

Proposed Small Business Development Sub-District (D-SB)

Introduction to Zoning

As per the Maine Land Use Planning Commission's laws, "a new land use district boundary may not be adopted or amended unless there is substantial evidence that:

1. The proposed land use district is consistent with the standards for district boundaries in effect at the time, the comprehensive land use plan, and the purpose and intent and provisions of Chapter 10: and
2. The proposed land use district has no undue adverse impact on existing uses or resources or a new district designation is more appropriate for the protection and management of existing uses and resources within the affected area.

The Aroostook Community Guided Planning and Zoning Steering Committee is considering the creation of an Aroostook County specific **Small Business Development** subdistrict. Development Districts such as this are defined as "areas discernible as having patterns of intensive residential, recreational, commercial or industrial use or commercial removal of metallic minerals, and areas appropriate for designation as development districts when measured against the purpose, intent and provisions of this chapter." 12 M.R.S.A. §685-A(1).

The Steering Committee believes that the creation of this subdistrict will play a positive and important role in the economy of the area. The subdistrict will enhance and diversify the economic opportunities for residents and visitors to Aroostook County. The expansion of commercial uses beyond traditional forestry and agriculture will help bring money and jobs to the County. Allowing easier and predicable land use regulations for small businesses, particularly those that manufacture value-added products, will also help stem out-migration.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Small Business Development subdistrict (D-SB) is to encourage a range of small business development in rural areas that are compatible with, and complementary to, Aroostook County's natural resource-based land uses such as agriculture, forestry, small-scale natural resource processing and manufacturing, and outdoor recreation. This subdistrict is designed to concentrate development in or at the edge of existing development within towns, plantations and townships identified as rural growth centers, and in concentrated areas along appropriate portions of major transportation corridors. The D-SB subdistrict seeks to maintain the rural character of the region and avoid the visual and fiscal impacts of unplanned growth.

2. Description

This subdistrict is designed to encourage a wide range of small commercial, light manufacturing, and public facilities that may create impacts incompatible with residential uses, recreation uses,

or resource management. These businesses are typically larger than a permissible home-based business, but are not large scale commercial or industrial developments. This subdistrict encourages the commercial expansion of facilities that are suitable for growth because of proximity to hub communities, service centers or major transportation corridors, despite generating some traffic, noise, odor, and visual impacts. This subdistrict shall be located in areas where it has no undue adverse impact on existing uses and resources.

3. Examples of Small Businesses and Public Facilities encouraged in the D-SB

I. Natural Resource-based Businesses:

1. Businesses that do small scale processing of wood products and agricultural products; uses might include:
 - i. Agricultural product processing, storage, and shipping
 - ii. Slaughterhouse
 - iii. Forest product processing, storage, and shipping
2. Businesses related to forestry, farming, or some natural resource extraction; uses might include:
 - i. Sawmill,
 - ii. Maintenance garage (e.g., equipment repair, inspection and washing)
 - iii. Firewood processing
 - iv. Gravel extraction
3. Facilities for commercial recreation such as guide services; uses might include:
 - i. Fish and game processing, packing, and shipping;
 - ii. Recreational equipment storage
 - iii. Shooting range
 - iv. Motorized recreation centers such as race tracks and motocross tracks
 - v. Non-motorized recreation centers such as nordic ski centers and mountain bike centers
 - vi. Marinas
4. Recreational lodging facilities (level D); uses might include:
 - i. Dining amenities
 - ii. Overnight lodging
 - iii. Retail
 - iv. Fuel sales
 - v. Recreational equipment rentals
 - vi. Bed and Breakfast

This category may in some instances have a need to be close to a resource and therefore more remote or removed from existing development, activity and infrastructure.

If the intent is to allow for natural resource related activities (including processing) to occur closer to the resource, what are the best ways to ensure that the activity (processing) is related to the natural resource at or near the location of the processing facility. (For example, would a farm that makes its own jams from produce grown on that farm also be allowed to truck in produce from elsewhere for processing and distribution? If so what limitations should be in place to ensure that impacts from such an operation are acceptable?)

Should some of these uses be limited to a certain scale operation (e.g. slaughterhouses, marinas)?

II. Retail, Restaurants, Offices, and Similar Businesses

1. Commercial (retail only); scale:
 - i. Footprint < 2,500 square feet
2. Gas Stations; scale:
 - i. Up to two pumps, each serving two vehicles
3. Art studios or artisan shops; scale:
 - i. Footprint < 2,500 square feet
4. Facilities offering food and beverages prepared on the premises; scale:
 - i. Footprint < 2,500 square feet
5. Professional offices, financial institutions; scale:
 - i. Footprint < 2,500 square feet
6. Commercial riding stables, boarding kennels, animal hospitals, and animal rescue facilities
7. Commercial Greenhouses, Landscaping businesses that have equipment and may sell trees, plants, and mulch.
8. Commercial indoor recreation facility such as a jump house, inside playground, etc.

This category does not seem to have a need to be close to a resource and therefore should not be located in remote locations or in areas removed from existing development, activity and infrastructure.

Most of the uses listed in this category are commercial in nature and would benefit from locating in high traffic areas (such as along public routes). Where should this category of uses be allowed to locate? Where should it not locate?

The locational considerations for these uses seem different than for the Natural Resource-based Businesses. Should there be different locational considerations for different categories of uses?

III. Manufacturing, Construction, and Similar Businesses

1. Light manufacturing and assembly plants
 - i. Footprint < 20,000 square feet
2. Contracting businesses
 - i. Footprint < 20,000 square feet
3. Automobile service and repair
 - i. Footprint < 20,000 square feet
4. Commercial facilities
 - i. Footprint < 20,000 square feet

The uses and size restrictions shown here were taken from use listings in LUPC's Extended Settlement Development Zone (one of the Rangeley Zones). The D-ES subdistrict is designed to accommodate a wide range of commercial, light manufacturing, and public uses that create impacts incompatible with other smaller scale commercial, public, and residential uses. It allows facilities that generate traffic or noise such as transfer stations, gasoline stations, warehouses, self storage, and contracting businesses. It is not designed to accommodate general retail establishments (better located in a community center or rural settlement) or to facilitate strip development along highways.

Is this scale of manufacturing or other industrial facility compatible with the objectives of the D-SB? If the scale for light manufacturing and similar businesses is reduced, will the zone still effectively encourage these facilities? Should it?

IV. Public or Private Services and Institutions

1. Fire stations
2. Healthcare facilities, Nursing Homes; scale:
 - i. Footprint < 2,500 square feet
3. Solid waste transfer or recycling stations
4. Public Works facilities, sand and salt storage facilities
5. Children's day care facilities; scale:
 - i. home child day care providers serving more than 12 children;
 - ii. footprint < 2,500 square feet
6. Home adult day service providers; scale:
 - i. serve more than 12 adults,

- ii. footprint < 2,500 square feet
7. Research laboratory
 - i. footprint < 2,500 square feet
 8. Public Water and Sewer Treatment facility

The uses and size restrictions shown here were taken from use listings in LUPC's Community Center Development Subdistrict (D-GN2) and Rural Settlement Development Subdistrict (D-GN3), both prospectively zoned subdistricts from the Rangeley Plan which include additional development standards to ensure that adjacent uses are compatibly developed.

The D-GN2 is intended for areas where there is a mix of complementary residential, commercial, and civic uses that create a focal point for community life. This subdistrict is similar to the D-GN subdistrict but provides for a wider range of appropriate uses and increased size thresholds for general commercial uses.

The D-GN3 is intended for areas where there is a mix of complementary residential, commercial, and civic uses that create a focal point for community life. This subdistrict is similar to the D-GN2 subdistrict but allows uses of an appropriately smaller size and intensity, also subject to specific development standards. It is also different from the D-GN2 subdistrict as it prohibits subdivisions in order to maintain the remote and small-scale feel of these development nodes.

Are these uses compatible with the objectives of the D-SB?