

Chapter 41
Taft Corners
Zoning District

This chapter establishes the Taft Corners Zoning District (TCZD) and the standards that are specifically applicable within that district.

41.1 Purpose – Boundaries – Uses Permitted

41.1.1 What are the boundaries of the TCZD? The boundaries of the TCZD are shown on the official zoning map that accompanies this bylaw. The TCZD has been largely replaced by the Taft Corners Form-Based Code Zoning District (TCFBC), but a portion of lands in the northern part of Williston’s Growth Center remain in the TCZD and are not in the TCFBC.

41.1.2 What is the purpose of the TCZD? The *Town Plan* (See Policy 3.1) calls for the development of a design-conscious, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use town center in the heart of Williston’s growth center.

***Town Plan* Excerpts that Provide the Policy Basis for this Chapter**

“The Town of Williston will encourage and support a design-conscious, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development and redevelopment pattern in the Taft Corners area. The town has worked toward this objective by successfully obtaining Growth Center Designation in 2008 and revising the Unified Development Bylaw in 2009. The town envisions the majority of new growth and development activity taking place in the Growth Center. The town will continue to support this objective by encouraging the construction of planned infrastructure in the Growth Center, concentrating new development in the Growth Center, and examining and monitoring the effectiveness of its bylaws”

from 3.1.3. Taft Corners – “The Taft Corners Zoning District is the core of Williston’s commercial area – the place where the town’s goal of creating a pedestrian-friendly, design conscious, mixed use commercial center can best be realized. Coupled with the construction of the grid streets, this will allow diverse, smaller-scale retail, office, and residential uses to be intermingled with the large retail stores and extensive parking areas that now dominate the area.”
See also 4.2.4, 4.2.5, 4.2.6, 4.2.7, and 4.3.

41.1.3 What uses are permitted in the TCZD? See Table 41.A. and WDB 41.1.3.1-5.

41.1.3.1 Retail Sales. The TCZD will evolve into an intensive retail center, with most new buildings coming to the sidewalk to help create amenable shopping streets along Trader Lane and other grid roads. Space consumptive retail uses, like auto dealers and building supplies, will be guided to the MUCZD or other locations.

41.1.3.2 Accommodations and Food Services. At least one hotel will be necessary for the long-term success of the TCZD. Food services, including street vendors, will also be permitted.

41.1.3.3 Entertainment. Indoor arts, entertainment, and recreation uses will be encouraged to draw people to the area.

41.1.3.4 Other Uses. Beyond retailing, accommodations, and restaurants a wide variety of business and personal service uses are permitted by Table 41.A, all subject to standards that will, over time, add visual diversity and interest and make the area friendlier to pedestrians.

41.1.3.5 Residential Uses. Residential uses are encouraged. As provided in Chapter 19 of this bylaw, they must have a minimum density of 5 dwellings per acre, an average density of 7.5 dwellings per acre, and a maximum of density 15 dwellings per acre with a transfer of development rights from the ARZD or the provision of a minimum of 20% of the proposed units as perpetually affordable housing per WDB 19.2.6.

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

41.2 Permits. Permit requirements are explained in Chapters 4-6 of this bylaw.

41.3 Dimensional Standards

41.3.1 What are the allowed residential densities, building heights, setbacks, other dimensional standards in this district? Is there a maximum building height in this zoning district? Building height in the TCZD is limited to 36 feet, except where the incentives of WDB 41.5.4 apply.

41.3.2 Must development in this zone be set back from property lines? Setbacks from rear and side property lines in the TCZD are controlled by the landscaped buffer requirements of Chapter 23 of this bylaw. Where landscaped buffers are not required, there are no setback requirements.

41.3.3 Must development in the TCZD be set back from roads? Yes. The minimum setbacks from roads in this zoning district shall be:

from the right-of-way of I-89, 150 feet; and

from the right-of-way of Williston Road and Route 2A, 25 feet.

Along other roads, buildings will generally come to the sidewalk, with the exceptions provided by WDB 41.5.1.2.

These setbacks must be landscaped as a Type III or IV buffer in compliance with Chapter 23 of this bylaw.

41.3.4 What Use may be made of the Required Setbacks? The required 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 required setbacks.

41.4 Density Standards. Lot Size. There is no minimum lot size in this zoning district. See Chapter 19 of this bylaw for a summary of density standards in this district. The density requirements in 41.4 and Chapter 19 only apply to portions of the TCZD that are NOT within the TCFBC.

41.5 General Standards Development in this zoning district must, unless specifically exempted, comply with all standards established in this bylaw. The general requirements in 41.5 only apply to portions of the TCZD that are NOT within the TCFBC.

41.5.1 Specific Standards Specific Standards are presented in WDB 41.7

41.6 Outdoor Sales and Storage The outdoor sales and storage requirements in 41.6 only apply to portions of the TCZD that are NOT within the TCFBC.

41.6.1 Are outdoor sales permitted? Outdoor sales in the TCZD will be limited to special events like a farmer’s market or occasional “sidewalk” sales and sidewalk vendors.

41.6.2 Is outdoor storage permitted? Outdoor storage is not permitted in this zoning district, excepting the temporary outdoor storage of construction equipment and materials, which is permitted in compliance with Chapter 17 of this bylaw.

41.7 Development Pattern. The development pattern requirements in 41.7 only apply to portions of the TCZD that are NOT within the TCFBC.

41.7.1 How will development be made more pedestrian-friendly? Buildings must invite pedestrians in, rather than being isolated from the street and sidewalk.

41.7.1.1 Pedestrian Connections. There must be a direct pedestrian connection between the principal building entrance/s and the sidewalk/s or path/s along the adjoining street/s. This is in contrast to the current situation in which the connection from the parking area is the principal connection.

41.7.1.2 Building Line to Sidewalk. New buildings must come to the sidewalk. This means that parking and outdoor sales must move to the side and/or rear of the building or into a structure. An exception of up to 30% of a building’s frontage may be made for an entry plaza or courtyard. The DRB may also permit exceptions for accessible parking and where the terrain and necessary grading make bringing the building to the sidewalk impractical.

41.7.1.3 No Dead Walls. Dead walls are permitted in the rear of buildings to provide service and storage space. Other walls must be animated by clearly demarked entrances; functional windows, including display windows; architectural detailing; and signs. The DRB may allow an exception where a side wall does not face a street, pedestrian way, or customer parking area.

What is a Dead Wall? A dead wall is any uniform blank wall that is 30 or more feet long.

41.7.2 How will buildings be made more appealing?

41.7.2.1 Building Mass. Apparent building mass must be broken up using clearly demarked doors and windows, including display windows; variations in the building footprint; and architectural detailing, including changes in materials, patterns, textures, and color. Landscaping may also be used to reinforce changes in massing. Changes in massing should not be merely cosmetic, but should correspond to the arrangement of internal space in the building.

41.7.2.2 Building Facades. Building facades must feature:

- a clearly distinguished foundation or base;

- a clearly distinguished top, which may be a parapet or cornice (it must be architectural, not just paint) and/or, preferably, a sloping roof; and
- a clearly-defined sign band or other set locations for signs.

41.7.2.3 Side and Rear Walls. The use of inferior materials for the sides or rear of a building is not permitted.

41.7.3 What other design elements are required? New development in the TCZD must offer at least five (5) of the elements listed below. These elements may be provided cumulatively, in or accessory to, multiple buildings that are part of a single development proposal.

41.7.3.1 ... multiple uses, containing a combination of one retail use and at least one of the following: retail, office or residential uses on the same property;

41.7.3.2 ... a “wrap” of smaller shops around at least one street facing side of any retail space of more than 20,000 square feet;

41.7.3.3 ... lodging (a hotel) and/or residential uses, including affordable dwelling units;

41.7.3.4 ... structured parking that provides 30% or greater of the required parking;

41.7.3.5 ... multiple stories, not just the appearance of multiple stories where the floor area of upper-level stories must be at least 60% or more of the first story floor area;

41.7.3.6 ... wide sidewalks that may be used for outdoor dining and/or with seating that encourages outdoor social interaction;

41.7.3.7 ... public artwork, the nature of which must be approved by the DRB, with the advice of the HDAC, public art must be proportionate in size and scale to the buildings in the proposed development, and be incorporated into the design of an urban park

41.7.3.8 ... on-site renewable energy generation, solar panels or geo-thermal, generating 25% or more of the estimated energy demand of the development; and/or

41.7.3.9 ... an urban park, as discussed in 4.4 of the *2016-2024 Williston Comprehensive Plan* Credit for compliance will be provided only where a proposed park is visible and accessible to the public so that it complements other proposed uses. A picnic table for employee lunch breaks is not an urban park.

41.7.4 Is there an incentive for performance? Yes. The height limit will be increased from 36 to 52 feet where perpetually affordable housing and/or structured parking are provided. To qualify, the development must create more than three (3) dwellings, of which 30% or greater are perpetually affordable, and/or provide 30% or greater of its parking requirement in a structure, resulting in a commensurate reduction in surface parking and loading areas.

41.7.5 Are there any limits on the use of the incentive offered by 41.7.4? Yes. It is not the intent of the building height incentive to permit the construction of four or five story buildings with flat roofs. This incentive is intended to make it possible to build three or, depending on the grade of the site, four story buildings that have diverse, attractive rooflines.

41.8 Specific Plans. Specific plans (see Chapter 9 of this bylaw) may be used to refine the requirements of the TCZD outside of the TCFBC. Specific Plans are not allowed within the TCFBC.t. The DRB may, when reviewing a pre-application, require that the applicant submit a specific plan before a discretionary permit for a new use, or a new structure or major addition will be approved.

41.9 Adirondack Views. Much of this zoning district has great westward views to the Adirondacks. Every specific plan and every application for a discretionary permit in the TCZD must show how views to the Adirondacks (where they exist) will be used as a feature of the proposed development. This does not mean that views must be left unimpeded. It does mean that developments must find a way to use this natural asset. Compliance with this standard could take a variety of forms, including, but not limited to, an urban park (see WDB 41.5.3.9) with westward views, windows from indoor “public” spaces facing west; an outdoor dining area with an Adirondack view, etc.

41.9 Allowed Uses

41.9.1 What uses are allowed in the Taft Corners Zoning District? Allowed and prohibited uses in the TCZD are identified in Table 41.A

Table 41.A – Taft Corners Zoning District	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 with the purpose statement for this zoning district.		
Residential		At a density of at least 5 D/A.
Retail Trade, but excluding 441-12, Automobile and Motor Vehicle Dealers; 447, Gasoline Stations, including convenience stores with gas; 45383, Manufactured Home Dealers; 4542, Vending Machine Operators; and 45431, Fuel Dealers	44-45	Except the retail sale of medical or recreational cannabis, a subsection of NAICS code 453998, which is prohibited in this district.
Parts Dealers	4413	Only where ALL sales and service are indoors
Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies	444	Only small specialty stores, where ALL sales and service are indoors - indoor lighting fixture sales - would be an example, may be permitted.
Information	51	
Finance & Insurance	52	
Real Estate	531	
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, but not 54194, Veterinary Services as noted	541	Vets with outdoor treatment and/or boarding facilities must be located in the ARZD
Management of Companies & Enterprises	55	
Administrative Support Services	561	
Educational Services	61	
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	Indoors only
Accommodation & Food Services, but excluding 72319 - Food Service Contractors	72	No drive-through food service is permitted.

Caterers	72331	But only accessory to other permitted uses.
Mobile Food Services (vendors, kiosks)	72333	
Drinking Places	72341	But only accessory to other permitted uses
Other Services, but only as listed below		
Personal & Laundry Services	812	
excluding 81233 Linen & Uniform Supply	81233	
Public Administration	92	Public parks are permitted in all districts.