

Chapter 34

Gateway Zoning District South

This chapter establishes the Gateway Zoning District South (GZDS) and the standards that are specifically applicable within that district

34.1 Boundaries – Purpose – Uses Permitted

34.1.1 What are the boundaries of the GZDS? The GZDS is shown on the official zoning map that accompanies this bylaw.

34.1.2 What is the purpose of the GZD? The area around Exit 12 is a “gateway,” in which many people form their first impression of Williston. The high level of accessibility and visibility make this an appropriate location for uses that serve travelers on I-89 and shoppers, as well as for offices that attract commuters from throughout the region. Pedestrians will not be forgotten, however, nor will pavement, steel, and chrome be allowed to dominate the view from the road. Special care will be taken to protect the wooded hillsides south of I-89 and safe access to Route 2A will be a major consideration.

34.1.3 What uses are permitted in the Gateway Zoning District South? Two principal types of development are anticipated in the GZDS: traveler services and offices. This bylaw also allows residential uses to be mixed with offices south of I-89 and provides limited opportunities for industrial uses in existing and approved buildings. Allowed uses are as follows:

34.1.3.1 Traveler Services. Parcels fronting Route 2A will continue to be developed for services to travelers and commuters. The uses that may be approved are shown in Table 34.A. Park-and-ride lots are also permitted.

34.1.3.2 Office Parks. Off Route 2A, this area is suitable for offices that attract employees and clients from throughout the region. The types of office use that may be permitted are listed in Table 34.A.

34.1.3.3 Residential. Residential uses may be mixed with offices at a minimum average density of five dwellings per acre (5 D/A) and a maximum average density of 7.5 D per acre (7.5 D/A). That maximum may be increased to as many as 11 D per acre with a transfer of development rights, as permitted by WDB 19.5, or a density bonus, as permitted by WDB 19.2.6

34.1.5.4 Light Industrial and Warehousing Uses. Industrial uses that do not generate large volumes of truck traffic may be permitted in existing or approved buildings that are designed for that purpose. WDB 34.9 and 34.10 set standards for such uses.

Approved? The term ‘approved’ is important in WDB 34.1.5.4 because it honors the possibility for one additional building that was approved in the specific plan adopted for the Hillside East area. That building could be used for an industrial use that provides all of the public benefits listed in the specific plan.

34.1.3.5 Accessory Structures and Uses. Accessory structures and uses are permitted in all zoning districts, as provided by Chapter 17 of this bylaw.

34.2 Permits. Permit requirements are explained in Chapters 4-6. With the minor exceptions noted there, all development in this zoning district will require a discretionary permit before an administrative permit can be approved.

34.3 Standards. Development standards are contained in 37.3.1 through 37.7.2.3. below.

34.3.1 *Is there a maximum building height in the GZDS?* Yes. Building height in the GZDS is limited to 36 feet, except where it is reduced to comply with WDB 34.8.5, below.

34.3.2 *Must development in the GZDS be set back from property lines?* Yes. Setbacks from rear and side property lines in this zoning district are controlled by the landscaped buffer requirements of Chapter 23 of this bylaw.

34.3.3 *Must development in the GZDS be set back from roads?* Yes. Setbacks from roads in this zoning district shall be:

34.3.3.1 From the Right-of-Way of I-89, 150 feet, except for public park-and-ride lots, which may be within 50 feet of I-89;

34.3.3.2 From the Right-of-Way of Route 2A, 75 feet; and

34.3.3.3 From the Right-of-Way of Any Other Road, public or private, 50 feet.

34.3.3.4 Average Setback Exception. The DRB may allow the setback required along a local road to be reduced to the average existing setback. The average existing setback will be determined by the Administrator by averaging the existing setback on all properties that are along the same street and within 300 feet of the lot where a reduction is proposed. A reduction shall be permitted only where the reduced setback is sufficient to permit for the construction of a sidewalk or, where one is called for in the *Town Plan*, a multi-use path.

34.3.4 *What uses are permitted in the required setbacks?* Setbacks must be landscaped in compliance with Chapter 23 of this bylaw. Access drives, roads, pedestrian ways, underground utility lines, and where such lines are permitted, overhead utility lines, may cross required setbacks at a right angle ($\pm 10^\circ$). Pedestrian ways may also run parallel to and within a required setback. Parking and loading areas may not be placed within the required setbacks.

34.3.5 *Is a minimum lot frontage required in the GZDS?* Yes. All lots in this zoning district must have at least 40 feet of frontage on an existing or proposed public or private road. The DRB may require a greater frontage where necessary to provide safe access.

34.4 Density Standards. There is no minimum lot size in this zoning district. See Chapter 19 for an explanation of how density is calculated and a summary of the density standards of this bylaw. WDB 19.3 explains how the standards of this bylaw regulate nonresidential densities.

34.5 General Standards. Development in this zoning district must, unless specifically exempted, comply with all standards established in Chapters 13-29 of this bylaw.

34.6 Specific Standards. Standards that apply only in this zoning district are presented in WDB 34.7 and 34.8.

34.7. Outdoor Sales and Storage

34.7.1 *Are outdoor sales permitted in the GZDS?* With the exception of gas pumps, outdoor sales are prohibited in this zoning district.

34.7.2 *Is outdoor storage permitted in the GZDS?* Outdoor storage is prohibited in this zoning district, except as provided here.

34.7.2.1 During Construction. Temporary storage of construction equipment and materials is permitted in compliance with Chapter 17 of this bylaw.

34.7.2.2 Solid Waste. Solid waste storage that is sited and screened in compliance with this bylaw is permitted.

34.7.2.3 Storage Parking. Service vehicles and vehicles awaiting repair and pick up may be kept in parking areas that are:

- in a side or rear yard (behind the front building line);
- buffered as required by Chapter 23 of this bylaw;
- in compliance with Chapter 14 of this bylaw.

34.8 Hillside Development

34.8.1 *Is the clearing of woodland or forest limited?* Clearing of wooded or forested sites with an average slope of more than three percent (3%) will be limited to 35% of the area of the parcel that is within the GZDS. The remainder of each site must remain in woodland or forest vegetation, except as specifically provided by WDB 34.8.3. This clearing limit includes access roads and utility lines.

34.8.2 *Is pruning of the existing forest or woodland vegetation allowed?* Trees may be pruned and brush cleared to create sight lines that enhance security. Pruning shall not extend more than 10 feet above the ground surface.

34.8.3 *Is replacement of the existing forest or woodland vegetation with another type of landscaping allowed?* The intent of this chapter is to maintain the appearance of a wooded hillside south of I-89. The existing forest or woodland vegetation may be managed, as provided by WDB 34.5.2, but may be thinned or replaced with conventional landscaping only as permitted here.

34.8.3.1 Park-and-Ride Lot. The setback for a park-and-ride lot along I-89 may be converted to a Type III or IV landscaped buffer (see Chapter 23 for landscaped buffer types) to help provide site security.

34.8.3.2 Conventional Lawns. Small areas of lawn or other conventional landscaping may be proposed on the south-facing sides of buildings to highlight entryways and provide a place for employees or residents to recreate. Conventional landscaping is also permitted in parking lot islands or the central hub of a roundabout. These areas will be counted as part of the total cleared area permitted by WDB 34.8.1. They must include major shade and/or coniferous trees that have an expected mature height taller than the building.

34.8.3.3 North Sides. In order to protect views from the north, the existing scrub forest shall be removed from the north side of each building and replaced with a minimum 75-foot-wide buffer that mimics the mature (climax) mixed hardwood and evergreen forest vegetation expected on this site. In order to protect views while this required buffer matures, an additional buffer of at least 75 feet of the existing scrub forest shall be retained to the north of the planted buffer.

34.8.3.4 Defensible Space. Conventional landscaping shall be permitted only as provided in WDB 34.8.3.2. The existing forest or woodland vegetation on the east and west sides of buildings may be thinned, but not cleared, to provide a wildfire defense space no more than 30 feet in width.

34.8.4 *Is there a limit on impervious surfaces in the GZDS?* The total area of impervious surfaces permitted in this zoning district is not directly limited, but the use of structured parking and porous pavement to help minimize impervious surfaces is required wherever feasible.

34.8.4.1 Structured Parking. Structured parking must be used to provide at least 1/3 of the required parking for any building larger than 10,000 square feet or any combination of buildings totaling 40,000 square feet or more. The DRB may permit a partial exception to this requirement if the applicant can show that it is not physically feasible to comply.

34.8.4.2 Porous Pavement. Porous pavements must be used for surface parking, walks, and other flatwork. The DRB may permit a partial exception to this requirement if the applicant can show that it is not physically feasible to comply.

34.8.5 *Are there specific design standards for building on hillsides in the GZDS?* Yes.

34.8.5.1 Minimize cut and fill. Grading should be minimized by careful attention to the siting of access drives and roads, parking and loading areas, buildings, and other improvements, all of which should parallel the contours of the slope. Monolithic buildings should be avoided, and larger buildings should be terraced or stepped along the slope to help minimize both grading and apparent building mass. Retaining walls may also be required to help minimize cut and fill.

34.8.5.2 Minimize contrast. While color and vitality are encouraged in most of Williston's commercial areas, building design on the hillsides of the GZDS should minimize contrast with the slope and its forest cover. Building orientation and height; building bulk or mass; building materials and colors; the extent of glass (especially west-facing glass); and the location and design of signs will all be reviewed for compliance with this principle.

34.8.5.3 Terrace parking and loading areas. Surface parking and loading areas should be terraced or stepped along the slopes, with distinct level areas divided by ample areas of retained forest or landscaping.

34.8.5.4 Visual Absorption. No building shall be silhouetted against the sky, as viewed from any public way, except roads, sidewalks, and paths on the same parcel. To state this in another way, all buildings shall be fully visually absorbed by the slope and its woodland or forest cover.

34.8.5.5 Lighting. Careful attention must be paid to the impact of both outdoor and interior lighting, as seen through windows, on views across the property. Illumination should be subdued to the maximum extent consistent with the development's use. Large expanses of windows must not be placed on the north sides of buildings.

34.9 Industrial Uses.

34.9.1 *Are “light” industrial uses permitted in the GZDS?* Table 34.A permits manufacturing uses in existing buildings, but only in compliance with WDB 34.9.2. New industrial buildings will not be permitted in this zoning district, except where they are consistent with an approved specific plan.

34.9.2 *What standards apply to industrial uses in the GZDS?*

34.9.2.1 Outdoor Sales and Storage are strictly limited. See WDB 34.7.

34.9.2.2 Suitability of Buildings and Property. Industrial uses shall only be allowed in existing and approved buildings on sites that have already been designed for and are suitable for industrial uses. Suitable buildings would have such design features as loading docks and site configurations that can accommodate truck traffic and truck turning movements.

34.9.2.3 Environmental Impacts. Proposed industrial uses must not require permits from the State of Vermont for discharges to the air or water, or use hazardous materials in quantities that would trigger WDB 18.5.3's requirement for a Hazardous Materials Management Plan, with the exception of a stormwater discharge permit.

34.9.2.4 Compatibility with Permitted Uses. Industrial uses may be permitted in existing and approved buildings in the GZDS only where their impacts on the environment, the town's infrastructure, and neighboring land uses are determined to be compatible with each other.

34.10 Wholesale Trade, Warehousing and Distribution.

34.10.1 *Are wholesale trade, warehousing, and distribution uses permitted in the GZDS?* Table 34.A permits wholesale trade and warehousing uses in existing buildings, but only in compliance with WDB 34.10.2. New warehousing and distribution buildings will not be permitted, except where they are consistent with an approved specific plan.

34.10.2 *What standards apply to industrial uses in the GZDS?*

34.10.2.1 Outdoor Sales and Storage are strictly limited. See WDB 34.7.

34.10.2.2 Suitability of Buildings. Warehousing, wholesale trade, and distribution uses shall only be allowed in existing and approved buildings that have already been designed for and are suitable for warehousing, wholesale trade and distribution. Suitable buildings would have such design features as loading docks and site configurations that can accommodate truck traffic and truck turning movements.

34.10.2.3 Compatibility with Permitted Uses. Warehousing and distribution uses may be permitted in existing and approved buildings in the GZDS only where their impacts on the environment, the town's infrastructure, and neighboring land uses are determined to be compatible with each other.

Table 34.A - Gateway Zoning District South NAICS		Notes
Uses that are not specifically permitted are prohibited. Listed uses are permitted only in compliance with all applicable requirements of this bylaw and the purpose statement for this zoning district.		
on parcels adjoining Route 2A ONLY		
Retail Trade, as below		
Gasoline Stations, with convenience stores	44711	
Accommodation & Food Services, as below		No drive-through food service is permitted in Williston.
Hotels and Motels, except Casino Hotels	72111	
RV Parks and Recreational Camps	72121	
Full Service Restaurants	72411	
Limited Service Eating Places (cafeterias, snack bars)	72421	
Caterers	72402	As an accessory to other permitted uses
Mobile Food Services (vendors, kiosks)	72403	As an accessory to other permitted uses
Drinking Places	72421	As an accessory to other permitted uses
offices on all parcels		
Information , but specifically not 51213, Theaters	51	Theaters are confined to the TCZD.
Finance & Insurance	52	No drive-through banking is permitted in the GZDS.
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services , but specifically not 54194, Veterinary Services that involve livestock	54	Vets for livestock are permitted only in the ARZD.
Management of Companies & Enterprises	55	
Administrative and Support Services , but specifically not 5617, Services to Buildings	561	5617 is permitted in the IZDW
Educational Services	61	
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	
Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, Similar Events	7113	
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional Org	813	
Public Administration	92	Public parks are permitted in all zoning districts.
In existing and approved buildings ONLY		

Manufacturing , but specifically not 322, Paper, 324, Petroleum and Coal Products, 325, Chemicals, or 331, Primary Metals Manufacturing	31-33	See WDB 34.9 for standards for these uses.
Furniture and Home Furnishing Merchant Wholesalers	4232	
Prof and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	4234	
Electrical and Electronic Goods Merchant Wholesalers	4236	
Hardware and Plumbing and Heating Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	4237	
Miscellaneous Durable Goods Merchant Wholesalers	4239	
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	424	
Beer, Wine, and Distilled Alcoholic Beverage Merchant Wholesalers	4248	
Miscellaneous Non Durable Goods Merchant Wholesalers	4249	
Wholesale Electronics Markets and Agents and Wholesalers	425	
Warehousing and Storage	493	