

Axel & Associates, Inc.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

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AUG 26 2015

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

August 24, 2015

Ms. Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson
Springfield, Illinois 62761

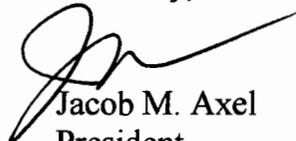
RE: MercyRockford Health System
Projects 15-038, 15-039, and 15-040

Dear Ms. Avery:

Please post the enclosed letter as a letter of support for the three above-referenced projects.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jacob M. Axel
President

enclosure



Lawrence J. Morrissey
Mayor
Office of the Mayor

August 11, 2015

Ms. Courtney Avery
Administrator
525 West Jefferson
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Ms. Avery:

This letter is submitted in support of MercyRockford's applications to your agency.

As Mayor of the City of Rockford since 2005, I am directly involved in the operations and oversight of the City's Fire Department EMS system. I work closely with our local medical systems. I am also involved in assessing the current and future health care needs of our community. Our community's medical systems support our quality of life and core economic activity. Consequently, I have been engaged with MercyRockford about their recent merger of Mercy Alliance, Inc. and Rockford Health System. I believe that this merger can bring economic vitality and opportunity while improving the quality of care to the residents of my community.

I am optimistic that the specific projects before you, including the construction of a new East Side Rockford Campus, can help achieve these important goals. The City of Rockford is committed to working with MercyRockford on the implementation of these projects to ensure that the long-standing commitment of MercyRockford to the residents of the west side of Rockford is fulfilled, while seeking to expand access to critical services through the development of its East Side Riverside/I-90 campus.

Ensuring Quality Care to Rockford's West Side Residents

Of critical importance to me is to ensure that the entire Rockford community, particularly those sections of our community that are the most vulnerable as it relates to poverty and poor health outcomes, receive equal and quality access to healthcare. MercyRockford has assured me that they will continue to provide vital healthcare services to Rockford's west side through its commitment to the Rockton Avenue campus. Specifically, MercyRockford will continue to operate 94 inpatient beds, an emergency department, a surgical suite, and a wide range of inpatient and outpatient support services at its Rockton Avenue campus on the west side.

Although part of the MercyRockford plan includes the closure of a large medical building on the Rockton Avenue Campus, MercyRockford has committed to work with the City of Rockford and our economic development partners to create a binding operating partnership for that building that will help us grow new high-quality jobs for our community. In fact, we believe that this generous partnership can result in a significant opportunity to market that building as a hub for technology and healthcare-related jobs anchored by the significant broadband fiber optic backbone integrated into the Rockton Avenue Campus.

Expanding Care & Specialty Pediatric Services through the New Campus

MercyRockford's plans to add pediatric specialty care services at its Riverside/I-90 campus in addition to emergency and adult hospital beds will also greatly improve healthcare access for the entire Rockford community. Currently, many of these critical services for our citizens must be accessed by traveling long distances to Chicago or State of Wisconsin medical facilities. We



Lawrence J. Morrissey
Mayor
Office of the Mayor

have a great opportunity to expand those services so that we will capture additional revenue and jobs for Illinois and avoid outmigration of those services outside the State of Illinois.

The City of Rockford will also be working with MercyRockford through our discussions regarding a final Annexation Agreement to ensure that the roadways and public infrastructure for the East Side Campus meets the needs of our community in a manner that is financially responsible and respectful to the taxpayers of our community. The City of Rockford Fire Department is the largest provider of EMS ambulance services for our community, and we are working with MercyRockford to ensure that we can meet basic EMS and Level 1 trauma needs under the proposed MercyRockford service configuration. While there are several details that need to be worked out to our mutual satisfaction, the citizens of our community will retain important controls over those elements through the binding Annexation Agreement and Development Agreement we will execute prior to the commencement of construction.

Supporting the Healthy Rockford Initiative

The City of Rockford is committed to the long-term health and wellness needs of our community. Our Police and Fire Department first responders are vital partners in these efforts. We are also committed to grow our efforts to integrate mobile health and community paramedic health to more closely integrate our work with our local hospital systems and community healthcare providers. The City of Rockford is working with partners like the University of Illinois College of Medicine, local healthcare providers, and employers to create a coordinated long-term, data-driven community health project known currently as the *Healthy Rockford Initiative*. I am excited that MercyRockford is committed to partnering with us to support this effort to help us drive better health and prosperity for our entire community.

I was born and raised in Rockford. My parents live in the northeast side of the City in the 4th Ward where the new campus will be built. I currently live with my wife and four children in the northwest side of the City, which has been historically anchored by the Rockton Campus. Our vision for the City of Rockford is *Excellence Everywhere for Everyone*. To that end, I support MercyRockford's proposed projects for both the immediate and long-term positive economic impact and the expanded healthcare services that they will provide. I trust the historic commitment that the MercyRockford partnership brings to our community and the development tools that will bind that commitment with us in a manner that will help ensure balanced growth and mutual prosperity for all parts of our community.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "LJM", enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval.

Lawrence J. Morrissey
Mayor, City of Rockford, Illinois

LJM/ss