

Carroll County Zoning and Site Development Revisions

TASK 3 – CODE
AMENDMENTS: SELF-SERVICE
STORAGE FACILITIES

AUGUST 18, 2026





Task 3 – Code Amendments: Self-Service Storage Facilities

Amendments Overview

§ 158.002 – (Zoning) Definitions

- Create separate definitions for Drive-Up and Internal Self-service storage facilities.

§ 158.082 – Regulation of Principal Uses

- Specify where self-storage is permitted in the commercial and industrial districts and refine approval pathways based on location and intensity.

§ 158.082 – Self-Service Storage Facility

- Introduce measurable, enforceable architectural and site design standards
- Ensure facilities are designed and oriented to fit their surrounding context
- Enhance site layout, circulation, and integration with surrounding development
- Establish standards to manage the scale and intensity of development

§ 158.002, Definitions

Replaces the term “Self-Service Storage Facility” with the following:

SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITY, DRIVE-UP. A building or group of buildings, typically single-story in design, containing multiple separate, self-contained storage units accessed through individual exterior doors that provide direct vehicular access to each unit. Such facilities are intended to accommodate the temporary storage of non-hazardous, personal property and may include climate- and temperature-controlled storage units and accessory outdoor storage of vehicles. No commercial activities or transactions shall be permitted other than the rental of storage units and the incidental sale of products related to storage and moving. In addition, the term does not include Contractor’s Equipment Storage as defined in § 158.002.

SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITY, INTERNAL. A fully enclosed, multi-story building in which individual storage units are primarily accessed from internal corridors and which the loading and unloading of storage items are typically conducted at a designated area within the building. Such facilities are intended to accommodate the temporary storage of non-hazardous, personal property and may include climate- and temperature-controlled storage units and accessory outdoor storage of vehicles. No commercial activities or transactions shall be permitted other than the rental of storage units and the incidental sale of products related to storage and moving. In addition, the term does not include Contractor’s Equipment Storage as defined in § 158.002.

§ 158.082 Commercial, Industrial, and Employment Campus Districts: Regulation of Principal Uses.

(A) Table of Principal Uses

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<i>Land Use Category Subcategory Description</i>	<i>C-1</i>	<i>C-2</i>	<i>C-3</i>	<i>I-1</i>	<i>I-2</i>	<i>EC</i>
INDUSTRIAL						
Self-service storage facility	X	P	P	X	X	X
Self-service storage facility in a sustainable community	X	P	P	C	X	X
Self-service storage facility, drive-up	X	P C	P	X	X	X
Self-service storage facility, internal	X	C	P	X	X	X
Self-service storage facility in a sustainable community, drive-up	X	C	P	C	X	X
Self-service storage facility in a sustainable community, internal	X	C	P	C	X	X

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Permitted Locations & Site Standards

Design Objective: Establish appropriate locations, unit sizes, and minimum lot requirements for self-service storage facilities.

Permitted Locations

- o C-2 District: Drive-up and Internal Self-service storage facilities permitted by Conditional Use.
- o C-3 District: Drive-up and Internal Self-service storage facilities permitted by right (subject to use regulations).
- o I-1 District: Drive-up and Internal Self-service storage facilities permitted by Conditional Use when located within a sustainable community (Finksburg).

Maximum Building and Storage Unit Size

- o The maximum gross floor area of a self-service storage facility shall not exceed 100,000 square feet in the In the C-2 and C-3 commercial districts.
- o Individual storage units may not exceed 500 square feet.

Minimum Lot Size

- o Drive-Up Self-Service Storage: 2 acres
- o Internal Self-Service Storage: 1 acre

Adaptive Reuse Incentive

- o The minimum lot size for an internal self-service storage facility may be reduced to 0.5 acre when: (1) An existing building is adaptively reused; and (2) All other building and site design requirements are satisfied.

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Front Façade Design and Orientation

Design Objective: Ensure storage facilities resemble high-quality commercial buildings rather than industrial compounds.

- o Front façade must be compatible with surrounding development.
- o Storage unit doors must face inward.
- o No drive aisles, loading areas, or storage aisles between the building and public street.
- o Street-facing facades must include: Windows/display areas covering at least 20% of the ground-floor frontage, or equivalent architectural treatment.
- o Blank walls along streets are prohibited.

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Massing and Composition

Design Objective: Create visually interesting buildings that are compatible with surrounding development and sensitive to neighboring uses.

Defined Building Form

- Buildings should feature a clearly articulated base, middle, and top.
- Ground floors should be distinguished from upper floors through cornices, banding, awnings, or similar architectural elements.

Prominent Entrances

- Primary building entrances should be clearly identifiable and integrated into the building's overall design and massing.

Street-Oriented Design

- Building massing and primary uses should be focused toward the primary street frontage.
- Service areas, utilities, and parking should be located on secondary facades and fully screened.

Corner and Double-Frontage Buildings

- Buildings with frontage on more than one street should establish both primary and secondary facades to ensure a cohesive architectural appearance.

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Office, Parking, Access & Circulation Standards

Design Objective: Ensure safe, efficient site operations while minimizing conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and neighboring properties.

Office & Employee Parking

- o An on-site management office is permitted.
- o Employee parking must be located adjacent to the office.
- o Required parking spaces must remain available for parking and may not be used for vehicle or equipment storage.

Access & Internal Circulation

- o Minimum drive aisle widths: (20 feet for two-way traffic and 15 feet for one-way traffic serving units on one side)
- o Site design must accommodate emergency vehicle access and maneuvering.
- o Internal circulation should provide clear ingress and egress routes.
- o Vehicle backing movements onto public streets are prohibited.

Site Connectivity

- o Cross-access easements to adjacent commercial and industrial properties should be provided when feasible to improve connectivity and reduce traffic conflicts.

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Use Limitations

Design Objective: Ensure self-storage facilities remain compatible with surrounding properties and operate as a low-impact storage use.

Permitted Uses

- o Property may be used solely for self-storage activities, including accessory outdoor vehicle storage.
- o Business operations unrelated to storage are prohibited (e.g., contractor's bay).

Accessory Outdoor Vehicle Storage

- o Outdoor vehicle storage is permitted as an accessory use.
- o Storage areas may occupy a maximum of 20% of the total lot area.
- o Outdoor storage may not be located:
 - Between a principal building and a public street.
 - Between any building and adjacent residentially zoned or used property.
- o All vehicles stored outdoors must be legally registered.

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Operational Restrictions & Hazardous Materials

Design Objective: Ensure self-storage facilities remain compatible with surrounding properties and operate as a low-impact storage use.

Operational Restrictions

- o No retail sales, contracting businesses, repair shops, or commercial workshops.
- o Limited sales of packing and moving supplies permitted within the on-site office.
- o Outdoor public address or loudspeaker systems are prohibited.
- o Facilities adjacent to residential areas must limit public access to between 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Hazardous Materials

- o Storage of toxic, hazardous, or explosive materials is prohibited.
- o Fuel contained within standard manufacturer-installed vehicle or boat fuel tanks is permitted.

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Development Incentives and Adaptive Reuse

Design Objective: Encourage mixed-use development, active streetscapes, and redevelopment of existing buildings.

Development Incentives

- o Climate-controlled, multi-service storage facilities may exceed the maximum permitted floor area by up to 20% when:
 - The ground floor includes active commercial frontage along the primary street; or
 - The facility is integrated into a mixed-use building containing retail or office uses.

Adaptive Reuse Opportunities

- o Existing commercial, office, and industrial buildings may be converted to self-storage facilities through the Conditional Use process in the C-2 and C-3 Districts.
- o Exterior modifications must comply with applicable façade and design standards.
- o To encourage redevelopment of existing buildings over greenfield development, the Board of Zoning Appeals may grant relief from certain development standards as part of Conditional Use approval.

§ 158.158 Self-Service Storage Facility

Design Review

Design Review Process

- o All self-service storage facilities in the C-2 and C-3 Districts are subject to review by the Design Advisory Review Committee (DARC) prior to Planning and Zoning Commission approval.
- o DARC evaluates compliance with:
 - Architectural design standards
 - Façade articulation requirements
 - Building materials and finishes
 - Site integration and compatibility with surrounding development

Next Steps

- **PZC Work Sessions (as needed)**
- **Recommended code amendments sent to Board of County Commissioners**
- **Review and public hearing**
- **Adoption**