



Montgomery County, Virginia

GENERAL BUSINESS (GB)

GB District: Covers that portion of the county ideally suited to conducting general business uses. GB districts should allow for direct and frequent public access, have direct access to primary highways or streets, have access to public water and sewer, adjoin existing commercial or industrial districts, and have no more than minimal impact on residential areas.

The General Business (GB) zoning designation is intended to aid in orderly business growth within the unincorporated areas of the county, and will most commonly border existing incorporated urban areas along primary highways (Rte. 11, Rte. 114, Rte. 460, etc.).

Qualifying lands

In order to qualify for inclusion in the GB (General Business) district, the land shall either be within the current GB district or be in other lands within the areas mapped as either Village, Village Expansion or Urban Expansion in the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan and are either served by or are planned to be served by public water and sewer. Five (5) acres of contiguous land are required to create a GB district.

What can I do "by right"?

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 Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance and with all other applicable regulations. The "by right" uses include:

- Amateur radio tower
- Apartment as accessory use, maximum of 2 per business structure
- Assembly of electrical, electronic devices, less than 3,000 sq. ft. floor area
- Automotive, light truck, sales, service, rental, and repair, excluding motor fuel sales
- Building material sales
- Business or trade school
- Cabinet shop, furniture, upholstery, craft industry less than 3000 sq. ft.
- Cemetery
- Church
- Civic club
- Community center
- Conference or training center
- Crematorium
- Custom meat cutting, processing
- and sales, excluding slaughtering
- Day care center
- Equipment sales and service
- Farm machinery sales/service
- Financial services
- Fire, police, and rescue facility
- Funeral home
- Garden center
- General store, convenience store without motor fuel sales
- Homeless shelter
- Hotel, motel
- Laundromat
- Library
- Medical care facility
- Motor vehicle rentals
- Office, administrative, business, or professional
- Park
- Park and ride lot, of 50 or fewer spaces
- Pet, household
- Post Office
- Printing service
- Public Use/Public Facility
- Public utility lines, other distribution or collection facilities
- Public utility lines, water or sewer
- Radio station, excluding tower
- Restaurant
- Retail sales and service
- School
- School of special instruction
- Shopping center
- Telecommunications tower, attached
- Veterinary practice, animal hospital

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

What uses are allowed with a Special Use Permit?

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

- Amateur radio tower greater than 75 ft.
- Assembly of electrical, electronic devices, greater than 3000 sq. ft. floor area
- Boarding house
- Buildings greater than fifty (50) feet in height
- Contractor's service establishment
- Feed and seed store and mill
- General store, convenience store with motor fuel sales
- Golf driving range, miniature golf and similar outdoor recreation
- Kennel, commercial
- Livestock market
- Mini-warehouse
- Night club
- Outpatient mental health and substance abuse center
- Park and ride lot of more than 50 spaces.
- Public utility plant, water, sewer, other
- Public utility substation
- Recreation establishment
- Recycling facility
- Service station
- Shooting range, indoor
- Stone engraving and sales
- Telecommunications tower, freestanding

- Transition house
- Truck, trailer, heavy equipment sales, service, rental, and repair

Building and Lot Requirements

Minimum Lot Area:

Lots sharing an access drive connected to a VDOT road: 20,000 sq. ft.

Lots not meeting the shared access criteria: 1 acre. (Exceptions are granted for public utility, public water, or public sewer installations and must be in accordance with the Montgomery County Subdivision Ordinance.)

Lot Access:

Whenever possible, lots shall be accessed from a shared access drive connected to a road in the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) system. Access roads shall be hard-surfaced roads designed by a Professional Engineer to accommodate projected volumes, loads, and vehicle types and approved by the Zoning Administrator with the Fire Marshall. Lot access for GB uses shall avoid impacting residential subdivisions with primary access and through traffic.

Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 0.40

Total Impervious Coverage: 85% of gross site area

Maximum Coverage by Buildings: 40%.

Minimum Width:

Seventy five (75) feet for lots sharing access with another lot; one hundred and fifty (150) otherwise. Width requirements for public utility or public water or sewer installations shall be accordance with the Montgomery County Subdivision Ordinance.

Minimum Yards:

- Front: 50 feet when opposite of a residential district; 35 feet otherwise.
- Rear: 40 feet when adjacent to a residential district; 10 feet otherwise.
- Side: 40 feet when adjacent to a residential district; 10 feet otherwise.

Maximum Building Height:

Fifty (50) feet. (Exception by SUP.)

Use Limitations

Screening & landscaping: In addition to landscaping and buffering requirements in the Ordinance, outside storage areas for materials, equipment, or trash are accessory uses and may not exceed 40% of the building area, must be located in side or rear yards adjacent to building, and must be screened from view of adjacent streets and adjacent land.

Off-street parking & loading: Must be provided in accordance with §10-44 and is permitted in the required setback. Parking requirements differ by size and type of use.

Indoor/outdoor operations: All repair and service operations must take place within a completely enclosed building, unless permission for outside operations is specifically allowed by SUP approved by the Board of Supervisors.

**For additional information contact:
Montgomery County Planning & GIS Services
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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.