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**CORRIDOR FORWARD: The I-270 Transit Plan Public Hearing Draft
PUBLIC HEARING – Montgomery County Council
February 15, 2022**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the working draft of the Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan. The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce has engaged in the public process and is very interested in increasing transportation capacity in the I-270 corridor. We also want to thank planning staff for their efforts in involving the community throughout the various stages of the draft plan.

Overall we are encouraged by the number of options provided in the transit network, understanding that some of the projects will take significantly longer to implement than others

We would like to comment on the following aspects:

1. Red Line Metro to Germantown – We understand that this is a long-term transit option and agree that the option of adding metro to Germantown would greatly increase transportation capacity. We fully support future study. This should not be instead of expansion of MARC Rail.
2. Corridor Connectors – The “corridor connectors” provide significant transit options in the corridor as they tie into existing transit options including the proposed Great Seneca Transit Network. However, eliminating the original Corridor Cities Transitway project eliminates a critical north-south transit connection between Gaithersburg / Germantown / Clarksburg. The proposed alternative to the original CCT route is not ideal. It takes a high-quality BRT route with dedicated roadways and splits it in half with portions running in mixed traffic. Although the project will provide a “one-seat” ride from the life science center to residential hubs of Germantown and Clarksburg, it is no longer rapid. Using the proposed 355 BRT route on the East side of I-270 does not take the place of the CCT. The Chamber has been a steady advocate for the Corridor Cities Transitway for the past fifteen years. A significant amount of time and money has already been spent on this transit project. The right-of-way exists to move this project forward.
3. Repurposing Lanes – We question the suggestion that existing general-purpose travel lanes could be repurposed solely for transit. As staunch advocates of the CCT, we wholeheartedly agree that BRT is most effective with designated travel lanes. We also know that it will be extremely difficult to repurpose auto lanes to make that happen. We understand that future traffic studies will determine whether repurposing lanes is feasible. Anecdotally, anyone who drives these roads on a daily basis will tell you it is impossible. The BRT options included in the

plan need to assume construction of designated travel lanes and not be conditional on repurposed lanes.

Thank you for your consideration.

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