

# **Carroll County, MD – Zoning and Site Development Codes Revisions**

## **Task 1 – Assessment of Existing Documents and Best Practices: Self-Service Storage Facilities in Commercial Districts**

*May 22, 2026*

### **Executive Summary**

This report evaluates self-service storage facilities in commercial zoning districts within Carroll County’s jurisdiction. In commercial districts, the use is permitted in the C-2 (Commercial Medium Intensity) and C-3 (Commercial High Intensity) zoning districts and is subject to supplemental use standards addressing site layout, operations, screening, lighting, and façade compatibility. A review of the Carroll County Master Plan (2014, amended 2019), the Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan (2018), and the Finksburg Corridor Plan (2013) indicates that while these facilities are commercial in nature, they do not strongly advance the County’s stated goals of promoting employment-generating uses, fostering active commercial destinations, and reinforcing a strong sense of place, particularly within commercial low- and medium-intensity areas. The use appears most consistent with Commercial-High land use designations, while its allowance in Commercial-Medium land use designated areas is less aligned with adopted plan guidance.

The County’s existing regulations do provide for functional standards related to unit size, height, circulation, parking, landscaping, and screening, but include limited objective design criteria to ensure consistent architectural quality and integration into commercial corridors. At the same time, national trends show continued growth in the self-storage industry, with increasing emphasis on multi-story, climate-controlled, mixed-use, and adaptive reuse models that can be more context-sensitive and visually compatible with surrounding development.

Overall, the following assessment provides for suggested recommendations that include refinements to permitted locations, approval processes, and context-sensitive design standards that could better align the County’s regulatory framework in terms of adopted planning policies and contemporary best practices. These targeted updates, focused on clear, objective standards, and corridor-appropriate placement, would help ensure that future self-service storage facilities are compatible with surrounding uses while preserving flexibility for property owners and market responsiveness.

## Introduction

Michael Baker International, Inc. (Michael Baker) assisted the Carroll County Planning and Land Management Department with an independent evaluation of the County's Development and Subdivision of Land Code and Zoning Code, codified under County Code Chapters 155 and 158, respectively. This effort included recommending and advancing targeted code amendments to align County regulations with the Carroll County Master Plan (2014, amended 2019), the Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan (2018), and the Finksburg Corridor Plan (2013).

Task 1 of the project involved a review of applicable County Code regulations related to zoning, site development standards, design guidelines, and other associated requirements for selected land use classifications. This review of existing County regulations and best practices focused specifically on the "self-service storage facilities" use permitted in commercial districts.

Self-service storage facilities are defined as follows in the County's Zoning Code (Chapter 158 of the County Code):

**SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITY.** A building or group of buildings divided into multiple, separate, self-contained compartments used to meet the temporary storage needs of residents and small businesses and may include climate-controlled facilities and accessory outdoor storage of vehicles. No commercial transactions are permitted other than the rental of storage units and the ancillary sale of related products.

This assessment of existing regulations, past planning efforts, and best practices includes an examination of how the County Code functions and how the regulations stipulated therein compare to contemporary planning and development standards related to self-service storage facilities. This work included:

- **Examination of Past Planning Efforts:** A review of existing plans and previous planning efforts that outline and identify key community goals and objectives related to this land use, including:
  - Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan (2018)
  - Finksburg Corridor Plan (2013)
  - Carroll County Master Plan (2014 and 2019 amendment)
- **Existing Code Review:** A focused analysis of Carroll County's Zoning Code (Carroll County Code Chapter 158) and Development and Subdivision of Land Code (Carroll County Code Chapter 155).
- **Best Practices Evaluation:** Research to identify modern approaches to zoning regulations, site design standards, and architectural requirements for self-service storage facilities.

Collectively, this assessment establishes a clear baseline of self-service storage facilities in Carroll County's codes and plans. It provides the foundation for informed decision-making as the project team develops recommendations for Zoning, and Development and Subdivision of Land Code amendments under Task 2.

## Examination of Past Planning Efforts

This section provides a crosswalk of existing code regulations for self-service storage facilities in commercial districts with the goals and objectives of three planning documents:

- Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan (2018)
- Finksburg Corridor Plan (2013)
- Carroll County Master Plan (2014) and Amendment (2019)

Together, these plans provide guidance for land use planning in the areas of the county within the jurisdiction and under the authority of the Carroll County Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Commissioners. These plans are intended to provide guidance for land use policy and regulations specified under the County's Zoning Code and Development and Subdivision of Land Code.

This examination answers the following:

- **Consistency with Plan Goals and Objectives**
  - Do the plans' goals and objectives support or discourage the development of self-service storage facilities in commercial areas?
- **Location**
  - Do the plans indicate where self-service storage facilities are appropriate or not appropriate?
  - How do those locations align with where the use is permitted in the Zoning Code?
- **Scale and Design Standards**
  - Do the plans provide guidance on the design and components of self-service storage facilities in commercial areas?
  - How does the guidance align with the existing regulatory standards for self-service storage facilities in commercial areas?

Each of the plans reviewed mention the importance of employment-generating uses as part of their economic development goals and objectives.

In a Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management–authored white paper titled *“Self-Storage in Carroll County’s C-2 Zoning District,”* it is stated that “the County’s Department of Economic Development consistently has opposed the allowance of self-service storage facilities in zones designated for industrial and employment uses, given the relatively small number of acres available in those zones.”

### *Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan (2018)*

#### **Consistency with Plan Goals and Objectives**

The plan does not specifically address self-service storage facilities; however, it includes several goals and objectives related to economic development.

The plan's Economic Development goal and associated objectives prioritize development that expands the County's employment and tax base, supports a skilled workforce, and increases opportunities for residents to live and work locally. Self-service storage facilities do not meaningfully advance these objectives, as they typically generate minimal employment, yield lower tax revenue per acre, and do not function as destination or activity-generating uses.

- Economic Development Goal 4: “Facilitate economic development opportunities that support the local skilled workforce and entrepreneurs and expand the county’s employment tax base (pg. 31).”
- Economic Development Objective 6: “Promote development that creates areas with a “sense of place” and “destinations” that encourage interaction among residents and users (pg. 67).”

- Economic Development Objective 7: “Encourage economic development that provides a broader range of skill levels and earning potential for residents who desire to work and live in Freedom and Carroll County (pg. 67).”

However, the plan also states the importance of attracting new commercial enterprises and developing/redeveloping existing vacant or underutilized commercial properties (see objectives below). Self-service storage facilities are a commercial use that could bring a vacant or underutilized property into active use without putting a burden on services (e.g., traffic, emergency services, etc.).

- Economic Development Objective 2: “Focus on the growth of existing businesses and employment retention, as well attracting new commercial and industrial enterprises (pg. 67).”
- Economic Development Objective 3: “Focus on development and redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties (pg. 67).”

### Location

The Plan’s designated land use map indicated the following commercial land use areas:

- Commercial-Low: “Areas intended to provide for services needed by a neighborhood population characterized by low volumes of traffic and noise. Properties with this designation would generally be less than five acres in size, and activities would involve the sale of services, goods, products, wares, or merchandise directly to the consumer, and certain limited offices of a small, local nature (pg. 213).”
- Commercial-Medium: “Areas intended to provide for services needed by a larger, suburban area population characterized by low to medium volumes of traffic. Activities would involve the sale of services, goods, products, wares, or merchandise directly to the consumer, as well as professional and business office uses, and the variation in lot sizes among properties with this designation would reflect the array of commercial uses permitted (pg. 213).”
- Commercial-High: “Areas intended to provide for services needed by a more regional population characterized by high volumes of traffic and longer hours of operation, generally with access to major transportation corridors. Activities would involve office, warehousing, distribution, large-scale retail, wholesale and some light processing operations, and properties with this designation would be large enough to accommodate the activities listed above, either alone or when consolidated with adjacent properties. Water and sewer service is generally planned to these areas (pg. 213).”

Based on these land use descriptions, self-service storage facilities would be appropriate in the Commercial-High land use areas and not appropriate in the Commercial-Low land use areas.

They serve a suburban market which is consistent with the intent to provide services to a larger suburban population rather than a regional draw. This can function as a direct-to-consumer service business, providing supplemental storage to residents and small businesses. It generates relatively low traffic volumes. Additionally, self-service storage is generally low intensity in terms of noise and operational impacts. However, there are aspects where self-service storage is less closely aligned with the Commercial Medium designation. The Commercial-Medium land use description emphasizes the sale of services, goods, products, wares, or merchandise directly to the consumer, whereas some self-service storage does not involve traditional service and retail sales activity. The use typically has limited day-to-day customer interaction after the initial lease. While the land use description does not specify the scale or form of permitted commercial uses, the proximity to residential areas suggests that the scale and intensity of development should be compatible with and sensitive to nearby neighborhoods.

The Carroll County Zoning Code has three commercial districts in the area covered by the Plan:

- **Commercial Low Intensity (C-1):** The purpose of the C-1 District is to provide locations for small-scale, low intensity retail and service commercial uses which are intended to provide goods and services primarily serving the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods with a minimum of consumer travel and convenient auto access. Uses allowed in the C-1 District include but are not limited to retail sales and services, personnel services, medical facilities, eating establishments, recreation and entertainment, and small professional office uses.
- **Commercial Medium Intensity (C-2):** The purpose of the C-2 District is to provide locations for a diverse range of medium-intensity retail, service and professional office uses needed by a larger population than those provided for in the C-1 District. This district is also intended to provide locations for compatible institutional and recreational uses, limited residential uses, and some of the general neighborhood uses associated with the C-1 District. Bicycle and pedestrian access are encouraged where possible to ensure compatibility with nearby neighborhoods.
- **Commercial High Intensity (C-3):** The purpose of the C-3 District is to provide locations for high-intensity, large-scale retail businesses and destinations of a regional nature, planned business parks, clusters of commercial development, wholesale businesses, offices, and certain light processing operations. This district is also intended to provide locations for compatible institutional and recreational uses and some of the medium-intensity uses associated with the C-2 District. Uses in this district should be located in proximity to transportation infrastructure and major corridors. Developments in the C-3 District should, where possible and appropriate, facilitate pedestrian circulation

Self-service storage facilities are permitted in the C-2 and C-3 districts of the Carroll County Zoning Code.

In intent and geography, the land use designations and map align with the Zoning Code and Zoning Map as follows:

Zoning District	Plan Land Use Designation
Commercial Low Intensity (C-1)	Commercial-Low
Commercial Medium Intensity (C-2)	Commercial-Medium
Commercial High Intensity (C-3)	Commercial-High

<b>Regulatory Consistencies with the Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Plan’s land use designation description for Commercial-High indicates that self-service storage facilities would be an appropriate use in this area, which aligns with the Zoning Code’s C-3 zoning district. As such, permitting this use in the C-3 zoning district is consistent with the Plan.</li> <li>• A self-service storage facility use does not fit within the description for the Commercial-Low land use area which aligns with the C-1 zoning district. The Zoning Code does not permit this use in the C-1 zoning district which is consistent with the Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities for Increased Plan Alignment</b>	To better align self-service storage service facility uses with the intent of the Commercial-Medium land use designation (and C-2 Zoning District) form standards should be applied to ensure compatibility with and sensitivity to nearby neighborhoods.

**Scale and Design Standards**

The plan does not provide specific guidance on the design and scale of self-service storage facilities, but provides the following guidance regarding design and scale of commercial development:

- “There remains a desire for scale-appropriate, pedestrian-friendly places, which could possibly be accomplished as economic redevelopment occurs (pg. 77).”
- “Address the visual appearance and lack of ‘sense of place’ in Freedom’s commercial corridors (pg. 3).”

<b>Regulatory Consistencies with the Plan</b>	<p>The Zoning Code specifies supplemental use regulations in Section 158.158 for self-service storage facilities that address aligning with the existing sense of place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The front building facade shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to be visually compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding properties (§158.158.C).</li> <li>• All structures, storage units, commercial parking areas, accessory vehicle storage areas, aisles, security fences, or walls, except the front building facade, shall be screened from view off site (§158.158.G).</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities for Increased Plan Alignment</b>	<p>None. There are no identified inconsistencies between the plan and the code. Although additional supplemental use regulations could be considered to increase pedestrian-friendly-scale and circulation especially as it relates to the surrounding areas.</p>

*Finksburg Corridor Plan (2014)*

**Consistency with Plan Goals and Objectives**

The plan does not specifically reference self-service storage facilities. However, the Plan establishes a policy direction for redevelopment, employment-supporting uses, gateway enhancement, and small-scale commercial activity, particularly within the MD 140 corridor.

Relevant plan goals and concepts include:

- Land Use Goal: “To encourage redevelopment as a way to promote new small-scale business, office and retail activity within the corridor (pg. 9).”
- Gateway and Design Goal: “To establish a visually appealing Gateway that welcomes residents and visitors to Carroll County (pg. 9).”

Self-service storage facilities do not directly support the plan’s goals; they do not constitute the small-scale business, office, or retail activity the plan seeks to promote. Self-service storage units can indirectly support small-scale business as some entrepreneurs, start-ups, and other small-scale business owners use self-service storage facilities to store some of their goods and materials. The form of the use would determine whether it contributes to the creation of a visually engaging and welcoming gateway in Carroll County.

**Location**

The plan’s designated land use map indicated one commercial land use area:

- Commercial: “Promotes retention and creation of small-scale business, office and retail uses that will support the service and retail needs of the surrounding community and provide for the basic needs of the regional traveler. Limited opportunities for residential development are also envisioned for the Commercial area, particularly on land that lies between MD 140 and Old Westminster Pike. In this vicinity, opportunities are envisioned for highway-oriented business uses along MD 140 and residential or mixed uses along Old Westminster Pike, to create a more compatible character of development within the historic Finksburg area. Development of

properties within the Commercial area will strive to incorporate creative design elements, consistent architectural and signage themes, and improved access to adjacent commercial properties. Realizing this type of development, however, may require that community water and sewer service be made available given the relatively small lot sizes (pg. 10).”

The Carroll County Zoning Code has one commercial zoning district in this area:

- **Commercial Medium Intensity (C-2):** The purpose of the C-2 District is to provide locations for a diverse range of medium-intensity retail, service and professional office uses needed by a larger population than those provided for in the C-1 District. This district is also intended to provide locations for compatible institutional and recreational uses, limited residential uses, and some of the general neighborhood uses associated with the C-1 District. Bicycle and pedestrian access are encouraged where possible to ensure compatibility with nearby neighborhoods.

Self-service storage facilities are permitted in the C-2 zoning district of the Carroll County Zoning Code.

In intent and geography, the Commercial land use designation aligns with the C-2 zoning district.

Self-storage is most consistent with the C-2 purpose of providing service uses needed by a larger population than the C-1 District. With a typical market area of approximately 3–5 miles, self-storage serves a broader suburban population rather than only an immediate neighborhood. It is a consumer-oriented service use, providing supplemental storage for households and small businesses. The use is generally low traffic, low noise, and operationally compatible with adjacent development, which supports the district’s goal of ensuring compatibility with nearby neighborhoods.

However, self-storage is less aligned with the C-2 district’s emphasis on diverse medium-intensity retail, service, and professional office uses. The use does not generate the same level of daily customer activity, employment, or commercial vitality as retail stores, restaurants, or office buildings. It also does not significantly contribute to pedestrian-oriented activity or storefront engagement that may be envisioned in some C-2 areas. While it qualifies as a service use, it is typically lower intensity than many of the uses anticipated in the district and may underutilize sites intended for more active commercial development.

Overall, self-storage can be considered generally consistent with the service component and suburban-scale intent of the C-2 District, but it does not strongly advance the district’s goals related to commercial diversity, pedestrian activity, and medium-intensity economic development.

<b>Regulatory Consistencies with the Plan</b>	Provides a service to a suburban-scaled market.
<b>Opportunities for Increased Plan Alignment</b>	To better align self-service storage service facility uses with the intent of the Commercial-Medium land use designation (and C-2 Zoning District) form standards and connectivity standards should be applied to ensure compatibility with and sensitivity to nearby neighborhoods.

**Scale and Design Standards**

The plan does not provide specific guidance on the design and scale of self-service storage facilities, but provides the following guidance regarding design and scale of commercial development:

- “Development of properties within the Commercial area will strive to incorporate creative design elements, consistent architectural and signage themes, and improved access to adjacent commercial properties (pg. 10).”

<b>Regulatory Consistencies with the Plan</b>	<p>The Zoning Code specifies supplemental use regulations in Section 158.158 for self-service storage facilities that address the desire for consistent architectural and signage themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The front building facade shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to be visually compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding properties (§158.158.C).</li> <li>• All structures, storage units, commercial parking areas, accessory vehicle storage areas, aisles, security fences, or walls, except the front building facade, shall be screened from view off site (§158.158.G).</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities for Increased Plan Alignment</b>	<p>Additional supplemental use regulations could be considered to improve access to adjacent commercial properties.</p>

*Carroll County Master Plan (2014) and Amendment (2019)*

**Consistency with Plan Goals and Objectives**

The Carroll County Master Plan does not specifically reference self-service storage facilities as a land use. However, the Plan establishes a policy framework regarding economic development, land use, and designated growth areas, which can be used to evaluate whether self-service storage facilities are consistent with the Plan’s intent.

Key goals include:

- Economic Development Goal (Goal 13): “Promote a healthy economy and additional employment opportunities by: (a) supporting the retention and expansion of existing businesses including agribusiness through sensible land use policies; (b) focusing on development and redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties; (c) providing land appropriately located and zoned for a variety of types and intensities of new economic development activities; and (d) maintaining a desirable balance between economic development and residential development (pg. 121).”
- Land Use & Community Design Goal (Goal 14): “Facilitate a development pattern that remains consistent with the fabric of our communities, is in harmony with the surrounding built and natural environments, encourages community interaction and, in rural areas, preserves the County’s rural character (pg. 25).”
- Growth Management Goal (Goal 15): “Pursue policies that facilitate development in appropriate areas, including the designated growth areas, thereby protecting and conserving agricultural and environmental resource areas, preserving open space, and providing public facilities and services efficiently and cost-effectively (pg. 137).”

Self-service storage facilities generally do not support the portion of the economic development goal of a healthy economic and additional employment opportunities. These facilities typically:

- Generate minimal employment compared to other commercial, office, or industrial uses the Plan seeks to promote.
- Provide limited economic multiplier effects and do not substantially contribute to the County’s goal of expanding its employment base or strengthening its long-term tax structure.

Additionally, the plan's emphasis on directing growth into Designated Growth Areas is tied to maximizing the public return on infrastructure investments and fostering compact, efficient, and economically productive land use patterns. Self-service storage facilities, due to their low activity level and high land consumption relative to employment and services provided, do not meaningfully advance these objectives, especially when compared to alternative commercial or employment-oriented uses.

On the other hand, self-service storage facilities can bring vacant or underutilized properties back into a productive use. It also should be noted that self-service storage facilities may also support the creation of compact development by allowing people to live in smaller homes while still having ample storage space, or to operate small or home-based businesses more efficiently and profitably by storing supplies or merchandise for demand-driven business models.

### **Location**

The plan's designated land use map indicated three commercial areas:

- Commercial-Low Intensity: "Areas intended to provide for services needed by a neighborhood population characterized by low volumes of traffic and noise. Properties with this designation are typically less than five acres in size, and activities would involve the sale of services, goods, products, wares, or merchandise directly to the consumer, and certain limited offices of a small, local nature (pg. 161)."
- Commercial-Medium Intensity: "Areas intended to provide for services needed by a larger, suburban area population characterized by low to medium volumes of traffic. Activities would involve the sale of services, goods, products, wares, or merchandise directly to the consumer, as well as professional and business office uses, and the variation in lot sizes among properties with this designation would reflect the array of commercial uses permitted. (pg. 161)."
- Commercial-High Intensity: "Areas intended to provide for services needed by a more regional population characterized by high volumes of traffic and longer hours of operation, generally with access to major transportation corridors. Activities would involve office, warehousing, distribution, large-scale retail, wholesale and some light processing operations, and properties with this designation would be large enough to accommodate the activities listed above, either alone or when consolidated with adjacent properties. Water and sewer service is generally planned to these areas (pg. 161)."

Based on these land use descriptions, self-service storage facilities would be appropriate in the Commercial-High land use areas and not appropriate in the Commercial-Low land use areas.

They serve a suburban market which is consistent with the intent to provide services to a larger suburban population rather than a regional draw. This can function as a direct-to-consumer service business, providing supplemental storage to residents and small businesses. It generates relatively low traffic volumes. Additionally, self-service storage is generally low intensity in terms of noise and operational impacts. However, there are aspects where self-service storage is less closely aligned with the Commercial Medium designation. The Commercial-Medium land use description emphasizes the sale of services, goods, products, wares, or merchandise directly to the consumer, whereas some self-service storage does not involve traditional service and retail sales activity. The use typically has limited day-to-day customer interaction after the initial lease. While the land use description does not specify the scale or form of permitted commercial uses, the proximity to residential areas suggests that the scale and intensity of development should be compatible with and sensitive to nearby neighborhoods.

The Carroll County Zoning Code has three commercial zoning districts:

- **Commercial Low Intensity (C-1):** The purpose of the C-1 District is to provide locations for small-scale, low intensity retail and service commercial uses which are intended to provide goods and services primarily serving the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods with a minimum of consumer travel and convenient auto access. Uses allowed in the C-1 District include but are not limited to retail sales and services, personnel services, medical facilities, eating establishments, recreation and entertainment, and small professional office uses.
- **Commercial Medium Intensity (C-2):** The purpose of the C-2 District is to provide locations for a diverse range of medium-intensity retail, service and professional office uses needed by a larger population than those provided for in the C-1 District. This district is also intended to provide locations for compatible institutional and recreational uses, limited residential uses, and some of the general neighborhood uses associated with the C-1 District. Bicycle and pedestrian access are encouraged where possible to ensure compatibility with nearby neighborhoods.
- **Commercial High Intensity (C-3):** The purpose of the C-3 District is to provide locations for high-intensity, large-scale retail businesses and destinations of a regional nature, planned business parks, clusters of commercial development, wholesale businesses, offices, and certain light processing operations. This district is also intended to provide locations for compatible institutional and recreational uses and some of the medium-intensity uses associated with the C-2 District. Uses in this district should be located in proximity to transportation infrastructure and major corridors. Developments in the C-3 District should, where possible and appropriate, facilitate pedestrian circulation.

Self-service storage facilities are permitted in the C-2 and C-3 districts under the Carroll County Zoning Code.

In intent and geography, the land use designations and map align with the Zoning Code and map as follows:

Zoning District	Plan Land Use Designation
Commercial Low Intensity (C-1)	Commercial-Low Intensity
Commercial Medium Intensity (C-2)	Commercial-Medium Intensity
Commercial High Intensity (C-3)	Commercial-High Intensity

Self-service storage facilities are permitted in the C-2 zoning district under the Carroll County Zoning Code.

<b>Regulatory Consistencies with the Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan’s land use designation description for Commercial-High indicates that self-service storage facilities would be an appropriate use in these areas. This area aligns with the C-3 zoning district in the Zoning Code. As such, permitting this use in the C-3 zoning district is consistent with the plan.</li> <li>• A self-service storage facility use does not fit within the description for the Commercial-Low land use area which aligns with the C-1 zoning district. The Zoning Code does not permit this use in the C-1 zoning district which is consistent with the Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities for Increased Plan Alignment</b>	To better align self-service storage service facility uses with the intent of the Commercial-Medium Intensity land use designation (and C-2 Zoning District) form standards should be applied to ensure compatibility with and sensitivity to nearby neighborhoods.

**Scale and Design Standards**

The plan does not provide specific guidance on the design and scale of self-service storage facilities, but provides the following guidance regarding design and scale of commercial development:

- “Facilitate a development pattern that remains consistent with the fabric of our communities, is in harmony with the surrounding built and natural environments, encourages community interaction and, in rural areas, preserves the County’s rural character (pg. 24).”

<b>Regulatory Consistencies with the Plan</b>	<p>The Zoning Code has supplemental use regulations in Section 158.158 for self-service storage facilities that address aligning with the existing sense of place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The front building facade shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to be visually compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding properties (§158.158.C).</li> <li>• All structures, storage units, commercial parking areas, accessory vehicle storage areas, aisles, security fences, or walls, except the front building facade, shall be screened from view off-site (§158.158.G).</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities for Increased Plan Alignment</b>	<p>See note in Location section regarding form standards.</p>

**Existing Code Review**

*Zoning Ordinance Analysis*

**Temporary Deferral**

Per County Zoning Code §158.158.01 Temporary Deferral on self-service storage facilities in the Freedom Designated Growth Area, there is currently a temporary deferral for self-service storage facilities within the Freedom Designated Growth Area. These projects can still be submitted for review and processed by the County, but no approval can be granted during this deferral period.

**Definitions**

Self-service storage facilities are defined as follows in the County’s Zoning Code (Chapter 158 of the County Code):

**SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITY.** A building or group of buildings divided into multiple, separate, self-contained compartments used to meet the temporary storage needs of residents and small businesses and may include climate-controlled facilities and accessory outdoor storage of vehicles. No commercial transactions are permitted other than the rental of storage units and the ancillary sale of related products.

**Districts & Uses**

A self-service storage facility is a permitted use in the C-2 and C-3 zoning districts, while a “Self-service storage facility in a sustainable community” is also a conditional use in the I-1 district.

- A *Sustainable Community* is defined in the Zoning Code as “An area that has received a sustainable communities designation from the State of Maryland pursuant to the 2010 Sustainable Communities Act.”
- While not otherwise permitted in the I-1 district, a self-service storage facility, per §158.079.A.(c) is permitted within a business/industrial park and is not included in the calculation of commercial uses that are not otherwise permitted in that district.

### Bulk and Area Requirements

- On lots within **Commercial Districts** that *do not* adjoin a residential district, the following bulk and area requirements apply:
  - Front yard setback: 10 foot minimum
  - Side yard setback: 10 foot minimum
  - Rear yard setback: 15 foot minimum
  - Height: 50 foot maximum
- On lots within **Commercial Districts** that adjoin a residential district, the following bulk and area requirements apply:
  - Front yard setback: 10 foot minimum
  - Side yard setback: 15 foot minimum
  - Rear yard setback: 15 foot minimum
  - Height: 35 foot maximum
    - The height of a building may be extended up to 50 feet if the side and/or rear yard adjoining the Residential District is increased in width one foot for each additional one foot of height above the normal maximum limit (158.130(E)(3)).
- On lots within **Industrial Districts**, the following bulk and area requirements apply:
  - Front yard setback: 10 foot minimum
  - Side yard setback: 20 foot minimum
  - Rear yard setback: 20 foot minimum
  - Height: 50 foot maximum
- If a self-service storage facility is included within a business/industrial park, the yards on both sides of an interior lot line may be zero, and the Planning and Zoning Commission may reduce other yard requirements. Where a zero yard is proposed, setbacks, buffers and/or landscape screening requirements shall not be applicable.

### Specific Use Requirements

Per §158.158 of the County Zoning Ordinance, self-service storage facilities are subject to a series of specific use regulations, they are as follows:

- Maximum individual storage unit height shall be 15 feet.
- Maximum area of each individual storage unit shall be 500 square feet.
- The front building facade shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to be visually compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding properties.
- A business office may be located on site, and the required parking spaces for employees shall be located adjacent to the business office. Required parking may not be rented, used for storage of vehicles, or other storage.
- Areas providing access between storage units and areas designed for two-way vehicular traffic shall be 20 feet wide. One-way vehicular traffic aisles with units on one side may be 15 feet wide. Access aisles and storage units shall be designed and located to provide maneuvering space for emergency vehicles.
- All outdoor lighting must be shielded and focused to direct light onto the premises and away from adjoining properties.
- All structures, storage units, commercial parking areas, accessory vehicle storage areas, aisles, security fences, or walls, except the front building facade, shall be screened from view off site.
- The site shall not be used for any activity or use except storage as specified herein.
- Flammable, toxic, or explosive materials or hazardous chemicals shall not be stored on site; provided, however, that fuel contained in standard fuel tanks of boats or vehicles which are

themselves stored on site is allowed. Standard fuel tanks for purposes of this section are those tanks which were designed for the specific vehicle by the manufacturer of the vehicle.

- Signs shall be permitted in compliance with §158.110 through 158.114, except that temporary signs, signs that relate to off-premises uses, or signs which exceed 50 square feet in area are prohibited.
- Landscaping shall be provided in accordance with Chapter 157 of the Carroll County Code.
- These are also controlled by the requirements within the County's Landscape Manual which provides specifics the types and location of the various classes of screening requirements.

### Parking

The following minimum parking requirements apply to a self-service storage facility:

- Self-service storage facility with driveway access: 2 employee parking spaces and 3 customer parking spaces located at the business office.
- Self-service storage facility without driveway access: 1 parking space for every 10 storage bays, plus 2 employee parking spaces and 3 customer parking spaces located at the business office.

### Approval Process

With the exception that there is an abnormal circumstance, such as a subdivision or a variance/modification required, then a self-service storage facility would likely be required to follow the Site Plan approval process unless it goes through the Conditional Use process as previously identified.

### *Development and Subdivision of Land Analysis*

Carroll County's regulations for the Development and Subdivision of Land provide little substantive guidance specific to the design or development of self-service storage facilities. The Code generally applies uniform land development standards, such as site plan requirements, parking design standards, and the requirements of the approval processes.

### *Land Development and Site Plan Review and Approval*

The review and approval process for zoning and land development is managed primarily by the Carroll County Development Review Division. The process varies depending on whether an applicant is pursuing a standard land development (site plan/subdivision) or a zoning-specific action like a variance or conditional use.

For residential, commercial, or industrial projects, the County Code review process typically follows these stages, which are normal to most any county or local government jurisdictional land use regulatory process:

- **Pre-Application/Submittal Conference:** Developers meet with County Development Review Division staff to establish a file and receive initial guidance.
- **Concept Plan Review:** Prior to a final plan, a concept plan must be submitted.
  - The Technical Review Committee (TRC), composed of various county agencies, conducts a monthly public meeting to provide feedback.
  - The County Planning and Zoning Commission reviews the concept plan. Concept plans expire after 12 months if a final plan is not submitted.
- **Adequate Public Facilities (APF) Testing:** The project is tested to ensure infrastructure (roads, schools, etc.) can support the development.

- **Agency Concurrence:** Before final approval, the developer must document compliance with specific codes including Floodplain Management, Forest Conservation, Stormwater Management, and Grading.
- **Final Plan Approval:** After all agency comments are addressed, the Planning and Zoning Commission votes on final approval. Approved plats are then recorded in the county land records.

### Design Review

County Code Chapter 155.052(B) empowers the Planning and Zoning Commission with authority to influence a range of site development plan features. The Design and Architectural Review Committee (DARC) was established in 2007 to provide professional, advisory insight to the Planning and Zoning Commission as they seek to approve final site development plans in accordance with 155.052(B).

The DARC is comprised of volunteers, appointed by staff, and consists of local practitioners in the architecture, landscape architecture, computer-aided design (CAD), and business development community. Staff from Economic Development, Planning, and Development Review are also part of the Committee.

Projects reviewed are specific to site development plans for commercial and industrial proposals, not subdivisions. Applicable projects are placed on a meeting schedule by the Development Review Division staff and discussed with the DARC. The Committee's advisory comments are then conveyed by Development Review, as a part of the Division's plan review comments, back to the engineer / owner / developer and also in the staff reports to the Planning and Zoning Commission at the concept review phase.

### Summary of Existing Code Review

#### *General*

While the Carroll County Zoning Code and the Development and Subdivision of Land Code do include specific use standards for self-service storage facilities, these requirements are generally limited to operational and site-related considerations, such as storage space configuration, internal circulation, lighting, and the storage of materials. These are typical regulatory elements for this type of use and are primarily focused on functionality and safety rather than broader design or compatibility concerns. The notable exception is a provision in the Zoning Code stating that "the front building façade shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to be visually compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding properties." While this language does introduce an element of architectural or design oversight, it is inherently subjective. The term "compatible" is open to interpretation and may be applied differently by County staff, elected officials, Planning and Zoning Commission members, or applicants, which can create uncertainty and inconsistency in the review process.

With respect to permitted locations, the Zoning Code allows self-service storage facilities as a principal permitted use in two of the County's Commercial Districts, C-2 and C-3. In the I-1 Industrial District, however, the use is permitted as a Conditional Use when located within a designated Sustainable Community, or when located in a Business/Industrial Park, subject to certain limitations. However, the allowance for self-service storage as part of a Business/Industrial Park in an I-1 zoning district is not clearly articulated in the use table, potentially leading to confusion. Clarifying and reconciling these provisions could help ensure consistent interpretation of the Code.

#### *How does all this work together?*

While the County's regulatory review and approval process is generally sound, the County Code does not include any significant use-specific regulations for self-service storage facilities that could help shape the type, scale, or overall appearance of development that may be preferred by the community.

In the absence of such standards, proposals are largely evaluated under broader zoning and development criteria, which may not fully address context-sensitive design considerations. That said, preferences regarding aesthetics and site design can be subjective, and the County should be cautious about adopting overly prescriptive requirements. Regulations that are too rigid or burdensome could expose the County to legal challenges or unnecessarily constrain property rights and market responsiveness.

Based on a review of previous planning efforts and best practice research the County could consider refining the zoning districts in which self-service storage facilities are permitted. In addition, the County could explore incorporating lighter-touch, context-based design standards. These might include basic expectations related to building orientation, façade articulation, screening, landscaping, access management, and compatibility with adjacent uses. A final consideration could also be to have separate types of self-service storage facilities: Drive-up/Mini-Storage (single story) and Internal Storage (multi-story) facilities. These uses could then be permitted in certain zoning districts based on scale and intensity of use, with each having their own applicable design standards.

Such standards can help ensure that new facilities are better integrated into their surroundings without dictating a specific architectural style or development model. By striking a balance between predictability and flexibility, the County can promote higher-quality outcomes while still allowing developers and the market to respond to changing economic conditions and consumer demand.

### Initial Recommended Regulatory Changes and Amendments

Based on the findings and research conducted by the consultant team during Task 1, a series of initial recommendations for regulatory changes were developed for the Carroll County Zoning and Development and Subdivision of Land regulations. These recommendations are intended to better align adopted planning policies and best-practice research with the County's existing regulatory framework.

These initial recommendations will be further refined during Task 2, informed by stakeholder input and technical review, and will be subject to approval by the County Commissioners prior to being translated into draft code language during Task 3.

### *Overall Regulatory Direction*

The Task 1 assessment found that while self-service storage facilities are generally permitted in certain zoning districts and addressed through standard development regulations, the County's regulatory framework relies largely on generalized use and site standards that do not include more specific architectural or design requirements and include some permissions that are not in perfect alignment with past planning efforts.

#### **1) Clarify Permitted Uses, Districts, and Approval Processes**

- Reevaluate where the use is permitted by right versus by conditional use approval.
- Create separate uses and/or regulations for Drive-up/Mini-Storage (single story) and Internal Storage (multi-story) facilities.
- Clarify in the use table that self-service storage is a permitted use in a Business/Industrial Park in the I-1 zone subject to §158.079(D)(1).
- Consider requiring conditional use approval in more sensitive commercial corridors where C-2 or other similar zoning occurs.
- Clarify and better regulate accessory outdoor vehicle storage associated with self-service storage facilities. Ensure consistency in how accessory outdoor vehicle storage is described

and applied. Evaluate whether the use should be permitted uniformly across commercial districts or differentiated (e.g., permitted in C-2 but restricted or subject to additional standards in C-3) to better reflect district intent. Establish clear limits on the scale of outdoor vehicle storage within self-service storage facilities. Determine when the accessory use becomes a principal use and how it is defined and regulated.

**2) Adopt Clear, Objective Design Standards**

- Minimum façade articulation requirements (e.g., changes in plane, materials, or roofline every certain number of feet).
- Maximum blank wall lengths along public streets.
- Required percentage of masonry, glass, or architectural treatment on street-facing façades.
- Enhanced landscaping or screening requirements when adjacent to residential uses.
- Enhanced utilization of the DARC in site plan reviews.

**3) Establish Context-Sensitive Location Standards**

- Require primary building entrances to face public streets where feasible.
- Limit or prohibit roll-up doors facing public rights-of-way in commercial districts.
- Require additional setbacks or buffers when abutting residential zoning.
- Encourage or require placement on arterial or collector roads, rather than local neighborhood streets.

**4) Incorporate Site Design and Access Management Standards**

- Require consolidated driveways where feasible.
- Establish minimum landscaping percentages or enhanced streetscape standards in commercial areas.
- Include pedestrian connectivity requirements when located near commercial centers.

**5) Consider Size and Scale Regulations**

- Establish maximum building footprint or length standards in commercial districts.
- Consider minimum lot size requirements to prevent piecemeal or poorly configured development.

**6) Encourage Higher-Quality or Mixed-Use Models**

- Allow incentives for climate-controlled, multi-story, or mixed-use storage developments in commercial areas.
- Consider permitting storage facilities as part of larger mixed-use or commercial developments, subject to design integration standards.

## Best Practices Evaluation

### *National Trends*

Several key trends are driving the self-service storage facility industry and its regulation by government jurisdictions:

- Growth and Demand: Self storage has grown to more than 2.1 billion square feet of space in 2026. Over the span of the last 5 years, 293.1 million square feet of storage space was built – that's equivalent to 13.8% of the total inventory. One third of Americans (33%) use self-service storage currently, with a further 18% intending to rent some in the future.
- Adaptive Reuse and Design: Developers are converting existing vacant retail spaces (like former Kmart, etc.) into modern, secure, and attractive self-service storage facilities to overcome land availability limitations.
- Drive-up vs. Indoor Storage Development: While drive-up storage facilities are still in demand offering high convenience at a lower cost, developers are building more indoor, multi-story facilities, especially in urban areas, driven by high demand, higher rent potential, and space optimization.
- Growing Preference for Climate Control: Indoor, climate-controlled storage is increasing as consumers store higher-value items (electronics, wine, antiques) needing humidity and temperature management.
- Recreational Vehicle and Boat Storage: As personal investments in RVs and watercraft increase for recreation and active living lifestyles, the demand for large-scale and specialty storage demand is increasing.
- Sustainability Trends: Facilities are implementing sustainable practices, including solar power installations and eco-friendly lighting.
- Strategic Location Placement and Mixed-Use: Facilities are being strategically placed in central, high-traffic areas within commercial and mixed-use districts. For mixed use projects, self-service storage is the anchor and incorporates small retail spaces for stores, fitness centers, and co-working spaces.

### *Best Practice Examples*

Michael Baker identified the following self-service storage facility development projects that exemplify sound land use planning and design principles. These facility examples are further profiled in the attached Best Practice Examples – Self-Service Storage Facilities slides.

#### Indoor Self-Service Storage

- Storelocal Storage Bellevue (Bellevue, TN) is a 72,000square foot institutional Class A self-service storage facility. Located on the corner of Collins Rd. and Learning Ln. in Bellevue, TN, this facility is fully climate controlled. The project was developed under the Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Zoning Code, which includes provisions to allow for customized design and site-specific conditions, such as higher density or unique architectural standards.
- Storelocal Storage Gallatin (Gallatin, TN) is a 96,000square foot institutional Class A self-service storage facility. The facility's two, three-story buildings provide a total of 646 self-service storage units that are 100% climate-controlled. The facility is located on the Nashville Pike in the Kennesaw Farms area of Gallatin, TN. The facility's unique barn house design pays homage to the rich history of Kennesaw Farms and the thoroughbreds who have graced its fields.

- Sherlock Self Storage (Duvall, WA) is an 89,407 SF facility spanning four levels with 592 storage units in rural King County. The design incorporates a basement and mezzanine within a three-story form, optimizing capacity while responding to local zoning constraints. Architectural expression draws inspiration from a nearby historic barn, aligning with community character while navigating SEPA requirements, parking, and landscape standards.

### Drive-up Self-Service Storage

- Trindle Self Storage (Carlisle, PA) is an independently owned and operated drive-up storage facility in Carlisle, PA offering over 22,000 total square feet of self-service storage space including a variety of unit sizes from 25 sq. ft. to 300 sq. ft.
- Prime Self Storage (Mechanicsburg, PA) is a drive-up self-service storage facility located at 5160 E. Trindle Rd. and offers various indoor climate-controlled and outdoor unit types and sizes, ranging from 5'x5' to 10'x30'. Its security includes gated entry, security cameras, and an on-site manager. It is particularly noted for having the largest outdoor parking lot for vehicles, boats, and RVs within a 60-mile radius.

### Adaptive Re-use

- U-Haul Moving & Storage of Carlisle (Carlisle, PA) is a 65,000 sq. ft., 700-unit, climate controlled self-service storage facility that was converted from the former 143,485 sq. ft. Kmart building and property in Carlisle, PA. Acquisition of the building was driven by U-Haul Corporate Sustainability initiatives: U-Haul supports infill developments to help local communities lower their carbon footprint. The U-Haul storage facility is integrated into a new mixed-use Town Center redevelopment master planned area of South Middleton Township.

# Carroll County Zoning and Site Development Revisions

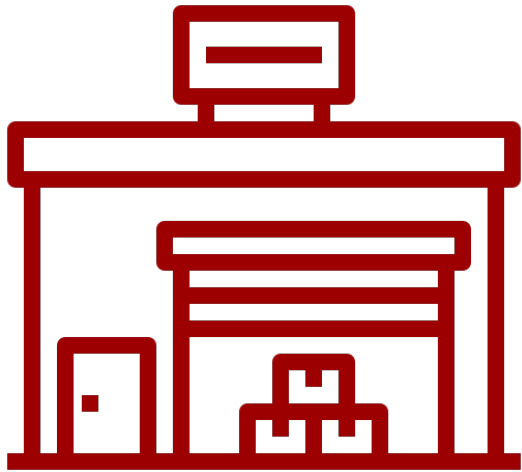
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TASK 1 – BEST PRACTICES

SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITIES

**MAY 22, 2026**





# Self-Service Storage Facilities

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# Background

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- Prior to 2019, when the C-2 and C-3 zoning districts were created as part of a comprehensive code rewrite, a self-service storage facility (“Mini Storage”) was allowed only in the Business General (BG) zoning district.
- During the County’s zoning code rewrite, “Mini Storage” use was replaced with “Self-Service Storage Facility” to reflect industry changes.
- At the time, most existing storage facilities were single-story, drive-up units, and there was no clear expectation that multi-story warehouse-style storage would be proposed.
- Accordingly, the Planning Commission recommended:
  - Permitted by Right in high-intensity commercial districts
  - Conditional Use in medium-intensity districts
  - Prohibited in low-intensity districts

# Background

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- Ultimately, the Board of County Commissioners made self-service storage facilities a permitted use by right in both the medium (C-2) and high-intensity (C-3) commercial districts, largely to avoid creating nonconforming uses.
- Self-service storage facilities are permitted as a conditional use in the I-1 district only if located in a designated Sustainable Community (currently, Finksburg is the only such area in the unincorporated parts of the county). They are also permitted by right in the I-1 district when incorporated into a Business/Industrial Park, approved as Business Parks prior to April 1, 2019.
- The use is expressly prohibited in Industrial Parks in the I-1 zoning district, per §158.156, and in Business Parks in the C-3 zoning district, per §158.159.
- The County's Department of Economic Development consistently has opposed the allowance of self-service storage facilities in zones designated for industrial and employment uses, given the relatively small number of acres available in those zones.

# Unintended Consequences

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- The Carroll Highlands Self-Service Storage Facility proposal revealed an unintended outcome, i.e., the Zoning Code permits large, multi-story buildings adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
- Such proposals were not fully anticipated when the zoning changes were enacted.
- Neighboring residential property owners expressed concerns related to the project's:
  - proximity to residential districts and lack of context sensitive design;
  - building scale, bulk, and height; and
  - traffic and crime safety.

# Zoning District vs. Use Appropriateness

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- In January 2024, the Commissioners held a public hearing on changes to bulk requirements in Commercial zones and subsequently reduced the maximum height and increased the minimum side yard setback for all uses in the Commercial zoning districts when they adjoin a Residential zoning district.
- Public concern pertaining to the Carroll Highlands project led Carroll County Commissioners to implement a temporary pause on final approval of new self-service storage facilities in December 2025.

# Plan Consistency

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- The Freedom Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2018) designated the Carroll Highlands area for medium commercial use (equivalent to the County's Commercial Medium Intensity (C-2) zoning district)
- The Plan does not specifically address self-service storage facilities; however, it includes several goals and objectives related to economic development.
- Self-service storage was not raised as a major concern during the Plan's adoption, but the Carroll Highlands project has become a catalyst for revisiting assumptions about what commercial zoning allows near residential areas.
- County Zoning implementing the Freedom Comprehensive Plans' designation was enacted in 2019; making self-service storage facilities a permitted use in the C-2 and C-3 districts.
- Mostly aligned with Commercial-Medium land use designation (and C-2 zoning district). To better align self-storage service facility uses with the intent of the Commercial-Medium land use designation (and C-2 Zoning District) form standards should be applied to ensure compatibility with and sensitivity to nearby neighborhoods.
- The Plan's land use designation description for Commercial-High indicates that self-service storage facilities would be an appropriate use in this area, which aligns with the Zoning Code's C-3 zoning district. As such, permitting this use in the C-3 zoning district is consistent with the Plan.



# Carroll County Zoning and Site Development Revisions

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BEST PRACTICES – SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITIES IN  
COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

# Storelocal Storage Bellevue

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# Storelocal Storage Bellevue

Storelocal Storage Bellevue is a 72,000square foot institutional Class A self-storage facility. Located on the corner of Collins Rd. and Learning Ln. in Bellevue, TN, this facility is fully climate controlled. The project was developed under the Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Zoning Code, which includes provisions to allow for customized design and site-specific conditions, such as higher density or unique architectural standards.



# Storelocal Storage Bellevue

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- Self-storage facilities are regulated under the **Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Zoning Code**, as Bellevue is part of the Metro Nashville government.
- The Storelocal Bellvue self-service storage facility is a permitted by right use in the Commercial Service (CS) zoning district.
- **Specific Plan (SP)**: Many modern self-storage projects in Bellevue and Nashville use SP zoning to allow for customized design and site-specific conditions, such as higher density or unique architectural standards.

# Storelocal Storage Bellevue

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- **Separation Distance:** Facilities must maintain significant distances from residential areas. For example, some ordinances require a minimum separation of 150 feet from any residential zoning district boundary or residential structure.
- **Building Height:** Standard height limits apply based on the base zone, but specific ordinances for storage have limited buildings to one-story (max 18 feet) in certain PUDs, though SP zoning can allow up to 4 stories depending on the location.
- **Landscaping & Buffering:** A Landscape Buffer Yard (often Type D) is required where the facility abuts residential or agricultural districts. This typically includes a 6-foot opaque fence or berm.
- **Operations:** All loading, unloading, and storage must take place on-site within an enclosed or fenced area. Outdoor loudspeakers are generally prohibited.
- **Glazing & Facades:** Developers may be required to use spandrel glass or similar glazing material on building elevations to improve aesthetics.
- **Environmental Protection:** Developments must comply with strict stormwater and fire protection standards, including adequate water supply and emergency vehicle access

# Storelocal Storage Gallatin

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# Storelocal Storage Gallatin

Storelocal Storage Gallatin is a 96,000 square foot institutional Class A self-storage facility. The facility's two 3-story buildings provide a total of 646 self-storage units that are 100% climate-controlled. This site is located on the Nashville Pike in the beautiful Kennesaw Farms area of Gallatin, TN. Construction was completed in March 2021. The unique barn house design pays homage to the rich history of Kennesaw Farms and the thoroughbreds who have graced its fields.



# Storelocal Storage Gallatin

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- Self-Service Storage Facilities are regulated under the Gallatin Zoning Ordinance as “Limited Warehousing” uses and by definition are regulated in maximum size and are precluded from being used for freight distribution warehouse storage facilities.
- Principal Permitted Use in the following Zoning Districts:
  - Commercial General (CG): Permitted by Right (60 ft. building height) (Storelocal Gallatin location)
  - Planned General Commercial (PGC): Conditional Use (40 ft. building height)
  - Industrial General (IG): Permitted by Right (80 ft. building height)
  - Industrial Restrictive (IR): Permitted by Right (80 ft. building height)
- The Zoning Ordinance’s Architectural Design and Compatibility Standards include applicability to the CG and PGC Districts.

# Sherlock Self Storage

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# Sherlock Self-Storage

Sherlock Self Storage, an 89,407 SF facility spanning four levels with 592 storage units in rural King County. The design incorporates a basement and mezzanine within a three-story form, optimizing capacity while responding to local zoning constraints. Architectural expression draws inspiration from a nearby historic barn, aligning with community character while navigating SEPA requirements, parking, and landscape standards.



# Sherlock Self Storage

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- Self-service storage facilities are regulated under the City of Duvall Municipal Code.
- The Sherlock Self Storage facility is classified as a “Self service storage” use that is permitted by right under the City’s Light Industrial (LI) zoning district. Among its multiple purposes, the LI district promotes high-quality and well-designed business and light industrial developments that are in keeping with Duvall's small-city character.
- [Chapter 14.34](#) of the Code specifies Design Guidelines that include standards for building design including a requirement that new non-residential development should provide architectural variety, pedestrian scale, and features that enhance its connection to the natural environment.
- The Design Guidelines also include standards for building massing and composition. One requirements specifies, “A strong overall building composition, along with a clear pattern of massing changes and modulation of building forms is required to create interest and to support the buildings integration into the overall context.”

# Trindle Self Storage

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# Trindle Self-Storage

Trindle Self Storage (Carlisle, PA) is an independently owned and operated drive-up storage facility in Carlisle, PA offering over 22,000 total square feet of self-service storage space including a variety of unit sizes from 25 sq. ft. to 300 sq. ft.



# Trindle Self-Storage

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- Self-Service Storage Facilities are regulated under the South Middleton Township Zoning Ordinance as both “Mini-Storage/Self-Storage Warehouse” and “Storage Facilities”.
  - Mini-Storage/ Self-Storage Facility: A structure containing separate storage spaces of equal or varying sizes leased or rented on an individual basis.
  - Storage Facility: Area or structure designed for storage of non-hazardous materials or finished product where the same are not broken down or aggregated into smaller or larger loads for transfer. This definition shall not include those facilities that meet the definition of “Truck Terminal” contained herein or storage of trucks, trailers, or both, as defined by this ordinance.
- Both uses are permitted by right in following Zoning Districts:
  - Industrial - Light (I-1): 40 ft. building height
  - Industrial - Manufacturing (I-2): 40 ft. building height
  - Industrial – Transportation (I-3): 40 ft. building height
  - Airport Development (AD): 40 ft. building height
- Mini-Storage / Self-Storage Facility is permitted by Conditional Use in the following Zoning Districts:
  - Commercial – General (C-2): 40 ft. building height

# Self-Storage vs. Contractor Bay

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- Similar to South Middleton’s prohibition on using self-storage facilities for truck terminals, self-storage facilities are also not intended to support daily contractor business operations, for the following reasons:
  - **Prohibition on business use.** Most self-storage lease agreements explicitly prohibit active business use — running power tools, receiving supplier deliveries, or performing any work on the premises. Likewise, local zoning regulations typically impose similar use prohibitions.
  - **Lack of electric power access.** Standard self-storage units provide no electrical service. Dedicated contractor storage space typically provides 100-amp or higher electrical service per unit — the minimum for running tools and charging reliably.
  - **Drive-up access limitations.** Drive-up access is intended to accommodate the loading and unloading of common household goods, not the ingress and egress of contractor supply deliveries. For example, deliveries and pick-ups may occur outside of storage facility gate access hours (typically between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.), aisles are often too narrow to accommodate larger delivery trucks and trailers, and such facilities generally lack designated delivery zones or adequate space to stage materials.

# Self-Storage vs. Contractor Bay

CRITERIA	SELF-STORAGE	CONTRACTOR BAY
ACTIVE WORK PERMITTED	<b>No</b> — lease prohibition at most facilities	<b>Yes</b> — commercially zoned, hands-on work allowed
COMMERCIAL BUSINESS ADDRESS	<b>No</b> — storage use only	<b>Yes</b> — licensed business premises
ELECTRICAL SERVICE	<b>None</b> in most units	<b>100–200 amp</b> per unit, standard
DRIVE-UP ACCESS	Yes, but facility gate hours apply	<b>Yes</b> — 24/7 direct vehicle access
SUPPLIER DELIVERIES	<b>Restricted or prohibited</b>	<b>Permitted</b> — compliant delivery address
OVERSIZED VEHICLE ACCESS	Limited — aisle width varies by facility	Wide bay access for trucks and trailers
HAZARDOUS MATERIAL STORAGE	<b>Restricted</b> by lease terms	Permitted within local fire code
INSURANCE COMPATIBILITY	May void commercial liability coverage	Supports standard contractor insurance

Source: <https://workbay.com/blog/contractor-bay-vs-self-storage/>

# Prime Storage

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# Prime Storage

Prime Storage is a major national self-storage operator that manages over 230 locations across 26 states. Owned and operated by Prime Group Holdings, it specializes in a wide range of storage solutions including residential, business, student, and military storage.

Prime Storage's Mechanicsburg, PA operation is a drive-up self-storage facility located at 5160 E. Trindle Rd. and offers various indoor climate-controlled and outdoor unit types and sizes, ranging from 5'x5' to 10'x30'. Its security includes gated entry, security cameras, and an on-site manager. It is particularly noted for having the largest outdoor parking lot for vehicles, boats, and RVs within a 60-mile radius.



# Prime Self-Storage

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- Self-service storage facilities are regulated under the **Hampden Township Zoning Ordinance** as a “Self-service storage facility” use.
- Self-service storage facility is defined as any real property designed and used for the purpose of renting or leasing individual storage spaces to tenants who are to have access to such space for the purpose of storing and removing personal property.
- The property is situated in the [C-L Commercial Limited](#) district, the purpose of which is to provide appropriate locations for office, limited commercial and residential usage where a proliferation of unrestricted commercial usage would be undesirable.
- Key Regulations for Self-Storage in this Zone Residential Buffers: Self-storage facilities in the C-G district are prohibited from abutting or being separated by only a public street from existing residential districts.
- **Building Height:** In the C-L district, no building shall be erected to a height in excess of 40 feet and may be increased one foot for each additional foot that the width of each yard. The maximum increased height is 45 ft. For Prime’s facility, the storage units are one story, but the office and manager’s living quarters building extends to at least 40 ft.
- **Buffer Yard:** Along any residential district boundary or when adjacent to a residential use, uses in the C-L district must have a 20 ft. wide separation buffer.
- **Off-street Parking:** All parking areas must be screened with a vegetative buffer.

# U-Haul Moving & Storage of Carlisle, PA (Adaptive Reuse)

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# U-Haul Moving & Storage of Carlisle

U-Haul converted a former 143,485 sq. ft. Kmart property in Carlisle, PA into a 65,000 sq. ft., 700-unit, climate controlled self-storage facility. Acquisition of the building was driven by U-Haul Corporate Sustainability initiatives: U-Haul supports infill developments to help local communities lower their carbon footprint. The adaptive reuse of existing buildings reduces the amount of energy and resources required for new-building materials and helps cities reduce their unwanted inventory of unused buildings.



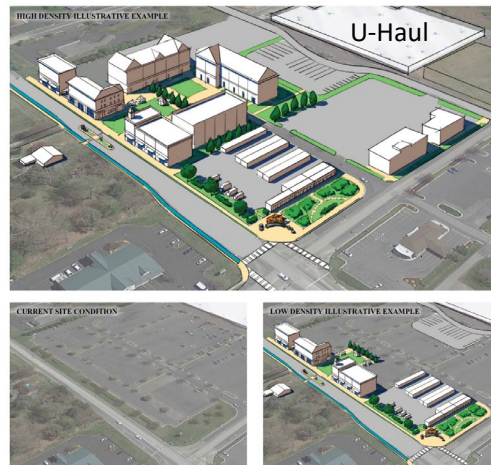
## Catalyst Site #2 – Former Walnut Bottom Town Center

### Catalyst Site #2 – Former Walnut Bottom Town Center

As proposed, the northwest corner of the catalyst site will be used for self-storage and parking with a proposed 60-foot setback from Walnut Towne Center Drive designated as public open space. The self-storage and parking area will include appropriate landscaping to mitigate its suburban-style development visual impact on the corridor. In addition, entryway signage at the corner will incorporate a focal point seating and shading for pedestrians, thus allowing U-Haul to maintain visibility while creating a pedestrian-oriented plaza space at a key corner with proximity to the other catalyst sites. Towards the northeastern side of the site, unused parking can be redeveloped as a series of small-scale mixed-use buildings that front the street or could alternatively be developed more intensely into the site with higher density.

The concept drawings depict a lower density option with 2 to 3 story buildings along Walnut Bottom Road only, and a higher density option as well as a parklet and median with midblock crossing to connect with the Two Mile House and nearby trails.

### STREET FACING RETAIL, TWO MILE HOUSE CONNECTION, AND CORNER PARKLET



# U-Haul Moving & Storage of Carlisle

- Self-Service Storage Facilities are regulated under the South Middleton Township Zoning Ordinance as both “Mini-Storage/Self-Storage Warehouse” and “Storage Facilities”.
- The U-Haul storage facility is located in the Commercial – General (C-2) and is permitted by Conditional Use as a “Mini-Storage/Self-Storage Facility.”
- The U-Haul storage facility is integrated into a new mixed-use Town Center redevelopment master planned area of South Middleton Township in Cumberland County, PA.



# Market Trends

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- **Growth and Demand:** Self storage has grown to more than 2.1 billion square feet of space in 2026. Over the span of the last 5 years, 293.1 million square feet of storage space was built – that's equivalent to 13.8% of the total inventory. One third of Americans (33%) use self-storage currently, with a further 18% intending to rent some in the future.
- **Adaptive Reuse and Design:** Developers are converting existing vacant retail spaces (like former Kmart, etc.) into modern, secure, and attractive self-storage facilities to overcome land availability limitations.
- **Drive-up vs. Indoor Storage Development:** While drive-up storage facilities are still in demand offering high-convenience at a lower cost, developers are building more indoor, multi-story facilities, especially in urban areas, driven by high demand, higher rent potential, and space optimization.
- **Growing Preference for Climate Control:** Indoor, climate-controlled storage is increasing as consumers store higher-value items (electronics, wine, antiques) needing humidity and temperature management.
- **Recreational Vehicle (RV) and Boat Storage:** As personal investments in RVs and watercraft increase for recreation and active living lifestyles, the demand for large-scale and specialty storage demand is increasing.
- **Sustainability Trends:** Facilities are implementing sustainable practices, including solar power installations and eco-friendly lighting.
- **Strategic Location Placement and Mixed-Use:** Facilities are being strategically placed in central, high-traffic areas within commercial and mixed-use districts. For mixed use projects, self-service storage is the anchor and incorporates small retail spaces for stores, fitness centers, and co-working spaces.

# Best Practices Summary

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- Examples demonstrate that self-storage facility construction can meet local architectural design requirements (where required) and avoid "cookie-cutter" metal boxes from being built.
- Self-storage construction today focuses on specialized designs to meet specific market demands, ranging from high-end climate-controlled facilities to massive RV storage. Developers are increasingly prioritizing durability, architectural appeal, and land use efficiency.
- Facilities are being strategically placed in central, high-traffic areas within commercial and mixed-use districts.
- Urban integration has increased adaptive reuse of existing buildings such as factories, outdated office spaces, and big-box stores.
- Urban integration and adaptive reuse creates opportunities for better design to ensure uses are compatible and sensitive to the existing built environment (i.e., compact sites require concealed or indoor loading areas to avoid trucks blocking sidewalks, etc.).