



From Legacy to Lifeline

Rebuilding the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center

Advanced care. Enduring commitment. Investing in a healthier future for Denver's Westside.



Case for Support

Providing community-centered, high-quality health care to all is a challenge Denver Health is uniquely suited to meet.

Since 1968, Denver Health has been a trusted community partner in the westside of the city ensuring that all residents have access to health care no matter their background. The single mother in Sun Valley, the migrant child in Valverde, and even the local small business owner in Barnum can experience compassionate, high-quality health care to ensure the best outcomes for them, their families, and greater Denver. When people are healthy, they can thrive, which makes Denver a vibrant city to live, work and play.

Generations have relied on the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center, and with your support, they can continue to depend on it for decades to come.

Today, if you visit the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center, located at 11th Avenue and Federal Boulevard, you will find a beating heart of Denver that most people never see. Women receiving prenatal care, children smiling wide for the dentist, and hundreds of others accessing a myriad of daily services: primary care, behavioral health, laboratory work, Medicaid enrollment, and more. From internal medicine to social safety-net navigation, the Westside clinic serves patients in nearly every phase of life.

Yet, the Westside clinic is stretched beyond capacity, limiting its ability to meet evolving community needs.

The building where the clinic has operated since 1985 features just 45,000 square feet of clinical space. Hallways have become makeshift offices, coat closets serve as check-in areas, and providers are running out of exam rooms. Meanwhile, Denver's overall population growth means increasing demand, with thousands of individuals — many of whom are newly-arrived in Denver — waiting for care at Westside and nearby clinics.

This is why Denver Health Foundation is leading a campaign to rebuild the Westside Clinic. A new, 82,500-square-foot facility, planned for the existing site's parking lot on Federal Boulevard, will significantly expand services.

With philanthropic support, we can increase patient capacity by 30% to serve 33,000 patients annually and provide needed new services including radiology, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.

We invite you to help continue the story of the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center — a story about improved health outcomes made possible through donor engagement and Denver Health's commitment to community care. Your contribution ensures patients will continue to receive the care they depend on today while knowing we are prepared to meet the needs of tomorrow.





History

Community Health Centers and the Westside Clinic

Since opening the first Community Health Center west of the Mississippi in 1966, Denver Health has been at the forefront of equitable access to health care. The Eastside Clinic in Five Points paved the way for other neighborhood clinics offering affordable care to all patients regardless of income or background right in their backyard. Locating Community Health Centers in neighborhoods with bus, train and other public transportation ensures that people without reliable transportation can still seek the care they need without location being a barrier.

In 1968, Denver Health opened the Westside Family Health Center at 10th Avenue and Federal Boulevard, and it became one of the first clinics of its kind to serve Spanish-speaking populations. By 1985, with patient volumes rising, the clinic moved a block north to its current location at 11th Avenue and Federal Boulevard. **This clinic, later named after Sam Sandos — Denver's first Latino city council member — quickly became one of the busiest in the city, now serving over 25,000 patients annually through more than 80,000 total visits.**

Today

As Colorado's primary safety-net health system, **Denver Health now operates 11 Community Health Centers and 19 School-based Health Centers, making the Denver Health system the 5th largest federally qualified health center network in the United States.** In 2024 alone, these neighborhood clinics served more than 203,000 unique patients. In that same time frame, Denver Health provided more than \$155 million in uncompensated care, demonstrating a deep commitment to serve populations with limited access to health care, regardless of the patient's ability to pay.



11 Community Health Centers



19 School-Based Health Centers



203,000 Unique Patients



Sun Valley: An Evolving Neighborhood

The Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center sits in the heart of Sun Valley, one of Denver's most vibrant and culturally rich neighborhoods. According to the Denver Housing Authority, Sun Valley residents represent 33 different cultural backgrounds and speak more than 28 languages — making it one of the most diverse areas in the city.

Despite its vibrancy, Sun Valley remains one of Denver's lowest-income neighborhoods. Almost 95% of the neighborhood's housing is subsidized, and only 5% of homes are owner-occupied. Approximately 80% of residents live in poverty, and 85% of households consist of single mothers with children.

Sun Valley is undergoing a significant transformation.

A six-phase [redevelopment plan](#) led by the Denver Housing Authority is replacing 333 obsolete public housing units with 960 newly constructed, mixed-income apartments. When the apartment project is completed in 2025, the neighborhood will also feature a riverfront park and an urban farm, creating more recreational and nutritional opportunities for residents.

Additionally, the River Mile Development northeast of Sun Valley will create a new housing and commercial district on the land currently occupied by Elitch Gardens Theme Park.

Of the 8,000 proposed residential units, 15% will be designated as affordable housing.

At the same time, the City of Denver's [West Area Plan](#) will guide development for the next two decades in Sun Valley, Valverde, Barnum, West Barnum, Villa Park, and West Colfax — all communities served by the Westside Clinic.

This is the backdrop against which Denver Health is rebuilding the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center. **As Sun Valley and surrounding neighborhoods grow, more residents will rely on the essential services the Westside Clinic provides.** Denver Health believes that Denver residents deserve state-of-the-art facilities where they can access dignified, high-quality care close to home.



Improving Health Outcomes

Today, the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center provides a wide range of services including adult medicine and pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, dentistry, and behavioral health care. Ancillary services such as Medicaid enrollment, laboratory work, and social services like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) are also available.

The clinic acts as a crucial first point of contact for many patients, who are often connected by Denver Health to additional community resources such as nutrition assistance, transportation, utility assistance, child care, housing, and domestic violence support. This work is made possible through Denver Health's partnerships with organizations like the Colorado Department of Early Childhood, Denver Food Rescue, Food Bank of the Rockies, Hunger Free Colorado, SNAP and the Sun Valley Community Coalition.

However, the current facility's space limitations have prevented Denver Health from providing additional essential services at this location.



30,000 square feet of new space for expanded health services

The new building will add more than 30,000 square feet of operational space, enabling the clinic to offer expanded services. In addition to enhanced pediatric and adult primary care, dental care, and OB-GYN services, the new facility will incorporate physical and occupational therapy, radiology (including ultrasound, x-ray, and mammogram services), and dedicated wellness spaces for employees — ensuring care providers and staff are equipped to serve patients' needs.

The clinic's capacity to serve patients is projected to increase by approximately 30% when the new clinic opens in 2027 — further strengthening community health outcomes and access to care.





Our Vision, Timeline, and Construction Plans

Denver Health Foundation envisions a future where every Denver resident can access care in modern facilities. In 2024, Denver Health began planning the design of the new facility, engaging key donors, community leaders, and other stakeholders throughout to ensure the project's viability.

Initially, Denver Health explored rebuilding the clinic at an entirely new location. However, after extensive feasibility studies conducted by the architecture firm [CannonDesign](#), it was determined that reconstructing the clinic within the existing site would save considerable resources and maintain continuity of care for patients.

The current plan is to rebuild the Westside Clinic in what is currently the facility's parking lot on Federal Boulevard. The estimated cost for the project is approximately \$100–\$115 million. Funding will come from a diverse mix of sources, including philanthropy, bonds, impact investments, and new market tax credits — ensuring financial sustainability for the future.

2025 → Construction begins late in the year

2026 → Construction continues

2027 → Estimated opening date for the new clinic

2028 → Old clinic is demolished and parking deck is built





Your Role

We have a tremendous opportunity to transform the health of our community — an opportunity that requires your partnership. **Philanthropy provides vital resources and inspiration as we work together to eliminate disparities, reduce costs, and improve access to quality care for all.**

Denver Health is committed to more than constructing a new building — we are continuing a long tradition of providing critical care to Denver’s Westside residents. **For 165 years, Denver Health has played a pivotal role in the physical, social, and economic well-being of our community.** Your support will enable us to invest in cutting-edge technologies, innovative care models, state-of-the-art facilities, and the next generation of skilled, compassionate providers.

This ambitious campaign needs your help, and the help of many like you — people who understand the importance of the Sam Sandos Westside Family Health Center to the evolving community it serves.

We invite you to join this significant effort, ensuring that as neighborhoods grow, all Denver residents have access to the compassionate, dignified care they deserve. Your gift today will help shape a healthier, thriving Denver for decades to come.



**Construction
begins in 2025**



**Patient capacity will increase
by 30% once complete**

Give a Gift Today

Denver Health Foundation

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[DenverHealthFoundation.org/Westside](https://denverhealthfoundation.org/Westside)

“The area of Westside has always been overlooked and underserved from a health care perspective. With Denver Health building a beautiful new building in the location, it will show that we are investing and care about the community.”

— Nick Gagner, DMD, Clinical Director, Dental

