

SeaTac Rezone: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Neighborhood Village?

The neighborhood village designations are meant to create smaller-scale, resident-oriented villages for residents, employees, and visitors located *outside* of the Urban Center. They are intended to provide gathering spaces and day-to-day services, while providing a variety of housing types. There are two designations for neighborhood villages – Neighborhood Village Medium and Neighborhood Village High.

What is Neighborhood Village Medium?

The purpose of this zone is to primarily provide access to everyday needs to local community members located outside of the Urban Center, including a range of moderately scaled housing options that are compatible with adjacent Neighborhood Residential areas, and provides a transition to the higher-density Neighborhood Village High Zone. This zone would allow for certain resident-oriented ground floor commercial uses, but this is not a requirement.

What uses are allowed in Neighborhood Village Medium?

Residential uses are limited to medium- and higher-density residential building types, including townhomes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, sixplexes, and apartments. ***New standalone residential uses are permitted in this zone, including detached dwelling units, which are still allowed.***

Ground floor active uses are optional for this zone but are encouraged. This means that new developments do not need to have ground floor active uses, but if they provide it, can obtain bonus height incentives.

If ground floor active uses are provided, they are required to be **resident-oriented uses**. This includes services such as hair salons and dry cleaners; eateries such as cafes, restaurants, and breweries or wineries; retail uses such as bookstores, clothing stores; everyday goods and services such as grocery and convenience stores; and other amenities such as libraries and community centers.

Some standalone commercial uses are permitted in this zone.

What heights are allowed in Neighborhood Village Medium?

The maximum height in the Urban Village Medium zone is **four (4) stories, or 45-feet**. Additional height in this zone may be achieved if the development provides affordable housing, additional park area or public spaces, or by providing ground floor active uses. The maximum height available with incentives in this zone is **six (6) stories, or 70-feet**.

Ground Floor Active Uses

A ground floor use of a mix-use building that attracts pedestrian activity, provides access to the general public, and conceals uses parking and other non-active uses if present on site.

Examples of active ground floor uses include but are not limited to **offices, retail, restaurants, cafes, and barber shop or hair salons**. Ground floor active uses shall not include uses with access limited to the residents of the building; for example, on-site gyms that do not allow public access.

Resident-Oriented Uses

A non-residential use that primarily seeks to serve local residents and the community's day-to-day needs.

Examples of resident-oriented uses include, but are not limited to **cafes, restaurants, barber shops, hair salons, libraries, community centers, and grocery or convenience stores**. Resident-oriented uses do not include hotels, motels, bed and breakfast, or other short-term rentals.

What is Neighborhood Village High?

The purpose of this zone is to provide access to everyday needs to local community members located outside of the Urban Center, through mixed-use development types, including a range of moderate- to higher-scaled housing options that are compatible with adjacent Neighborhood Residential areas, while still providing a moderate intensity of resident-orientated commercial uses.

What uses are allowed in Neighborhood Village High?

Residential uses are limited to apartments located in mixed-use buildings. New standalone residential uses are *not* permitted in this zone.

Ground floor active uses are required for this zone. This means that all new developments shall have ground floor active uses occupying at least fifty (50) percent of the ground floor.

These ground floor active uses are required to be **resident-oriented uses**. This includes services such as hair salons and dry cleaners; eateries such as cafes, restaurants, and breweries or wineries; retail uses such as bookstores, clothing stores; everyday goods and services such as grocery and convenience stores; and other amenities such as libraries and community centers.

Standalone commercial uses are not permitted in this zone.

What heights are allowed in Neighborhood Village High?

The maximum height in the Urban Village Medium zone is **five (5) stories, or 55-feet**. Additional height in this zone may be achieved if the development provides affordable housing or additional park area or public spaces. The maximum height available with incentives in this zone is **eight (8) stories, or 90-feet**.

What is an Urban Village?

The urban village designations are meant to create smaller-scale urban villages for residents, employees, and visitors located *within* the Urban Center, providing gathering spaces and day-to-day services, while also providing convenient housing. These zones also serve as transitional zones between the more intense development of the Urban Center and the surrounding Neighborhood Residential zones. There are two designations for urban villages – Urban Village Medium and Urban Village High.

What is Urban Village Medium?

The purpose of this zone is to create a mixed-use medium-density designation in the Urban Center that is oriented towards neighborhood services. This zone is designed to be less intense development than the Urban Village High zone. It is also designed to be a transitional zone that is compatible with the Neighborhood Residential areas surrounding the Urban Center.

What uses are allowed in Urban Village Medium?

Residential uses are limited to medium- and higher-density residential building types, including fourplexes, fiveplexes, sixplexes, and apartments, and must be located in mixed-use buildings. New standalone residential uses are *not* permitted in this zone.

Ground floor active uses are required for this zone. This means that all new developments shall have ground floor active uses occupying at least fifty (50) percent of the ground floor.

Standalone commercial uses are not permitted in this zone.

What heights are allowed in Urban Village Medium?

The maximum height in the Urban Village Medium zone is **five (5) stories, or 55-feet**. Additional height in this zone may be achieved if the development provides affordable housing or additional park area or public spaces. The maximum height available with incentives in this zone is **seven (7) stories, or 80-feet**.

What is Urban Village High?

The purpose of this zone is to create a primarily mixed-use medium-density designation that provides retail and service-oriented businesses on the ground floor or on the same site to serve residents, employees, and visitors in the Urban Center. This zone is designed to be a transitional zone between the Urban Village Medium zone and the higher intensity commercial uses within the Urban Center.

What uses are allowed in Urban Village High?

Residential uses are limited to apartments located in mixed-use buildings. New standalone residential uses are *not* permitted in this zone.

Ground floor active uses are required for this zone. This means that all new developments shall have ground floor active uses occupying at least fifty (50) percent of the ground floor.

Standalone commercial uses are not permitted in this zone.

What heights are allowed in Urban Village High?

The maximum height in the Urban Village Medium zone is **six (6) stories, or 65-feet**. Additional height in this zone may be achieved if the development provides affordable housing or additional park area or public spaces. The maximum height available with incentives in this zone is **nine (9) stories, or 100-feet**.

Quick Reference – Urban and Neighborhood Village Zones

Zone	Is single-family allowed? (aka detached dwellings)	Are ground floor active uses required?	What is the maximum height?	What is the maximum height with incentives?
Neighborhood Village Medium	Yes	No, it's optional.	4 stories	6 stories
Neighborhood Village High	No	Yes	5 stories	8 stories
Urban Village Medium	No	Yes	5 stories	7 stories
Urban Village High	No	Yes	6 stories	9 stories

What happens to existing single-family houses with this rezone?

The City understands the importance of continuing existing uses for single-household dwelling units (single-family houses) in the areas affected by these rezones. With updates to the SeaTac Municipal Code, occurring concurrently with the rezones, existing detached dwelling units are permitted to continue their use, and are allowed to complete repairs, and certain additions or expansions.

The future code section to allow this is SMC 15.120.070(E), and is included below for reference:

“E. Any detached dwelling unit made nonconforming due to a change in zoning classification, shall be considered legally nonconforming, and shall be permitted to continue as a nonconforming use, as follows:

1. *Alterations and additions may be approved provided the proposed changes meet all applicable dimensional requirements, do not increase the nonconformance of any dimensional standards, and do not create an additional dwelling or accessory dwelling unit.*
2. *A detached dwelling unit that experiences substantial destruction in excess of the allowance in SMC 15.120.080 shall have the rights to the nonconformance continued provided all the following apply:*
 - a. *The loss of the structure is the result of a fire, earthquake, or other casualty not intentionally caused by the owner or tenant of the property; and*
 - b. *The replacement is within the original configuration of the structure immediately prior to the substantial destruction; and*

A complete building permit application to replace or reconstruct the structure is filed with the city within three years of such fire, natural disaster, or casualty event.”