



LAWRENCEVILLE UNITED

A Resident Driven Organization

February 9, 2016

Public Comment from Lawrenceville United on the Riverfront Interim Planning Overlay District

Lauren Connelly, Executive Director of Lawrenceville United

Lawrenceville United (LU), located at 4839 Butler Street) is a non-profit, resident-driven, community-based organization that works to protect and improve the quality of life of all Lawrenceville residents and stakeholders through community engagement and advocacy, community restoration and beautification, and community planning and development. I am here today on behalf of our organization in support of the proposed IPOD.

Lawrenceville is currently experiencing an incredible revival. Investors and developers are approaching Lawrenceville with proposed projects and plans, and houses are selling and renting faster than ever and at prices that exceed any plans that we had for the market. Lawrenceville United works closely with residents, business owners, developers, and the Lawrenceville Corporation to steward responsible growth and development. We work to make sure that new projects align with community-driven plans that have been created, including the Green Boulevard and Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plans- which specifically address our Allegheny riverfront. We work to ensure that new development and redevelopment demonstrates the values of our plans: preserving authenticity of place, creating strong connections with our riverfront, ensuring we have housing for all, activating more open space and green space as a public amenity, addressing stormwater management issues and celebrating high standards of design that embrace the past but also celebrate all of the exciting things that are leading us into the future. We believe that the IPOD is a tool that can help us and the City responsible steward this somewhat overwhelming growth.

We appreciate the efforts of the Planning Department and the City to draft the IPOD, and their work in creating a draft that is a great first step to ensuring that new development is respectful of and responsive to our neighborhood fabric and to our community visions and plans. We acknowledge that this is a first step in achieving long-term goals, and look forward to robust community conversations and process over the next 18 months to ensure that long-term objectives and goals for the riverfronts reflect the priorities of all community stakeholders. Given the rate at which development is occurring in our community, we needed updated zoning years ago, but appreciate that it is happening now – and will need the IPOD in place for the next 18 months, and permanent zoning that will hopefully address use, height, public space, greening, and more.