

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development  
Zoning Code Text Amendment**

**Date:** April 8, 2013

**Initiator of Amendment:** Council Member Gordon

**Date of Introduction at City Council:** December 14, 2012

**Specific Site:** Citywide

**Ward:** Citywide      **Neighborhood Organization:** Citywide

**CPED Staff and Phone:** Kimberly Holien, (612) 673-2402

**Intent of the Ordinance:** To broaden the zoning districts in which blood/plasma collection facilities may be located.

**Appropriate Section(s) of the Zoning Code:** Chapter 536: Specific Development Standards; Chapter 547, Office Residence Districts; Chapter 548, Commercial Districts; Chapter 549, Downtown Districts.

The following chapters were also introduced: Chapter 520: Introductory Provisions; Chapter 541: Off-street Parking and Loading; and Chapter 550: Industrial Districts. However, staff is not recommending changes to these chapters as part of this amendment and therefore recommends returning them to the author.

**Background:** An ordinance amendment was introduced to the City Council on December 14, 2012, to revise the regulations for blood/plasma collection facilities. Specifically, staff was asked to review and consider broadening the zoning districts in which blood/plasma collection facilities may be located. Staff was also asked to look at drafting specific development standards for these uses. Blood/plasma collection facilities are currently allowed in the C4, General Commercial district and B4C, Downtown Commercial District. The use requires a conditional use permit in both zoning districts. The proposed changes include the adoption of specific development standards for blood/plasma collection facilities and make them a permitted use in the C4 and B4C districts. The amendment would also add blood/plasma collection facilities as a permitted use in the OR3, Institutional Office Residence district.

The proposed amendment will broaden the potential locations for which blood/plasma collection facilities may be located in the City and create flexibility by making them a permitted use with specific development standards that are intended to mitigate any off-site impacts. In addition, the proposed amendment will streamline the approval process and reduce staff time required for zoning approval of these uses.

The City currently has one blood/plasma collection facility and other blood collection facilities that are accessory functions to large uses such as the American Red Cross and Memorial Blood Centers.

**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 broaden the potential locations for which blood/plasma collection facilities may be located in the City and create flexibility by making them a permitted use with specific development standards. Blood/plasma collection facilities are currently only allowed as a conditional use in the B4C and C4 zoning districts. The proposed amendment would make these uses permitted in the B4C, C4 and OR3 districts and adopt specific development standards to mitigate potential off-site impacts. In addition, the proposed amendment will streamline the approval process and reduce staff time required for zoning approval of these uses.

There are only 29 parcels citywide with B4C or C4 zoning, severely limiting potential locations for these uses. A large majority of these parcels are along Lake Street and distanced from larger hospital and office campuses. The amendment will add these facilities as a permitted use in the OR3, Institutional Office Residence district. This district was chosen because OR3 zoning is typically found on or near large institutional campuses, such as hospitals, colleges and universities and large office developments. Adding these medical facilities as a permitted use in the OR3 district will also support the City's Life Sciences Corridor, which is located in a 1.5 mile-long, 0.5 mile-wide area along Chicago Avenue in downtown and south Minneapolis. Within the Corridor there are 19 health and medical institutions, 61 research labs and clinics, more than 2,300 physicians, 12,000 employees and 250 researchers. There are several parcels within the City's designated Life Sciences Corridor that are zoned OR3. 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 blood/plasma collection facilities in the OR3 District would allow additional supporting uses and jobs in these areas. The standard model for one nation's largest plasma providers includes approximately 60 living wage jobs in the medical field.

The amendment is not expected to create any problems due to the proposed specific development standards and additional regulation and oversight by other agencies. The specific development standards proposed are intended to reduce potential off-site impacts such as litter, outdoor queuing and/or loitering and will require a management plan for each facility. In addition to these specific development standards, blood/plasma collection facilities are licensed by the Food and Drug Administration and locally regulated by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry and the Minnesota Department of Health.

The amendment will serve a public purpose by expanding potential locations for this use, which can be a significant job generator along the City's Life Sciences corridor and elsewhere citywide. Blood/plasma collection is an essential function of the medical field and while the City currently only has one such facility, this amendment would allow for other organizations such as the American Red Cross and Memorial Blood Centers to locate their blood donation facilities in more locations outside of their corporate offices. The amendment will serve a public purpose by

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streamlining the review process for such uses and reducing the amount of staff time and resources necessary to regulate the use.

### **Timeliness:**

**Is the amendment timely?**

**Is the amendment consistent with practices in surrounding areas?**

**Are there consequences in denying this amendment?**

This amendment is part of the continual process of updating the zoning ordinance in order to improve our processes and streamline certain applications. The amendment is also timely given that it supports the goal of Minneapolis 2020 to retain and grow businesses in life sciences. Finally, the amendment is timely in that the city currently has one plasma collection facility located at 1026 Washington Avenue SE. This facility is being displaced due to a development project and options for relocation are restricted due to the limited number of B4C and C4 zoned parcels in the City.

Staff performed a code search to obtain information on how other cities treat blood/plasma collection facilities. Due to the specific nature of the use, this research went beyond nearby cities and peer cities to include cities that actually address the use in their zoning ordinances. The City of Portland, OR allows “blood collection facilities” as a permitted use in their Office and Institutional Office zoning districts. The City of Atlanta, GA allows “blood donor stations other than at hospitals” with a special use permit in several zoning districts, including the Central Business Support District, Arts Center District, Midtown District, and Central Area Commercial Residential District. The City of Austin, TX allows commercial blood plasma center as a conditional use if the use is “within: (1) one-half mile of another commercial blood plasma center; or (2) 540 feet of a lot zoned or used for a residence, church, public or private school, public park or playground, or day-care facility.” In their zoning table, a commercial blood plasma center is otherwise permitted in areas with Neighborhood Center area (NCA) zoning. The City of Saint Louis Missouri does not address the use in the zoning ordinance, but has a “Commercial Blood or Plasma Vendor Registration-Identification Ordinance,” the purpose of which is to “provide a system for the registration and identification of and the reporting of medical data applicable to commercial blood or plasma vendors as being in the common interest of the health of the people of the City.” Of the 25 cities researched, these four were the only ones that specifically address this use. Staff contacted other cities with known plasma centers that did not address the use in the zoning ordinances and found that most treat it like a clinic or other general medical facility.

The main consequence of denying said amendment is that the City of Minneapolis would continue to be significantly more restrictive than peer cities and other cities nationwide as it relates to blood/plasma collection facilities.

### **Comprehensive Plan:**

#### **How will this amendment implement the Comprehensive Plan?**

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

**Land Use 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.**

**Land Use Policy 1.4: Develop and maintain strong and successful commercial and mixed use areas with a wide range of character and functions to serve the needs of current and future users.**

1.4.1 Support a variety of commercial districts and corridors of varying size, intensity of development, mix of uses, and market served.

**Land Use Policy 1.5: Promote growth and encourage overall city vitality by directing new commercial and mixed use development to designated corridors and districts.**

1.5.2 Facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized commercial areas by evaluating possible land use changes against potential impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

**Economic Development Policy 4.1: Support private sector growth to maintain a healthy, diverse economy.**

4.1.5 Continue to streamline City development review, permitting and licensing to make it easier to develop property in the City of Minneapolis.

**Policy 4.2: Promote business start-ups, retention and expansion to bolster the existing economic base.**

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

This amendment will promote business growth and retention throughout the City and streamline approval processes while mitigating potential off-site impacts. The proposed amendment is consistent with the above policies of the comprehensive plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development:**

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the zoning code text amendment, amending chapters 536, 547, 448 and 549. Staff further recommends that Chapters 522, 541 and 550 be **returned** to the author.

### **Attachments:**

1. Ordinance amending Chapter 536, Specific Development Standards.
2. Ordinance amending Chapter 547, Office Residence Districts, to add blood/plasma collection facilities as a permitted use.

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3. Ordinance amending Chapter 548, Commercial Districts, to change blood/plasma collection facilities from a conditional use to a permitted use with specific development standards.
4. Ordinance amending Chapter 549, Downtown Districts, to change blood/plasma collection facilities from a conditional use to a permitted use with specific development standards.
5. Citywide map of OR3 zoning.