



Medical Services Uses in Industrial Zones

**Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)
Director's Report and Recommendation
October 2023**

Overview

In July of 2023 the City updated its industrial zones to implement the Industrial and Maritime Strategy. One feature of the new Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 23.50A industrial zones is stricter maximum size of use limits for non-industrial uses. Evergreen Treatment Services was established in 2017 on Airport Way South in the Duwamish Manufacturing Industrial Center and may in the future seek to construct a larger facility. However, the more limiting new maximum size of use limit on medical services would prevent Evergreen from expanding. Evergreen Treatment Services is an important partner in the City's efforts to address opioid addiction by providing medication-assisted treatment with wraparound services including medical monitoring, counseling, and drug screens. It is a high priority for the City to address the sharp increase in overdoses and deaths stemming from opioid use including fentanyl that have occurred in recent years. The proposed legislation would allow for expansion of medical services uses but is limited to apply only to existing uses and in geographic area so as not to increase pressures to convert industrial land to non-industrial uses. The ordinance would exempt medical service uses and associated offices from size of use limits. There are no other existing medical services uses in the geography where the exemption is permitted besides Evergreen Treatment Services.

Purpose of Size of Use Limits in Industrial Zones

The City of Seattle remains committed to limiting the size of non-industrial uses in industrial areas as one of a set of policies intended to protect industrial land and ensure it is available for existing and future industrial uses. Competition for industrial land in Seattle has been an ongoing potential source of industrial displacement that could compromise the City's industrial sector. Because non-industrial uses generally can pay higher rent than industrial uses can, allowing non-industrial uses in industrial zones places upward pressure on the price of industrial land. Further, as non-industrial projects proliferate in industrial zones, it increases speculation that zoning may be changed further. This speculation places additional upward pressure on industrial land prices – pricing them out of reach for industrial users seeking to expand or simply to continue to afford their rent.

Non-industrial size of use limits were introduced with a new industrial zoning framework in 1987 to limit the size of use for retail or office uses. In July of 2023, the City Council adopted a new land use

framework for industrial land and retained maximum size of use limits as a tool to limit encroachment by non-industrial uses in its industrial areas.

The table below shows the current land use categories subject to size of use limits and maximum size allowed in the relevant Maritime, Manufacturing and Logistics (MML) zone.

Use subject to size limits	Maximum Size of Use Limit			
	MML	II	UI	IC
Animal shelters and kennels	10,000 sq. ft.	N.S.L	10,000 sq. ft.	N.S.L
Drinking establishments	3,000 sq. ft.	3,000 sq. ft.	3,000 sq. ft.	N.S.L.
Entertainment	10,000 sq. ft.	10,000 sq. ft. except 25,000 in II 85-240	25,000 sq. ft.	50,000 sq. ft.
Lodging uses	N/A	25,000 sq. ft.	25,000 sq. ft.	75,000 sq. ft.
Medical services	10,000 sq. ft.	25,000 sq. ft.	25,000 sq. ft.	N.S.L.
Office	10,000 sq. ft.	10,000 sq. ft.	15,000 sq. ft.	N.S.L.
Restaurants	3,000 sq. ft.	3,000 sq. ft.	3,000 sq. ft.	N.S.L.
Retail sales, major durables	10,000 sq. ft.	15,000 sq. ft.	15,000 sq. ft.	N.S.L.
Sales and services, automotive	10,000 sq. ft.	25,000 sq. ft.	75,000 sq. ft.	75,000 sq. t.
Sales and services, general	7,500 sq. ft.	7,500 sq. ft.	7,500 sq. ft.	50,000 sq. ft.

Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment provides an exemption to the size of use limits for medical service uses and associated offices established on or before July 18, 2023. This exemption would enable Evergreen Treatment Services to expand their facility through redevelopment. The exemption includes a geographic limit that requires the facility to be east of Airport Way South. There are no other medical service uses in this geography and the exemption would not result in a proliferation of large medical service uses throughout the industrial area. The amendment is proposed because of the unique and acute public health need for addiction treatment services that is present currently.

Evergreen Treatment Services

Approval of the proposal would facilitate the redevelopment and expansion of Evergreen Treatment Centers' existing facility on Airport Way South. This facility currently serves upwards of 1,300 patients

per day making it the largest single-site opioid treatment program in King County. Approximately 40 percent of the patient population is unstably housed. A potential future expansion of Evergreen Treatment Services would increase treatment capacity for the population most at-risk for fatal overdose. Planning for future redevelopment of the site has been supported through grant funding from the City of Seattle and the State of Washington. A potential future expansion could allow for an increase of patient capacity and integration of primary care, and improved patient retention/overdose reduction.

Recommendation

OPCD recommends adoption of this amendment. Providing a pathway for Evergreen Treatment Services to redevelop and expand will enable them to address the opioid treatment needs of Seattle community members. Although medical services are not an industrial use and therefore a minor incompatibility with land use policy could be incrementally increased, the public benefit provided by directly addressing a pressing public health need outweighs the potential impact. Limits in the proposed legislation ensure that the amendment would not compromise the intent of the size of use limits for non-industrial uses in industrial areas.