



CITY OF LANDER
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT & PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, September 04, 2025 at 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers, 240 Lincoln Street

AGENDA

Join Zoom Webinar -

NOTE: You must be an invited panelist to speak at the webinar

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86460253452>

Phone one-tap: +12532050468,,86460253452# US

Attendance: Chair Zach Mahlum, Members, Tom Russell, Kara Colovich, Chris Savan, Mary Greene, Rob Newsom, and Joe Henry. City Attorney Adam Phillips, Council Liaisons Dan Hahn and Chad Cassady, Assistant Public Works Director Hunter Roseberry, Recording Secretary RaJean Strube Fossen

1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

This meeting is being recorded electronically. All petitioners to the Board of Adjustments will receive a written decision and order within thirty (30) days of this hearing. The decision will be clearly stated with findings of fact and conclusions of law. Anyone wishing to appeal against a decision and order may do so through District Court.

Anyone wishing to speak tonight, must first be recognized, come to the podium, take the oath, and state your name prior to speaking.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[A.](#) **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES** of August 7, 2025

3. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - NEW BUSINESS

[A.](#) CU 25.11 1165 Goodrich, Short term rental, Suwal

4. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - OLD BUSINESS

5. PLANNING COMMISSION - NEW BUSINESS

[A.](#) Short Term Rental policy discussion

6. PLANNING COMMISSION - OLD BUSINESS

7. ADJOURNMENT



CITY OF LANDER BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT & PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, August 07, 2025 at 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers, 240 Lincoln Street

MINUTES

Join Zoom Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85768470104?pwd=NDFJZ01nTlZwMEYvSTFiS2lMYzB4QT09>

Meeting ID: 857 6847 0104

Passcode: 339483

Attendance: Chair Zach Mahlum, Members, Tom Russell, Kara Colovich, Chris Savan, Rob Newsom, and Joe Henry. Council Liaisons Dan Hahn, John Larsen, Recording Secretary RaJean Strube Fossen

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Anyone wishing to speak tonight, must first be recognized, come to the podium, take the oath, and state your name prior to speaking.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES of July 17, 2025

Kara moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Tom. Motion carried.

B. SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 25, 2025

Kara Moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Tom. Motion carried.

3. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - NEW BUSINESS

A. CONSENT AGENDA 3 each STR NORTHSIDE DRIVE

A. CU 25.06, 151 Northside Drive

B. CU 25.07, 123 Northside Drive

C. CU 25.08, 119 Northside Drive

Adam Thorpe, owner, took the oath and explained that he is the owner of the entire mobile home community with 20 rentals. Within their manufactured home park he has 3 furnished rental units that they would like the capability for short term rentals. Typically these are rented

for 30-90 days for contract workers but they would like to have options for when the units are vacant.

Kara asked if the rules attached are for the entire park and if there are separate rules for short term rentals. Adam replied that they to have quiet hours from 10pm to 9am. There are additional rules for Airbnb guests.

John Larsen noted that the park has been greatly improved and thanked the owner for his investment in the community.

Kara asked if there have ever been any complaints about the current renters. The owner replied no, there had not.

Chris noted that the Board has been questioning the maximum number of guests. The owner verified that the various rentals had varying numbers of bedrooms and various guest limits as noted in each application. Chris stated that since there is less than 10 guests allowed in each unit that he is comfortable with all three applications.

Zach reminded the board that our decisions cant be predicated on building codes. Chris feels that enforcement of the commercial building codes during the permit process could change the appearance or character of the neighborhood therefore making it a viable consideration for zoning code deliberations.

Joe stated he is more interested in sticking with the zoning code for decisions and not making determinations based on building codes.

Kara would like to restrict the occupants to 2 per bedroom with one extra air mattress in lieu of max of 10 guests.

Rob likes the conditions of limiting guests like Kara suggests in lieu of setting a maximum. His opinion is that the limit could be based on the number of bedrooms not the number of beds.

RaJean read the City recommendation letter for approval of all three addresses provided that WY state lodging taxes are collected and the annual fire inspection is performed.

Kara moved to approve CU 25.06, 25.07, 25.08 contingent on meeting the City recommendations of Lodging tax collection and fire inspections with an additional condition that guests be limited to 2 guests per bedroom plus 1 guests per unit. Seconded by Rob. Motion passed unanimously.

RaJean let the applicant know that a decision and order will come within 30 days. After receipt of that document and passing the fire inspection the rentals will be permitted for short term rentals.

B. CU 25.10short-term rental 484 N 4th, Wittek

Austin Wittek, owner, took the oath. Austin was accompanied by legal counsel Aaron Vinich. He explained that his revised application will have all the same rules as the previous application in April but would limit guests to 15 persons and be run from late April to October.

Kara asked the difference in the two applications. The owner verified that he is applying for 15 guests instead of 18. He is appealing the original denial by this board and he hopes the new limit on number of guests will allow approval of the application so he can avoid pursuing the appeal in district court.

Chris asked him to restate the configuration of the house. He replied that there are 5 bedrooms and 3 baths. Two bedrooms and 1 bath is his private residence and then 3 bedrooms and 2 baths are for the rental operations. Discussions were held on the disposition of beds or bunks and number of occupants per bed or per bedroom.

Joe asked if he has addressed parking. Austin replied that his Terms of service lists whether you have a car or not and he is restricting his guests to 6 total cars, 4 on the street and 2 in the drive. Austin reported that he has been hosting hikers as guests for free and not a single one has had a car.

Chris asked if the owner knows if the remodel will meet occupancy codes. RaJean verified codes will be met during the building and occupancy permit processes through the Building Department.

Rob verified with the owner if his guests this summer were paid guests. Austin restated that all his guests have stayed for free.

Zach verified that there have been no complaints from neighbors this summer. Austin said there has not.

RaJean noted that one additional public comment was received after the publication of the agenda packet that has been handed out to all Board Members. She read the City recommendation letter for approval of this application provided that WY state lodging taxes are collected and the annual fire inspection is performed.

Riley Schlager, Canyon Street, took the oath and spoke in favor of the hostel. She has met the summer guests and thinks the guests are a good addition to the community.

Chris Hulme, Eugene Street, took the oath. His family is 100% in support the endeavor and Austin is a great neighbor. Chris thinks the endeavor promotes our community and is an asset for future community building. There has been a positive impact on the neighborhood since Austin has moved in. He has not noticed any extra noise so far and has seen courteous guest behaviors. Austin is professional in his manner in keeping up the property.

Sally Watt, Eugene Street, took the oath as his adjacent neighbor. She spoke in support at the first application. She has not met any of the guests but they have been respectful of the quiet hours even when having a BBQ outside in the evening. She had no idea there were 8 guests one night.

Zack asked if any guests would be allowed to sleep in tents in the back yard. Austin replied that they could, but they would have to follow the same rules as all guests. They would still fall under the occupancy cap.

Rob asked if the owner was surprised at the level of use this summer. Austin has not advertised at all but has had guests contact him through phone number references.

Aaron Vincent, legal counsel for Austin on the appeal that has been filed, spoke to the fact that the application, when compared side by side to the zoning codes, meets all codes and should be granted.

Kara asked the board members to discuss the occupancy limit to include both inside and outside the house. She feels strongly the limit could be per bedroom plus one like the previous application. The code is inconclusive on some definitions, and this operation could be

interpreted as hotel/motel and she feels it is up for interpretation by this board on where a hostel fits in the codes for short-term rental.

Rob asked RaJean to document the last vote. She read the Decision and Order citing each members vote into the record.

Austin felt that the public comment last time was overwhelmingly negative and not based on his true business intentions. He does not feel that it is fair to deem the use as commercial as that is a misinterpretation of his operation.

Chris stated his interpretations of building code occupancy limits and zoning codes density to Aaron Vincent for an opinion. Chris stated his interpretations of residential vs commercial based on his definitions of occupancy from the adopted International Residential codes and then his interpretation of family as non-transient residents. Aaron reminded Chris that his opinion will be in relation to his counsel to Austin and not a legal opinion. Aaron stated that, In short, the Board's determination should not be based on residential or commercial in nature but on the zoning allowances for a short term rental in a residential zone. Chris reiterated that he is still struggling with transient residents vs family (non-transient) occupants. Aaron related that an Airbnb for one night is for transients and our code allows that. Chris verified that Aaron feels that occupancy could be limited in some manner for all rentals. Aaron does not think this line of thinking for transiency and commercial occupancy limits are appropriate reasons for denial.

Rob feels that these individual bookings are not a family and each reservation is a separate client even though there may be a common thread between guests. He feels this is a nuance of this application. Aaron thinks that since Austin is residing on site he will be able to maintain the rules for all occupants.

Austin replied that his application for a hostel is a new model for this board and he is aware and respects that the board thinks their decision may set a precedent. However, he agrees that these considerations of transient clients and commercial use are not grounds for denial of his short-term rental application. Chris stated he supports a hostel in Lander but his line of questioning is based on the character of residential neighborhoods and where is the breaking point for commercial use in a residential zone.

Both Austin and Chris believe that the long term solution to these issues is to enact code changes supported and adopted by Council. Chris is looking for a consistent, enforceable policy going into the future.

Tom agrees that short-term rental rules need attention but does not feel that the transiency nature of the guests is a determining factor as this is currently allowed by code where short-term rentals are allowed.

Zach stated that we need to use the definitions and guidance in the codes to make the determination. Zach cited 4-2-3 for definitions of short-term rental, hotel, and dwelling. It appears by definition that Austin's structure is currently a dwelling and the application is for residents transient in nature. There are no zoning code citations setting limits on the number occupants per bed, per dwelling, or any other measure. Zach stated that this board cannot make decisions based on the building code. This board can make recommendations to the council for the future changes, but the determination for this application needs to be made on what is in the code right now.

Kara acknowledges that the definitions are important. She interprets dwelling as bedrooms and she is comfortable with 8 plus one on a couch for this structure's configuration. Austin countered that bedrooms cannot be considered as limiting occupants because rooms can be of different sizes housing different numbers of beds and occupants comfortably.

Tom commented that this structure has or will have 2 dwelling units by design. There are not currently caps on the number of people per bedroom or dwelling (unit).

Tom moved to approve CU 25.10 contingent on meeting the City recommendations of Lodging tax collection and fire inspections. Tom accepted a friendly amendment to include an additional condition that guests be limited to 15 as listed in the application. Seconded by Joe.

Kara - voted NO based on occupancy level that is too dense for her interpretation of R-3

Rob - voted NO based on the large number of individual parties and feeling this operation is commercial in nature

Chris - voted NO as the operation does not meet residential intent of an R-3 neighborhood.

Joe - Yes

Tom - Yes

Zach stated that had the vote not already failed, he would have voted in favor of the motion based on the fact that there are no codes that limit occupancy number for residences or short-term rentals.

Motion Failed.

Kara started discussion for a new motion with different conditions. She would like to make the occupancy limit of 9 persons (2 per bedroom plus 1) and also meeting the City lodging tax and fire inspections recommendations. Kara then stated that as a motion. Chris seconded. During discussion Rob questioned how the occupancy will be enforced. Zach stated that in his experience the enforcement would be based on the City receiving complaints and a subsequent hearing before this board. Joe wanted the motion to address allowing outside occupants in a tent addressed but did not make a motion for amendment.

George Piplica took the oath. As a realtor in Riverton and proponent of the application he suggests that the permit could have a trial period or be altered after a short period of time. He asked for clarity on the process. RaJean clarified the current enforcement methods of fire annual inspections and restated that if the City receives 3 complaints they can set a hearing before this board for action.

Chris Hulme re-took the stand and read the R-3 code out loud where that there can be a 3750-sqft (half-size) lot with up to 3 residences on each allowed as the highest density in this zone. He feels this allows much more density than Austin's proposal on his two full lots. He believes that indicates Austin's proposed use is appropriate for an R-3 zone.

Riley Schlager re-took the stand and stated that Austin is a rule follower and she believes the owner will enforce the rules.

Zach ended public comment and called for the question. Kara's second motion to approve CU 25.10 with conditions for lodging tax collection, fire inspection and a maximum occupancy of 9 persons passed unanimously.

Ralean told the applicant that a decision and order will be issued within 30 days. It will list the right to appeal to district court.

There was a 10 minute recess called

4. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - OLD BUSINESS

5. PLANNING COMMISSION - NEW BUSINESS

A. Z 25.02 569 Garfield, Schultejann

Dan Schultejann, owner, took the oath and explained that they have invested in the old masonic lodge and would now like to rezone the building and all 6 lots to commercial.

Chris asked if they have a specific intention for the property. Dan stated he would like to keep is options open for any variety of additional uses. They feel this property is in a valuable location and will have more opportunity for sale as commercial property.

Ralean stated there was no public comment and the application was in order and met all of our code requirements.

Joe moved to approve the Z 25.02 rezoning request. Rob seconded.

Rob discussed why the change should be made. Perhaps the Lodge should have been zoned commercial all along. The empty residential lots would retain housing opportunity. Zach asked the owner what is the net effect and what change in conditions is being made by citing code 4-8-3. Dan stated they would like to restore the building and have already started. They would like to keep the lots intact with the building but only the future will determine the final uses. Dan stated that he is not qualified to give a legal perspective as to what change in legal condition this is addressing.

Rob verified that the adjacent lots are used for parking.

Joe moved to approve Z 25.02 as submitted, Tom seconded. Rob initiated a short discussion on the merits of adding more commercial lots and taking residential lots away from housing opportunity. Motion passed unanimously.

Ralean gave the applicant the information of a public hearing and first reading at the August 26th Special Council meeting. There will be 2 additional readings required before the action is complete.

B. Z 25.03 765 Garfield, Piplica/Bregar

George Piplica, and Hunter Bregar, owner and prospective buyer, took the oath. George clarified that this is a joint application because Hunter is a prospective buyer who will see the potential zoning change through to his ownership. This property is 2 lots that will have a better sale value and future uses if it is zoned commercial. These lots are adjacent to 2 lots that were rezoned commercial a couple years back for the purpose of a warehouse for Boyle Electric .

Hunter explained that he is a prospective purchaser and intends to install 2 shops 2400-3200 sqft in size. One would be used for storage for his business holdings and the second is for a lease opportunity for another commercial business. Hunter feels there are limited opportunities for large storage in town.

Chris asked if they spoke to the adjacent landowners. They reported that they have not talked to the Indoor Shooting range. Boyle has similar plans for his adjacent lots and is in favor of the rezoning. They did not talk to the adjacent commercial neighbors.

Zach asked what the net effect of the request is. George replied that turning the use to the highest and best use as commercial is beneficial for commerce. There will be minimal impact to street. Hunter stated that with high volume traffic and lack of views, this may not be an ideal location for residential use.

Zach asked what need for change they are recognizing. George stated they are recognizing changing conditions toward commercial use in the adjacent neighborhood.

Rob asked about the residences across the alley. Hunter verified that there are residences across the alley, all with fences. Rob asked the City to verify requirements for commercial building adjacent to residential. RaJean replied that the side and rear setbacks of the residential zone must be met. Further discussion resulted in the requirement that fencing will be required on the side if next to a house, but there are not houses on either side.

Tom moved to approve Z 25.03 at 765 Garfield. Seconded by Chris. Kara stated that her vote will be yes but she is conflicted because this rezoning continues a trend toward more commercial near a commercial zone, but she would also like to retain residential zones for housing opportunity. Motion passed unanimously.

RaJean gave the applicants the information of public hearing and first reading at the August 26th Special Council meeting. There will be 2 additional readings required. The third reading must be separated by at least 30 days from the first reading.

6. PLANNING COMMISSION - OLD BUSINESS

A. Recommendation for new board member to City Council

Zach recused himself from the vote as one applicant was a former employee.

Chris feels it is odd to recommend new members for his own board. He believes that should rest with the Mayor and Council.

RaJean clarified that this interview and recommendation process is not required but has been in effect for 7-8 years. John Larsen says the council appreciates a recommendation. Chad said he would also be appreciate the board reflections.

Chris reflected that MJ is very involved in the community and brings a motivation, futuristic view to the board. Kathi comes from the perspective of what Lander was and has seen a lot of changes. They both want what they think is best for Lander, but Kathi's sentiment and views are seen in other public venues.

Joe would look to the better team member and team player which may be Ms. Green.

Kara stated that looking forward what topics will be addressed she feels the community input is important at the beginning of the deliberations. MJ brings a lot of community ties and Kathi brings a strong voice also. She feels MJ could be recommended to Council but hopes that Kathi will participate with her strong voice.

Rob and Tom have no opinion as they were not at the interviews.

Zach has known Kathi since 2018 as a employee. She has a solid grasp of the codes and has a good work ethic. He supports Kathi. He knows MJ in a limited capacity but she seems to be a qualified and experienced board member,

Chris moved to not make a recommendation to the Mayor. Joe seconded. Votes were as follows:

Kara -voted No- She wonders if this will set a precedent where City council will then select members.

Rob - voted No, "this is our job".

Chris yes, Joe Yes, Tom Yes. Motion passes 3-2. John Larsen clarified with RaJean that the Mayor will make a recommendation to Council based on the applications and these notes.

B. Discussion of future work session for Title 4 administrative changes

Discussions were held on what the members would like to address next. RaJean stated that Adam requests that appeals language and rights be fixed to reduce liability. Zach would be willing to work on that. The consensus was to have RaJean and Adam work on the appeals language changes and the Board will work on short-term rental.

Discussions were held on putting STR work session on the agenda prior to applications or separating meetings into a voting session and a work session or dividing up into committees. The consensus was to have a planning meeting short-term rental work session prior to the BOA meeting on the next agenda. Members requested a one hour time limit on the planning meeting to be fair to the BOA applicants.

Zach asked attending council members about any guidance from their point of view. Dan wants short-term rental language that better defines limits across all permits and zones. Zach would like better definitions all around, like hostel, hotel, motel, short-term rental.

Chad is used to occupancy restrictions because of his military base experience in small towns. He suggests using other towns' rules as examples instead of reinventing the wheel.

No further business was conducted.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm



CITY OF LANDER
CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION – TITLE 4-6-1
NON-REFUNDABLE FEE \$500.00

Section 3, Item A.

For Office use only: Case # CU 25.0

Date Received 8/4/25 Date Fee Paid 8/5/25 BOA Hearing Date Sept. 11

Existing zone designation R-2 Applicable Section of zoning code 4-61 4-12-3 C

Name of Applicant SURAT SUWAL Email SURATSUWAL@GMAIL.COM

Address 1165 Goudrich Dr, Lander, WY 82520 Phone # 617-337-7078

Do you own this property Yes ☒ No ☐

If no, Name of Owner _____ Email _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Legal Description of Property (Street address, subdivision lot and block numbers, or attached a Legal description prepared by a surveyor)

1165 Goudrich Dr, Lander, WY 82520

Present Zoning District of Property R-2 Current zoning use of the property R-2

Proposed Zoning District NA Proposed zoning use of property STR

Legal Description of Property (Street address, subdivision lot and block numbers, or attached a Legal description prepared by a surveyor)

Block 1, Lot 1 Hilltop Addition

Check Conditional Use Type below

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ☐ Child Care/preschool | ☐ RV campground | ☐ Restaurant |
| ☐ Home Business | ☐ Clinic/nursing home | ☐ Gaming |
| ☐ Bed/Breakfast | ☐ Professional office | ☐ Communication tower |
| ☒ Short term Rental | ☐ Mortuary/crematory | ☐ Junkyard |
| ☐ Group/foster home | ☐ Motel | ☐ Other, Explain _____ |

Describe your conditional request (Hours of operation, off-street parking, traffic patterns, fencing, etc.)

This property will be for STR. It has 2 car garage,
4 car drive way, fully fenced.
Only up to 9 guest to stay. Quiet time 10PM - 7PM
3 bedrooms

Explain why your conditional use will not adversely affect your neighborhood

It is fully fenced with 4 car parking but only
2 cars allowed to stay and guest comes in to town
mostly for out door activity and uses property
to rest or sleep.



CITY OF LANDER
CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION – TITLE 4-6-1
NON-REFUNDABLE FEE \$500.00

Section 3, Item A.

X Attached is a plot plan or drawing of all buildings and outside areas used for the conditional use.

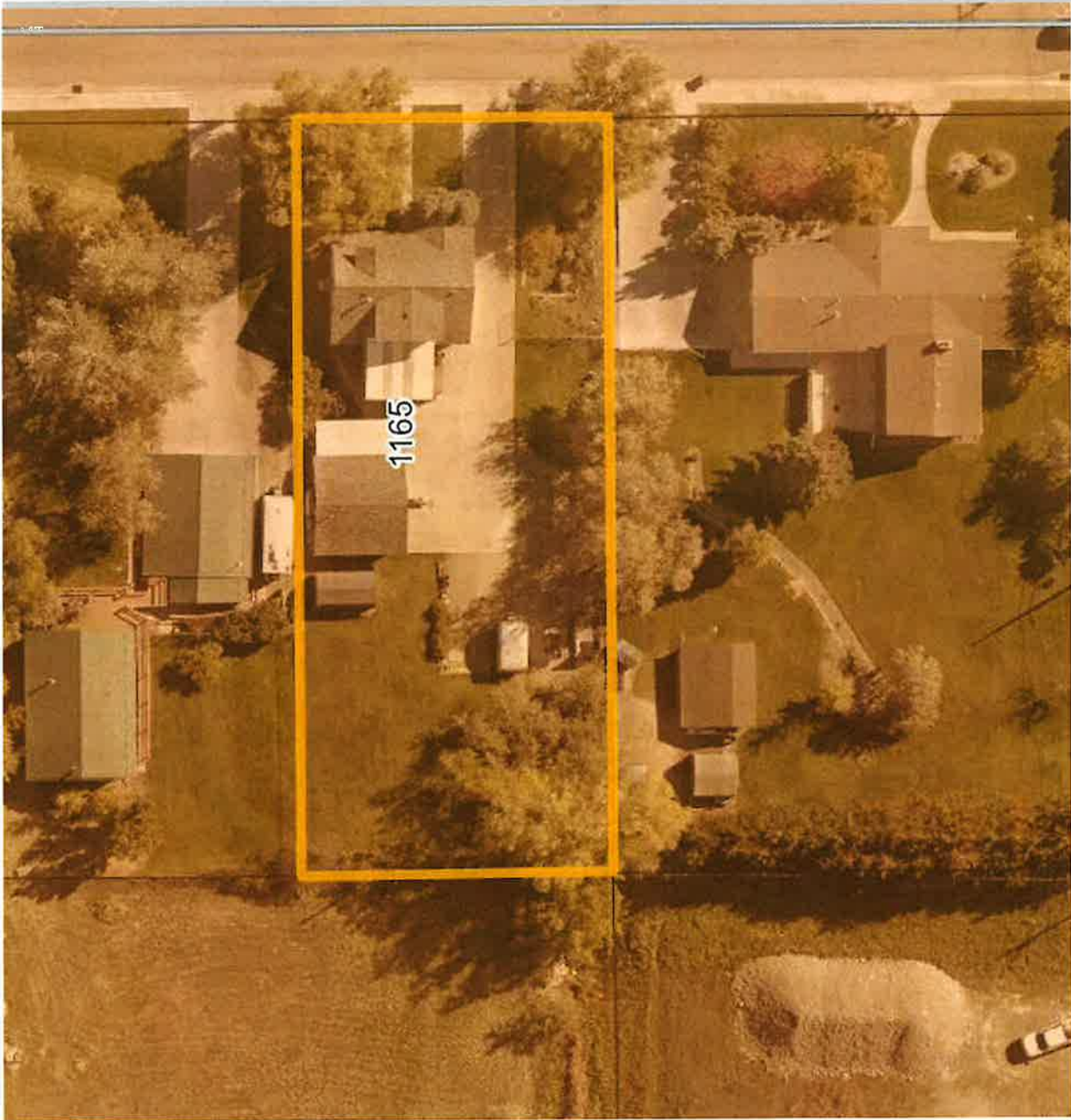
_____ Attached is additional information for Child Care, Group Home, or Home Business, as required

Signature of applicant [Signature] Date 08-05-2025

Signature of owner [Signature] Date 08-05-2025

under Sookkaas Hospitality LLC

Applicant address: 1050 Spriggs Dr, Lander, WY 82520



50 ft

Layers Info

1 Parcel(s) [Zoom to parcel\(s\)](#)

- Parcel: 33991920500100
- Account#: R0008156 Property Detail
- Tax ID: 000000000008142 [Property Taxes](#)
- Plat: HILLTOP ADDITION
- Lot: 01
- Owner: SUWAL SURAJ S
- Mail Addr: 1050 SPRIGGS DR
- Mail Addr: LANDER, WY 82520-2605
- St Addr*: 1165 GOODRICH DR
- Deed: 1457318 (07/252024)
- Location: HILLTOP ADDN BLK 1 LOT 1 WD 2024-1457318
- Tax Classification: Residential
- 0.45 acres, 19,557 square feet

* Where more than one Site Address exists within a parcel, we cannot guarantee the Primary Site Address will be displayed.

Lander Short-Term Rental: Analysis and Recommendations

Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the short-term rental (STR) market in Lander, Wyoming, and offers a framework for potential regulation. Lander's tourism-based economy, driven by its proximity to the Wind River Mountains and numerous national parks, has fueled significant STR growth. Data indicates there are approximately 50-55 active STRs in the city, representing about 1.6% of Lander's total residential housing stock of 3,454 units. While STRs provide revenue to local hosts and boost the visitor economy, they also present potential negative impacts, such as reduced long-term housing availability and neighborhood disruption. Drawing on best practices and examples from other mountain towns in Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah, this document outlines various regulatory methods, including licensing, zoning, and taxation, to help the City of Lander achieve a balance that preserves community character while supporting the visitor economy.

Introduction

Lander, Wyoming, is a community defined by its proximity to the Wind River Mountains and its status as a gateway to some of the country's most spectacular natural landscapes. The city's reliance on tourism and outdoor recreation has led to a significant increase in the use of short-term rentals (STRs) as a popular lodging option for visitors. This analysis examines the current state of STRs in Lander, their economic and social impacts, and a range of potential regulatory approaches. The goal is to provide a foundation for informed decision-making that addresses community concerns while fostering a sustainable and vibrant local economy.

Description of Lander, WY

Lander, Wyoming, is situated in the central-western part of the state at the foothills of the Wind River Range. Known as the "gateway to the Wind River Range," it offers a quiet, remote mountain town atmosphere with a robust outdoor recreation scene.

Lander’s Tourism Offerings:

- **Sinks Canyon State Park:** A primary attraction featuring unique geological formations, rock climbing, hiking trails, and a trout hatchery.
- **Wind River Range:** The vast mountain range offers world-class rock climbing, backpacking, hiking, and fishing. Lander is particularly famous for its annual International Climber's Festival.

- **Local Culture:** The town's historic Main Street is home to numerous art galleries, unique shops, local restaurants, and craft breweries, creating an inviting and walkable downtown experience.
- **Proximity to National Lands:** Lander is surrounded by the Shoshone National Forest and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands, providing extensive opportunities for outdoor activities.

Location as a Place to Stay: Lander's strategic location makes it a logical stopover for travelers en route to major national parks. It is approximately a four-and-a-half-hour drive from Yellowstone National Park and offers a scenic route through Grand Teton National Park, making it an ideal basecamp for multi-day road trips. This positioning significantly enhances its appeal for short-term visitors seeking alternatives to traditional hotel lodging.

Short-term Rentals Description

The general definition of a short-term rental is the rental of a residential property for a period of less than 30 consecutive days. In Lander, this definition has been proposed in changes to the city's zoning code, and STRs are classified as a "conditional use" in some zones, which requires a permit.

Taxation in Lander: STRs in Lander are subject to a combined lodging and sales tax rate of 12% (4% statewide sales tax, 1% Fremont County sales tax, 5% statewide lodging tax, and 2% Fremont County lodging tax). A portion of this revenue is dedicated to tourism promotion and can be used to mitigate visitor impacts on local infrastructure.

Comparison to Other Jurisdictions: While Lander's definition is standard, other towns have added layers of regulation to manage STR impacts. For example, **Teton County, Wyoming**, strictly prohibits STRs (defined as rentals under 31 days) in most residential areas unless the property is within a specific resort zone. **Jackson, Wyoming** adds a crucial limit on residential STRs, capping them at 60 rental nights and 3 stays per year.

Why Regulation of Short-term Rentals Occurs

Regulation of STRs typically occurs to address a variety of community concerns and goals. Academic studies consistently show that a high concentration of STRs contributes to increased housing prices and rents. A primary reason for regulation is to manage the impact of commercial activity on residential neighborhoods, preserving their quiet and safe character. Other key reasons include:

- **Housing Affordability:** To prevent residential units from being converted from long-term housing stock to transient, short-term accommodations, which can drive up housing costs for permanent residents. Research by the NBER and others has

shown that the "financialization" and "conversion" of housing stock directly correlate with a rise in home prices and rents.

- **Public Safety:** To ensure properties meet health and safety standards, such as having working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and clear emergency exits that are suitable for a large number of transient guests. This includes ensuring properties with a higher number of occupants adhere to the requirements of the **International Building Code (IBC) for a Group R-1 occupancy**, which is the classification for transient lodging.
- **Revenue Generation:** To ensure that STR operators contribute their fair share of taxes (lodging, sales, etc.) to the local economy, helping to fund city services and infrastructure.
- **Community Accountability:** To create a system that holds property owners accountable for the actions of their guests, such as noise complaints or parking issues, through a local contact person.

Impact of Short-Term Rentals on Local Communities

Short-term rentals have a multi-faceted impact on the City of Lander, with both positive and negative consequences.

Positive Impacts:

- **Economic Diversification:** STRs provide supplemental income for local property owners. This money supports local services, cleaning, and maintenance.
- **Increased Tourism Revenue:** By expanding the number of available lodging options, STRs attract more visitors, who in turn spend money at local restaurants, shops, and attractions, boosting the city's tax base.
- **Flexible Accommodations:** STRs offer a more varied lodging experience than traditional hotels, appealing to families, large groups, and visitors seeking a more "local" feel.

Negative Impacts:

- **Housing Availability:** The conversion of long-term rental properties into STRs can tighten the local housing market. With approximately 50-55 STRs in the city noted per site like AirDNA.co and Rabbu.com, this represents about **1.6% of the city's total residential dwelling units** (3,454). This percentage, especially when concentrated in specific neighborhoods, is significant enough to contribute to rising housing costs for residents.

- **Neighborhood Character:** Unregulated STRs can disrupt the peace and quiet of residential neighborhoods through noise, increased vehicle traffic, and a constant rotation of unfamiliar faces.

Potential for Growth of Short-Term Rentals in Lander, WY

Based on current data, the STR market in Lander shows strong growth potential driven by its status as a tourist destination. Occupancy rates are highest during the peak summer months (June-August), and the majority of listings are for one- and two-bedroom properties, catering to couples and small groups. The ability to earn significantly more from a short-term rental compared to a traditional long-term lease provides a strong financial incentive for property owners. This market dynamic suggests that without appropriate regulation, the number of STRs will likely continue to increase, potentially exacerbating the negative impacts on the local housing market and community character.

Goals and Methods to Regulate Short-Term Rentals

The primary goals of regulating STRs should be to:

- Preserve long-term housing stock for residents.
- Ensure public health and safety in all rental units.
- Maintain neighborhood character and quality of life.
- Create regulatory clarity in granting and revoking licenses.
- Generate a stable revenue stream for the city through taxes and fees.

Several methods can be used to regulate STRs. A city can choose one or a combination of the following approaches:

- **Permitting/Licensing:** Requiring all STR operators to obtain an annual permit or license. This process can include a fee, a safety inspection, and a review of the property's compliance with local zoning and health codes. To implement a primary residency requirement, the city could require applicants to provide proof using a list of documents such as a driver's license, voter registration, or tax returns.
- **Zoning Restrictions:** Limiting STRs to specific commercial or mixed-use zones, or allowing them only in certain residential districts with strict conditions (e.g., owner-occupied rentals).
- **Occupancy Limits:** Setting a maximum number of guests per rental, either based on the number of bedrooms or a fixed number, to prevent overcrowding and excessive noise.

- **Taxation:** Work with state legislators to create legislation allowing tax proceeds to fund affordable, attainable, and additional housing.
- **Enforcement:** Establishing clear and transparent procedures for reporting and investigating complaints, with penalties for non-compliance.

Examples and Table of Other Mountain West Towns

City/Town	State	Primary Regulatory Method	Key Provisions
Lander	Wyoming	Conditional Use Permit	Short-term rentals are classified as a conditional use in R-Med, Agricultural, and Commercial zones. A permit is required for operation.
Jackson	Wyoming	Licensing and Use Permit	Requires both a business license and a Basic Use Permit (BUP). STRs outside the lodging overlay are limited to 60 rental days and 3 stays per year .
Teton County	Wyoming	Zoning and Permit System	Prohibits STRs (less than 31 days) in most residential areas unless the property is in a specific resort zone. Guest houses have a 90-day minimum rental period .
Sheridan	Wyoming	Licensing and Compliance	Requires a rental license and a completed compliance checklist for safety. Allows one residential rental license per property.
Laramie	Wyoming	Business Licensing and Zoning	Requires a business license and adherence to specific zoning and safety regulations. Hosts must collect and remit lodging taxes.
Park City	Utah	Licensing and Inspection	Requires a nightly rental license, a state sales tax ID, and a passed property inspection. The process generally takes 15-30 days to approve.
Steamboat Springs	Colorado	Licensing and Zoning	Requires a short-term rental license. Properties are divided into different zones (A, B, C) with varying degrees of STR eligibility. A 9% tax is dedicated to workforce housing.

Aspen	Colorado	Tiered Permit System	Three permit types: Owner-Occupied (STR-OO) limited to 120 nights, Classic (STR-C) with no night limit but capped numbers, and Lodging Exempt (STR-LE) for commercial properties. All require a business license and specific taxes.
Boise	Idaho	Licensing and Safety Checklist	Requires an annual short-term rental license for a fee. The application includes a safety checklist for smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and liability insurance.

Options/Alternatives for Regulating Short-term Rentals

Given the current low level of regulation in Lander, several options are available, ranging from minimal intervention to more comprehensive controls:

- **Option 1: Status Quo with Zoning Amendments for Clarity:** Maintain the current system of issuing conditional use permits. Develop zoning amendments that clarify the specific qualifications a short-term rental must meet to be granted a permit.
- **Option 2: Tiered Licensing System:** Implement a licensing system with different tiers. For example, a "Tier 1" could be for owner-occupied rentals with minimal requirements, and a "Tier 2" for non-owner-occupied rentals with stricter safety inspections, higher fees, and a limit on the number of permits. This balances support for occasional hosts with greater oversight of commercial operators. This option directly addresses the problem of investor-owned properties and their impact on housing stock.
- **Option 3: Zoning-Based Approach:** Restrict new STRs in R1, R2, and R3 zones to be properties where the residential property is the owner’s primary residence. STRs for properties that are not the owner’s primary residence would be allowed by conditional use permit in R5 and R-Med districts. These larger-scale commercial STRs would be subject to more stringent requirements, including compliance with **International Building Code (IBC) Group R-1 occupancy** rules if they exceed the size or number of guests for a typical residential occupancy. This approach leverages the city's zoning to protect low-density residential neighborhoods while accommodating commercial STRs in higher-density areas better suited for them.
- **Option 4: Limit the frequency of short-term rentals:** Implement a cap on the number of unique stays and/or total rental days per year (i.e., 3 unique stays with a

total of 60 maximum days, similar to Jackson). This directly prevents homes from being converted into full-time, year-round hotels.

- **Option 5: Ban on Short-term Rentals:** Create a full or partial ban on short-term rentals within specific residential zoning districts. This is the most restrictive option and would have the largest impact on both the STR market and the local economy.

Conclusion

The growth of short-term rentals in Lander, Wyoming, presents both an opportunity to enhance the local economy and a challenge to maintaining community character and housing affordability. While the city's current regulatory framework is minimal, a proactive approach can help achieve a balance that benefits both visitors and residents. By carefully considering the methods and examples outlined in this report, Lander can develop a thoughtful regulatory strategy that supports its identity as a welcoming tourist destination while preserving the high quality of life cherished by its residents.

 **Conditional Use Application fillable 2021.pdf**
273K

Chris Savan <chris.s@fremontsurveying.com>
To: Rajean Strube Fossen <rsfossen@landerwyoming.org>
Cc: "Zachary Hamilton Mahlum, Esq." <zach@zhmesq.com>

Mon, Sep 1, 2025 at 11:59 PM

RaJean,

Attached is a report that was generated and edited with a few hours of training. This should be a good spring board for a discussion.

Chris



Chris Savan, PE
Engineering Manager
155 N 1st St, Ste A, Lander, WY 82520
307.206.1007 | chris.s@fremontsurveying.com

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 **Lander STRs.docx**
24K

Chris Savan <chris.s@fremontsurveying.com>
To: Rajean Strube Fossen <rsfossen@landerwyoming.org>
Cc: "Zachary Hamilton Mahlum, Esq." <zach@zhmesq.com>

Tue, Sep 2, 2025 at 1:02 AM

RaJean,

There was more information I wanted to include for reference if we keep looking at STRs. The summary is, there are more STRs than we think (50+), STRs do have an impact on housing costs, and there is plenty of financial incentive for STRs to grow if they go unregulated.

I recognize that there is a fair amount of unsourced material in the report I included in the previous email. There are a lot of sources that I read through while creating the report. Putting a concise, thoughtful, and well-referenced report will take more than a few half days of research, outlining, prompting, and writing than I have already completed. I am happy to continue working on this, but I recognize that a more detailed report will require additional time and effort by more than just myself. We can discuss how much research and data we want to back these efforts at the meeting.

Specifically, I think it would be insightful for the commission and council to understand the financials on a few residences that have been converted to short-term rentals in Lander. Many houses on the market right now can be converted into profitable STRs. There is data on sites like [airdna.co](https://www.airdna.co) and [rabbu.com](https://www.rabbu.com), both which can take existing residential listings and calculate yields. It streamlines the analysis process. Most investors will still do the analysis, but those sites decrease analysis time and open the market up to less experienced investors. That's great for markets, but it might not be great if you don't want STRs in your neighborhood. I have talked to multiple people in town that use these tools to review future STRs so I know that it is being used. I included two quick calculations for existing properties in town below. Loan payments and taxes aren't included here, but I think augmenting this type of information is useful.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS - ANNUAL FINANCIAL

6-bedroom house		
Occupancy	46%	
Website Rate	\$ 818	
Owner Gross Daily Rate	\$ 665	
Cleaning and Maintenance	\$250	per turnover
Average Stay Length	2.8	
Average Nights Rented	167	
Number of Turnovers	60	
Turnover Cost	\$15,000	

Owner Rev - Clean/Maint = \$ 96,055

SHORT-TERM RENTALS - ANNUAL FINANCIAL

2-bedroom House		
Occupancy	46%	
Website Rate	\$ 169	
Owner Gross Daily Rate	\$ 148	
Cleaning and Maintenance	\$60	per turnover
Average Stay Length	2.8	
Average Nights Rented	167	
Number of Turnovers	60	
Turnover Cost	\$3,600	

Owner Rev - Clean/Maint = \$ 21,116

Here are a few other resources for reference that we can provide for a committee that might continue the research. There are also plenty of additional studies.

Effect on housing prices:

<https://nlihc.org/resource/study-finds-presence-short-term-rentals-associated-higher-property-prices#:~:text=Each%20additional%20Airbnb%20listing%20within,premium%20results%20in%20higher%20rent.>

<https://www.purdue.edu/research/features/stories/short-term-rentals-make-housing-less-affordable/#:~:text=Wei%20and%20his%20colleagues%20find,3%25%20in%20the%20affected%20cities.>

<https://granicus.com/blog/are-short-term-vacation-rentals-contributing-to-the-housing-crisis/#:~:text=According%20to%20a%20recent%20article,market%20in%20two%20interconnected%20mechanisms.>

<https://granicus.com/blog/are-short-term-vacation-rentals-contributing-to-the-housing-crisis/#:~:text=According%20to%20a%20recent%20article,market%20in%20two%20interconnected%20mechanisms.>

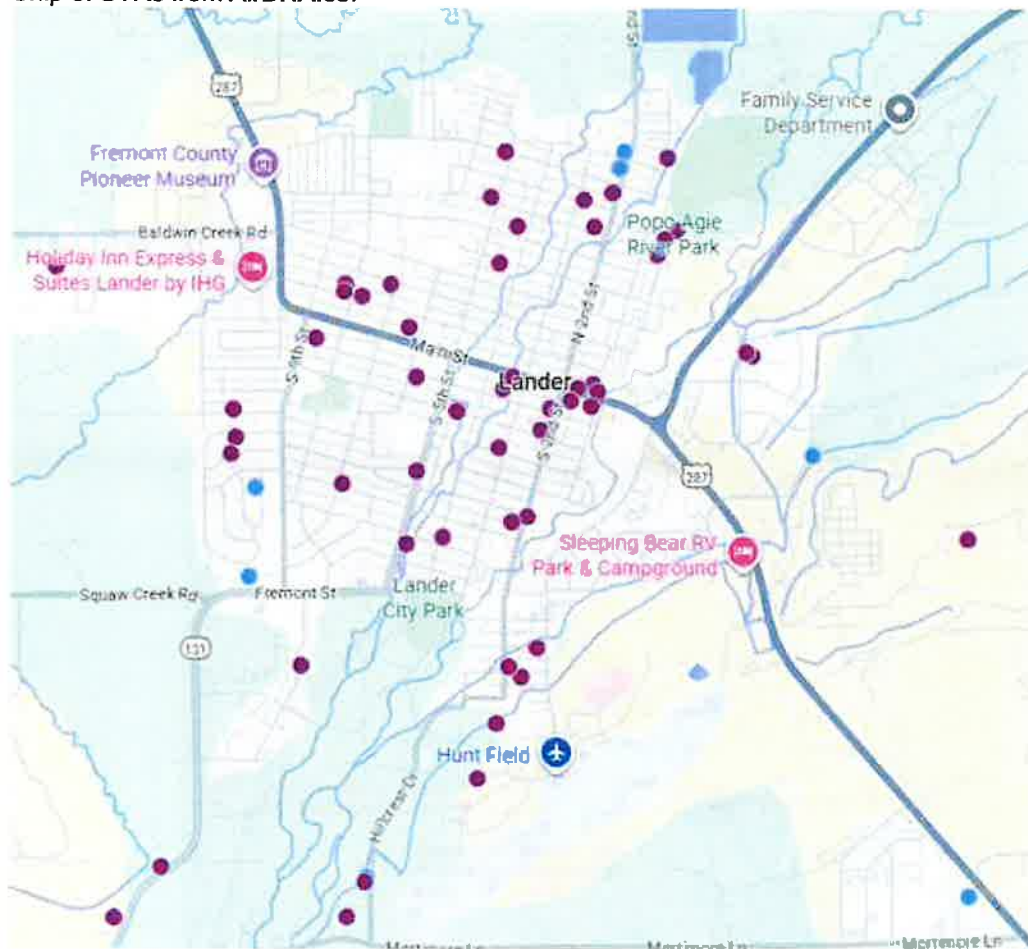
A Draft Infographic of the previous report: <https://g.co/gemini/share/19b2a4ab4100>

Snip on Instant Revenue Calculation from Rabbu.com:



Snip of STRs from AirDNA.co:

Section 5, ItemA.



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Rajean Strube Fossen <rsfossen@landerwyoming.org>

STR's

2 messages

Joseph Henry <henryjoseph73@gmail.com>
To: Rajean Strube Fossen <rsfossen@landerwyoming.org>

Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 6:37 PM

These are my initial thoughts RaJean:

1. Can we define an STR from a hotel or motel? Initially an STR application would seem to be a one time request that is a timed event. However, currently, it seems that once the STR is approved it is in place until the owner disposes of the property.

My suggestion is that an STR must be a timed approval, a specific period of time but no longer than one year. A re-application, at that time, would provide a record upon which to consider the renewal. We are currently in the hotel/motel scenario with STR's but the STR do not operate like hotel/motels.

There seems to be little regulation with little or no inspection of STR's.

When it is discovered that someone is renting illegally, without approval, there should be an immediate fine rather than a neighbourhood survey which generally does no good. Yes, there is a threat to hotels/motels but if we have regulations that are enforced it will contribute to a more equal and competitively priced market.

All STR applications should stipulate that before renting the space must be inspected and an occupancy certificate issued with a copy maintained in the city files.

Short Term Rental does not really apply except that the individual staying there is short term. The approval to continue renting short term appears to be almost indefinite, once approved.

I may have more-JH

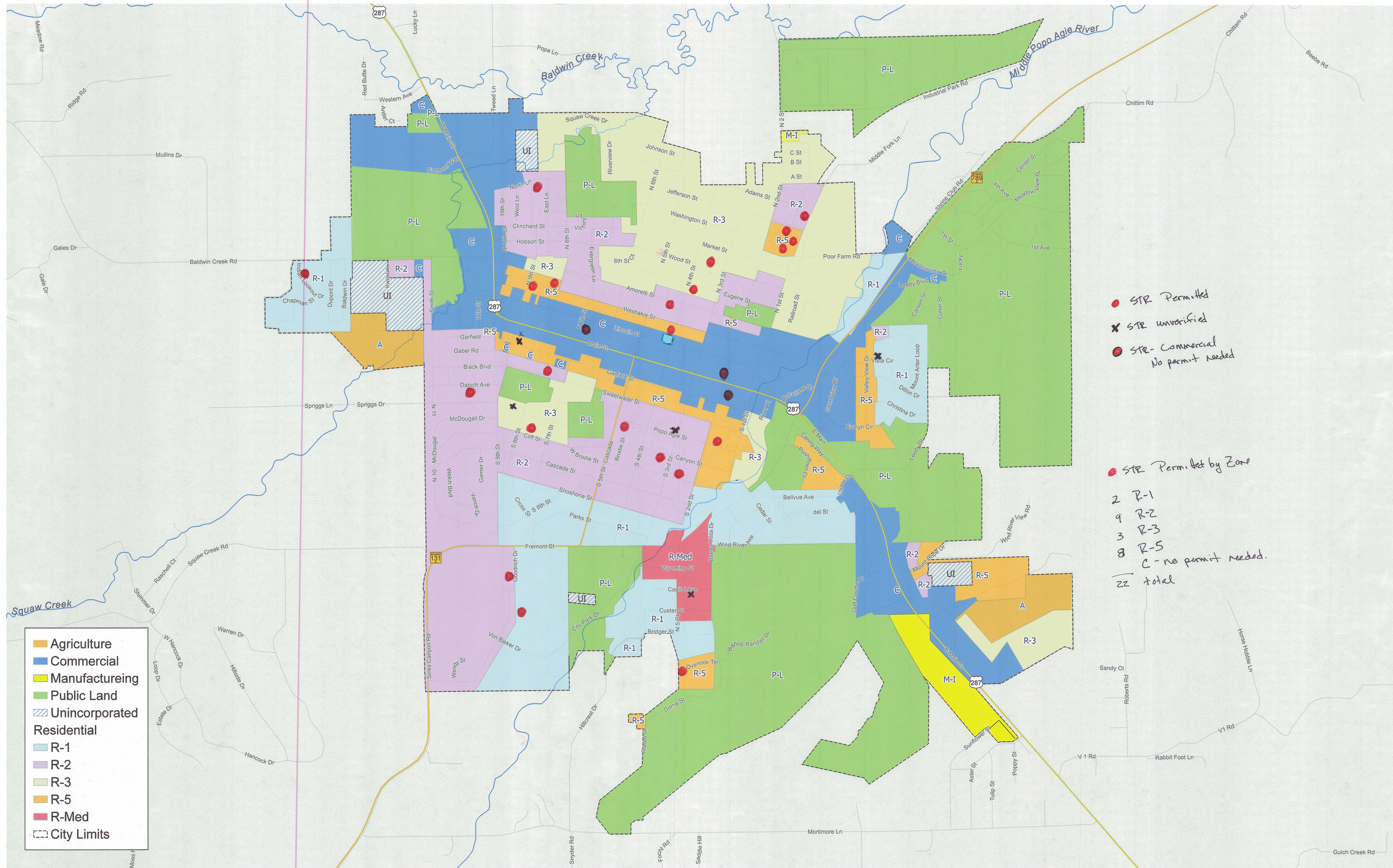
Rajean Strube Fossen <rsfossen@landerwyoming.org>
To: Joseph Henry <henryjoseph73@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 2, 2025 at 6:52 AM

Thanks Joe, I will include in the packet and we will see you Thursday.

Have a great day!
RaJean

[Quoted text hidden]



● STR Permitted
✗ STR unverified
● STR- Commercial
No permit needed

● STR Permitted by Zone
2 R-1
9 R-2
3 R-3
8 R-5
C - no permit needed.
22 total