

## STATEMENT OF HARDSHIP

Children's Hospital is one of the largest and most sophisticated health care centers in the country. Annually, the hospital has more than 300,000 in-patient visits, while the out-patient activity has increased from 241,000 visits to over 336,000 since 2002. Further, Children's Hospital is certified by the American College of Surgeons as a Level I Trauma Center, the first pediatric provider in Ohio. As such, Children's Hospital has one of the busiest pediatric emergency departments in the country, with more than 70,000 visits per year. The main campus houses more than just the Hospital, it is also home to Children's Hospital Research Institute, Children's Hospital Institute for Pediatric Education, Children's Foundation, Children's Orthopedic and Surgery Centers, and soon Children's Center for Child & Family Advocacy (which will be open for business by year's end). A staff of more than 700 practitioners and more than 3,600 employees are required to offer all the services the Children's Hospital corporate family provides.

Because Children's Hospital is such a preeminent medical facility, expansion is often required to meet the community's demand and to allow the Hospital to continue to be a leader in its field, offering the latest, most innovative treatment and services. In fact, Children's has embarked on a 160,000 square foot clinical expansion, along with the construction of a new Ronald McDonald House. As both the facilities and the prestige of Children's Hospital continue to grow, so does the demand for parking by those wishing to take advantage of the Hospital's services. Additional parking is necessary to accommodate construction workers without imposing on on-street parking in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Three years ago, City Council granted a variance for temporary parking at the corner of 18<sup>th</sup> and Fulton Streets to provide substitute parking while the Hospital constructed a new parking garage. At that time, it could not be anticipated that the new parking garage would not adequately satisfy all the parking demands placed on Children's Hospital. Thus, Children's Hospital continues to need the parking spaces located in the lots at 18<sup>th</sup> and Fulton Streets and is applying to obtain the same variance for another two years to accommodate the continuing construction on the main campus.

After the variance was granted in 2001, the subject property was developed with three gravel-surfaced parking lots, as shown on the site plan, to provide a total of 110-120 parking spaces. A wood screening fence 5 feet high was installed along the property lines that are adjacent to or across alleys from residential uses, while the remainder of the perimeters were fenced with chain link fence 5 feet high with security gates at the entrances. The landscaping, reflected on the site plan, was also installed along the frontages of the properties. Further, these parking lots are lit with cut-off fixtures (downlighting) that do not exceed 16 feet in height and are shielded to prevent glare from the lights being cast off the property.

It is anticipated that these parking lots will continue to be used only by Hospital employees working the day shift and construction workers. Accordingly, it is also

anticipated that the parking lots will continue to be operated only from 6:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m., with most of the parkers arriving between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. and leaving between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Further, to assure that Hospital employees use the parking lots rather than the residential streets around the Hospital, Children's Hospital will continue to provide a shuttle bus service between the parking lots and the Hospital.

To continue to provide the parking lots and shuttle service on the subject property, the following variances will be required:

- (1) Variance from Section 3333.03, Columbus City Codes, to permit a parking lot in an AR-3, Apartment Residential district which is not ancillary to a permitted building or use on the same parcel;
- (2) Variance from Section 3342.24, Columbus City Codes, to permit a gravel-surfaced parking lot;
- (3) Variance from Section 3342.18, Columbus City Codes, to reduce the parking and maneuvering setback from 25 feet to 10 feet along Fulton Street and 18<sup>th</sup> Street;
- (4) Variance from Section 3342.11, Columbus City Codes, to eliminate the requirement for trees and tree islands within the parking lots;
- (5) Variance from Section 3342.19, Columbus City Codes, to reduce the widths of 20 parking spaces from 9 feet to 8 feet;
- (6) Variance from Section 3342.06, Columbus City Codes, to reduce the required width of one-way aisles from 20 feet to 15 feet;
- (7) Variance from Section 3342.08, Columbus City Codes, to reduce the required width of the driveway from 18<sup>th</sup> Street from 20 feet to 18 feet;
- (8) Variance from Section 3333.27, Columbus City Codes, to allow chain link fences to extend partially into the 30' vision triangle at the northeast and northwest corners of the intersection of 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Fulton Street; and
- (9) Variance from Section 3342.17, Columbus City Codes, to permit 1 ½ inch gaps between the boards in the wood screening fences which would reduce the opacity of the fences to less than 75%.

The Applicant requests that the variances be conditioned on the following:

- (a) Continued maintenance of the fences and security gates as shown on the site plan;
- (b) Continued maintenance of the landscaping along the 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Fulton Street and Engler Street frontages;

- (c) Continued maintenance of all parking lot lighting, which consists of cut-off fixtures (downlighting) on poles not exceeding 16 feet in height and shielded to prevent glare from being cast off of the property onto neighboring residential properties;
- (d) The parking lots will be operated only during the hours of 6:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m.;
- (e) The parking lots will be maintained in accordance with the standards of Section 3390.041, Columbus City Codes (temporary parking lots); and
- (f) The variances will expire two years after the ordinance granting them becomes effective.

As demonstrated by the foregoing, the re-granting of the variances will alleviate hardships and unusual and practical difficulties. It should be noted that the variances will not adversely affect the surrounding properties and neighborhoods, but benefit them. The Hospital has made an extensive investment in the property, particularly in regards to landscaping, lighting, and security. Indeed, the Hospital's security patrols the area, thus enhancing the safety of those who reside in the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as those utilizing the parking lots. Further, if the variance request is granted, it will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent properties, will not unreasonably increase the congestion of public streets, increase the danger of fires, endanger the public safety or unreasonably diminish or impair the public health, safety, comfort, morals or welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Columbus.