to participate.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Mayor and Council at its meeting of March 9, 2010.

Claire F. Funkhouser, CMC, City Clerk