



# City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

## Seattle Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

**Date:** November 23, 2015

**To:** Councilmember Mike O'Brien, Chair  
Planning Land Use and Sustainability (PLUS) Committee

**From:** Ryan Moore, DPD, Senior Planner  
Mike Podowski, DPD, Land Use Policy Manager

**Subject:** Proposed Land Use Code Amendment – Medical Use Exception

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### **Proposed Amendments**

The legislation would allow exceptions to the current size restriction on medical uses within Neighborhood Commercial 1 (NC1) zones under the following conditions:

- 1) Located within an urban center or village;
- 2) Limited to medical uses that provide services on a reduced-fee basis to individuals and families at 200% of the federal poverty level (\$23,540 for an individual, \$48,500 for family of 4);
- 3) Must be in operation prior to adoption of this ordinance
- 4) Cannot be associated with a Major Institution Master Plan; and
- 5) Maximum size cannot exceed 20,000 square feet.

### **Background**

- Neighborhood scale health clinics provide a needed community service that can help activate a neighborhood business district by creating walk-in/foot traffic that supports adjacent businesses and creates the vitality that many neighborhoods seek.
- Community health care providers serving low-income clientele rely on outside funding in order to continue operations as opposed to a market-rate business model, restricting their ability to operate numerous facilities with separate administrative functions.
- Economies of scale can be used to facilitate the operation of a comprehensive health care facility by consolidating and centralizing administrative functions. However, this centralization can generate the need for slightly larger facilities than previously anticipated, beyond what is currently allowed in NC1 zones.
- Medical services are currently limited to 10,000 square feet (sf) in size in Neighborhood Commercial 1 (NC1) zones, limiting the ability of medical uses to expand their range of health care services,



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including dentistry and case management, in order to address the comprehensive community medical needs.

- Given the small number of such operations within the urban centers/villages (4 currently meet the criteria in the proposed legislation) the impact associated with increasing their allowed size will not be significant with respect to a NC1 zoned neighborhood's form and function.

Thank you for your consideration of the proposal. We are available to answer any questions you may have.