



Memorandum – Short Term Rental Ordinance

TO: Grosse Pointe Woods Planning Commission

FROM: Ashley Jankowski

SUBJECT: Short Term Rental Ordinance

DATE: April 01, 2025

It is the opinion of the Grosse Pointe Woods Planning Commission that short term rentals pose a risk to the quality and affordability of the housing stock for local community members. For this reason, the Commission reviewed approaches to short term rental ordinances by neighboring communities (i.e. Grosse Pointe Park) to understand best practices to disallow short term rentals.

In January and February 2025, the Commission developed Ordinance language to define short term rentals and disallow short term rentals in our community, including an effective date to wind down operations of existing short term rental businesses. On March 25, 2025, a public hearing was held to consider the Ordinance. No community members spoke in favor or against the ordinance, and the Commission recommended the Ordinance for adoption by the Grosse Pointe Woods City Council.

EFFECTIVE DATE EXAMPLES WITHOUT GRANDFATHERING

There are already short term rental properties in operation in Grosse Pointe Woods with pre-existing bookings. However, in recent conversations, **the City Attorney has expressed that existing short-term rentals were never lawful or permitted in residential districts under the City Code of Ordinances, and therefore, these rental businesses are not legal non-conforming uses and must not be grandfathered in with a Short Term Rental Ordinance.**

There are examples of this form of Short Term Rental Ordinance in Michigan communities. Below, please find summaries of the approach to short term rental bans, without grandfathering:

Community Name	Approach to Implementing Effective Dates
Park Township, Ottawa County	In Park Township, short term rentals were banned in residential districts on November 10, 2022. All short term rental activity was required to end by October 1, 2023. [~11 month effective date]



PROPOSED ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

We would like to discuss the following language, which proposes no “grandfathering-in” of any existing short term rentals, given their lack of legal non-conforming use status. Please note that these are new items being added to the Ordinance, and no pre-existing Ordinance language is proposed to be altered.

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SECTION 50-2.19 – DEFINITIONS

SHORT TERM RENTAL (STR) means the rental or subletting of any investor-owned or owner-occupied dwelling on a premises for a term of 29 days or less.

SECTION 50-4.34. – RENTAL PROPERTIES

[Effective 1-1-2026]

- A. All rental units must be occupied by the same tenant for a minimum of 30 days.
- B. All rental units must abide by the rental property provisions and code regulations provided in *Article VII. – Exterior Building Maintenance* of the City Code of Ordinances.

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Please note the later effective date for this Ordinance. We recommend that this ordinance is communicated to residents and property owners through a letter, where it is made clear that ***short term rentals were never permitted in any district; this ordinance language seeks to clarify the Ordinance; and that any short term rental properties currently operating are considered unlawful and must cease and desist by [January 1, 2026].***

We wish to recommend this Ordinance to City Council. If you have any questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Ashley Jankowski
Associate Planner