

Gallatin County Short-Term Rentals FAQs

1. What is a short-term rental?

In Gallatin County, the phrase short-term rental typically refers to a residential Dwelling Unit that is rented out for a period of 30 days or less. Gallatin County has 22 different zoning districts and only two of them mention short-term rentals specifically in their respective Zoning Regulations (Gallatin Canyon/Big Sky and Hebgen Lake). Uses similar to short-term rental housing may also be referred to as vacation rentals, overnight accommodations, or recreational housing in various zoning districts. **Be sure to check the definition of these related terms in your specific zoning district regulation.**

2. Are short-term rentals allowed on my property?

Gallatin County has 22 different zoning districts outside of municipalities. Please use the [Interactive Mapper](#) to see which zoning district and sub-district your property is located in. See the [Interactive Maps page](#) for help using the mapper.

There are no restrictions from the Planning Department on property use in unzoned areas, so in terms of zoning, short-term rentals are allowable in these areas from the County Planning perspective. However, the Gallatin City-County Health Department has permitting requirements regarding public health and sanitation for short-term rentals (also referred to as “tourist homes”) in both zoned and unzoned areas; see below.

According to Gallatin County’s zoning regulations, if a use isn’t specifically authorized by the zoning regulation, then it is not allowed, therefore **if short-term rentals are not mentioned in the specific zoning district regulation, they are not permitted anywhere in that zoning district.** See #4 below for additional information.

The below zoning districts are the only districts that mention short-term rentals in their regulations:

Zoning District	Referred to as:	Allowed as:	Within these Sub-Districts
Bozeman Pass	Vacation Rental*	Conditional Use	AR80, PL640, AR40
Bridger Canyon	Overnight Accommodations* Recreational Housing*	Conditional Use	B-2, B-3, B-4 B-2, B-3, B-4, within PUDs
Gallatin Canyon/Big Sky	Short Term Rental*	Permitted Use	R-MH 3000, R-MH 6000, R-MF 6500, R-SF 7500, R-SF 11000, RC-SF, C-I, CC, TCC, TCR, R-B, R
Hebgen Lake	Short-Term Rental*	Conditional Use	C, RP
South Gallatin	Overnight Accommodations*	Conditional Use	CC

*Make sure to check the definitions in the [Zoning Regulations](#) of your zoning district to ensure the accommodation you are seeking approval for matches your intention.

Conditional Use: Requires the approval of a Conditional Use Permit and involves the public hearing process.

Permitted Use: An allowed use by right.

3. Can I get a statement saying short-term rentals are allowed on my property?

You can fill out a [Property Information Request Form](#) for your property and send it to the Planning Department to complete. Make sure you check the box for “Tourist License (Vacation Rental)” and write “short-term rental” in the “Other” line under Proposed Project. When we are completing this form for you, we will specify whether short-term rentals are an allowed use.

4. How do I get short-term rentals added as a permitted use in my zoning district?

There are two different processes that can be completed to add short-term rentals to a zoning district. One is through a [Zone Text Amendment](#) and the other is an [Administrative Determination](#).

The Zone Text Amendment process and application can be found [here](#). The application packet includes a cover letter, an explanation of how the change meets the Evaluation Criteria, and a written explanation of the proposed changes to the regulation. The proposed change is noticed, reviewed, and brought to a public hearing for a decision. Setting up a meeting with a planner before submitting this type of application is highly recommended. This process would directly change the text of the zoning regulation if approved.

The Administrative Determination process involves making the case that a proposed use is similar to an existing Permitted or Conditional Use in the Zoning District where it can be argued that such use is very similar in nature and impact to uses that are already allowed. This is detailed in the Interpretation of Use Classification in the [“Part 1” Zoning Administrative Regulation](#). Part 2 Zoning Districts have different processes unique to each Zoning District. You can see which Zoning Districts are classified as Part 2 [here](#). The Administrative Determination process would include choosing an allowed or conditional use in the zoning district that you would argue is similar to a short-term rental. The Administrative Determination form can be found [here](#). The application requires submitting a narrative that explains how the short-term rental use meets the specified criteria and how it fits with the chosen permitted or conditional use being considered. The application will go before a decision-making board(s) for approval or denial. If approved, that Conditional or Permitted Use will be added to the zoning sub-district.

5. Do I need a license to run a short-term rental?

Yes! The State of Montana requires local health department review. In Gallatin County, this is done through the Public Accommodations License process. Information and application for the Public Accommodations License can be found [here](#).

Questions? Contact: Department of Planning, 311 West Main Street, Rm 108, Bozeman, MT 59715
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