

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHILDREN'S GROWTH

Friends of Children's Hospital Responds to the Laurelhurst Community Club's Claims About Children's Hospital's Plans for Growth

LCC Claim: Are you ready to settle for: **A hospital complex nearly 2.5 times larger than the current one.** The proposed *increase* of 1.5 million square feet added to the existing 900,000 square feet results in 2.4 million square feet in a primarily single-family, residential neighborhood that is not a designated urban village. Children's major institution boundary would expand from about 22 acres to 30 acres.

Fact: **Children's Hospital is at capacity.** The alternative of not expanding is that the hospital will be forced to turn away sick children simply because there are not enough beds. Children's is a 100-year old asset in our region and must grow if it is to continue to meet the growing need for specialized pediatric care.

Children's has worked to contain its growth in a designated area by pursuing the purchase of Laurelon Terrace, which allows for the expansion to move closer to Sand Point Way and away from neighborhood streets.

LCC Claim: Are you ready to settle for: **Towering buildings at 160 feet.** The proposed multiple structures are 55 feet taller than those allowed on any other major institution campus outside of an urban village. Other such institutions are limited to a maximum height of 105 feet on portions of their campuses. Imagine these dominating towers...should they determine the character, views, and even future zoning decisions of our neighborhood?

Fact: The Citizens Advisory Committee, which includes community members and Children's Hospital have worked tirelessly to develop an alternative that lowers the proposed height from 240 feet to 160 feet and takes advantage of the property's slope to maintain the existing view plane. This alternative helps preserve the character of the neighborhood, maintains existing view lines, improves pedestrian and bicycle safety, and keeps much of the construction away from the existing hospital, thereby limiting the construction's impact on patients and families.

LCC Claim: Are you ready to settle for: **Traffic congestion.** A doubling of on-campus parking to about 3,100 spaces and the addition of 350 patient beds (for a total of 600 beds) will, according to the EIS, double the number of daily vehicle trips generated by Children's. Imagine the additional vehicles along the already clogged NE 45th St. and Sand Point Way corridors.

Fact: **Commute reduction methods will expand as hospital grows**
The LCC letter makes it seem as though Children's is making traffic worse and doing nothing about it. That is not the case. The hospital already spends millions of dollars a year on its award-winning traffic management plans and will continue to do so.

The traffic numbers LCC cites (hospital growth will double the number of daily vehicle trips) are misleading because they do not consider the efforts Children's is making to reduce vehicle trips and parking needs. In addition, Alternative 7 eliminates the need for entrances and exits onto neighborhood streets, focusing traffic flow on Sand Point Way. The hospital's traffic management plan will continue reduce new vehicle trips through a number of creative solutions.

In addition, the hospital is widely recognized for its current traffic management efforts, which will be expanded with the hospital's growth. For example, more than 65% of hospital employees currently use bikes, vanpools, buses, carpools, rideshare programs or other means to get to the hospital. It has been recently highlighted by the *Seattle PI*, KING 5 the *Puget Sound Business Journal* and others as one of the most progressive companies in the region when it comes to traffic concerns.

LCC Claim: Are you ready to settle for: **Elimination of 230 housing units for neighborhood families.** 136 Laurelon Terrace garden condominiums would be demolished, and 100 potential units on the multi-family zoned Hartmann site (which Children's would redevelop as offices and medical services) would never be built, severely reducing the affordability and diversity of housing in our neighborhood.

Fact: **HOUSING REPLACED – NOT LOST.**
The only way for the hospital to meet the neighborhood's desire to preserve views and lower densities is through the possible purchase of the nearly seven acre Laurelon Terrace property, which is contiguous to Children's Laurelhurst campus. **This opportunity came about when the board of Laurelon Terrace approached the hospital about purchasing the entire property.** The timing was fortuitous, and the CAC was able to develop Alternative 7 to incorporate development on this property in the near-term. The Laurelon Terrace board will vote to approve this sale later this summer. If the sale is approved, each owner will be compensated more than double market value.

It is inaccurate to say that there will be a loss of housing in the neighborhood as Children's will be contributing to the development of 136 new housing units in northeast Seattle.

This is more than a fair effort to replace housing that was sold voluntarily by the owners and is considered a true win for the community, hospital and Laurelon Terrace owners.

LCC Claim: Are you ready to settle for: **The future possibility of even more development and upzones.** In addition to owning and proposing redevelopment of the Hartmann property and Laurelon Terrace (of which Children's now owns at least 43 of the 136 units), the hospital has a partnership interest in the Springbrook properties. In the past year, it has also acquired at least 9 of the 30 single-family homes on the streets that surround the current campus (not including the 5 homes on NE 45th St. associated with Talaris). Will Children's use these properties for more expansion and upzones, and does it plan to buy even more?

Fact: **It is absolutely not true** that Children's purchase of homes on the south and east campus perimeters is a precursor to additional development. **Expanding the campus into the neighborhood to the east or south is not part of the proposed master plan.**

Children's has purchased several single-family homes directly on the east and south perimeters of the hospital campus. Children's Board of Trustees approved these purchases for two reasons: 1) to provide an option for homeowners who wished to sell in order to avoid potential impacts from current development and 2) to have some homes to lease to Children's faculty and staff.

At this point in time, Children's has decided not to purchase additional homes on the hospital's perimeter along 44th, 45th and 50th to the east and south.