



Montgomery County, Virginia CONSERVATION (C-1)

C-1 District: Conservation (C-1) districts provide recreational, conservation, and scenic areas, including all forest and mountain lands in the Jefferson National Forest, for Montgomery County residents and visitors. The Conservation District is intended to facilitate water and natural resource conservation, to assist with United States Forest Service conservation programs, encourage the closure of national forest boundaries into one contiguous conservation area, and to retain the open space areas of the county that are deemed non amenable to good development practices (including areas with excessive slopes, wetlands, and floodplains).

Qualifying lands for inclusion in the C-1 district are those that are currently zoned C-1 and other lands within Montgomery County mapped as rural or resource stewardship in the Comprehensive Plan. Qualifying lands shall not generally include those served or planned to be served by public water or sewer service. The minimum area required to create a district is 20 acres of contiguous land.

What can I do by right in C-1 district?

There are uses that are designated as "by right" which means you do not have to apply for a special use permit. The uses do, however, have to comply with all approved plans and permits, development standards, and performance standards included in the 1999 Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance and with all other applicable regulations. The "by right" uses include:

- Agriculture
- Agriculture, small scale
- Amateur radio tower
- Bed and breakfast homestay
- Cemetery
- Dwelling, single-family
- Farm Enterprise
- Game preserve
- Home occupation
- Manufactured home, Class A or B
- Natural Area
- Pet, farm
- Pet, household
- Public utility lines, water, sewer and other
- Public Use/Public Facility
- Sawmill, Temporary
- Telecommunications tower, attached
- Temporary Healthcare Structure
- Veterinary practice, animal hospital

Temporary family healthcare structures are allowed, subject to the requirements of Sec. 10-41 (2A).

Accessory structures are also allowed, subject to the requirements of Sec. 10-41 (1).

What uses require a special use permit?

Some uses are allowed in the C-1 district with the permission of the Board of Supervisors through the Special Use Permit process (applications available from the Planning Dept.). These include:

- Accessory Structures that exceed the principal structure in size and/or height*
- Amateur radio tower greater than 75 ft.
- Bed and breakfast inn
- Campground
- Park, unlighted
- Park and ride lot
- Playground, unlighted
- Sawmill
- Structure over sixty-five (65) feet in height
- Telecommunications tower, freestanding

*Special use permit allowed with permission of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Conservation Easements

Under the new ordinance, a conservation easement is defined as an easement granting a right or interest in real property that retains land or water areas predominately in their natural, scenic, open, or wooded condition, preserving such areas as suitable habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife, or maintaining existing land uses.

In a conservation easement, the land remains yours and allows you to define current and future use. For example, if you have thirty acres of wooded land that has been in your family for generations, and you would like to see the character of the property preserved for future generations of your family. A conservation easement allows you either prohibit or restrict development in later years. You design the easement to fit your desires and the nature of the property. It does not limit your use or your right to dispose of the land as long as use fits within the terms of the easement. In addition, there are tax benefits from establishing a conservation easement. Information on conservation easements is available from the New River Land Trust or the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

Building & Lot Requirements

Each zoning district has different lot and building requirements; which are meant to insure the compatibility of new development with the existing development in the surrounding area.

Minimum Lot Size:

2.5 Acres

Lot Access:

Lots must be accessible from a VDOT road or from a hard-surface road designed by a professional engineer to accommodate projected volumes, loads, and vehicle types and must be approved by the Zoning Administrator. There are two exceptions:

- 1) Three (3) lots divided from a parent parcel may be served by a private access easement at least forty (40) feet in width and connected to a road in the VDOT system,
- 2) A lot in a family subdivision may use a 20 foot easement to connect the lot to a road currently in the VDOT system.

Minimum Width:

120 feet at the minimum setback line of the front yard. Frontage requirements for family subdivisions and public utilities or public water and sewer installation lots shall be in accord with the Montgomery County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.

Sliding Scale Requirements:

As with the Agriculture (A-1) district, the Conservation district incorporates a sliding scale in order to maintain lower density. The sliding scale and the number of allowable subdivisions are based on the amount of land in the parent parcel as of December 13, 1999.

Permissible Density: Sliding Scale- Conservation District

Size of Parent Parcel	Number of Permitted Lots
Less than 2.5 acres	0 lots
Less than 5.0 acres	1 lot
Less than 7.5 acres	Up to 2 lots
7.5 to 10.0 acres	Up to 3 lots
More than 10.01 acres	Add 1 lot per additional 30 acres over the first 10 acres

**For additional information contact:
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Christiansburg, VA 24073
Ph: 540-394-2148; Fax: 540-381-8897**

A zoning permit and/or site plan may be required to proceed with the uses listed on this data sheet. See section 10-53 of the Montgomery County Code, or call the Planning Department, to determine the required development approvals.

This sheet is intended to only be a guide for development regulations in this zoning district. Please see Chapter 10 of the Montgomery County Code for the specific regulations. The full texts of the zoning and subdivision ordinances are available at the Planning Department Webpage or at www.municode.com.