

**Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division Report
Zoning Code Text Amendment**

Date: September 14, 2009

Initiator of Amendment: Council Member Goodman

Date of Introduction at City Council: May 22, 2009

Specific Site: Citywide

Ward: Citywide **Neighborhood Organization:** Citywide

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Intent of the Ordinance: To revise permitted uses in the OR2, High Density Neighborhood Office Residence and OR3, Institutional Office Residence Districts.

Appropriate Section(s) of the Zoning Code: Chapter 547, Office Residence Districts.

Background: On May 22, 2009, an ordinance amendment was introduced at the City Council to amend Chapters 547 of the Zoning Code relating to permitted uses in the Office Residence Districts and Chapter 536 relating to Specific Development Standards. The purpose of the amendment is to modify the use table to allow medical and dental laboratories in the OR2 and OR3 Districts. Upon researching these uses, staff has determined that no specific development standards are necessary at this time.

Medical and dental laboratories are currently permitted in all commercial districts within the City and within all downtown districts. These uses are defined in Section 520.160 of the Zoning Code as “*an establishment primarily engaged in providing professional analytic or diagnostic services to the medical profession, or to the patient, on direction of a physician; or an establishment primarily engaged in making dentures, artificial teeth, and orthodontic appliances to order for the dental profession.*” Only uses that fall within this definition would be permitted with the proposed amendment. Chapter 541 of the Zoning Code currently contains specific parking requirements for these uses. No changes are proposed to these parking requirements.

Purpose for the Amendment:

What is the reason for the amendment?

What problem is the Amendment designed to solve?

What public purpose will be served by the amendment?

What problems might the amendment create?

The purpose of the amendment is to allow medical and dental laboratories in the OR2 and OR3 Districts. These districts both allow medical and dental clinics as permitted uses. Hospitals are allowed

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by conditional use permit in the OR3 District. The proposed amendment would allow additional medical facilities in these zoning districts citywide.

There are several parcels within the City's designated Life Sciences Corridor, per *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, that are zoned OR2 and OR3. The Corridor extends from downtown along Chicago Avenue, Portland Avenue and 11th Avenue stretching from the Hennepin County Medical Center at 6th street, to Abbott Northwestern Hospital and the Midtown Exchange at Lake Street. In total, the Corridor contains 19 health and medical institutions and 61 research and clinical labs. This area includes a large concentration of employment and a cluster of supporting uses, including other medical clinics and offices. The proposed amendment to allow medical and dental laboratories in the OR2 and OR3 Districts would allow additional supporting uses in these areas. This amendment would be applied citywide.

The purpose of the office residence districts is to provide an environment of mixed residential, office, institutional, and where appropriate, small scale retail sales and service uses designed to serve the immediate surroundings. These districts may also serve as freestanding institutions and employment centers throughout the city. Medical and dental laboratories may be appropriate in OR2 and OR3 districts as they would allow these office-type uses as stand alone uses or as part of a larger campus area that serve the public. Given the limited number of non-residential uses allowed in the OR1 District, and the predominantly residential nature of this district, staff does not believe it would be appropriate to allow medical and dental laboratories in the OR1 District at this time.

Staff does not expect that this amendment will generate any problems. Medical and dental laboratories are currently allowed in commercial and downtown districts. Medical clinics and hospitals are currently allowed in the OR2 and OR3 Districts and medical and dental laboratories are a complimentary uses to these facilities. All medical and dental laboratories would be subject to the enclosed building requirement in Chapter 535 of the Zoning Code, limiting any potential impact that they may have on surrounding uses. These uses are not expected to generate significant amounts of traffic or be otherwise detrimental to any adjacent properties.

Timeliness:

Is the amendment timely?

Is the amendment consistent with practices in surrounding areas?

Are there consequences in denying this amendment?

The amendment is timely given that it supports the goal of Minneapolis 2020 to retain and grow businesses in life sciences. This amendment is part of the continual process of updating the zoning ordinance as well. Staff performed a code search to obtain information on how other area cities treat medical and dental laboratories. The City of Saint Paul allows these uses in commercial areas, including Traditional Neighborhood Districts, which are intended to foster the development and growth of compact, pedestrian-oriented urban villages. The City of Bloomington, MN allows these uses in its Central Business District with no specific development standards. The City of St. Louis Park, MN also allows these uses in its General Commercial District. Neither of these cities have a zoning district that is

comparable to the Office Residence Districts. The City of Rochester, MN allows medical facilities, including laboratories, in nearly all of its residential and commercial zoning districts.

If the proposed amendment is denied, medical and dental laboratories would not be allowed in the OR2 and OR3 Districts, limiting potential locations for laboratories that serve as support services and standalone users. This may limit opportunities for the City to attract users that support the city's life sciences initiatives.

Comprehensive Plan:

How will this amendment implement the Comprehensive Plan?

The following general land use policies of the *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* apply:

Policy 1.1: Establish land use regulations to achieve the highest possible development standards, enhance the environment, protect public health, support a vital mix of land uses, and promote flexible approaches to carry out the comprehensive plan.

1.1.5 Ensure that land use regulations continue to promote development that is compatible with nearby properties, neighborhood character, and natural features; minimizes pedestrian and vehicular conflict; promotes street life and activity; reinforces public spaces; and visually enhances development.

1.1.7 Invest in targeted place-making strategies to build upon and enhance existing community assets and encourage private sector development.

Policy 1.15: Support development of Growth Centers as locations for concentration of jobs and housing, and supporting services.

1.15.4 Promote the integration of major public and private institutional campuses located in Growth Centers, including health care and educational services, with the function and character of surrounding areas.

Policy 4.15: Continue to support the variety of institutional uses Downtown that serve students, visitors, employees, and residents

4.15.3 Allow for the physical expansion of medical services in Downtown with designs that effectively integrate them into the surrounding neighborhood.

Recommendation of the Community Planning and Economic Development--Planning Division:

The Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the zoning code text amendment.

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Attachments:

1. Ordinance amending Chapter 547, adding medical and dental laboratories in the OR2 and OR3 Districts.