



**KNOXVILLE/KNOX COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF KNOXVILLE CLOSURE OF PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY**

▶ **FILE #:** 8-C-08-SC

AGENDA ITEM #: 10

AGENDA DATE: 8/14/2008

▶ **APPLICANT:** FORT SANDERS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

TAX ID NUMBER: 94 N K 004,019
JURISDICTION: Council District 1
SECTOR PLAN: Central City
GROWTH POLICY PLAN: Urban Growth Area (Inside City Limits)
ZONING: O-1 (Office, Medical, and Related Services)
WATERSHED: Third Creek

▶ **RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BE CLOSED:** Nineteenth St.

▶ **LOCATION:** Between Clinch Avenue and Laurel Avenue

IS STREET:
(1) IN USE?: Yes
(2) IMPROVED (paved)?: Yes

▶ **APPLICANT'S REASON FOR CLOSURE:** To enhance the public safety of pedestrians and vehicles at the Hospital Emergency entrance, and to be able to provide a connection between proposed building expansion and the present hospital facility.

DEPARTMENT-UTILITY REPORTS: No objections received as of 7/25/08: subject to any required easements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

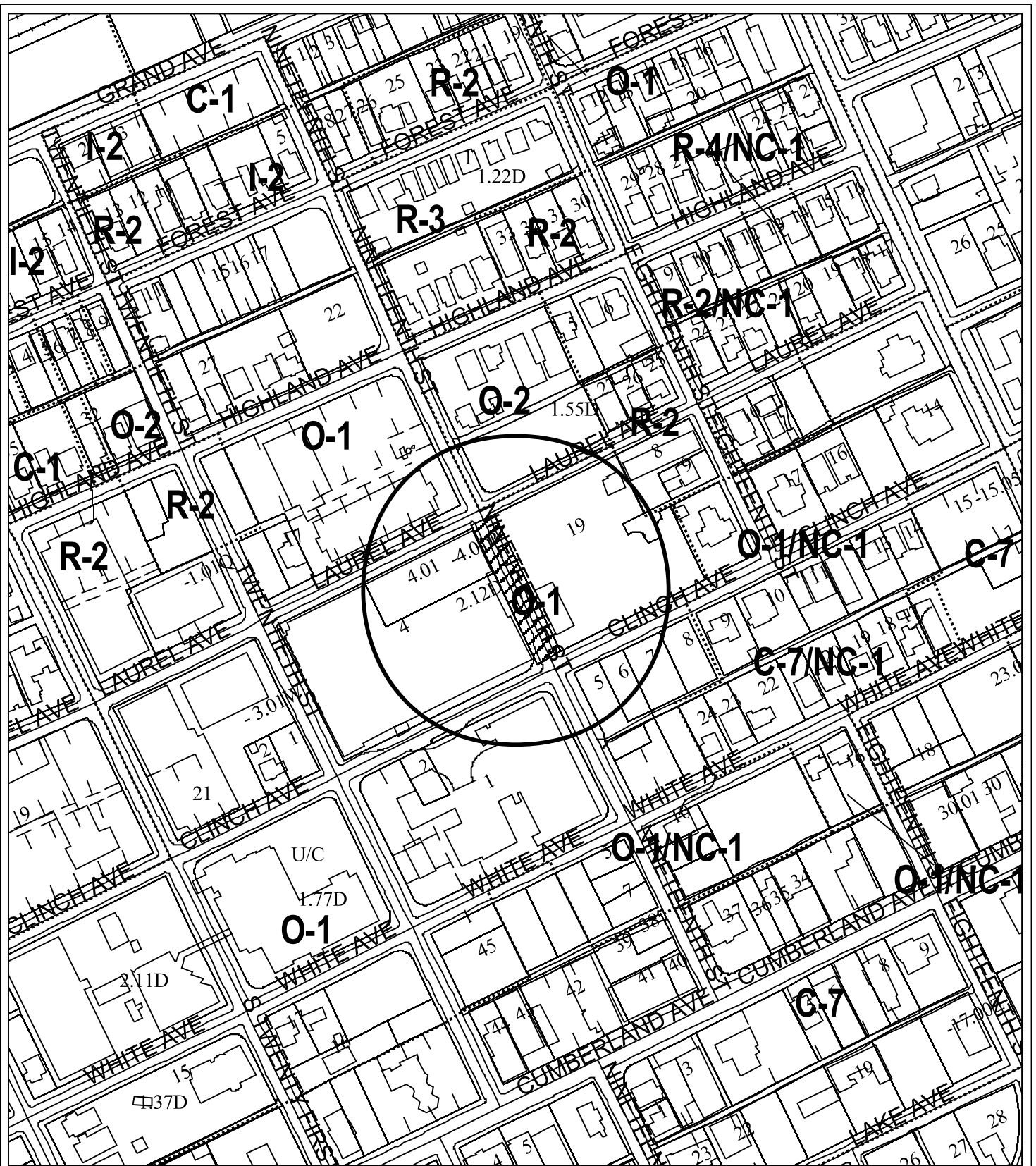
▶ **APPROVE the closure, subject to any required easements or relocation of utilities by applicant as required.**

This closure is needed to allow this regional medical facility to construct additional facilities to allow them to continue meeting the medical needs of this community and the region. The closure will also allow the existing and proposed structures of the facility to operate in a safe manner and comply with the federal handicapped accessibility requirements.

COMMENTS:

The applicant was requested and did provide a traffic impact analysis for this closure which showed the existing street network will continue to function in a satisfactory manner with this closure. (See attachments from the applicant as well as from the MPC staff.)

If approved, this item will be forwarded to Knoxville City Council for action on 9/9/2008 and 6/23/2008. If denied, MPC's action is final, unless the action to deny is appealed to Knoxville City Council. The date of the appeal hearing will depend on when the appeal application is filed. Appellants have 15 days to appeal an MPC decision in the City.



**8-C-08-SC
CLOSURE OF PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY**

Name of Street or Alley: Nineteenth St
 To be closed from: Clinch Avenue
 To be closed to : Laurel Avenue

Original Print Date: 07/21/08 Revised:
 Metropolitan Planning Commission * City / County Building * Knoxville, TN 37902

Petitioner: Fort Sanders
 Regional Medical Center
 Map No: 94
 Jurisdiction: City





To: Mark Donaldson, MPC Executive Director
From: Nathan Benditz, Transportation Engineer
Amy Brooks, Transportation Planner
Date: August 8, 2008
Re: 19th Street Road Closure

Based upon the analysis of Wilbur Smith Associates and the application of a Neighborhood Connectivity Index, the impacts on the existing Fort Sanders neighborhood of closing 19th Street between Laurel Avenue and Clinch Avenue will be negligible.

Traffic Demand and LOS

Of the failing intersections within the study area, all of the intersections would be in a failing condition due to the background traffic alone, and would only be failing on the side street of the intersection and not the main roadway. The traffic study finds that all internal intersections to the periphery of 17th Street, Cumberland Avenue, Grand Avenue, and 22nd Street will operate at a level of service (LOS) of “C” or better. A select few intersections will experience a lower LOS coming from the internal network to these periphery roadways due to the higher traffic demand of the periphery roadways, but the overall LOS of the whole intersection will still be at an acceptable level. From the analysis performed and the traffic counts collected, it appears that the streets within the Fort Sanders community will be able to accommodate the additional traffic demand.

Neighborhood Connectivity

Connectivity refers to the directness of links and density of connections in a neighborhood network. A well connected neighborhood network has many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal dead-ends (cul-de-sacs). As connectivity increases, travel distances decrease and route options increase, allowing more direct travel between destinations¹. Staff applied a Roadway Connectivity Index to analyze the impact closing 19th Street would have on the

¹ Reid Ewing (1996), *Best Development Practices; Doing the Right Thing and Making Money at the Same Time*, Planners Press (www.planning.org), 1996.

connectivity of the Fort Sander's neighborhood. The Index was developed by Reid Ewing, Fellow of the Urban Land Institute and former, Director of the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University.

Staff applied the Connectivity Index to a portion of the Fort Sander's neighborhood from the railroad tracks to the west, Grand Avenue to the north, 17th Street to the east and Cumberland Avenue to the south. The connectivity within this area was 1.69 on the Connectivity Index. The Index is calculated as the ratio of the number of street links (road sections between intersections) in the neighborhood's street layout divided by the number of street nodes (intersections and cul-de-sac heads). The 19th Street closure would result in a 1.67 on the index. An index of 1.4 is identified as the minimum score necessary for a walkable community².

² Todd **Litman** (2005), *Roadway Connectivity: Creating More Connected Roadway and Pathway Networks*, TDM Encyclopedia, Victoria Transport Policy Institute (www.vtpi.org/tca).

Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center
Request for Closure of 19th Street between Clinch Ave and Laurel Ave.

8-C-08-SC

Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center is requesting the closure of 19th Street between Clinch Ave and Laurel Ave based on the following reasons:

1. To improve vehicular safety at the Emergency Department (ED) entrance. Currently, ambulances must block through traffic in order to back up to the patient loading area.
2. To improve pedestrian safety and to provide an ADA compliant route between the ED parking and the ED entrance – all of which currently crosses 19th Street.
3. To provide in-patient and out-patient connectivity between the new Medical Office Building (MOB) and the existing hospital.
4. To provide an improved ADA compliant entry to the entire hospital. The proposed MOB will create a new ‘front door’ to the hospital that will replace the current entrance to the hospital which is on a steep gradient section of Clinch.
5. To provide an opportunity for the expansion of a regional medical facility in the heart of Knoxville that provides service to a broad constituency in the Greater Knoxville area.
6. The closure of 19th Street as shown by two studies prepared by Wilbur Smith Associates will have little impact the Fort Sanders Neighborhood street system.