

Amendment 1 Version #1 to CB 120823 - SDCI 2024 Omnibus ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Morales

Remove grocery store back-of-house size limit expansion

Effect: The City applies maximum size-of-use limits to many uses in commercial zones. In Neighborhood Commercial 1 (NC1) and Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC2) zones, the land use code includes size-of-use limits on most types of commercial activity. The intent of these zones is to provide for neighborhood goods and services at a scale appropriate to the surrounding neighborhood. NC1 zones are typically found in the middle of the lowest-density neighborhoods, and NC2 zones are typically found in moderately-dense neighborhoods.

Given their importance to their surrounding communities, and their purpose of providing a wide range of goods to their customers, the size-of use limits for grocery stores are generally higher than the limits that apply to other types of commercial uses. In the NC1 zone, most commercial uses are limited to 10,000 square feet. However, an existing grocery store can be expanded up to 23,000 square feet in size. In the NC2 zone, most commercial uses are permitted up to 25,000 square feet in size, but grocery stores (and similar businesses like drug stores) can be 50,000 square feet in size. There is no maximum size limit on grocery stores in the other commercial zones.

The 2024 Omnibus bill includes a provision that would allow grocery stores to expand further, increasing their size by the lesser of 30 percent or 8,500 square feet. The additional space would be limited to area used for back-of-house functions such as stockrooms, storage, break rooms, loading, and administrative offices.

This amendment would remove that provision. Grocery stores in NC1 zones would be limited to 10,000 square feet for new stores or 23,000 square feet for existing stores. Grocery stores in NC2 zones would be limited to 50,000 square feet. Back-of-house functions on floors subject to FAR limits would be counted toward those maximums.

1. Delete Section 23 of CB 120823:

~~Section 23. Section 23.47A.010 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 123046, is amended as follows:~~

~~23.47A.010 Maximum size of nonresidential use(())~~

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Lish Whitson
Land Use Committee
September 11, 2024
D#1

~~B. For the purposes of this ((section)) Section 23.47A.010, size of use includes the gross floor area of a structure(s), or portion of a structure(s), occupied by a principal use and all uses accessory to that use, except that:~~

~~1. In NC1 and NC2 zones, any area dedicated to outdoor display of goods or equipment for rent or for sale is also included((, and));~~

~~2. In all zones, any gross floor area used for accessory parking is exempted from the size calculation((.)) ; and~~

~~3. In all zones, any gross floor area used for stockrooms, storage, break rooms, loading, and administrative office accessory to a principal grocery store use is exempted from the size calculation, provided it does not exceed 8,500 square feet or 30 percent of the gross floor area, whichever is less.~~

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2. Renumber the following sections as appropriate.